



Local Development Framework

Sustainability Appraisal Report of
Basildon Borough Core Strategy
Preferred Options Report

February 2012

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0 Non-Technical Summary

1. Introduction

This is the Non-Technical Summary of the Sustainability Appraisal Report for Basildon Borough Council Core Strategy Preferred Options Report. It describes how the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) process was used to assist in preparing the growth options and the delivery strategy, as required by planning legislation and Government guidance.

The purpose of the SA is to promote sustainable development through the integration of social, economic and environmental considerations in the preparation of planning policy documents.

The preparation of the SA of Basildon Borough Core Strategy involved two key stages:

- The production of a Scoping report setting out the scope of the Sustainability Appraisal which was published in June 2011.
- The production of the Sustainability Appraisal Report, which is being published with this Non-Technical Summary to accompany the Core Strategy Preferred Options Report.

2. The Local Development Framework

Basildon Borough Council is currently preparing a Local Development Framework (LDF) in accordance with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended), which will replace its Local Plan Saved Policies.

The Core Strategy is the first LDF document being produced and it will set out the core elements of the planning framework for Basildon Borough, up until 2031. It is the principal DPD for the Borough and it sets out the Council's preferred spatial vision for how Basildon Borough should develop over the next twenty years.

3. Sustainability Appraisal

As part of the process for preparing the LDF, the Council is statutorily obliged to undertake a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Sustainability Appraisal (SA). These procedures have been combined into a single appraisal process entitled 'Sustainability Appraisal' or 'SA', for which the overall aim, is to ensure that each document, contributes to the achievement of sustainable development.

The Sustainability Appraisal seeks to determine the performance, in sustainability terms of the Strategic Objectives, Spatial Growth Options and Core Policies. Its role is to assist with the identification of the appropriate approach, in sustainability terms, to predict implications for sustainable development and put forward recommendations for improvement where necessary. It will be reviewed in light of any future changes made to this strategy and policies and consultation responses.

4. Development and Appraisal of the Core Strategy Options

The preparation of Basildon Borough's Core Strategy involved the development of Strategic Objectives which were established to deliver the Council's Spatial Vision and aspirations for the future. A Sustainability Appraisal was undertaken to determine whether the Strategic Objectives were in accordance with sustainability principles.

The Strategic Objectives set out the context for the development of the three Spatial Growth Options.

Each Spatial Option has been assessed against the Sustainability Appraisal Objectives with regard to their effect on these objectives.

Sustainability Appraisal throughout the development of the Core Strategy Spatial Options enabled the social, economic and environmental acceptability of the options to be determined. Changes to the options or mitigation measures were recommended to reduce potential adverse effects and maximise beneficial effects.

Outcomes of the Options Appraisal

It should be noted that the Sustainability Appraisal of the Spatial Growth Options was a tool to help inform decision making by Basildon Borough Council. The role of Sustainability Appraisal was to highlight sustainability implications of each option rather than recommending appropriate options for implementation.

Option A's main purpose is to protect the Borough's environmental assets, especially the Green Belt, and its overall lower growth rate means it will have less impact on the natural environment of the Borough.

The three Options perform well economically, with Option B and C having a better impact on economic development.

Socially, Options B and C perform better than Option A, which could have negative impacts on housing, health and education.

Overall, Options B and C perform better than Option A which appears to be the least sustainable option particularly in relation to future economic growth, although Option A performed well in relation to environmental issues due to the lower level of overall growth and complete protection of the Green Belt.

Whilst Option B and C offer similar measures, the high level of housing densities promoted in Option C could lead to more negative impacts on the conservation of existing natural features.

The Council selected Option A as its Preferred Option, together with the Core Policies and Primary Areas of Development and Change to support the delivery of this option.

The Core Policies and Primary Areas of Development and Change have been appraised using the Sustainability Appraisal. The implementation of the Plan will have a number of social, economic and environmental effects.

A series of recommendations, whose purpose is to maximise beneficial effects and minimise adverse effects of the Plan are available in section 7.4 of the SA Report.

1 Introduction

Basildon Borough Council, as a Local Planning Authority (LPA) is currently preparing a Local Development Framework (LDF) in accordance with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended).

The Basildon Borough LDF will replace its Local Plan Saved Policies, which were saved from the Basildon Borough Local Plan 1998, which expired on 27th September 2007, and approved by a Direction from the Secretary of State, as adopted local planning policies.

The Core Strategy Development Plan Document (DPD) is the first LDF document being produced and it will set out the core elements of the planning framework for Basildon Borough, up until 2031. It will comprise the Vision, Strategic Objectives, the Preferred Option, Delivery Strategy, Core Policies and a monitoring framework. The Core Strategy is the principal DPD for the Borough and all other documents within the LDF must conform to it.

The Core Strategy Preferred Options Report sets out the Council's preferred spatial vision for how Basildon Borough should develop over the next twenty years.

As part of the process for preparing the LDF, the Council is statutorily obliged to undertake a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Sustainability Appraisal (SA). These procedures have been combined into a single appraisal process entitled 'Sustainability Appraisal' or 'SA', for which the overall aim, is to ensure that each document, contributes to the achievement of sustainable development.

This document is the Sustainability Appraisal Report for Basildon Borough Council Core Strategy Preferred Options Report and is referred to hereafter as the SA Report. The Sustainability Appraisal for Basildon Borough Council Core Strategy Preferred Options Report has been prepared in-house, and the purpose of this Sustainability Report is to document the SA process and present the findings in a manner that can be used for stakeholder and public consultation.

The Sustainability Appraisal seeks to determine the performance, in sustainability terms of the Strategic Objectives, Spatial Growth Options and Core Policies. Its role is to assist with the identification of the appropriate approach, in sustainability terms, to predict implications for sustainable development and put forward recommendations for improvement where necessary. It will be reviewed in light of any future changes made to this strategy and policies and consultation responses.

The Sustainability Appraisal Guidance¹ published in 2005 by the then Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (now Department of Communities and Local Government) states that "it is not the role of the SA to determine the option(s) to be chosen as the basis for the preferred options and the draft plan. This is the role of those who have to decide which strategy is appropriate. The role of the SA is to assist with the identification of appropriate options, by highlighting the sustainability implications of each, and by putting forward recommendations for improvement."

This Sustainability Appraisal Report is being published alongside the Core Strategy Preferred Options, in accordance with the SEA Regulations and SA Guidance, and comments from the statutory consultees and other relevant stakeholders will be sought.

¹ Sustainability Appraisal of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Documents – OPDM - 2005

2 Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment

2.1 Sustainability Appraisal

The purpose of Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is to promote sustainable development through the integration of social, environmental and economic considerations into the preparation of Development Plan Documents (DPDs). It is mandatory under Section 39(2) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 as amended (The Act).

2.2 Strategic Environmental Assessment Process

The European Directive 2001/42/EC (the SEA Directive) “on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment”, requires a formal environmental assessment of certain plans and programmes such as the Basildon Borough Core Strategy, which are likely to have significant effects on the environment.

Strategic Environmental Assessment is designed to provide a high level of protection to the environment and to integrate environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes, with a view to promoting sustainable development.

The SEA Directive is implemented in the UK through the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004. Under these Regulations, Local Planning Authorities are required to undertake SEA for any planning documents which set a framework for future developments which are likely to have significant environmental effects. Such planning documents include DPDs.

2.3 Single Appraisal Process

Whilst the objectives of SEA and SA are different, their methodologies are similar and can be co-beneficial. Therefore the continual SA process for the Core Strategy has incorporated the assessment requirements of the SEA Directive, ensuring sustainability and environmental issues are embedded in the strategic decision-making process.

Where the term Sustainability Appraisal is used, it means a Sustainability Appraisal under the Act,

2.4 Objectives of Sustainability Appraisal

SA is an ongoing process, which seeks to improve the sustainability performance of a plan by testing it throughout its preparation in order to expose any weaknesses in its contribution to achieving sustainable development. It is an integral part of good plan-making, and to enable it to be effective and worthwhile, the appraisal must start early in the plan-preparation process. By doing so, SA assists with the identification of sustainability issues and options, which in the case of the Core Strategy, will be refined through the SA process into policies to form its eventual content.

The SA of the Core Strategy Preferred Options Report has been prepared in order to fulfil the statutory requirement from the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, including the requirement set out in paragraph 4.24 of the Planning Policy Statement 12, stating that to meet the test of ‘soundness’ a DPD must have met the procedural requirement that ‘the plan and its policies have been subjected to sustainability appraisal’. However, the main purpose of the SA is to help create a better plan and one that takes full account of the potential for impacts on sustainable development. This aims to avoid and mitigate the potential for adverse impacts and maximise the benefits for greater sustainability.

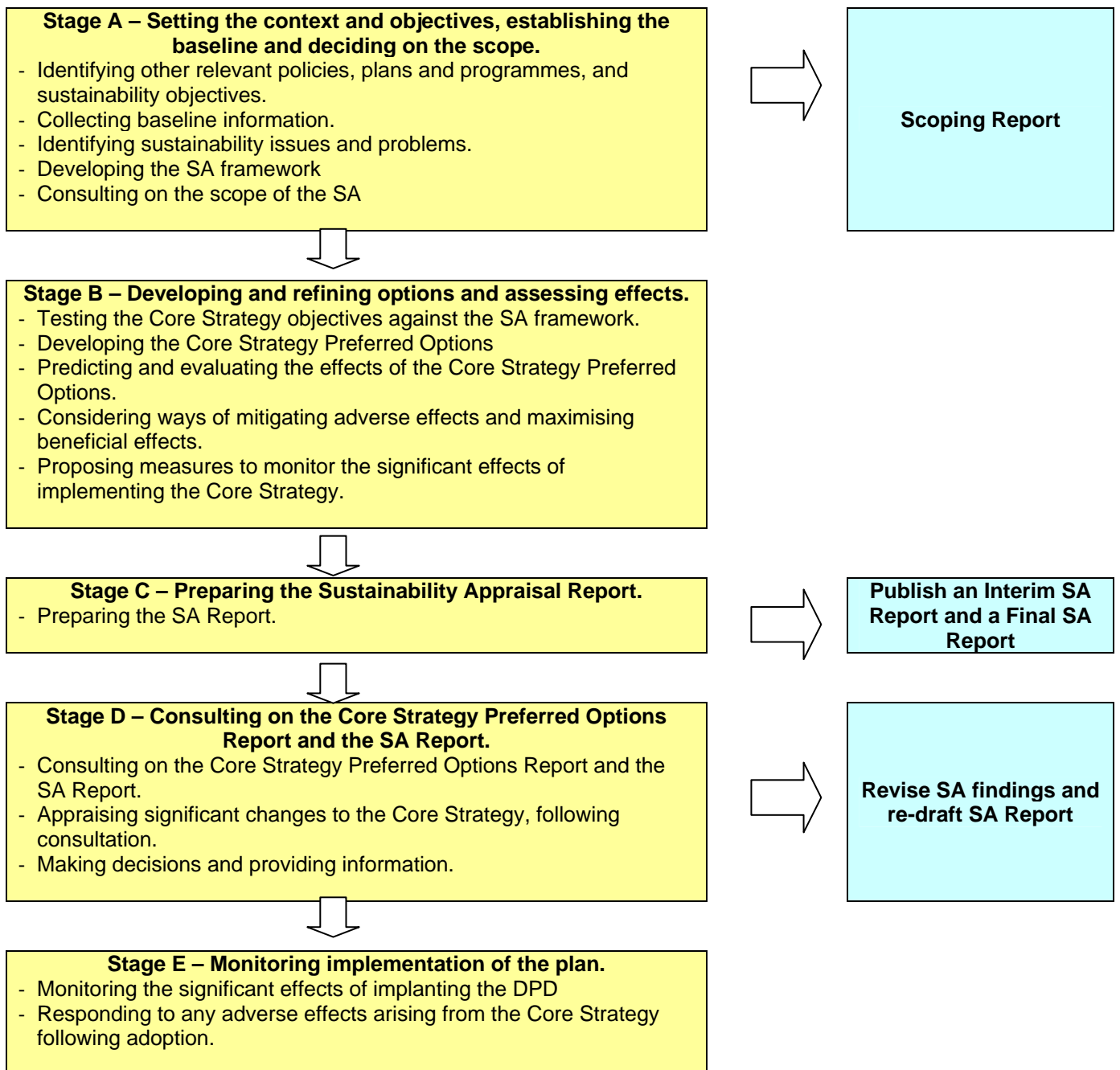
2.5 Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive Compliance

The SEA Regulations set out certain requirements for reporting the SEA process, and specify that if an integrated appraisal is undertaken (i.e. when the SEA is incorporated within the SEA process, as for the SA of Basildon Borough Council's Core Strategy), then the sections of the SA Report that report the SEA process, must be clearly signposted.

Appendix 1 summarises the requirements of the SEA Directive and identifies how the requirements have been met and where these are located in the Sustainability Report.

2.6 Sustainability Appraisal Stages

The Council has followed the SA process set in the Guidance produced by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (now Department of Communities and Local Government). This Guidance advocates a five-stage approach to undertake SA.



2.7 Other Assessments

Habitats Regulation Assessment

The European Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and Wild Flora and Fauna provides legal protection for habitats and species of European importance (Natura 2000 sites). The Directive requires an Appropriate Assessment (AA) to be carried out in relation to 'any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site but likely to have significant effects thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects.'

AA is designed to assess the impacts of a plan (or project) against the conservation objectives of a Natura 2000 site for any likely significant effects and to ascertain whether the proposed plan would adversely affect the integrity of the site.

When consulting on the SA/SEA Scoping Report and the Site Assessment Methodology and Criteria, in March-April 2011, the Council took the opportunity to seek Natural England's views regarding the need to undertake Habitats Regulation Assessment for the Council's Core Strategy.

Although there are no Natura 2000 sites within its boundaries, the Council proposed to assess the likely effects on those sites within 15km of the Borough's boundary. An exception would be where sites further than 15km, might be affected by an LDF DPD because of their role in water supply.

A Habitats Regulation Assessment has been prepared by Essex County Council Environmental team and accompanies the Core Strategy Preferred Options Report.

Service Impact Assessments (Equalities Impact Assessments)

A Service Impact Assessment (SIA) is a legal requirement under the Equality Act 2006. It is a tool to ensure that the Council promotes equality and does not discriminate. It is a way to make sure that teams and services think carefully about the impact that functions or policies will have on different groups of residents and service users as well as staff and employees.

An Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) is a requirement under the Race Relations (Amendment) Act 2000. This looks at all aspects of equalities, including race, disability, gender, religion or belief, sexual orientation and age, to ensure that the policy or proposal being investigated does not discriminate against any particular segment of the population.

A SIA (EqIA), in line with the relevant legislation, regulations and Council's Equality Policy, has been undertaken during the preparation of the Core Strategy, and accompanies the Preferred Options Report.

3 SA Stage A

The first stage of the SA was the production of a Scoping Report. The purpose of which is to set out what the approach to the SA would be, the baseline characteristics of the Borough and surrounding area, other relevant strategies and plans covering the area and the identification of objectives for sustainable development for use in the appraisal.

In August 2007, the Council consulted statutory consultees, and other environmental, social and economic bodies active within the Borough, as well as local special interest groups and neighbouring authorities, on the Draft Core Strategy SA Scoping Report and Draft LDF Contextual Baseline.

A complete list of the Draft Scoping Report consultees is set out in Appendix 2 of this report.

A Site Assessment Methodology and Criteria, based on the 19 Sustainability Appraisal Objectives defined in the Scoping Report, was developed to assess the sustainability of potential sites. It is part of the overall SA/SEA process and provides a basic level of assessments to help consider options for land allocations.

The Council has consulted on both its Core Strategy SA/SEA Scoping Report and its Site Assessment Methodology & Criteria. This consultation lasted for five weeks (2nd July – 6th August 2008) and 32 statutory and specialist organisations were invited to comment on the draft.

Before adopting the SA/SEA Scoping Report and the Site Assessment Methodology and Criteria, the Council consulted, between 21st March and 26th April 2011, the statutory consultees in order to confirm they had no objections. The responses received were incorporated into the SA Scoping Report.

The statement of consultations including comments received for each consultation and the Council's responses, the LDF Contextual Baseline, the Site Assessment Methodology and Criteria and adopted Scoping Report are available on the Council's website. www.basildon.gov.uk/ldf

3.1 Review of relevant Plans and Programmes

In order to establish a clear scope for the Sustainability Appraisal of the LDF, a review of relevant policies, plans and programmes was undertaken. This review covered International, European, National, Regional and local level policies, plans and strategies.

Plans to be reviewed were identified by the Forward Plans team and through the consultation process. The key objectives of each plan were identified and their implications for the Core Strategy were established. This allowed the team to identify key sustainability issues and informed the development of the SA Objectives and Framework.

The SA Scoping Report (June 2011) provides further details of the review process including a list of the plans and programmes reviewed.

To ensure that the SA framework developed incorporates the relevant and most up-to-date plans and policies, a review of these plans has been necessary. This review is provided in Appendix 3.

3.2 Baseline conditions

Collection of baseline information is required under the SEA legislation and is fundamental to the SA process to provide a background to, and evidence base for, identifying sustainability problems and opportunities in the Borough.

To this effect, the environmental, economic and social circumstances of Basildon Borough and their likely evolution in the future were gathered in order to collect sufficient data on the present and future state of the Borough. This baseline provided the basis to identify the key sustainability issues and the basis for predicting the potential effects of the Core Strategy.

A list of the Borough's Sustainability Issues is available in the Scoping Report.

3.3 SA Objectives

SA is based on an objective-led approach whereby potential impacts of a plan are gauged in relation to a series of objectives for sustainable development. The SA Objectives therefore provide the benchmark from which to assess the effects of the Core Strategy.

The SA Objectives integrate environmental, economic, and social considerations and have been distilled from the information collated during the review of Plans and Programmes, the review of the Baseline Conditions and the key sustainability issues.

As part of Stage A of the SA process, a series of 19 Sustainability Objectives were established for appraising the LDF, and in particular the Core Strategy.

The Core Strategy should aim to fulfil the SA Objectives as this will allow the plan to be consistent with environmental regulations and sustainable development policies. However there may be some objectives on which the Council's LDF will have a limited impact or which are in conflict with one another.

The SA Objectives are shown in Table 1 below, and are organised against the environmental, economic, and social considerations.

Table 1 – SA Objectives




SA Objectives	Environmental	Economic	Social
1. Conserving and enhancing the diverse natural landscape, countryside, green spaces, cultural heritage and local distinctiveness of Basildon Borough	✓		
2. Protect, conserve and enhance the Borough's biodiversity and the habitats which support it	✓		
3. Achieve sustainable levels of prosperity and economic growth to stimulate economic regeneration		✓	
4. Ensure the Borough's town centres are promoted as sustainable locations for living, retail, leisure and related commercial development		✓	✓
5. Improve educational attainment and social inclusion, especially in the most deprived areas of the Borough			✓
6. Ensure that everyone has the opportunity to live in a decent home and increase affordable provision to help those most in need locally			✓
7. Improve the health and well-being of the Borough's residents and reduce inequalities in health related to development and the environment			✓
8. Create and sustain vibrant communities that are safe and feel safe to those who live or visit them and where crime is reduced			✓
9. Regenerate and renew disadvantaged areas where people live or work in the Borough			✓
10. Ensure all development is delivered in the most sustainable and suitable locations and to high standards of design and construction	✓		✓
11. Improve accessibility to and enhance local services and facilities			✓
12. Improve efficiency of land use, through the re-use of previously developed land and existing buildings, including the re-use of materials from previous buildings	✓		
13. Minimise the risk of flooding and the detriment to public health, domestic and commercial property and the natural environment flood events can bring	✓		
14. Reduce local emissions of greenhouse gases, adopt building designs that can adapt to the changing climate and ensure the Borough is prepared for the changes forecast as being a consequence of a changing climate	✓		
15. Reduce air, land, water and noise pollution and improve their respective quality through direct action or mitigation measures	✓		
16. Improve water efficiency and achieve sustainable water resource management	✓		
17. Improve energy efficiency of buildings and increase the use of renewable energy sources for local energy needs, to reduce the reliance on fossil fuels	✓		
18. Reduce waste generation and increase the amount of waste which is recycled or re-used	✓		
19. Reduce traffic congestion and its related pollution levels by improving travel choice and channelling development to sustainable locations	✓		

4 SA Stage B

SA is an ongoing process, which seeks to improve the sustainability performance of a plan by testing it throughout its preparation in order to expose any weaknesses in its contribution to achieving sustainable development. It is an integral part of good plan-making, and to enable it to be effective and worthwhile, the appraisal must start early in the plan-preparation process. By doing so, SA assists with the identification of sustainability issues and options, which in the case of the Core Strategy, will be refined through the SA process into policies to form its eventual content.

To that effect, the Sustainability Appraisal of the Basildon Core Strategy Preferred Options Report includes an assessment of the performances of the Strategic Objectives, the Spatial Options and the Core Policies against each SA Objective. This enabled the sustainability effects and performance of the Core Strategy to be described, analysed and compared.

The effects of the Strategic Objectives, Spatial Options and Core Policies are described in matrices and are depicted using symbols (see table below).

Objective Compatibility Key	
Potentially Incompatible	
Compatible	
No Links	

The matrices provide comments on where the Core Strategy (its Strategic Objectives, Spatial Options and Core Policies) has potential impacts. They highlight where possible positive/negative effects with recommendations for proposed mitigation or enhancement where identified.

4.1 The Core Strategy

The Core Strategy sets out the Council's preferred spatial vision for how Basildon Borough should develop over the next twenty years.

4.2 Basildon Borough Spatial Vision 2031

The Council has developed a Spatial Vision to tackle the Borough's development challenges and help deliver the Sustainable Community Strategy.

By 2031, Basildon Borough's inhabitants, communities and businesses will be flourishing; enjoying a quality of life and environment that has been enhanced through managing growth within the limits of the Green Belt, which will have an increased role in providing recreational opportunities.

The Borough's regenerated town centres, residential neighbourhoods, employment centres and green spaces will be the envy of South Essex, enriching its character and vitality as a place to live, work and play.

The Basildon Borough of 2031 will be:

1. More Environmentally Responsible and Distinctive

- The Green Belt and countryside will have been protected and enhanced through land management and environmental improvements;
- A network of high quality open spaces and wildlife habitats will link its urban and rural areas together and provide access to the valuable natural resource that is South Essex's Green Grid;
- The Borough's Living Landscapes will be a major part of our lives. In particular, the South Essex Marshes will have been transformed into a complex of interconnected, yet distinct environments, benefiting nature through enhanced habitat, a greater appreciation of the Borough's fragile biodiversity, providing flood defence and educational links to our historic past;
- The Borough's architecture and townscape will be distinctive and pleasing to the eye;
- All new developments will be of a high quality design and environmental standard. They will respect our local heritage and ensure that the Borough continues to be a place where people want to live, take pride in and prosper; and
- More sustainable forms of development, design and construction will have helped reduce our vulnerability to a changing climate. The efficient use of natural resources, reduction in waste, more efficient energy use, together with local renewable energy will have also brought environmental and economic benefit.

2. Prosperous and Thriving

- A regenerated Basildon Regional Town Centre will have broadened its retail and leisure offer, be the home of a new college campus, an enlarged railway station and bus interchange. There will be more people living in the town centre, which will have greater space for business and culture in a safe, well designed and diverse environment with its own burgeoning evening economy offering something for people of all ages;
- Billericay, Wickford, Pitsea and Laindon Town Centres will be successful in their own right providing a focus for community life and providing a mixture of shops, services, housing, cultural and community facilities to serve their local areas;
- Improvements will have taken place to the Borough's schools, particularly in Basildon New Town, with changes in the way that education is provided promoting a strong learning culture and encouraging young people to aspire and achieve more in later life;
- Links between business and higher education will have been strengthened and helped to stimulate more innovative business growth;
- Better access to educational and training facilities to improve residents' qualifications and skills will have been made available enabling them to play their part in, and benefit from, the area's increased prosperity;
- A high quality locally distinctive and prosperous economy with a strong skills base and high quality environment will have turned the town centres and industrial estates into hives of activity and business, with new buildings, support services and facilities; and
- There will be easier access to, and strengthened links between, employment opportunities

within and outside of the Borough, particularly the City of London, Stratford City & the DP World, London Gateway Port in neighbouring Thurrock.

3. More Homely, Connected and Vibrant

- The Borough's communities will be inviting; they will be places people want to live, feel they belong to, and where their everyday and long-term needs are easily met;
- The Borough will be a place that feels safe, where people are active and healthy, and look out for each other;
- People will become involved in the running of their communities. There will be a strong sense of society and community spirit, supported by the voluntary sector, local groups, town and parish councils;
- New homes will have been built that help meet local needs and are of a design and type that people want to live in;
- Housing estate renewal will have been completed in Five Links and Craylands;
- Spatial inequalities in residents' state of health will have been reduced by new and enhanced medical facilities and methods of treatment and care;
- The Borough will have a distinguished reputation as a location offering sporting excellence; peoples' physical, mental health and well-being will have been improved by getting people involved in physical activity, building new developments in more sustainable locations that reduce congestion and provide alternative ways of getting around, as well as through good access to high quality green spaces, leisure facilities and areas for play and recreation;

5 Testing the Strategic Objectives

In order to deliver the Basildon Borough Spatial Vision 2031, the Council has developed ten Strategic Objectives, which were drawn from the Drivers for Change which were established by the thematic Topic Papers which support the Core Strategy as part of the Evidence Base.

5.1 Basildon Borough Strategic Objectives

SO1: Protecting and Enhancing the Quality of the Local Environment

- Enhance the quality of the Borough's built environment through spatial planning and design, conservation of heritage assets, and the improvement of the character of its landscapes to secure the future of the Borough's distinctiveness and sense of place;
- Protect, conserve and positively manage the Borough's biodiversity resources through strengthening green infrastructure and the protection, renewal and creation of habitats;

SO2: Improve the Quality and Value of the Green Belt

- Ensure the Borough's Green Belt continues to serve its purpose; and
- Proactively manage the use of land in the Green Belt so that it benefits local communities; and
- Continue to enforce against unauthorised development.

SO3: Minimising Our Impact on the Environment

- Promote the efficient use of resources by embracing sustainable patterns of development, improving energy and water efficiency, increasing the use of renewable energy technologies and minimising pollution, including greenhouse gas emissions;
- Designing local environments so that they are of a high quality, more resilient to a changing climate and benefit from integrated environmental systems for drainage and waste management; and
- Ensure people can be protected from the effects of flooding.

SO4: Creating Vibrant and Thriving Town Centres:

- Maintain Basildon Town Centre's rank and role as a Regional Centre in Essex by ensuring it contributes to the Borough's overall growth targets and becomes the prime focus for new retail and leisure developments; and
- Conserve the distinct identities of the Borough's other town centres, whilst improving their local community roles and functions through mixed-use developments that provide a better range of shopping, leisure and employment opportunities, alongside an enhanced transport infrastructure and public realm.

SO5: Strengthening the Competitiveness of the Local Economy

- Maintain the Borough's position as a sub-regional economic hub by providing enough land, in suitable locations, with supporting infrastructure to accommodate business needs and support the diversification of the Borough's employment sector mix;
- Improve the robustness of the local economy by ensuring opportunities to maintain and enhance business support programmes, access to multi-tiered education and skills training are available to improve investor confidence in locating to or remaining in the Borough; and
- Promote the Borough on a local, national, European and international scale as an attractive base for businesses.

SO6: Delivering New Homes

- Provide sufficient housing, in a range of mixes and tenure that meet the Borough's existing needs, including of its ageing population, whilst taking into account future population growth

SO7: Capitalising on Local Tourism Opportunities

- Extend the Borough's leisure tourism offer by promoting its cultural and environmental

assets; and

- Securing the provision of high quality accommodation and support facilities in the Borough to satisfy demands from businesses.

SO8: Helping Local People to Maintain Healthier Lifestyles

- Provide an environment that is attractive, enjoyable, safe, accessible and easy to live and work in; and
- Ensure access to leisure, sport, recreation and cultural facilities is maintained to encourage active and healthier lifestyles.

SO9: Enhancing Quality of Life for All

- Foster a dynamic and prosperous local economy, employing a highly trained, skilled and educated local workforce;
- Reduce inequalities in employment by improving access to all levels of education, training and skill enhancement;
- Address social exclusion and inequalities in healthcare and education by ensuring good quality health, education and community support and cultural facilities are accessible to the Borough's residents of all ages;
- Improve access to, and the provision of community, sports and cultural facilities, together with sufficient local infrastructure to ensure healthier and stronger communities develop; and
- Nurture stronger and safer communities, increasing peoples' safety and well-being by designing out crime, reducing disorder and its causes, encouraging community involvement and instilling civic pride.

SO10: Securing the Delivery of Supporting Infrastructure

- Ensure that all developments are in accessible locations to minimise the need to travel;
- Promote a reduction in car use and encourage the use of public transport, walking, & cycling to minimise the impact of the Borough's growth on transport infrastructure; and
- Ensure all developments are supported by the necessary infrastructure and community facilities, in an effective and timely manner to make the development sustainable and minimise its effect upon existing communities.

5.2 Results of the Assessments of Strategic Objectives

The Core Strategy Strategic Objectives set out the Council's aspirations for the future and have set the context for the development of Spatial Growth Options.

In order to determine whether the Strategic Objectives are in accordance with sustainability principles, as recommended by the Guidance, their compatibilities have been tested against the SA Objectives.

Table 2 below shows how the compatibility of each Strategic Objective against the SA Objectives. Table 3 provides a summary of the findings of the assessments and highlights recommendations and mitigation measures that could be implemented in order to improve the sustainability of the Strategic Objectives.

The detailed matrices of the assessments are contained in Appendix 4 of this report.

Table 2 – SA of Strategic Objective

SA Objective	Environmental											Economic		Social										
	1	2	10	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	3	4	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11			
Core Strategy Strategic Objective																								
SO1: Protecting and Enhancing the Quality of the Local Environment	✓	✓	✓ -	✓													✓ □				✓ -			
SO2: Improve the Quality and Value of the Green Belt	✓	✓	✓ -	✓	✓		✓				✓ -	✓ -					✓		✓		✓ -			
SO3: Minimising Our Impact on the Environment	✓ -	✓ -	✓	✓ -	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓ -	✓	✓	✓	✓ -	✓ -	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
SO4: Creating Vibrant and Thriving Town Centres	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓ -	✓ -				✓ -	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
SO5: Strengthening the Competitiveness of the Local Economy	✓ -	✓	✓	✓ -	✓	✓	✓				✓ -	✓	✓	✓	✓ -				✓	✓	✓	✓		
SO6: Delivering New Homes	✓ -	✓ -	✓ -	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓ -		✓	✓		✓	✓ -	✓	✓	✓	✓ -	✓ -		
SO7: Capitalising on Local Tourism Opportunities	✓ -	✓	✓ -	✓ -	✓	✓	✓				✓ -	✓			✓ -		✓	✓ -	✓	✓	✓ -	✓		
SO8: Helping Local People to Maintain Healthier Lifestyles	✓ -	✓	✓ -	✓ -		✓ -					✓ -		✓	✓ -	✓ -		✓	✓ -	✓	✓	✓ -	✓		
SO9: Enhancing Quality of Life for All	✓ -	✓	✓ -	✓ -		✓ -					✓ -	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓ -	✓		
SO10: Securing the Delivery of Supporting Infrastructure	✓ -	✓ -	✓ -			✓ -					✓		✓	✓	✓ -		✓	✓		✓ -	✓	✓		

Table 3 – SA of Strategic Objectives – Commentary and Recommendations

Core Strategy Strategic Objective	Commentary and Recommendations
<p>SO1: Protecting and Enhancing the Quality of the Local Environment</p>	<p>The purpose of this Strategic Objective is to protect, conserve and enhance the quality of the built environment and environmental assets. Therefore overall, it will have a positive environmental impact.</p> <p>This Strategic Objective only addresses the environmental aspect of sustainability, and does not guarantee that the locations of developments will be sustainable and suitable. Moreover developments, depending on their locations, could have an adverse impact on the built environment and environmental assets this Strategic Objective seeks to protect.</p> <p>It is recommended that the sustainability of any development locations be demonstrated.</p> <p>This Strategic Objective does not have any link to Economic considerations.</p> <p>Overall this Strategic Objective does not have any link to Social considerations, however it has the potential of having a positive impact on the health and well-being of residents and sustainability of locations.</p> <p>It could be an opportunity to promote better access to nature through the creation of green corridors, which have the potential to have a positive impact on the residents' health and well-being.</p>
<p>SO2: Improve the Quality and Value of the Green Belt</p>	<p>This Strategic Objective aims to improve the quality of the Green Belt and ensure it continues to serve its purpose. Therefore, overall it will have a positive Environmental Impact.</p> <p>This Strategic Objective only addresses the environmental aspect of sustainability, and does not guarantee that the locations of developments will be sustainable and suitable. Moreover developments, depending on their locations, could have adverse impacts on the built environment and environmental assets this Strategic Objective seeks to protect.</p> <p>It is recommended that the sustainability of any development proposals be demonstrated.</p> <p>Promoting the Green Belt for recreation would attract visitors and could lead to a greater proportion of journeys, some undertaken by car, and this could have an adverse impact on traffic congestion and related pollution. It could be an opportunity to promote better access to nature through the creation of green corridors, which would offer non motorised links between settlements such as cycle routes, bridleways and footpaths.</p> <p>This Strategic Objective has the potential to have a negative economic impact. By protecting the Green Belt and resisting the expansion of existing urban areas, it concentrates economic development within employment areas and town centres which may not have enough space available to accommodate existing and future economic growth. It is also not guaranteed that town centres will be developed more than any other urban location.</p> <p>The Employment Capacity Study needs to be updated as this would help to analyse the economic needs and demands and the land capacity and availability in the Borough.</p> <p>A review of the Green Belt would help reinforce its boundary.</p>

Table 3 – SA of Strategic Objectives – Commentary and Recommendations

Core Strategy Strategic Objective	Commentary and Recommendations
	<p>Overall this Strategic Objective does not have any link to Social considerations. However it has the potential of having a positive impact on the health and well-being of residents, the regeneration and sustainability of the locations. It could be an opportunity to promote a better access to nature through the creation of green corridors, which have the potential to have a positive impact on residents' health and well-being.</p>
<p>SO3: Minimising Our Impact on the Environment</p>	<p>This Strategic Objective aims to implement measures to reduce the impact of our ways of life on our surroundings. Overall this Strategic Objective will have a positive Environmental Impact.</p> <p>However, whilst it recommends the implementation of renewable energy technologies, their location and type could have a negative impact on the protection of biodiversity, local distinctiveness, and land use. Also whilst the Strategic Objective promotes sustainable patterns of development, it is not clear whether the sustainability of locations, access of services and facilities, and measures to reduce traffic congestion have been considered.</p> <p>It is recommended that before any renewable energy technologies or schemes are implemented, their feasibility, type and locations be established. It is also recommended that the sustainability of development locations be established.</p> <p>It is also recommended that this Strategic Objective include measures to reduce traffic congestion and its related pollution, such as alternative ways of transport.</p> <p>Overall this Strategic Objective will have a positive Economic Impact. The implementation of renewable technologies provides a good opportunity to diversify the economy of the Borough.</p> <p>Overall this Strategic Objective will have a positive Social impact. However the implementation of sustainable patterns of development could have a negative impact on house affordability.</p>
<p>SO4: Creating Vibrant and Thriving Town Centres</p>	<p>Overall this Strategic Objective will have a positive Environmental Impact. However it has the potential to lead to an adverse impact on flooding. It is therefore recommended that PPS25 Sequential and Exception tests be carried out when determining the locations of developments.</p> <p>Sustainable design solutions should also be implemented to ensure that measures to reduce greenhouses gases, land, water, noise and traffic pollution and improve their quality have been considered.</p> <p>Overall this Strategic Objective will have a positive Economic Impact. It aims to maintain the use of Town Centres, this will ensure their diversification and have a positive impact on the economy.</p> <p>Overall this Strategic Objective will have a positive Social impact. Town centres will have their community roles reinforced and will offer local services and facilities to communities.</p>
<p>SO5: Strengthening the Competitiveness of the Local Economy</p>	<p>Overall this Strategic Objective will have a negative Environmental Impact.</p> <p>The existing employment areas are located within the urban area, therefore to maintain the competitiveness of the economy and provide enough land in</p>

Table 3 – SA of Strategic Objectives – Commentary and Recommendations

Core Strategy Strategic Objective	Commentary and Recommendations
	<p>suitable locations could lead to the release of land outside the urban area, which could have adverse impacts on the built environment and environmental assets. Moreover there is no certainty that the urban area possesses enough space available to accommodate existing and future economic growth.</p> <p>An update of the Employment Capacity Study would help to analyse the economic needs and demands and the land capacity and availability in the Borough.</p> <p>A review of the Green Belt would help reinforce its boundary.</p> <p>Overall this Strategic Objective will have a positive Economic Impact. The Strategic Objective aims to strengthen the competitiveness of the Borough.</p> <p>Overall this Strategic Objective will have a mixture of positive and negative Social impact. This Strategic Objective will lead to positive impact on aspects that offer more services, facilities or regenerate areas. However the sustainability and accessibility of the new locations will have to be demonstrated.</p>
<p>SO6: Delivering New Homes</p>	<p>Overall this Strategic Objective will have a negative Environmental Impact. Providing sufficient houses will lead to more developments and in the long term could lead to the release of land in locations that could have an overall negative environmental impact on SA Objectives that deal with Environmental protection. It is recommended that the sustainability of any development locations be demonstrated.</p> <p>It also has the potential to lead to an adverse impact on flooding. It is therefore recommended that PPS25 Sequential and Exception tests be carried out when determining the locations of developments.</p> <p>Overall this Strategic Objective will have a positive Economic Impact. Whilst it only addresses the Social aspect of sustainability, it is expected that mixed-use developments in town centres will be promoted thus improving access to services.</p> <p>Overall this Strategic Objective will have a positive Social impact.</p> <p>However the provision of housing for the existing and growing future population could lead to an increase of density and therefore to overcrowding. The sustainability and accessibility of developments and their locations will have to be demonstrated.</p> <p>Street layouts and sustainable design of buildings should also be taken into account as they have established health benefits, provide convenient, safe, attractive environments that encourage more active lifestyles, and help ensure that solutions to reduce pollution have been considered.</p>
<p>SO7: Capitalising on Local Tourism Opportunities</p>	<p>Overall this Strategic Objective will have a negative Environmental Impact.</p> <p>This Strategic Objective seeks to extend the tourism offer, this would lead to developments, which depending of their types and where they are located, have the potential to lead to a negative impact. The increase of visitors will also lead to a greater proportion of journeys to and from the Borough and this, also has the potential to have a negative impact. It is recommended that the sustainability of any development locations be demonstrated.</p>

Table 3 – SA of Strategic Objectives – Commentary and Recommendations

Core Strategy Strategic Objective	Commentary and Recommendations
	<p>It also has the potential to lead to an adverse impact on flooding. It is therefore recommended that PPS25 Sequential and Exception tests be carried out when determining the locations of developments.</p> <p>Sustainable design solutions should also be implemented to ensure that measures to reduce greenhouses gases, land, water, noise and traffic pollution and improve air quality have been considered.</p> <p>It could be an opportunity to promote better access to nature through the creation of green corridors, which would offer non motorised links between settlements such as cycle routes, bridle ways and footpaths.</p> <p>Overall this Strategic Objective will have a positive Economic Impact as developing tourism will be an opportunity to develop and diversify the economy.</p> <p>Overall this Strategic Objective has the potential to have a positive Social impact. Developing tourism will be an opportunity to create new jobs, encourage social inclusion and will also raise the Borough's profile.</p>
<p>SO8: Helping Local People to Maintain Healthier Lifestyles</p>	<p>This Strategic Objective will either have a negative or positive Environmental Impact.</p> <p>It aims to encourage people to lead a healthier lifestyle and enjoy the environment. This could lead to measures that improve the Borough's environmental assets. If not managed properly and depending on the type of development and their locations, it could have negative impacts on these assets. Creating an attractive environment also has also the potential to lead to an increase in visitors and this could result in a greater proportion of journeys to and from the Borough and this, also has the potential to have a negative impact. It is recommended that the sustainability of any development locations be demonstrated, and that sustainable design solutions be implemented within any development.</p> <p>Overall this Strategic Objective will have a positive Economic Impact. Locating Leisure, Sports and Recreation facilities within Town Centres will have the potential to emphasise mixed-use development in these centres and will have the potential to positively impact on the Economy.</p> <p>Overall this Strategic Objective has the potential to have a positive Social impact. This Strategic Objective aims to provide the infrastructure for people to have an active life and this will have a positive impact on their health, well-being, and develop residents' sense of pride.</p> <p>It could be an opportunity to promote better access to nature through the creation of green corridors, which have the potential to have a positive impact on the residents' health and well-being.</p>
<p>SO9: Enhancing Quality of Life for All</p>	<p>This Strategic Objective will either have a negative or positive Environmental Impact.</p> <p>Providing the infrastructure to enhance the quality of life for all, implies that developments will take place. When located in the urban area these developments could be an opportunity to improve it, however it could also lead to developments in the vicinity of environmental assets leading to negative impact and not ensuring an efficient use of land. It is therefore recommended that the sustainability of any development locations be demonstrated, and that</p>

Table 3 – SA of Strategic Objectives – Commentary and Recommendations

Core Strategy Strategic Objective	Commentary and Recommendations
	<p>sustainable design solutions be implemented within any development.</p> <p>This Strategic Objective could also lead to development in areas that are not easily accessible, and result in an increase in journeys undertaken by car. This could be counterbalanced by the promotion of alternative ways of transport.</p> <p>Overall this Strategic Objective will have a positive Economic Impact. The Strategic Objective seeks to improve access to all levels of education, this will have the potential to develop a better skilled and educated local workforce and attract employers, therefore leading to a positive economic impact.</p> <p>Overall this Strategic Objective has the potential to have a positive Social impact. The Strategic Objective deals and aims to improve all social aspects, whether it is health, employment, education, and social exclusion.</p>
<p>SO10: Securing the Delivery of Supporting Infrastructure</p>	<p>This Strategic Objective could either have a positive or negative Environmental Impact.</p> <p>The Strategic Objective aims to provide the necessary transport infrastructure to make existing and future developments accessible. Additional development might be needed to accommodate a growing population, leading to the release of land in the Green Belt, which does not ensure good access to services and facilities. Additional transport infrastructure might be needed in these locations and this could lead to a negative environmental impact. Therefore the sustainability and accessibility of any development locations would have to be demonstrated.</p> <p>Whilst it also promotes alternatives ways of transport which have the potential to positively impact on the Environment, the layout and design of streets would have to be promoted to encourage walking and cycling.</p> <p>Overall this Strategic Objective will have a positive Economic Impact. By providing the necessary infrastructure, the Strategic Objective ensures that services and facilities are accessible and therefore will have the potential to positively impact on the Economy.</p> <p>Overall this Strategic Objective has the potential to have a positive Social impact. This Strategic Objective seeks to provide access to services and facilities, and encourage more walking and cycling. These measures have the potential to reduce social inclusion, and improve health, well-being and sense of pride.</p>

6 Testing the Spatial Growth Options

The Spatial Growth Options have been assessed against the SA Objectives with regard to the effects of the options on the SA Objectives. Recommendations have been made where there are any potential adverse effects predicted for sustainability or opportunities identified to improve the sustainability of the Core Strategy.

The full detail of the appraisal is detailed in Appendix 5 of this report; a summary of the assessment findings and recommendations is also provided below.

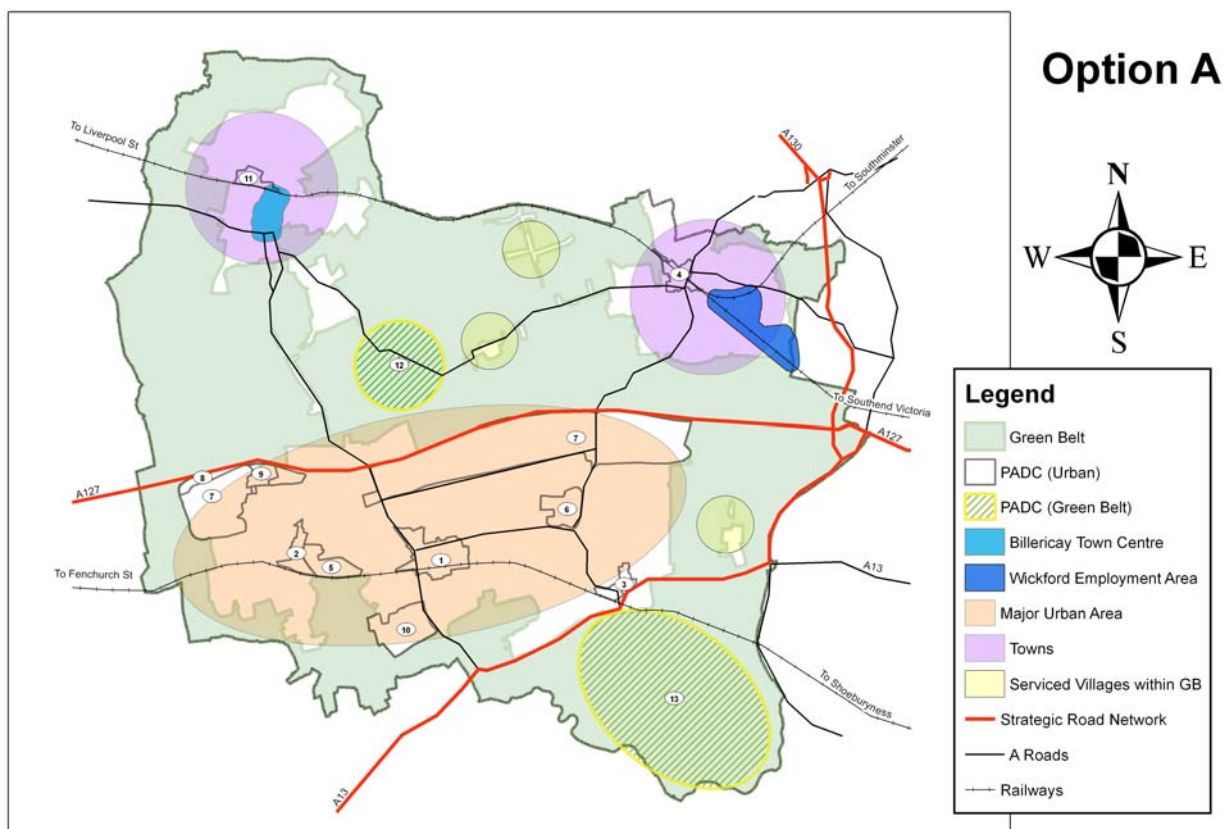
6.1 The Three Spatial Growth Options

6.1.1 Option A

Maximising Urban Potential and Protecting the Green Belt

Option A aims to maximise the urban potential of what is already in place, by regenerating our urban areas, utilising existing services and infrastructure. This option values the green belt above other considerations and makes it the priority for the future.

Key Diagram



Summary of Option A

Option A makes the most of what the Borough already has environmentally, economically and socially by limiting development to within the urban areas only, offering long term protection to the Green Belt, whilst concentrating on the conservation and design of the built environment to improve people's quality of life.

The Green Belt will become a focus for environmental enhancement, habitat restoration, land management, flood defence and recreation.

The majority of growth would come forward from Primary Areas for Development and Change (PADC). It will include at least 6,500 additional dwellings, providing homes for approximately 9,000 people, which although less than the Borough's natural increase, means that the Green Belt can continue to be afforded the highest protection with no land releases for development.

Future economic development would be focused on diversifying the types of industry and employers based in the Borough and infilling vacant or underused sites in existing employment areas and town centres. In addition, at least 5ha of new employment land will be released from the urban area.

Town centres will be the focus for regeneration and development, creating vital, active hubs through diversification and renewal.

Housing densities outside town centres in Option A will remain similar to existing neighbourhoods, offering scope for a range of property types to be built across the Borough.

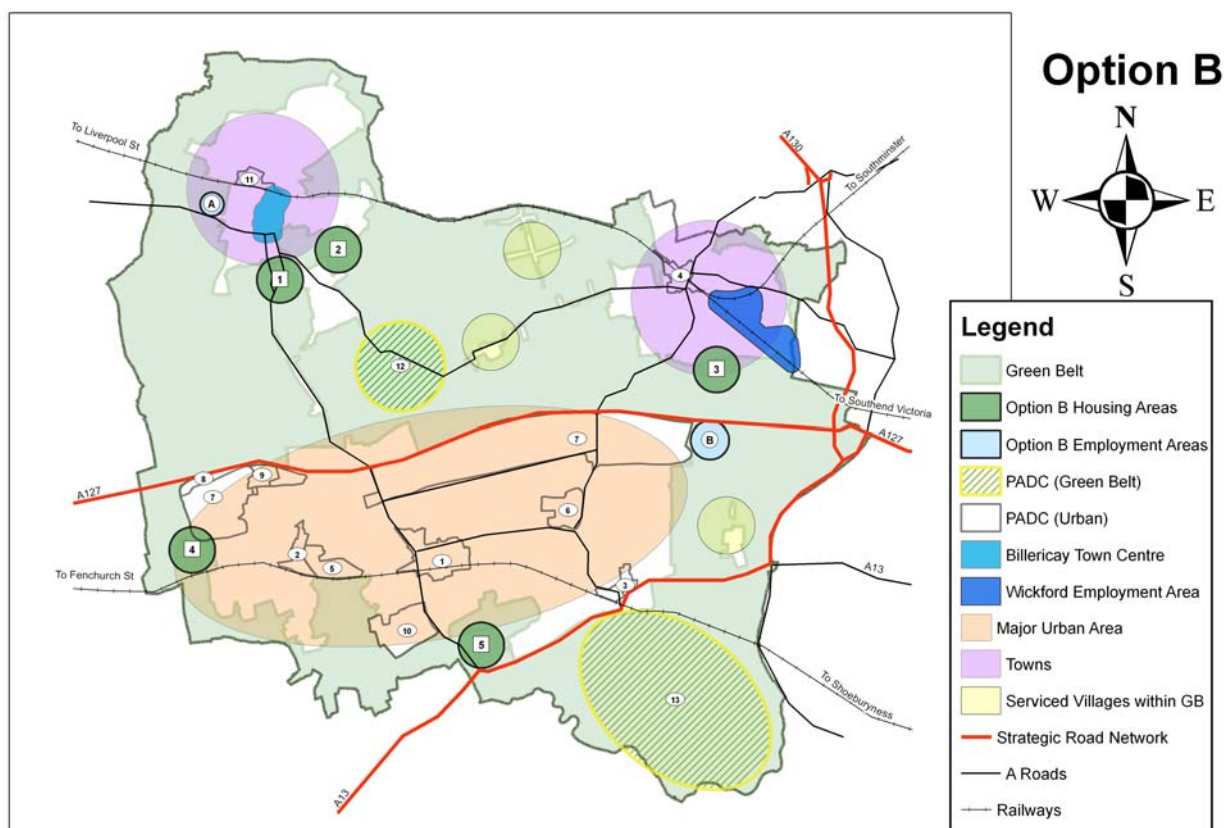
Using existing infrastructure, will place greater pressure on current services, but reduce the requirement for expensive initial expenditure by the local authority, service providers or developers, which can be a barrier to growth.

6.1.2 Option B

Accommodating a Growing Population and Strengthening Economic Resilience

Option B aims to provide a choice of housing whilst maximising the use of existing services and infrastructure. It aims to strengthen the economic resilience of the Borough through strategic land allocations in economically beneficial locations, whilst creating a robust, long-term Green Belt boundary.

Key Diagram



Summary of Option B

Option B presents a strategy to improve the economic resilience of the Borough and meet a population rise of nearly 14,000 people, while maintaining existing urban densities and maximising the use of existing infrastructure.

Existing development opportunities in the urban area will be met as in Option A, combined with several strategic extensions. The Borough will plan to provide 10,100 additional dwellings and up to 14ha of additional economic land to 2031. Town centres are the focus for regeneration and development, creating vital, active hubs through diversification and renewal.

At least 6,700 dwellings will be provided within the current urban area, with 3,300 homes delivered in new urban extensions and at least 100 within Plotlands. Poor quality open spaces will be used to meet housing growth in the urban area, rationalising the public estate and focusing park investment on creating higher-quality spaces. Removal of some Green Belt for housing and economic development will be required to meet this target.

Housing densities in Option B will remain similar to existing neighbourhoods, offering sufficient scope for a range of property types to be built across the Borough. Where necessary, new areas will include additional services to provide for day-to-day needs, reducing the need to travel and improving quality of life.

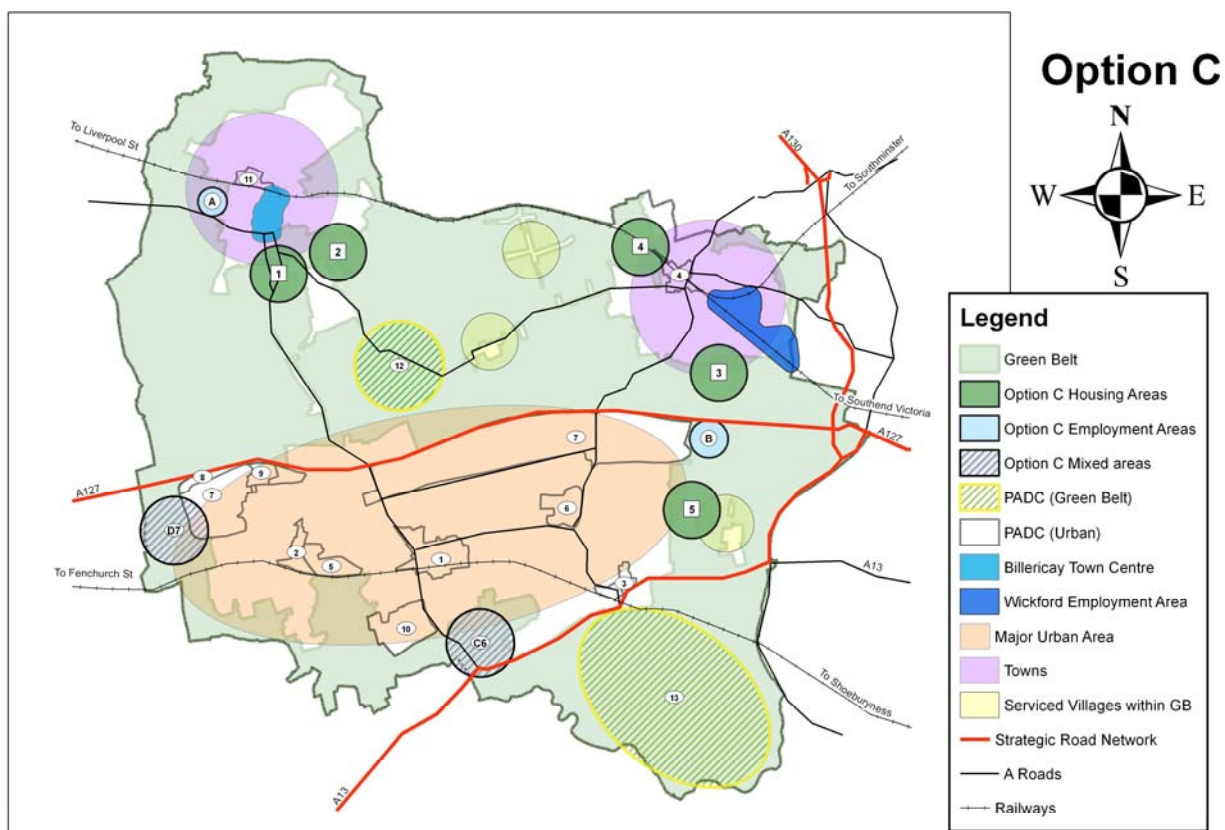
Maximising the use of existing infrastructure will place greater pressure on current services, but reduce the requirement for expensive initial expenditure by the local authority, service providers or developers, which can be a barrier to growth.

6.1.3 Option C

Maximise the Borough's Growth Potential

Option C aims to maximise growth, meeting one of the highest households forecasts with higher density developments and providing significant new opportunities for economic development. It will provide a wide range and quantity of infrastructure, services and amenities to offer the best quality of life possible.

Key Diagram



Summary of Option C

Option C presents a spatial approach to meeting the full housing demand for the Borough and maximising its economic potential. Through higher urban densities and strategic land releases, this option provides for the forecast population rise of nearly 36,000 people and a need for 21,600 dwellings over the next 20 years, with supporting infrastructure.

A strategic release of up to 26ha for employment use will balance housing with economic activity and enable businesses to locate to the Borough, maintaining Basildon's economic importance to

the Region and providing attractive locations for businesses. The Borough's town centres remain the focus for suitable activities and regeneration, creating vital hubs of activity with local distinction. Additional centres will be created within urban extensions to ensure equitable access to goods and services.

Around 7,500 dwellings will be provided within the current urban area and 14,100 in urban extensions removed from the Green Belt, together with at least 100 dwellings through infill in the Plotlands.

Phasing of development and substantial funding for infrastructure will be crucial to ensure new areas are suitably serviced by utilities, transport, communication and civic amenities, creating a good quality of life for future occupiers. Planning to meet the Borough's entire housing demand and promoting opportunities for economic growth will require substantial investment from public and private funding.

6.2 Results of the Assessments of the Spatial Growth Options

SA throughout the development of the Core Strategy Spatial Options enabled the social, economic and environmental acceptability of the options to be determined. For each option it was determined whether there would be a move towards or away from achievement of each SA objective. In some cases the options had no influence on the objective, or the impact would depend on how the option is implemented. This was illustrated through the use of compatibility keys in the appraisal matrices.

SA of the Core Strategy Spatial Options identified a number of potential effects, both beneficial and adverse. The Options appraisal matrices provided in Appendix 5 detail the likely effects that have been identified. In addition, where appropriate, changes to the options or mitigation measures were recommended to reduce potential adverse effects and maximise beneficial effects.

Table 4 below summarises the results of the compatibility test between the Spatial Options and the SA Objectives and compares the options against one another.

Table 4 – SA of the Spatial Growth Options

SA Objective Spatial Growth Options	Environmental											Economic		Social							
	1	2	10	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	3	4	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Option A Maximising Urban Potential and Protecting the Green Belt	✓	✓	✓ -	✓	-	✓ -	□	-	-	-	✓ -	✓ -	✓	✓	-	-	-	✓ -	✓	✓ -	✓
Option B Accommodating a Growing Population and Strengthening Economic Resilience	✓	✓ -	✓ -	✓	✓	✓ -	✓	-	✓	✓	✓ -	✓	✓	✓	✓ -	✓	✓	✓	✓ -	✓ -	✓
Option C Maximise the Borough's Growth Potential	-	✓ -	✓ -	✓	✓	✓ -	✓ □	-	✓	✓	-	✓	✓	✓	✓ -	✓	✓ -	✓	✓ -	✓ -	✓

6.2.1 Environmental Impacts

Option A shows a strong emphasis in maximising the urban area and protecting the Green Belt and the Borough's environmental assets.

Protecting the Green Belt will help conserve the distinctiveness, landscape and character of the rural parts of the Borough. Whilst housing densities for new developments in the urban area will be similar to the existing, it is expected that layout and design of streets and buildings that integrate with the urban fabric will be promoted and that proposals that promote local distinctiveness, through design and integration with the existing area, including any heritage and cultural features will be supported.

Whilst this Option aims to protect existing habitats and biodiversity within the Borough, no measures to identify, protect and enhance new ecological assets outside the Green Belt have been identified.

Developing in the urban area demonstrates good efficiency of land use and encourages use of Previously Developed Land. A robust assessment has been undertaken to promote sites in the urban area (identified in the RLA and SHLAA) suitable to accommodate the housing growth. Because these sites are located within the urban area they are in a sustainable location, providing access to services and facilities and well served by public transport. However, in this assessment, sites located in the Green Belt were not considered and therefore their sustainability and suitability have not been taken into account.

Discussions with the key stakeholders and services providers have not taken place, therefore it is not possible to ensure that the key services and facilities will be available and able to cope, and as a result it is difficult to confirm whether the Option presents the most suitable and sustainable locations.

Ensuring that development happens within the urban area could help reduce the reliance on cars, by providing easier access to services and facilities. However the Option does not actively encourage alternative ways of transport nor does it consider the potential congestion that could result from the development.

The sites promoted to accommodate housing growth, which were sourced from the SHLAA, have been considered against flood risk and only sites outside the flood zones were kept. However this option does not take into consideration the risk of surface water flooding, and sustainable design solutions to protect people and property from the risks of flooding, such as SUDS should be incorporated into this option.

Whilst this Option recognises environmental quality and promotes regeneration, it does not provide for the reduction of water and energy consumption or the reduction of waste. Sustainable patterns of development that consider water and energy efficiency, the implementation and use of renewable energy technologies and encourage waste recycling should be encouraged.

The selection of PADCs has not been subject to the same level of assessment as those undertaken for the RLA and SHLAA sites, which considered flood risk, environmental sensitivity and access to services and community facilities.

Option B promotes development within the existing urban area (including public open space in the urban settlements) and aims to release land in the Green Belt to accommodate a growing population and encourage economic development.

A significant effort has been made to safeguard the most environmentally sensitive sites, and the option followed a method for choosing locations with low environmental constraints to conserve important natural landscapes and countryside.

Sites selected were also considered against flood risk and only sites outside the flood zones were kept. However this option does not take into consideration the risk of surface water flooding, and sustainable design solutions to protect people and property from the risks of flooding, such as SUDS should be incorporated into this option.

Whilst there are no ecological assets directly at these locations, some of them are adjacent to sites locally recognised for their environmental assets and no specific assessments of the impact on these features has been undertaken.

The option includes a strong emphasis on the conservation and enhancement of the built environment. Ensuring housing densities similar to existing and supporting the infill of plotlands will help conserve the distinctiveness of the Borough.

The approach chosen for choosing the sites proves consideration of efficiency of land use.

This Option supports the implementation and use of energy efficiency and waste recycling measures. However there is no specific request for these measures to be implemented, therefore sustainable patterns of development that consider energy efficiency, the implementation and use of renewable energy technologies and encourage waste recycling should be encouraged.

Extensions in the Green Belt for housing and economic development, have also been chosen because of their connectivity with serviced settlements, whether they are adjacent or close to existing significant employment areas and where there is unlikely to be a need for substantial infrastructure improvements. These are shown to be considered the most sustainable and suitable locations, and due to their accessibility to services and facilities could help reduce the reliance on cars.

However, plotlands do not provide suitable access to services and therefore the development proposed in these areas will be deficient or will require additional infrastructure such as schools, health facilities and transport improvements which are unlikely to be justified by the scale of development. Equally, the capacity of key services is not thoroughly explored in the Option and the cumulative impact of development is not evidently explored. Therefore the plotland infills are not considered to be sustainable, suitable, locations for development.

Sustainable design and layout of streets and buildings should also be promoted to ensure reduction of greenhouse gases, water efficiency and promote alternative ways of transport.

Option C intends to develop first in the urban area and regenerate town centres; it is recognised that the urban land supply in the Borough is limited, therefore in order to accommodate a larger population and housing and economic growth, the release of areas in the Green Belt is necessary.

This shows sufficient effort to ensure an efficient use of land by maintaining higher densities, resisting the inclusion of environmentally sensitive sites, and ensuring the sites promoted are served by existing facilities.

The selection of sites identified to meet the housing and employment demands in the urban area and the Green Belt demonstrates an approach that promotes the least environmentally sensitive sites, and protects, conserves and enhances important habitats for biodiversity throughout the Borough. New Open Spaces will also be provided alongside new residential development, and this will be an opportunity to provide new habitat.

However whilst the areas proposed to be developed to accommodate growth are the least environmentally sensitive locations, some are nevertheless adjacent to sites locally recognised for their environmental assets and the impact on these has not been assessed.

Moreover, the high housing densities in this Option could potentially lead to an adverse impact on the local distinctiveness of the Borough, which is dominated by family housing at particular densities. Whilst important natural features and areas that have designated natural landscapes are protected, the scale of release could have a negative impact on the general diversity of the Borough's natural landscape, countryside and heritage by allocating the majority of least-sensitive land for release.

Sites selected were also considered against flood risk and only sites outside the flood zones were kept. However this option does take into consideration the risk of surface water flooding, and sustainable design solutions to protect people and property from the risks of flooding, such as SUDS should be incorporated to this option.

This Option seeks to improve the connectivity between town centres and urban extensions to reduce the need to travel and improve public transport to ensure an equitable access to goods, services and opportunities. Extensions in the Green Belt for housing and economic development, have also been chosen because of their connectivity with serviced settlements, whether they are adjacent or close to existing significant employment areas and where there is unlikely to be a need for substantial infrastructure improvements. These are shown to be considered the most sustainable and suitable locations, and due to their accessibility to services and facilities could help reduce the reliance on cars.

This Option promotes a high level of growth and the upgrade and improvement of transport infrastructure and the improvement of public transport, to improve access to services and facilities. While this may have an obvious increase in the overall levels of Greenhouse gases, there is sufficient consideration of measures to reduce the need to travel and promote sustainable patterns of development to suggest the Option endeavours to reduce emissions relative to the population. Moreover there is no certainty that transport infrastructure to accommodate this level of growth will be provided.

However, the plotlands do not provide suitable access to services and transport infrastructure and therefore the development proposed in these areas will be deficient or will require additional infrastructure such as schools, health facilities and transport improvements which are unlikely to be justified by the scale of development; this could also lead to an increase in the reliance of car for people to access key local services and facilities.

This Option supports the implementation and use of renewable energy sources and supports the integration of energy efficiency and waste recycling measures. However there are no specific requests for these measures to be implemented, therefore sustainable patterns of development that consider energy efficiency, the implementation and use of renewable energy technologies and encourage waste recycling should be encouraged.

The high level of growth will put additional strain on water consumption. Requests for the implementation of water efficiency measures into development schemes, should be incorporated in this Option.

Sustainable design and layout of streets and buildings should also be promoted to ensure reduction of greenhouse gases, and promote alternative ways of transport.

6.2.2 Economic Impacts

Option A supports Town Centre regeneration to improve access to and choice of retailing and services available in the main town centres. It promotes town centres as sustainable locations for dwellings, employment and leisure in the Borough.

This Option aims to concentrate employment within the existing employment areas, making use of the space available and allocates 5ha of new land. However this option places a limit on the overall level of new employment land to be provided in the Borough over the next 20 years. This may have an impact on the future economic growth of the Borough.

Option B encourages economic development, strengthens the Borough's economic resilience and allocates more employment land for long term business growth. It encourages the existing employment areas to remain the preferred locations for economic development, protected from loss to alternative uses.

This option supports Regional and Town Centre regeneration, an appropriate scale of development in local centres to support communities. It also provides for a range of homes in existing urban areas, including Regional and Town centres.

Option C aims to develop and maximise the Borough's economic growth potential and draw employers to the Borough.

It promotes the continued regeneration of Town Centres; the retention of existing local centres; the promotion of new local centres to serve urban extensions and business parks; the retention of existing regional and town centres as primary locations for retail and service development; it supports new retail facilities that provide additional services and/or choice to communities in order to promote sustainable living. To achieve long-term growth, the Option clearly prescribes a substantial increase in land allocated for employment growth in order to promote economic opportunities, improve competitiveness and enhance the Borough's regional economic position. Existing employment areas remain the preferred location for economic development, but new employment land in the urban area and release of land in the Green Belt are also required.

6.2.3 Social Impacts

Option A maximises the function of existing Centres, which are the most accessible locations in the Borough. By concentrating development in these locations, greater consumer choice can be encouraged, together with benefits for co-location of services and a more effective public transport network. However there has not been an assessment of potentially under-served locations to inform the development of this Option.

Through the PADCs, the Option addresses a number of locations that require investment, improvement and housing area renewal. These commitments are designed to improve the lives of people living in the Borough, improve the local environment, improve access to jobs and job prospects, improve housing stock and may provide initiatives for training / education.

This Option seeks to improve the PADCs and makes considerations for how these locations could function better. This should improve perceptions of the Borough, and have a positive effect in developing a sense of place, and increase residents' pride and satisfaction to live in the Borough, whilst encourage them to protect their neighbourhood in order to feel safe.

Infrastructure such as community buildings, sports facilities, education, and health facilities could play a role in creating and sustaining vibrant communities. However, it does not appear that discussions with stakeholders and providers of these facilities, took place, and with the knowledge that the low growth may limit the ability to support improvements to existing infrastructure (or provide new infrastructure) through planning obligations, the Option could not achieve this objective.

Option B provides for a range of homes in existing urban areas, including Regional and Town centres. The addition of homes within town centres is appropriate practice to provide more sustainable living conditions, where travel is less necessary and greater activity is encouraged, increasing demand and opportunity in town centres.

The Option provides a housing level and encourages variety to meet natural population growth and changing Borough demographics. It provides opportunities for many people to access a home they would want to live in, with supporting facilities.

This Option aims to provide the necessary infrastructure to support communities, health facilities, civic amenities, and creation of new open spaces.

The regeneration of particular parts of the Borough through the PADCs is an opportunity to improve access to health facilities and reduce health inequalities within the Borough, mainly through the improvement of housing stock and improvements to the public realm to encourage more active lifestyles, including walking and cycling. These methods of encouraging activity in the public realm and mixing communities should provide a good grounding for sustaining active, safe communities and avoiding problems often caused by mono-tenure estates or poor accessibility to goods and services.

The distribution of development under this Option attempts to ensure all new dwellings have the potential to access certain services. It encourages the development of local centres (at an appropriate scale) to support communities and protects existing retail facilities, with additional amenities and facilities where necessary. However, the potential access to services has not considered the capacity of those services to meet potential demand. The Option supports development in or at the edge of urban areas, which are generally better served in terms of services, facilities and public transport than other Green Belt locations (including Plotlands) or unserviced settlements.

This option aims to improve education attainment and reduce social exclusion, by proposing a scale and location of homes which allows for a reasonable expansion of dwellings to meet demand, and reduce the potential for overcrowding, which can reduce quality of life and impact on educational attainment, particularly for young people.

Through the PADCs, this Option proposes a number of locations that require investment, improvement and long standing housing area renewal. These commitments are designed to improve the lives of people living in the Borough, improve local environments, improve access to jobs and job prospects, improve housing stock and may provide initiatives for training / education.

Option C aims to support communities by providing equitable access to goods and services, amenities, a variety of housing type and employment opportunities. This includes providing for Town Centres to remain the focus for suitable activities and regeneration, and for them to be vital hubs of activity with local distinction.

These measures should increase the retail and services offer and also provide additional services and choices to communities in order to promote sustainable living, especially in the new urban extensions and business parks.

These methods of encouraging activity in the public realm and mixing communities should provide a good grounding for sustaining active, safe communities and avoiding problems often caused by mono-tenure estates or poor accessibility to goods and services.

This option seeks to meet some of the highest housing forecasts for the Borough through higher urban densities and strategic land releases. The level of housing proposed should be capable of providing the proportion of affordable homes required to meet housing needs.

The option promotes the creation of additional facilities and services, where required, to ensure a good quality of life in the urban extensions and ensure equitable access to goods and services. It also includes the upgrade and improvement of transport infrastructure and the improvement of public transport, which will improve access to services and facilities. However accessibility could be enhanced if more walking and cycling routes were implemented.

This Option aims to provide the necessary infrastructure to support communities, and meet the demands generated by the high levels of growth; this will include education, health facilities and civic amenities.

New education infrastructure can help to improve education attainment. This option promotes the retention of existing allocated open spaces and the creation of new ones, which may have a positive impact in encouraging healthier lifestyles. This option also aims to improve the connectivity between town centres and urban extensions to reduce the need to travel, thus encouraging walking and cycling.

Through the PADCs, the Option addresses a number of locations that require investment, improvement and long standing housing area renewal. These commitments are designed to improve the lives of people living in the Borough, improve social inclusion, education, as well as health and well being.

The choices for the distribution and location of new development are supported by reasonable endeavours to identify the most sustainable and suitable locations. However, discussions with stakeholders and providers will need to take place, to ensure that the distribution and scale of growth can be accommodated in a way that will not adversely affect education in the Borough, and ensure that health services and facilities are sufficient and have the capacity to positively impact on health inequalities.

The Plotlands do not provide access to the types and range of services generally sought. Development in these areas may require additional infrastructure such as schools, health facilities and transport improvements that are not currently present. There is no assessment of the potential needs arising from development in these locations.

When regenerating the urban area, street layouts and the design of buildings should be taken into account as they could promote walking and cycling which have established health benefits and they also provide convenient, safe, attractive environments that encourage more active lifestyles.

6.3 Conclusion

Option A's main purpose is to protect the Borough's environmental assets, especially the Green Belt. Its overall lower growth rate means it will have less impact on the natural environment of the Borough.

The three Options perform well economically, with Option B and C having a better impact on economic development.

Socially, Options B and C perform better than Option A, which could have negative impacts on housing, health and education.

Overall, Options B and C perform better than Option A which is the least sustainable option, particularly in relation to economic growth, although Option A performed well in relation to environmental issues due to the lower level of growth and complete protection of the Green Belt.

Whilst Option B and C offer similar measures, the high level of housing densities promoted in Option C could lead to more negative impacts on the conservation of existing natural features.

However the Sustainability Appraisal Guidance² published in 2005 by the then Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (now Department of Communities and Local Government) states that “it is not the role of the SA to determine the option(s) to be chosen as the basis for the preferred options and the draft plan. This is the role of those who have to decide which strategy is appropriate. The role of the SA is to assist with the identification of appropriate options, by highlighting the sustainability implications of each, and by putting forward recommendations for improvement.”

The Council therefore has selected Option A as its Preferred Option.

² Sustainability Appraisal of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Documents – OPDM - 2005

7 Testing the Core Policies and Primary Areas for Development and Change (PADC)

7.1 The Core Policies & PADC

The Core Policies that seek to achieve the Council's Spatial Vision, Strategic Objectives and support the Preferred Option A's delivery, are as follows:

CS1 – Conservation and the Natural Environment	CS8 – Affordable Housing
CS2 – Design and the Built Environment	CS9 – Provision for Gypsies and Travellers
CS3 – A More Valued Green Belt	CS10 – Provision for Travelling Showpeople
CS4 – Flood and Water Management	CS11 – Supporting Tourism Growth
CS5 – Adapting to a Changing Climate	CS12 – Providing Leisure Facilities
CS6 – Valued and Vibrant Town Centres	CS13 – Education, Health and Community Facilities
CS7 – Sustaining Economic Growth	CS14 – Integrated and Timely Infrastructure Provision

Primary Areas for Development and Change (PADC) are the Core Strategy's strategic allocation mechanism to distribute and manage development, land use change and environmental enhancement in the Borough to deliver the Spatial Vision and Strategic Objectives. They are listed below:

PADC1: Basildon Regional Town Centre	PADC8: Dunton & Southfields
PADC2: Laindon Town Centre	PADC9: Dunton East
PADC3: Pitsea Town Centre	PADC10: Nethermayne Cluster
PADC4: Wickford Town Centre	PADC11: Radford Way Employment Area
PADC5: Five Links, Laindon and PADC6: Craylands, Basildon	PADC12: Barleylands Outdoor Sports Hub
PADC7: A127 Enterprise Parks Corridor	PADC13: South Essex Marshes

7.2 Results of the Assessments of the Core Policies and PADC

The purpose of the SA assessments is to assess the compatibility of the Core Policies and PADC with the SA Objective.

Each policy and PADC was assessed individually and the detailed assessment matrices are available in Appendix 6.

7.3 Cumulative Effects Analysis

In addition to the appraisal of individual policies, the overall effects of the Plan (the Preferred Option and its policies) were considered, as required by the SEA Directive.

To assist in the consideration of the overall effects of policies, Table 5 which illustrates how each policy and PADC has performed against each SA Objective is provided below.

Table 5 – SA of Core Policies and PADC

SA Baseline Themes	Cultural heritage, landscape, biodiversity, flora and fauna		Economic Development		Population, health and social characteristics				Housing	Material Assets					Climatic factors			Air, Noise, Water, Soil and Geology		Transport
	1	2	3	4	4	5	7	8	6	9	10	11	12	18	13	16	17	14	15	19
SA Objective	Core Strategy Core Policies and PADC																			
CS1 – Conservation and the Natural Environment	✓	✓	□	□	□	□	□	✓	□	✓	□	✓	□	□	✓	✓	□	□	□	✓
CS2 – Design and the Built Environment	✓	□	□	□	□	□	✓	✓	□	✓	✓	✓	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	✓
CS3 – A More Valued Green Belt	✓	✓	□	□	□	□	✓	□	□	✓	□	✓	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
CS4 – Flood and Water Management	□	□	□	□	□	□	✓	□	□	✓	□	✓	□	□	✓	✓	□	✓	✓	□
CS5 – Adapting to a Changing Climate	✓	✓	□	□	□	□	✓	✓	✓	□	□	□	□	✓	□	□	□	✓	✓	✓
CS6 – Valued and Vibrant Town Centres	✓	□	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	□	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
CS7 – Sustaining Economic Growth	□	□	✓	✓	✓	✓	□	□	□	□	✓	✓	✓	□	□	□	□	✓	□	✓
CS8 – Affordable Housing	□	□	□	□	□	✓	□	□	✓	□	✓	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□
CS9 – Provision for Gypsies and Travellers	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□	□

Table 5 – SA of Core Policies and PADC

SA Baseline Themes	Cultural heritage, landscape, biodiversity, flora and fauna		Economic Development		Population, health and social characteristics				Housing	Material Assets					Climatic factors			Air, Noise, Water, Soil and Geology		Transport
	1	2	3	4	4	5	7	8	6	9	10	11	12	18	13	16	17	14	15	19
SA Objective																				
Core Strategy Core Policies and PADC																				
CS10 – Provision for Travelling Showpeople	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CS11 – Supporting Tourism Growth	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
CS12 – Providing Leisure Facilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
CS13 – Education, Health and Community Facilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
CS14 – Integrated and Timely Infrastructure Provision	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
PADC1: Basildon Regional Town Centre	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
PADC2: Laindon Town Centre	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
PADC3: Pitsea Town Centre	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Table 5 – SA of Core Policies and PADC

SA Baseline Themes	Cultural heritage, landscape, biodiversity, flora and fauna		Economic Development		Population, health and social characteristics				Housing	Material Assets					Climatic factors			Air, Noise, Water, Soil and Geology		Transport
	1	2	3	4	4	5	7	8	6	9	10	11	12	18	13	16	17	14	15	19
SA Objective																				
Core Strategy Core Policies and PADC																				
PADC4: Wickford Town Centre																				
PADC5: Five Links, Laindon and PADC6: Craylands, Basildon																				
PADC7: A127 Enterprise Parks Corridor																				
PADC8: Dunton & Southfields																				
PADC9: Dunton East																				
PADC10: Nethermayne Cluster																				
PADC11: Radford Way Employment Area																				
PADC12: Barleylands Outdoor Sports Hub																				

Table 5 – SA of Core Policies and PADC

SA Baseline Themes	Cultural heritage, landscape, biodiversity, flora and fauna		Economic Development		Population, health and social characteristics				Housing	Material Assets					Climatic factors			Air, Noise, Water, Soil and Geology		Transport
	1	2	3	4	4	5	7	8	6	9	10	11	12	18	13	16	17	14	15	19
SA Objective Core Strategy Core Policies and PADC																				
PADC13: South Essex Marshes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

To facilitate the comparison, the SA Objectives have been grouped under the Baseline themes, and the significant sustainability effects of the Plan are described in Table 6 below.

Table 6 – SA of Core Policies and PADC – Sustainability effects

Baseline Themes	Effects identified
<p>Cultural Heritage, Landscape, Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna (SA Objectives 1 &2)</p>	<p>The Plan has mixed effects on the SA Objectives of conservation of the cultural heritage and landscape and protection of the biodiversity and habitats that support it.</p> <p>The Plan incorporates policies (CS1 and CS 3) that strictly deal with the conservation and protection of the Borough’s environmental assets and the Green Belt.</p> <p>However, policies dealing with Design and Built Environment, Town Centre, Flood Risk, Education, Health and Community facilities, and Infrastructure give minimal or limited consideration to the impacts they may have on cultural heritage and environmental assets.</p> <p>The PADCs that relate to the regeneration of town centres are compatible with the SA Objectives, however clear measures should be integrated to ensure protection and conservation of the local distinctiveness and environmental assets</p> <p>PADC 13 and 14 are compatible with these SA Objectives; however the location of PADC 8, 9 and 10 made them incompatible. They should therefore incorporate considerations to protect and conserve landscape and environmental assets.</p> <p>A link to the policies CS1; CS2 and CS 3 should be made in the PADC to ensure considerations listed in these policies are taken into account when developing these locations.</p>
<p>Economic Development (SA Objectives 3 & 4)</p>	<p>The Plan has mixed effects on the SA Objectives that relate to Economic Development.</p> <p>Overall the policies are compatible with the objective of achieving sustainable levels of prosperity and economic growth. The Plan provides for Economic Development through policies dealing with Economic Growth, Town Centres, Tourism, Education, Health and Community Facilities and Infrastructure.</p> <p>The policies that deal with the built environment and the protection of the Green Belt are incompatible with the SA Objectives.</p> <p>In terms of promoting the Borough's town centres as sustainable locations, the policies will have an overall positive effect. Policies that deal with Town Centres, Economic Growth Tourism and Leisure are compatible with the SA Objective, while the policy dealing with Education, Health and Community Facilities and Infrastructure, will have a mixed impact. This is due to the fact that the policy does not take a sequential approach to provide community facilities in town and local centres.</p> <p>PADC relating to Basildon and Laindon Town Centres are both</p>

Table 6 – SA of Core Policies and PADC – Sustainability effects

Baseline Themes	Effects identified
	<p>compatible with both SA Objectives, whilst PADC relating to Barleylands is compatible with the SA Objective of achieving sustainable levels of growth and incompatible with the second one. However the PADCs that relate to the other town centres and the employment areas are either incompatible or could have mixed impacts on the SA Objectives. This seems to be due to the lack of diversification in the job offer, the lack of improvement measures and provision of community facilities, and absence of consideration for the Town Centre first approach.</p>
<p>Population, Health and Social Characteristics (SA Objectives 4; 5; 7; 8)</p>	<p>Overall the policies have a positive impact on the SA Objectives that deal with Population, Health and Social Characteristics.</p> <p>Through policy CS 13, the Plan provides for Education, Health and Community Facilities. However this policy does not perform well against the SA Objectives dealing with “Promoting Town Centres as sustainable locations” and “Improving educational attainment and social inclusion”. This is due to the fact that the policy does not take a sequential approach to providing community facilities in town and local centres; and that improvements or new facilities will only be provided when there is sufficient development to justify this.</p> <p>Policy CS 6 has a mixed impact on the SA Objective that deals with “Creating and sustaining vibrant communities”. This is due to the fact that the policy does not consider the potential of the regeneration to the Borough’s centres to be an opportunity to create and sustain vibrant communities.</p> <p>Overall the PADC have a mixed impact on the SA Objectives dealing with Population, Health and Social Characteristics. The PADCs all positively contribute positively in achieving SA Objective 8 (Creating and sustaining vibrant communities).</p> <p>As discussed in the Baseline theme above, the PADCs that relate to the Pitsea and Wickford town centres, the employment areas and Barleylands could have mixed impacts on SA Objective 4.</p> <p>Against SA Objective 5 (Improve educational attainment and social inclusion), PADC relating to Basildon, Pitsea Town Centres have a mixed impact whilst Wickford Town Centre is incompatible. This is due to the fact that these PADC do not provide for all education needs, or diversification in the job offer.</p> <p>PADC 9 (Dunton East) has a mixed impact on SA Objective 7 (Health and Well-being). Whilst this PADC is adjacent to an open space, it is very limited for opportunities to improve health. The PADC should link leisure and health facilities to this development and also include the promotion of green infrastructure to encourage people to walk and cycle.</p>
<p>Housing (SA Objective 6)</p>	<p>Overall the policies and PADC have a mixed impact on the SA Objective to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to live in decent and increase the provision of affordable homes.</p>

Table 6 – SA of Core Policies and PADC – Sustainability effects

Baseline Themes	Effects identified
	<p>Through Policy CS8 Affordable Housing, the Plan addresses positively the SA Objective.</p> <p>Policy CS5 deals with adapting to the effects of Climate Change, and whilst it does not provide for homes, has a positive impact on the SA Objective, as through its implementation, better standards of homes can be achieved.</p> <p>PADC 5 & 6 and PADC 10 also have a positive impact on the SA Objective. However whilst the measures in PADC 10 seek to provide housing, there is no indication as to their affordability. Both PADCs should be linked to CS8 – Affordable Housing policy.</p> <p>Policy CS 6 (Town Centres) and the PADC that deal with Town Centres (PADC 1; 2; 3; 4) and Dunton East (PADC 9) all have mixed impacts on the SA Objective, as whilst they provide housing, they do not provide for a mix of housing tenure, therefore it is not guaranteed that they provide housing for all, or affordable housing.</p> <p>Policies CS 9 and CS 10 which relate to the provision for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople, could have a negative impact on the SA Objective. They recommend a Local Needs Area Assessment to be completed and the provision required in this assessment would have to be taken into consideration for the policies to be compatible with the SA Objective.</p>
<p>Material Assets (SA Objectives 9; 10; 11; 12; 18)</p>	<p>Overall the policies and PADC have mixed impacts on the SA Objectives that deal with Material Assets.</p> <p>The Plan does not include a policy that provides for the regeneration and the renewal of disadvantaged areas. However most of the PADC are compatible with SA Objective 9.</p> <p>Most of the policies and PADC perform well against SA Objectives 9, 10 and 11.</p> <p>When the policies and PADC have either mixed impact or are incompatible with SA Objective 9, this is mainly due to the fact that they do not tackle deprived or disadvantaged areas or are not evidently based on an approach to improve or bring employment to disadvantaged areas.</p> <p>Against SA Objective 10 (Ensure all developments are delivered in sustainable locations), PADCs have either mixed impact or are incompatible with the SA Objective. This is either because they are not considered to be sustainable locations or because they do not promote sustainable design or sustainable patterns of development.</p> <p>When the policies have either a mixed impact or are incompatible with SA Objective 11, this is because the locations proposed for development do not all provide an easy access to services and facilities.</p>

Table 6 – SA of Core Policies and PADC – Sustainability effects

Baseline Themes	Effects identified
	<p>Against SA Objective 12 (Efficiency of land use), the Plan does not perform well.</p> <p>When Policies and PADC have mixed impact or are incompatible with the SA Objectives, this is because they do not give consideration to the regeneration and re-use of derelict buildings or to the use of PDL before green field.</p> <p>None of the PADCs link with SA Objective 18 (Reduce waste generation and increase the amount of waste which is recycled or re-used).</p> <p>Policies relating to the built environment, adapting to climate change, town centres and education, health and community facilities, either have a mixed impact or are incompatible with the SA Objective. This is because they do not consider waste generation and how development can contribute to waste generation. They also do not consider design that could integrate waste reduction measures.</p>
<p>Climatic factors (SA Objectives 13; 16; 17)</p>	<p>The Plan has mixed impact on the SA Objectives that deal with Climatic Factors.</p> <p>The Policies and PADC are mostly incompatible with SA Objective 13 (minimising the risk of flooding). This is because they do not take into consideration the impact that development will have on flooding (including surface water flooding), nor do they mention that effective design solutions (such as SUDS) could help mitigate against potential flood risk.</p> <p>The Policies either have mixed impact or are incompatible with SA Objective 16 (water efficiency and water consumption). The policies do not consider water efficiency, and the impact that development can have on the water efficiency nor do they consider water management and water consumption.</p> <p>The Policies either have mixed impact or are incompatible with SA Objective 17 (energy efficiency). They do not consider energy efficiency, nor do they reflect that design can improve energy efficiency of buildings and encourage the use of renewable energy.</p>
<p>Air, Noise, Water, Soil and Geology (SA Objectives 14 & 15)</p>	<p>The Policies and PADC either have mixed impact or are incompatible with SA Objective 14 (Reduce emissions of Greenhouse gases).</p> <p>This is because they do not take into consideration that further development may have an impact on climate change, and do not include caveats to adaption to climate change through good design. They also do not emphasise the need to provide infrastructure that enhances and encourages the use of alternative modes of transport, rather than the car.</p> <p>Against SA Objective 15 (reduce air, land, water and noise pollution), most of the policies have either a mixed impact or are incompatible with the SA Objective. This is because they do not recognise that the built environment can impact upon air, land, water and noise pollution, and that design solutions can help to reduce the impacts.</p>

Table 6 – SA of Core Policies and PADC – Sustainability effects

Baseline Themes	Effects identified
<p>Transport (SA Objective 19)</p>	<p>The Plan has mixed impacts on the SA Objective that deals with transport.</p> <p>Most of the policies and all PADC, with the exception of PADC 5&6, either have mixed impact or are incompatible with SA Objective 19.</p> <p>This is because they not consider the impacts on traffic congestion that some of the developments may have.</p> <p>Some locations proposed for development are not easily accessible and therefore developing in these areas will not reduce reliance on cars. Alternative ways of transport and use of green infrastructure to provide ways in and out developments should be encouraged.</p>

7.4 Recommendations for Mitigation and Enhancement

The assessment of the Plan and an analysis of the Topic Papers resulted in the development of a series of recommendations, whose purpose is to maximise beneficial effects and minimise adverse effect of any impacts.

Mitigations and improvements measures listed in Table 7 below are recommendations only. Some measures, whilst they might already be mentioned, will need more clarity or more emphasis added to them.

The Council will determine their implementation as part of the Core Strategy.

Mitigation measures can be incorporated at three stages of the development:

- During the preparation of the Core Strategy in order to design out or reduce adverse impacts and maximise beneficial impacts.
- During the construction process in order to minimise adverse impacts and/or maximise beneficial impacts arising.
- Following development in order to minimise impacts and/or maximise beneficial impacts arising during the post implementation phase.

Table 7 – Mitigation measures

Baseline Themes	Core Strategy Mitigation Measures
<p>Cultural Heritage, Landscape, Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Consider impacts of developments on the natural environment, the views, and the character of the areas. o Consider archaeology, cultural heritage, protection/enhancement of local distinctiveness, landscapes and topography. o Ensure all existing ecological networks and any additional habitats or biodiversity above the existing designations, have been identified, and are protected/enhanced. o Establish nature improvement areas and new green areas designation. o Ensure that biodiversity and landscape assets are accessible.
<p>Economic Development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Diversify Basildon’s economic base and ensure it develops as a centre of investment for new technologies (e.g. green technologies).

Table 7 – Mitigation measures

Baseline Themes	Core Strategy Mitigation Measures
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Recognise and enhance the interdependent economic systems that exist between Basildon, the surrounding market towns and the rural hinterlands. ○ Undertake an up-to-date Employment Review. ○ Ensure retail locations remain competitive and attractive, with access to convenience and comparison goods throughout the Borough.
<p>Population, Health and Social Characteristic</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Improve employment prospects, education and skills of local people through the provision of better schools. ○ Ensure provision of accommodation for all (younger households, ageing population). ○ Provide for hostels, domestic violence refuges, and care settings. ○ Promote healthier lifestyles, offer better standard of living, and create safer communities. ○ Ensure the socially disadvantaged areas are targeted and ensure the regeneration of all deprived areas. ○ Ensure developments support existing communities and contribute to the creation of safe, sustainable, liveable and mixed communities with good access to jobs and key services for all. ○ Tackle homelessness. ○ Ensure partnership working and community involvement to help deal with poverty, inequality and social exclusion. ○ Improve the built environment and infrastructure of the areas to be improved where they affect community cohesion. ○ Encourage cultural industries. ○ Develop wider range of formal and informal cultural learning opportunities. ○ Identify a cultural identity for the Borough and improve civic pride.
<p>Housing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Provide for current and future housing need. ○ Make the best use of existing housing stock. ○ Ensure mix of housing tenure, size and type. ○ Define housing densities. ○ Provide for affordable housing and define a target.
<p>Material Assets</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ensure that design is taken into consideration and provides for building of appropriate scale, size and mix and better designed streets. ○ Ensure measures for the reduction of waste generation and the increase of waste recycling are implemented. ○ Ensure that commercial buildings are designed in conformity with environmental protection standards. ○ Implement Code for Sustainable Homes to ensure the design of buildings and layout of developments help moderate the effects of Climate Change. ○ Improve energy efficiency of buildings and encourage the use of renewable energy.

Table 7 – Mitigation measures

Baseline Themes	Core Strategy Mitigation Measures
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Consider regeneration or renovation of derelict buildings. ○ Ensure the re-use of previously developed land, before green fields. ○ Ensure green infrastructure and open spaces are provided with development.
Climatic factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ensure that flood risk (including surface water flooding) is considered and ensure that the risk of flooding is not increased elsewhere in order to accommodate development. ○ Consider the impact that development will have on flood risk. ○ Implement actions listed in the South Essex and North Essex Catchment Flood Management to store water and manage flood risk, sustain, and reduce flood risk. ○ Implement targets to source energy from renewable sources by 2020. ○ Implement targets for reduction of carbon emission by 2050. ○ Set requirements to improve energy efficiency and energy security. ○ Support the transition to a low carbon economy in a changing climate. ○ Work with household, businesses, and energy firms in the implementation of the Green Deal Scheme. ○ Identify opportunities for decentralised low carbon and renewable energy production within the area.
Air, Noise, Water, Soil and Geology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Minimise the impacts of development on geodiversity. ○ Ensure consideration is given to the Borough's agricultural diversity. ○ Consider Marine Protected Areas and Marine Conservation Zones (such as Crouch and Roach Estuaries and Vange and Pitsea Creek). ○ Apply a sequential approach when considering developing on agricultural land: grade 3b, 4 and 5 used in preference of a higher quality for development.
Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Address concerns for: growing congestion; over parking; public perception of safety and security of transport. ○ Encourage use of alternative mode of transport such as walking, cycling, and buses. ○ Provide appropriate street design and development layouts to encourage walking, cycling and use of public transport.

8 Monitoring

Monitoring is an important part of SA; it ensures that the process is ongoing and does not end once the DPD has been adopted.

Monitoring will enable Basildon Borough Council to determine whether the implementation of the Core Strategy is working towards the achievement of the SA Objectives.

To this end, the Council compiled the LDF Contextual Baseline, which set out baseline information to inform the LDF, the Sustainability Appraisal and provide a context for the Annual Monitoring Report.

The Contextual Baseline Report also identified a set of indicators and targets that can be used for monitoring purpose. They were determined using the SA Objectives, the key issues identified and the review of plans and programmes.

The Contextual Baseline Report is available on the Council's website: www.basildon.gov.uk/ldf

9 Next Steps

The Core Strategy will be consulted on for a period of 6 weeks. Basildon Borough Council will then consider the responses to the public participation and produce their final Core Strategy.

This SA report, alongside consultation responses received, will be used to inform the preparation of the Core Strategy Submission Document. Any significant changes made to the document will be subject to further SA, and a Revised SA Report will be published alongside the Core Strategy Submission Document.

Appendices (available separately)

Appendix 1– Statement of Compliance with the SEA Directive and Regulations

Appendix 2 – Scoping Report Consultation – Consultees List

Appendix 3 – Plans, Programmes and Policies Review

Appendix 4 – Sustainability Appraisal Matrices of the Strategic Objectives

Appendix 5 – Sustainability Appraisal Matrices of the Spatial Growth Options

Appendix 6 – Sustainability Appraisal Matrices of the Core Policies

