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Basildon Borough Local Plan

Non-Technical Summary

Sustainability Appraisal including Strategic Environmental Assessment

Sustainability Appraisal / Environmental Report
Prepared by LUC
October 2018

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Introduction

- 1.1 This Sustainability Appraisal Report Non Technical Summary has been prepared by LUC, on behalf of Basildon Borough Council (the Council) as part of the integrated Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of the Basildon Borough Local Plan.
- 1.2 This Non Technical Summary relates to the SA of the Basildon Borough Publication Local Plan (November 2018), containing Strategic and Spatial Policies, Site Allocations and Development Management Policies. It should be read in conjunction with the Basildon Borough Publication Local Plan.

Basildon Borough

- 1.3 Basildon Borough is located in South Essex, 30 miles east of the City of London. It covers an area of 87km² and has a population of approximately 176,000. The main settlement is Basildon, a Mark 1 New Town designated in 1948 and built in a number of phases over 50 years. Basildon has the largest population in the Borough with approximately 103,600 residents. Two smaller independent towns are situated to the north of the Borough, Billericay and Wickford. Billericay has a population of approximately 34,040 and Wickford approximately 29,600. The urban areas are enveloped by rural countryside containing three serviced villages and fifteen smaller plotland settlements set within Green Belt characterised by a mosaic of scrub, grassland and relict woodland habitats with small-scale communities of a rural nature. Basildon Borough is well connected to the regional and national rail and road network.

Basildon Borough Local Plan

- 1.4 Basildon Borough Council, as the Local Planning Authority, is preparing a Local Plan in accordance with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, 2004, and the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012¹.
- 1.5 The Local Plan is a Borough wide plan to coordinate the development and growth requirements of the Borough for the period 2014 to 2034.
- 1.6 The Local Plan includes the following types of policies:
 - **Strategic Policies:** These set out the framework for joint working, managing development and supporting service provision, provide a borough-wide approach for guiding development to designated parts of the Borough, along with mechanisms for delivering infrastructure and protecting and enhancing the built and natural environment.
 - **Allocation Policies:** These identify specific locations where development and change will occur. Criteria developed for each allocation set out the types of development which may occur, along with any mitigation and infrastructure provision necessary to support the development.
 - **Development Management Policies:** These are intended to be applied throughout the development management process, setting out how the development will be managed to ensure it contributes towards the vision and objectives.
- 1.7 Supplementary Planning Documents and Neighbourhood Plans may also be prepared to further support the policies within the Local Plan.
- 1.8 The Publication Local Plan identifies the need for roughly 19,500 homes to be delivered within the Borough over the plan period from 2014 to 2034. Land provision for at least 17,791 homes has been identified within the Local Plan. However, it is expected that only around 15,465 could be delivered within the plan period. Consequently, in addition to this, Policy SD2 identifies two broad

¹ Statutory Instrument 2012 No. 767

locations for potential housing growth which will be considered in the next review of the Local Plan once a sustainable development proposal has been identified that incorporates, and is supported by, the necessary infrastructure provision. The two broad locations are located in the area to the south of Crays Hill, Billericay and in the area to the south of Wickford. Furthermore, Policy SD3 allocates minimum housing targets for two neighbourhood plan areas within the Borough: 1,350 within the Bowers Gifford and North Benfleet Neighbourhood Plan Area and 39 homes within the Ramsden Bellhouse Neighbourhood Plan Area. The Publication Local Plan provides for a net increase of 20,000 jobs over the plan period, which equates to a minimum of 42ha of additional employment land (37ha for the Borough's needs and 5ha to accommodate unmet need from London). The Publication Local Plan allocates a series of sites for development to meet the identified housing and economic needs, focused primarily on Basildon, but also with some sites allocated at Billericay and Wickford.

- 1.9 The Draft Local Plan underwent public consultation (known as Regulation 18 consultation) in January 2016. The Publication Local Plan is now being consulted upon (known as Regulation 19 consultation) and will subsequently be submitted to an independent inspector for examination (known as Regulation 22). The Local Plan has been accompanied by an SA and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Report at both Regulation 18 and 19 stages, and will be so at the Regulation 22 stage.
- 1.10 The Publication Local Plan and this SA Report will be made available for public consultation from November 2018.

Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 1.11 An SA is a systematic process that must be carried out during the preparation of a Local Plan. Its role is to promote sustainable development by assessing the extent to which the emerging plan, when judged against reasonable alternatives, will help to achieve relevant environmental, economic and social objectives.
- 1.12 This process is an opportunity to consider ways by which the Local Plan can contribute to improvements in environmental, social and economic conditions, as well as a means of identifying and mitigating any potential adverse effects that the plan might otherwise have. By doing so, it can help make sure that the proposals in the plan are the most appropriate given the reasonable alternatives. It can be used to test the evidence underpinning the plan and help to demonstrate how the tests of soundness have been met. SA should be applied as an iterative process informing the development of the Local Plan.
- 1.13 Under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, SA is mandatory for Local Plans. For these documents it is also necessary to conduct an environmental assessment in accordance with the requirements of the SEA Directive (European Directive 2001/42/EC), and the SEA Regulations which transpose the SEA Directive into English law. Therefore, it is a legal requirement for the Local Plan to be subject to SA and SEA.
- 1.14 The requirements to carry out SA and SEA are distinct, although it is possible to satisfy both using a single appraisal process.

Methodology

- 1.15 In addition to complying with legal requirements, the approach taken to the SA of the Basildon Borough Local Plan is based on current best practice and the guidance on SA/SEA set out in the National Planning Practice Guidance, which involves carrying out SA as an integral part of the plan-making process.
- 1.16 The SA process comprises a number of stages, as shown in **Table 1** below.

Table 1: Corresponding stages in plan making and SA

Local Plan Step 1: Pre-production - Evidence Gathering
SA stages and tasks
<p>Stage A: Setting the context and objectives, establishing the baseline and deciding on the scope</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A1: Identifying other relevant policies, plans and programmes, and sustainability objectives • A2: Collecting baseline information • A3: Identifying sustainability issues and problems • A4: Developing the SA Framework • A5: Consulting on the scope of the SA
Local Plan Step 2: Production
SA stages and tasks
<p>Stage B: Developing and refining options and assessing effects</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • B1: Testing the Plan objectives against the SA Framework • B2: Developing the Plan options • B3: Predicting the effects of the Plan • B4: Evaluating the effects of the Plan • B5: Considering ways of mitigating adverse effects and maximising beneficial effects • B6: Proposing measures to monitor the significant effects of implementing the Plans
<p>Stage C: Preparing the Sustainability Appraisal Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • C1: Preparing the SA Report
<p>Stage D: Consulting on the Draft Plan and the Sustainability Appraisal Report</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • D1: Public participation on draft Plan and the SA Report • D2(i): Appraising significant changes
Local Plan Step 3: Examination
SA stages and tasks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • D2(ii): Appraising significant changes resulting from representations
Local Plan Step 4 & 5: Adoption and Monitoring
SA stages and tasks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • D3: Making decisions and providing information
<p>Stage E: Monitoring the significant effects of implementing the Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E1: Finalising aims and methods for monitoring • E2: Responding to adverse effects

1.17 How these stages have been met during the preparation of the Basildon Borough Local Plan is also described below.

Stage A: Scoping (SA Framework)

- 1.18 The scoping stage of the SA includes compiling and understanding the social, economic and environmental baseline for the plan area as well as the sustainability policy context and key sustainability issues, and to keep these up-to-date throughout the plan preparation and SA process.
- 1.19 A Scoping Report was originally prepared by Basildon Borough Council and published for consultation in 2007. This was further updated and adopted in 2011. These scoping documents were prepared in house by Basildon Borough Council.
- 1.20 In light of key plan and policy changes (for example, publication of the National Planning Policy Framework and revocation of the East of England Regional Spatial Strategy) and baseline data updates (e.g. release of 2011 Census data), a further update was made to the Scoping Report in July 2013. The 2013 Scoping Report² was prepared by LUC on behalf of Basildon Borough Council, drawing on the scoping material which was previously prepared and consulted upon, and provided detail on the scope of the SA/SEA of the Core Strategy Revised Preferred Options Report.
- 1.21 The plan, policy and programme review and baseline information has been updated as necessary at different stages during the SA, and the most up to date versions are now included in **Chapter 3** and **Appendix 1** of the full SA Report.
- 1.22 **Table 2** shows the 19 SA objectives in the SA Framework along with their associated questions.

Table 2: SA Framework for the Basildon Borough Local Plan

SA Objective
1. Conserving and enhancing the diverse natural and urban landscape, countryside and green spaces of Basildon Borough.
2. Protecting and enhancing the cultural heritage and local distinctiveness of Basildon Borough.
3. Protect, conserve and enhance the Borough's biodiversity and the habitats which support it.
4. Achieve sustainable levels of prosperity and economic growth to stimulate economic regeneration.
5. Ensure the Borough's Town Centres are promoted as sustainable locations for living, retail, leisure and related commercial development.
6. Improve educational attainment and social inclusion, especially in the most deprived areas of the Borough.
7. Ensure that everyone has the opportunity to live in a decent home and increase affordable provision to help those in most need locally.
8. Improve the health and wellbeing of the Borough's residents and reduce inequalities in health related to development and the environment.
9. Create and sustain vibrant communities that are safe and feel safe to those who live in or visit them and where crime is reduced.
10. Regenerate and renew disadvantaged areas where people live or work in the Borough.
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.

² For 2013 Scoping Report (LUC) see link: <http://www.basildon.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=5222&p=0>

SA Objective

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 the local contribution to climate change, by reducing emissions of greenhouse gases, improving energy efficiency of buildings and increase the use of renewable energy sources for local energy needs to reduce the reliance on fossil fuels.
15. Reduce air, land 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. Encourage adopting building and public realm designs which ensure the Borough is better prepared for the impacts of climate change.
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.

SA Stage B: Developing and refining options and assessing effects

- 1.23 The options or reasonable alternatives considered during development of the Basildon Borough Local Plan included the overall spatial strategy for the Borough, potential areas for new housing and employment development within and as urban extensions to Basildon, Billericay and Wickford, and alternative policy approaches for proposed policies. There have been a number of stages in developing and refining the plan options as listed below:
- Core Strategy Issues Paper (Autumn 2007) (Regulation 18 consultation).
 - Core Strategy Preferred Options Consultation (February 2012) (Regulation 18 consultation).
 - Core Strategy Revised Preferred Options Report (December 2013) (Regulation 18 Consultation).
 - Basildon Borough Draft Local Plan (January 2016) (Regulation 18 consultation).
 - Basildon Borough Publication Local Plan (November 2018) (Regulation 19 consultation) (the focus of this current consultation).

SA Stage C: Preparing the Sustainability Appraisal report

- 1.24 This SA Report describes the process undertaken to date in carrying out the SA of the Basildon Borough Local Plan. It sets out the findings of the appraisal, highlighting any likely significant effects, making recommendations for improvements and clarifications that may help to mitigate negative effects and maximise the benefits of the plan, and outlining proposed monitoring measures.
- 1.25 Each policy option and their reasonable alternatives have been assessed against each SA objective, and a judgement made with regards to the likely effects that the option would have on that objective. These judgements were recorded as a colour coded symbol, as shown below in **Figure 1**. The sustainability effects of the Publication Local Plan are summarised below and presented in detailed matrices in Appendix 5 of the full report, along with a justification of the judgements made.

Figure 1: Key to symbols and colour coding used in the SA of the Basildon Borough Local Plan

++	The policy is likely to have a significant positive impact on the SA objective(s).
+	The policy is likely to have a positive impact on the SA objective(s).
0	The policy is likely to have a negligible or no impact on the SA objective(s).
-	The policy is likely to have a negative impact on the SA objective(s).
--	The policy is likely to have a significant negative impact on the SA objective(s).
?	It is uncertain what effect the policy will have on the SA objective(s), due to a lack of data.
+/-	The policy is likely to have a mixture of positive and negative impacts on the SA objective(s).

- 1.26 The SA assumptions set out to assist with the appraisal of the site allocation policies and ensure objectivity and consistency in the judgments of effects were initially developed during the appraisal of the Broad Locations for development when the Council intended to adopt a Core Strategy. The most recent assumptions used in the SA of the Local Plan are presented in Appendix 3 of the full SA Report.

SA Stage D: Consultation on the Basildon Borough Local Plan and this SA Report

- 1.27 Public and stakeholder participation is an important element of the SA and wider plan-making processes. A summary of the consultation responses on the SA at all stages of the SA process received is provided in Appendix 2 of the full SA Report.
- 1.28 Subject to approval by the Council, representations will be invited on the Publication Local Plan and this SA Report as part of the formal consultation stage under Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

SA Stage E: Monitoring implementation of the Local Plan

- 1.29 This SA Report sets out recommendations for monitoring the sustainability effects of the Publication Local Plan once adopted. The monitoring proposals are considered within the context of the broader monitoring framework for the Basildon Borough Local Plan and the data collection for Basildon Borough Council's Annual Monitoring Report.

Sustainability context for development in Basildon

Review of plans, policies and programmes

- 1.30 The Local Plan is a Borough wide plan aiming to coordinate the development and growth requirements of the Borough for the period 2014 to 2034. The vision and objectives for future development and change within Basildon Borough are accompanied by an initial suite of policies that set out the strategic approach to growth and distribution of development across the Borough in order to achieve a sustainable development.
- 1.31 The Local Plan must be consistent with national planning policy, specifically the National Planning Policy Framework and National Planning Practice Guidance. The Local Plan must also take account of sub-regional, county and local plans of relevance.
- 1.32 The National Planning Policy Framework requires local planning authorities to set out the strategic policies for the overall strategy for the pattern, scale and quality of development, and make sufficient provision for:
- housing (including affordable housing), employment, retail, leisure and other commercial development;

- infrastructure for transport, telecommunications, security, waste management, water supply, wastewater, flood risk and coastal change management, and the provision of minerals and energy (including heat);
- community facilities (such as health, education and cultural infrastructure); and
- conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, including landscapes and green infrastructure, and planning measures to address climate change mitigation and adaptation.

1.33 A detailed review of the relevant International, National, Sub-regional and Local Plans, policies and programmes can be seen in Appendix 1 of the full SA Report.

Baseline information

1.34 Baseline information provides the basis for predicting and monitoring the likely sustainability effects of a plan and helps to identify key sustainability issues and means of dealing with them. The review of baseline information covered the following topics:

- Climatic factors, including climate change, energy use and carbon emissions, and flood risk.
- Population, health and social characteristics.
- Housing.
- Economic development.
- Cultural heritage and landscape.
- Biodiversity, flora and fauna.
- Air and noise.
- Water.
- Soils and geology.
- Material assets, comprising services and facilities, infrastructure and open spaces.
- Transport.

Key sustainability issues

1.35 From the review of baseline information a series of key sustainability issues for Basildon were identified and a description provided of how these issues are likely to evolve without the Local Plan. The issues are listed in **Table 3**.

Table 3: Key sustainability issues facing Basildon Borough

Baseline Sustainability Issue	Likely Evolution of the issue without the Plan
<p>1. Recognising the likely impacts of climate change on the Borough's built and natural environment – ensuring that adaptation, design and siting and other mitigation measures can enhance energy efficiency, internal comfort, and lower carbon footprints.</p>	<p>In the absence of an up to date Local Policy Framework it will be difficult to command higher standards of building design. It will also be difficult to take a strategic approach to the siting of development ensuring that locations less vulnerable to the future effects of climate change can be chosen.</p> <p>However, emissions from new development are likely to be progressively reduced due to initiatives such as the Code for Sustainable Homes.</p> <p>The National Planning Policy Framework requires local authorities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and actively support energy efficiency improvements without the implementation of relevant DPDs.</p>
<p>2. Ensuring that all new homes built in the Borough are zero carbon and adopt building designs that can adapt to a changing climate.</p>	<p>Carbon reduction is a national concern driven by national targets that are influencing the industry, for example zero carbon standards for new homes by 2016. The Local Plan has some role to play in increasing the rate of local mitigation and adaptation in the context of regional and national improvements.</p>
<p>3. Reducing the reliance on non-renewable energy sources to meet the Borough's energy demands (mainly electricity), including using on-site renewables and improving efficiency.</p>	<p>National renewable energy and carbon reduction targets and the National Planning Policy Framework require local authorities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and actively support energy efficiency and renewable energy.</p> <p>The Local Plan and subsequent LPDs can contribute to improved energy efficiency and increased take up of renewable energy through policies which require higher sustainability standards (e.g. for larger allocations) where there is a demonstrated local need and provide a positive policy approach to the consideration renewable energy applications.</p> <p>Emissions from new development are likely to be progressively reduced due to initiatives such as the Code for Sustainable Homes and the national target of achieving zero carbon homes by 2016.</p>
<p>4. Being able to manage and mitigate against all sources of flooding (fluvial, tidal, ground and surface water) and their different effects across the Borough.</p>	<p>Without the benefits of local spatial strategy it will be more difficult to manage the effects of developments on flood risk, although all developments would need to take account of National policy on flood risk.</p> <p>The National Planning Policy Framework would still apply without the implementation of the DPDs and states that “inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk, but where development is necessary, making it safe without increasing flood risk elsewhere” (paragraph 155).</p>

Baseline Sustainability Issue	Likely Evolution of the issue without the Plan
	The severity and likelihood of flooding is likely to increase with current trends of climate change.
5. Concern over the long-term ability of all of man-made flood storage areas (washlands) to manage urban drainage and contain storm water across the drainage basin, particularly if some are affected by poor maintenance standards or the poor condition of related infrastructure.	<p>Without an up to date local policy framework, it will be more difficult to take a strategic approach to siting development in areas of lower flood risk. . This may mean more development occurring in unsuitable locations, placing greater pressure on existing defences.</p> <p>The National Planning Policy Framework would still apply without the implementation of the DPDs and states that “inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk, but where development is necessary, making it safe without increasing flood risk elsewhere” (paragraph 155).</p> <p>The severity and likelihood of flooding is likely to increase with current trends of climate change.</p>
6. Increasing demands placed on outdoor recreation and wildlife areas due to warmer and drier weather patterns.	<p>With population of the Borough increasing, pressure on recreation and wildlife areas is likely to be exacerbated. Without an up to date Local Plan, there is less opportunity to adopt a co-ordinated, spatial approach to the development of open green spaces/green networks for recreation, walking and cycling networks, and wildlife.</p> <p>Strategic developments allocated through the Local Plan will provide capacity for new residential and employment developments without compromising the local integrity of the Borough’s environmental assets.</p>
7. Recognition that changes to the climate will bring new challenges to recreation and wildlife areas in the Borough due to extended growing seasons and increased vulnerability of some native species and the migration of new species (including the potential for alien introductions).	The severity and likelihood of adverse impacts on local ecosystems is likely to increase with current trends of climate change. Without an up to date Local Plan, there is less opportunity to adopt a co-ordinated, spatial approach to managing the effects of this change through careful site allocations and targeted wildlife conservation and enhancement initiatives.
8. Adverse environmental and health impacts associated with increases in air, soil and water pollution from human activities, made worse by increasing temperatures and less rainfall.	Climate change and a rising local population are in combination, at certain times of the year, likely to increase the sources, pathways and receptors of harmful pollutants independently of any local plan. However, without a planned approach to development through the Local Plan, there is less opportunity to adopt a co-ordinated, spatial approach that would manage and reduce the risk of further health impacts.
9. The Borough’s varied urban, rural	The severity and likelihood of adverse impacts on local ecosystems and landscapes is likely to

Baseline Sustainability Issue	Likely Evolution of the issue without the Plan
<p>and natural landscapes are vulnerable to adverse effects from urban expansion, increasing recreational pressures, seasonal climate change as well as agricultural and land management practices.</p>	<p>increase with current trends of climate change and the rising population of the Borough. These impacts are at risk of being exacerbated without a planned approach to development. Without the Local Plan, there is less opportunity to adopt a co-ordinated, spatial approach to the development of open green spaces/green networks for recreation, walking and cycling networks, and wildlife.</p> <p>Strategic developments allocated through the Local Plan will provide capacity for new residential and employment developments without compromising the local integrity of the Borough's environmental assets, including the Borough's most sensitive landscapes.</p>
<p>10. An adequate housing supply, incorporating a mix of housing types will be required to meet the growing population.</p>	<p>Housing shortfall likely to continue without a positive and proactive approach to delivery of local housing through an up to date Local Plan for the Borough. A coordinated spatial strategy to housing allocation is essential.</p>
<p>11. There may be changes in the demand for, as well as the operational impacts on key services, such as housing, health, education and social care. This is affected further by the changing demographic profile of the Borough's residents.</p>	<p>Likely to continue without appropriate policy responses. For example, responding to the needs of an ageing population may be less co-ordinated in the absence of the Plan. However, all new housing developments would need to meet the requirements of Lifetime Homes.</p>
<p>12. There are significant local health issues concerning teenage pregnancies, levels of physical activity, and early deaths through cancer.</p>	<p>Likely to continue without appropriate policy responses at the national and local level. Consideration of healthy lifestyles (including responding to issues such as obesity) will occur at the National level. Local level initiatives e.g. family planning and public health strategies will seek to respond to Basildon-specific issues. An up to date Local Plan for the Borough can contribute to some of the wider determinants of health e.g. improvements to poor quality housing, access to suitable green spaces and the balance of use types in town centres (for example, minimising the likelihood of overconcentration of any one use type).</p>
<p>13. Tackling deprivation and achieving social inclusion will be challenging in parts of the Borough, given the disparities in how well some parts of the Borough perform over others.</p>	<p>The spatial distribution of deprivation and social exclusion in the Borough is likely to continue without an appropriate local policy response, linked to socio-economic regeneration, locating employment in areas of high deprivation, providing community services and facilities including education facilities. The issue of social exclusion in relation to Gypsies and Travellers specifically should also be addressed through specific Gypsy and Traveller site allocations.</p>
<p>14. There are poor levels of GCSE</p>	<p>The spatial distribution of deprivation and social exclusion in the Borough is likely to continue</p>

Baseline Sustainability Issue	Likely Evolution of the issue without the Plan
educational achievement, especially in schools in Basildon, which can affect entry into further education, skill levels and economic potential.	without an appropriate local policy response, linked to socio-economic regeneration, locating employment in areas of high deprivation, providing community services and facilities including education facilities.
15. Comparably fewer qualifications/ training gained at 'A' Level or higher in the Borough than the region or country. If this continues it could have a negative impact on the economic competitiveness of the Borough and may lead to more jobs going to people from outside the Borough and affect local people's long-term employability.	The spatial distribution of deprivation and social exclusion in the Borough is likely to continue without an appropriate local policy response, linked to socio-economic regeneration, locating employment in areas of high deprivation, providing community services and facilities including education facilities.
16. There are high local levels of working age benefit claimants.	The spatial distribution of deprivation and social exclusion in the Borough is likely to continue without an appropriate local policy response, linked to socio-economic regeneration, locating employment in areas of high deprivation, providing community services and facilities including education facilities.
17. There are income inequalities between local men and women, which could present difficulties to improving quality of life and reducing poverty particularly for single parents.	The spatial distribution of deprivation and social exclusion in the Borough is likely to continue without an appropriate local policy response, linked to increasing affordable housing, socio-economic regeneration, locating employment in areas of high deprivation, providing community services and facilities including education facilities. Gender inequality is more difficult to respond to at a local level. There are, however, national initiatives which seek to redress the balance.
18. Theft from and of vehicles is relatively high in the Borough, which affects general perceptions of the Borough, with regards to safety and crime.	The National Planning Policy Framework requires good design that creates "safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion" (paragraph 91). However, the spatial distribution of deprivation and social exclusion in the Borough is likely to continue without an appropriate local policy response, linked to socio-economic regeneration, locating employment in areas of high deprivation, providing community services and facilities including education facilities. This is should have indirect, positive effects on actual crime and fear of crime.
19. The safety of motorists and other	Local patterns and spatial distributions of road accidents, linked to age and social deprivation,

Baseline Sustainability Issue	Likely Evolution of the issue without the Plan
road users must improve.	require a coordinated local policy response linked to socio-economic regeneration and providing relevant community services and facilities including education facilities. National initiatives aimed at improving road safety for all road users are likely to continue.
20. There is a high level of child poverty in the Borough which can lead to poor health outcomes	Child poverty in the Borough is likely to continue without an appropriate local policy response, linked to socio-economic regeneration and interventions to reach children and families in need of help.
21. Providing a mix of housing types and sizes for the differing demands of the local population, particularly in Vange and Lee Chapel North.	Likely to continue without appropriate local policy responses. For example, responding to the needs of an ageing population may be less co-ordinated in the absence of the Plan. However, all new housing developments would need to meet the requirements of Lifetime Homes.
22. The delivery rate of affordable housing is low, compared to relatively high levels of local need.	Affordable housing shortfall is likely to continue without a positive and proactive approach to local housing through the Local Plan, which includes assessing the capacity and feasibility of regenerating existing brownfield land. A coordinated spatial strategy for housing allocation is essential ensuring there are sufficient sites to meet demand and respond to historically low rates of construction.
23. Estate renewal programmes in the Borough may result in increases to the number of affordable houses being granted permission in the Borough, but they also result in temporary losses, whilst replacement dwellings are being built.	Very much a local issue that requires a carefully planned local policy response alongside on-going monitoring and management.
24. The construction rate of New Dwellings is lower than the annual average rate required to meet minimum targets by 2021. The net increase in new dwellings has been historically low, partially attributed to mass demolition as part of three major estate renewal programmes that has occurred in the last 10 years.	A continued under delivery of new homes likely to continue without a positive and proactive approach to local housing through the Local Plan. A coordinated spatial strategy for housing allocation is essential ensuring there are sufficient sites to meet demand and respond to historically low rates of construction.

Baseline Sustainability Issue	Likely Evolution of the issue without the Plan
<p>25. Potential residential capacity from brownfield sites (e.g. town centres) could take longer to realise, particularly if there are site assembly issues, the sites affect significant biodiversity or cultural heritage interests, require existing uses to be relocated, or need to be decontaminated before new units can be built.</p>	<p>Housing shortfall likely to continue without a positive and proactive approach to local housing through the Local Plan, which includes assessing the capacity and feasibility of regenerating existing brownfield land. A coordinated local spatial strategy to housing allocation will help select those sites which are both suitable (e.g. with fewer environmental constraints) and deliverable.</p>
<p>26. The increase in house prices is not reflected in increasing wage levels in the Borough.</p>	<p>Likely to continue at the regional and national scale. Can be somewhat mitigated by a positive and proactive approach to local housing through the Local Plan, for example, through delivery of a range of dwelling types and tenures to meet need. A coordinated local spatial strategy to housing allocation is essential.</p>
<p>27. The number of unauthorised pitches for Gypsies and Travellers in the Borough is the greatest in Essex.</p>	<p>Without the adoption of local Gypsy and Traveller site allocations through local development planning, there will be less certainty relating to the delivery of authorised pitches. Without the adoption of the Plan, the trend is therefore likely to continue.</p>
<p>28. Homelessness in Basildon is higher than the Essex average, with a large number of homeless households in temporary accommodation awaiting a settled home.</p>	<p>Number of homeless households likely to continue increasing without a positive and proactive approach to delivery of local housing through an up to date Local Plan for the Borough.</p>
<p>29. Local economy is not diverse and relies upon large multi-national companies.</p>	<p>Employment trends likely to continue in current economic climate without significant local intervention. In urban areas, local planning interventions can help improve access to a range of employment and increase delivery of affordable housing, which in turn can increase the available workforce which may encourage new employers to locate in Basildon Borough. A local plan response can also identify areas in need of regeneration and put forward a renewal programme to achieve this. This in turn may encourage new businesses to locate in Basildon.</p> <p>With regards to Basildon Borough's rural economy, paragraph 83 of the National Planning Policy Framework supports the rural economy by supporting the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business and enterprise in rural areas, and promoting the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses.</p>

Baseline Sustainability Issue	Likely Evolution of the issue without the Plan
<p>30. Requirement to make provisions for jobs growth in line with increases to housing provision, whilst having regard to biodiversity and the wider environment.</p>	<p>Employment trends likely to continue in current economic climate without significant local intervention. Local planning interventions can help improve access to a range of employment and increase delivery of affordable housing, which in turn can increase the available workforce which may encourage new employers to locate in Basildon Borough. A local plan response can also identify areas in need of regeneration and put forward a renewal programme to achieve this. This in turn may encourage new businesses to locate in Basildon Borough.</p> <p>Strategic developments allocated through the Local Plan will provide capacity for new residential and employment developments without compromising the local integrity of the Borough's environmental assets.</p>
<p>31. Basildon is within the national regeneration area of the Thames Gateway, and is identified, along with Castle Point, as the South Essex 'Business Hub', with specific development and regeneration aspirations that it is encouraged to achieve.</p>	<p>Basildon is likely to benefit from its inclusion in the Thames Gateway regeneration area without further local policy intervention. There is however opportunity to maximise the potential of its inclusion through local planning policy, through targeted socio-economic regeneration, locating employment in areas of high deprivation, providing necessary infrastructure and community services and facilities including education facilities.</p>
<p>32. The ability to enhance the vitality and viability of town centres, whilst meeting various development needs, regeneration aspirations, within social and environmental constraints.</p>	<p>With the exception of the Thames Gateway regeneration initiative, there is unlikely to be significant benefits from sub-regional and national policies, plans and programmes. The Local Plan can specify the balance and mix of uses which are appropriate in town centres. This is less to happen in a coordinated, planned way in the absence of the Plan.</p>
<p>33. There is a need to increase the take-up rates of further education courses and diversify the skills base of the local labour market, to ensure local business sectors are able to diversify and improve the long-term prosperity of residents.</p>	<p>Improving the education and skills base of Borough residents requires a range of interventions, some of which will happen in the absence of the Plan (for example, national initiatives in respect of education).</p> <p>However, a planned approach to development (e.g. targeting regeneration and new employment to areas of higher deprivation) which may indirectly improve education and skills levels is less likely in the absence of the Plan.</p> <p>The spatial distribution of deprivation and social exclusion in the Borough is likely to continue without an appropriate local policy response, linked to providing community services and facilities including education facilities.</p>

Baseline Sustainability Issue	Likely Evolution of the issue without the Plan
<p>34. There is a need to protect the cultural heritage resource in the Borough from further destruction or degradation, and conserve and enhance heritage assets through a positive strategy for the historic environment in line with the National Planning Policy Framework.</p>	<p>Destruction or degradation trend would be likely to continue and may be exacerbated without a planned local approach to development. National policy should help to protect and enhance heritage assets but whether or not this will help specific sites is uncertain.</p>
<p>35. The Borough's varied urban, rural and natural landscapes are vulnerable to adverse effects from urban expansion, increasing recreational pressures, seasonal climate change, as well as agricultural and land management practices.</p>	<p>The severity and likelihood of adverse impacts on local ecosystems and landscapes is likely to increase with current trends of climate change and the rising population of the Borough. These impacts are at risk of being exacerbated without a planned approach to development. Without the Local Plan, there is less opportunity to adopt a co-ordinated, spatial approach to the development of open green spaces/green networks for recreation, walking and cycling networks, and wildlife.</p> <p>Strategic developments allocated through the Local Plan will provide capacity for new residential and employment developments without compromising the local integrity of the Borough's environmental assets, including the Borough's most sensitive landscapes.</p>
<p>36. There are European and International habitats and species of designated interest within 5km of the Basildon Borough administrative boundary.</p>	<p>Paragraph 170 of the National Planning Policy Framework seeks to minimise impacts on biodiversity and provide net gains in biodiversity where possible, which may afford some protection to the SSSIs and local designations in the Borough. The Habitats and Birds Directives provide protection to the internationally designated biodiversity sites in proximity to the Borough.</p> <p>Strategic developments allocated through the Local Plan will provide capacity for new residential and employment developments without compromising the local integrity of the Borough's environmental assets, including biodiversity. A Local Plan would strengthen national policy, further safeguarding nature sites. Adopting a strategic, local approach to the allocation of development will ensure that the impacts of development (both singularly and in combination) on all nature conservation interest can be better managed.</p> <p>Furthermore, without the Local Plan, there is less opportunity to adopt a co-ordinated, spatial approach to the development of green networks for wildlife.</p>
<p>37. Unsympathetic grazing methods, ditch management and water level management are regarded as factors that have negative effects</p>	<p>Paragraph 170 of the National Planning Policy Framework seeks to minimise impacts on biodiversity and provide net gains in biodiversity where possible, which may afford some protection to the SSSIs and local designations in the Borough.</p> <p>However, strategic developments allocated through the Local Plan will provide capacity for new</p>

Baseline Sustainability Issue	Likely Evolution of the issue without the Plan
<p>on existing SSSI units.</p>	<p>residential and employment developments without compromising the local integrity of the Borough's environmental assets. A Local Plan would strengthen national policy, further safeguarding nature sites.</p> <p>Without the Local Plan, there is less opportunity to adopt a co-ordinated, spatial approach to the development of green networks for wildlife. As Local Wildlife Sites are only afforded protection by the planning system (unless the need for development, outweighs their continued conservation), it may also result in adverse impacts on these sites from unregulated activities such as recreation or agriculture.</p>
<p>38. Local Wildlife Sites in the Borough are being negatively affected by actions such as agricultural practices, inappropriate management, road-widening, and recreational activities. If this continues, it could affect their wildlife value and the contribution they make to biodiversity, landscapes and the natural environment.</p>	<p>Paragraph 170 of the National Planning Policy Framework seeks to minimise impacts on biodiversity and provide net gains in biodiversity where possible, which may afford some protection to the SSSIs and local designations in the Borough.</p> <p>However, strategic developments allocated through the Local Plan will provide capacity for new residential and employment developments without compromising the local integrity of the Borough's environmental assets. A local plan would strengthen national policy, further safeguarding nature sites.</p> <p>Without the Local Plan, there is less opportunity to adopt a co-ordinated, spatial approach to the development of green networks for wildlife.</p>
<p>39. There is a need for continued preservation and long-term management of Ancient Woodlands in the Borough.</p>	<p>Strategic developments allocated through the Local Plan will provide capacity for new residential and employment developments without compromising the local integrity of the Borough's environmental assets, such as ancient woodland.</p> <p>Without the Local Plan, there is less opportunity to adopt a co-ordinated, spatial approach to the development of green networks for wildlife.</p>
<p>40. The Thames Marshes and unimproved grasslands of Vange, Bowers and Pitsea represent 10% of this habitat type in Essex and are of national and international significance to the species they support. They must be suitably conserved from adverse impacts of development.</p>	<p>Strategic developments allocated through the Local Plan will provide capacity for new residential and employment developments without compromising the local integrity of the Borough's environmental assets, such the Thames Marshes and unimproved grasslands of Vange, Bowers and Pitsea.</p> <p>Without the Local Plan, there is less opportunity to adopt a co-ordinated, spatial approach to the development of green networks for wildlife.</p>

Baseline Sustainability Issue	Likely Evolution of the issue without the Plan
<p>41. A need to ensure Priority Habitats/Species and other locally endangered species are protected from destruction by inappropriate development or land management practice.</p>	<p>Paragraph 170 of the National Planning Policy Framework seeks to minimise impacts on biodiversity and provide net gains in biodiversity where possible, which may afford some protection to the SSSIs, local designations and protected species in the Borough.</p> <p>A coordinated approach to strategic development through the Local Plan will provide capacity for new residential and employment developments without compromising the local integrity of the Borough's environmental assets (including protected species). A Local Plan approach would strengthen national policy, further safeguarding nature conservation sites and habitats of local importance.</p> <p>Without the Local Plan, there is less opportunity to adopt a co-ordinated, spatial approach to the development of green networks for wildlife.</p>
<p>42. Water Quality and Foul Water Capacity can have significant impacts on the status of SSSI's and other designated / sensitive sites and the water environment in general.</p>	<p>Paragraph 170 of the National Planning Policy Framework seeks to minimise impacts on biodiversity and provide net gains in biodiversity where possible, as well as prevent both new and existing development from contributing to or being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability, which may afford some protection to the SSSIs, local designations and protected species in the Borough.</p> <p>A coordinated approach to strategic development through the Local Plan will provide a more structured framework for managing foul water capacity and in turn water quality capacity without compromising the local integrity of the Borough's environmental assets (including protected species). A Local Plan approach would strengthen national policy, further safeguarding nature conservation sites and habitats of local importance from water pollution.</p>
<p>43. Need to continue to minimise and contain excess noise from domestic and industrial sources in the Borough.</p>	<p>The Building Regulations aim to manage the impact of noise from new domestic and industrial developments through good design. Furthermore, the increasing prevalence of sustainability standards such as BREEAM and the Code for Sustainable Homes will also have a positive contribution. Development of an up to date local planning framework will ensure that Local Plan and development management policies seek to address the current sustainability issues (including noise).</p>
<p>44. Air pollution associated with Basildon's road network may exceed statutory NO₂ levels.</p>	<p>Without the Local Plan and its planned approach to development, air pollution issues may continue. The new Local Plan could act to improve air quality, rather than just ensuring it does not deteriorate further.</p>
<p>45. Not all surface and groundwater bodies currently meet 'Good' status in respect of water quality (required</p>	<p>This pressure will continue in the absence of Local Plan.</p>

Baseline Sustainability Issue	Likely Evolution of the issue without the Plan
through the Water Framework Directive).	
46. Need to provide adequate foul water capacity to meet existing and future domestic and commercial needs to ensure the water environment is protected.	<p>Paragraph 170 of the National Planning Policy Framework seeks to prevent both new and existing development from contributing to or being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability, which may afford some protection to the water environment in and around the Borough. A Local Plan would strengthen national safeguards by adding an important strategic spatial dimension to this local issue.</p> <p>Part of the local plan approach will be to liaise with utility companies over the level of growth proposed to ensure that wastewater infrastructure can be adequately upgraded/enhanced in advance of new development.</p>
47. Need to provide an adequate water supply available to meet the domestic consumption needs of existing and future residents.	<p>Without the Plan it will be more difficult to adopt a co-ordinated approach to adapting to climate change, including the need to use water sustainably. Conversely, new development needs to meet higher water efficiency standards and water companies must plan to reduce leaks from the water supply network as well as improve water efficiency.</p> <p>Part of the local plan approach will be to liaise with utility companies over the level of growth proposed to ensure that water resources are adequate to supply the needs of new development.</p>
48. Ensure that Groundwater Vulnerability Areas in the north of the Borough are protected, directly or indirectly, from adverse development impacts.	Strategic developments allocated through the Local Plan will provide capacity for new residential and employment developments without compromising the local integrity of groundwater vulnerability areas. A Local Plan would strengthen national safeguards by adding an important strategic spatial dimension to this local issue.
49. Improve the efficiency of water use and reduce local water wastage.	Without the Plan it will be more difficult to adopt a co-ordinated approach to adapting to climate change, including the need to use water sustainably. Conversely, new development needs to meet higher water efficiency standards and water companies must plan to reduce leaks from the water supply network as well as improve water efficiency.
50. Minimise the amount of development located on Grade 3a agricultural land and on important mineral reserves.	<p>Minerals and waste planning is undertaken by Essex County Council who would be statutory consultees in respect of development in Basildon Borough which is on or close to minerals safeguarding areas.</p> <p>National Policy (the National Planning Policy Framework) restricts development on higher grade agricultural land, however there is understood to be limited Grade 3a land in the Basildon.</p>

Baseline Sustainability Issue	Likely Evolution of the issue without the Plan
	Adopting a strategic approach to development planning through the Revised Local Plan should enable adverse impacts on minerals and higher grade agricultural land to be minimised.
51. Basildon Town Centre offers very limited leisure and evening economy options, operating solely as a retail destination and Laindon Town Centre is in significant need of regeneration.	Local Plan policies identify and make provisions for areas in most need of regeneration. Without a Local Plan, Basildon Town Centre could go into decline due to its lack of leisure/cultural facilities whilst Laindon Town Centre would deteriorate further.
52. Maximising the use of Previously Developed or Derelict Land in the Borough, whilst recognising that brownfield sites may include Priority Habitats and/or support significant biodiversity interest.	Housing shortfall is likely to continue without a positive and proactive approach to local housing through the Local Plan, which includes assessing the capacity and feasibility of developing existing brownfield land. A coordinated local spatial strategy to housing allocation would maximise the use of previously developed land, whilst protecting and enhancing priority habitats and species.
53. Improving the quality and availability of the open spaces, social, leisure and cultural facilities in the Borough, based on local needs and demands and recognised localised disparities within the Borough.	With the rising population of the Borough, pressures on the quality and availability of open space are likely to continue without a planned approach to development. Without the Local Plan there is less opportunity to adopt a co-ordinated, spatial approach to the development of open green spaces/green networks for recreation, walking and cycling networks, and wildlife.
54. Reducing domestic waste generation in the Borough and increasing access to recycling.	The Basildon Local Plan is unlikely to make a significant contribution to this issue. Essex County Council is the Waste Planning Authority for the County, which includes Basildon Borough. The requirements of national sustainability standards such as BREEAM and the Code for Sustainable Homes will also have a positive contribution.
55. Almost half of the local workforce live outside the Borough (mostly Castle Point, Rochford and Southend) and travel in by private vehicles which leads to congestion at peak times across the Borough's road network. This is compounded by over half of the Borough's	Such a sub-regional, cross-boundary issue requires a coordinated approach between Basildon Borough and its neighbouring local authorities. The Local Plan provides a mechanism to prioritise improvements to the public transport in order to discourage reliance on the private car. This would be coordinated in conjunction with County-wide transport planning undertaken by Essex County Council.

Baseline Sustainability Issue	Likely Evolution of the issue without the Plan
<p>residents working outside of the Borough.</p>	
<p>56. Many of the junctions in Basildon are currently close to or at capacity and there is a need for significant mitigation measures to accommodate growth in the settlements of Billericay and Wickford.</p>	<p>The Local Plan provides a mechanism to prioritise improvements to junctions at or nearing capacity and improve the provision of sustainable public transport in order to discourage reliance on the private car. This would be coordinated in conjunction with County-wide transport planning undertaken by Essex County Council.</p>

Evolution of options

- 1.36 The preparation of the Local Plan has taken many years, and has involved a considerable amount of options testing (including through the SA process), both formally during the public consultation process and also informally during each version of the plan preparation stage. The account below summarises the work undertaken to date.

Core Strategy Issues Paper (Autumn 2007) (Regulation 18 consultation)

- 1.37 Preparatory work began on the Local Development Framework in 2006, following the withdrawal of the Basildon District Replacement Local Plan – 2nd Deposit.
- 1.38 A Core Strategy Issues Paper was published in August 2007. The Council also launched its first Call for Sites for landowners to submit sites to the Local Planning Authority for consideration for development. One of the main conclusions from the 'Issues' consultation was that the Core Strategy needed to be more strategic and focussed in future iterations.
- 1.39 No SA work on the Issues was undertaken at this stage, although a SA Scoping Report was prepared and consulted upon (and subsequently updated in 2011 and 2013).
- 1.40 Between 2008 and 2012, the Council carried out a further Call for Sites and several studies/evaluations of the local environment and development requirements to assemble a robust and credible evidence base. This looked at cross boundary issues such as the water cycle and flood risk, as well as Borough specific matters such as open space provision, historic character and biodiversity.

Core Strategy Development Plan Document (February 2012) (Regulation 18)

- 1.41 In February 2012 the Council approved for consultation the Basildon Borough Core Strategy Preferred Options Report which set out three alternative growth options for the Borough for the period 2011-2031. The 2012 Core Strategy was consulted upon for 6 weeks until 11th April 2012 and included eight public road shows, focus groups and forums.
- 1.42 The 2012 Core Strategy set out the Council's preferred options in respect of the quantum and spatial distribution of development, preferred 'Policy Areas of Development and Change' and through a set of preferred Core Policies to manage development in the Policy Areas of Development and Change. The preferred spatial option in this version of the Core Strategy (Option A) sought to provide a minimum of 6,500 additional dwellings between 2011 and 2031, split between the Major Urban Area of Basildon (80%), and the towns of Billericay (1.5%) and Wickford (15.5%) with no encroachment into the Green Belt. Two alternative spatial options proposed different amounts of new housing and employment development that would have required development within the Borough's Green Belt over the next 20 years (these were Option B which sought to deliver 10,100 additional dwellings and up to 14 ha of additional economic land, and Option C which sought to deliver 21,600 additional dwellings and up to 26 ha of employment land).

Summary of SA of Core Strategy 2012 Spatial Options

- 1.43 The appraisal of the Spatial Options concluded the following:
- *“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...*

1.44 The 2012 SA Report also included a table summarising the sustainability effects of the Core Policies and the Policy Areas of Development and Change.

Core Strategy Revised Preferred Options Report (December 2013)

1.45 A revised Core Strategy Preferred Options Report was prepared in 2013 to respond to the extensive consultation responses. This included updates to respond to national policy requirements (notably the need to identify an objectively assessed housing need for the Borough), taking account of Census 2011 data and economic change. A suite of new evidence documents were also prepared.

1.46 The format of the Core Strategy Revised Preferred Options Report was similar to the 2012 version. The Plan was underpinned by a vision and strategic objectives and the overall spatial strategy for the Borough was supported by 15 Policy Areas of Development and Change and a set of Core Policies. There were a number of changes to the Vision, Strategic Objectives, Spatial Strategy, and Core Policies.

1.47 In terms of quantum of development, the 2013 Draft Local Plan Core Strategy provided for 16,000 new dwellings and 49 hectares of new employment land, representing the up-to-date objectively assessed need for the Borough. Three spatial options were considered:

- Option 2a (the preferred option at this stage), which was a proportionate distribution of the 16,000 dwellings and 49 hectares of new employment land relative to the size of the Borough's Main Towns – Basildon (including Laindon and Pitsea), Billericay and Wickford. 6,900 homes and 38 hectares of industrial land were planned for within the settlements' existing urban areas. 9,100 homes and 11ha of industrial land were planned for within the Borough's Green Belt, split into urban extensions around the towns, between the serviced villages of Crays Hill, Bowers Gifford and Ramsden Bellhouse and infill development in the fifteen Plotland settlements scattered around the Borough.
- Option 2b, which focussed the 16,000 dwellings and 49 hectares of new employment land towards Billericay and Wickford where feasible, with Basildon taking less than a proportionate scale of growth. The remainder of growth would be split between the serviced settlements of Crays Hill, Ramsden Bellhouse and Bowers Gifford and some allowance for infill in the Plotlands.
- Option 2c, which focussed the 16,000 dwellings and 49 hectares of new employment land towards Basildon, with a smaller proportion of the remaining growth directed to Billericay and Wickford. A small proportion would be split between the serviced settlements of Crays Hill, Ramsden Bellhouse and Bowers Gifford and some allowance for infill in the Plotlands.

1.48 The 2013 Draft Local Plan Core Strategy also included changes to the Policy Areas of Development and Change in terms of scale and type of development proposed, plus new Policy Areas of Development and Change in the Green Belt at Basildon, Billericay and Wickford. 26 Broad Locations were identified as possible locations for development needs (the remaining 47 locations were not considered reasonable by the Council). A map of the Broad Locations is provided in **Figure 2**.

1.49 The 26 Broad Locations were used by the Council to consider alternative ways of distributing the required dwellings. Each of the 26 Broad Locations was appraised by LUC on its own merits, using the SA Framework, and before any mitigation. The Council cross-matched the Broad Locations with the spatial findings from the evidence base considering the following:

- Environmental constraints/characteristics (landscape sensitivity, historic context, Green Belt, nature designations).
- Infrastructure provision (flood risk, surface water management, water supply, waste water treatment works capacity, waste water network, power network, education provision, health).

- Delivery factors (viability, landownership, recent promotion).
- The outcomes of the Sustainability Appraisal.

- 1.50 The findings helped the Council to rule out Broad Locations with the lowest potential for development and focus consideration as to which Broad Locations should be considered as Policy Areas of Development and Change.
- 1.51 The 2013 Draft Local Plan Core Strategy also included 20 Core Policies to manage development including policies on Housing (affordable housing and housing mix); Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Needs; Conservation and the Natural Environment, Green Belt, Health and Wellbeing, Supporting and Sustaining the Local Economy and Transport Infrastructure.

Summary of SA of the Draft Local Plan Core Strategy 2013

- 1.52 The SA carried out by LUC found that the effects between the three Spatial Options did not differ markedly in many respects. The SA objectives relating to landscape, cultural heritage and biodiversity were the ones that were most likely to be affected negatively, because of the permanent loss of greenfield land to development, although it is recognised that development can also offer opportunities to deliver investment in green infrastructure and also in community facilities and services. The likelihood of significant adverse effects increased depended on which town was being considered under which Spatial Option. The SA found that focusing development on a particular town (or to the north or south of the Borough) would be more likely to have significant adverse effects against the environmental SA objectives in relation to that part of the Borough.
- 1.53 At this stage of the plan preparation process, the Council selected the proportionate growth option (Spatial Option 2A) to underpin the Revised Preferred Options Report as the most balanced and appropriate strategy – in effect, it spread both the positive effects and the negative effects, rather than concentrating them on one or two towns in the Borough. The SA found that this option performed as well as the other two options against many of the SA objectives, although inevitably there were some differences. There remained concerns over traffic issues, and potential congestion, which needed to be resolved, and further work was also required on water issues although it was thought that these can be addressed. Flood risk was a concern in some locations, which would need careful assessment, planning and design to ensure that avoid it becoming an issue in the future.

Draft Local Plan (January 2016)

- 1.54 The Draft Local Plan identified specific site allocations whereas the previous Core Strategy identified broad areas for growth. The change in the type of Plan being prepared led to additional detailed evidence being undertaken so that site boundaries could be determined.
- 1.55 Between the publication of the 2013 Draft Local Plan Core Strategy and the Draft Local Plan a number of new land parcels were submitted to the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment for consideration for their development potential. There were also a number of updates to the Local Plan evidence base, such as the Landscape Study, Green Belt Study and LUC's Ecology Study. As such the Council undertook a review of broad areas of search renaming the new versions Strategic Sites to avoid confusion with the previous work undertaken.

Strategic Sites

- 1.56 The starting point for this exercise was the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment evidence base followed by the specific findings of the revised landscape study and Green Belt study. Individual sites or clusters of sites promoted through the Council's Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment with an initial combined capacity of 200 homes or more were identified as strategic sites. This resulted in the identification of 30 Strategic Sites.
- 1.57 The strategic sites are shown on **Figure 2**.

Allocations

- 1.58 Following a similar method to the identification of Policy Areas of Development and Change the Strategic Sites were cross-matched with the spatial findings from the evidence base to identify the development site allocations. The following evidence was taken into consideration:

- Environmental constraints/characteristics, including the findings from ecology site appraisals and landscape sensitivity site appraisals.
- Infrastructure provision.
- Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment.
- The Sustainability Appraisal.

1.59 This exercise identified specific draft site allocations. The draft site allocations form smaller areas than the full extent of the Strategic Sites. This is because the evidence identified constraints within the majority of the Strategic Sites, such as landscape sensitivities, which made parts of them less/not suitable for development. In the Draft Local Plan a total of 18 allocations were identified within the existing Green Belt as urban extensions to the three main settlements (Basildon, Wickford and Billericay).

1.60 In general the draft allocations correlated well with the Policy Areas of Development and Change identified in the Core Strategy Revised Preferred Options which were strategic growth areas with no defined boundaries.

1.61 The draft site allocations consulted upon in January 2016 are shown alongside the reasonable alternatives in **Figure 3**.

Distribution of development

1.62 Taking into account homes that have already been delivered, the Draft Local Plan provided for 8,835 homes at Basildon, 1,860 at Billericay, 3,300 at Wickford, and 908 homes elsewhere including a village extension to Bowers Gifford amounting to around 600 homes and 218 homes in the Plotland settlements.

1.63 This represented a slight shift in distribution compared to the Core Strategy Revised Preferred Options Report (December 2013). Basildon and Billericay received fewer homes, both in terms of numbers as a proportion of the total, and Wickford received more homes, also in terms of numbers as a proportion of the total. Other settlements also received more (most notably Bowers Gifford and the Plotland settlements). The amount of employment land and its distribution between settlements remained unchanged.

Publication Local Plan (November 2018)

1.64 In between the publication of the Draft Local Plan in 2016 and the publication of the Publication Local Plan in November 2018, two key evidence base documents were published:

- *Archaeological Assets Impact Assessment for Potential Growth Locations within Basildon Borough (2016)*
- *Updated national Indices of Multiple Deprivation data (2015)*

1.65 The evidence base updates were used to reappraise all draft site allocations and their reasonable alternatives in relation to SA objectives 2 (Historic Environment) and 10 (Reducing Deprivation) respectively.

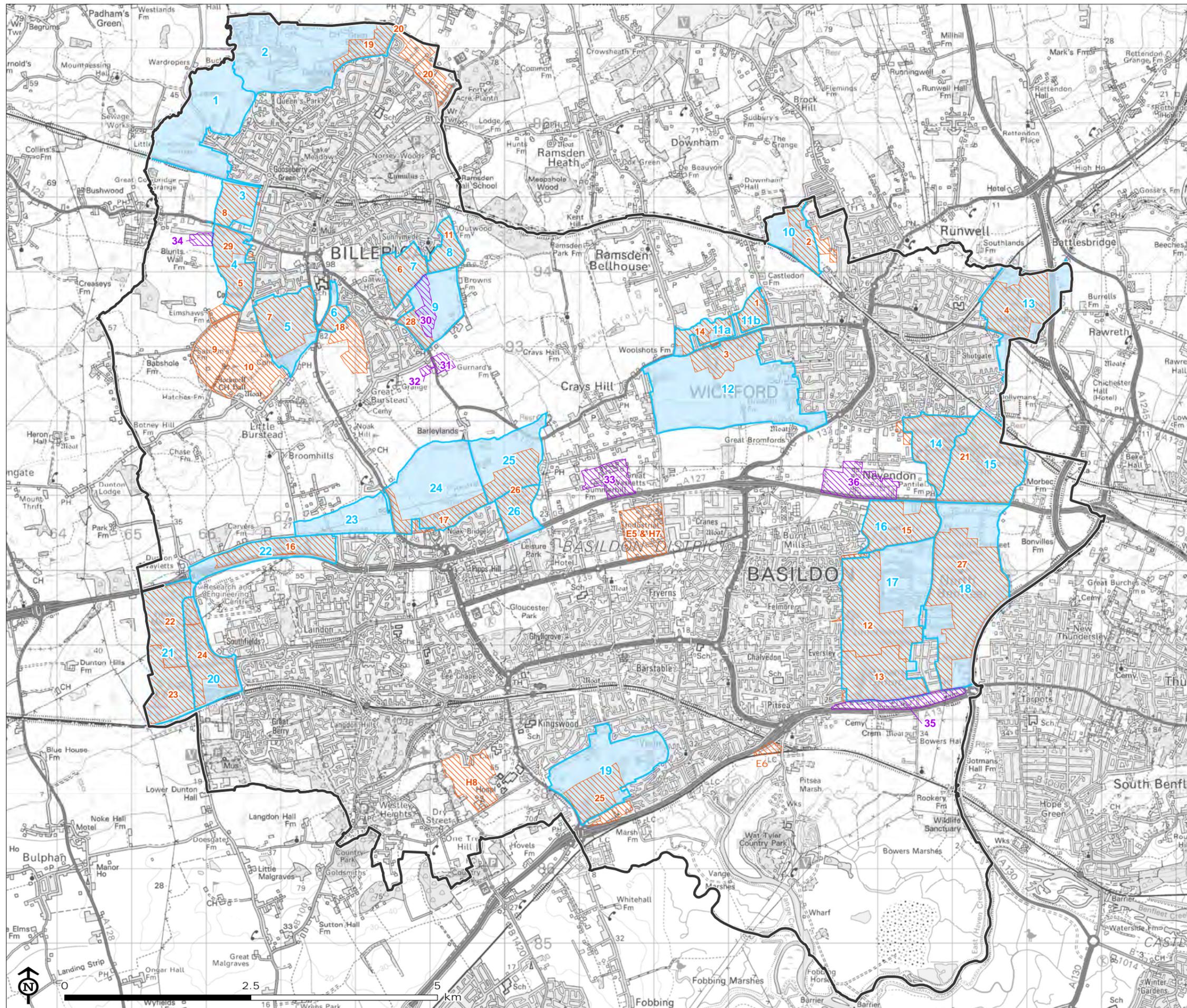
1.66 Twenty three new site options were appraised for comparison against the draft site allocations and the other reasonable alternatives in 2017. Thirteen of the new site options were tied to draft housing allocation policies either due to their similar size and/or location. The remaining ten site options were not tied to draft housing allocation policies largely due to their relatively small sizes, i.e. each in isolation would not represent a reasonable alternative to any specific draft housing allocation policy.

1.67 Basildon Borough Council prepared a High Level Development Framework for the areas of land previously allocated in the Draft Local Plan 2016. Further options were tested, including consolidating the four individual allocations into a larger strategic allocation including a new relief road to alleviate current and mitigate future road congestion within Billericay.

1.68 A summary of the appraisal findings of the contents of the Publication Local Plan, including all site allocations is provided below. **Figure 4** illustrates the location of the Publication site allocations.

Figure 2: Broad Locations and Strategic Sites

-  Basildon Borough boundary
-  Broad location
-  Strategic site
-  Additional strategic sites considered post Reg 18 consultation



Map Scale @ A3: 1:50,000

Basildon Borough Publication Local Plan – changes since the consultation on the Draft Local Plan

- 1.69 A number of changes were made to the Local Plan between the 2016 Draft Local Plan version and the 2018 Publication Version.
- 1.70 In particular, the number of homes the Local Plan plans to deliver has increased from 15,260 to 17,791 in the 2016 Draft Local Plan with at least minimum target of 15,465 in the 2018 Publication Local Plan.
- 1.71 The area of new employment land the Local Plan plans to deliver has been reduced from 49ha to 37ha. However, the Publication Local Plan identifies a need to meet a proportion of London's unmet employment needs equating to at least 5ha, creating a minimum need of 42ha of employment land over the plan period. In order to meet the Borough's, and a proportion of London's, employment needs within the Plan period the Policies SD1 and SD2 therefore identify 91.5ha of land supply, which meets the Borough's needs and a proportion of unmet need coming from London. In combination with the facilities, services and infrastructure constructed alongside the planned growth, the employment land is to deliver a minimum target of 20,000 jobs over the Plan Period.
- 1.72 The Publication Local Plan puts the Borough's planned growth into an updated regional planning context. Basildon Borough Council is working with neighbouring authorities in the South East to bring forward a Joint Spatial Plan for sustainable growth in South Essex which seeks to deliver at least 90,000 homes and 58,000 jobs. The Publication Local Plan states that it will be reviewed, at least in part, following the adoption of the Joint Spatial Plan for South Essex, if opportunities for further growth and infrastructure provision in the Borough are identified.
- 1.73 The Proposed Local Plan distributes the planned growth across the Borough's settlement hierarchy. The amount of growth to be delivered within the Borough's main urban areas, namely Basildon (including Laindon, Pitsea and Noak Bridge) has been increased from 8,835 dwellings to 8,747 dwellings. However the amount of new employment land provision referenced in policy SD2 has been changed from 41ha of land need to 91.5ha of land supply (total amount of land required to meet the 42ha need).
- 1.74 Employment provision in the Borough's towns of Billericay has remained unchanged at 0.3 hectares, but Wickford's provision has increased from 0.7 to 0.9 hectares respectively. Dwelling provision within Billericay has increased significantly from 1,860 to 3,034, resulting in a significant increase in the area of greenfield land being developed beyond the town's existing urban area (80 hectares to 114 hectares), and more modestly in Wickford from 3,300 to 3,513 – although the area of development outside the existing development boundary of Wickford has gone down from 83 hectares to 72 hectares.
- 1.75 The Draft Local Plan's large westward urban extension, incorporating the village of Dunton, has been removed from the Publication Plan, resulting in a significant reduction in the area of greenfield land beyond the existing urban area being developed (almost half of the original 300 hectares).
- 1.76 Minor amendments have also been made to the number of homes to be delivered in the Borough's smaller services settlements of Crays Hill.
- 1.77 The Publication Plan identifies two areas to the south of Crays Hill, Billericay and to the south of Wickford as broad locations for potential housing growth which will be considered in the next review of the Local Plan once a sustainable development proposal has been identified that incorporates, and is supported by, the necessary infrastructure provision.
- 1.78 A new policy has been included within the Publication Local Plan (Policy SDC3 – Designated Neighbourhood Area). The new policy allocates the following minimum housing targets to be delivered within the Borough's neighbourhood Plans:
- 1,350 homes within the Bowers Gifford and North Benfleet Neighbourhood Area; and,
 - 39 homes within the Ramsden Bellhouse Neighbourhood Area.
- 1.79 The Publication Local Plan also includes a number of changes to the development management policies and individual site allocations.

Sustainability Appraisal findings of Publication Local Plan

- 1.80 A detailed assessment of each strategic, allocation and development management policy in the Publication Local Plan has been undertaken, considering their likely effects against each of the SA objectives. Detailed appraisal matrices for each policy can be found in Appendix 5 of the main SA Report.
- 1.81 A summary of the appraisal of the Publication Local Plan policies is provided below.

Publication Local Plan Chapter 5 – Vision and Objectives

- 1.82 The overall Vision for Basildon sets a general aspiration to become a fair and inclusive Borough where communities have a healthy and safe place to live and work and an improving quality of life now and for future generations. The Vision is likely to have a positive effect on all of the SA objectives. The success of the Vision in helping to achieve the sustainability objectives depends on the implementation of the policies in the Local Plan.
- 1.83 The Local Plan contains 10 Strategic Objectives that are unlikely to have an effect or are compatible with minor positive effects on the SA objectives. The majority of the Strategic Objectives (SOs) have at least one significant positive effect where they directly address SA objectives (SAs).

Mitigation of significant adverse effects

- 1.84 Although the Sustainability Appraisal identified some potentially adverse effects, none of these were identified as significant adverse effects.

Reasonable alternatives

- 1.85 The Publication Vision and Strategic Objectives scored the same as the versions published in the Draft Local Plan. However, the amendments included in the Publication Local Plan are considered to generate slightly more positive effects than the previous iteration.

Publication Local Plan Chapter 6 – Achieving Sustainable Development

- 1.86 The appraisal of Publication policies SD1 and SD2 identified the following significant effects:
- Significant adverse effects are identified for policies SD1 and SD2 against SA objectives 1 (landscape, countryside and green spaces), 2 (historic environment) and 3 (biodiversity) as the Plan is seeking to deliver a significant amount of growth, the majority of which is to be accommodated on greenfield land outside the existing urban areas of the Borough's settlements.
 - Significant positive effects have been recorded against SA objectives 4 (economy) and 7 (housing) for both policies SD1 and SD2 in acknowledgement of the significant amount of growth (housing and employment) being accommodated within the Borough. The significant positive effect recorded against SA objective 7 (housing) is also accompanied by a significant adverse effect to reflect the fact that the rate of housing delivery expected in the Plan period falls short of that considered necessary to support housing need and economic growth.
 - Significant positive effects are also identified against SA objective 5 (town centres) and 9 (vibrant communities) due to both policies committing to the delivery of new housing and employment land in the existing urban areas of the Borough, including in and around the Borough's town centres.
 - Significant adverse effects are identified for both policies SD1 and SD2 against SA objective 12 (re-use of previously developed land and buildings) and 13 (flood risk) due to the fact that the majority of the Boroughs housing and employment needed are to be accommodated on greenfield land outside the existing urban areas of the Borough's settlements. These effects are coupled with a significant positive effect in acknowledgement of the fact that every effort has been made to prioritise the development of brownfield land in the Borough's existing urban areas before greenfield land is developed.
- 1.87 The appraisal of Publication Local Plan policies SD3 identified the following significant effects:

- Significant adverse effects against SA objectives 1 (landscape, countryside and green spaces), 2 (historic environment) and 3 (biodiversity) due to the fact that the policy allocates housing numbers to two Neighbourhood Plan areas which contain sensitive landscapes, biodiversity and historic assets. These effects are uncertain until the detailed location, design and layout of development are set out within each area's Neighbourhood Plan.
- Significant positive effects are identified against SA objectives 6 (education and social inclusion), 7 (meeting housing need), 8 (health and wellbeing) and 10 (regeneration) in acknowledgement of the scale of dwellings allocated for delivery within the North Benfleet and Bowers Gifford Neighbourhood Plan Area (1,350 dwellings). The delivery of such a significant number of homes will meet a significant proportion of the Borough's housing needs including new local services and facilities such as schools, open spaces and health care facilities, helping to regenerate areas of the Borough known to be deprived and in need of investment and regeneration.
- Significant adverse effects are identified against SA objective 12 (re-use of previously developed land and buildings) due to the fact that the policy allocates housing numbers to two Neighbourhood Plan areas which are largely made-up of open greenfield land designed as at least Grade 3 agricultural land. Therefore, the development of dwellings within the Neighbourhood Plan Areas has the potential to result in the loss of some of the Borough's Best and Most Versatile agricultural land.

1.88 No significant effects were identified for Policy SD 4.

Mitigation of significant adverse effects

1.89 The significant adverse effects identified are likely to be mitigated in part if not completely through the detailed mitigation measures outlined within the individual strategic site allocation policies and the implementation of other strategic and development management policies in the Local Plan. The use of greenfield land to accommodate development to meet the objectively assessed housing and economic needs of the Borough cannot be mitigated, notwithstanding the prioritisation given to development within the existing urban areas.

Reasonable alternatives

1.90 The Publication policies outlined in Chapter 6 score the same or better than the previous iterations and reasonable alternatives appraised in the Draft Local Plan for the majority of the SA objectives. However the increased amount of growth within the Publication Plan further increases the significant adverse effects identified previously, and, at a strategic scale, increases the potential for more minor adverse effects against SA objectives against which minor adverse effects were not previously identified, for example SA objective 19 (transport congestion).

1.91 Despite the significant adverse effects of accommodating the scale and distribution of growth planned for in the Borough in the Publication Local Plan, it is recognised that the rate of housing delivery expected in the Plan period falls short of that considered necessary to support housing need and economic growth. Consequently, a significant adverse effect has been identified against SA objective 5 (housing) in combination with the significant positive effect identified in acknowledgement of the significant growth that has been planned for. It should be noted that if additional growth were to be accommodated within the Borough it is likely that the significant adverse effects that have been identified against the environmental SA objectives 1 (landscape, countryside and green spaces), 2 (historic environment), 3 (biodiversity) and 13 (flood risk) would be more reinforced.

Publication Local Plan Chapter 7 – Building a Strong, Competitive economy

1.92 The appraisal of the Publication Local Plan's 11 policies within this chapter identified the following significant effects³:

- Significant adverse effects for policies E2 and E6 against SA objective 1 (landscape, countryside and green spaces).

³ Policy E5 represents the employment development component of a mixed-use development site. The housing and employment components of this development allocation are outlined in an equivalent policy (Policy H5) in Chapter 11. Therefore, Policy E5's significant effects are described in the section on Chapter 11 below.

- Significant adverse effects for policies E2 and E3 against SA objective 3 (biodiversity).
- Significant positive effects for policies E1-E4 and E6 against SA objective 4 (economic growth and regeneration).
- Significant positive effects for policy E1 and E11 against SA objective 6 (education and social inclusion).
- Significant positive effects for policies E1-E4 and E6 against SA objective 12 (re-use of previously developed land and buildings).

1.93 Publication **Policies E5 – Land West of Gardiners Lane South, Basildon** and **E6 – Land East of Burnt Mills, Basildon** allocates employment development in the Borough. Publication Policy E5 represents the employment component of a mixed-use allocation also allocated in Chapter 11 in Publication **Policy H5 Land West of Gardiners Lane South, Basildon**. Significant effects associated with this mixed-use allocation are described in the section on Chapter 11 of the Publication Local Plan below.

1.94 Four significant adverse effects are identified for **Publication Policy E6** against SA objectives 1 (landscape and green spaces), 2 (cultural heritage), and 12 (re-use of previously developed land and buildings) and 13 (flood risk). This is because as all the land within this strategic site allocation is open greenfield land classified as Grade 3 agricultural land (moderate to good agricultural land). Furthermore, the eastern half of the site falls within flood zones 2 and 3, and is directly adjacent to a Grade II listed building. Both The effects (with the exception of SA objective 13) are uncertain as it is not known whether detailed design of the development could minimise harm to the openness of the countryside, the setting of the listed building or indeed whether the land is Grade 3a (i.e. Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land) or Grade 3b (which is not Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land).

Mitigation of significant adverse effects

1.95 The significant adverse effects are likely to be mitigated through the detailed mitigation measures outlined within the individual strategic site allocation policies and the implementation of other strategic and development management policies in the Publication Local Plan. However, the use of greenfield land to accommodate employment uses cannot be mitigated, notwithstanding the prioritisation given to development within the existing urban areas.

Reasonable alternatives

1.96 The majority of the Publication policies score the same or better than the equivalent preferred policies presented in the Draft Local Plan.

Publication Local Plan Chapter 8 – Ensuring the Vitality of Town Centres

1.97 The appraisal of the Publication Local Plan's 17 policies identified the following significant effects:

- Significant positive effects for policies R2, R3 and R5 against SA objective 1 (landscape, countryside and green spaces).
- Significant positive effects for policies R1-R6 and R10 against SA objective 4 (economic growth and social inclusion).
- Significant positive effects for policies R1-R9 and R14 against SA objective 5 (town centres).
- Significant positive effects for policies R2 and R17 against SA objective 6 (education and social inclusion).
- A significant positive effect for Policy R2 against SA objective 7 (meeting housing need).
- A significant positive effect for Policy R16 against SA objective 8 (health and wellbeing).
- Significant positive effects for policies R1–R6, R8 and R17 against SA objective 9 (vibrant communities).
- Significant positive effects for policies R1–R5 against SA objective 10 (regeneration and renewal of disadvantaged areas).
- Significant positive effects for policies R2, R3, R10 and R14 against SA objective 11 (access to services and facilities).

- Significant positive effects for policies R2 and R3 against SA objective 12 (re-use of previously developed land and buildings).
- A significant mixed positive and adverse effect for Policy R2 against SA objective 14 (greenhouse gas emissions).
- A significant positive effect for policy R3 against SA objective 14 (greenhouse gas emissions).

1.98 **Policy R13** (Locations for Hotel/Visitor Accommodation) represents the only development allocation within Chapter 8. Two significant effects are identified in the appraisal of this allocation:

- A significant adverse effect is identified for Policy R 13 against SA objective 3 (biodiversity) due to this strategic allocation being located on wooded land recognised for its ecological value.
- A significant adverse effect is identified for Policy R13 against SA objective 12 (re-use of previously developed land and buildings). This is because R13 supports the allocation of a new hotel development on wooded greenfield land. However, this effect is uncertain as it is not known whether the location is Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land (i.e. Grade 3a rather than Grade 3b).

Mitigation of significant adverse effects

1.99 The significant adverse effects identified are likely to be mitigated through the implementation of other policies in the Local Plan. It is unlikely that the loss of greenfield land for the hotel development adjacent to Basildon Golf Course can be mitigated, although it is recognised that it is on the edge of the urban area.

Reasonable alternatives

1.100 The majority of the policies in Chapter 8 of the Publication Local Plan score the same or slightly better than the equivalent preferred versions consulted upon in the Draft Local Plan.

Publication Local Plan Chapter 9 – Promoting Sustainable Transport

1.101 The appraisal of this chapter's eleven policies identified the following significant effects:

- A significant positive effect for policy T1 against SA objective 4 (economic growth and regeneration).
- A significant positive effect for policy T4 against SA objective 6 (education and social inclusion).
- A significant positive effect for policy T4 against SA objective 8 (health and wellbeing).
- A significant positive effect for policy T7 against SA objective 9 (vibrant communities).
- Significant positive effects for policies T1, T3 and T4 against SA objective 11 (access to services and facilities).
- Significant positive effects for policies T2/T5, T4 and T6 against SA objective 19 (traffic congestion).

Mitigation of significant adverse effects

1.102 The sustainability appraisal of the Plan's eleven policies within Chapter 9 identified no significant adverse effects.

Reasonable alternatives

1.103 The policies in Chapter 9 score the same or better than all the reasonable alternatives appraised in Chapter 5 of this SA Report.

Publication Local Plan Chapter 10 – Supporting High Quality Communications Infrastructure

1.104 The appraisal of the Publication Local Plan's three policies identified no significant effects.

Mitigation of significant adverse effects

- 1.105 The Sustainability Appraisal of the Plan's three policies within Chapter 10 identified no significant adverse effects, therefore mitigation is not necessary.

Reasonable alternatives

- 1.106 The policies in Chapter 10 of the Publication Local Plan score the same or better than the previous iterations included in the Draft Local Plan.

Publication Local Plan Chapter 11 – Delivering a Wide Choice of High Quality Homes

- 1.107 The appraisal of the three strategic policies and six development management policies identified the following significant effects:
- Significant adverse effects for policies H1 and H23 against SA objective 1 (landscape, countryside and green spaces), 2 (cultural heritage) and 3 (biodiversity).
 - A significant positive effect for Policy H1 against SA objective 4 (economic growth and regeneration).
 - Significant positive effects for policies H1, H2, H3, H23–H26 and H28 for SA objective 7 (meeting housing need).
 - A significant positive effect for Policy H1 against SA objective 9 (vibrant communities).
 - A significant positive effect for SA objective 11 (facilities and services) for Policy H1.
 - Mixed significant positive and significant adverse effects for policies H1, H3, H23 and H28 against SA objective 12 (re-use of previously developed land and buildings).
 - Significant adverse effects for policy H1 against SA objective 13 (flood risk).
- 1.108 Chapter 11 contains 19 allocation policies, one of which is a mixed-use development (see Policy H5 and Policy E5). The appraisal of these 21 housing allocations including one mixed-use development identified the following potential significant effects:
- **Policy H4 New Gypsy and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Plot Provision** scores mixed significant positive and adverse effects against SA objective 7 (meeting housing need) and 12 (re-use of previously developed land and buildings). This is because the policy allocates sites for the provision of gypsy and traveller and travelling showpeople; however it is yet to be determined whether sufficient sites have been allocated to meet local needs. The effects recorded against SA objective 12 are in acknowledgement of the fact that the majority of the identified sites are on brownfield land, but that some sites are on also on greenfield land.
 - **Policy H5 Land West of Gardiners Lane South, Basildon** scores significant adverse effects against SA objective 12 (re-use of previously developed land and buildings) and significant positive effects against SA objectives 6 (education and social inclusion) and 10 (regeneration). This is because roughly half of the allocation falls on Grade 3 agricultural land. Despite this, the allocation falls within an area considered to be deprived in relation to the 'Barriers to Housing' criterion in the national Indices of Multiple Deprivation, creating the opportunity for significant regeneration. The allocation will deliver a significant area of new employment land, which should generate new jobs and contribute significantly to the local economy and the skills of the local population. Furthermore, the policy makes provision for a 3 form entry primary school which will be provided on-site with significant indirect benefits on the health of the local population.
 - **Policy H6 Land North of Dry Street, Basildon** scores significant adverse effects against SA objectives 1 (landscape, countryside and green spaces) and 2 (cultural heritage), and significant positive effects against SA objectives 6 (education and social inclusion), 8 (health and wellbeing), 10 (regeneration), 11 (access to services and facilities), 14 (greenhouse gas emissions), 15 (air, land and noise pollution) and 19 (traffic congestion). This is because the allocation is located on a large area of greenfield land recognised for its ecological value and in close proximity to heritage assets. These adverse effects are uncertain until the exact design, form and layout of new housing proposals are known. Despite these adverse effects, significant positive effects are likely to be generated through the development's contributions

to the relocation of Basildon College. The allocation falls within an area considered deprived with regard to Barriers to Housing which gives it potential for regeneration. The allocation is located in close proximity to existing and planned local services and facilities, including health and recreation facilities. This makes it easier for new residents to access them via less carbon intensive, more healthy and less noisy modes of transport than the private car, contributing to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, local air and noise pollution and traffic congestion.

- **Policy H 7 Land North and South of London Road, Vange** scores significant adverse effects against SA objectives 1 (landscape, countryside and green spaces), 2 (cultural heritage) and 12 (re-use of previously developed land and buildings) and a significant positive effect against SA objectives 6 (education and social inclusion), 8 (health and well-being), 10 (regeneration) and 11 (access to services and facilities). This is because the policy plans to deliver homes on greenfield land in an area of landscape sensitivity, which contains existing open green spaces. Furthermore, the site lies within an area where there is potential for sensitive below ground archaeological deposits. Most of these adverse effects are uncertain until the exact design, form and layout of new housing proposals are known. However, the allocation falls within an area considered deprived with regard to the 'Barriers to Housing' criterion in the national Indices of Multiple Deprivation, creating the opportunity for significant regeneration. In addition, the new development will support the expansion of Vange Primary School at the same time as being within close proximity to a good range of health and recreation facilities.
- **Policy H8 West Basildon** scores significant adverse effects against SA objectives 1 (landscape, countryside and green spaces) and 12 (re-use of previously developed land and buildings) and significant positive effects against SA objectives 8 (health and wellbeing) and 10 (regeneration). This is because the policy plans to deliver homes on greenfield land that has a low capacity for development due to its openness and there is limited provision within the policy to minimise harm on landscape character. Most of these adverse effects are uncertain until the exact design, form and layout of new housing proposals are known. However, the allocation falls within an area considered deprived with regard to the 'Barriers to Housing' criterion in the national Indices of Multiple Deprivation, creating the opportunity for significant regeneration. Furthermore, Policy H 8 makes provision for open space that will provide a new sports hub, at the same time as being within close proximity to a good range of health and recreation facilities.
- **Policy H9 Land West of Steeple View, Laindon** scores a significant adverse effect against SA objective 12 (re-use of previously developed land and buildings) and a significant positive effect against SA objective 10 (regeneration). This is because land within the allocation is greenfield land. However, the allocation falls within an area considered deprived with regard to the 'Barriers to Housing' criterion in the national Indices of Multiple Deprivation, creating the opportunity for significant regeneration.
- **Policy H10 Land East of Noak Bridge, Basildon** scores significant adverse effects against SA objective 12 (re-use of previously developed land and buildings) and a significant positive effect against SA objectives 8 (health and wellbeing) and 10 (regeneration). This is because the allocation is located on greenfield land. Significant positive effects are likely to be generated through the development's close proximity to existing and planned health and recreation facilities. Furthermore, the allocation falls within an area considered deprived with regard to the 'Barriers to Housing' criterion in the national Indices of Multiple Deprivation, creating the opportunity for significant regeneration.
- **Policy H11 East of Basildon** scores significant adverse effects against SA objectives 1 (landscape, countryside and green spaces), 2 (cultural heritage), 3 (biodiversity) and 12 (re-use of previously developed land and buildings) and significant positive effects on SA objectives 6 (education and social inclusion), 8 (health and wellbeing) and 10 (regeneration). This is because the allocation is located on greenfield land with ecological value and in close proximity to heritage assets. Furthermore, the landscape sensitivity of the area is considered to be too high to accommodate the number of homes proposed without significant change to the character of the area. Most of these adverse effects are uncertain until the exact design, form and layout of new housing proposals are known. Additionally, the allocation falls within an area considered deprived with regard to the 'Barriers to Housing' criterion in the national Indices of Multiple Deprivation, creating the opportunity for significant regeneration. The

site's proximity to existing and planned education facilities has the potential to generate significant opportunities for local education. Furthermore, the new development will provide a strategic open spaces, at the same as being within close proximity to a good range of health and recreation facilities.

- **Policy H12 Land South of Wickford** scores a significant adverse effect on SA objective 12 (re-use of previously developed land and buildings) and significant positive effects on SA objectives 6 (education and social inclusion), 7 (meeting housing need) and 8 (health and wellbeing). This is because the land allocated is greenfield land. However, this large allocation would deliver a significant number of new homes within the Plan period. The site's proximity to existing and planned education facilities has the potential to generate significant opportunities for local education. Furthermore, the new development would be in close proximity to a good range of health and recreation facilities.
- **Policy H13 Land North of Southend Road, Shotgate** scores a significant adverse effect on SA objectives 2 (cultural heritage) and significant positive effects on SA objectives 8 (health and wellbeing), 11 (access to services and facilities), 14 (greenhouse gas emissions), 15 (air, land and noise pollution) and 19 (traffic congestion). This is because the allocation is located in an area where the historic landscape and below ground deposits are considered highly sensitive to change. Despite this, significant positive effects are likely to be generated due to the allocations close proximity to existing and planned local services and facilities, including health and recreation facilities. The development's close proximity to these facilities are likely to make it easier for new residents to access them via less carbon intensive, healthier and noisy modes of transport than the private car, contributing to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, local air and noise pollution and traffic congestion.
- **Policy H14 Land South of Barn Hall, Wickford** scores significant adverse effects on SA objectives 2 (cultural heritage) and 12 (re-use of previously developed land and buildings) and a significant positive effect on SA objectives 8 (health and wellbeing) and 10 (regeneration). This is because the land allocated for development is greenfield land located in a historic landscape sensitive to change. Most of these adverse effects are uncertain until the exact design, form and layout of new housing proposals are known. However, the allocation falls within an area considered deprived with regard to the 'Barriers to Housing' criterion in the national Indices of Multiple Deprivation, creating the opportunity for significant regeneration. Furthermore, the new development would be in close proximity to a good range of health and recreation facilities.
- **Policy H15 Land North of London Road, Wickford** scores significant adverse effects on SA objectives 2 (cultural heritage), 3 (biodiversity) and 12 (re-use of previously developed land and buildings). This is because the allocation is located on greenfield land with ecological value and in close proximity to heritage assets. These adverse effects are uncertain until the exact design, form and layout of new housing proposals are known.
- **Policy H16 Land North East of Potash Road, Billericay** scores significant adverse effects on SA objectives 3 (biodiversity) and 12 (re-use of previously developed land and buildings). This is because the allocation is located on greenfield land with ecological value, within 1km of Norsey Wood SSSI. These adverse effects are uncertain until the exact design, form and layout of new housing proposals are known.
- **Policy H17 South West Billericay** scores significant adverse effects on SA objectives 1 (landscape, countryside and green spaces), 3 (biodiversity) and 12 (re-use of previously developed land and buildings) and significant positive effects on SA objectives 6 (education and social inclusion), 7 (meeting housing need), 8 (health and wellbeing), 11 (access to services and facilities), 14 (climate change), 15 (pollution) and 19 (traffic congestion). This is because portions of the greenfield land allocated in Policy H18 have no/very low capacity for development, and are located within 1km of Mill Meadows SSSI. These adverse effects are uncertain until the exact design, form and layout of the developments are known. Significant positive effects are likely to be generated through the development's close proximity to existing and planned health and recreation facilities, as well as the provision of a new primary school. The developments location makes it easier for new residents to access them via less carbon intensive, healthier and noisy modes of transport than the private car, contributing to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, local air and noise pollution and traffic congestion. The

policy provides a significant amount of housing, as well as a new relief road which will help reduce traffic congestion.

- **Policy H18 Land South of Windmill Heights, Billericay** scores a significant adverse effect on SA objectives 3 (biodiversity) and 12 (re-use of previously developed land and buildings) because these allocations are located on greenfield land designated as a Species Alert Area and within 1km of Mill Meadows SSSI and 1-2km of Norsey Wood SSSI. Significant positive effects on SA objectives 8 (health and wellbeing), 11 (access to services and facilities), 14 (greenhouse gas emissions), 15 (air, land and noise pollution) and 19 (traffic congestion) are expected to arise. The significant positive effects are likely to be generated through the developments' close proximity to existing and planned local services and facilities, including health and recreation facilities making it easier for new residents to access them via less carbon intensive, healthier and noisy modes of transport than the private car, contributing to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, local air and noise pollution and traffic congestion.
- **Policy H19 Land East of Greens Farm Lane, Billericay** scores significant adverse effects on SA objectives 2 (cultural heritage), 3 (biodiversity) and 12 (re-use of previously developed land and buildings) and a significant positive effect on SA objectives 8 (health and wellbeing) and 10 (regeneration). This is because the allocation is located within 1km of Mill Meadows SSSI and Norsey Wood SSI, as well as containing a Grade II listed building. These adverse effects are uncertain until the exact design, form and layout of new housing proposals are known. Significant positive effects are likely to be generated through the development's close proximity to existing and planned health and recreation facilities. Furthermore, the allocation falls within an area considered deprived with regard to the 'Barriers to Housing' criterion in the national Indices of Multiple Deprivation, creating the opportunity for significant regeneration.
- **Policy H20 Land East of Southend Road, Billericay** scores significant adverse effects on SA objectives 2 (cultural heritage) and 3 (biodiversity) and a significant positive effect on SA objective 8 (health and wellbeing). This is because the allocation is located within 1km of Mill Meadows SSSI, 1-2km of Norsey Wood SSSI, and contains two listed buildings. These adverse effects are uncertain until the exact design, form and layout of new housing proposals are known. Despite these adverse effects, significant positive effects are likely to be generated through the development's close proximity to existing and planned health and recreation facilities.
- **Policy H21 Self-Build Allocations** scores significant adverse effects on SA objectives 1 (landscape, countryside and green spaces), 2 (cultural heritage) and 3 (biodiversity). This is because two of the allocations within the policy (22a and 22b) sit within landscapes that are highly sensitive to development and change. Furthermore, 22c is located directly adjacent to Norsey Wood SSSI and 22a lies within 1km of Mill Meadows SSSI.
- **Policy H22 Housing Growth in Crays Hill** scores a significant adverse effect on SA objective 12 (re-use of previously developed land and buildings) and a significant positive effect on SA objective 10 (regeneration). This is because the allocations are largely located on greenfield land. However, the allocation falls within an area considered deprived with regard to the 'Barriers to Housing' criterion in the national Indices of Multiple Deprivation, creating the opportunity for significant regeneration.

1.109 **Table 4** shows the significant effects of the Publication Local Plan housing site allocations.

1.110 **Figures 5-15** show the potential effects of the site allocations (including mixed use allocations H5 and E5) are shown for the following SA objectives:

- Figure 5: Landscape, countryside and green spaces.
- Figure 6: Cultural heritage.
- Figure 7: Biodiversity.
- Figure 8: Education.
- Figure 9: Housing.
- Figure 10: Health and wellbeing.
- Figure 11: Regeneration and renewal of disadvantaged areas.

- Figure 12: Access to services and facilities.
- Figure 13: Re-use of previously developed land and buildings.
- Figure 14: Flood risk.
- Figure 15: Transport.

1.111 The figures illustrate the broad spatial variations in effects across the SA Framework. Therefore, SA objectives for which there is limited or no variation in effects have not been mapped.

Mitigation of significant adverse effects

1.112 The significant adverse effects identified under SA objectives 1 (landscape, countryside and green spaces), 2 (cultural heritage), 3 (biodiversity), 6 (education and social inclusion), 7 (meeting housing need), 8 (health and wellbeing), 12 (re-use of previously developed land and buildings), 13 (flood risk) and 19 (traffic congestion) are likely to be mitigated through the implementation of the measures outlined within the individual development draft allocation policies and draft strategic and development management policies, notably policies SD4, T1–T11, DES1–DES7, HC1–HC12, GB1–GB11, CC1–CC7, NE1–NE9 and HE1–HE5. The adverse effects generated by the scale of development planned for in Policy H1 against SA objectives 14 (climate change) and 19 (traffic congestion) are likely to be mitigated through the implementation of the measures outlined within the individual allocation policies and strategic and development management policies, notably policies T1–T11 and CC1–CC7.

1.113 The significant adverse effect generated against SA objective 7 (housing) for Policy H1 relates to the under provision of housing over the plan period. This effect can only be avoided through the delivery of more homes within existing site allocations or new site allocation in the Plan period. The significant adverse effects generate on SA objective 12 (re-use of previously developed land and buildings) will be difficult to mitigate for those allocations on greenfield land.

Reasonable alternatives

1.114 The policies in Chapter 11 generally score the same or better than their reasonable alternatives. However, there are a number of exceptions where the reasonable alternatives score better:

- **Policy H8** (previously referred to as H10 in the Draft Local Plan) scores less well than the majority of its reasonable alternatives, particularly against SA objectives 6 (education and social inclusion) and 7 (meeting housing need) because the site being developed is now much smaller than the area allocated in the Draft Local Plan. The reduction in the size of the allocation has resulted in a proportionate reduction in the number of homes provided. Furthermore, the policy no longer includes an employment allocation, which would have otherwise provided opportunities for work-based training and skills development. This original, larger option was not however included within the Publication Local Plan due to the potential risk of settlement coalescence which would arise if this option went ahead alongside the proposal in the emerging Brentwood Local Plan for the Dunton Hills Garden Village, adjacent to the Borough boundary. Work was undertaken to identify if, and how the landscape could be used and designed to create a visual separation between the two proposals. However, Brentwood Borough Council has not incorporated that work into their evidence base, and consequently the risk of settlement coalescence remains.
- **Policy H10** (previously referred to as H12 in the Draft Local Plan) scores less well than one of its reasonable alternatives: **3** – land north of Wash Road. Policy H10 scores worse than reasonable alternative 3, particularly against SA objectives 11 (access to services and facilities), 14 (greenhouse gas emissions) and 15 (air, land and noise pollution). This is because unlike alternative option 3, Policy H10 is not within easy walking distance of as good a range of existing and planned local services and facilities, including a local or neighbourhood centre. This is likely to increase the number of cars on the road, with adverse effects on pollution. The inclusion of H9 and H10 within the Publication Local Plan was for the purpose of ensuring that there was a sufficient pupil product in the Noak Bridge area to support the provision of additional primary school facilities. A lower level of provision would have failed to support the growth in provision needed, and would have resulted in the need for school children to travel out of the area.

- Policy H16** (previously referred to as H19 in the Draft Local Plan) scores less well than one of its reasonable alternatives (**3** – land to the west of Stock Road) against SA objectives 4 (economic regeneration) and 10 (regeneration). This is because Policy H17 covers a smaller area than alternative option 3, limiting its ability to deliver the same number of homes, facilities and services. Furthermore, the chosen allocation does not sit within an area considered to be below average on the indices of multiple deprivation, limiting its potential to contribute to the regeneration of the immediate area. However, it should be noted that alternative option 3 scored particularly poorly against SA objective 1 (landscape, countryside and green spaces) due to the particular sensitivity of the landscape in this location. Located further to the west and covering a smaller area, Policy H 17 is therefore considered to perform better in this regard. Furthermore, the judgement of the Council is that Green Belt harm is less significant at H17, as there is already development and incursions into the Green Belt to the north of Potash Road. Queen Park Road meanwhile provides a robust Green Belt boundary. Alternative option 3 would therefore bring about greater Green Belt harm.
- Policy H20** (previously referred to as H27 in the Draft Local Plan) has six reasonable alternatives: **1** – no allocation; **2** – lower density of development for 145 homes; **3** – land to the south east of South Green (site 31); **4** – land to the south east of South Green (site 32); **5** – land to the east of South Green; and **6** – an extension to include land to the east of Stroud Green. Policy H21 scores lower than alternative options 3 and 4 against SA objectives 3 (biodiversity) and 13 (flood risk). This is because alternative options 3 and 4 do not contain or sit adjacent to designated wildlife sites whereas Policy H21 does. Furthermore, alternative options 3 and 4 do not fall within Critical Drainage Areas. However, alternative option 3 has since been allocated as a self-build allocation under Policy H22. In isolation, Alternative option 4 could not deliver the number of homes proposed within Publication Policy H21 without significantly increasing the scale/size of the area identified for potential development. Increasing the scale of development in this location would likely generate more significant adverse effects against SA objective 1 (landscape, countryside and green spaces), being in a more open location and would narrow the gap between Billericay and Basildon to the south. It was the location of the site considered under option 4, and its potential impact on the openness of the Green Belt which resulted in it not being selected for inclusion.

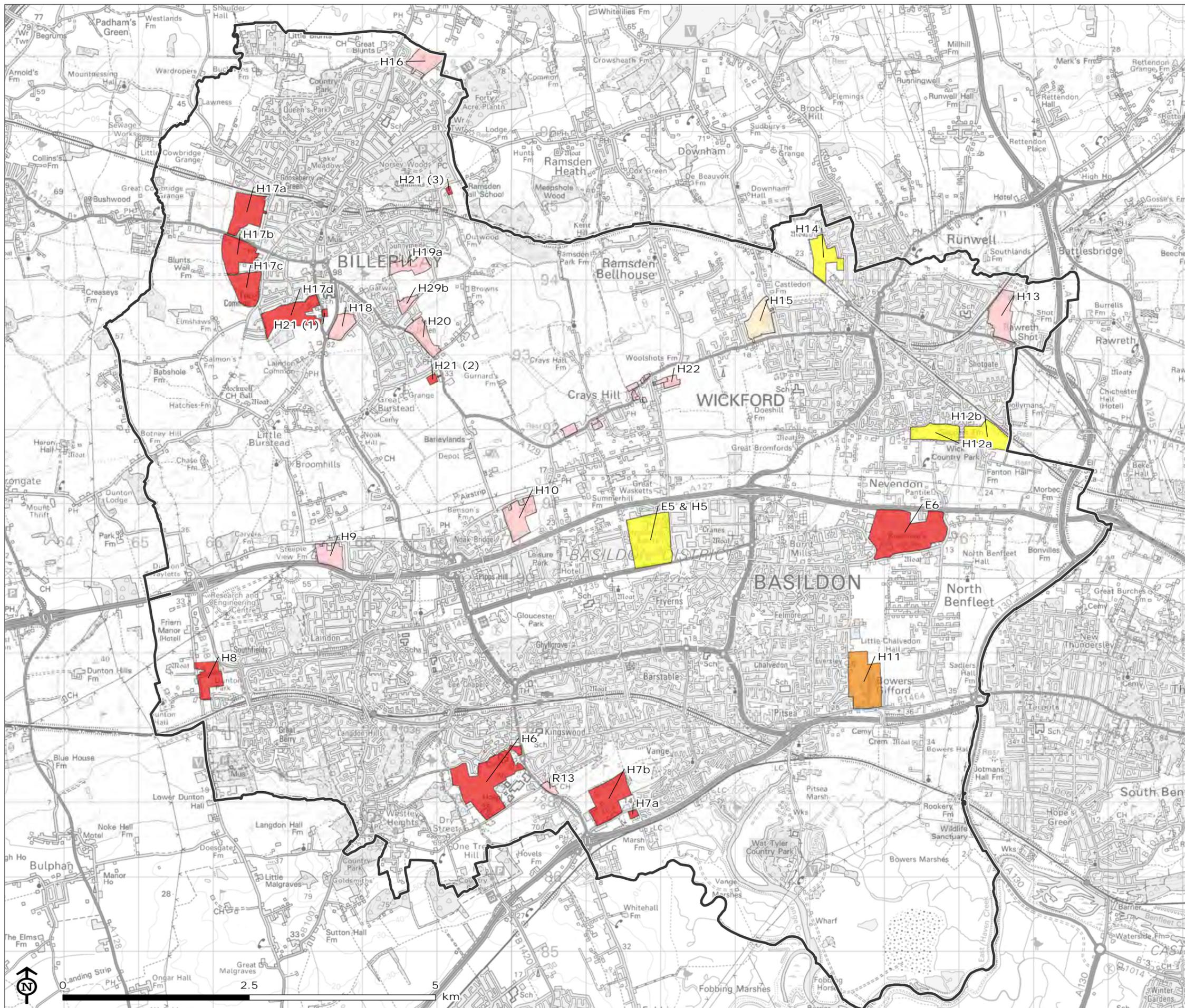
Table 4: SA scores for site allocation policies in Publication Local Plan Chapter 11 – Delivering a Wide Choice of High Quality Homes

SA Objectives	H4	H5	H6	H7	H8	H9	H10	H11	H12	H13	H14	H15	H16	H17	H18	H19	H20	H21	H22
1. Conserving and enhancing the diverse natural and urban landscape, countryside and green spaces, of Basildon Borough.	-/?	+/-/?	--/?	--/?	--/?	-/?	-/?	+/-/?	+/-/?	-/?	+/-/?	0/?	-/?	--/?	-/?	-/?	-/?	--/?	-/?
2. Protecting and enhancing the cultural heritage and local distinctiveness of Basildon Borough.	-/?	0/?	--/?	--/?	-/?	0/?	-/?	--/?	0/?	--/?	--/?	--/?	-/?	-/?	-/?	--/?	-/?	--/?	-/?
3. Protect, conserve and enhance the Borough's biodiversity and the habitats which support it.	-/?	-/?	-/?	+/-/?	-/?	-/?	+/-/?	+/-/?	+/-/?	+/-/?	+/-/?	+/-/?	+/-/?	+/-/?	+/-/?	+/-/?	+/-/?	+/-/?	+/-/?
4. Achieve sustainable levels of prosperity and economic growth to stimulate economic regeneration.	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	0	+
5. Ensure the Borough's Town Centres are promoted as sustainable locations for living, retail, leisure and related commercial development.	0	+/?	+/?	+/?	+/?	0/?	+/?	+/?	+/?	+/?	+/?	+/?	+/?	+/?	0/?	+/?	0/?	0	0
6. Improve educational attainment and social inclusion, especially in the most deprived areas of the Borough.	+	++	++	++	+	+	+	++	++	+	+	+	+	++	+	+	+	0	+
7. Ensure that everyone has the opportunity to live in a decent home and increase affordable provision to help those in most need locally.	++/-/?	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	++	+	+	+	+	++	+	+	0	0	0

SA Objectives	H4	H5	H6	H7	H8	H9	H10	H11	H12	H13	H14	H15	H16	H17	H18	H19	H20	H21	H22
8. Improve the health and wellbeing of the Borough's residents and reduce inequalities in health related to development and the environment.	+	++/?	++/?	++/?	++/?	+	++/?	++/?	++/?	++/?	++/?	+	+	++/?	++/?	++/?	++/?	0	+
9. Create and sustain vibrant communities that are safe and feel safe to those who live in or visit them and where crime is reduced.	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
10. Regenerate and renew disadvantaged areas where people live or work in the Borough.	+	++	++	++	++	++	++	++	+	+	++	+	+	+	+	++	0	+	++
11. Improve accessibility to and enhance local services and facilities.	+/-	+/?	++/?	++/?	+/?	-/?	-/?	+/?	+/?	++/?	+/?	-/?	-/?	++/?	++/?	+/?	+/?	0	-/?
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.	-/?	-	-	-	0	-	-	-	-	0	0	-/?	-	-/?	-	-	-	-	-
14. Reduce the local contribution to climate change, by reducing emissions of	-/?	+/?	++/?	+/?	+/?	-/?	-/?	+/?	+/?	++/?	+/?	-/?	-/?	++/?	++/?	+/?	+/?	0	-/?

SA Objectives	H4	H5	H6	H7	H8	H9	H10	H11	H12	H13	H14	H15	H16	H17	H18	H19	H20	H21	H22
greenhouse gases, improving energy efficiency of buildings and increase the use of renewable energy sources for local energy needs to reduce the reliance on fossil fuels.																			
15. Reduce air, land and noise pollution and improve their respective quality through direct action or mitigation measures.	+/- /?	+/?	++?	+/?	+/?	-/?	-/?	+/?	+/?	++/ ?	+/?	-/?	-/?	++/ ?	++/ ?	+/?	+/?	0	-/?
16. Improve water efficiency and achieve sustainable water resource management.	0?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	0	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	0
17. Adopt building and public realm designs which ensure the Borough is prepared for the effects of climate change.	0	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
18. Reduce waste generation and increase the amount of waste which is recycled or re-used.	0?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
19. Reduce traffic congestion and its related pollution levels by improving travel choice and channelling development to sustainable locations.	-/?	+/?	++/ ?	+/?	+/?	-/?	-/?	+/?	+/?	++/ ?	+/?	-/?	-/?	++/ -/?	++/ ?	+/?	+/?	0	-/?

Figure 5 Site Allocation Scores for SA Objective 1 -Landscape, Countryside & Green Spaces



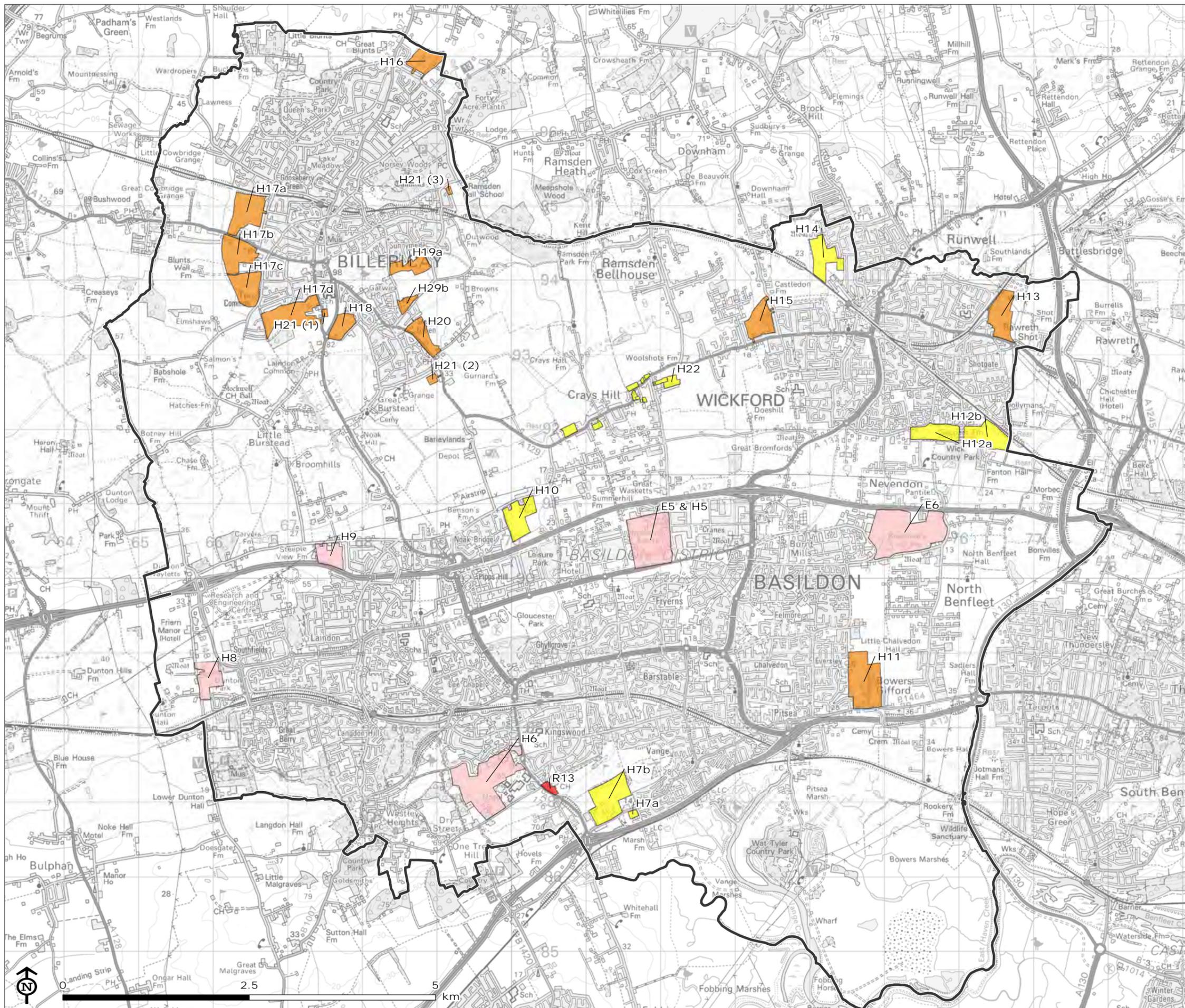
Basildon Borough boundary

Appraisal Scores

- +/+/?
- +/-/?
- 0/?
- /?
- /?

Map Scale @ A3: 1:50,000

Figure 7: Site Allocation Scores for SA Objective 3 - Biodiversity



Basildon Borough boundary

Appraisal Scores

- +/-/?
- /?
- +/-/?
- /?

Map Scale @ A3: 1:50,000

Figure 9: Site Allocation Scores for SA Objective 7 - Housing



Basildon Borough boundary

Appraisal Scores

- ++
- +
- 0

Map Scale @ A3: 1:50,000

Figure 10: Site Allocation Scores for SA Objective 8 - Health and Wellbeing



Basildon Borough boundary

Appraisal Scores

- ++/?
- +
- 0

Map Scale @ A3: 1:50,000

Figure 11: Site Allocation Scores for SA Objective 10 - Regeneration and Renewal of Disadvantaged Areas



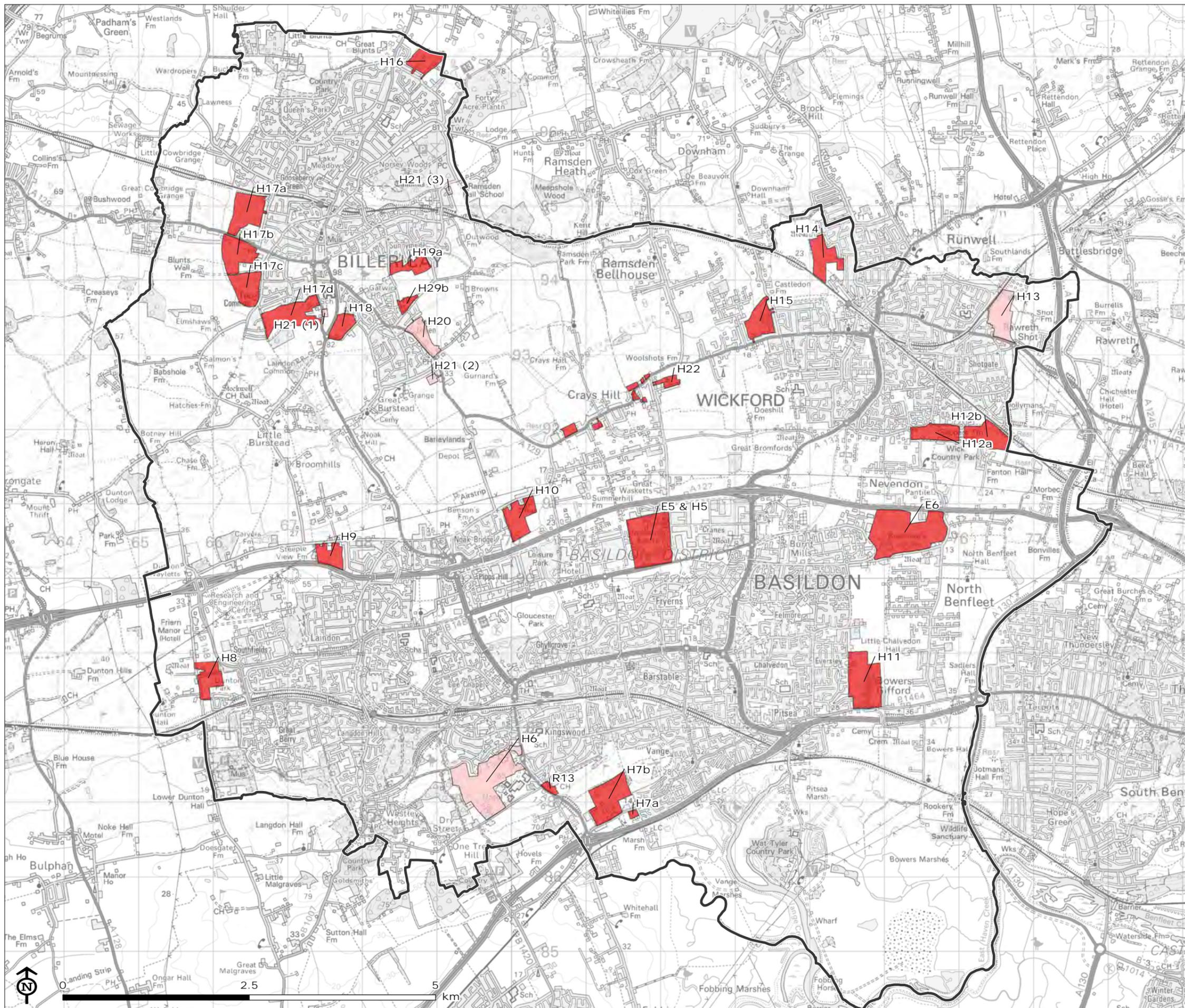
Basildon Borough boundary

Appraisal Scores



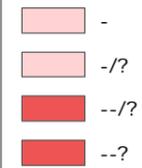
Map Scale @ A3: 1:50,000

Figure 13: Site Allocation Scores for SA Objective 12 - Re-use of Previously Developed Land and Buildings



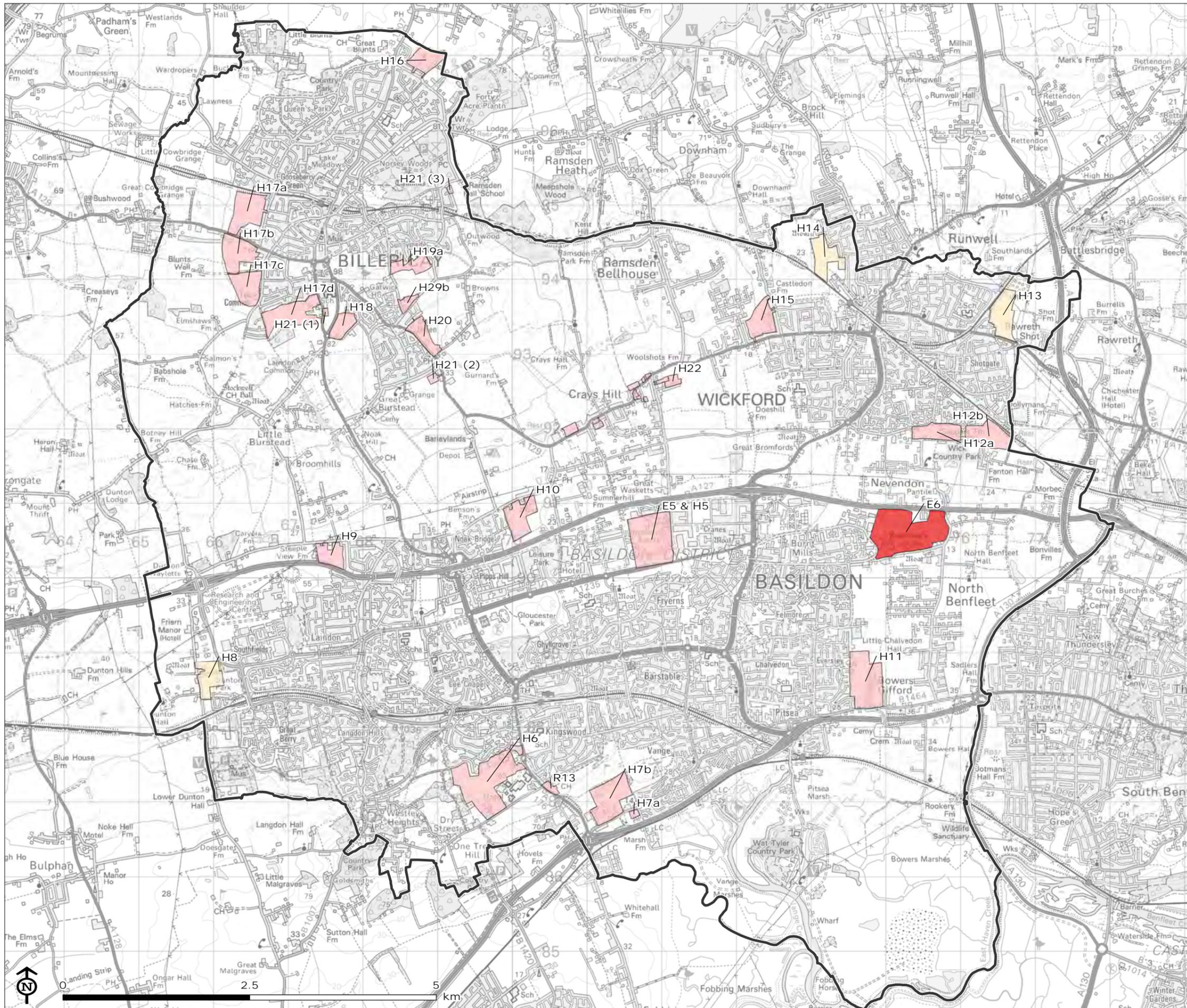
Basildon Borough boundary

Appraisal Scores



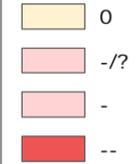
Map Scale @ A3: 1:50,000

Figure 14: Site Allocation Scores for SA Objective 13 - Flood Risk



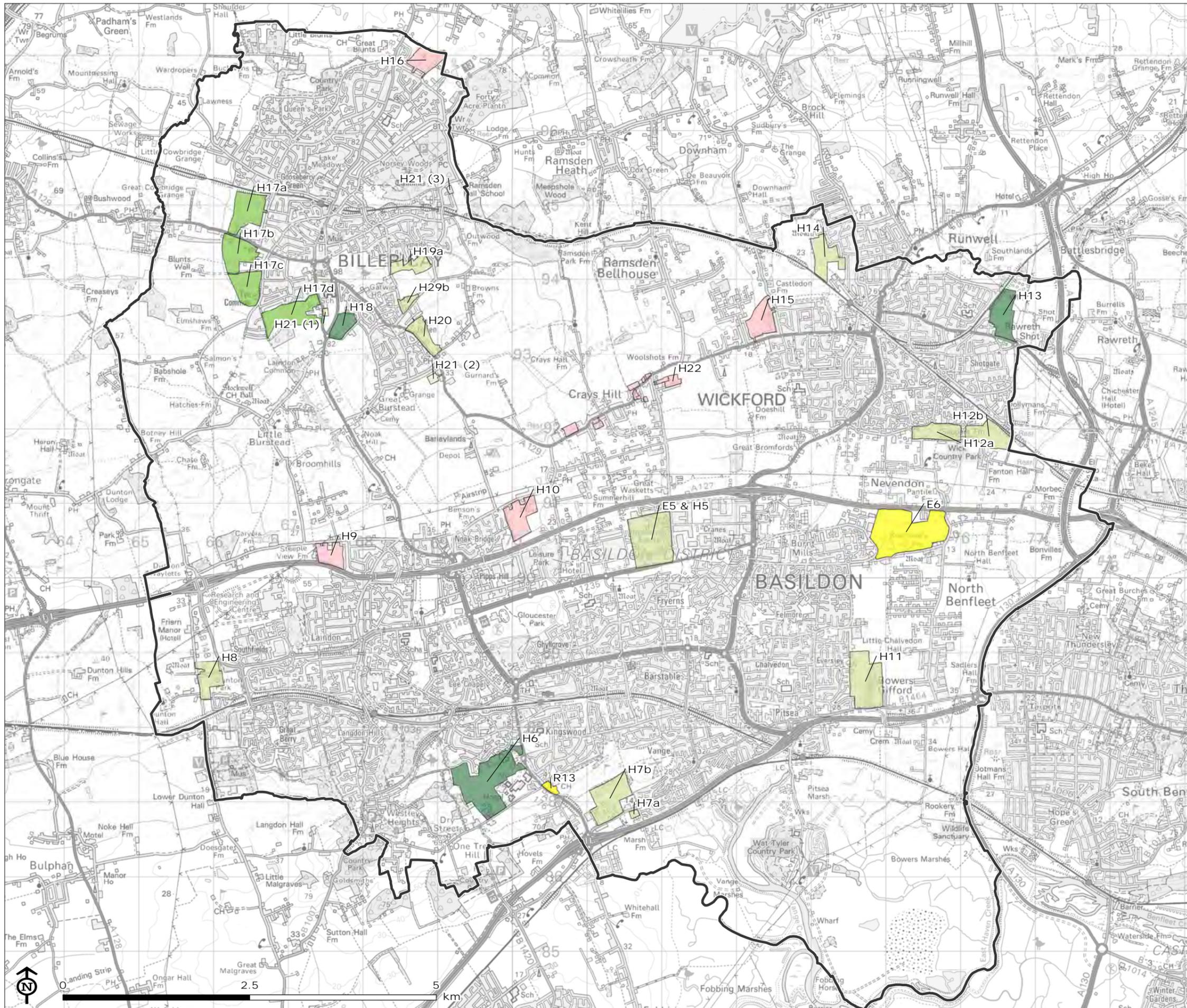
Basildon Borough boundary

Appraisal Scores



Map Scale @ A3: 1:50,000

Figure 15: Site Allocation Scores for SA Objective 19 - Transport



Basildon Borough boundary

Appraisal Scores

- ++/?
- +/+/?
- +/?
- +/-/?
- 0
- /?

Map Scale @ A3: 1:50,000

Publication Local Plan Chapter 12 – Requiring Good Design

- 1.115 The appraisal of Chapter 12's design policies identified the following significant effects:
- Significant positive effects for policies DES2 and DES4-DES6 against SA objective 1 (landscape, countryside and green spaces).
 - Significant positive effects for policies DES1, DES6 and DES7 against SA objective 2 (cultural heritage).
 - A significant positive effect for policy DES1 against SA objective 8 (health and wellbeing).
 - A significant positive effect for policies DES1 and DES7 against SA objective 9 (vibrant communities).

Mitigation of significant adverse effects

- 1.116 The sustainability appraisal of the Plan's seven policies within Chapter 12 identified no significant adverse effects.

Reasonable alternatives

- 1.117 The policies in Chapter 12 of the Publication Local Plan score the same or better than their equivalent policies in the Draft Local Plan.

Publication Local Plan Chapter 13 – Promoting Healthy Communities

- 1.118 The appraisal of Chapter 13's policies identified the following significant effects:
- Significant positive effects for policies HC1, HC2 and HC5-HC9 against SA objective 1 (landscape, countryside and green spaces).
 - A significant positive effect for policies HC5 and HC6 against SA objective 3 (biodiversity).
 - Significant positive effects for policies HC1, HC3 and HC10 against SA objective 6 (education and social inclusion).
 - Significant positive effects for policies HC1, HC5, HC6 and HC8 against SA objective 8 (health and wellbeing).
 - A significant positive effect for policy HC8 against SA objective 9 (community vibrancy).
 - A significant positive effect for policy HC1 against SA objective 10 (regeneration and renewal of disadvantaged areas).
 - Significant positive effects for policies HC1-HC6, HC8 and HC10 against SA objective 11 (access to services and facilities).

Mitigation of significant adverse effects

- 1.119 The sustainability appraisal of the preferred policies within Chapter 13 identified no significant adverse effects.

Reasonable alternatives

- 1.120 The policies in Chapter 13 of the Publication Local Plan score the same or better than their equivalent policies in the Draft Local Plan.

Publication Local Plan Chapter 14 – Protecting Green Belt Land

- 1.121 The appraisal of Chapter 14's Green Belt policies identified the following significant effects:
- Significant positive effects for policies GB1, GB5 and GB6, GB8 and GB11 against SA objective 1 (landscape, countryside and green spaces).
 - Significant positive effects for policies GB1, GB5, GB6, GB8 and GB11 against SA objective 2 (cultural heritage).
 - A significant positive effect for policies GB2 and GB11 against SA objective 3 (biodiversity).
 - A significant positive effect for policy GB10 against SA objective 4 (economic growth and regeneration).

- A significant positive effect for policy GB1 against SA objective 5 (town centres).
- Significant positive effects for policies GB2, GB4 and GB10 against SA objective 7 (meeting housing needs).
- Significant positive effects for policies GB1 and GB3 against SA objectives 10 (regeneration and renewal of disadvantaged areas) and 12 (re-use of previously developed land and buildings).
- A significant positive effect for policy GB11 against SA objective 12 (re-use of previously developed land and buildings).
- Significant adverse effects are identified for policies GB2 and GB4 against SA objective 1 (landscape, countryside and green spaces).
- Significant adverse effects for policies GB2 and GB4 against SA objective 13 (flood risk).

Mitigation of significant adverse effects

- 1.122 The significant adverse effects are likely to be mitigated through the implementation of other policies in the Local Plan.

Reasonable alternatives

- 1.123 The policies in Chapter 14 of the Publication Local Plan score the same or better than their equivalent policies in the Draft Local Plan.

Publication Local Plan Chapter 15 – Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change and Flooding

- 1.124 The appraisal of the chapter's seven policies identified the following significant effects:

- A significant positive effect for policy CC2 against SA objective 3 (biodiversity).
- A significant positive effect for policy CC1 against SA objective 11 (access to services and facilities).
- Significant positive effects for policies CC1-CC4 against SA objective 13 (flood risk).
- Significant positive effects for policies CC1, CC5 and CC7 against SA objective 14 (greenhouse gas emissions).
- Significant positive effects for policies CC1 and CC5 against SA objective 16 (water resources).
- A significant positive effect for policy CC1 against SA objective 17 (preparedness for the effects of climate change).
- A significant positive effect for policy CC5 against SA objective 18 (waste).
- A significant positive effect for policy CC1 against SA objective 19 (traffic congestion).

Mitigation of significant adverse effects

- 1.125 The sustainability appraisal of Chapter 15's policies identified no significant adverse effects.

Reasonable alternatives

- 1.126 All but one of the policies in Chapter 15 of the Publication Local Plan score the same or better than their equivalent policies in the Draft Local Plan. The exception is Policy CC7. The Draft Local Plan version of the policy included explicit reference to the need to demonstrate that proposals for new renewable energy infrastructure have no harm to landscape or significant features in the landscape, ecology or historic assets, local communities or the openness of the Green Belt. This text has been removed from the Publication version of the policy.

Publication Local Plan Chapter 16 – Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment

- 1.127 The appraisal of the Chapter 16 policies identified the following significant effects:

- Significant positive effects for policies NE1-NE5 and NE9 against SA objective 1 (landscape, countryside and green spaces).
- A significant positive effect for policy NE9 against SA objective 2 (cultural heritage).

- Significant positive effects for policies NE1-NE4 and NE9 against SA objective 3 (biodiversity).
- A significant positive for policy NE6 against SA objective 8 (health and wellbeing).
- A significant positive effect for policy NE9 against SA objective 10 (regeneration and renewal of disadvantaged areas).
- Significant positive effects for policies NE7 and NE9 against SA objective 12 (re-use of previously developed land and buildings).
- A significant positive effect for policy NE1 against SA objective 14 (greenhouse gas emissions).
- Significant positive effects for policies NE1 and NE6 against SA objective 15 (air, land and noise pollution).
- A significant positive effect for policy NE6 against SA objective 16 (water resources).
- A significant positive effect for policy NE1 against SA objective 17 (preparedness for the effects of climate change).

Mitigation of significant adverse effects

1.128 The sustainability appraisal of the policies in Chapter 16 identified no significant adverse effects.

Reasonable alternatives

1.129 The policies in Chapter 16 of the Publication Local Plan score the same or better than their equivalent policies in the Draft Local Plan.

Publication Local Plan Chapter 17 – Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment

1.130 The appraisal of the Publication Local Plan's five policies identified significant positive effects for SA objectives 1 (landscape, countryside and green spaces) and 2 (cultural heritage).

Mitigation of significant adverse effects

1.131 The sustainability appraisal of the five Chapter 17 policies in the Publication Local Plan identified no significant adverse effects.

Reasonable alternatives

1.132 The policies in Chapter 17 of the Publication Local Plan score the same or better than their equivalent policies in the Draft Local Plan.

Publication Local Plan Chapter 18 – Implementation

1.133 The appraisal of the Publication Local Plan's policies identified only one significant positive effect. This is for Policy IMP2 against SA objective 11 (access to services and facilities).

Mitigation of significant adverse effects

1.134 The sustainability appraisal of the four Chapter 18 policies in the Publication Local Plan identified no significant adverse effects.

Reasonable alternatives

1.135 The policies in Chapter 18 of the Publication Local Plan score the same or better than their equivalent policies in the Draft Local Plan.

Cumulative Effects

1.136 Provision of development through the Publication Local Plan has potential to result in a number of cumulative **significant positive** effects on the social and economic SA objectives, especially:

- Objective 4: Economic growth and regeneration.
- Objective 5: Town centres.
- Objective 6: Education and social inclusion.
- Objective 7: Meeting housing need.

- Objective 8: Health and wellbeing.
 - Objective 9: Vibrant communities.
 - Objective 10: Regeneration and renewal of disadvantaged areas.
- 1.137 Provision of at least 15,465 homes in Basildon falls short of that considered necessary to meet the needs of the Borough's communities and businesses over the Plan period. Consequently, a **significant adverse** effect is recorded for SA Objective 7: Meeting housing need.
- 1.138 The provision of at least 15,465 homes and 91.5ha of employment land supply (the total amount of employment land required to meet the Borough's 37ha of employment land need and a proportion of London's unmet employment land needs) in Basildon is likely to result in a number of **significant adverse** cumulative effects. These are predicted in respect of:
- Objective 13: Flood risk, although none of the individual allocations are considered to have significant adverse effects on this objective on their own, cumulatively, the significant amount of greenfield development proposed within the Plan has the potential to increase surface water run-off, which could generate significant effects. This is uncertain as the Plan's policies aim to manage flood risk arising from development.
 - Objective 15: Air, land and noise pollution (although effects are anticipated to be short term only).
 - Objective 19: Traffic congestion, although this is uncertain as the plan contains improvements to the highway network to address congestion issues identified through the detailed mitigation modelling of future transport scenarios.
- 1.139 **Significant mixed effects (+ + / - -)** are predicted in respect of the following SA objectives:
- Objective 1: Landscape, countryside and green spaces.
 - Objective 2: Cultural heritage.
 - Objective 3: Biodiversity.
 - Objective 11: Access to local services and facilities.
 - Objective 12: Re-use of previously developed land and buildings.
 - Objective 14: Greenhouse gas emissions.
- 1.140 A significant proportion of the growth planned within the Borough will be on greenfield land within the Borough's Green Belt, resulting in significant adverse effects on the Borough's wildlife, including protected species and habitats, natural and historic landscapes, townscapes and countryside. However, the Publication Local Plan prioritises the development and regeneration of previously developed land in the existing urban areas of the Borough's settlements and many of the strategic allocations promote and offer opportunities to enhance the setting and special characteristics of the Borough's historic and natural environment. The opportunities extend to actively managing and reducing the Borough's greenhouse gas emissions in the face of sustained and significant population growth through the construction of energy efficient and decentralised energy networks.
- 1.141 Residential development within the Borough is split roughly 50% to Basildon, 15% to Billericay and 20% to Wickford, with other extensions to the smaller settlements that sit in between and in the east of the Borough. Employment growth is largely focussed in Basildon. Consequently, it is expected that cumulative effects described above will be felt most significantly in and around Basildon, followed by Billericay and Wickford and, finally, the remaining rural areas.

In combination effects

- 1.142 In addition to the potential effects arising from development in Basildon through the Publication Local Plan, there is also potential for effects in combination with other development planned in neighbouring boroughs and districts as well as county-wide initiatives such as transport infrastructure projects and mineral and waste development within and adjacent to Basildon Borough.

- 1.143 A significant amount of development is proposed around Basildon Borough. This is likely to result in increased indirect pressure on Basildon's landscapes, green spaces and countryside, the Borough's biodiversity and could lead to further pressure on the historic environment.
- 1.144 The combined increase in traffic flows in Basildon and in neighbouring authorities could result in an intensification in noise and air pollution (including increased greenhouse gas emissions), which could in turn affect the health of existing and new residents. There is also potential for additional traffic congestion in the Borough.
- 1.145 Increased development outside the Borough could also exacerbate flood risk within the Borough, particularly to the north of the Borough.

Findings of the Habitats Regulations Assessment

- 1.146 The Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Report⁴ concluded that the Publication Draft Local Plan will not have an adverse effect on the integrity of European Sites, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects as a result of recreational impacts. European sites are those sites of international importance for nature conservation.

Reasons for Choosing the Publication Local Plan

- 1.147 The Publication Local Plan builds on the earlier work undertaken in respect of the Core Strategy and the Draft Local Plan. Consequently, the scale and spatial distribution do not vary significantly from that earlier work, and the general locations of development have remained broadly the same, although there is variations around specific sites in relation to their allocation and the extent of land to be provided. There are a number of matters that have contributed to the variations arising and the decisions taking in formulating the Publication Local Plan. These are as follows:
- The housing need in Basildon has increased by around 4,000 homes since that earlier work was undertaken. This has given rise to the Council having to scrutinise the deliverability of sites in more detail.
 - Given the increased need for housing the capacity of the urban area and the densities applied on development sites has been reviewed. The urban capacity has increased by over 2,000 homes as a consequence, whilst the land take from the current extent of the Green Belt has remained similar to that set out in the Draft Local Plan. Whilst the Publication Local Plan does not score well in relation to the use of Previously Developed Land as a consequence of the Green Belt take, the objective of the sustainability appraisal in this regard has driven the decision making process to ensure land is used effectively.
 - Considerations of Green Belt Harm and settlement coalescence have resulted in the extent of development to the west of the Basildon Urban area being reduced. This is largely to off-set the potential impact of the Dunton Hills Garden Village proposals adjacent to the Borough's boundary in Brentwood Borough.
 - Infrastructure delivery has also been a significant consideration. The proposals for Gardiners Lane South (H5), West Basildon (H8), Noak Bridge (H10), East Basildon (H11 and E6), South Wickford (H12) and South West Billericay (H17) are all aligned and predicated upon the delivery of key pieces of infrastructure including highways, schools and sports facilities. There are therefore instances where in order to create the critical mass or opportunities for infrastructure provision some environmental harm, primarily to the landscape has been accepted to enable this to occur.
 - Overall, however, the Council has sought to limit environmental harm to that of landscape harm through consideration of the sustainability appraisal and strategic environmental assessment, and other site specific assessments. Proposals within the Publication Local Plan therefore avoid areas of flood risk, and nature conservation designations, for example. Additionally, the site selection process has considered matters of sustainable accessibility, as detailed in the Sustainability Appraisal, in order to direct development to places where residents do not have to rely on the private car for every journey undertaken.

⁴ Basildon Local Plan Habitats Regulations Report, LUC, 2018

- This is not to say however that poor development would not still give rise to harm. Consequently, the Publication Local Plan has been used to introduce new requirements on development around good quality design, and mitigation of environmental harm. The recommendations of earlier versions of the sustainability appraisal have helped direct that policy development.

Monitoring

- 1.148 Monitoring should be focused on the significant sustainability effects that may give rise to irreversible damage (with a view to identifying trends before such damage is caused) and the significant effects where there is uncertainty in the SA and where monitoring would enable preventative or mitigation measures to be taken. A number of significant adverse and significant positive effects have been identified in relation to the Publication Local Plan (including significant mixed effects).
- 1.149 The Council has prepared a monitoring framework to monitor implementation of the policies in the Publication Local Plan⁵. Table 7.1 in full SA Report sets out a complimentary framework for monitoring potential significant effects arising from implementation of the Basildon Borough Publication Local Plan.

Conclusions

- 1.150 An SA report has been prepared to accompany the Regulation 19 Consultation for the Basildon Borough Publication Local Plan. The SA has sought to identify significant effects emerging from the Publication Local Plan in line with the SEA Regulations.
- 1.151 The Publication Local Plan does not plan for the delivery of enough dwellings to meet its objectively assessed housing needs (between 19,497 and 19,776 homes over 20 years). The Publication Local Plan plans to deliver at least 15,465 homes over the Plan period, creating the potential for a significant shortfall in the delivery of homes. However, in addition to the allocation of specific sites within the Local plan and additional housing numbers for the Bowers Gifford and North Benfleet and Ramsden Bellhouse Neighbourhood Plan Area, Policy SD2 of the Local Plan identifies two broad locations for potential housing growth which will be considered in the next review of the Local Plan once a sustainable development proposal has been identified that incorporates, and is supported by, the necessary infrastructure provision. One broad location lies to the south of Crays Hill, Billericay and another lies to the south of Wickford.
- 1.152 The Publication Local Plan plans for the delivery of at least 51ha of B-class employment land (37ha to meet the Borough's needs and an additional land to meet some London's unmet needs) during the period 2014-2034. In appreciating how the employment land market works, there is a need however to provide a contingency allowance to account for 'windfall losses' and 'churn'. Therefore, the Publication Local Plan plans to deliver a total land supply of 91.5ha to meet the need.
- 1.153 Delivering at least 15,465 dwellings and 91.5ha of employment land supply cannot be accommodated within the Borough without the release of Green Belt land. Therefore, the Publication Local Plan recognises that the majority of the Borough's housing needs and a significant proportion of the Borough's employment needs will need to be provided on sites on edge of the Borough's main settlements, requiring the extent of the Green Belt to be amended.
- 1.154 The Publication Local Plan allocates roughly 50% of the housing development allocated in Basildon, 15% to Billericay and 20% to Wickford, with other extensions to the smaller settlements that sit in between and to the east of the Borough. Employment growth is largely focussed in Basildon.
- 1.155 Although the Publication Local Plan seeks to maximise the amount of development to be delivered within the existing urban areas, the scale of development needed inevitably means that a significant amount of greenfield land, including Green Belt land, will need to be developed, leading to potential significant adverse effects on the landscape, biodiversity and cultural heritage,

⁵ Basildon Borough Council Local Plan Monitoring Framework, 2018

depending on the characteristics and sensitivity of the location of the site allocation. However, the alternatives to the allocations in the Publication Local Plan generally did not perform better against the SA objectives than those selected, and in many instances did not perform as well. The exceptions were those alternatives that proposed no or reduced development, which would result in no or fewer adverse environmental effects, but in these instances the social and economic benefits of the development would not be delivered. The allocation policies include delivery criteria that are designed to ensure that any significant adverse effects are minimised as far as possible. These delivery criteria are of particular importance:

- To the east of Basildon within and around the development allocation outlined in Policy H11 and SD3 (1,350 homes in the Bowers Gifford and North Benfleet Neighbourhood Plan Area), where the delivery of a landscape buffer between the settlements of Pitsea and Bowers Gifford is essential to avoid coalescence of these settlements by maintaining the integrity of this strategic gap as Green Belt, green infrastructure and open space.
- To the south west of Billericay within and around the consolidated development allocations outlined in Policy H17a-H17d, where the significant scale of development in this location will facilitate the delivery of a much needed relief road to alleviate congestion.

- 1.156 The larger scale developments will, in many instances, be capable of delivering a wider range of benefits than smaller developments, such as the inclusion of new community facilities or investment community facilities (e.g. local schools and healthcare), support for public transport, and in some allocations the incorporation of employment land to allow for mixed-uses.
- 1.157 The Publication Local Plan seeks to offer policy guidance and criteria on how development will be planned, delivered and managed, in order to ensure that the social, economic and environmental benefits that the Basildon Local Plan aims to deliver are actually delivered in practice. There will need to be considerable investment in infrastructure, including green infrastructure, transport and community services and facilities, and also water and sewerage services. The funding and timing of this investment will influence the phasing of delivery of the housing and employment land.
- 1.158 It also needs to be borne in mind that Basildon does not exist in isolation. Like Basildon, neighbouring districts and boroughs are also planning to deliver considerable amounts of development. This will result in in-combination effects, which will give the impression of increased urbanisation, and put pressure on resources, such as water, and on ecological networks. It is therefore important that the districts and boroughs continue to work closely together on the South Essex Joint Spatial Plan to make sure that their plans are co-ordinated to provide an integrated approach to maintaining and enhancing quality of life for all their residents, and to ensure that a rich, high quality and resilient environment is created.

Next steps

- 1.159 Following consultation on the soundness of the Publication Local Plan, the Local Plan will be submitted to the Secretary of State to be examined by the Planning Inspectorate. Assuming the Local Plan is found sound by the independent Planning Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State, and subject to modifications which may need to be subject to further SA work and public consultation, the Council expect the Local Plan to be adopted in 2019.

LUC

October 2018