

Farnham Neighbourhood Plan

(Regulation 15)

Sustainability Appraisal/ Strategic Environmental Assessment Non Technical Summary

Farnham Town Council

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Section 1 Introduction

This Non-technical Summary provides a summary of the Sustainability Appraisal, which incorporates Strategic Environmental Assessment, of the Regulation 15 Farnham Neighbourhood Plan. It summarises the stages of Sustainability Appraisal undertaken and provides a brief overview of key sustainability issues facing the Neighbourhood Plan area and a summary of the findings of the Sustainability Appraisal assessment of the Neighbourhood Plan development options and policies.

Detailed findings, along with a full list of plans, policies and programmes that have influenced development of the policies and the Sustainable Appraisal Objectives, along with the baseline information and consultation responses can be found in the full Sustainability Appraisal/ Strategic Environmental Assessment.

What is Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Appraisal?

To help ensure that the Farnham Neighbourhood Plan is sustainable, it is best practice in the UK to undertake a Sustainability Appraisal (SA). An SA is a process that aims to predict and then assess the economic, environmental and social effects likely to arise from the adoption of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Where a neighbourhood plan could have significant environmental effects, it may fall within the scope of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 and so require a strategic environmental assessment (SEA). In April 2016, Waverley Borough Council issued a screening opinion that an SEA was required to be undertaken for the Farnham Neighbourhood Plan.

One of the basic conditions that will be tested by the independent examiner of a Neighbourhood Plan is whether the making of the plan is compatible with European Union obligations (including under the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive).

SEA is a process for identifying the environmental impacts likely to arise from the Plan. As both the SA and the SEA aim to predict and assess the impacts of plans, they are usually combined to avoid duplication. They are referred to as the SA/SEA. It is the intention that the SA/SEA will be used as the basis for appraising the Neighbourhood Plan, and proposes the methodology that will be used to do this.

An SA/SEA Scoping Report was published in September 2014 outlining the main issues that will need to be considered when planning development in Farnham. A SA/SEA accompanied the Regulation 14 Neighbourhood Plan in October 2014 and now accompanies the Regulation 15 Farnham Neighbourhood Plan.

Methodology of Sustainability Appraisal/ Strategic Environmental Assessment

The methodology of the SA/ SEA conforms with current national planning practice guidance (on strategic environmental assessment and sustainability appraisal (updated February 2015)).

Whilst early public engagement took place on the potential issues for the Neighbourhood Plan, a review was undertaken of the planning policies affecting Farnham. In addition, social, economic and environmental information (baseline data) was collected and analysed. This information was collected from local studies; public engagement on the Farnham Neighbourhood Plan carried out in 2012 and 2013, and other evidence published at District and County levels. The policy review and baseline data were taken

into consideration in drawing up a list of key issues affecting Farnham and a set of sustainability objectives.

This process was written up in the SA Scoping Report, which was put out for public consultation in Summer 2014. The Scoping Report included a summary of the baseline data, the implications of concurrent plans, policies and programmes on Farnham; proposed Sustainability Objectives and monitoring indicators. The Scoping Report also described the proposed methodology for undertaking the SA/SEA of the draft Neighbourhood Plan. The Scoping Report was circulated for consultation with statutory consultees and interested parties during the summer 2014. The consultation responses were then considered and, where appropriate, amendments were incorporated into a Final Scoping Report (September 2014).

The next step was the preparation of the draft Farnham Neighbourhood Plan (FNP) (Regulation 14) SA/SEA. First the draft FNP Objectives were tested for compatibility with the sustainability objectives. Then a range of policy options were each tested against the sustainability objectives. Each policy option was scored according to whether its impact on the Objective would be: significantly negative, minor negative, no impact, uncertain impact, minor positive or significantly positive. In addition, where potential impacts were identified on sustainability objectives, recommendations were made to remove or reduce negative impacts and enhance positive ones. Where possible, these recommendations were taken into account in preparing the draft FNP. In some cases, in order to increase the positive impacts of the draft policies and to reduce their negative impacts, recommendations were made for the Regulation 15 Submission Neighbourhood Plan. The cumulative impact of all the policies in the FNP were considered, as has the possible impact of any major developments proposed in Waverley and in neighbouring districts.

The final step has been the preparation of the Submission Farnham Neighbourhood Plan (Regulation 15) SA/SEA. A topic-based assessment of the Farnham Baseline situation and Key Issues has been updated for the SA/SEA and can be reviewed in Appendix 1 of the SA/SEA. As with the Regulation 14 Neighbourhood Plan, the FNP Objectives have been tested for compatibility with the sustainability objectives. Given the updated Baseline and evidence base, and the emerging Local Plan, a range of policy options have been tested against the sustainability objectives. Each policy option is scored according to whether its impact on the objective would be: significantly negative, minor negative, no impact, uncertain impact, minor positive or significantly positive. Specific Neighbourhood Plan policies have been tested in the same way. Where possible, these recommendations, together with those made in the SA/SEA accompanying the Regulation 14 Neighbourhood Plan, have been taken into account in preparing the Regulation 15 Submission Neighbourhood Plan in order to increase the positive impacts of the policies and to reduce their negative impacts. The cumulative impacts of all the policies in the FNP were considered, as has the possible impact of any major developments proposed in Waverley and in neighbouring districts.

Section 2: Key Sustainability Issues

The baseline situation and key issues were updated for the SA/SEA and are set out below:

Key Issues for Farnham

Housing

There is a need to ensure that there is adequate housing available in a range of sizes and tenures to meet local needs whilst protecting the local environment and quality of life, including smaller homes, student housing and specialist elderly housing schemes.

Identifying suitable, sustainable locations to meet housing requirements.

Landscape and Open Space

Local residents fear the coalescence of settlements which would harm settlement identity and character.

Pressures to build housing or other built development could threaten valued areas of open space, views, the landscape setting of Farnham and accessibility to the countryside .

Traffic and transport infrastructure are harmful to landscape character.

The urban fringe around Farnham and along the A31 corridor could be enhanced.

Local consultation indicates that Farnham Park and its historic setting, Bishops Meadow and Gostrey Meadow are particularly valued open spaces.

Jobs and Employment

There is a level of commuting out of the County.

Demand for housing or other uses could result in the loss of some employment space.

Redevelopment in and around East Street could provide opportunities to enhance the mix of uses and quality of the environment in the town centre, but there is local concern about the design and mix of uses as proposed.

The future of the Woolmead and vacant sites.

Retention of independent retailers and neighbourhood centres that reduce the need to travel by car.

Retention of a mix of employment opportunities to promote a vibrant local economy.

Support for small businesses and agricultural diversification.

Perceived shortage of high quality employment sites.

Tourism is based on visitors to the historic centre and attractions

Transport

Heavy volumes of traffic on major routes and passing through Farnham town centre causing congestion at peak times and contributing to climate change, pollution, loss of amenity and creating safety issues.

Future development in and outside Farnham has the potential to exacerbate existing road traffic issues.

Large vehicles and heavy traffic on rural roads.

Poor environment for pedestrians and cyclists at some locations.

Heavy goods vehicles unloading on the road.

Challenges created by narrow, historic roads in handling volume of traffic, developing safe cycle and pedestrian routes and promoting public transport.

Parking issues in the town centre.

Infrastructure

Existing and future pressure on the road and rail transport systems and for parking.

Congestion in central Farnham.

The need for safe networks and crossings for cyclists and pedestrians.

Pressure on school places for the current and predicted populations.

Open space provision generally good but some deficiencies in recreation open space.

Shortage of facilities for young people.

Improvements to broadband/technical infrastructure.

Protection and expansion of cultural facilities.

Ensuring any new development is supported by adequate infrastructure development including water supply and waste water treatment.

The potential impact of large scale developments in surrounding towns.

Pollution

An Air Quality Management Area has been designated in Farnham due to Nitrogen Dioxide emissions mainly from traffic.

The chemical quality of the River Wey and Blackwater River is currently good but the ecological quality is moderate/poor.

Ecology and Biodiversity

Farnham incorporates several areas of local or national natural conservation interest and is within the buffer zone of European SPAs and a SAC.

The variety of local habitats including farmland, woodland, water features, heathland and urban green spaces encourages a wide diversity of flora and fauna including priority species.

There are several areas within Farnham which could be improved to enhance their ecology and biodiversity.

Identifying suitable SANG provision.

Design and Heritage

Maintaining the character of distinct areas in and around Farnham.

Promotion of good design.

Water

Farnham suffers from water stress along with the rest of the South East region of England

The need to reduce flood risk and the impact of flooding now and in the future.

The increased pressure on water resources likely to occur with future development in Farnham and in neighbouring areas.

The need to improve water quality and the biodiversity value of water features.

Energy

Absence of information on the scope for non-renewable technologies in Farnham.

Community-scale energy schemes could be viable in Farnham.

Landscape impacts mean that large scale renewable technologies are likely to be inappropriate in Farnham.

Climate Change

The principal effects of climate change in Farnham will be rising temperatures, impacts on water resources, particularly the frequency and severity of flooding and impacts on biodiversity.

Climate change measures will need to address the causes of climate change, mitigation of its effects and adaptation.

Carbon emissions from domestic and industrial sources and from traffic contribute to global warming.

Section 3: Sustainability Objectives

The Sustainability Objectives for Farnham Neighbourhood Plan were derived from a review of policies and documents including the Waverley Borough Sustainability Objectives; an understanding of the key issues facing Farnham and consultation with the Environment Agency; Historic England and Natural England

The Sustainability Objectives for Farnham are as follows:

1.	To ensure that everyone has the opportunity to live in a decent and affordable home of the appropriate size, type and tenure.
2.	To protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment, the town's open spaces and high quality and sensitive landscape and prevent the coalescence of settlements.
3.	To promote opportunities for employment within the Town and support Farnham town centre, local businesses and tourism.
4.	To reduce the need to travel by car for local journeys, reduce road congestion, improve air quality and improve and promote travel by cycle and on foot within the Town.
5.	To ensure adequate amenities for local residents, including health, education, local shopping and leisure facilities.
6.	To conserve and enhance biodiversity and prevent any significant adverse effect on sites of national and international importance.
7.	To ensure development complements the character of the town's individual neighbourhoods.
8.	To maintain and improve the water quality of the Town's watercourses and to achieve sustainable water resources management.
9.	To reduce and manage the risk of flooding and any consequential harmful impacts to public wellbeing, the local economy and the environment.
10.	To increase energy efficiency and the proportion of energy generated from renewable sources in the Town and to utilize sustainably produced and local products in new developments where possible.
11.	To reduce the Town's impact on climate change and prepare the community and environment for its impacts.
12.	To conserve and enhance the historic environment, heritage assets and their settings and the distinctive built heritage of the area.

Section 4: Testing the Neighbourhood Plan Objectives

To ensure that the Neighbourhood Plan is sustainable, it is necessary to test the objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan against the Sustainability Objectives.

Neighbourhood Plan Objectives

Environment

- To conserve and enhance the distinctive built heritage of the area.
- To ensure development is well designed and takes into account the distinctive character and heritage of each of Farnham's individual areas.
- To protect the identity and distinctive character of the different areas of Farnham and prevent the coalescence of Farnham and Aldershot; Badshot Lea and Weybourne; Rowledge and Wrecclesham, Rowledge and Boundstone and Rowledge and Frensham
- To protect and enhance the landscape around the town including the Surrey Hills AONB; areas of high landscape value and sensitivity; Farnham Park and its historic setting and the well wooded arcadian character of south Farnham
- To protect and enhance and improve connectivity between important green spaces of the whole town, including the strategically important Farnham Park, the Bishops Meadow and the Wey corridor
- To retain and extend the diversity of wildlife and habitats throughout the Neighbourhood Plan area
- To maintain the integrity of all Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and SSSIs

Housing

- To ensure an adequate supply and mix of housing to meet strategically identified needs within the identified environmental constraints of Farnham.'
- To make the best and effective use of brownfield sites
- To ensure the development of greenfield sites is well integrated with the adjoining countryside by retaining and enhancing landscape features (such as woodland, hedgerows, mature trees, watercourses and ponds) and providing a good standard of amenity space and sensitive landscape edges

Employment

- To support a balanced local economy with a thriving town centre office sector and a range of business units (including for creative industries) with good access around Farnham
- To retain and regenerate well located existing employment sites

Farnham Town Centre and Local Centres

- To retain and enhance the attractive historic market town centre as the economic and social hub of Farnham
- To retain a range of unit sizes within the town centre to promote a variety of retailers, including independent stores, and a thriving evening economy with a range of pubs and restaurants
- To protect the clusters of shops and services at neighbourhood centres serving the local communities of Farnham

Leisure and Wellbeing

- To protect and enhance public green spaces used for recreational purposes throughout the area, including links between open spaces and leisure activities, and ensure new provision in association with new development
- To improve sports provision in and around Farnham

- To protect the cultural attractions of the town

Infrastructure

- To ensure sufficient infrastructure capacity is provided in a timely manner, appropriate to the scale of new development
- To ensure new development is well connected to the facilities of Farnham by a range of transport modes, including walking, cycling and public transport and, where appropriate, makes suitable provision towards new sustainable transport infrastructure
- To improve air quality within the town centre
- To ensure Farnham’s extensive network of footpaths, bridleways and cycle ways is protected and where possible extended through new development to continue to provide access to local facilities and the countryside
- To increase school places at all levels
- To ensure sufficient sewage treatment capacity is available to serve new development.

Testing the Neighbourhood Plan Objectives

A matrix was prepared testing each Neighbourhood Plan Objective against each SA Objective. The key to the matrix is as follows:

	Objectives are compatible
	Compatibility is unclear
	Objectives are incompatible
	No obvious relationship between the objectives

Neighbourhood Plan Objectives	Sustainability Objectives											
	Homes	Landscape/ Open Space	Employment/Centres	Transport/Air Quality	Amenities	Biodiversity	Character	Water Resources/ Quality	Flooding	Energy Efficiency	Climate Change	Heritage
1	Orange	Green	Orange	Green	Orange	Green	Green	Green	Green	Orange	Orange	Green
2	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Orange	Green	Green	Green
3	Orange	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
4	Orange	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
5	Orange	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
6	Orange	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
7	Orange	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
8	Green	Orange	Orange	Orange	Green	Orange	Green	Orange	Orange	Orange	Orange	Orange
9	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Orange
10	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
11	Orange	Orange	Green	Orange	Green	Orange	Green	Green	Orange	Orange	Orange	Green
12	Orange	Orange	Green	Orange	Green	Orange	Green	Green	Orange	Orange	Orange	Green
13	Green	Green	Green	Orange	Green	Green	Green	Green	Orange	Orange	Orange	Green
14	Orange	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
15	Orange	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
16	Orange	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
17	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
18	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
19	Green	Orange	Green	Orange	Green	Orange	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Orange
20	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
21	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
22	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green
23	Green	Green	Green	Orange	Green	Orange	Green	Green	Green	Orange	Orange	Green
24	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green	Green

Summary of Comparison of Objectives

The appraisal of the compatibility between the Neighbourhood Plan objectives and the SA objectives revealed no contradictions. Most of the Neighbourhood Plan Objectives are compatible with the Sustainability Objectives. Overall, it demonstrates that the Neighbourhood Plan Objectives are broadly sustainable. No objectives are considered to be incompatible. All of the Sustainability Objectives are addressed by the Neighbourhood Plan Objectives.

Overall, there is good compatibility between the Neighbourhood Plan objectives and the SA/ SEA objectives.

Section 5: Sustainability Appraisal of Development Options

The SA/ SEA describes how there has been an appraisal of development options. The SEA Directive requires the appraisal to appraise 'reasonable development alternatives'. The likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the Neighbourhood Plan and reasonable alternatives taking into account the objectives and the geographical scope of the plan, should be identified, described and evaluated (Article 5(1) of the Directive).

In the light of the updated baseline situation and evidence base, and the emerging Local Plan, it has been possible to identify a number of reasonable alternative strategic approaches to planning Farnham over the period to 2031. Reasonable alternatives have been identified and appraised for the following:

- housing growth: the number of homes to be developed
- economic development growth
- strategic distribution of development at Farnham

Such options have been tested against the sustainability objectives identified in the SA/SEA.

Housing Growth: the number of homes to be developed

What are the reasonable alternatives?

The following reasonable alternatives were derived:

- very limited additional housing within the Plan area. (Alternative 1.1).
- a minimum of 2214 new homes within the Plan area (Alternative 1.2)
- significantly exceeding 2214 new homes in Farnham, meeting a large portion of the Borough's identified housing need of 9861 dwellings (Alternative 1.3).

The SA/ SEA examines the impacts of each alternative to assist the Town Council in selecting the appropriate provision of additional housing. The alternatives were tested against the SA/ SEA objectives.

Housing Growth Alternatives	Alternative 1.1 Very limited additional housing within the Plan area	Alternative 1.2 Approximately 2214 new homes within the Plan area	Alternative 1.3 Meeting a large portion of the Borough's identified housing need in the Plan area
SA/ SEA Objective			
1 To ensure that everyone has the opportunity to live in a decent and affordable home of the appropriate size, type and tenure.	--	++	++
2 To protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment, the town's open spaces and high quality and sensitive landscape and prevent the coalescence of settlements.	++	+	--
3 To promote opportunities for employment within the Town and support Farnham town centre, local businesses and tourism.	--	+	+
4 To reduce the need to travel by car for local journeys, reduce road congestion, improve air quality and improve and promote travel by cycle and on foot within the Town.	--	-	--
5 To ensure adequate amenities for local residents, including health, education, local shopping and leisure facilities.	?	?	?
6 To conserve and enhance biodiversity and prevent any significant adverse effect on sites of national and international importance.	++	+	--
7 To ensure development complements the character of the town's individual neighbourhoods.	++	+	--
8 To maintain and improve the water quality of the Town's watercourses and to achieve sustainable water resources management.	?	?	?
9 To reduce and manage the risk of flooding and any consequential harmful impacts to public wellbeing, the local economy and the environment.	++	+	--
10 To increase energy efficiency and the proportion of energy generated from renewable sources in the Town and to utilize sustainably produced and local products in new developments where possible.	?	?	?
11 To reduce the Town's impact on climate change and prepare the community and environment for its impacts.	+	-	--
12 To conserve and enhance the historic environment, heritage assets and their settings and the distinctive built heritage of the area.	++	+	--

SCORE	DESCRIPTION	SYMBOL
Significant Positive Effect	The development alternative contributes significantly to the achievement of the objective	++
Minor Positive Effect	The development alternative contributes to the achievement of the objective but not significantly	+
Neutral	The development alternative does not have any effect on the achievement of the objective	0
Minor Negative Effect	The development alternative detracts from the achievement of the objective but not significantly	-
Significant Negative Effect	The development alternative detracts significantly from the achievement of the objective	--
No Relationship	There is no clear relationship between the development alternative and the achievement of the objective or the relationship is negligible	/
Uncertain	The effect on the objective is uncertain and subject to implementation	?

Which is the most sustainable alternative?

In summary, whilst Alternative 1.1 would achieve a number of environmental objectives through a lack of development, it would have significant negative effects on the opportunity to live in a decent and affordable home of the appropriate size, type and tenure; supporting the Town and Neighbourhood Centres and local employment and the need to travel by car and air pollution. Alternatives 1.2 and 1.3 can be shown to have a significant positive effect on the opportunity to live in a decent and affordable home of the appropriate size, type and tenure. The amount of housing included within Alternative 1.2 means that significant negative environmental impacts can be avoided and the protection, and potential enhancement of some of the Plan area's environmental assets means that this Alternative should have minor positive impacts in these environmental objectives. However, Alternative 1.3 would have significant negative impacts on a wide range of environmental objectives, including biodiversity without sufficient identified SANG. In addition, without significant additional employment growth (which in turn would also have significant negative impacts on environmental objectives) there would be likely to be significant negative impacts on reducing the need to travel by car and air quality.

For the reasons set out above, the preferred alternative for the Neighbourhood Plan is a housing provision of approximately 2214 new homes within the Plan area.

Economic Development Growth

What are the reasonable alternatives?

The following reasonable alternatives were derived:

- to help to meet the economic needs of the Borough by following the policy Approach of the emerging Local Plan must represent a reasonable alternative for the Neighbourhood Plan (Alternative 2.1).
- to set a low level of economic development provision within the Plan area (with need met elsewhere in the Borough or beyond) should therefore be tested as a reasonable alternative (Alternative 2.2)
- to significantly exceed the projected economic development needs in Farnham, meeting a large portion of the Borough's identified economic development need (Alternative 2.3).

Appraisal of Economic Development Alternatives

The SA/ SEA examines the impacts of each alternative to assist the Town Council in selecting the appropriate provision of additional housing. The alternatives were tested against the SA/ SEA objectives.

Economic Development Alternatives	Alternative 2.1 Assist meeting the economic needs of the Borough by following the policy approach of the emerging Local Plan	Alternative 2.2 Low level of economic development provision	Alternative 2.3 Meeting a large portion of the Borough's identified economic development need in the Plan area
SA/ SEA Objective			
1 To ensure that everyone has the opportunity to live in a decent and affordable home of the appropriate size, type and tenure.	0	0	0
2 To protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment, the town's open spaces and high quality and sensitive landscape and prevent the coalescence of settlements.	+	++	--
3 To promote opportunities for employment within the Town and support Farnham town centre, local businesses and tourism.	++	--	++
4 To reduce the need to travel by car for local journeys, reduce road congestion, improve air quality and improve and promote travel by cycle and on foot within the Town.	-	--	--
5 To ensure adequate amenities for local residents, including health, education, local shopping and leisure facilities.	+	-	+
6 To conserve and enhance biodiversity and prevent any significant adverse effect on sites of national and international importance.	+	++	--
7 To ensure development complements the character of the town's individual neighbourhoods.	+	++	--
8 To maintain and improve the water quality of the Town's watercourses and to achieve sustainable water resources management.	?	?	?
9 To reduce and manage the risk of flooding and any consequential harmful impacts to public wellbeing, the local economy and the environment.	-	-	--
10 To increase energy efficiency and the proportion of energy generated from renewable sources in the Town and to utilize sustainably produced and local products in new developments where possible.	?	?	?
11 To reduce the Town's impact on climate change and prepare the community and environment for its impacts.	-	+	--
12 To conserve and enhance the historic environment, heritage assets and their settings and the distinctive built heritage of the area.	+	++	--

SCORE	DESCRIPTION	SYMBOL
Significant Positive Effect	The development alternative contributes significantly to the achievement of the objective	++
Minor Positive Effect	The development alternative contributes to the achievement of the objective but not significantly	+
Neutral	The development alternative does not have any effect on the achievement of the objective	0
Minor Negative Effect	The development alternative detracts from the achievement of the objective but not significantly	-
Significant Negative Effect	The development alternative detracts significantly from the achievement of the objective	--
No Relationship	There is no clear relationship between the development alternative and the achievement of the objective or the relationship is negligible	/
Uncertain	The effect on the objective is uncertain and subject to implementation	?

Which is the most sustainable alternative?

In summary, whilst Alternative 2.2 would achieve a number of environmental objectives through a lack of development, it would have significant negative effect on promoting opportunities for employment within the Town and supporting Farnham town centre, local businesses and tourism and the need to travel by car and air pollution. Alternatives 2.1 and 2.3 can be shown to have a significant positive effect on promoting opportunities for employment within the Town and supporting Farnham town centre, local businesses and tourism. The amount of economic development included within Alternative 2.1 means that significant negative environmental impacts can be avoided with some minor positive effects on a range of environmental objectives and minor negative effects likely to travel by car and air pollution, flooding and climate change. In contrast, Alternative 2.3 would have significant negative impacts on a wide range of environmental objectives. In addition, without significant additional housing growth (which in turn would also have significant negative impacts on environmental objectives) there would be likely to be significant negative impacts on reducing the need to travel by car and air quality.

For the reasons set out above, the preferred alternative for the Neighbourhood Plan is following the policy approach of the emerging Local Plan of the redevelopment, intensification and/or expansion of sites presently used for employment uses; the re-use and conversion of existing rural buildings; tourism and a new site on Land off Water Lane, Farnham.

Strategic distribution of development at Farnham

What are the reasonable alternatives?

A range of alternatives associated with the preferred levels of growth appeared to be feasible in terms of distributing new development at Farnham:

- Maximise Farnham's brownfield development opportunities and disperse development around the periphery of the town and beyond into the countryside (Alternative 3.1)
- Maximise Farnham's brownfield development opportunities and focus dispersed development at the periphery of the town to avoid the known environmental constraints (AONB (and candidate AONB); Green Belt (and proposed Green Belt));

coalescence; landscape of high value and sensitivity; areas of biodiversity value or the floodplain) (Alternative 3.2)

- Focus development in a single growth area of Badshot Lea (Alternative 3.3)

Appraisal of Development Options

The SA/ SEA examined the impacts of each alternative to assist the Town Council in selecting the appropriate provision of additional housing. The alternatives were tested against the SA/ SEA objectives.

Strategic distribution of development at Farnham Alternatives	Alternative 3.1 Maximise Farnham's brownfield development opportunities and disperse development around the periphery of the town and beyond into the countryside	Alternative 3.2 Maximise Farnham's brownfield development opportunities and focus dispersed development at the periphery of the town to avoid known environmental constraints	Alternative 3.3 Focus development in a single growth area of Badshot Lea
SA/ SEA Objective			
1 To ensure that everyone has the opportunity to live in a decent and affordable home of the appropriate size, type and tenure.	++	++	+
2 To protect, enhance and make accessible for enjoyment, the town's open spaces and high quality and sensitive landscape and prevent the coalescence of settlements.	--	++	--
3 To promote opportunities for employment within the Town and support Farnham town centre, local businesses and tourism.	++	++	-
4 To reduce the need to travel by car for local journeys, reduce road congestion, improve air quality and improve and promote travel by cycle and on foot within the Town.	--	+	--
5 To ensure adequate amenities for local residents, including health, education, local shopping and leisure facilities.	--	+	-
6 To conserve and enhance biodiversity and prevent any significant adverse effect on sites of national and international importance.	--	++	+
7 To ensure development complements the character of the town's individual neighbourhoods.	+	++	--
8 To maintain and improve the water quality of the Town's watercourses and to achieve sustainable water resources management.	?	?	?
9 To reduce and manage the risk of flooding and any consequential harmful impacts to public wellbeing, the local economy and the environment.	-	-	-
10 To increase energy efficiency and the proportion of energy generated from renewable sources in the Town and to utilize sustainably produced and local products in new developments where possible.	?	?	?
11 To reduce the Town's impact on climate change and prepare the community and environment for its impacts.	--	-	--
12 To conserve and enhance the historic environment, heritage assets and their settings and the distinctive built heritage of the area.	+	+	+

SCORE	DESCRIPTION	SYMBOL
Significant Positive Effect	The development alternative contributes significantly to the achievement of the objective	++
Minor Positive Effect	The development alternative contributes to the achievement of the objective but not significantly	+
Neutral	The development alternative does not have any effect on the achievement of the objective	0
Minor Negative Effect	The development alternative detracts from the achievement of the objective but not significantly	-
Significant Negative Effect	The development alternative detracts significantly from the achievement of the objective	--
No Relationship	There is no clear relationship between the development alternative and the achievement of the objective or the relationship is negligible	/
Uncertain	The effect on the objective is uncertain and subject to implementation	?

Which is the most sustainable alternative?

In summary, Alternatives 3.1 and 3.3 have a number of significant and minor negative effects on most of the sustainability objectives whilst Alternative 3.2 is likely to have mostly significant or minor positive effects on these objectives.

For the reasons set out above, the preferred alternative for the strategic distribution of development at Farnham is to maximise Farnham's brownfield development opportunities and focus dispersed development at the periphery of the town to avoid known environmental constraints.

Section 6: Sustainability Appraisal of Neighbourhood Plan Policies

This section summarises the sustainability appraisal of each policy within the Regulation 15 Farnham Neighbourhood Plan. The matrices for each of the policies included in the Neighbourhood Plan can be found in Appendix 2 of the SA/SEA and are summarised in the table below. The matrices for the sites not allocated in the Neighbourhood Plan are included in Appendix 3 of the SA/SEA.

The bottom line of the summary table below gives a score for the likely cumulative impact of the proposed Neighbourhood Plan policies if all policies are adopted. This is calculated by considering the likely impacts of all the policies on each Sustainability Objective and making a judgment on the predicted combined impact of the policies. There is no formal phasing of development proposed in the Neighbourhood Plan, so it is unlikely that the full cumulative effects would take place until towards the end of or even beyond the Plan period.

The Sustainability Appraisal is required to identify significant impacts of the Plan. Significant impacts are highlighted in the table in green (positive) and red (negative).

Neighbourhood Plan Policies		Sustainability Objectives											
		Homes	Landscape/ Open Space	Employment/Centres	Transport/Air Quality	Amenities	Biodiversity	Character	Water Resources/ Quality	Flooding	Energy Efficiency	Climate Change	Heritage
Environment	FNP1	+	+	+	+	0	+	++	++	++	0	+	++
	FNP2	?	+	+	+	0	+	++	+	+	?	+	++
	FNP3	0	0	+	0	0	0	++	0	0	0	0	++
	FNP4	0	0	+	0	0	0	++	0	0	0	0	++
	FNP5	?	+	+	+	0	+	++	0	0	?	+	++
	FNP6	?	+	+	+	0	+	++	0	0	?	+	++
	FNP7	?	+	+	+	0	+	++	0	0	?	+	++
	FNP8	?	+	0	+	0	+	++	+	+	0	+	++
	FNP9	0	0	+	0	0	0	++	0	0	0	0	++
	FNP10	-	++	+	+	+	++	+	+	+	0	+	++
	FNP11	-	++	?	+	?	+	+	+	+	0	+	0
	FNP12	0	++	+	+	+	++	0	+	+	0	+	+
	FNP13	?	++	+	+	+	++	+	+	+	0	+	+
Housing	FNP14a	++	+	0	?	?	+	+	?	0	?	?	0
	FNP14b	++	0	0	-	?	0	+	-	0	-	-	0
	FNP14c	++	0	0	-	?	0	+	-	0	-	-	0
	FNP14d	+	0	-	?	-	+	+	?	?	?	?	0
	FNP14e	+	0	-	0	?	+	++	?	0	?	?	++
	FNP14f	+	+	-	0	0	+	++	-	+	?	?	++
	FNP14g	+	0	0	-	?	0	+	-	0	-	-	0
	FNP14h	++	+	?	+	++	0	++	?	?	?	?	++
	FNP14i	++	0	0	-	?	0	+	-	0	-	-	0
	FNP14j	+	0	0	-	0	?	+	-	0	-	?	0
	FNP15	++	0	0	0	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	+
	FNP16	+	0	+	0	+	0	++	0	0	0	0	++
Employment	FNP17a	0	0	+	?	0	?	0	?	?	?	?	0
	FNP17b	0	?	++	-	0	?	0	?	?	-	?	0
	FNP17c	0	0	+	-	0	?	?	?	?	?	?	0
	FNP17d	0	0	+	-	0	?	?	?	?	?	?	0
	FNP17e	0	0	+	?	0	?	0	?	?	?	?	0
	FNP17f	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	FNP17g	0	0	++	?	0	?	0	?	0	?	?	0
	FNP17h	0	0	+	?	0	?	0	?	0	?	?	0
	FNP17i	0	0	+	?	0	?	0	?	?	?	?	0
	FNP17j	0	?	+	?	0	?	?	?	0	?	?	0
	FNP17k	0	0	+	?	0	?	0	?	?	?	?	0
FNP17l	0	0	+	?	0	0	0	?	0	?	?	0	

	FNP17m	0	0	+	?	0	0	0	?	0	?	?	0
	FNP17n	0	0	+	?	0	?	0	0	0	?	0	0
	FNP17o	0	?	+	?	0	0	0	0	0	?	?	0
	FNP17p	0	0	+	?	0	0	0	?	0	?	?	0
	FNP17q	0	0	+	?	0	0	0	0	0	0	?	0
	FNP17r	0	0	+	?	0	?	0	0	0	?	?	0
	FNP17s	0	0	+	?	0	?	0	0	0	?	?	0
	FNP17t	0	0	+	?	0	?	0	?	?	?	?	0
	FNP17u	0	0	+	?	0	?	0	?	?	?	?	0
	FNP18	0	0	+	-	0	0	0	-	0	-	-	0
	FNP19	0	0	+	?	+	0	0	?	0	?	-	0
FNP20	?	?	+	?	+	?	+	?	?	?	?	?	
Town & Neighbourhood Centres	FNP21	+	+	++	+	+	0	++	0	0	+	+	++
	FNP22	++	+	++	+	+	0	++	0	0	+	+	++
	FNP23	?	0	++	+	++	0	++	0	0	+	+	++
	FNP24	0	0	++	+	++	0	++	0	0	+	+	+
	FNP25	0	0	+	+	+	0	+	0	0	+	+	+
Leisure	FNP26	0	++	0	?	+	+	+	+	+	?	+	+
	FNP27	0	++	+	+	++	+	+	+	+	?	+	+
	FNP28	0	0	+	+	+	0	+	0	0	+	+	0
	FNP29	0	0	+	+	+	0	+	0	0	+	+	+
Infra-structure	FNP30	0	+	+	++	+	+	+	?	?	+	+	+
	FNP31	0	0	?	0	+	+	0	++	?	0	+	0
	FNP32	0	+	+	+	+	+	?	?	+	+	+	?
Cumulative Impact		++	++	++	?	++	?	++	?	?	?	?	++

SCORE	DESCRIPTION	SYMBOL
Significant Positive Effect	The development alternative contributes significantly to the achievement of the objective	++
Minor Positive Effect	The development alternative contributes to the achievement of the objective but not significantly	+
Neutral	The development alternative does not have any effect on the achievement of the objective	0
Minor Negative Effect	The development alternative detracts from the achievement of the objective but not significantly	-
Significant Negative Effect	The development alternative detracts significantly from the achievement of the objective	--
No Relationship	There is no clear relationship between the development alternative and the achievement of the objective or the relationship is negligible	/
Uncertain	The effect on the objective is uncertain and subject to implementation	?

Section 7: Conclusions

The **significant** effects of the Regulation 15 Neighbourhood Plan may be summarised as follows:

Overall, no cumulative negative impacts on Sustainability Objectives are predicted.

The policies in the Regulation 15 Neighbourhood Plan are expected to have a significant positive impact on the objective of providing decent and affordable homes of the appropriate size, type and tenure. The Plan includes 10 housing site allocations which together could provide approximately 845 new homes within and adjoining the built up area. The option selection process has included consideration of greenfield sites in order to achieve this level of housing, but the sustainability appraisal has been used to identify the most sustainable options. The Planning Strategy enables new housing development within the built up area boundary. Policy FNP12 seeks to ensure that small dwellings and homes for older people are constructed to meet identified need.

A significant cumulative positive impact is predicted for landscape and open space. There is opportunity on existing brownfield sites to enhance the landscape when new proposals come forward. The landscape-dominated arcadian areas to the south of Farnham are protected. Outside the built up area, policy seeks to conserve and enhance the landscape and scenic beauty of the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and its setting and to prevent a detrimental impact on areas of highest landscape value and sensitivity and the historic sensitive landscape of Old Park. New greenfield site allocations avoid such landscape and must be well integrated into the landscape by existing and new landscape buffers of appropriate native species as well as through sensitive designs. Policies also seek to retain the area's extensive green infrastructure and to ensure appropriate additional provision in association with development. .

A significant cumulative positive impact is anticipated in relation to promoting opportunities for employment and supporting town and neighbourhood centres. The policies relating to employment, leisure and wellbeing and town centres are all expected to have a positive impact on this objective and in addition the Regulation 15 Neighbourhood Plan proposes to retain, and where appropriate, intensify a range of employment premises on 17 sites which includes business parks and estates and smaller rural units. An allocation for a business site is made at Water Lane which would have a positive impact on employment but a more mixed impact on other objectives.

A significant cumulative positive impact is predicted on amenities/services. This is because the employment, town centres and leisure policies in particular will help to support a broad range of services and facilities in the Plan area. The environmental policies relating to landscape, biodiversity and SPAs will help to retain access to natural open space for the Town's residents.

A significant cumulative positive impact is expected in ensuring that development complements the character of the town's individual neighbourhoods. This is particularly due to the significant positive impact of some environmental and centres policies which should ensure that all new development responds to the built character and protects the landscape setting. The housing site allocations (Policy FNP 14) and the business site allocation (Policy FNP18) are all accompanied by specific development guidance. The proposed redevelopment of East Street (Policy FNP21) and The Woolmead (Policy FNP22) would have a significant positive impact on the historic character of Farnham town centre.

A significant cumulative positive impact is expected in conserving and enhancing the historic environment, heritage assets and their settings and the distinctive built heritage of

the area. This is particularly due to the significant positive impact of some environmental and centres policies which should ensure that all new development responds to local heritage. Some brownfield housing allocations are located within and adjoining conservation areas and listed buildings where enhancements are expected.

A number of the environment policies would have a significant positive impact on the landscape and open space and biodiversity objectives by protecting landscape, preventing the coalescence of settlements, providing SANG and protecting and enhancing biodiversity value. In addition, Policy FNP20 seeks to protect open space. There is always an inherent tension in protecting landscape and open space and providing sufficient housing to meet identified needs, but the environment policies, together with Waverley Local Plan environment policies, should help to ensure that any future development protects valued landscape and open space.

The environment policy on design and conservation (Policy FNP1) would have a significant positive impact on character, water quality and flooding objectives. The transport policy (Policy FNP30) would have a significant positive impact on the sustainability of transport and air quality.

Taken as a whole, the policies of the Plan have no net negative impact.

This Sustainability Appraisal/ Strategic Environmental Assessment Non Technical Summary has been prepared on behalf of Farnham Town Council by

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