Maldon District Council Local Development Plan
Sustainability Appraisal Report incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulations Assessment – Preferred Options Consultation

Maldon District Council

13 June 2012
Final Report (Preferred options)
9X1918

Photo by David Wallis
# Maldon District Council Local Development Plan

**Sustainability Appraisal Report incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulations Assessment – Preferred Options Consultation**

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---|---
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<th>Draft Report. Submitted 25.05.12</th>
<th>Drafted by Emma Mundy</th>
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<tr>
<td>Checked by Matthew Hunt</td>
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<td>Approved by Peter Thornton</td>
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<th>Approved by Matthew Hunt</th>
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A company of Royal Haskoning
1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Local Planning Policy History

1.1.1 The East of England Plan, saved policies in the Essex and Southend-on-Sea Replacement Structure Plan, and the Maldon District Replacement Local Plan provide the current development plan framework for Maldon District Council (MDC).

1.1.2 MDC approved its Replacement Local Plan for adoption in November 2005, in accordance with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 1990. As required under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, MDC then commenced work on the production of a Local Development Framework (LDF) for the District. In April 2009, the Local Development Scheme (LDS) was produced which outlined the contents of, and timeframe for, the development of the LDF. A Sustainability Appraisal (SA) informed the development of policies, and an SA Report (SAR) was produced to accompany the Maldon District Core Strategy Submission draft, prior to pre-submission (Regulation 27) consultation. However, due to changes in the planning landscape these documents were not progressed to consultation and submission. Current activity to produce a Local Development Plan (LDP), and the accompanying SA process, builds on much of this previous work, expanding it where necessary.

1.1.3 The Localism Act includes a clause that seeks the abolition of Regional Spatial Strategies. The East of England Plan was to be the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) for the region covering the period 2001 to 2021. The Plan has a key role in contributing to the sustainable development of the region and sets out planning policies which address the needs of the region and key sub-regions. These policies provide a development framework for the next 15 to 20 years seeking to influence the quality of life, the character of places and how they function, and inform other strategies and plans. Since the revocation of regional plans, legal challenges, and the lack of an alternative mechanism for strategic planning mean that the RSS should still be a material consideration at the time of writing. It is anticipated to be abolished in 2012.

1.1.4 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) came into effect in March 2012. It states that the Replacement Local Plan ‘saved policies’ can continue to be given due weight according to their degree of consistency with the NPPF (the closer the saved policies in the plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given). The East of England Plan is currently also part of the statutory Development Plan for the District, but is expected to be revoked prior to the adoption of the Local Development Plan. The Local Development Plan will have to be in conformity with National Planning Policy.

1.1.5 Decision-takers may also give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to:

- the stage of preparation of the emerging plan (the more advanced the preparation, the greater the weight that may be given);
- the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies (the less significant the unresolved objections, the greater the weight that may be given); and
• the degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to the policies in the NPPF (the closer the policies in the emerging plan to the policies in the NPPF, the greater the weight that may be given).

1.2 Assessing Sustainability

Requirement for Sustainability Appraisal

1.2.1 Under the regulations implementing the provisions of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, a SA is required for all DPDs. The purpose of SA is to promote sustainable development through better integration of sustainability considerations in the preparation and adoption of plans. Planning Policy Statement 1 (PPS1) describes SA in Paragraph 9 of Annex B:

“A Sustainability Appraisal is intended to assess the impact of plan policies from an environmental, economic and social perspective. It is intended to test the performance of a plan against the objectives of sustainable development and thereby provide the basis for its improvement.”

1.2.2 The UK Strategy for Sustainable Development ‘Securing the Future’ was produced in March 2005. It lays out an overarching national approach founded on five principles:

a) Living within environmental limits – To bring environmental improvements and ensure natural resources remain unimpaired for future generations;

b) Ensuring a strong, healthy and just society – meeting the needs of all people in all communities, and promoting well-being, cohesion and equal opportunity;

c) Achieving a sustainable economy – to provide prosperity and opportunity for all, promoting efficient resource use and ensuring that environmental and social costs fall on those who cause them (polluter pays);

d) Promoting good governance – encouraging participation in decision making at all levels; and

e) Using sound science responsibly – ensuring policy development has a sound basis, whilst acknowledging uncertainty and accounting for public views.

1.2.3 The Regulations stipulate that SAs of DPDs should meet the requirements of the EU Directive 2001/42/EC on assessment of effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment (the ‘SEA Directive’).

Requirement for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

1.2.4 The SEA Directive1 came into force in the UK on 20 July 2004 through the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004. The Directive applies to a variety of plans and programmes, including those for town and country planning and land use, as they set the framework for future development consent and are likely to have a significant effect on the environment.

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1.2.5 The overarching objective of the SEA Directive is:

“To provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans… with a view to promoting sustainable development, by ensuring that, in accordance with this Directive, an environmental assessment is carried out of certain plans… which are likely to have significant effects on the environment.” (Article 1)

1.2.6 SEA is an iterative assessment process to ensure that potential significant environmental effects arising from the plan/programme are identified, assessed, mitigated and communicated to plan-makers. SEA also requires the monitoring of significant effects once the plan/programme is implemented.

1.2.7 The SEA Directive and the SEA Regulations state that the SEA must consider environmental effects, identifying the specific topic areas set out below, and the interrelationship between them:

- Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna;
- Population and Human Health;
- Water and Soil;
- Air;
- Climatic Factors; and
- Cultural heritage and Landscape.

1.2.8 Although the requirements to carry out SA and SEA are distinct, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) guidance Sustainability Appraisal of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Documents (November 2005) states that it is possible to satisfy both through a single appraisal process.

**SA/SEA Process**

1.2.9 Table 1.1 sets out the various SA stages, tasks and relationships with the plan preparation, as set out in the ODPM guidance. Stage A is addressed within the Scoping Report (see Appendix A) and this report covers Stage B and results in the implementation of Stage C. Section 2.2 covers these stages in more detail.

**Table 1.1 - Incorporating Sustainability Appraisal in the Plan Preparation Process**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DPD Stage 1: Pre-production – Evidence Gathering</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>SA Stages and tasks</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage A: Setting the context and objectives, establishing the baseline and deciding upon the scope:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A1: Identifying other relevant policies, plans and programmes, and sustainability objectives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A2: Collecting baseline information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A3: Identifying sustainability issues and problems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A4: Developing the SA Framework.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A5: Consulting on the scope of the SA.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DPD Stage 2: Production</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>SA Stages and tasks</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stage B: Developing and refining options and assessing effects:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B1: Testing the DPD objectives against the SA Framework.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B2: Developing the DPD options.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
B3: Predicting the effects of the DPD.
B4: Evaluating the effects of the DPD.
B5: Considering ways of mitigating adverse effects and maximising beneficial effects.
B6: Proposing measures to monitor the significant effects of implementing the DPD.

Stage C: Preparing the Sustainability Appraisal Report:
C1: Preparing the SA Report.

Stage D: Consulting on the preferred options of the DPD and SA Report:
D1: Public participation on the preferred options of the DPD and SA Report.
D2 (i): Appraising significant changes.

DPD Stage 3: Examination

SA Stages and tasks
D2 (ii): Appraising significant changes resulting from representations.

DPD Stage 4: Adoption and Monitoring

SA Stages and tasks
D3: Making decisions and providing information.

Stage E: Monitoring the significant effects of implementing the DPD:
E1: Finalising aims and methods for monitoring.
E2: Responding to adverse effects.

Consultation within the Appraisal Process

1.2.10 The consultation requirements for a statutory SA are as follows:

- Authorities must be consulted on the scope and level of detail of the information to be included in the Environmental Report.
  - The 2004 SEA Regulations indicates four Consultation Bodies; Countryside Agency², English Heritage, English Nature² and the Environment Agency.
  - SA guidance recommends additional consultation with other representatives including economic interests and local business, social interests and community service providers, transport planners and providers and NGOs;
- The public and Consultation Bodies must be consulted on the draft plan or programme and the Sustainability Appraisal Report (SAR).

1.3 Plan Development and Assessment Process to Date

2006 to 2010 Core Strategy SA

1.3.1 In 2006 Atkins prepared an SA scoping report for the Maldon District Core Strategy (CS). This was consulted on in October - November 2006 and the information was revised in light of comments received. These informed the production of an interim SAR which was developed further as policies were developed for the CS.

² The Countryside Agency and English Nature have since been merged in to one body known as Natural England.
1.3.2 An assessment of the finalised policies within the Maldon District Core Strategy Submission Draft was carried out to predict and evaluate the effects as they related to the SA objectives. Policies generally addressed the range of sustainability objectives identified in the SA framework, and were considered to offer potentially significant positive effects on environmental, social and economic objectives.

1.3.3 Negative effects were still predicted, however, against objectives seeking to: protect water resources; reduce emissions of greenhouse gases; maintain air quality; and reduce natural resource consumption. However, these effects were considered potentially avoidable, or that they could be minimised or offset, through implementation of other policies.

2012 Scoping Report

1.3.4 The purpose of the Scoping Report, produced by Royal Haskoning in March 2012, was to update the baseline and issues considered within the previous SA process, and to document how these would inform the ongoing and iterative SA of the developing LDP. It also detailed the proposed methodology and framework to be used for the SA, which was again based where relevant, on the previous SA process. The Scoping Report, which was circulated to statutory consultees\(^3\) for 5 weeks between March and April 2012, is presented for information in Appendix A.

1.3.5 Feedback from the consultation on the Scoping Report has been incorporated into this SAR and a table detailing the consultation responses, and resulting changes, can be found in Appendix B. In summary, the changes resulting from engagement with the statutory bodies were:

- Amendment of the key social priorities for the District;
- Addition to the environmental issues in Table 4.1; and
- Addition of indicators to the SA Framework for accessibility and biodiversity.

Habitats Regulations Assessment

1.3.6 A Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening Report undertaken in December 2010, assessing likely effects arising from the developing Core Strategy, concluded that there would be “no significant effect from the Maldon District Core Strategy alone or in-combination on the Essex Estuary international sites.” Given the increased scope of the LDP, Section 7 of this report details an updated HRA, re-assessing policies for potential significant effects on all relevant internationally-designated nature conservation sites. In order to ensure a cohesive assessment process, to produce an integrated report, and reflecting the conclusions drawn, the HRA process is reported within this document rather than within a separate report.

1.4 Purpose of this Report

1.4.1 This report represents the results of the SA (Stage 2 in Table 1.1) and also the screening stage of the HRA for the Maldon District Council LDP. As part of the consultation on the Maldon LDP Preferred Options document, this report will also be

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\(^3\) Natural England, the Environment Agency and English Heritage
available for comment and feedback from this process will be re-assessed in relation to the conclusions of the SA, where necessary.

1.4.2 The report comprises the following sections:

- Section 1: Introduction;
- Section 2: Appraisal Methodology;
- Section 3: Relevant Plans and Programmes;
- Section 4: Baseline Information;
- Section 5: The Sustainability Appraisal Framework;
- Section 6: The Compatibility Assessment;
- Section 7: LDP Policy Assessment;
- Section 8: Habitats Regulations Assessment;
- Section 9: Cumulative, Synergistic and Indirect Effects;
- Section 10: Mitigation;
- Section 11: Monitoring; and
- Section 12: Conclusion.
2 THE APPRAISAL METHODOLOGY

2.1 Meeting the requirements of the SEA Directive

2.1.1 This SA will also meet the requirements of the SEA Directive for environmental assessment of plans. Table 2.1 sets out where the specific SEA requirements have been met in this report.

Table 2.1 - Schedule of Strategic Environmental Assessment Requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirements of the Directive</th>
<th>Where Covered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preparation of an environmental report in which the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme, and reasonable alternatives taking into account the objectives and geographical scope of the plan or programme, are identified, described and evaluated. The information to be given is:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) An outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan or programme and relationship with other relevant plans and programmes.</td>
<td>Section 1, Section 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution without implementation of the plan or programme.</td>
<td>Section 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected.</td>
<td>Section 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d) Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan or programme including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance, such as areas designated pursuant to Directive 79/409/EEC and 92/43/EEC.</td>
<td>Section 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e) The environmental protection objectives established at international, community or national level which are relevant to the programme and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation.</td>
<td>Section 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f) The likely significant effects on the environment, including: short, medium and long term; permanent and temporary; positive and negative; secondary, cumulative and synergistic effects on issues such as: biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors.</td>
<td>Section 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g) The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and, as fully as possible, offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme.</td>
<td>Section 10 and 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h) An outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with and a description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties (such as technical deficiencies or lack of know-how) encountered in compiling the required information.</td>
<td>Section 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i) A description of measures envisaged concerning monitoring (in accordance with regulation 17).</td>
<td>Section 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j) A non-technical summary of the information provided under the above headings.</td>
<td>Provided as a separate document alongside this Report</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.2 Appraisal Process

2.2.1 The ODPM guidance emphasises that SA is an iterative process that identifies and reports on the likely significant effects of the plan and the extent to which the
implementation of the plan will achieve the social, environmental and economic objectives by which sustainable development can be defined. The complete methodology involves the stages and tasks outlined in Table 1.1 and the following sections detail the process undertaken in the production of this SAR. Stage A is detailed within the Scoping Report.

**Stage B: Developing and Defining Options**

**B1: Testing the Objectives against the Sustainability Appraisal Framework**

2.2.2 The LDP objectives were tested for compatibility with the SA objectives to test the degree to which the objectives are in accordance with sustainability principles. LDP objectives can then be refined if necessary, through an iterative process. When testing compatibility the following scale has been used:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Compatibility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>++</td>
<td>LDP objective directly supports sustainability objective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+</td>
<td>Broadly supports sustainability objective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>~</td>
<td>No direct conflict although there is potential for some, dependent on location and or detail of implementation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>LDP objective directly conflicts with the sustainability objective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No connection</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**B2: Developing the LDP Options**

2.2.3 In order to predict the sustainability implications of the options for the LDP, each policy option was assessed against the SA Framework. A judgement was made to predict the likely sustainability implications that might arise should the option be implemented. The methodology adopted was qualitative, which is generally accepted as good practice by the SA guidance. In the current practice of SA, the broad-brush qualitative prediction and evaluation of magnitude of effects is often based on a seven point scale comprising easily understood terms (see Table 2.2). Detailed commentary on the assessment of the individual policies is presented in Section 7 and further to this, the detailed assessment table as presented in Appendix D.

Table 2.2 – Assessment Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Scale</th>
<th>Assessment Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>+++</td>
<td>Major positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>++</td>
<td>Moderately positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+</td>
<td>Minor positive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>Neutral or no obvious effect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>Minor negative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--</td>
<td>Moderately negative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>Major negative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>?</td>
<td>Effect uncertain</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
B3: Predicting the Effects of the Preferred Option

2.2.4 This involved an appraisal of the baseline conditions and trends and how they may be influenced by the policies. The predicted effects on each were described in terms of their nature and magnitude using the following parameters:

- Timing of effect – short, medium, long term;
- Duration of effect – short, medium, long term;
- Nature of effect – positive, negative or neutral; and
- Secondary, cumulative and/or synergistic effects.

2.2.5 For the purposes of this assessment, and in keeping with the previous assessments carried out (as described in Section 1.3), short term effects are defined as those predicted to commence within the first five years from adoption of the LDP. Medium-long term effects occur between five and ten years following adoption and long term effects occur more than ten years from adoption. This assessment is detailed in Section 7.

B4: Evaluating the Effects of the Preferred Option

2.2.6 The next stage of the assessment involved evaluating the significant effects of the options. This involved forming a judgement on whether or not the predicted effects will be significant. Primarily this was a qualitative assessment based on expert judgement. Objectivity and consistency was assisted by the indicators in the SA Framework and the assessment rationale (Appendix C).

2.2.7 Effects were considered in combination with other known Plans, Policies and Programmes. Cumulative effects of all policies within the Plan were also considered as described below.

Secondary and Cumulative Effects Assessment

2.2.8 Annex I of the SEA Directive requires that the assessment of effects include secondary, cumulative and synergistic effects. Secondary or indirect effects are effects that are not a direct result of the plan, but occur away from the original effect or as a result of the complex pathway e.g. a development that changes a water table and thus affects the ecology of a nearby wetland. These effects were identified and assessed primarily through the examination of the relationship between various objectives, and the consideration of complex effects, during the assessment of environmental effects.

2.2.9 Cumulative effects arise where several proposals individually may or may not have a significant effect, but in-combination have a significant effect due to spatial crowding or temporal overlap. Many environmental problems result from cumulative effects. These effects are very hard to deal with on a project by project basis through Environmental Impact Assessment. It is at the SA/SEA level that they are most effectively identified and addressed.

2.2.10 Cumulative effects assessment is a systematic procedure for identifying and evaluating the significance of effects from multiple activities. The analysis of the causes, pathways
and consequences of these effects is an essential part of the process. Cumulative effects were considered throughout the entire SA process, and are identified and discussed at Section 9.

**B5: Considering Ways of Mitigating Adverse Effects and Maximising Beneficial Effects**

2.2.11 For any options which are deemed to have a negative impact on one of the receptors, mitigation measures were identified during Stage B4 which will aim to reduce or manage these effects. These mitigation measures range in scale and nature, with differing requirements, and are discussed within Section 10.

**B6: Proposing Measures to Monitor the Significant Effects of Implementing the Core Strategy**

2.2.12 SA monitoring involves measuring against indicators which will enable the establishment of a causal link between the implementation of the plan and the effect (positive or negative) being monitored. It can also help to ensure that any effects which arise during implementation, positive or negative and whether or not they were foreseen, can be identified. Where necessary, action can also be taken by the Council or partners to address them. These measures are addressed in Section 11.
3 RELEVANT PLANS AND PROGRAMMES

3.1 A wide range of plans, policies and programmes (PPPs) were identified during the SA of the Maldon District CS. International, national, regional and district level policies influenced the development of the SA Framework (see Section 5). Since 2009 (the last revision of relevant plans, policies and programmes), the policy context in which the LDP is set has continued to evolve, at a national, regional and local level. PPPs that have influenced this SA and the ongoing LDP development are detailed within the Scoping Report (Appendix A). No updates have been required since the production of the Scoping Report in April 2012, except for the need to consider the National Planning Policy Framework.

3.2 National Planning Policy Framework

3.2.1 Published in March 2012, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government’s requirements (policies) for the planning system for England. It provides a framework within which local needs and priorities must be taken into account in the preparation of local (and neighbourhood) plans. It should also be a consideration in planning decisions.

3.2.2 The NPPF confirms that the role of planning is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and enshrines a “presumption in favour of sustainable development”. The document states that sustainable means ensuring that better lives for ourselves shouldn’t mean worse lives for future generations, whilst development means growth. It acknowledges the three mutually-dependent dimensions of sustainable development and the principles of the UK Sustainable Development Strategy.

3.2.3 The NPPF immediately superseded all PPS and Planning Guidance Notes (PPG), as well as other documents which used to inform the development and implementation of local planning policies.

3.2.4 EU obligations and statutory requirements are not superseded by the NPPF, but it does reinforce the importance of an up-to-date local development plan. In particular it states that ‘sustainable development’ (in accordance with the local plan) should go ahead without delay, whilst conflicting development should be rejected.

3.2.5 In the absence of a Plan, or relevant policy, applications should be granted unless any adverse impacts of doing so would “significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits” assessed against the NPPF. Replacement Local Plan ‘saved policies’ can continue to be given due weight according to their degree of consistency with the NPPF. The Local Development Plan will have to be in conformity with National Planning Policy.

3.3 Relevant Social, Environmental and Economic Priorities

3.3.1 The analysis of PPPs undertaken during the previous SA and in this current SA has identified social, environmental or economic priorities that have been used to influence the preparation of the Maldon LDP. These priorities were consulted on in Scoping Report, and minor amendments (as identified below – text additions are highlighted in bold text, deletions struck through) were suggested by the consultees.
## Table 3.1 – Key Priorities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Key Priorities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>Improvement in health, reduction in inequalities of access to health facilities, and encourage healthy lifestyles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Improvement of access for all to quality, affordable and resource efficient housing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Improvement in accessibility to jobs, health, education, leisure, open spaces and community facilities</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Improve the skills base particularly in traditional, lower paid sectors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reduction in crime and the fear of crime by tackling the root cause of crime through education. Support citizenship and anti-racism initiatives</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Raising achievement levels and developing opportunities for everyone to acquire the skills needed to find and remain in work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Improving the quality of life. Maintain peace and tranquillity</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Encouraging high quality design in new development including mixed use to create local identity and encourage a sense of community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Development of confident, diverse, socially inclusive and cohesive communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental</td>
<td>Improvement in the choice and use of sustainable transport modes and reduction of the need to travel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Promotion of low energy use and energy efficiency</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reduction in waste generation and disposal and achieve sustainable management of waste</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maximising the area’s historic and cultural heritage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Protection and enhancement of biodiversity and geological assets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Protection and enhancement of landscape character</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Protection of water resources and an improvement in water quality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Protecting land and soil and managing geological resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reduction of the risk of flooding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Improve air quality and achieve clean air for everyone</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Economy in the use of land and buildings and sustainable urban design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Adapting to, and managing, the effects of climate change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reduction of greenhouse gases emissions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economic</td>
<td>Competitive local economies which benefit local people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Development of a robust and diverse world class economy with a strong enterprise culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Restoring the role of Market towns as sustainable centres for services, supporting rural regeneration and improve the prosperity of market towns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Development and maintenance of a healthy labour market</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Improvements which support viable and vibrant town centres, and development of commercial and civic centres which instil pride in the local population</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Enable economic opportunities to be available to all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Recognise the role of tourism and manage the impact of its activities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.3.2 These social, environmental and economic priorities have been used as a way of identifying the features which may be of most relevance to the District and helped to determine and develop the scope of the baseline for the SA (as presented in Section 4). They also influenced the framework for the policy assessment.
4 BASELINE INFORMATION

4.1.1 The SEA Directive requires that the Environmental Report should provide information on:

“Relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan” and the “environmental characteristics of the areas likely to be significantly affected” (Annex I (b) (c)) and

“any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan or programme including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance, such as areas designated pursuant to Directives 79/409/EEC (Birds Directive) and 92/43/EEC (Habitats Directive)” (Annex I)

4.1.2 In addition to the SEA Directive requirements, the statutory SA process requires the collection of additional information on social and economic characteristics. The baseline information is collected to give an overview of the social, environmental and economic characteristics of the plan area and how these compare to the region and the rest of the country. The key baseline information was identified in the Scoping Report and can be found in Appendix A, however, a summary is provided below.

4.2 Social Baseline

4.2.1 The District has a total population of 63,200 which is the lowest of the districts in Essex. The population density in the District is also one of the lowest in Essex, with an average of 176.2 people per km² in 2010. The main towns are Maldon, Heybridge and Burnham-on-Crouch with the majority of the population living in the rural villages. The District’s population has grown at a similar rate to that of Essex with a population growth of 11.3% between 1998 and 2009, (MDC, 2010).

4.2.2 In 2009, the proportion of the District’s population aged 65 and over was 17.3%, with the proportion of the population aged under 15 at 17.7%. The age group of 55-64 year olds (the next generation of retirees) currently makes up 15.3% of the population.

4.2.3 It has been reported that in 2009, the District contained approximately 26,705 housing units, with over 80% of households owner-occupied (compared with a national average of 68.1%) (Atkins, 2010). Data from the 2009 Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) update indicates that there are 341 households in Maldon which are overcrowded by the ‘bedroom standard’ and there are 392 concealed households. A test of affordability for these households shows that 90% of them cannot afford to resolve their housing difficulties through market housing in the District.

4.2.4 There are two local authority sites for the travelling community in Maldon District, located at Brickhouse Road and Wood Corner. The Brickhouse Road site supports six plots and the Wood Corner site supports 20. In Essex, there are 11 permanent sites which support a total of 174 plots.

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4 ONS 2010 mid-year estimates (http://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/2038431774/report.aspx)
5 An indicator of occupation density
6 Couples, people with children and single adults aged over 25 who share facilities with another household
4.2.5 Crime rates in the District are lower than the regional and national figures, with 23.52 offences per 1,000 residents in 2009 (compared to 38.41 in Essex). However, between 1999/2000 and 2008/2009, the total number of crimes in the District increased by 71.78%, which is above the national average.

4.2.6 The District has 280ha of easily accessible green space: 4.49 ha of open space per 1000 people. Around 80% of households in the District are within five minutes walk (or 400m) of a green space at least 1ha in size.

4.2.7 Maldon District is a rural area which has no major roads or dual carriageways and only one rail link – the Southminster branch line – which links part of the Dengie peninsula to the London main line. A number of bus routes also operate but their service is variable and they do not access the whole District.

4.2.8 The 2001 Census identified that within the District 10% of residents work mainly at or from home. This is a significantly higher percentage than for Essex (18%), and England as a whole (14%). There is a high dependency on the car, with 68.03% of the population using the car for travel to work which places the District in the top 40% of districts nationally. The proportion of residents who travelled to work within the District by public transport was 8.78% in 2001. By comparison the national figure was 14.81%.

4.3 Environmental Baseline

4.3.1 A significant proportion of the Districts coastline is internationally designated as Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) sites. These sites are also designated under the Ramsar Convention for their extensive intertidal habitats, a number of which are also designated as UK and Essex Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) habitats.

4.3.2 The District also contains six Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), many of which occupy the same area as the SPA and Ramsar sites, two National Nature Reserves (NNRs), and 89 County Wildlife Sites. Old Hall Marshes is also a Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB) Reserve.

4.3.3 UK and Essex BAP species are also known to occur in the District, including native oyster species, bittern Botaurus stellaris, harbour porpoise Phocoena phocoena, twaite shad Alosa fallax, grey partridge Perdix perdix, shining ramshorn snail Segmentina nitida, and water vole Arvicola amphibius.

4.3.4 The District contains a wide range of heritage and archaeological resources. There are 20 Scheduled Monuments (SMs) within the District and over 1,000 listed buildings. Of these, 5 features are on English Heritage’s ‘At Risk’ register for 2011. There are also 13 Conservation Areas in the District. Braxted Park is the only registered park or garden in the District. There is also the registered site of the Battle of Maldon near Northey Island, which is connected to the Viking invasion.

4.3.5 The District mainly consists of farmland, with the pattern of field boundaries a vital part of the historic character of the coastal zone. The District falls within the Landscape Character Areas of the Greater Thames Estuary and the North Thames Basin. There is pressure from development around the edge of the area especially in the estuary area.
4.3.6 The majority of the District is classed as Grade 3 (moderate quality) agricultural land with small sections of the higher quality Grade 2 land to the west of Maldon and along the Dengie peninsula. There are also some small areas of Grade 1 land, the highest quality agricultural land grade, near Bradwell-on-Sea and Burnham-on-Crouch.

4.3.7 The underlying geology of the area is comprised of chalk (a major aquifer), overlaid by Lower London Tertiary deposits, which in turn are overlain by London Clay. There are also 3 SSSIs within the District which are designated for their geological interest features, all of which are in favourable condition.

4.3.8 A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) report (Scott Wilson, 2008) identified that the main areas considered to be at risk are Burnham-on-Crouch, North Fambridge, Heybridge Basin, and the Causeway. Climate change predictions for Essex (most recently the UK Climate Projections (UKCP09)) suggest an increasing trend in summer and winter temperatures, and increasing seasonality in rainfall (leading to drier summers and wetter winters). Sea levels in Essex are also increasing over time.

4.3.9 The District is located within one of the driest areas of the country. All of the assessed ground water management units were identified by the Combined Essex Catchment Abstraction Management Strategy (CAMS) as having ‘no water available’, and the rivers within the District suffer from over abstraction (Environment Agency, 2004).

4.3.10 The Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC) produced data on local authority CO₂ (equivalent) emissions for 2005 to 2009, which indicate that the amount of CO₂ produced in relation to industry and commercial activities in 2009 was 123 thousand tonnes (kt), which had decreased from 169kt in 2005. The District has the 3rd lowest CO₂ emissions for industry and commercial activities in Essex, behind Castle Point and Rochford. Maldon has the second lowest CO₂ emissions associated with domestic use in the County.

4.3.11 Maldon District currently produces 22,232 tonnes of domestic household waste per annum (2010/11), of which 63% was sent to landfill. In 2010/11 the recycling rate in Maldon District was 37.05% showing an increase from the 2005/06 rate of 29.23%. However, this rate is the second lowest of the Councils in Essex.

4.4 Economic Baseline

4.4.1 Employment in the District is concentrated in the urban areas of Maldon, Heybridge, Southminster, and Burnham-on-Crouch. Retail provision is principally located in Maldon and Burnham-on-Crouch. Within the District 73% of residents are in employment (October 2010 to September 2011). Distribution, hotels and restaurants accounts for 23% of employment in the District which is similar to both the regional and national rates (2008 data). Manufacturing accounts for 18% of employment, which is higher than the Essex and UK figures of 10%.

4.4.2 With the exception of few large-scale companies, the economy of the District is dominated by a large number of small firms. The District’s economic base is broad but is predominantly reliant on property and business services (25% of all businesses), construction (17% of all businesses), production (11% of all businesses) and agriculture.

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7 2009 is the latest date for which this information is available
(7% of all businesses). The largest employer in the District was Bradwell Power Station, which is currently being decommissioned.

4.4.3 The tourism sector is particularly important to the District, with a number of holiday and leisure parks present and sailing being a popular summer activity. It is estimated that the value of tourism to the District in 2008 was £140million/annum to the local economy. It provides 10% of the District’s employment.

4.4.4 The District’s population has a lower level of qualifications than national and regional averages. The percentage of the population without any educational qualifications is approximately 14% in the District in comparison with 11% nationally; and only approximately 20% has NVQ4 or above compared to the national average of 31%.

4.4.5 Adult learning patterns in the District roughly match those for Essex. The 2004 Area profile indicates that a third of The District residents (33%) undertook learning in the last 12 months; considerably less than the 42% of Essex residents, while a higher share of The District residents have not undertaken learning for six years or more than Essex residents (Learning and Skills Council, Essex, 2004).

4.5 Key Sustainability Issues

4.5.1 Based on the review of relevant plans and programmes, together with an analysis of the baseline data, key sustainability issues relevant to the LDP have been identified.

4.5.2 Table 4.1 below presents the key sustainability issues, as set out in the Scoping Report. The list is an outline of the priority areas where the LDP can have significant influence and has been influenced by the consultation on the Scoping Report (as identified in the amended text below).
Table 4.1 – Key Sustainability Issues

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Issues / Problems</th>
<th>Opportunities/Implications for the LDP</th>
<th>Relevant SEA topic/s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social</strong></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| Housing – Affordability, mix, size and tenure | • The number of affordable completions in the District is low. Access to Housing is identified in the IMD 2007 as a major local barrier due to increasing house price and lack of affordable housing in the District.  
• The existing size, mix and tenure of housing is not appropriate for the needs of the District particularly first time buyers and those on lower than average income.  
• The District has high levels of rural housing stock with a high proportion of semi and detached houses and fewer flats and terraces than the national average contributing to the affordable housing problem. | Population and Human Health |
|                       | • The LDP will need to tackle the demand for affordable housing for local people and key sectors of the community. In addition, the LDP will need to provide for appropriate housing type – i.e. size, mix and tenure. |                      |
| High levels of car usage | • Private car use is high in the area due to the rural nature of the district and contributes at certain locations to localised congestion and poor air quality. The reductions in industrial CO₂ emissions have the potential to be offset by an increase in transport related emissions. | Population and Human Health, climatic factors, and air |
|                       | • The LDP could support new public transport infrastructure and also the provision of local facilities which could reduce the reliance on cars and reduce the need to travel.  
• Redevelopment proposals should encourage walking, cycling and more sustainable modes of transport, and discourage car use where possible. |                      |
| Poor transport connections and accessibility | • A predominantly rural district with no major roads or dual carriageways and only one rail link. Capacity and quality of existing road network is limited.  
• Rural bus services are essential to maintain access to remote areas.  
• The flexibility and duration of services results in difficulties in accessibility within the district particularly at night and particularly to and from the more remote areas accentuating rural isolation.  
• Limited access to greenspace and other features of the natural environment | Population and Human Health, and all environmental topics |
|                       | • The LDP is unlikely to have a direct effect on major infrastructure projects as these will be included in the Essex Local Transport Plan and the Regional Transport Strategy. The LDP will need to take into consideration major infrastructure projects and could include a policy on planning obligations.  
• The LDP could support the development of new greenspace and the improvement of access to existing sites and other natural environment features. |                      |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Issues / Problems</th>
<th>Opportunities/Implications for the LDP</th>
<th>Relevant SEA topic/s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rural Isolation</strong></td>
<td>• Rural villages and their communities are becoming less self-sufficient in providing local jobs and services resulting in changes to the socio-economic profile. Small towns and villages are vulnerable to the changing character of rural life becoming almost dormant commuter villages which offer limited local facilities and job opportunities but increasing house prices as a result of the in-migration of those better off. This also augments poor accessibility to more remote areas.</td>
<td>• The LDP could promote a sustainable rural economy, support farm diversification where appropriate and contribute to creating vibrant and viable rural communities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Demographics</strong></td>
<td>• Ageing population has increased the proportion of the population who are economically inactive as a result of increased number of retirees and the younger population leaving The District. • There are likely to be problems accommodating a projected growth in population which is likely to have associated environmental problems such as deterioration in air quality, increased congestion, pressure on Greenfield land and increase in flood risk. • Small percentage of students due to lack of post 16 education facilities.</td>
<td>• The LDP needs to reverse the out-migration of the younger population in search of new jobs and homes by providing opportunities within the District and/or improving accessibility to and from the District. Also the LDP should support post 16 and higher education facilities in the District to attract students to stay in the District.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Key Issues / Problems | Opportunities/Implications for the LDP | Relevant SEA topic/s
---|---|---
Environmental

**Pressure on ecological assets**
- There are a number of local, national and international nature conservation designations in the District including the SAC, SPAs, SSSIs, Ramsar, NNRs, LWSs and CWSs.
- These national and international designations are primarily located in the intertidal zone. As sea levels rise, coastal defences prevent inter-tidal habitats from migrating landwards, thereby resulting in their loss.
- Development could threaten the protection and utilisation of potential habitats, and the continuity of existing habitats.
- Eutrophication of the Blackwater Estuary is identified as a problem.
- Four of the nine SSSIs in the District (see Table 4.1) are in an unfavourable recovering condition, principally as a result of coastal squeeze.
- Part of an ancient woodland SSSI is located within Maldon District. The District has a low proportion of ancient woodland compared with other districts in Essex.
- There are several UK and Essex BAP species and habitats present within the District which should be protected and enhanced.
- The protection and enhancement of non-designated biodiversity is also an important issue.
- Climate change may lead to the deterioration of terrestrial and estuarine habitats. Species restricted by climate may not be able to colonise new areas.

- **Opportunities for the LDP to outline measures to support local biodiversity within designated sites and also for non-designated biodiversity features.** Additionally the LDP can promote habitat creation and the linking of environmentally valuable habitats. The natural environment is a key asset which can enhance the rural economy and tourism, and as such should be preserved through the LDP.
- Protection of ecological assets should be a key priority in spatial planning policy. Mitigation measures may be required if development is proposed in the vicinity of the designated site.
- The screening stage of a Habitats Regulations Assessment will be required. This will form a separate process but its findings will be incorporated in the SAR.

Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna, Climatic Factors
### Local Landscape Importance

- The scenic beauty of the local landscape is important in Maldon District. There are a number of local landscape character areas which need protecting.
- General sensitivities have been identified through the Landscape Character Assessment due to pressures on the landscape including:
  - Decrease in woodland and tree cover.
  - Continuing decline/loss of hedgerows, field margins and farm ponds as a result of maximising field size, lack of appropriate management and spray drift.
  - Soil erosion as a result of autumn cultivation of arable crops.
  - Increased pressure for new uses of ‘marginal’ land, including small holdings, leisure uses and pony paddocks.
  - Potential change of grazing marsh to salt marsh through managed realignment.
  - Loss of salt marsh through coastal squeeze.
  - Increase in large arable farm units which may lead to further homogenisation of the landscape.
  - Farm diversification such as the adoption or reuse of farm buildings for commercial, industrial and storage uses.

The LDP needs to ensure the protection and enhancement of the local landscape using Landscape Character Assessment as a tool for appraising such areas.

The LDP should promote opportunities for ecotourism and improved access to areas of landscape importance.

**Relevant SEA topic/s**: Cultural Heritage and Landscape

### High Risk of Flooding

- Due to its coastal location, parts of the District are at risk from both river and coastal flooding. 30-35% of the District is low-lying and at high risk of flooding. This places development constraints on some sections of the District.
- The Essex and South Suffolk SMP2 has determined the best ways to look after this part of the coast in a sustainable way for the next 100 years.

Development in high flood risk areas of the District should be avoided, or include measures to manage flood risk as part of the development. Prevention measures should take into account cumulative effect of flood protection on downstream flooding.

Development should also consider the likely increasing risk of flooding resulting from climate change.

The LDP can reduce the impacts of flooding through effective land use planning and the promotion of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS).

**Relevant SEA topic/s**: Water and Soil, Population and Human Health, Climatic Factors, Cultural Heritage and Landscape
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Issues / Problems</th>
<th>Opportunities/Implications for the LDP</th>
<th>Relevant SEA topic/s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>High Resource Consumption</strong></td>
<td>• The LDP is unlikely to have a direct effect on waste management in the District as waste is dealt with at a regional level through the Regional Waste Strategy. However, the LDP policies can support and encourage the recycling of waste and the provision of facilities for recycling in new development through planning obligations or site waste management plans. The LDP may also promote the recycling of construction waste through the use of site waste management plans. • Water saving devices and SuDS should be included in all new developments and water metering promoted.</td>
<td>Water and Soil, Climatic Factors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Maldon District has a low recycling rate with the majority of domestic waste landfilled.</td>
<td>• Preservation of historic landscape character is an important issue; and integrated management of the historic and natural environments is crucial. • Opportunities for the historic environment to promote regeneration in urban and rural locations. • Need to ensure that archaeological remains are protected through the LDP policies.</td>
<td>Cultural Heritage and Landscape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Low use of renewables in the District.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• The District is located within the driest region of the country. Further growth in housing could lead to further increases in demand for water</td>
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<tr>
<td>• The Essex &amp; Suffolk Water area is classified under the Environment Agency’s methodology as “Seriously Water Stressed Area”. Measures are being put in place to increase capacity of water storage at Abberton Reservoir. Completion is scheduled for 2014.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• Water supplies for the Maldon District are derived both from the Chelmer and Blackwater Rivers at Langford and from the Stour River at Stratford St Mary and Brantham.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Historic Environment</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• There are 20 Scheduled Monuments in the District and over 1,000 listed buildings, of which 5 are on the ‘at risk’ register.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• There are 13 Conservation Areas within the District.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Much of Maldon’s archaeology, particularly that located along the coast is susceptible to erosion due to sea level rise / climate change. This places archaeological remains at significant risk.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>• The majority of the Historic Landscape Character Zones in the District (Historic Environment Characterisation Project 2008) are considered to contain archaeological deposits which are sensitive to change.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• There are a number of important rural heritage landscapes in the District.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Preservation of historic landscape character is an important issue; and integrated management of the historic and natural environments is crucial.</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Opportunities for the historic environment to promote regeneration in urban and rural locations.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Need to ensure that archaeological remains are protected through the LDP policies.</td>
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</table>
### Key Issues / Problems

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Previously Developed Land</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Due to the rural nature of the District the legacy of Previously Developed Land is low. Whilst the issue of contamination should be low, a limited amount of Previously Developed Land could inhibit potential growth in the District or require the use of countryside.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Economic</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Out migration of population, workers and students occurs because there are not enough jobs in the District and there are higher wages available outside the District. This leads to high demand for housing at a high price for those able to commute out of the District, leaving high house prices in the district for those who have to work in lower paid jobs within the district.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Limited diversity of employment opportunities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Continued decline of the agricultural sector.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Tourism sector is underachieving and a reported lack of hotel facilities particularly around the town of Maldon.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The closure of the Bradwell Power Station has removed a major employer from the District.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The District relies on tourism and its reputation for sailing; this generates jobs in the district. However, these are relatively low paid and seasonal in nature.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The manufacturing sector is declining but still significant to the District.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunities/Implications for the LDP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- The development put forward in association with the LDP should not be overly restricted by potential contaminated locations; however the use of Greenfield land for development as a result of the rural nature of the District will need to be addressed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Potential to create employment areas to minimise out migration of skills dependant on type of location available.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The LDP should ensure there is suitable employment, skills and training opportunities given the decline in job opportunities following the closure of Bradwell Power Station for decommissioning (Bradwell has been identified as a potential site for nuclear new build, which could present opportunities for employment).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- The LDP could seek to improve tourism facilities in the larger settlements and help this important sector.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relevant SEA topic/s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Water and Soil</td>
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<tr>
<td>Population and Human Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population and Human Health</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Key Issues / Problems

**Vulnerability of the rural/agricultural economy**
- Continued decline of the agricultural sector in the District.
- Pressures from Common Agricultural Policy, change in nature of farming practices.
- Demand for farm diversification, barn conversions to supplement farmers’ incomes.

### Opportunities/Implications for the LDP

- The LDP should promote a healthy rural economy creating vibrant town and village centres and respond to declining employment opportunities in the countryside, especially in agriculture through diversification whilst at the same time balancing the need to protect the countryside for its landscape, wildlife, agricultural, forestry and recreational value.
- Agri-environmental schemes may create jobs using traditional skills. Diversification of the rural economy to support the local economy.

### Relevant SEA topic/s
- Population and Human Health
4.6 Predicted Future Trends

4.6.1 The SEA Directive requires the consideration of the likely evolution of the state of the environment without the implementation of the LDP. During the lifetime of the LDP it is predicted that there will be a number of external influences within, or which could affect the District, as well as the wider county. The following influences and associated future trends were identified in the Scoping Report and are covered in more detail in Appendix A, but a summary is provided below.

- Population Projections:
  - Maldon District population is projected to increase by 14,996\(^8\) over the period 2010 to 2033.
  - Population density is also predicted to increase, putting pressure on existing services and facilities.
  - As well as accommodation pressure, such levels of regional growth would have negative effects in terms of air quality, noise and traffic congestion.

- Affordability of Housing:
  - The average house prices in the District will continue to rise.
  - The increasing housing prices will exacerbate the affordable housing problem.

- Environmental Assets:
  - The standard of protection afforded by existing defences will decline as sea level rises due to climate change.
  - Climate change could influence landscape character and biodiversity, altering the flora and fauna known to be present.
  - The coastline faces dynamic change through loss of existing saltmarsh and mudflats.
  - Pressure on water resources is likely to increase.

- Agricultural Assets:
  - Coastal management techniques, such as managed realignment, are likely to affect coastal agricultural areas.
  - Projected temperature rises are likely to alter the types of species which can be farmed in the District, requiring diversification and evolution of farming practices.

\(^8\) Figure from a ‘trend’ scenario which reproduces the 2008-based sub-national population projections (SNPP) from ONS. An economic scenario assessment, which is a labour constrained scenario, predicts a population increase of 13,701.
5 THE SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL FRAMEWORK

5.1.1 The SA Framework is a key component in completing the SA. It combines the baseline information, review of PPPs and key sustainability issues into a systematic and easily understood tool that can be used to predict and assess effects arising from the implementation of the LDP. It was developed during the previous SA process and has been reviewed, and where necessary amended and updated, in light of updated baseline information and feedback from the consultation of the Scoping Report. The SA Framework is set out in Table 5.1 (as with previous tables, amended text following consultation is shown).

5.1.2 For each objective a set of indicators has been proposed to capture the change likely to arise from the LDP implementation and these will play a role in the assessment itself. Where appropriate existing data sources and indicators which are already monitored in the District have been used. In some cases, specific new indicators are proposed which will require monitoring by relevant bodies should significant effects relating to the SA objectives be identified. A good balance of appropriate and reliable indicators across the SA objectives is critical in developing an effective but practical monitoring programme. Final review of these indicators will be undertaken post-consultation and prior to submission of the LDP for examination.
Table 5.1 – SA Framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>SA Objective</th>
<th>Key indicators</th>
<th>Relevant targets</th>
<th>SEA Topics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Social SA objectives</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>To maintain and improve accessibility to services and facilities for all sectors of the community</td>
<td>% of rural residential population within 10km of key services (e.g. bank/post office)</td>
<td>All key services to be within 10km for 90% of rural households. Source: Countryside Agency (now Natural England)</td>
<td>Population and Human Health, Cultural Heritage and Landscape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Hectares of accessible green space per 1,000 people</td>
<td>Maintain the current level of provision for District parks (1ha per 1000 population) Provision for local parks and neighbourhood amenity spaces should not drop below existing levels.</td>
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<td>Number or length of newly created or improved Public Rights of Way per year</td>
<td>No target identified</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>% of new residential / commercial development within 1km of good public transport links</td>
<td>Actively manage patterns of growth to make the fullest possible use of public transport Source: NPPF</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>% of buildings accessible for disabled people</td>
<td>No target identified</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>% of residents within walking distance of public transport interchange</td>
<td>No target identified</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>% crossings for disabled people</td>
<td>No target identified</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>To provide and maintain an adequate level of good quality affordable housing of appropriate size, tenure, mix and location to meet local needs</td>
<td>A suitable balance between supply and demand for housing</td>
<td>Meet identified and agreed housing demand</td>
<td>Population and Human Health</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|    | | % of affordable homes as proportion of total new dwelling completions | Develop in line with local targets:  
- Northern Rural, Maldon Central and South and Rural South - 40%  
- Maldon North and Rural South East Higher - 30%  
- Rural South East Lower - 25% | |
<p>|    | | Affordability of housing: average house price against income | No target identified | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>SA Objective</th>
<th>Key indicators</th>
<th>Relevant targets</th>
<th>SEA Topics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>To promote healthier lifestyles, improve levels of health and well being</td>
<td>Life expectancy</td>
<td>Increase</td>
<td>Population and Human Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Provision of infrastructure to improve health care</td>
<td>Increase</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Crime levels</td>
<td>Decrease</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Fear of crime</td>
<td>No target identified at this stage</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>% of people who describe their health as good</td>
<td>Increase</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>% of people who describe their health as poor</td>
<td>Decrease</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Participation in sport and active recreation</td>
<td>70% of population participants in 30 minutes activity, 5 times a week by 2020. Source: The Framework for Sport in England: A Vision for 2020</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>To reduce rural isolation and social exclusion geographically and demographically through encouraging viable and vibrant communities</td>
<td>IMD rankings</td>
<td>Improve</td>
<td>Population and Human Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Number of active residents groups/neighbourhood watch groups etc.</td>
<td>Increase</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Range of leisure and recreation opportunities within walking distance</td>
<td>Increase</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Retention of rural facilities including village shops</td>
<td>Maintain and increase</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>SA Objective</td>
<td>Key indicators</td>
<td>Relevant targets</td>
<td>SEA Topics</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>To maintain and improve public transport provision, promote sustainable modes</td>
<td>% of planning applications which contribute to sustainable transport initiative</td>
<td>No target identified</td>
<td>All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>of transport and reduce journey miles undertaken by car</td>
<td>through planning contributions</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Walking and cycling routes</td>
<td>Maintain and increase where feasible</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Integration of National Cycle Network</td>
<td>Increase</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Modal Split (% of workforce travelling to work by mode)</td>
<td>To increase the percentage of journeys to work by non-car modes.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Public transport patronage volumes</td>
<td>No target identified</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Public transport provision, frequency and reliability</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<td>Traffic volumes</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Number of car trips (census)</td>
<td>No target identified</td>
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</table>

**Environmental SA objectives**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>6</th>
<th>To protect and enhance the local towscape, heritage assets and their settings</th>
<th>Index of Multiple Deprivation for “Living Environment”</th>
<th>Improve</th>
<th>Cultural Heritage and Landscape, Population and Human Health</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Number of Listed Buildings, SMs, Historic Parks and Gardens, Registered Historic Battlefields and Conservation Areas in the District</td>
<td>No decrease in extent or change in setting</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Areas of sensitive archaeology and associated features identified and protected</td>
<td>Increase</td>
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<td>Historic features on English Heritages ‘at risk’ register</td>
<td>To reduce the number of features at risk during the plan period</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Number of Conservation Area appraisals prepared during the plan period</td>
<td>No target identified</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Historic Landscape Characterisation trends</td>
<td>Maintain</td>
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<td>No</td>
<td>SA Objective</td>
<td>Key indicators</td>
<td>Relevant targets</td>
<td>SEA Topics</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>To protect and enhance biodiversity and important wildlife habitats</td>
<td>Number, area and condition of international, national, regional and locally designated sites</td>
<td>Compliance with Conservation Objectives and local management standards Source: Natural England</td>
<td>Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna, Water and Soil</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>BAP species and habitats</td>
<td>Increase in extent and number Source: Natural England</td>
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<td>% of new developments incorporating ecological enhancement measures per year (including green and blue infrastructure)</td>
<td>No target identified</td>
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<td>Area of ‘ancient woodland’</td>
<td>Maintain extent Source: Natural England</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Area of created intertidal habitat</td>
<td>Increase Source: Natural England</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>To protect quality and levels of local water resources</td>
<td>% of watercourse with good or fair biological and chemical quality</td>
<td>Achieve good status or potential in the water body (against the Water Framework Directive) Source: Environment Agency</td>
<td>Water and Soil</td>
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<td>Average domestic water consumption (l/head/day)</td>
<td>Reduce consumption and within new developments achieve the minimum equivalent of Level 3 under the Code for Sustainable Homes for water use (105litres / capita / day) as a minimum</td>
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<td>The number of sustained objections from the EA to planning applications based on water quality concerns</td>
<td>No target identified</td>
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<td>SA Objective</td>
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<td>SEA Topics</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>To minimise the risk and hazards of flooding by adapting to the impacts of climate change, including sea level rise</td>
<td>No. of properties at risk of flooding</td>
<td>A reduction in the number of properties at risk of flooding.</td>
<td>Water and Soil, Population and Human Health, Climatic Factors</td>
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<td>Number of planning applications approved where the EA has sustained an objection on flood risk grounds</td>
<td>Zero</td>
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<td>No. of planning permissions with SuDS</td>
<td>No target identified</td>
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<td>Amount of new development (ha) situated within a flood risk area</td>
<td>No new development in Flood Zone 2 and 3</td>
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<td>Area (ha) identified for flood attenuation</td>
<td>No target identified</td>
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<td>Area (ha) of intertidal habitat creation</td>
<td>Increase in the area of intertidal habitat</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Length of flood and coastal defences and % in a good, fair and poor condition</td>
<td>No target identified</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>To ensure efficient use of land and protect geodiversity, soil quality and mineral resources</td>
<td>% of dwellings built on previously developed land not of high environmental value</td>
<td>Development opportunities on previously developed land will be maximised</td>
<td>Water and Soil</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>% contaminated land remediated or contained during plan period</td>
<td>No target identified</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Number of developments meeting densities between 30-50dph</td>
<td>NPPF states that local planning authorities should adopt own approach to housing density to reflect local circumstances</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Number and condition of geological designations (SSSI and RIGS)</td>
<td>No decline in extent or condition</td>
<td>Source: Natural England</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>New planning permissions granted on known Mineral Safeguarding Areas</td>
<td>Zero</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>To reduce emissions of greenhouse gases</td>
<td>CO₂ emissions by sector and per capita</td>
<td>To reduce CO₂ emissions 80% by 2050 from a 1990 baseline figure (national target). Source: UK Climate Change Act 2008 and DECC</td>
<td>Climatic Factors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>SA Objective</td>
<td>Key indicators</td>
<td>Relevant targets</td>
<td>SEA Topics</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| 12 | To maintain air quality levels in line with national and/or WHO targets     | No. of days when air pollution is moderate or high for NO₂, SO₂, O₃, CO or PM10                   | To meet National Air Quality Standards  
Source: Maldon District Council                                                                                                                      | Air, Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna            |
|    |                                                                              | Levels of main pollutants                                                                          | To meet National Air Quality Standards                                                                                                                                   |                                               |
|    |                                                                              | Number and area of Air Quality Management Areas                                                     | To meet National Air Quality Standards  
Source: Maldon District Council                                                                                                                      |                                               |
| 13 | To reduce natural resource consumption                                       | % of premises meeting BREEAM “Very Good” standard or higher and % of dwellings meeting Code for Sustainable Homes levels 4-6 | All new dwellings meeting Code level 4 by 2013 and Code level 6 by 2016 or BREEAM (“Very Good”/“Excellent” standard.  
Source: Code for Sustainable Homes                                                                                       | Air, Climatic Factors, Water and Soil         |
|    |                                                                              | % of energy generated from renewable sources (by type of scheme)                                   | Increase in energy from renewable sources within new developments                                                                                     |                                               |
|    |                                                                              | Energy consumption per capita                                                                        | To reduce energy consumption year on year.                                                                                                                        |                                               |
|    |                                                                              | Household, construction and industrial waste produced (tonnage)                                     | Decrease                                                                                                                                                    |                                               |
|    |                                                                              | % of household waste recycled and/or composted                                                       | To recycle or compost at least 40% by 2010, 45% by 2015 and 50% by 2020.  
|    |                                                                              | % of household waste landfilled                                                                     | LAA target to reduce the amount of residual waste per household to 587 kg in 2009/10 and 593 kg in 2010/11.  
Source: Maldon Council 2008                                                                                                                     |                                               |
|    |                                                                              | % of construction, demolition and industrial waste landfilled                                      | No target identified                                                                                                                                         |                                               |
|    |                                                                              | % use of recycled aggregates in construction                                                           | Increase                                                                                                                                                    |                                               |
|    |                                                                              | % of household waste used to recover heat or power                                                    | To recover energy from 67% of municipal waste recovery by 2015.  
Source: UK Waste Strategy, 2000                                                                                                               |                                               |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>SA Objective</th>
<th>Key indicators</th>
<th>Relevant targets</th>
<th>SEA Topics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>To maintain and enhance the quality of the countryside, coasts, estuaries and local landscape character</td>
<td>Number and area of designated landscape</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Cultural Heritage and Landscape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Proportion of developments which demonstrate that they maintain or enhance the quality of the countryside, coasts, or estuaries, and local landscape character</td>
<td></td>
<td>No target identified</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% and qualitative change in countryside character areas by character type (Countryside Character Counts)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Achieve positive trends (Maintained and Enhancing)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Economic SA objectives</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>To strengthen the local economy through supporting the growth and diversification of business sectors and improving the attractiveness of the District to investment in both urban and rural areas</td>
<td>VAT registrations per 10,000 resident population</td>
<td>No target identified</td>
<td>Population and Human Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Breakdown of businesses by sector (number and %)</td>
<td></td>
<td>No target identified</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% change in unemployment rate</td>
<td></td>
<td>No increase in unemployment rate</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gross value added per worker (productivity)</td>
<td></td>
<td>No target identified</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Rural diversification or other diversification initiatives</td>
<td></td>
<td>No target identified</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% of people employed by employment type</td>
<td></td>
<td>No target identified</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>To develop and support sustainable tourism within the District</td>
<td>Input from tourism into local economy (£ per annum)</td>
<td>Increase</td>
<td>Population and Human Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number and type of tourist attractions</td>
<td>Maintain or increase</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number of people employed in the tourism industry</td>
<td></td>
<td>No target identified</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>SA Objective</td>
<td>Key indicators</td>
<td>Relevant targets</td>
<td>SEA Topics</td>
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<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>To support employment diversity to create jobs that match the skills profile for the local population</td>
<td>Educational attainment, IMD (Education Skills and Training domain), Retention rates of young people in District</td>
<td>Increase, Improve, No target identified</td>
<td>Population and Human Health</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6 OBJECTIVES COMPATABILITY ASSESSMENT

6.1 B1: Testing the Objectives against the Sustainability Appraisal Framework

6.1.1 An initial compatibility matrix was developed to identify to what extent the draft objectives of the MDC LDP are compatible with the SA objectives (results can be seen in Appendix A). Since then the LDP objectives have been developed further and amended and as such, are re-assessed below for compatibility with the SA objectives.

6.1.2 The objectives for the District (provided within the Preferred Options Consultation Document, May 2012) are as follows:

i. Provide sufficient, well designed, quality housing to meet the housing target, increase the supply of affordable housing across the District and focus future development in sustainable locations within settlements boundaries and strategic growth areas.

ii. Identifying strategic growth areas to provide for the Districts future needs to improve the quality of life for all.

iii. To maintain a diverse, vibrant, viable economy, encouraging equity and diversification and enhancement of skills and employment opportunities across the District.

iv. To facilitate the development of appropriate rural enterprises and protect and enhance rural service provision across the rural areas within the District.

v. To develop and support sustainable tourism within the District.

vi. To protect and enhance the distinctive natural, built and historic environment of the District.

vii. To secure high quality new development within the District supported by infrastructure, promoting a reduction in the use of resources, addressing the threat of climate change, improving energy and water efficiency and promoting the use of renewable energy.

viii. To minimise the negative impacts of climate change by encouraging zero or low carbon development across the District.

ix. To ensure new development is either located away from high flood risk areas (Flood Zones 2 and 3) or is safe and flood resilient when it is not possible to avoid such areas.

x. To maintain, improve and co-ordinate public transport provision, and promote sustainable modes of transport.

xi. To ensure that people and communities enjoy quality sustainable lifestyles by enabling the provision of facilities and services, including essential and green infrastructure, where they are needed in the District.

xii. To facilitate and promote sustainable development in appropriate locations throughout the District.

xiii. To facilitate the delivery of new infrastructure to meet the needs of the community.

xiv. To ensure the delivery of regeneration and enhancement of the Central Area (incorporating Maldon Central, Causeway Regeneration Area and the Leisure Quarter).
6.1.3 The table below details the results of the compatibility assessment between the LDP and SA objectives.

Table 6.1 – Compatibility matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SA Objective</th>
<th>LDP Objectives</th>
<th>i</th>
<th>ii</th>
<th>iii</th>
<th>iv</th>
<th>v</th>
<th>vi</th>
<th>vii</th>
<th>viii</th>
<th>ix</th>
<th>x</th>
<th>xi</th>
<th>xii</th>
<th>xiii</th>
<th>xiv</th>
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6.1.4 The assessment identifies that the majority of the LDP objectives are compatible with the SA objectives. However, several objectives (in particular Objectives i, ii, xii and xiii) retain the potential for conflict with some of the SA objectives, depending on how and where the policy is implemented. The implementation is considered in more detail in the full assessment of the LDP policies, set out in Section 7.
LDP POLICY ASSESSMENT

B2: Developing the LDP Options

7.1.1 Appendix D presents the detailed results of the assessment of the proposed policies. This process has been iterative and assessments of the policies have been undertaken several times during the development of the LDP. The sections below present the main assessment findings and provide outstanding suggestions or recommendations for the improvement of the sustainability performance of some policies, including mitigation measures. Table 7.1 shows the summary of the policy assessment results, highlighting the identified effects and also how the policies have developed. Appendix E presents the findings in respect of an earlier assessment of draft policies for comparison, including recommendations made to strengthen the policies in relation to the SA objectives.

7.1.2 The SEA Directive requires that the Environmental Report should consider:

'reasonable alternatives taking into account the objectives and the geographical scope of the plan or programme' and give ‘an outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with’ (Article 5.1 and Annex I).

7.1.3 Each section below therefore includes an assessment of the alternative options proposed within the consultation draft LDP for each policy. Where one has not been suggested, it has been assumed that the alternative would be that no such policy was included in the LDP. Options and alternatives have also been formally considered at an earlier stage of the Council’s Plan development.

S1 Sustainable Development

7.1.4 Overall, Policy S1 policy performs well against the SA Objectives, which is in keeping with its role as a strategic policy driving the implementation of sustainable development and supporting the other LDP policies. The policy has a positive impact against the SA Objectives, and is assessed as being likely to deliver major positive impacts in terms of providing affordable housing and strengthening the local economy (Objectives 2 and 15, respectively). During development of the policies all recommendations made to strengthen this policy were incorporated. The inclusion of these recommendations has resulted in an increase in positive effects in relation to Objectives 5 (public transport), 8 (water resources), 12 (air quality), and 17 (employment diversity).

Alternative

7.1.5 The alternative to Policy S1 would be for no policy, and for the Council to rely instead on the primacy of the NPPF. This would result in no significant impacts or changes in relation to the assessment for S1. Overall, there would be broadly neutral to minor positive impacts.

S2 Strategic Growth

7.1.6 Overall the policy has a positive impact and is broadly in line with the majority of the SA Objectives, which is appropriate as it is a strategic policy which supports the achievement of other policies within the Plan. It is likely to result in negative impacts in
relation to air quality and water resources, and the use of natural resources which relate to the delivery of the development.

Alternatives

Alternative Growth 1: Population Stable

7.1.7 This alternative option would not result in the achievement of any of the employment objectives as it does not support a viable population. The lower scale of development (as compared with the preferred policy approach) would have a slightly more positive impact on environmental objectives, in particular resource use, greenhouse emissions, and air quality. There is the potential for negative environment impacts on water resources and flood risk (Objectives 8 and 9) due to a lack of delivery of suitable infrastructure in the future. The alternative could similarly jeopardise the ability to meet Objective 1 (maintain and improve accessibility).

Alternative Growth 2: Workforce Stable

7.1.8 The alternative option would have a negative impact on environmental objectives for resources use, greenhouse emissions, air quality and water resources, due to the scale of growth proposed. There is the potential for economic benefit from maintaining the existing workforce profile. The option would put pressure on existing infrastructure and could consequently affect some of the social objectives.

Alternative Growth 3: Meeting Projected Demand

7.1.9 There is the potential that this alternative could fail the economic objectives as there could lead to the population outgrowing employment. It would have similar environmental impacts as Alternative Growth 2. However, the impact on social objectives could be expected to be more negative as there would be a strain on resources and current services and facilities.

Alternative Spatial Distribution Option 1: Concentrated Growth at Southminster

7.1.10 Socially, this alternative option could enhance the Southminster area and could help to spread development more equitably through the district. However, the maintenance of service provision is likely to be more difficult. There could also be an impact on water resources and water quality as there are existing sewerage capacity issues which would be likely to worsen under this alternative. The quality of the countryside, landscape and townscape would also be affected. There is expected to be some economic benefit to the eastern areas of the district.

Alternative Spatial Distribution Option 2: Concentrated Growth at the North West Villages

7.1.11 This option would fail to support Objective 1, as it will not maintain or improve accessibility to services and facilities. Overall, there would be no significant benefits in respect of the sustainability objectives. Specifically this objective would not reduce rural isolation. It has already been identified that there is a sewerage constraint which could be exacerbated by this alternative option.
Alternative Spatial Distribution Option 3: Dispersed Growth

7.1.12 This option of dispersed growth would likely result in a lack of new infrastructure or facilities in the District and would not contribute to several of the social objectives. Also, there would be no support to the local economy as growth would be less planned and controlled.

Alternative Spatial Distribution Option 4: Enhanced South West Growth

7.1.13 This alternative option would meet several of the social objectives and could have a positive impact on the local economy. However, the deliverability of the growth could be an issue and this could have knock on effects for such features as affordable housing and infrastructure. In addition, it does not provide any benefits to the wider district or improve rural isolation.

S3 Place Shaping

7.1.14 Policy S3 has a broadly positive impact and is in line with the majority of the SA objectives. Following policy development in response to earlier consideration against the SA framework, Policy S3 is not expected to result in negative impacts in relation to greenhouse gases and the use of natural resources, having instead neutral impact for these objectives. All recommendations for strengthening this policy have been incorporated during development and as a result the policy is now likely to have a moderate positive effect on promoting healthier lifestyles.

Alternative

7.1.15 The alternative to Policy S3 is to not have a policy related to place shaping. By doing this there could be potential negative impacts on the majority of the objectives as development in the District could become piecemeal and there would be a more significant cumulative impact from the spread development, with less targeted delivery against social and economic needs, and a lower likelihood of achieving the delivery of suitable infrastructure enhancements.

S4 Central Area Policy

7.1.16 Policy S4 typically has positive impacts in association with the majority of the objectives. However, it is likely to result in minor negative impacts in relation to the use of natural resources, greenhouse gases and water resources. It is a strategic policy localised to the central Maldon and Heybridge area and therefore impacts on the wider District are limited. Through implementation of recommendations made at earlier stages of the SA process, this policy is now likely to have a moderate positive effect on biodiversity.

Alternatives

Alternative 1

7.1.17 This alternative would maintain the protection of the area and therefore receives an overall positive assessment against the objectives as with the preferred policy. However the policy does not provide any specific enhancement measures and therefore would not achieve moderate positive effects.
Alternative 2

7.1.18 This alternative also delivers similar outcomes to the preferred policy. However, there would be a delay in the delivery of likely benefits and there could be a potential lack of integration and prioritisation between the action plan and the LDP. Due to this enhancement opportunities could be missed and significant positive effects would not be achieved.

S5 Settlement Hierarchy and Boundaries

7.1.19 Policy S5 is broadly neutral with positive impacts likely in relation to the majority of the social objectives such as reducing rural isolation, affordable housing, and improving public transport. It is also likely to result in a minor positive impact in respect of Objective 14, protecting the landscape character.

Alternatives

Alternative 1

7.1.20 This alternative is broadly similar to the preferred policy except that there is the potential for negative impacts in relation to rural isolation and the local economy (Objectives 4 and 15 respectively) as it does not define a settlement hierarchy.

Alternative 2

7.1.21 This alternative is broadly similar to the first alternative. It would allow for less controlled growth which could be more difficult to support with appropriate infrastructure. There would be a significant negative impact in respect of Objectives 5, 10 and 14 (public transport, land use and landscape). However, it could potentially contribute to reducing rural isolation in the District.

S6 Development in the Countryside

7.1.22 Policy S6 has a positive impact in relation to the majority of the SA objectives, including a moderate positive impact on reducing rural isolation and reducing resource consumption. There is expected to be a neutral impact on flood risk and air quality.

Alternative

7.1.23 This alternative would have similar impacts in relation to the SA objectives as Alternative 2 for Policy S5 (potentially less local specification of the nature and location of development and less potential for supporting infrastructure).

D1 Design Quality and Built Environment

7.1.24 This policy is broadly neutral with some positive impacts relating to promoting healthier lifestyles and protecting local townscape, heritage and natural environment features. The supporting text to the policy states that the District already suffers from inconsistent design which has an impact on local character. Therefore in relation to this issue the policy has a positive impact.
Alternative

7.1.25 The alternative of having a more prescriptive approach does not affect the overall sustainability of the LDP. However, it could remove an element of flexibility in adapting to future changes, potentially jeopardising longer term economic and environmental sustainability.

D2 Climate change and environmental impact of new development

7.1.26 This policy has a broadly positive impact, with major positive benefits arising from the reduction of greenhouse gases and natural resource consumption. It is also likely to result in moderate positive scores for accessibility, providing alternative means of working to reduce car travel and water resources (Objectives 1, 5 and 8, respectively). Following adoption of earlier recommendations, this policy is also likely to have a moderate positive effect on Objective 5 by reducing the need to travel by car.

Alternatives

Alternative 1

7.1.27 The alternative option would be expected to result in less beneficial impacts in relation to Objectives 8, 11, 12 and 13, reducing the likely impacts to minor positive.

Alternative 2

7.1.28 The alternative option of producing a higher proportion of energy on site by low carbon means is likely to have a positive effect in reducing resource consumption and greenhouse gas emissions but could have a larger impact on the townscape and landscape character.

D3 Conservation and Heritage Assets

7.1.29 The policy is broadly neutral with positive impacts associated with heritage assets and maintaining the countryside and landscape. It is also likely to have a moderate positive effect on land use. All recommendations from previous assessments have been adopted.

Alternative

7.1.30 The alternative is to not have a policy and in which case the NPPF would take priority in relation to conservation and heritage features. Overall, the positive outcomes from having a locally-specific heritage specific policy would be reduced, although national policy would provide protection.

D4 Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Generation

7.1.31 The policy is broadly neutral with some positive impacts relating to protecting local townscape and heritage and biodiversity, and reducing natural resource consumption. Impacts on landscape will be dependent on scale and type of renewable energy project. The assessment reflects the fact that projects could result in a change to existing character, although this is not necessarily a negative change.
Alternatives

Alternative 1

7.1.32 By identifying locations for low carbon energy projects this option allows for the potential impacts on the landscape to be more proactively managed. However, it does not allow for flexibility in establishing these sites and could potentially have other impacts to the environment. The additional time associated with such identification could result in negative impacts on greenhouse gas emissions through delaying the delivery of renewable energy generation.

Alternative 2

7.1.33 By not providing a specific policy for low carbon energy generation and relying on national policy to guide decision making in the District, there is the potential that these developments could be located in areas which are not suitable for the District in relation to the environmental SA objectives.

D5 Flood Risk

7.1.34 This policy is broadly neutral with a major positive impact associated with reducing flood risk and a minor positive impact in connection with protecting water resources. All recommendations for previous assessment have been incorporated.

Alternative

7.1.35 The NPPF would take primacy if a flood risk specific policy was not created. The NPPF has less local specification and could miss the possibility for local enhancements. The greater positive impacts received by the preferred policy may be missed.

E1 Existing Employment Use

7.1.36 Policy E1 is broadly neutral with moderate positive impacts related to strengthening the local economy and supporting employment diversity. It is also likely to result in minor positive impacts on townscape, biodiversity and landscape.

Alternative

7.1.37 The alternative option would not be compliant with Objective 10 regarding the efficient use of land as it is not a flexible approach. Also, it may have a minor negative impact on strengthening the local economy as it may be unresponsive to future change.

E2 Retail Provision

7.1.38 This policy has a broadly neutral impact with a negative impact relating to greenhouse gas emissions. It should result in a minor positive impact on accessibility, townscape, natural resource consumption, local economy and employment diversity.
Alternatives

Alternative 1

7.1.39 With this alternative there is the potential for a negative impact on the townscape through the implementation of retail units on a site by site basis. Alternatively opportunities for economic benefit could be missed through a lack of policy clarity.

Alternative 2

7.1.40 There is the potential for some benefit in relation to the environmental objectives but as the option is in response to currently projected demand it is not responsive to local change or future demands. It could therefore have negative social and economic impacts in particular in respect of Objectives 1, 15 and 16 (accessibility, local economy and sustainable tourism).

E3 Village Shops and Services

7.1.41 This policy is predominantly neutral in impact, with moderate positive impacts associated with accessibility and reducing rural isolation. It is also likely to result in a minor positive impact in relation to sustainable tourism. All recommendations to strengthen the policy have been incorporated and as a result is likely to result in a minor positive effect on Objective 5 (public and sustainable transport).

Alternatives

Alternative 1

7.1.42 The alternative has a potential negative impact in terms of accessibility to services, reducing rural isolation and protecting the townscape. Existing services and facilities could be lost, increasing the need to travel across the district to meet needs.

Alternative 2

7.1.43 By not providing a policy to protect village shops and services, these assets may be affected thereby having an impact on accessibility and potentially increasing rural isolation.

E4 Agriculture and Rural Diversification

7.1.44 Policy E4 is broadly neutral with some minor positive impacts associated with a number of the environmental objectives such as townscape and biodiversity. It also received a moderate positive score in relation to impacts on strengthening the local economy and a minor positive score for employment diversity. All recommendations from previous assessments have been incorporated. However, as a result of amendments to the policy wording, scores in relation to land use and landscape character have reduced to minor positive.
Alternatives

Alternative 1

7.1.45 The alternative option offers a more flexible approach with regards to rural diversification which could have a negative impact on the environmental objectives, in particular to landscape and natural environment features. However, it could benefit the local economy.

Alternative 2

7.1.46 This alternative option would have a broadly positive impact in relation to the environmental objectives but could have a detrimental impact on local economy.

E5 Tourism

7.1.47 The policy is predominantly positive, with no significant negative impacts. It is likely to have a major positive impact in relation to sustainable tourism as it is aiming to develop and improve the existing situation.

Alternative

7.1.48 The alternative would have a less beneficial impact in respect of Objective 16 as it is not as supportive of sustainable tourism. There could be negative impacts on the local economy (Objective 15) by affecting the tourism industry in the District.

E6 Skills, Training and Education

7.1.49 Policy E6 has a neutral impact for the majority of the SA Objectives, whilst likely to result in a moderate positive impact for Objective 17 (supporting employment diversity). It also receives a minor positive score in relation to the local economy.

Alternative

7.1.50 The alternative option would not be likely to result in any positive benefits in relation to supporting employment diversity as it would not support the development of skills, training and education. It would be likely to have a neutral impact in respect of most objectives.

H1 Affordable Housing

7.1.51 The policy has a predominantly neutral impact for the majority of objectives, with positive effects associated with accessibility and reducing rural isolation (Objectives 1 and 4, respectively). It is likely to result in a major positive impact in relation to Objective 2 (affordable housing).
Alternatives

Alternative 1

7.1.52 The alternative option has no significant social impacts but it may have an impact on the viability of the local economy. This in turn could result in the non-delivery of a higher percentage of affordable housing.

Alternative 2

7.1.53 A higher threshold for affordable housing would result in a less positive impact on Objective 2 (affordable housing) as the proposed development may not be feasible/achievable in all locations.

Alternative 3

7.1.54 The removal of the commuted sums mechanism would not have a significant impact on the sustainability of this policy. It could have a slight positive impact in relation to creating viable communities as it may result in a more diverse housing mix; however this mechanism is only expected to be used in exceptions.

H2 Housing Mix

7.1.55 The policy has a predominantly neutral impact for the majority of objectives, with positive effects associated with affordable housing and reducing rural isolation.

Alternatives

Alternative 1

7.1.56 This alternative does not provide flexibility in terms of local circumstance and future change and is therefore not an adaptable policy. However despite this, the alternative would receive a similar assessment to the preferred policy.

Alternative 2

7.1.57 This alternative option does not allow for the strategic management of supply in relation to future changes and pressures in the district. However, the alternative would result in similar outcomes to the preferred policy, although there may be a slightly less beneficial impact in relation to maintaining and improving access to services as there is the potential that the development would not be appropriate to the area.

H3 Accommodation for Specialist Needs

7.1.58 The policy has positive impacts with regards to accessibility, health and wellbeing, protecting local townscape and landscape. However, broadly the policy has a neutral impact in respect of the sustainability objectives.
Alternatives

Alternative 1

7.1.59 The alternative option would not have any significant difference in terms of impacts, compared with the preferred policy, in respect of most objectives. However there is the potential over time to have a negative impact on Objective 2 (affordable housing) as it does not provide the flexibility to adapt to future demands and changes.

Alternative 2

7.1.60 Alternative 2 would not have any significant effect in relation to the Objectives but as it is an inflexible option providing explicit targets, it has the potential to affect Objective 2 (affordable housing) as cannot adapt to future demands and changes.

H4 Effective Use of Land

7.1.61 The policy is predominantly positive, with the main benefit being associated with Objective 10 (ensuring efficient land use). Minor positive scores were recorded in a number of areas such as air quality, natural resources, enhancing the landscape and biodiversity. Following implementation of earlier recommendations, it is likely the policy will have moderate positive effects in relation to accessibility and maintaining landscape character.

Alternatives

Alternative 1

7.1.62 The adoption of blanket targets across the District could result in negative impacts to environmental aspects such as landscape and townscape. Such an approach also does not provide a flexible approach to managing future changes. However, it would also have a positive impact on the efficient use of land (Objective 10).

Alternative 2

7.1.63 The provision of a prescriptive approach to land use would not provide a flexible approach to future change within the District. However, it could also have a positive impact on the efficient use of land (Objective 10).

H5 Rural Exception Schemes

7.1.64 The policy is broadly positive, with a minor negative effect in relation to reducing rural isolation – whilst the policy is socially inclusive it has the potential to lead to a degree of social exclusion. However this issue is addressed in Policy T1. The greatest positive impact is likely to be in relation to the delivery of affordable housing. Recommendations to the policy have resulted in an increase in the positive effect for reducing rural isolation.
Alternatives

Alternative 1

7.1.65 The NPPF defines sustainability requirements in the context of land use planning and consequently, omission of the policy could be considered unsustainable.

Alternative 2

7.1.66 By allowing a more flexible mixed tenure scheme, unsuitable development in the countryside could be allowed which may have a detrimental impact on landscape and countryside character, heritage assets and biodiversity. It may also increase rural isolation.

H6 Provision for Travellers

7.1.67 The policy is broadly neutral in terms of impacts against the sustainability objectives, with positive impacts likely in relation to accessibility, affordable housing, public transport and protecting townscape, water resources, air quality, biodiversity and landscape. All recommendations from previous assessments have been incorporated.

Alternatives

Alternative 1

7.1.68 The use of good science is central to the pillars of the UK Sustainability Strategy and the use of incomplete or out of date data to project figures would not represent good practice and is therefore not in compliance with the Strategy. The result, likely over provision of pitches, would not necessarily be the most sustainable option for the District. Although not large scale, the proposed increase could result in less efficient use of land.

Alternative 2

7.1.69 As above, it is more appropriate to use locally robust data to create a sustainable solution regarding Traveller pitches in the District. Even though small scale, this could be less efficient use of land.

Alternative 3

7.1.70 This alternative does provide positive aspects but could cause a delay to the delivery of Traveller pitches within the District. Over time this option could be merged with the annual monitoring recommended in the policy to provide a focussed approach over the longer term.

Alternative 4

7.1.71 This option is focussed on identifying new sites and could result in the relocation of Travellers to areas which are better suited to them and meets their interests. This could increase pressure on existing infrastructure which has not been designed to cater for
them and could enhance isolation. As above, elements of this approach could still be adopted with ongoing identification of sites in response to any changes in demand.

**H7 Agricultural and Essential Workers Accommodations**

7.1.72 The policy has a largely neutral impact with minor positive effects in relation to affordable housing, reducing rural isolation, improving public transport and employment diversity. It also receives minor positive scores for the majority of environmental objectives due to further development of the policy; all recommendations from previous assessments have been incorporated into the current policy wording.

**Alternative**

7.1.73 The alternative is that there is no policy on rural enterprise accommodation which means that there is no control over this type of development in the District. There is therefore potential for negative impacts to arise for the majority of the social and environmental objectives, although some protection would be given from other policies within the LDP.

**H8 Provision for Houseboats**

7.1.74 The policy is broadly positive, although the impacts are only minor. This is in keeping with the specific nature of the policy. The approach to managing houseboat developments is likely to result in minor positive impacts in terms of affordable housing, townscape, biodiversity, water resources, air quality and landscape.

**Alternative**

7.1.75 The alternative is that there is no policy on houseboats for the District, which means that there is no control over this type of development. Potential negative impacts could arise for the majority of the social and environmental objectives. However, some protection would be given from other policies within the plan.

**N1 Green Infrastructure Network**

7.1.76 The policy is broadly positive; with a minor negative impact on the land use objective (Objective 10) (whilst this policy is beneficial it does not necessarily represent the most locally efficient use of land in terms of development). This policy will have a major positive impact in relation to accessibility.

**Alternative**

7.1.77 The ‘Do Nothing’ alternative option would not bring any benefits to the District. It could lead to deterioration in the condition of exiting green space and infrastructure over time. However, an alternative which maintains the status quo would not have this effect. The NPPF would provide some protection of delivery of green infrastructure but not to the extent which is detailed in the preferred policy.
**N2 Nature Environment and Biodiversity**

7.1.78 The policy is broadly neutral in terms of impact against the objectives. Positive impacts are likely in relation to health and wellbeing, flood risk, land use and sustainable tourism. Moderate positive impacts are likely in relation to protecting the countryside/landscape and a major positive impact on protecting biodiversity.

**Comment:**

- Where compensatory habitat would relate to loss or damage to land designated internationally (as a Natura 2000 or Ramsar site) this can only be considered once Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest (IROPI) for the development or plan have been confirmed by the appropriate Secretary of State. This ensures compliance with The Conservation of Species and Habitats Regulations 2010 (as amended) and reflects requirements of the EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC).

**Alternative**

7.1.79 No alternatives have been proposed for this policy. The NPPF would address the issue of not having a specific natural environment policy and would provide a degree of protection to these sites. However, it would not deliver the same level of local benefit as a specific policy would.

**N3 Open Space, Sport and Leisure**

7.1.80 The majority of the impacts associated with this policy are neutral, with a moderate positive impact on accessibility and health and wellbeing. All recommendations from previous assessments have been incorporated.

**Alternative**

7.1.81 The alternative option does not provide a flexible approach to managing and providing open space and leisure facilities within the District. Whilst this is the case, the impacts overall are unlikely to be significantly different from the preferred policy.

**T1 Sustainable Transport**

7.1.82 The majority of projected impacts associated with this policy are positive and a number, such as accessibility, rural isolation and public transport are projected to be moderate in scale.

**Alternative**

7.1.83 Whilst outside the Council’s immediate scope, a more prescriptive approach would identify areas of need which could help improve accessibility across the District and could help improve rural isolation (moderate to major positive impact for Objectives 4 and 5). Such an approach would bring direct benefits.
**T2 Accessibility**

7.1.84 The policy is broadly positive, likely to have a major positive impact on maintaining and improving accessibility to services and facilities. It is also likely to have a moderate positive impact on objectives for public transport, air quality and greenhouse gases.

**Alternative**

7.1.85 The alternative of not having an accessibility specific policy means that implementation of aspects relating to accessibility would rely on other policies. There is therefore much less potential to realise beneficial impacts.

**I1 Infrastructure and Services**

7.1.86 The policy is broadly positive, with a major positive impact in maintaining and improving public transport and moderate positive impacts in accessibility and reducing rural isolation.

**Alternative**

7.1.87 The alternative option of a less pro-active approach provides less opportunity to identify beneficial impacts in relation to infrastructure and would not realise positive impacts for the majority of the social objectives and also to the local economy.
### Table 7.1 Policy Assessment

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* Green represents positive change in score from the draft assessment, red represents a negative change (see Appendix E)
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<th>SA Objectives</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E5 Tourism</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E6 Skills, Training and Education</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H1 Affordable Housing</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H2 Housing Mix</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H3 Accommodation for Specialist Needs</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H4 Effective Use of Land</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H5 Rural Exception Schemes</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H6 Provision for Travellers</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H7 Agricultural and Essential Workers Accommodations</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H8 Provision for Houseboats</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N1 Green Infrastructure Network</td>
<td>+++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N2 Nature Environment and Biodiversity</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N3 Open Space, Sport and Leisure</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T1 Sustainable Transport</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T2 Accessibility</td>
<td>+++</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I1 Infrastructure and Services</td>
<td>++</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Maldon LDP SA Report
Final Report (Preferred options)

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9X1918/R00002/303653/PBor
13 June 2012
8 HABITATS REGULATIONS ASSESSMENT

8.1 Introduction

8.1.1 The need for the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) arises from the EC Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) and its implementation in the UK under the Conservation of Habitat and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended) (previously the Conservation (Natural Habitats &c.) Regulations 1994 (as amended). Under Regulation 61 (1), HRA is required for a plan or project which, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects, is likely\(^{10}\) to have a significant effect\(^{11}\) on the integrity of an international site\(^{12}\) and which is not directly connected with the management of the site.

8.1.2 HRA is typically considered to be a risk-based assessment for spatial plans, drawing on available information, although for site specific assessments it can be evidence based. The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) has produced draft guidance on carrying out Appropriate Assessment for the protection of International Sites for Regional Planning Bodies and Local Planning Authorities (DCLG, 2006). It addresses determining the need for an Appropriate Assessment for a given plan and the provision of an assessment, if one is required. The documents ‘Planning for the Protection of European Sites: Appropriate Assessment’ (DCLG, 2006) and ‘The Assessment of Regional Spatial Strategies under the Provisions of the Habitats Regulations – Draft Guidance’ (English Nature, 2006) also provide a cohesive source of guidance for assessments, as do the RSPB publication ‘The Appropriate Assessment of Land Use Plans in England’ (2007), and more recent guidance for competent authorities (Tyldeley and Hoskin 2008; David Tyldesley and Associates 2010).

8.1.3 The general process of undertaking a HRA is iterative, alongside and informing policy development, and accords with Figure 8.1 below. Initially an assessment is undertaken of whether the policies and land allocations from a Core Strategy have the potential to have a Likely Significant Effect (LSE), either alone or in-combination, upon the relevant sites. Those policies that can be scoped out of the further assessment stages can be considered suitable for inclusion in the development plan.

8.1.4 Where more detailed review of policies is required their potential impacts on the integrity of the international sites are assessed against information gathered on the condition of the site, and any further information concerning the likely impact. Where it cannot be concluded that the policies will not have an adverse impact on the sites then mitigation or avoidance measures must be developed.

\(^{10}\) Case law has interpreted the test of ‘likelihood’ as meaning that there may be (as opposed to is likely to be) a significant effect. In the Waddenzee case (C-127/02) the European Court of Justice ruled that a project should be subject to appropriate assessment “if it cannot be excluded, on the basis of objective information, that it will have a significant effect on the site”. This reinforces the need to take a precautionary approach when effects are not certain.

\(^{11}\) Effects must be considered ‘significant’ where they could undermine the specific site’s conservation objectives. “The competent authority should not be swayed by the notion that the likely significance of any effect … is necessarily related to the proportion or size of area affected. It is the potential effect on the ecological functioning of the site that is relevant” (David Tyldesley and Associates 2010).

\(^{12}\) Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), designated under the Habitats Directive, and Special Protection Areas (SPA) designated under the Birds Directive, form part of the EU-wide Natura 2000 network. The UK National Planning Policy Framework confirms that ‘Ramsar sites’, designated under the Ramsar Convention (The Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, especially as Waterfowl Habitat), and sites in the process of being designated, should be subject to the same provisions.
8.1.5 Where mitigation or preventative measures cannot be established, and if a policy lacks a viable alternative, it is necessary to consider whether the policy is required. Only where a particular policy (identified to have the potential for a significant adverse effect) is justified by ‘imperative reasons of overriding public interest (IROPI), and there is no alternative solution, can consideration be given to progressing it. The relevant Government department must be consulted with through this process, and must confirm that IROPI prevails, as well as there being no possible mitigation measures or alternatives solutions that would negate the adverse effects on the site.

8.1.6 In light of the amended LDP policies this section of the SAR sets out the review and update of the screening assessment undertaken in 2010.

8.2 Identification of International Sites

8.2.1 The following internationally designated sites are present within Maldon District boundary or within 20km of the District:

- Abberton Reservoir SPA and Ramsar;
- Blackwater Estuary SPA and Ramsar;
- Benfleet and Southend Marshes SPA and Ramsar;
- Colne Estuary SPA and Ramsar;
- Crouch and Roach Estuaries SPA and Ramsar;
- Dengie SPA and Ramsar site;
- Essex Estuaries SAC;
- Foulness SPA and Ramsar;
- Outer Thames Estuary SPA; and
- Thames Estuary and Marshes SPA and Ramsar.
8.2.2 Appendix F provides the reason for designation for each of these sites.

Scoped out sites

8.2.3 During the previous screening assessment, the following sites were scoped out of further assessment:

- Foulness SPA and Ramsar;
- Abberton Reservoir SPA and Ramsar;
- Benfleet and Southend Marshes SPA and Ramsar;
- Thames Estuary and Marshes SPA and Ramsar; and
- Outer Thames Estuary SPA.

8.2.4 Benfleet and Southend Marshes, Thames Estuary and Marshes, and the Outer Thames Estuary were all scoped out due to the distance from these international sites to the District and the lack of pathway from which an impact could arise. It was considered that these sites were unlikely to be affected by recreational disturbance or any other impact considered possible as a result of the policies in the previous CS. This conclusion remains for the LDP policies and therefore these sites remain scoped out of further assessment.

8.2.5 Foulness SPA and Ramsar site is located approximately 320m south of the District boundary, on the southern side of the Crouch Estuary. The main type of impact that was considered to arise from the policies within the CS was that of recreational disturbance as a result of additional people living within the District. However, given the distance required to travel to reach the site and that much of it is owned by the Ministry of Defence (MoD) and not open access to the public, it was considered that this site would not be affected by policies and was scoped out of further assessment. This conclusion remains valid for the assessment for the LDP.

8.2.6 Abberton Reservoir SPA and Ramsar site is located approximately 2.3km north of the District boundary. During the previous screening assessment, consultation with Natural England was undertaken which indicated that the increase in visitor numbers from development in the District was not significant enough to the site to have an effect on condition of the international site. The current proposed housing figures for the District, whilst representing an increase, are not considered significant enough to impact a site which is already managed for visitor pressures. Therefore this site also remains scoped out of further assessment.

8.3 Potential impacts

8.3.1 Plans or projects can adversely affect the integrity of a site by:

- Causing delays in progress towards achieving the conservation objectives of the site;
- Interrupting progress towards achieving the conservation objectives of the site;
- Disrupting those factors that help to maintain the favourable conditions of the site; and,
• Interfering with the balance, distribution and density of key species that are the indicators of the favourable condition of the site.

8.3.2 The following impacts are considered possible as a result of implementing the LDP, and could lead to a potential significant effect on the International sites.

• Physical damage:
  - Siltation;
  - Changes in surface and groundwater flows; and
  - Removal/ smothering or damage to habitats.

• Disturbance:
  - Noise;
  - Visual;
  - Introduction of microbial pathogens; and
  - Introduction of non-native species.

• Contamination:
  - Introduction of non-synthetic and/or synthetic compounds;
  - Changes in nutrient or organic loading; and
  - Changes in turbidity.

8.4 Screening Assessment

8.4.1 Throughout the SA of the LDP policies the impact on international sites has been considered in relation to SA Objective 7 (to protect and enhance biodiversity and important wildlife habitat) and also in its own right. A screening assessment was undertaken of each of the policies against the international sites (and their features) to determine if likely significant effects as a result of the impacts detailed above were likely. The assessment is largely based on the conservation objectives of the sites which are detailed in Appendix G. Table 8.1 summarises this process, and the potential for a likely significant effect in the table is represented as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symbol</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>The policy will have a likely significant effect on the international site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>There is the potential for the policy to have a likely significant effect on the international site, depending upon its implementation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+</td>
<td>The policy will not have a likely significant effect on the international site</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8.4.2 For this assessment, each policy was considered on its own, without the influence of other policies (unless direct reference was made to other policies in the wording), although in reality the LDP will be considered as a whole. This is a precautionary approach intended as a thorough means of addressing issues relating to the international sites which may arise through the LDP policies.
| Potential Impact | S1 | S2 | S3 | S4 | S5 | S6 | D1 | D2 | D3 | D4 | D5 | E1 | E2 | E3 | E5 | E6 | H1 | H2 | H3 | H4 | H5 | H6 | H7 | H8 | N1 | N2 | N3 | T1 | T2 | I1 |
|------------------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|
| Blackwater Estuary SPA and Ramsar |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Physical damage |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Disturbance     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Contamination   |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Colne Estuary SPA and Ramsar |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Physical damage |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Disturbance     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Contamination   |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Crouch and Roach Estuaries SPA and Ramsar |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Physical damage |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Disturbance     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Contamination   |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Dengie SPA and Ramsar |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Physical damage |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Disturbance     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Contamination   |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Essex Estuaries SAC |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Physical damage |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Disturbance     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
| Contamination   |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |     |
8.4.3 As can be seen from Table 8.1, the majority of the LDP policies were considered unlikely to have a significant effect on the condition of the international sites. These LDP policies typically included reference to protecting the District’s environment or ecology, which was considered to include the international sites. However, a number of policies were considered to have the potential for a likely significant effect and this potential is discussed in more detail in the following sections.

**Policy S2**

8.4.4 This policy sets out the proposed housing growth for the District and the areas in which it should be located. Although these developments are located around existing settlements and therefore will not encroach on the international sites and directly affect them, there is the potential that increased development could put pressure on existing water resources and quality which may in turn affect the condition of the Blackwater Estuary and the Crouch and Roach sites. In addition, there is the potential for disturbance issues as a result of the increased population visiting nearby areas such as the estuaries.

8.4.5 The majority of the housing allocation is proposed to the south of Maldon and north of Heybridge. By placing housing away from the international sites, and given the levels of disturbance already arising from the town, it is unlikely that additional properties will result in any significant disturbance to the SPA / Ramsar from day to day recreation (e.g. dog walking). In addition, the policy provides for the creation of open space which will provide alternative recreational areas for members of the public, which would reduce visitor pressures on the international sites. With regard to Maldon town, the Blackwater SPA/Ramsar boundary extends to the edge of the town, and due to high levels of disturbance from recreation and traffic is it considered unlikely that any key roosting sites are present in this area.

8.4.6 Any additional discharge consents required for effluent will be managed in compliance with the Water Framework Directive (WFD) and as such will take account of any potential impacts to the international sites. In addition, applications for discharge consents which effect international sites are sent to Natural England by the Environment Agency for approval. This process ensures that no consents are granted if an impact on an international site is anticipated. The overall condition of the watercourses is also monitored under the WFD, preventing resource related issues. Consequently, it is considered that the implementation of this policy is unlikely to impact on the achievement of the conservation objectives of the international sites and is not likely to have a significant effect on any of the features of these sites.

**Policy H7**

8.4.7 The provision of accommodation for agricultural workers has the potential to have a likely significant effect on the international sites depending on the location of these developments. The creation of new development could cause damage to habitats if located within the international sites, or noise and visual disturbance from the proximity of the buildings to the international sites.

8.4.8 This development is likely to be both small scale in relation to its size and number required in the District, and whilst locations are not known at this current time it is considered that the predominantly estuarine nature of the international sites is not
suitable for development due to access, risk of flooding and lack of suitable land. Also, this development is intended to accommodating small numbers of people, therefore noise and visual disturbance would be minimal. It is therefore considered that this policy is not likely to have a significant effect on the international sites.

Policy N1

8.4.9 Through the creation of a green infrastructure network in the countryside and along the coastline there is the potential that this policy could result in increased numbers of people along the estuaries, causing a visual and noise disturbance. This could put pressure on the bird species such as avocet *Recurvirostra avosetta*, golden plover *Pluvialis apricaria*, dark belli ed Brent goose *Branta bernicla*, bar tailed godwit *Limosa lapponica*, and ruff *Philomachus pugnax* for which the Blackwater, the Crouch and Roach, and the Dengie SPA/Ramsar sites are designated.

8.4.10 However, it can be reasonably considered that these infrastructure networks are likely to be more frequently used in warmer times of the year by both residents and tourists alike (with the exception of birdwatchers who are more aware of bird species and less likely to cause disturbance), thereby reducing the potential impact on over-wintering bird species, the main reason for these sites being internationally designated. Also, communication with Carol Reid (Natural England Conservation Officer) undertaken during the previous HRA, identified that the bird species for which the sites are designated do roost away from the SPAs, and the key roost areas are located in remote places (largely arable land) that the public do not usually visit.

8.4.11 The Blackwater Estuary SPA is also designated for breeding little tern *Sterna albifrons* which typically nests on shingle. The areas typically used by this species for breeding are located away from the main developed areas of the District and therefore use of any footpath network in these areas are going to be less used.

Summary

8.4.12 Although potential likely significant effects have been identified for these three policies, it is unlikely that impacts on the features of the international sites would actually arise. Noise and visual disturbance is unlikely to be significantly increased by the proposed development, as the international sites are predominantly located away from residential areas and measures to provide areas of greenspace will provide alternative areas for recreation that will reduce or prevent visitor pressures on the designated sites.

8.4.13 Impacts on water quality and resources will be managed through ensuring compliance with the WFD, which will include seeking support from Natural England for any increase to discharge limits as a result of increased development.

8.4.14 In addition, it is considered that the policies in-combination will not have a likely significant effect on the international sites, as policies such as N2 seek to protect these sites and ensure that they are not affected by development or other impacts which may arise from the implementation of the LDP policies.
8.5 In-combination Impacts

8.5.1 The following sections detail other plans which have been considered within this screening report to see if in-combination effects could arise from the implementation of the LDP and any of the theses plans. These sections include the district councils which surround the District and detail the outcomes of the completed HRAs for their development plans.

Chelmsford Borough Council

8.5.2 Chelmsford Borough Council has completed a HRA of the Chelmsford Core Strategy and Development Control Submission Document (DPD). This document identified four policies with potential to impact the Essex Estuaries SAC and Roach and Crouch SPA. The policies relate to housing density, promotion of employment clusters, location of business development and industrial and warehouse development. The assessment identified that in-combination impacts could arise as a result of developments concentrated in the South Woodham Ferrers area. These impacts could arise from increased demands for land and water based recreation, fly-tipping and general trespass. As with the Maldon LDP, the Chelmsford Core Strategy assures consideration is given to international sites. The assessment of Chelmsford’s Core Strategy identifies that overarching policies within their plan will protect the international sites from cumulative impacts. The policies within the Chelmsford Core Strategy and Development Control Submission Document, combined with those in the Maldon LDP will ensure that proposed developments will not affect the integrity of the international sites. Furthermore policies relating to environmental aspects within the Chelmsford Core Strategy provide protection against cumulative impacts.

Colchester Borough Council

8.5.3 Colchester Borough Council has completed a HRA of their Core Strategy. The assessment identified that the international sites (Abberton Reservoir SPA, Blackwater Estuary SPA, Colne Estuary SPA, and Essex Estuaries SAC) could be affected through pollution leading to increased nutrient loading and increased demand on water resources, and increased non-physical and physical disturbance to the sites through increases in housing and tourism facilities. The assessment rules that nutrient loading and water demand would not have a significant impact as water provision would be met through strategic planning and licensing (for abstraction and discharge) by Anglian Water. The Core Strategy could therefore have an effect in-combination with the LDP as a result of planned tourism and housing developments by both Councils. However, taking into account the text within Maldon’s LDP, with regard to the protection and enhancement of the international sites there are not considered to be any in-combination affects associated with the international sites.

Braintree District Council

8.5.4 Braintree District Council’s HRA concluded that the effects of a population increase through increased development, (for instance through climate change, water quality and increase of recreational visits to the international sites) in the adjoining authorities of Maldon, Tendring, Chelmsford, and Colchester on the Colne Estuary SPA/Ramsar, Blackwater Estuary SPA/Ramsar, and Essex Estuaries SAC could, in combination with increase in population of Braintree District, result in a likely significant effect on these...
international sites. However, the majority of these effects can be avoided and mitigated through policies in the Core Strategy and Development Management DPD, informed by evidence gathered through monitoring and surveying of the sites.

8.5.5 It is considered that the text with Maldon’s LDP, which seeks to protect the international sites from impacts arising from development, should ensure that in-combination effects with development within Braintree do not arise.

**Rochford Borough Council**

8.5.6 The HRA found that the Core Strategy had the potential for likely significant effects both alone and in-combination on international sites through increased disturbance, increased atmospheric pollution and reduced water levels and quality. The assessment considered that the mitigation provided by the Core Strategy would be sufficient to avoid likely significant effects as a result of increased disturbance and increased atmospheric pollution. However, the assessment could not conclude with certainty that the level of development proposed in the Core Strategy and surrounding areas will not have likely significant in-combination effects on international sites via reduced water quality and increased water resource demand.

8.5.7 The assessment made a number of recommendations to address these uncertainties and mitigate the potential likely significant effects. These measures combined with the fact that the Maldon District will not have an impact on water quality and water resources means that an in-combination effect is considered unlikely.

**Additional Considerations**

8.5.8 The Essex and South Suffolk Shoreline Management Plan (SMP2) will determine how the coast will be managed over the next 100 years. The plan has been produced in draft and is currently with Defra for approval under the Habitat Regulations. The main conclusion of the HRA was that there could be a potential likely significant effect on a number of International sites as a result of habitat loss. However, it also concluded that land use plans of the relevant Districts were unlikely to have an in-combination effect with the SMP2.

**In-combination Policy Assessment**

8.5.9 It is also important to consider the in-combination effects which may arise from those policies which have been assessed as having a potential likely significant effect on the integrity of international sites.

8.5.10 The screening assessment identified that the impacts likely to arise in relation to more than one policy were related to disturbance and physical damage as a result of increased development. As previously mentioned, the provision of open space and recreation areas implemented as part of S1 will help to reduce and prevent additional disturbance which might arise from other policies. It is therefore anticipated that there will be no in-combination effect as a result of disturbance to the international sites.

8.5.11 It is unlikely that any of the policies will result in the direct damage to the international sites through implementation of any of the policies. The housing growth is located away from the international sites and development associated with agricultural work is unlikely
to be located within the designated habitat as these areas are at risk of flooding and typically away from access routes.

8.5.12 In addition, it is considered that the policies in-combination will not impact on the achievement of the sites’ conservation objectives and consequently will not result in a significant adverse effect on the integrity of the international sites, as policies such as N2 seek to protect these sites and ensure that there are not affected by development or other impacts which may arise from the implementation of the LDP policies.

8.6 Conclusion

8.6.1 In summary, it is considered that the Maldon LDP is not likely to have a significant effect on any features of the international sites detailed above, either alone or in-combination. Although a number of individual policies (S2, H7 and N1) were identified as potentially having a likely significant effect, it was determined that at the plan level there would be no damage or disturbance to the interest features of the international sites.
9 CUMULATIVE, SYNERGISTIC AND INDIRECT EFFECTS

9.1.1 The detailed assessment, the results of which are presented in Appendix D, was focused primarily on the direct effects of individual policies. As required by the SEA Regulations, cumulative, synergistic and indirect effects have also been recorded and analysed during the appraisal. Table 9.1 lists the results of this analysis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policies</th>
<th>Effects</th>
<th>Causes</th>
<th>Significance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S1, S2, S3, S4, D2, E3, H4, H6, N1, N3, T1, T2, I1</td>
<td>Tackling accessibility issues across the District</td>
<td>A large number of the policies may help to improve the accessibility of the District’s communities to key services and facilities both cumulatively and indirectly. Certain policies will improve public transport links, whilst others are seeking to protect and enhance the existing community facilities. Also, the creation of a green infrastructure network will provide alternative means of accessing services.</td>
<td>Significant positive effects overall.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S1, S5, S6, E3, T1, I1</td>
<td>Tackling social and geographical exclusion</td>
<td>A number of the policies may help to reduce geographical and social exclusion in the district, both cumulatively and indirectly. These factors include: improving the quality of housing and development as well as affordability, improving skills levels and access to community facilities, education and employment. Increased community interaction through increasing walking as a mode of transport and the provision of areas of open space and community facilities is also likely to have beneficial effects on reducing social exclusion.</td>
<td>Significant positive effects likely over the longer term as development proposals and infrastructure completed, providing this is done in an equitable way across the plan area and areas of deficiency are targeted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S1, S2, S3, D2, H1, H2, H5, H6, N1</td>
<td>Improving the quality of where people live</td>
<td>A number of the policies will assist in improving the quality of living environments, such as through the Code for Sustainable Homes ensuring housing quality and high standards of design in all development, and the requirement for improving infrastructure provision to include green infrastructure. Also, the provision of good quality, affordable housing will help to improve the quality of living.</td>
<td>Significant and sustained effects in creating quality built and natural environments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S1, S6, D2, D4, D5</td>
<td>Conservation of natural resources including soils, water and minerals</td>
<td>Whilst the cumulative effects of realising the scale of development set out in some of the LDP policies is likely to result in an increase in natural resource consumption, policies encouraging sustainable design and construction, renewable energy generation, the protection of natural resources and environmental quality will all contribute to the Districts resources.</td>
<td>Positive effects overall in terms of protecting and maintaining natural resources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policies</td>
<td>Effects</td>
<td>Causes</td>
<td>Significance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S1, D2, D5, T1, T2</td>
<td>Adaptation to the effects of climate change</td>
<td>Whilst the cumulative effects of realising the scale of development set out in some of the LDP policies is likely to result in an overall increase in greenhouse gas emissions across the District (albeit this is will be reduced as a result of policies within the Plan). Policies should also, in combination, have a combating effect in respect of vulnerability to the effects of climate change. Sustainable design principles, green infrastructure and measures such as SuDS can help the District adapt to the effects of climate change. Habitat creation could also contribute to reduced greenhouse gas emissions through carbon sink capacity increases.</td>
<td>Positive effects overall if the policies in combination are implemented effectively.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S1, D4, N1, N2</td>
<td>Conservation and enhancement of biodiversity</td>
<td>Protection of species and habitat through comprehensive positives to ensure the impact of development is minimised and new habitats are created where possible. The creation of a green infrastructure network may enable species to adapt to the effects of climate-induced habitat change or other future pressures. Indirect effects may arise through a potential reduction in overall traffic levels in the medium to long term where a modal shift to more sustainable modes takes place.</td>
<td>Positive effects in the long term if the policies are implemented effectively over time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S1, S4, D3, D4, H4</td>
<td>Protection of the local heritage assets</td>
<td>Protection of sites of historical and archaeological importance through comprehensive policies to ensure the impact of development is minimised. Policies include measures to enhance heritage assets in the towns, as well as remove traffic and congestion from these areas which will enhance settings.</td>
<td>Positive effects in the long term if the policies are implemented effectively over time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All policies</td>
<td>Strengthening of the local economy in the District and providing employment opportunities</td>
<td>The LDP policies in their entirety combine to provide an environment which will enable the stimulation of economic growth through revitalising town centres, focusing employment in existing centres and accessible locations, encouraging inward investment and supporting traditional and new rural businesses including sustainable tourism. This will also provide increased opportunities for employment.</td>
<td>Significant positive effects likely over the longer term.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9.1.2 This assessment highlights those policies that are expected to result in significant effects which should be supported by monitoring measures as appropriate, to ensure that beneficial effects are realised where possible.
10 MITIGATION

10.1.1 The term mitigation encompasses any approach which is aimed at preventing, reducing or offsetting significant adverse sustainability effects that have been identified. In practice, a range of measures applying one or more of these approaches is likely to be considered in mitigating any significant adverse effects predicted as a result of implementing the LDP. In addition, it is also important to consider measures aimed at enhancing positive effects. All such measures are generally referred to as mitigation measures.

10.1.2 Mitigation can take a wide range of forms, including:

- Refining options in order to improve the likelihood of positive effects and to minimise adverse effects;
- Technical measures (such as setting guidelines) to be applied during the implementation stage;
- Identifying issues to be addressed in project Environmental Impact Assessments for certain projects or types of projects;
- Proposals for changing other plans and programmes; and
- Contingency arrangements for dealing with possible adverse effects.

10.1.3 However, the emphasis should be in the first instance on proactive avoidance of adverse effects. Only once alternative options or approaches to avoiding an effect have been examined should mitigation then examine ways of reducing the scale/importance of the effect.

10.1.4 Suitable mitigation measures have been considered within the assessment of the LDP policies. A number of policies, including S1 (Sustainable Development), S2 (Strategic Growth), S3 (Place Shaping), H5 (Rural Exception Schemes), and N1 (Green Infrastructure Network), have been improved through the implementation of recommendations which have helped to mitigate previous potential impacts on water resources, air quality, resource consumption, land use, and reduce the effects of rural isolation and social exclusion. Whilst not considered as mitigation, monitoring of effects resulting from the implementation of the plan is addressed in Section 11.
11 MONITORING

11.1.1 The SEA Directive states that ‘member states shall monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of plans and programmes…..in order, inter alia, to identify at an early stage unforeseen adverse effects, and to be able to undertake appropriate remedial action’ (Article 10.1). In addition, the Report should provide information on a ‘description of the measures envisaged concerning monitoring’ (Annex I (i)) (Stage E).

11.1.2 SA monitoring will cover significant social, economic and environmental effects and involves measuring indicators, which will enable the establishment of a causal link between the implementation of the LDP and the impacts (both positive and negative) being monitored.

11.1.3 The SA guidance recommends monitoring is incorporated into each Council’s existing monitoring arrangements. Under Section 35 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and Regulation 48 of the Town and Country Planning Regulations 2004, Councils are required to prepare Annual Monitoring Reports (AMRs) to assess the implementation of their LDPs. For monitoring efforts to be optimally effective, it will be important that the Councils seek to integrate the monitoring of the significant sustainability effects of the LDP with the existing AMR process. At this stage it is anticipated that SA monitoring will take place annually alongside the monitoring of the LDF.

11.2 Significant Effects of the LDP

11.2.1 Potential indicators for monitoring effects against all the SA objectives have been proposed as part of this appraisal and are listed under the relevant objective in the SA Framework set out in Table 5.1. They were originally produced during the original SA process but have updated in this SA in light of new information. The SA of the Maldon District Local Development Plan Preferred Option Consultation Document has identified that there are significant positive effects arising from the LDP which will require monitoring to ensure that they are successfully realised. Effects that are likely to be most significant have been included in the monitoring framework, especially where effects are likely to be cumulative as identified in Table 9.1. This includes measures in relation to objectives (water resources, greenhouse gas emissions and resource consumption) which did receive some minor negative effects during the appraisal but for which it is considered that the LDP as a whole will not impact significantly.

11.2.2 The monitoring programme outlined in Table 11.1 below is preliminary and will be confirmed at the time of the adoption of the LDP. This programme was produced during the original SA process and has been updated and amended where necessary in light of the new LDP policies. The programme may still evolve based on the results of public consultation, dialogue with environmental and other consultees and the identification of additional data sources, as in many cases information will be provided by outside bodies.
Table 11.1 – Proposed Monitoring Programme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effect to be monitored</th>
<th>Proposed Indicators</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Suggested frequency of review/analysis of monitoring data/mitigation</th>
<th>Responsibility for undertaking monitoring and identification of engagement required</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Effect on protecting and enhancing the local landscape, townscape, heritage assets and their settings | Number of Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments, Historic Parks and Gardens, Registered Historic Battlefields, Ancient Woodland and Conservation Areas | No decrease in extent or change in setting  
*Source: English Heritage* | Annual | MDC  
*English Heritage* |
|                                                                                       | Areas of sensitive archaeology and associated features identified and protected    | Increase                                                                | Periodically            | MDC  
*English Heritage* |
|                                                                                       | Historic features on English Heritage’s ‘at risk’ register                          | To reduce the number of features at risk during the plan period  
*Source: English Heritage* | Annual | MDC  
*English Heritage* |
|                                                                                       | Proportion of developments which demonstrate that they maintain or enhance the quality of the countryside, coasts, or estuaries, and local landscape character | No target identified                                                   | Periodically            | MDC  
*English Heritage*  
*Natural England* |
|                                                                                       | % and qualitative change in countryside character areas by character type (Countryside Character Counts) | Achieve positive trends (Maintained and Enhancing)                    | Periodically            | MDC  
*Natural England* |
| Effect on protecting and enhance biodiversity and important wildlife habitats         | Number, area and condition of international, national, regional and locally designated sites | Compliance with Conservation Objectives and local management standards  
*Source: Natural England* | Annual | Natural England  
*Local Wildlife Trust, Essex County Council* |
|                                                                                       | BAP species and habitats                                                           | Increase in extent and number  
*Source: Natural England* | Annual | Natural England |
|                                                                                       | % of new developments incorporating ecological enhancement measures per year (including green and blue infrastructure) | No target identified                                                   | Annual | MDC  
*Natural England* |
|                                                                                       | Area of ‘ancient woodland’                                                         | Maintain extent  
*Source: Natural England* | Annual | MDC  
*Natural England* |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effect to be monitored</th>
<th>Proposed Indicators</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Suggested frequency of review/analysis of monitoring data/mitigation</th>
<th>Responsibility for undertaking monitoring and identification of engagement required</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Area of created intertidal habitat</td>
<td>Increase</td>
<td></td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>MDC Natural England</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effects on conserving natural resources including soils, water and minerals</td>
<td>% of watercourse classified as good or fair biological and chemical quality</td>
<td>Achieve good status or potential in the water body (against the Water Framework Directive)</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>MDC Environment Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average domestic water consumption (l/head/day)</td>
<td>Achieving the equivalent of Level 3/4 under the Code for Sustainable Homes for water use (105 litres/capita/day) as a minimum</td>
<td></td>
<td>Periodically</td>
<td>MDC Water companies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of dwellings built on previously developed land not of high environmental value</td>
<td>Development opportunities on previously developed land will be maximised</td>
<td></td>
<td>Periodically</td>
<td>MDC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Area of contaminated land remediated or contained during plan period</td>
<td>No target identified</td>
<td></td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>MDC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportion of new development in strategic growth areas complying with identified density standards</td>
<td>NPPF states that local planning authorities should adopt own approach to housing density to reflect local circumstances</td>
<td></td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>MDC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number and condition of geological designations (SSSI and RIGGS)</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td></td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>MDC Natural England, local geological bodies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New planning permissions granted on known Mineral Safeguarding Areas</td>
<td>Zero</td>
<td></td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>MDC Essex County Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Energy consumption per capita</td>
<td>To reduce energy consumption year on year</td>
<td></td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>MDC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household, construction and industrial waste produced (tonnage)</td>
<td>Decrease</td>
<td></td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>MDC Essex County Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effect to be monitored</td>
<td>Proposed Indicators</td>
<td>Target</td>
<td>Suggested frequency of review/analysis of monitoring data/mitigation</td>
<td>Responsibility for undertaking monitoring and identification of engagement required</td>
</tr>
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<td>-------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>% of household waste recycled and/or composted</td>
<td>To recycle or compost at least 40% by 2010, 45% by 2015 and 50% by 2020. Source: UK Waste Strategy, 2007</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>MDC Essex County Council</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% use of recycled aggregates in construction</td>
<td>Increase</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>MDC Essex County Council</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adaptation to the effects of climate change</td>
<td>Extent of Green Infrastructure including SuDS and habitat linkages</td>
<td>Increase</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>MDC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CO₂ emissions by sector and per capita</td>
<td>To reduce CO₂ emissions 80% by 2050 from a 1990 baseline figure (national target). Source: UK Climate Change Act 2008 and DECC</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>MDC (National data)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modal Split (% of workforce travelling to work by mode)</td>
<td>To increase the percentage of journeys to work by non-car modes. Source: Maldon District Council</td>
<td>Using census data (or higher resolution data where available)</td>
<td>MDC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of premises meeting BREEAM “Very Good” standard or higher and % of dwellings meeting or going above Code for Sustainable Homes level 3</td>
<td>All new dwellings meeting Code level 4 by 2013 and Code level 6 by 2016 or BREEAM (‘Very Good’/Excellent’ standard. Source: Code for Sustainable Homes</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>MDC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of planning applications approved where the EA has sustained an objection on flood risk grounds</td>
<td>Zero</td>
<td>Periodically</td>
<td>Environment Agency</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of energy generated from renewable sources (by type of scheme)</td>
<td>Increase in energy from renewable sources within new developments</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>MDC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effect on accessibility issues across the District</td>
<td>% of rural residential population within 10km of key services (e.g. bank/post office)</td>
<td>All key services to be within 10km for 90% of rural households. Source: Countryside Agency (now Natural England)</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>MDC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effect to be monitored</td>
<td>Proposed Indicators</td>
<td>Target</td>
<td>Suggested frequency of review/analysis of monitoring data/mitigation</td>
<td>Responsibility for undertaking monitoring and identification of engagement required</td>
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<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effect on tackling social and geographical exclusion and improving health and wellbeing</td>
<td>Provision of infrastructure to improve health care</td>
<td>Increase</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>MDC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Crime levels</td>
<td>Decrease</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>MDC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fear of crime</td>
<td>No target identified</td>
<td>Periodically</td>
<td>MDC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% of people who describe their health as good</td>
<td>Increase</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>MDC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% of people who describe their health as poor</td>
<td>Decrease</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>MDC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Participation in sport and active recreation</td>
<td>70% of population participants in 30 minutes activity, 5 times a week by 2020.</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>MDC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IMD rankings</td>
<td>Improve</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>MDC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effect to be monitored</td>
<td>Proposed Indicators</td>
<td>Target</td>
<td>Suggested frequency of review/analysis of monitoring data/mitigation</td>
<td>Responsibility for undertaking monitoring and identification of engagement required</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number of active residents groups/neighborhood watch groups etc.</td>
<td>Increase</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>MDC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Range of leisure and recreation opportunities within walking distance</td>
<td>Increase</td>
<td>Periodically</td>
<td>MDC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Retention of rural facilities including village shops</td>
<td>Maintain and increase</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>MDC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effect on the local economy in the District and providing employment opportunities</td>
<td>VAT registrations per 10,000 resident population</td>
<td>Increase</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>MDC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Breakdown of businesses by sector (number and %)</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>MDC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% change in unemployment rate</td>
<td>No increase in unemployment rate</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>MDC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rural diversification or other diversification initiatives</td>
<td>No target identified</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>MDC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% of people employed by employment type</td>
<td>No target identified</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>MDC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Input from tourism into local economy (£ per annum)</td>
<td>Increase</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>MDC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number of people employed in the tourism industry</td>
<td>No target identified</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>MDC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IMD (Education Skills and Training domain)</td>
<td>Improve</td>
<td>Annual</td>
<td>MDC</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CONCLUSION

12.1.1 The policies within the Maldon District Local Development Plan Submission Draft generally support the range of sustainability objectives identified in the SA Framework. Recommendations which have arisen throughout the SA process have been incorporated into the proposed LDP policies.

12.1.2 The policies are considered to potentially offer significant positive effects on environmental, social, and economic objectives. This specifically relates to environmental objectives concerned with the protection of local townscape and heritage assets, and protection and enhancement of biodiversity and wildlife habitats. Major positive effects are also expected against social SA objectives concerned with improving accessibility to services and facilities; the delivery of housing to meet local needs; promoting health and wellbeing, reducing rural isolation and social and geographical inequalities, and maintaining and improving public transport and sustainable transport modes. In relation to economics, major positive effects are anticipated for all three of the SA objectives. Also moderate positive effects are expected in relation to: minimising flood risk and adapting to the effects of climate change; ensuring the efficient use of land; and maintaining and enhancing the quality of the countryside.

12.1.3 The assessment of the policies found that there are three policies which are likely to have the most positive effects compared with the rest of the LDP policies. These are S1 (Sustainable Development), S3 (Place Shaping), and D2 (Climate Change and Environmental Impact of New Development). These policies had beneficial impacts across the social, environmental and economic objectives, seeking to protect and enhance the key features of the District as well as providing for the local population and economic community.

12.1.4 Policy S1 sets out the sustainable development goals for the District which, through development of the LDP and the iterative SA process, is the one policy which has a positive effect for all of the 17 SA objectives. Through implementation of this policy there is the potential for ensuring extensive benefits for the natural environment over time including landscape, biodiversity, air quality, drainage and accessibility. The policy could create a healthy and competitive local economy and support the local population by providing housing growth appropriate to the needs of the District and creating sustainable communities.

12.1.5 Benefits will also be achieved as a result of policy S3, through the creation of garden suburbs which include sustainable transport, public spaces for all; the encouragement of the development of community services and facilities; and an attractive landscape which benefits biodiversity. Improved accessibility could lead to an increase in informal physical exercise and improve health levels and sense of wellbeing. Further, an increase in walking and cycling within communities could help to improve community cohesion, natural surveillance, vibrancy of rural communities, and mental wellbeing. Indirect benefits may arise for health through a decrease in air pollution over time.

12.1.6 Policy D2 has a number of environmental benefits related to reducing air quality, maintaining water resources and reducing greenhouse gas emissions which will also have positive indirect effects on the improving community levels of health and wellbeing. The provision of flood management measures such as SuDS will provide environmental
features which will enhance local biodiversity and provide features of interest for the local population.

12.1.7 Negative effects are still predicted, however, against SA objectives seeking to: protect quality of water resources; reduce emissions of greenhouse gases; maintain air quality; and reduce natural resource consumption. However, these effects are expected to be minor and are likely to be avoided, minimised or offset through the effective implementation of other policies. As a result of assessment recommendations, applied iteratively through the development of the LDP, the Council has amended the wording of policies S2 and S3 to reduce moderate negative effects on water resources and greenhouse gas emissions to minor effects.

12.1.8 In addition, the HRA Screening Assessment on the potential for likely significant effects on the Blackwater Estuary SPA and Ramsar; Colne Estuary SPA and Ramsar; Crouch and Roach Estuaries SPA and Ramsar; Dengie SPA and Ramsar, and Essex Estuaries SAC, concluded that there will not be any significant adverse effects on the integrity of these international sites alone or in-combination from the Maldon District LDP.
REFERENCES


Learning and Skills Council, Essex (2004) Maldon Area Profile

Local Futures (2010) District Profile: A Summary Profile of Maldon


NOMIS (2012) 2001 Census Data


### Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AMR</td>
<td>Annual Monitoring Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BAP</td>
<td>Biodiversity Action Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>BREEAM</td>
<td>Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method</td>
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<td>CAMS</td>
<td>Catchment Abstraction Management Strategy</td>
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<tr>
<td>CO₂</td>
<td>Carbon Dioxide</td>
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<tr>
<td>CS</td>
<td>Core Strategy</td>
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<tr>
<td>CWS</td>
<td>County Wildlife Site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DCLG</td>
<td>Department for Communities and Local Government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Defra</td>
<td>Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DECC</td>
<td>Department for Energy and Climate Change</td>
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<tr>
<td>DPD</td>
<td>Development Plan Document</td>
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<tr>
<td>EA</td>
<td>Environment Agency</td>
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<tr>
<td>EIA</td>
<td>Environmental Impact Assessment</td>
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<td>HRA</td>
<td>Habitats Regulations Assessment</td>
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<tr>
<td>IROPI</td>
<td>Imperative Reason of Overriding Public Interest</td>
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<tr>
<td>LDF</td>
<td>Local Development Framework</td>
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<tr>
<td>LDP</td>
<td>Local Development Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>LDS</td>
<td>Local Development Scheme</td>
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<tr>
<td>LPA</td>
<td>Local Planning Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LSE</td>
<td>Likely Significant Effect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MDC</td>
<td>Maldon District Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NNR</td>
<td>National Nature Reserve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPPF</td>
<td>National Planning Policy Framework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NVQ</td>
<td>National Vocational Qualification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ODPM</td>
<td>Office of the Deputy Prime Minister</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPG</td>
<td>Planning Policy Guidance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PPS</td>
<td>Planning Policy Statement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RSPB</td>
<td>Royal Society for the Protection of Birds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RSS</td>
<td>Regional Spatial Strategy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA</td>
<td>Sustainability Appraisal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAC</td>
<td>Special Area of Conservation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAR</td>
<td>Sustainability Appraisal Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SHMA</td>
<td>Strategic Housing Market Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SM</td>
<td>Scheduled Monument</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEA</td>
<td>Strategic Environment Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SFRA</td>
<td>Strategic Flood Risk Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SHLAA</td>
<td>Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPA</td>
<td>Special Protection Area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSSI</td>
<td>Site of Special Scientific Interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SuDS</td>
<td>Sustainable Urban Drainage System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UKCIP</td>
<td>United Kingdom Climate Impacts Programme</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>