



CLIENT PROJECT REPORT CPR2103

Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan: Core Strategy Sustainability Appraisal of the Proposed Submission Document: Non-Technical Summary

August 2015

Non-Technical Summary

Background

A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) has been carried out on the Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan (Core Strategy) to meet regulations¹, because it has the potential to produce significant environmental effects.

The main purpose of SEA is improve the environmental performance of a plan by assessing whether it is likely to result in any significant environmental effects (positive or negative). Recommendations as to how adverse effects can be avoided, offset or reduced, as well as how improvements can be made, should be suggested. A programme to monitor significant effects is required in order to check whether the SEA has been accurate in its predictions.

Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is required under other legislation relating to the new Local Plans being prepared by local planning authorities. This is in addition to SEA. The Local Plan guidance² merges the SA and SEA elements into a single process and therefore a joint SA/SEA process is being undertaken for the Local Plan (Core Strategy).

This Sustainability Appraisal Report (SA Report) documents the findings of the assessment of the Proposed Submission Document for the Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan Part 1 - Core Strategy, in order to give stakeholders and the public an opportunity to comment on the findings, at the same time as making any representations on the plan itself.

The Local Plan (Core Strategy) Proposed Submission Document

Oxfordshire County Council are currently working on the preparation of their Minerals and Waste Local Plan (Core Strategy) which is due to replace the current Minerals and Waste Local Plan.

The new plan will provide the planning strategies and policies for the development that will be needed for the supply of minerals and management of waste in Oxfordshire to 2030. It will set out strategic policies to guide minerals and waste development over the plan period and common core policies which address development management issues relevant to both minerals and waste.

¹ Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes (Wales) Regulations (2004)

² Plan Making Manual: <http://www.pas.gov.uk/pas/core/page.do?pageId=109798>

The SA/SEA Process

The assessment process is briefly described below. The SEA Regulations require that the following topics are investigated: Air; Biodiversity; Climatic factors; Cultural heritage; Human health; Landscape; Material assets; Population; Soil; Water; and the interrelationship between these factors. The Sustainability Appraisal element of the process widens this to include consideration of additional social and economic issues.

Stage A - After documenting the sustainability characteristics of the area, and identifying any trends (i.e. is the situation getting better or worse?), the policy context of the Local Plan (Core Strategy) was reviewed. From the outputs of these two initial tasks the key environmental issues and opportunities that exist in the County were identified, on which the assessment should focus. A series of SA/SEA Objectives were developed to concentrate the subsequent assessment process on these key issues. This stage has been revisited on more than one occasion, most recently in 2015.

Stage B - This stage involved predicting the effects that would result if the Local Plan were implemented and then assessing whether any of these effects would be significant. Where potential adverse effects were identified measures to mitigate these effects were identified.

Stage C - The Sustainability Appraisal Report pulls together the results of all the assessment activities that have been undertaken and identifies monitoring activities that will check the accuracy of the assessment once the Local Plan is adopted. It incorporates the Environmental Report that is required by the SEA Regulations.

Stage D - This stage involves consultation on the SA Report with environmental bodies, key stakeholders and the public. The SA will then assess any significant changes to the Plan that are made after the consultation. At plan adoption, an SA Adoption Statement will be published which explains how the SA has influenced the plan making process and which finalises the monitoring arrangements. As with Stage A, consultation as part of Stage D has happened on more than one occasion, most recently in 2014.

Stage E - This stage takes place after the Local Plan (Core Strategy) is adopted and covers the monitoring of the predicted effects.

Sustainability Issues and Options

The first stage of the SA/SEA focused on the identification of the sustainability issues in Oxfordshire. Issues and opportunities that have been identified are shown in the table below.

Key sustainability issues and opportunities in Oxfordshire

Population growth will lead to increased waste production and demand for waste management facilities and for aggregates for construction, across the whole county.

Economic growth in Oxfordshire should be encouraged and minerals and waste development could support this through the provision of opportunities for unskilled labour.

Tourism represents an important part of Oxfordshire's economy. Minerals and waste development could detract from initiatives to encourage people to visit the whole county, not just Oxford. However, post mineral restoration could create opportunities for rural development and recreational facilities.

Climate change poses a threat to parts of the county through flooding. Minerals and waste development could meet this challenge not only by managing the positive and negative aspects of development in the floodplain, but also by encouraging working practices that minimise greenhouse gas emissions.

Increased traffic generation on both motorways and major roads in the county leads to congestion and contributes towards a reduction in air quality. Minerals and waste development should balance reducing air pollution by employing the 'proximity principle' with ensuring that minerals and waste transport minimises environmental impacts by using suitable roads.

Nine Air Quality Management Areas have been identified in Oxfordshire, where levels of NO₂ from traffic exceed recommended government levels. Minerals and waste developments need to manage their transport routes in order to reduce the negative impact on air quality, and to avoid exacerbating pollution levels in existing AQMAs.

Oxfordshire has low rainfall levels and the Thames Water area is one of the most water stressed in the country. Population growth will increase demand for water. The review of abstraction licences by the Environment Agency may result in smaller numbers of licences being permitted. Thames Water has proposed that it build a new reservoir in Oxfordshire to meet rising demand; this may result in increased demand for aggregate for a temporary period.

Minerals and waste development could negatively impact on the biodiversity value of certain areas. Restoration of minerals sites may be constrained by the designation of airfield safeguarding zones across much of Oxfordshire, which reduce the risk of bird strike to aircraft. It may also be constrained by a lack of available inert fill to restore sites to uses such as reed bed or wet woodland.

Mineral and waste development offers opportunities to improve access to rural areas, create recreational facilities, and contribute towards habitat creation in the county and biodiversity gains.

Oxfordshire includes parts of three Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty which will need to be protected from adverse effects of minerals and waste development. This provides a constraint as to where new and extended operations can be located.

Oxfordshire is a county which has a rich historic environment. Minerals and waste development could result in the loss or destruction of some of the heritage assets of the county such as Scheduled Ancient Monuments and archaeological assets.

Oxfordshire has plentiful reserves of sand and gravel, having approximately one third of the unconstrained gravel resource in the South East region. Identifying sites for mineral extraction should take into account the cumulative effect of extensive mineral working on local communities and the transport infrastructure.

The extraction of plentiful reserves of sand and gravel in the county must be balanced against the potential loss of best and most versatile agricultural land which could result from extraction.

Water quality in Oxfordshire's rivers could be improved. Minerals and waste development could contribute to the pollution of water courses and groundwater.

Significant provision needs to be made for secondary and recycled waste management facilities to continue to increase the amount of secondary and recycled waste which can be managed in the County.

Further detail can be found in the main SA Report and its accompanying appendices.

Government guidance³ on how to undertake SEA recommends that objectives are developed that relate to the key issues, so that the assessment can use these objectives to focus on the prediction and assessment of the effects that are most important in an area.

These objectives were developed as part of the Scoping Report and updated following consultation on that report in order to take account of consultation comments. The broad objectives that have been used in this SA/SEA are:

1. To protect, maintain, and enhance Oxfordshire's biodiversity and geological diversity including natural habitats, flora and fauna and protected species.
- 2a. To protect and enhance landscape character and local distinctiveness.
- 2b. To conserve and enhance the historic environment, heritage assets and their settings
3. To maintain and improve ground and surface water quality.
4. To improve and maintain air quality to levels which do not damage natural systems.
5. To reduce greenhouse gas emissions to reduce the cause of climate change.
6. To reduce the risk of flooding.
7. To minimise the impact of transportation of aggregates and waste products on the local and strategic road network.
8. To minimise negative impacts of waste management facilities and mineral extraction on people and local communities.
9. To protect, improve and where necessary restore land and soil quality.
10. To contribute towards moving up the waste hierarchy in Oxfordshire.
11. To enable Oxfordshire to be self-sufficient in its waste management and to provide for its local need for aggregates as set out in the LAA.
12. To support Oxfordshire's economic growth and reduce disparities across the county.

³ A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (ODPM, 2005)

Previous Assessment Stages

Assessment of Issues and Options (2006)

The Council consulted on Issues and Options in 2006. In accordance with Government Guidance and the Regulations, these Issues and Options were assessed against the SA Framework set at the Scoping Report stage. An Interim SA Report was produced in June 2006 and submitted for public consultation alongside the Issues and Options Consultation Report.

The SA of the Issues and Options identified positive, negative and uncertain affects for all identified options and made recommendations, wherever appropriate to strengthen options to achieve a sustainable development. Detail on the Issues and Options assessments can be found in the main SA Report.

Assessment of the Preferred Options (2007)

Following consultation on the Issues and Options, and taking into account the outcomes of the Issues and Options SA, draft Preferred Options were identified. The Core Strategy Preferred Options consultation document set out the County Council's preferred options for addressing each of the key issues that had previously been identified. The Preferred Options were subject to SA in February 2007, with the findings documented in a Sustainability Appraisal Report. These documents were submitted for public consultation.

The SA of the Preferred Options identified positive, negative and uncertain affects for all identified options and made recommendations, wherever appropriate to strengthen options to achieve a sustainable development. Detail on the assessments can be found in the main SA Report.

Assessment of Spatial and Aggregates Apportionment Options (2010)

In 2010, the Council identified various draft minerals spatial strategy options for the location of future areas for the extraction of sharp sand and gravel, soft sand, and crushed rock. In 2011 and 2012, various aggregate apportionment options were considered based on predictions of future demand. As part of its development of the waste strategy, in 2011 the Council also prepared spatial strategy options for all of the key waste streams.

An assessment of the various spatial options for minerals and waste and aggregates apportionment options was undertaken. Detail on the assessments can be found in the main SA Report.

Assessment of the Planning Strategies (2011)

Based on the Preferred Options SA, stakeholder responses, findings of local and regional studies and assimilation of further information, Draft Minerals and Waste Planning

Strategies were consulted upon in September 2011. Similar to the assessment undertaken at the Issues and Options and Preferred Options stages, each of the elements within the Minerals and Waste strategies was assessed. Further information on these two assessments can be found in the main SA Report.

Assessment of Proposed Submission Document (2012)

In May 2012, Oxfordshire County Council consulted on its Minerals and Waste Core Strategy Proposed Submission Document. Again, similar to the previous stages of the SA each of the plan elements were assessed against the SA Objectives and a SA Report was produced. Further information can be found in the main SA Report.

In October 2012, the County Council submitted an Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Core Strategy to the Secretary of State for examination. The Inspector raised a number of issues, as a consequence of which the examination was suspended in February 2013 and in July 2013 the County Council resolved to withdraw that plan and to prepare a revised Oxfordshire Minerals and Waste Local Plan.

Assessment of the Local Plan Part 1 Core Strategy Consultation Draft (2014)

In February 2014 Oxfordshire County Council consulted on its Local Plan Part 1 Core Strategy Consultation Draft, with this new Plan being subject to the combined SA/SEA process. An SA Report was prepared to document the findings of the assessment. As with the associated Plan the comments received in response to the consultation process have been taken into account when undertaking the SA/SEA of the Plan now being considered (i.e. the Proposed Submission Document). The details of the comments received and how they have been taken into consideration are provided in Appendix B of the new SA Report (July 2015).

Assessment of the Proposed Submission Document

The Proposed Submission Document has now been assessed as part of the SA/SEA process. Based on the methodology used in the early rounds of the SA, the assessment used the following scoring system:

Significance Assessment	Description
++	The option is likely to have a significant positive effect
+	The option is likely to have a positive effect which is not significant
0	No effect / no clear link
?	Uncertain or insufficient information on which to determine effect
-	The option is likely to have a negative effect which is not significant
--	The option is likely to have a significant negative effect
+/-	The option is likely to have some positive and some negative effects

The assessment of the Core Strategy Proposed Submission Document generally found that the policies are likely to have overall positive effects across the range of sustainability topics. A number of significant positive effects have been identified against the following objectives:

- SA1 'Biodiversity and geodiversity' in relation to M10: Restoration of minerals workings in the long term and C7: Biodiversity and geodiversity across all timescales (short, medium and long term).
- SA2a 'Landscape' in relation to M10: Restoration of minerals workings in the long term and C8: Landscape across all timescales.
- SA2b 'Historic Environment' in relation to M10: Restoration of minerals workings in the long term and C9: Historic environment and archaeology across all timescales.
- SA3 'Ground and surface water quality' in relation to M10: Restoration of minerals workings in the long term and C4: Water environment across all timescales.
- SA4 'Air quality' in relation to C10: Transport across all timescales.
- SA5 'Greenhouse gas emissions' in relation to W2: Oxfordshire waste management targets in the medium and long term, C2: Climate change across all timescales and C10: Transport across all timescales.

- SA6 'Flood risk' in relation to M10: Restoration of minerals workings in the long term and C3: Flooding across all timescales.
- SA7 'Transport effects' in relation to M6: Aggregate rail depots and C10: Transport, both across all timescales.
- SA8 'Population and health' in relation to M10: Restoration of minerals workings in the long term, C5: Environmental and amenity protection and C10: Transport across all timescales and C11: Rights of way in the medium and long term.
- SA9 'Land and soil quality' in relation to W5: Siting of waste management facilities in the medium and long term and C6: Agricultural land and soils across all timescales.
- SA10 'Waste hierarchy' in relation to M1: Recycled and secondary aggregate and W2: Oxfordshire waste management targets, both in the medium and long term.
- SA11 'Self-sufficiency' in relation to M2: Provision for working aggregate minerals and M3: Principal locations for working aggregate minerals in the medium and long term, M8: Safeguarding minerals resources in the long term, and W1: Oxfordshire waste to be managed, W4: Locations of facilities to manage the principal waste and W6: Landfill all across the short, medium and long term.
- SA12 'Economic growth' in relation to M6: Aggregate rail depots in the medium and long term.

No significant negative effects have been identified.

The full results of the assessment can be seen in the tables below (**Table 1** for minerals policies, **Table 2** for waste policies and **Table 3** for common core policies) and are explained in greater detail in Appendix D accompanying this report.

Table 1: Summary table of assessments of the Minerals Planning Policies

Plan Elements (abridged)	Duration (Short/Medium/Long term)	SA/SEA Objectives (abridged)												
		1	2a	2b	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
		Biodiversity & Geodiversity	Landscape	Historic Environment	Water Quality	Air Quality	Greenhouse Gas Emissions	Flood Risk	Transport Effects	Population & Health	Soils	Waste Hierarchy	Self-sufficiency	Economic Growth
Policy M1: Recycled and Secondary Aggregate	ST	+	+	+	+	?	?	?	?	?	+	+	+	+
	MT	+	+	+	+	?	?	?	?	?	+	++	+	+
	LT	+	+	+	+	?	?	?	?	?	+	++	+	+
Policy M2: Provision for working aggregate minerals	ST	?	?	?	?	?	+	?	+	+/?	?	0	+	+
	MT	?	?	?	?	?	+	?	+	+/?	?	0	++	+
	LT	?	?	?	?	?	+	?	+	+/?	?	0	++	+
Policy M3: Principal locations for working aggregate minerals	ST	+/-	-/?	-/?	+/-	0	+	0	-	-/?	+	0	+	+
	MT	+/-	-/?	-/?	+/-	0	+	+	-	-/?	+	0	++	+
	LT	+/-	-/?	-/?	+/-	0	+	+	-	+/?	+	0	++	+
Policy M4: Sites for working aggregate minerals	ST	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	0	0	+
	MT	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	0	0	+
	LT	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	0	0	+
Policy M5: Working of Aggregate Minerals	ST	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	0	+	+
	MT	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	0	+	+
	LT	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	?	0	+	+
Policy M6: Aggregates rail depots	ST	0	0	0	0	+	+	+/-	++	0	0	0	0	+
	MT	0	0	0	0	+	+	+/-	++	+	0	0	0	++
	LT	+/?	+/?	+/?	+/?	+	+	+/-	++	+	0	0	0	++
Policy M7: Non-aggregate mineral working	ST	+/-	+/-	+/-/?	+/-	0	?	?	-	-/?	+/?	0	0	+
	MT	+/-	+/-	+/-/?	+/-	0	?	?	-	-/?	+/?	0	0	+
	LT	+/-	+/-	+/-/?	+/-	0	?	?	-	-/?	+/?	0	0	+
Policy M8: Safeguarding mineral resources	ST	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	MT	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0
	LT	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	+	0	0	0	++	+
Policy M9: Safeguarding mineral infrastructure	ST	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	+	0	0	0	+	+
	MT	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	+	0	0	0	+	+
	LT	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	+	0	0	0	+	+
Policy M10: Restoration of mineral workings	ST	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	MT	+	+	+	+	0	0	+	0	+	+	0	0	+
	LT	++	++	++	++	0	0	++	0	++	+	0	0	+

Table 2: Summary table of assessments of the Waste Planning Policies

Plan Elements (abridged)	Timescale (Short/Medium/Long term)	SA/SEA Objectives (abridged)												
		1	2a	2b	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
		Biodiversity & Geodiversity	Landscape	Historic Environment	Water Quality	Air Quality	Greenhouse Gas Emissions	Flood Risk	Transport Effects	Population & Health	Soils	Waste Hierarchy	Self-sufficiency	Economic Growth
Policy W1: Oxfordshire waste to be managed	ST	?	?	?	?	?	+	?	+	?	?	0	++	+
	MT	?	?	?	?	?	+	?	+	?	?	0	++	+
	LT	?	?	?	?	?	+	?	+	?	?	0	++	+
Policy W2: Oxfordshire waste management targets	ST	+/?	+/?	+/?	?	?	+	?	?	?	+	+	+	+
	MT	+/?	+/?	+/?	+/?	?	++	?	?	?	+	++	+	+
	LT	+/?	+/?	+/?	+/?	?	++	?	?	?	+	++	+	+
Policy W3: Provision for waste management capacity	ST	?	?	?	?	?	+	?	?	?	?	+	++	+
	MT	?	?	?	?	?	+	?	?	?	?	+	++	+
	LT	?	?	?	?	?	+	?	?	?	?	+	++	+
Policy W4: Locations for facilities to manage the principal waste	ST	?	?	?	?	?	+	?	+	?	?	0	0	0
	MT	?	?	?	?	?	+	?	+	?	?	0	0	0
	LT	?	?	?	?	?	+	?	+	?	?	0	0	0
Policy W5: Siting of waste management facilities	ST	0	0	?	?	?	+	?	+	?	+	0	0	+
	MT	+/?	+/?	?	?	?	+	?	+	?	++	0	0	+
	LT	+/?	+/?	?	?	?	+	?	+	?	++	0	0	+
Policy W6: Landfill	ST	+/?	+	0	+	?	+/?	0	?	?	+/-	0	++	+
	MT	+/?	+	0	+	?	+/?	0	?	?	+/-	0	++	+
	LT	+/?	+	0	+	?	+/?	0	?	?	+	0	++	+
Policy W7: Management and disposal of hazardous waste	ST	?	?	?	?	?	?	0	?	?	?	?	+/?	+
	MT	?	?	?	?	?	?	0	?	?	?	?	+/?	+
	LT	?	?	?	?	?	?	0	?	?	?	?	+/?	+
Policy W8: Management of agricultural waste	ST	0	?	?	0	?	0	0	0	?	0	+	0	0
	MT	+	?	?	+/?	?	+	0	+/?	?	+/?	+	0	0
	LT	+	?	?	+/?	?	+	0	+/?	?	+/?	+	0	0
Policy W9: Management and disposal of radioactive waste	ST	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	?	0	0	+	0
	MT	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	?	0	0	+	+
	LT	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	?	0	0	+	+
Policy W10: Management and disposal of waste water/sewage	ST	?	?	?	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	MT	?	?	?	+	0	0	+	0	+	+	0	0	0
	LT	?	?	?	+	0	0	+	0	+	+	0	0	0
Policy W11: Safeguarding waste management sites	ST	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	MT	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	+	0	0	0	+	+
	LT	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	+	0	0	0	+	+

Table 3: Summary table of assessments of the Common Core Policies for Minerals and Waste

Plan Elements (abridged)	Timescale (Short/Medium/Long term)	SA/SEA Objectives (abridged)												
		1	2a	2b	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
		Biodiversity & Geodiversity	Landscape	Historic Environment	Water Quality	Air Quality	Greenhouse Gas Emissions	Flood Risk	Transport Effects	Population & Health	Soils	Waste Hierarchy	Self-sufficiency	Economic Growth
Policy C1: Sustainable Development	ST	?	?	?	?	?	0	?	0	?	?	?	+	+
	MT	?	?	?	?	?	0	?	0	?	?	?	+	+
	LT	?	?	?	?	?	0	?	0	?	?	?	+	+
Policy C2: Climate Change	ST	+	+	0	0	?	++	+	?	?	0	0	+	+
	MT	+	+	0	0	?	++	+	?	?	0	0	+	+
	LT	+	+	0	0	?	++	+	?	?	0	0	+	+
Policy C3: Flooding	ST	+	0	0	+	0	0	++	0	+	?	0	+	+
	MT	+	0	0	+	0	0	++	0	+	?	0	+	+
	LT	+	0	0	+	0	0	++	0	+	?	0	+	+
Policy C4: Water Environment	ST	+	+	0	++	0	0	+	0	+	+	0	0	+
	MT	+	+	0	++	0	0	+	0	+	+	0	0	+
	LT	+	+	0	++	0	0	+	0	+	+	0	0	+
Policy C5: Local environment, amenity and economy	ST	+	+	+	+	+	0	0	+	++	+	0	0	0
	MT	+	+	+	+	+	0	0	+	++	+	0	0	0
	LT	+	+	+	+	+	0	0	+	++	+	0	0	0
Policy C6: Agricultural land and soils	ST	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	++	0	0	0
	MT	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	++	0	0	0
	LT	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	++	0	0	0
Policy C7: Biodiversity and Geodiversity	ST	++	+	0	+	0	0	+	0	+	+	0	0	0
	MT	++	+	0	+	0	0	+	0	+	+	0	0	0
	LT	++	+	0	+	0	0	+	0	+	+	0	0	0
Policy C8: Landscape	ST	+	++	+	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0
	MT	+	++	+	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0
	LT	+	++	+	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0
Policy C9: Historic environment and archaeology	ST	0	0	++	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0
	MT	0	0	++	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0
	LT	0	0	++	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0
Policy C10: Transport	ST	?	?	?	+	++	++	0	++	++	+	0	+	+
	MT	?	?	?	+	++	++	0	++	++	+	0	+	+
	LT	?	?	?	+	++	++	0	++	++	+	0	+	+
Policy C11: Rights of way	ST	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	0	0	0	0
	MT	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	++	0	0	0	0
	LT	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	++	0	0	0	0

Cumulative Effects

Cumulative effects are those effects which, though they may be small in relation to one policy, may combine across a whole plan (or in association with other plans) to produce an overall effect which is more significant. The following cumulative effects have been identified:

SA1: Biodiversity

Whilst the operation of minerals and waste facilities has the potential to result in some adverse cumulative effects on local biodiversity in the short-medium term, the measures in the common core policies, in particular Core Policy C7, along with the restrictions placed by Policy M4 and the restoration requirements of Policy M8 provide the potential for cumulative positive effects in the long-term. There is potential for positive synergistic effects on biodiversity and water management if restoration schemes in close proximity to one another are implemented.

SA2a: Landscape

Whilst the operation of minerals and waste facilities has the potential to result in some adverse cumulative effects on local landscapes in the short-medium term, the measures in the common core policies along with the requirements of Policies W6 (Siting of waste facilities) and Policy M4 (Working of aggregate minerals) should help to avoid and mitigate these effects. The aim of the waste strategy to minimise waste arisings along with reducing the amount of waste sent to landfill will contribute towards the protection of local landscapes. In addition to the consideration given to landscape within these specific minerals and waste policies, Core Policy C8 will help to ensure that the landscape is protected and where possible enhanced.

SA2b: Historic environment

The operation of minerals and waste facilities has the potential to result in some adverse cumulative effects on heritage assets, with some potentially being of a permanent nature (e.g. the loss of archaeological heritage). However Core Policy C9 will help to protect the County's historic environment from inappropriate minerals and waste developments and in addition by seeking to achieve enhancements to the historic environment wherever possible the policy which should help further reduce the overall effects of minerals and waste on the County's heritage assets.

SA3: Water quality

Minerals extraction has the potential to cause adverse effects on surface and ground water resources. Core Policies C3 and C4 will however help to reduce the potential for

adverse water quality effects. In the long-term the restoration of mineral sites could have positive implications for local water quality.

SA4: Air quality

The transportation of minerals and waste by road will inevitably lead to emissions of pollutants from HGVs. However, the distribution of extraction sites and waste facilities across the county will help to avoid any one particular area being overly-exposed to such emissions. There will also be air quality issues associated with the minerals and waste operations (non-transport emissions related) such as dust created by extraction and vehicle traffic. Core Policies C5 and C10 will help to reduce the potential for adverse air quality effects.

SA5: Greenhouse gas emissions

Minerals extraction and waste management operations inevitably lead to greenhouse gas emissions (ghg) emissions. The strategic and core policies in the plan, particularly Core Policy C2, should help to limit increases in emissions by distributing aggregate extraction across the county so it can serve local markets; providing a similar approach for waste facilities by locating facilities close to waste arisings; encouraging the use of rail for minerals transportation; reducing the amount of waste going to landfill; and adopting a low carbon approach for new development.

SA6: Flood risk

Minerals extraction operations have the potential to increase local flood risk. This risk should be avoided through the requirements of Core Policy C3. In addition Policy M8 considers the issue of increasing flood storage capacity within restoration schemes. The overall effect on flood risk of implementing the Core Strategy could therefore be positive.

SA7: Transport

The transport of minerals and waste by road will inevitably result in adverse effects on local air quality, local communities, and on a global scale increased ghg emissions. The Core Strategy aims to reduce these effects through distribution of extraction sites and waste facilities across the county in order to reduce 'distance travelled'; encouraging a shift from rail and other non-road transport for minerals; and requiring lorry routes to be used. Core Policy C10 is specifically aimed at reducing the harmful impacts of transport on the communities in the county and neighbouring areas.

SA8: Population and health

Communities in close proximity to minerals and waste operations, as well as those living on transportation routes are likely to be adversely affected by operations, such as through dust, odour and noise. The distribution of mineral sites and waste facilities

across the county should help to prevent any one particular community or group of communities from being disproportionately over-exposed to these adverse effects. The common core policies seek to mitigate any adverse effects, particularly Core Policy C5, whilst in the medium-long term Policy M8 could provide amenity benefits and countryside access as part of restoration schemes. The reduction of the amount of waste being sent to landfill will also result in benefits to local amenity.

SA9: Soil and land-use

The Core Strategy aims to limit the amount of greenfield land required for new minerals and waste operations by encouraging the use of secondary and recycled aggregate, thereby reducing the need for primary extraction on greenfield sites, and the siting of new waste facilities on previously developed land. Common Policy C6 provides specific requirements to reduce adverse effects on soils.

SA10: Waste hierarchy and SA11: Self-sufficiency

Key objectives of the Core Strategy are for Oxfordshire to move its waste up the hierarchy and for the county to be as self-sufficient as is possible for waste management and minerals supply. The strategic policies in Core Strategy will help to achieve those objectives.

SA12: Economic growth

The policies within the Core Strategy combine to provide the potential to contribute positively towards Oxfordshire's economic growth. The supply of minerals is a key factor in supporting economic growth, particularly in relation to the provision of new housing and employment developments that are being planned across the county.

Mitigation and recommendations

A key role of the SA/SEA is to provide recommendations as to how the sustainability performance of the plan can be improved. While undertaking the SA/SEA since 2010, a range of recommendations have been identified as to how the Local Plan Core Strategy could maximise its performance against the range of sustainability topics. Some of the recommendations sought to mitigate potential adverse effects, whilst others looked to build on some of the opportunities presented within Oxfordshire.

Monitoring

The requirement in the SEA Regulations relating to monitoring focuses specifically on significant environmental effects of the implementation of plans and programmes, with a view to identify unforeseen adverse effects at an early stage and be able to undertake appropriate remedial action.

Once the Core Strategy is adopted, its effects against a range of sustainability areas are to be monitored to allow action to be taken to reduce and/or offset any significant effects. Where possible this monitoring will make use of existing arrangements, particularly those being developed to monitor the performance of the Minerals and Waste Plan. It is therefore not appropriate at this time to develop a separate detailed monitoring programme for inclusion in this SA report. The final monitoring plan will be published in the SA/SEA Adoption Statement, alongside the adopted Local Plan Core Strategy.

Next Steps

The publication of this SA Report signifies the start of the process whereby key stakeholders and the public are given the opportunity to provide representations on the contents of both the Local Plan (Core Strategy) Proposed Submission Document and the accompanying SA Report. The results of the consultation process will be used to guide the further development of the local plan policies.

Making your Views Known

This SA Report will be published for representations alongside the Local Plan (Core Strategy) Proposed Submission Document.

Copies of the SA documents can be found on the Council's website: <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/public-site/minerals-and-waste-policy>.

Comments on the SA Report should be sent in writing to:

By email: mineralsandwasteplanconsultation@oxfordshire.gov.uk

By post: Minerals & Waste Core Strategy Consultation
Environment & Economy
Planning Regulation (Minerals & Waste)
Oxfordshire County Council
Speedwell House
Speedwell Street
Oxford
OX1 1NE

Responses must be received by **30th September 2015**.

All comments received will be publicly available. When the consultation period has finished, the comments received will be considered during the next stage of the SA/SEA process.