

Benson Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan – Post Adoption Statement in accordance with the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 and European Directive 2001/42/EC

16 August 2019

1 Introduction

1.1 The Neighbourhood Development Plan

The Benson Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) was ‘made’ (adopted) by South Oxfordshire District Council (the District Council) on 23 August 2018 and now forms part of the South Oxfordshire Development Plan for the determination of planning applications in the Parish.

In preparing the NDP, account was taken of the requirements of European Union Directive 2001/42/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment, referred to as the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive and its transposing regulations, the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (the SEA Regulations).

The SEA Directive and transposing regulations seek to provide a high level of protection of the environment by integrating environmental considerations into the process of preparing certain plans and programmes. The aim of the Directive is *“to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes with a view to promoting sustainable development, by ensuring that, in accordance with this Directive, an environmental assessment is carried out of certain plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment.”*

In developing the NDP, proportionate, robust evidence should support the choices made and the approach taken. In terms of SEA and Sustainability Appraisal (SA), the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) (paragraph 26, SEA and SA) states:

“There is no legal requirement for a neighbourhood plan to have a sustainability appraisal as set out in section 19 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. However, a qualifying body must demonstrate how its plan or order will contribute to achieving sustainable development. A sustainability appraisal may be a useful approach for doing this.”

Paragraph 27 of the PPG continues:

“In some limited circumstances, where a neighbourhood plan is likely to have significant environmental effects, it may require a strategic environmental assessment. Draft neighbourhood plan proposals should be assessed to determine whether the plan is likely to have significant environmental effects.”

Consistent with this guidance, the District Council completed a SEA Screening Statement (13 June 2016) and concluded that the NDP was likely to have significant effects on the

environment and that SEA was required. Consequently a SEA was undertaken by Benson Parish Council comprising of:

- A Scoping Report dated 16 December 2016
- Draft Sustainability Appraisal, dated Feb 2017
- Sustainability Appraisal (Final) Report incorporating SEA dated October 2017

In assessing the emerging NDP and also in line with the PPG, the parish council decided to undertake a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) that was compliant with the SEA Directive but also considered wider social and economic effects. References to the 'Environmental Report' in this Post-Adoption Statement refer to the relevant SA Report.

The Sustainability Appraisal Report can be viewed at

<http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/planning-policy/neighbourhood-plans/benson-neighbourhood-p>

Hard copies of the reports can be viewed at Benson Parish Hall. Check here for up to date opening times: <http://www.bensonpc.org.uk>

This Post Adoption Statement represents the conclusion of the SEA process and fulfils the plan and programme adoption requirements of the SEA Directive and SEA Regulations. This statement has been prepared in accordance with Regulation 16 (3) and (4) of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, which require a statement to be produced on adoption of a plan or programme, to detail, in summary:

- how environmental considerations have been integrated into the NDP (Section 2 of this document);
- how the Environmental Report has been taken into account (Section 3);
- how opinions expressed in response to the consultation on the Draft NDP and Draft Environmental Report have been taken into account (Section 4);
- the reasons for choosing the NDP, as made, in the light of the other reasonable alternatives dealt with (Section 5); and
- the measures that are to be taken to monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the NDP (Section 6).

2 HOW ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS HAVE BEEN INTEGRATED INTO THE NDP

2.1 Environmental Considerations in the NDP

Preparation of the NDP

Environmental and wider sustainability considerations have been integral to the key decisions made in respect of the policies and proposals of the NDP. The integration of these considerations into the plan making process has principally been achieved through:

- the development of a proportionate evidence base on topics including (inter alia) housing, population and health, transport, landscape, biodiversity, flood risk, climatic factors;
- engagement with key stakeholders and the public on the emerging NDP and related environmental and sustainability matters; as well as formal consultation, this included informal discussions with relevant statutory bodies and specialist regional and local environmental non-governmental organisations;
- the consideration of national planning policy and the objectives of other plans and programmes, including those produced by the District Council; and
- ongoing assessment including SEA (see **Section 2.2**) [and screening under the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) in July 2018 where the NDP was screened out from having to do an appropriate assessment].

NDP Content

The NDP plans positively to support local development (as outlined in paragraph 13 of the National Planning Policy Framework). This aim is expressed in the NDP Vision, which is:

Benson will accommodate the level of growth required to meet our local housing needs, while respecting its history and protecting its rural setting beneath the Chiltern Hills and alongside the River Thames. Our Neighbourhood Plan will encourage a modern, thriving and self-confident village centre, together with the facilities and infrastructure necessary to meet the economic, social and environmental needs of the community. As part of this, the planning process will promote sensitive development that integrates well with the rest of the village and design standards that ensure Benson retains its distinctive character.

The Vision is supported by 12 Objectives in the NDP which are as follows:

- Provide sufficient housing to meet local needs;
- Cater for growth in a manner that maintains the distinct and separate character of the village;
- Cater for growth in a manner that conserves and enhances heritage within the Neighbourhood Plan area;
- Cater for growth in a manner which respects Benson's setting in the rural landscape and its close association with the River Thames;

- Ensure that Benson has a modern, vibrant village centre;
- Ensure there are adequate facilities to serve our growing local population;
- Ensure the sustainability of economic activity in the Neighbourhood Plan area;
- Safeguard and enhance existing green infrastructure and secure the provision of additional green space connected to the wider countryside;
- Ensure that new development is sited, planned and executed in a way that takes account of climate change and other changes in the natural environment;
- Ensure that new development contributes towards the free and safe flow of traffic and has a minimum impact on the existing highway infrastructure;
- Encourage walking and cycling to get around the village by providing a network of safe pedestrian and cyclist routes, in particular to the centre;
- Encourage sustainable modes of transport by all means available

The NDP contains a number of policies to help realise the Vision and Objectives and help to deliver sustainable development.

With regard to the economic dimension of sustainable development the Plan will:

- Deliver approximately 565 new houses;
- Provide considerable assistance in securing a 5-year housing land supply in the District;

Provide the context for the revitalisation of the village centre through a reduction in through traffic and increase in the population base of the village.

With regard to the social dimension of sustainable development the Plan will:

- Deliver much-needed new affordable housing.
- Enhance the ability of local people to enjoy the character, the appearance and the services in the village centre through the provision of a relief road that reduces the volume of through traffic away from the school and other facilities in the village centre.
- Enhance access to recreational facilities.

With regards to the environmental dimension of sustainable development the Plan will:

- Deliver high quality design in new developments;
- Safeguard the character and appearance of the Benson Conservation Area;
- Safeguard ecology and biodiversity assets in the Plan area;
- Designate Local Green Spaces and ensure that new development makes adequate provision for new green spaces;

- Maintain the separation between Benson and surrounding settlements;
- Define the new edge of Benson with a landscape buffer that provides benefits for biodiversity in a locally relevant way.

The process of considering the environmental needs of Benson’s community whilst the NP was prepared has also sparked the production of a Strategy for People and Nature, which sets out a long-term ambitious approach to delivering green infrastructure benefits in the parish.

2.2 Environmental and Sustainability Considerations in the SEA

To provide the context for the SEA, and in compliance with the SEA Directive, a proportionate review of other relevant plans and programmes was undertaken and the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and its evolution without the NDP were considered; together, they informed the identification of a series of key sustainability issues. This information was set out in the Scoping Report in December 2016 and was subsequently updated as part of the Environmental Report to reflect changes since the Scoping Report was published.

The key sustainability issues identified through the review of plans and programmes and analysis of baseline information informed, and were reflected in, the objectives and criteria that comprised the framework used to appraise the NDP (the SEA Framework) (see **Table 2.1**). Broadly, the SEA objectives presented the preferred sustainability outcome which usually involved minimising detrimental effects and enhancing positive effects, whilst at the same time delivering the housing growth required.

Table 2.1: The SEA Framework

The SA framework is provided below:

Sustainability Objectives of the Benson Neighbourhood Plan

Objective 1: Heritage

To sustain and enhance the heritage assets of the Parish.

- Will the policies ensure that there will be no harm to a designated heritage asset or that its setting is enhanced?
- Will the policies promote opportunities to enhance the setting of a designated heritage asset?

Objective 2: Landscape

To successfully manage change to the character of the local landscape.

- Will the policies avoid development on the most sensitive landscape edges and protect the setting of the North Wessex Downs AONB?

- Will the policies help prevent the visual coalescence of Benson with its neighbouring settlements?

Objective 3: Traffic

To minimise the effects of extra traffic on local roads resulting from new developments.

- Will the policies make provision for long term road improvements to alleviate congestion in the village?
- Will the policies ensure that unavoidable car trips can be managed on the local road network?

Objective 4: Biodiversity

To deliver a net gain in the biodiversity value of the Parish.

- Will the policies ensure that development will lead to an overall improvement in the biodiversity value of the Parish?
- Will the policies protect designated biodiversity sites from harmful development?
- Will the policies help enable the proper maintenance and enhancement of any ecological networks?

Objective 5: Village Centre

To improve the vitality and viability of the village centre.

- Will the policies protect the critical mass of the local services in the Village Centre?
- Will the policies lead to a greater footfall of local people accessing the Village Centre?

Objective 6: Community Assets

To sustain a range of viable community assets.

- Will the policies protect existing community assets from unnecessary loss?
- Will the policies enable investment in new community assets in accessible locations in the village?

Objective 7: Flooding

To avoid or minimise the risk of flooding.

- Will the policies avoid the development of land at risk of flooding (in flood zones 2 and 3)?

- Will the policies ensure that any development in areas known to be at risk of surface water flooding makes satisfactory provision for mitigation measures?

Objective 8: RAF Benson

To ensure the amenities of local residents are not harmed by the operations of RAF Benson.

- Will the policies ensure that new development is not exposed to any significant harm in respect of noise, vibrations or safety from aircraft activities?

The SEA process considered the contribution of the NDP towards each of the appraisal objectives, drawing on the baseline information to predict the likely significant effects in line with the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (now Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government) Practical Guide to the SEA Directive¹. Specifically, the following key components of the NDP were appraised against the SEA objectives

- Vision and Plan Objectives;
- Policies in the NDP and reasonable alternatives to those, including the do-nothing option where appropriate;
- Site allocations (including reasonable alternatives such as making no housing allocations); and
- cumulative and in-combination effects

The appraisal identified the likely changes to the baseline conditions as a result of the NDP's implementation. These effects were described (where possible) in terms of their extent, the timescale over which they could occur, whether the effects would be temporary or permanent, positive or negative, short, medium and/or long-term. The potential for secondary, synergistic and cumulative effects were also considered and reported where relevant.

¹ ODPM (2005) *A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive*. Published September 2005.

3 HOW THE ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT HAS BEEN TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT

3.1 Overview

The development of the NDP has been iterative. SEA has played an integral role in this iterative process with each of the following NDP stages having been accompanied by an Environmental Report in order to help inform the Plan and fully integrate environmental and sustainability considerations into decision making. **Table 3.1** below lists the iterations of the NDP, corresponding Environmental Reports and key conclusions from the Environmental Report.

Table 3.1 Summary of SEA Iterations Report	Summary of the Accompanying SEA Environmental Report (what was appraised)	Key Conclusions from the SEA Environmental Report
Interim SA, November 2015	The report, conducted as part of the emerging Local Plan, formed the baseline for subsequent SA iterations. It assessed all of the land available for development in Benson, suggested where there might be positive, neutral or negative effects.	Baseline information taken into account in subsequent iterations.
Draft Sustainability Appraisal Report, February 2017	The report provides an assessment of the Neighbourhood Plan objectives and policies and alternatives for the location of new housing in the village, including two additional sites that were put forward in response to the 2015 consultation. The report was drafted in light of responses from statutory consultees on the Scoping Study, dated Dec 16.	The initial assessment indicated that the preferred policies of the Pre Submission Plan avoided leading to any significant, negative environment effects that were not offset by stronger, positive environmental and social effects.

Final Sustainability Appraisal Report, October 2017

The report provides a finalised assessment of the Neighbourhood Plan objectives and policies and alternatives for the location of new housing in the village, in light of consultation on the draft NDP and draft SA, consulted upon in March 17

The updated assessment indicated that the preferred policies of the Plan avoided leading to any significant, negative environment effects and would contribute, in overall terms, to achieving a sustainable pattern of growth and consolidation in the village.

The SA Report concluded that sites Ben 1, 2 and 3/4 provided a range of significant positive effects in relation to the provision of housing and accessibility to facilities and services. Potential effects in relation to biodiversity landscape and cultural heritage were identified but other polices in the NDP were judged to help mitigate these. Allocating other/alternative sites was considered but would have failed to deliver the benefit of the relief road which addresses the problem of environmental and social problems caused by through traffic volumes in the village centre.

3.2 How the Findings of the SEA have been taken into account

The SEA has helped to shape the direction of the NDP. In particular, the findings of the SEA of the emerging NDP and reasonable alternatives have informed decisions in respect of:

- the policies that the NDP should contain and their content;
- the amount of growth to be accommodated in the plan area;
- the sites to be allocated in the NDP and options for delivering the overall amount of growth required.

Through the SEA process, a small number of recommendations were also made concerning the emerging plan policies and these were set out in the Environmental Reports prepared in support of earlier drafts of the NDP. The recommendations are summarised in **Table 3.2** together with a commentary on whether or not these were reflected in the made NDP and, if so, how.

Table 3.2: Recommendations arising from the iterations of SEA Recommendation	Response
Policy Ben NP6 (<i>Policy number since superseded</i>) should be amended to ensure that effects on archaeological interests on Site Ben 7 are understood and addressed	Policy NP6 of the draft NBP was amended in light of this recommendation, although in the

	<p>final plan, this site allocation was deleted.</p>
<p>Amend Policy Ben NP11, required developers to set out in their Travel Plans measures to invest in existing and new bus services to enable commuters, school children and other uses to access Oxford, Reading and Wallingford.</p>	<p>Policy NP11 amended as recommended.</p>
<p>EA advised that the NDP consider how to address the gap in waste water treatment capacity.</p>	<p>This issue was raised with the Local Authority so that a Grampian Condition could be applied to any consents for development.</p>
<p>Historic England recommended further development of heritage material to inform the plan including in-depth character assessments, identification of non-designated assets, and amendments to policy wording.</p>	<p>The evidence base was expanded, a heritage policy was added and other policies tweaked as explained in the detailed Consultation Statement.</p>
<p>OCC sought expansion of the NDP to cover delivery of a wider suite of public health objectives including enabling people to be more active, address social isolation, make healthier food choices</p>	<p>Addressed in part - the focus on the NDP needs to be on land allocation although the policy focus on sustainable modes of transport such as walking and cycling plus the strong emphasis on green infrastructure benefits for people as well as wildlife deliver to the spirit of OCC's recommendation.</p>

4 HOW OPINIONS EXPRESSED DURING CONSULTATION HAVE BEEN TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT

4.1 Overview

As set out in Section 1, the development of the NDP has been informed by extensive, ongoing engagement and public consultation, in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (SI No. 637).

A Consultation Statement was prepared for the NDP in accordance with Paragraph 15 (2)1 of the Regulations which defines a “consultation statement” as a document which:

- (a) contains details of the persons and bodies who were consulted about the proposed neighbourhood development plan;*
- (b) explains how they were consulted;*
- (c) summarises the main issues and concerns raised by the persons consulted; and*
- (d) describes how these issues and concerns have been considered and, where relevant, addressed in the proposed neighbourhood development plan.*

The Consultation Statement sets out the consultation undertaken during the preparation of the NDP, a summary of main issues raised and details of how the comments received have been taken into account.

4.2 SA Consultation Summary

Following consultation on the scope of the SEA in December 2016 to January 2017, Environmental Reports have been prepared and published for consultation at each key NDP stage as set out **Table 3.1** above.

A five week consultation was undertaken on the Scoping Report which concluded on 27 January 2017; a total of 2 responses were received, one from Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) and a second from Historic England.

OCC did not require any changes but observed that the NDP’s objective to look for provision of long term road improvements to alleviate congestions set a higher benchmark than might ordinarily be the case for an NDP. OCC asked to be kept informed on progress, a request that was noted and taken account of in subsequent consultations.

Historic England sought a more complete character assessment of the village as a baseline, including information on non-designated assets. This was addressed by undertaking an assessment of the buildings in Benson that are of heritage note/value but non-listed. This material informed the final version of the Benson Design Statement, a document that was noted by the NDP examiner as an exemplar.

The draft Environmental Report was consulted on alongside the Regulation 14 (Pre-submission) version of the NDP for 6 weeks, concluding on 14 April 2017. In combination, a total of 256 distinct comments were received from statutory bodies, developers, and local residents. The comments made on both documents were considered by the Parish Council in preparing the final version of the Plan and the SA/SEA report.

Details of the results of consultation at this stage, including a full breakdown of the comments received on the Pre-submission Plan and accompanying draft Sustainability Appraisal, are provided in the Consultation Statement published on SODC's website here: <http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/sites/default/files/Benson%20Neighbourhood%20Plan%20Consultation%20Statement.pdf>.

The comments covered a wide array of matters, ranging from local views about site selection and numbers of houses allocated in the plan to both general and specific comments on the draft policies from a range of stakeholders. Full details can be viewed in the published summary, but examples of comments specifically relating to SEA and the environment included:

Environment Agency recognised that the NDP identified a report from Thames Water concluding that wastewater treatment capacity in Benson was inadequate to cater for any substantial increase in housing. This was already noted in the draft NDP, but was also flagged to SODC such that a Grampian Condition could be applied to any large scale planning permissions granted in the village.

Natural England strongly welcomed the draft NDP's focus on Green Infrastructure (GI) including policies aimed at delivering biodiversity benefits. It expressed concern about the large numbers of houses proposed in terms of risks to the landscape setting of AONBs nearby. Noting that the number of houses was required to secure the benefit of a relief road, the final NDP and SA concluded that the social and environmental benefits for the community outweighed the small landscape impact. To mitigate the impacts, the NDP included a policy requiring a vegetated landscape buffer to the north and west of the allocated sites.

The provision of substantial new green spaces in two of the three allocated sites, with a green corridor running around the third as a connection, represents a strong positive benefit for the community, recognising the benefits for people and nature of green infrastructure. In response to SODC remarks about the need for HRA, the wording of the narrative accompanying the GI policies was amended to recognise the role that the new green spaces would play in providing locally accessible green spaces, thus reducing the need to travel by car to alternatives.

5. THE REASONS FOR CHOOSING THE NDP, AS ADOPTED, IN THE LIGHT OF THE OTHER REASONABLE ALTERNATIVES DEALT WITH

5.1 Overview

Article 5 (1) of the SEA Directive and SEA Regulation 12(2) require that “*an environmental report shall be prepared in which the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme, and reasonable alternatives taking into account the objectives and the geographical scope of the plan or programme, are identified, described and evaluated*”. Information to be provided includes “*an outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with*” (SEA Directive Annex I (h) and SEA Regulations Schedule 2 (8)).

The European Commission guidance on the SEA Directive² discusses possible interpretations of handling ‘reasonable alternatives’ as required by Article 5(1). It states that “*The alternatives chosen should be realistic. Part of the reason for studying alternatives is to find ways of reducing or avoiding the significant adverse effects of the proposed plan or programme*”.

As set out in **Section 3**, the SEA has been an iterative process undertaken alongside and integrated with the development of the NDP itself. The reasonable alternatives considered in preparing the NDP and appraised through the SA have related to:

- development scenarios (the amount of growth to be accommodated in the plan area);
- policy options (including the do-nothing option where relevant);
- identification of a settlement boundary;
- site allocations; and
- site configurations (site boundaries and site capacity).

The findings of the appraisal of the preferred approach and reasonable alternatives were reported in the Environmental Reports at each stage of NDP preparation and subject to consultation with the wider community and relevant consultation bodies.

5.2 The Reasons for Choosing the Preferred Approach and for Rejecting Reasonable Alternatives

The Final Sustainability Appraisal Report sets out the reasons for choosing the preferred approach and for rejecting reasonable alternatives, this is summarised below.

Development Scenarios

Benson Parish Council set out to allocate sufficient land in the village for housing to meet the requirements derived from the Oxfordshire SHMA. It sought to do so in a way that reflected the issues that were important to residents of the village, together with national and district policies, focusing particularly on the NPPF. Over the period of plan

² EC (2001) *Implementation of Directive 2001/42 on the Assessment of the Effects of Certain Plans and Programmes on the Environment*. Available from http://ec.europa.eu/environment/archives/eia/pdf/030923_sea_guidance.pdf [Accessed June 2017].

development, consultation with the community identified that a key deliverable sought through the NDP was a solution to the increasing traffic problems in the village. Benson Parish Council recognised an opportunity to take a strategic approach to its NDP, allocating additional land for houses to secure developer and land owner commitment to funding a relief road. This influenced the selection of sites (see below) for development. One of the additional benefits is that Benson can demonstrate the part a positive approach to development and growth can play, helping SODC towards achieving a 5 year land supply.

The assessment indicates that the policies of the Submission Plan have avoided leading to any significant, negative environment effects that are not offset by stronger, positive environmental and social effects. They will contribute, in overall terms, to achieving a sustainable pattern of growth and consolidation in the village.

The spatial strategy chosen has found a way of growing the village to secure vital benefits – the Relief Road and new social infrastructure – without causing significant harm to its essential rural character.

The alternative strategies comprising smaller numbers of development sites do not compare unfavourably with the preferred strategy for the most part, as it is a composite of four of the eight main sites assessed. The crucial difference is that without the cumulative delivery of the Relief Road, which is dependent on each of those four sites, the social benefits are not as positive.

The SEA captures the thinking undertaken by the Parish Council; options included allocating a smaller number of sites to provide the minimum necessary number of houses or the alternative of leaving SODC to determine applications in line with local and national policy. The conclusion was that those approaches would have resulted in piecemeal growth, which would have failed to secure the primary objective/benefit of a relief road, and may not have enabled the creation of policies that reflected more nuanced local aspirations e.g. planting schemes that deliver for pollinators as set out in Benson's People & Nature Strategy.

Policies Included in the NDP

Neighbourhood plans are not obliged to contain policies addressing all types of development. The range and scope of policies to be included in the NDP was considered through production of draft versions of the NDP. Where relevant the do-nothing option was also considered. Relevant policy areas and reasonable alternatives are summarised below.

Policies included in the NDP cover a range of themes including Housing typology, Strategic Infrastructure (Transport/ roads), Green Infrastructure, Design matters and Local/Community Infrastructure/Facilities. Having set an overarching strategic objective (securing the relief road), the NDP then sought to put in place policies that delivered sustainable development for the community in Benson. In terms of environment:

- a comprehensive suite of policies address NPPF requirements to have regard to the needs of biodiversity and put in place measures to enhance ecological networks.

- Further, the NDP seeks to provide access and recreation opportunities, recognising the social benefits that flow from good quality green spaces including allotments, places to play and come together as a community. This is particularly important in a place like Benson where the allocation of all housing land along one side in the village could present a social cohesion challenge for the community. Policies place some of the new community facilities in the new developments to encourage people to mix.
- The NDP sets policies that support pedestrians and cyclists in getting round the village and encourages use of public transport.

Site Options

Site assessments were undertaken by the neighbourhood planning team to ascertain the availability and simple capacity of land in and around the main village. Each site was identified as being part of one of five spatial options:

- North and East of the Village – the proposed option, defined as land north of Littleworth Road, Hale Road and Watlington Road (comprising site refs: BEN1, BEN2, BEN3 and BEN4)
- North of the Village – defined as only land north of Littleworth Road and Hale Road (comprising site refs: BEN1 and BEN2)
- East of the Village – defined as only land north of Watlington Road (comprising site refs: BEN3 and BEN4)
- South East of the Village – defined as land south of Watlington Road (comprising site refs: BEN5 and BEN6)
- South of the Village – defined as land south of St. Helen's Avenue (comprising site refs: BEN7 and BEN8 and land south of the A4074 at Preston Crowmarsh)

Through the development of the NDP, ten sites were subject to consideration for allocation for development. All sites were considered against an objective set of criteria for their suitability and ability to help the community meet its objectives in developing the NDP. As well as the ability to meet housing needs and deliver the relief road as prioritised by the community, the site suitability assessment also considered a wide range of important criteria related to sustainability. For example, impacts on nature, wildlife and landscape, ease of access to sustainable transport options including public transport and footpaths, impacts on heritage assets including the conservation area and archeology, and exposure to vibration and noise from RAF Benson. Where the possibility of adverse impacts were identified, the NDP set policies designed to ensure that environmental, social and economic benefits were secured, such that Benson can grow sustainably in the future.

The preferred sites (Ben 1, Ben 2, Ben 3, and Ben 4) were chosen because they enabled the provision of the relief road desired by the community. A range of design and green infrastructure policies were put in place to mitigate any adverse impacts identified through the SEA process.

6. THE MEASURES THAT ARE TO BE TAKEN TO MONITOR THE SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL AND SUSTAINABILITY EFFECTS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NDP

6.1 Overview

The SEA Regulations (17 (1)) set out that *“The responsible authority shall monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of each plan or programme with the purpose of identifying any unforeseen adverse effects at an early stage and being able to undertake appropriate remedial action”*.

The District Council is the responsible authority for the purposes of monitoring the NDP. Planning Practice Guidance states:

“Monitoring the significant effects of the implementation of a neighbourhood plan that was subject to a strategic environmental assessment should be undertaken (see regulation 17 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004). This will enable unforeseen adverse effects to be identified at an early stage and to enable appropriate remedial actions. The local planning authority should consider arrangements to monitor the significant effects of implementing the neighbourhood plan and reporting this issue in its Monitoring Report.”

The District Council is developing a suite of monitoring indicators that cover the topics identified in the SEA Directive. These will be used to monitor the effects of the Development Plan, including the Benson NDP. Appendix A sets out the proposed monitoring indicators for the Local Plan and how they relate to the SEA topics that will be used prior to adoption of the Local Plan. These will be finalised once the Local Plan is adopted. The Council's Authority Monitoring Plan will be produced annually with information updated as it becomes available.

Benson Parish Council is not obliged to produce additional indicators for monitoring at the local level but may do so if it wishes. The Qualifying Body would be responsible for monitoring any additional indicators. In this instance Benson Parish Council has not elected to do so.

APPENDIX A: MONITORING INDICATORS FOR THE LOCAL PLAN AND RELATIONSHIP THE SEA DIRECTIVE (Appendix R Monitoring - Sustainability Appraisal of the Submission Version of the Local Plan 2019 – Appendices - March 2019)

Review of Proposed Monitoring Indicators against the Topics in the SEA Directive

Local Plan Policy	Indicators from the Local Plan	Sustainability Objective(s)	SEA Topic
STRAT1: The Overall Strategy	Covered by all other indicators in framework -see below	See below	See below
STRAT2: South Oxfordshire Housing and Employment Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Number of dwellings permitted and completed in the district to meet the overall need □ Progress towards meeting South Oxfordshire’s apportionment of unmet need in the housing market area □ Number of dwellings permitted and completed in the district to meet the overall need □ Quantum of land permitted and completed for employment by strategic site and allocation □ Number of Homes delivered at the Grenoble Road, Northfield, and North of Bayswater Brook strategic allocations 	1. ‘Housing’. 13. ‘Employment’ 14. ‘Science Vale.’	Population
Strat3: Didcot Garden Town	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Number of planning permissions granted contrary to the Didcot Garden Town Masterplan Principles 	The design principles cover design, local character, density and tenure, transport and movement, heritage, landscape and green infrastructure and social and community benefits. As such this indicator is relevant to a number of SA Objectives, including: 1 ‘Housing’ 2 ‘Community safety’ 3 ‘Access to facilities’ 4 ‘Health and wellbeing’ 5 ‘Environmental protection’ 6 ‘Travel choice’	Population, Human health, Material assets, Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna, Cultural heritage, Landscape

		7 Biodiversity 9 Historic environments 17 Community involvement	
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Local Plan Policy	Indicators from the Local Plan	Sustainability Objective(s)	SEA Topic
STRAT4: Strategic Development	<input type="checkbox"/> Progress of essential strategic infrastructure items <input type="checkbox"/> Progress of other Strategic infrastructure items	1 'Housing.' 3 'Access to facilities' 10 Climatic factors	Population, Material assets
STRAT5: Residential Density	<input type="checkbox"/> Average density for major developments permitted by strategic allocation and location	8 Land use	Material assets
Strat6: Green Belt	<input type="checkbox"/> Status and type of permissions granted within the Green Belt	8 Land use	Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna, Soil
Strat7: Land at Chalgrove Airfield	<input type="checkbox"/> Progress of Masterplan for the strategic allocation <input type="checkbox"/> Number of homes permitted and delivered at strategic allocation <input type="checkbox"/> Quantum of employment land permitted and completed at strategic allocation <input type="checkbox"/> Number of pitches permitted and delivered for Gypsies and Travellers	1 'Housing' 13 'Employment'	Population

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Local Plan Policy	Indicators from the Local Plan	Sustainability Objective(s)	SEA Topic
STRAT8: Culham Science Centre	<input type="checkbox"/> Quantum of employment land permitted and completed Culham Science Centre	13 'Employment' 14 'Science Vale'	Population
STRAT9: Land Adjacent to Culham Science Centre	<input type="checkbox"/> Progress of Masterplan for the strategic allocation: <input type="checkbox"/> Number of homes permitted and delivered at strategic allocation <input type="checkbox"/> Number of pitches permitted and delivered for Gypsies and Travellers	1 'Housing'	Population
STRAT10: Land at Berinsfield	<input type="checkbox"/> Progress of Masterplan for the strategic allocation <input type="checkbox"/> Number of homes permitted and delivered at strategic allocation <input type="checkbox"/> Quantum of employment land permitted and completed at strategic allocation.	1 'Housing' 13 'Employment'	Population
Strat 10i: Berinsfield Local Green Space	<input type="checkbox"/> Status and type of permissions granted on land identified	3 'Access to facilities'	Population, Human health

Strat 11: Land South of Grenoble road	<input type="checkbox"/> Progress of Masterplan for the strategic allocation <input type="checkbox"/> Number of homes permitted and delivered at strategic allocation <input type="checkbox"/> Quantum of employment land permitted and completed at strategic allocation	1. 'Housing'. 13. 'Employment'	
Strat 12: Land at Northfield	<input type="checkbox"/> Progress of Masterplan for the strategic allocation <input type="checkbox"/> Number of homes permitted and delivered at strategic allocation	1 'Housing'	Population
Strat 13: Land North of Bayswater Brook	<input type="checkbox"/> Progress of Masterplan for the strategic allocation <input type="checkbox"/> Number of homes permitted and delivered at strategic allocation	1 'Housing'	Population

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Local Plan Policy	Indicators from the Local Plan	Sustainability Objective(s)	SEA Topic
Strat 14: Land at Wheatley Campus, Oxford Brookes University	<input type="checkbox"/> Number of homes permitted and delivered at strategic allocation	1 Housing	Population
Policy HEN 1: The Strategy for Henley-on-Thames	<input type="checkbox"/> Number of homes permitted and delivered in the Parish of Henley-on-Thames <input type="checkbox"/> Quantum of employment land permitted and completed in the parish of Henley-on-Thames <input type="checkbox"/> Quantum of retail floorspace permitted and completed in the parish of Henley-on-Thames	1 'Housing' 13 'Employment'	Population
Policy TH1: The strategy for Thame	<input type="checkbox"/> Number of homes permitted and delivered in the Parish of Thame <input type="checkbox"/> Quantum of employment land permitted and completed in the parish of Thame <input type="checkbox"/> Quantum of retail floorspace permitted and completed in the parish of Thame	1 'Housing' 13 'Employment'	Population
Policy WAL1:	<input type="checkbox"/> Number of homes permitted and delivered in the Parish of Wallingford <input type="checkbox"/> Quantum of employment land permitted and completed in the parish of Wallingford <input type="checkbox"/> Quantum of retail floorspace permitted and completed in the parish of Wallingford	1 'Housing' 13 'Employment'	Population
Policy H1: Delivering New Homes	<input type="checkbox"/> Covered by all other housing indicators	See below	See below
Policy H2: New Housing in Didcot	<input type="checkbox"/> Number of homes permitted and completed in Didcot by strategic allocation	1 'Housing'	Population
Policy H3: Housing in the towns of Henley-on-Thames, Thame and Wallingford	<input type="checkbox"/> Number of homes permitted and completed in the towns of Henley-on-Thames, Thame and Wallingford	1 'Housing'	Population

Local Plan Policy	Indicators from the Local Plan	Sustainability Objective(s)	SEA Topic
Policy H4: Housing in the Larger Villages	<input type="checkbox"/> Number of homes permitted and completed by Larger Village	1 'Housing'	Population
Policy H5: Land to the West of Priest Close, Nettlebed	<input type="checkbox"/> Homes permitted and completed on allocated site	1 'Housing'	Population
Policy H6: Joyce Grove, Nettlebed	<input type="checkbox"/> Homes permitted and completed on allocated site	1 'Housing'	Population
Policy H7: Land to the South and West of Nettlebed Service Station	<input type="checkbox"/> Homes permitted and completed on allocated site	1 'Housing'	Population
Policy H8: Housing in the Smaller Villages	<input type="checkbox"/> Number of homes permitted and completed by Smaller Village	1 'Housing'	Population
Policy H9: Affordable Housing	<input type="checkbox"/> Percentage of affordable housing provided on major developments or sites with combined gross floorspace of more than 1000m ²	1 'Housing'	Population
Policy H10: Exception Sites	<input type="checkbox"/> Status of permissions granted for rural exception sites	1 'Housing'	Population
Policy H11: Housing Mix	<input type="checkbox"/> Average housing mix of planning permissions	1 'Housing'	Population
Policy H12: Self Build and Custom Housing	<input type="checkbox"/> Number of registered interests on the self and custom build register compared with the potential supply of self and custom build housing <input type="checkbox"/> Proportion of self and custom build plots on strategic allocations		

Local Plan Policy	Indicators from the Local Plan	Sustainability Objective(s)	SEA Topic
Policy H13: Specialist Housing for Older People	<input type="checkbox"/> Amount and type of housing designed for older people permitted as part of strategic allocations and within the district.	1 'Housing'	Population
Policy H14: Provision for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople	<input type="checkbox"/> Number of pitches permitted and delivered for Gypsies and Travellers by location	1 'Housing'	Population
Policy H15: Safeguarding Gypsy, traveller and travelling Showpeople sites	<input type="checkbox"/> Status and type of permissions granted on Safeguarded Gypsy, Traveller and travelling Showpeople sites	1 'Housing'	Population

Policy H16: Infill Development and Redevelopment	<input type="checkbox"/> Status and type of housing permitted not in accordance with policy	1 'Housing'	Population
Policy H17: Sub-division and Conversion to Multiple Occupation	<input type="checkbox"/> Status and type of permissions relating to sub-divisions houses of multiple occupation	1 'Housing'	Population
Policy H18: Replacement Dwellings	<input type="checkbox"/> Status and type of replacement housing permissions in the open countryside	1 'Housing' 8 'Land use'	Population Landscape
Policy H19: Re-use of rural buildings	<input type="checkbox"/> Status and type of housing permissions in the open countryside	1 'Housing' 8 'Land use'	Population Landscape
Policy H20: Rural Workers Dwellings	<input type="checkbox"/> Status and type of Rural Worker Dwelling application	1 'Housing'	Population
Policy H21: Extensions to Dwellings	<input type="checkbox"/> Status and type of permissions	1 'Housing'	Population

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Local Plan Policy	Indicators from the Local Plan	Sustainability Objective(s)	SEA Topic
Policy EMP6: New Employment Land at Thame	<input type="checkbox"/> Quantum of employment land permitted and completed at Thame	13 'Employment'	Population
Policy EMP7: New Employment Land at Wallingford	<input type="checkbox"/> Quantum of employment land permitted and completed at Wallingford	13 'Employment'	Population
Policy EMP8: New Employment Land at Crowmarsh Gifford	<input type="checkbox"/> Quantum of employment land allocated, permitted and completed	13 'Employment'	Population
Policy EMP9: New Employment Land at Chalgrove	<input type="checkbox"/> Quantum of employment land permitted and completed at Land at Monument Business Park	13 'Employment'	Population
Policy EMP10: Community Employment Plans	<input type="checkbox"/> Number of applications for Major developments supported by a community employment plan	13 'Employment' 15 'Education and Skills'	Population
Policy EMP11: Development in the Countryside and Rural Areas	<input type="checkbox"/> Status and type of applications for employment uses in the open countryside	1 'Housing' 8 'Land use' 13 'Employment'	Population Landscape

		15 'Education and Skills'	
Policy EMP12: Tourism	□ Status and type of permissions granted for visitor economic developments.	8 'Land use 13 'Employment' 15 'Education and Skills'	Population Landscape

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Local Plan Policy	Indicators from the Local Plan	Sustainability Objective(s)	SEA Topic
Policy EMP13: Caravan and Camping Sites	□ Status and Type of permissions granted for Caravan and Camping Sites	8 'Land use'	Landscape
EMP14: Retention of Visitor Accommodation	□ Amount of C1 use floorspace lost	13 'Employment' 16 'Tourism'	
Policy INF1: Infrastructure Provision	□ Covered by all other infrastructure indicators	See below	See below
Policy TRANS1a: Supporting Strategic Transport Investment across the Oxford to Cambridge Arc:	□ Progress of Oxford to Cambridge Arc	1 'Housing' 6 'Travel Choice' 10 'Climatic factors'	Population Material assets Climatic factors
Policy TRANS1b: Supporting Strategic Transport Investment	□ Progress of transport projects identified in the Local Transport Plan	1 'Housing' 6 'Travel Choice' 10 'Climatic factors'	Population Material assets Climatic factors
Policy TRANS2: Promoting Sustainable Transport and Accessibility	□ Monitoring of Travel Plans for developments over 80 dwellings □ Progress of transport schemes □ To monitor designated Air Quality Management Areas	1 'Housing' 5 'Environmental protection' 6 'Travel Choice' 10 'Climatic factors'	Population Material assets Climatic factors Air

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Local Plan Policy	Indicators from the Local Plan	Sustainability Objective(s)	SEA Topic
Policy TRANS3: Safeguarding of Land for	□ Status and use of planning permissions on land safeguarded	1 'Housing' 6 'Travel choice'	Population Material assets

Strategic Transport Schemes			
Policy TRANS4: Transport Assessments, Transport Statements and Travel Plans	☐ Monitoring of Travel Plans for developments over 80 dwellings	1 'Housing' 5 'Environmental protection' 6 'Travel choice'	Population Material assets Climatic factors Air
Policy TRANS5: Consideration of development Proposals	☐ Number of permissions granted against technical advice	1 'Housing' 5 'Environmental protection' 6 'Travel choice'	Population Material assets Climatic factors Air
Policy TRANS6: Rail	☐ Status and type of planning permissions related to rail services	5 'Environmental protection' 6 'Travel choice'	Population Climatic Factors Air
Policy TRANS7: Development Generating New Lorry Movements	☐ Number of permissions granted against technical advice	5 'Environmental protection' 6 'Travel choice' 10 'Climate Change'	Population Material assets Climatic factors Air
Policy INF2: Electronic Communications	☐ Compliance with Building Regulations	8 'Land-use'	Landscape

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Policy INF3: Telecommunications Technology	☐ Number of planning permissions refused	8 'Land-use'	Landscape
Policy INF4: Water and Waste Water Resources	☐ Number of planning permissions granted against technical advice	5 'Environmental protection' 11 'Flood Risk'	Biodiversity, fauna, and flora Water
Policy ENV1: Landscape and Countryside	☐ Status and type of permissions permitted in the AONBs		
Policy ENV2: Biodiversity Designated sites, Priority Habitats and Species	☐ Changes in areas of Priority Habitats and Species ☐ Number of permissions granted contrary to consultee advice on impact on Special Areas of Conservation ☐ Number of permissions granted contrary to consultee advice on impact on SSSI's	7 'Biodiversity'	Biodiversity, fauna, and flora

Policy ENV3: Non Designated Sites, Habitats and Species	<input type="checkbox"/> Change in biodiversity area and/or sites	7 'Biodiversity'	Biodiversity, fauna, and flora
Policy ENV4: Watercourses	<input type="checkbox"/> Number of planning permissions granted against technical advice	10 'Climate Change' 11 'Flood Risk'	Human health Water Climatic factors
Policy ENV5: Green Infrastructure in New Developments	<input type="checkbox"/> Number of planning permissions granted against technical advice <input type="checkbox"/> Number of buildings on the 'Heritage at Risk' Register <input type="checkbox"/> Number of new Conservation Area Character Appraisals	7 'Biodiversity' 8 'Land-use' 9 'Built-heritage'	Biodiversity, fauna, and flora Human health Climatic factors

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Local Plan Policy	Indicators from the Local Plan	Sustainability Objective(s)	SEA Topic
Policy ENV6: Historic Environment	<input type="checkbox"/> Progress of Heritage Partnership Agreements	8 'Land-use' 9 'Built-heritage'	Cultural Heritage
Policy ENV7: Listed Buildings	<input type="checkbox"/> Number of planning permissions granted against technical advice	8 'Land-use' 9 'Built-heritage'	Cultural Heritage
Policy ENV8: Conservation Areas	<input type="checkbox"/> Number of planning permissions granted against technical advice	8 'Land-use' 9 'Built-heritage'	Cultural Heritage
Policy ENV9: Archaeology and Scheduled Monuments	<input type="checkbox"/> Status and type of planning permissions	8 'Land-use' 9 'Built-heritage'	Cultural Heritage
Policy ENV10: Historic Battlefields, Registered Park and Gardens and Historic Landscapes	<input type="checkbox"/> Status and type of planning permissions	8 'Land-use' 9 'Built-heritage'	Cultural Heritage
Policy ENV11: Pollution- - Impact from existing and/or Previous Land uses on new Development and the Natural Environment (Potential receptors of Pollution)	<input type="checkbox"/> Number of planning permissions granted against technical advice	1 'Housing' 2 'Environmental Protection' 8 'Land-use'	Population Human health Soil Air Material assets Climatic factors
Policy ENV12: Pollution Impact of Development on Human Health, the natural environment and/or Local	<input type="checkbox"/> Number of planning permissions granted against technical advice	1 'Housing' 5 'Environmental Protection' 8 'Land-use'	Population Human health Soil Air

amenity (Potential Sources of Pollution)			Material assets Climatic factors
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Local Plan Policy	Indicators from the Local Plan	Sustainability Objective(s)	SEA Topic
Policy EP1: Air Quality	<input type="checkbox"/> To monitor designated Air Quality Management Areas	5 'Environmental Protection'	Air
Policy EP2: Hazardous Substances	<input type="checkbox"/> Number of planning permissions granted against technical advice	5 'Environmental Protection' 8 'Land-use'	Air Soil Material Assets
Policy EP3: Waste collection and Recycling	<input type="checkbox"/> Percentage of household waste sent for re-use, recycling or composting	12 'Waste'	Material Assets
Policy EP4: Flood Risk	<input type="checkbox"/> Number and detail of permissions granted contrary to Environment Agency advice on flooding	11 'Flood Risk'	Climatic Factors
Policy EP5: Minerals Safeguarding Areas	<input type="checkbox"/> Status and use of planning permissions on land safeguarded.	8 'Land-use'	Material Assets Soil
Policy DES1: Delivering High Quality Development	<input type="checkbox"/> Covered by all other design indicators	See Below	See Below
Policy DES2: Enhancing Local Character	<input type="checkbox"/> Number of planning permissions granted against technical advice	1 'Housing' 8 'Land-use'	Population Material Assets

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Local Plan Policy	Indicators from the Local Plan	Sustainability Objective(s)	SEA Topic
Policy DES3: Design and Access Statements	<input type="checkbox"/> Number of permissions granted for major development supported by an appropriate masterplan and design and access statement.	1 'Housing' 13 'Employment'	Population
Policy DES4: Masterplans for Allocated Sites and Major Development	<input type="checkbox"/> Covered by indicator for DES3	See DES3.	See DES3.
Policy DES5: Outdoor Amenity Space	<input type="checkbox"/> Covered by indicator for DES3	See DES3.	See DES3.
Policy DES6: Residential Amenity	<input type="checkbox"/> Covered by indicator for DES3	See DES3.	See DES3.

Policy DES7: Public Art	<input type="checkbox"/> Number of permissions granted for major development, or sites larger than 0.5 hectares, that incorporate public art provision	1 'Housing' 13 'Employment'	Population
Policy DES8: Efficient use of resources	<input type="checkbox"/> Covered by indicators for STRAT12, EP1 and EP3	See STRAT12, EP1 and EP3	See STRAT12, EP1 and EP3
Policy DES9: Promoting Sustainable Design	<input type="checkbox"/> Number of permissions granted that incorporate climate change adaptation measures.	5 Environmental Protection 8 'Land-use' 9 'Built Heritage' 10 'Climatic factors'	Air Soil Climate Factors Material Assets Cultural Heritage Landscape
Policy DES10: Renewable Energy	<input type="checkbox"/> Status and type of permission granted for renewable energy <input type="checkbox"/> Renewable energy capacity	8 'Land-use' 10 'Climatic factors'	Material Assets Climatic Factors Material Assets

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Local Plan Policy	Indicators from the Local Plan	Sustainability Objective(s)	SEA Topic
Policy TC1: Retail and Services Growth	<input type="checkbox"/> Net change in comparison and convenience retail floorspace	3 'Access to Facilities' 13 'Employment'	Population Material Assets
Policy TC2: Retail Hierarchy	<input type="checkbox"/> A use class development permitted by settlement hierarchy <input type="checkbox"/> Number of applications approved and refused for 500m2 or greater accompanied with a Retail Impact Assessment	3 'Access to Facilities' 13 'Employment'	Population Material Assets
Policy TC3: Comparison goods floorspace requirements	<input type="checkbox"/> Comparison retail floorspace permitted by settlement hierarchy	3 'Access to Facilities' 13 'Employment'	Population Material Assets
Policy TC4: Convenience floorspace provision in the Market Towns	<input type="checkbox"/> Provision of convenience floorspace (sqm retail floor space) at Henley, Thame and Wallingford	3 'Access to Facilities' 13 'Employment'	Population Material Assets
Policy TC5 – Primary Shopping Areas	<input type="checkbox"/> Number of planning permissions granted resulting in loss of retail floorspace in Primary Shopping Areas	3 'Access to Facilities' 13 'Employment'	Population Material Assets
Policy CF1: Safeguarding Community Facilities	<input type="checkbox"/> Number of community facilities ₁ lost	3 'Access to Facilities' 4 'Health'	Population Human Health

1 These include use facilities under A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, D1 and D2 use classes.

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Local Plan Policy	Indicators from the Local Plan	Sustainability Objective(s)	SEA Topic
Policy CF2: Provision of Community Facilities and Services	□ Status and type of permissions for community facilities	3 'Access to Facilities' 4 'Health' 7 'Biodiversity'	Biodiversity, fauna and flora Population Human Health
Policy CF3: New Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facilities	□ Provision of sporting facilities	3 'Access to Facilities' 4 'Health' 7 'Biodiversity'	Biodiversity, fauna and flora Population Human Health
Policy CF4: Existing Open Space, Sport and Recreation Facilities	□ Number of permissions leading to the loss of open space, sport and recreation facilities	3 'Access to Facilities' 4 'Health' 7 'Biodiversity'	Biodiversity, fauna and flora Population Human Health