Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) for the Adderbury Neighbourhood Plan Review

SEA Environmental Report

Adderbury Parish Council

July 2025

Delivering a better world

Quality information

Prepared by	Checked by	Verified by	Approved by
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Revision History

Revision	Revision date	Details	Authorized	Name	Position
V1.0	15.05.25	Initial draft of reasonable alternatives assessment for QB review	15.05.25	R.P.	Principal Planner
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4. Consideration of reasonable alternatives through the SEA

Introduction

4.1 In accordance with the SEA Regulations, an Environmental Report must include:

- An outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with; and
- The likely significant effects on the environment associated with alternatives / an outline of the reasons for selecting the preferred approach in light of the alternatives appraised.

4.2 The 'narrative' of plan-making / SEA up to this point is told within this part of the SEA Environmental Report. Specifically, how the SEA process to date has informed the consideration of different approaches for key elements of the ANPR.

4.3 The following sections therefore describe how the SEA process to date has informed the preferred strategy for the neighbourhood area and potential locations for development.

Strategic parameters

Adopted Local Plan

4.4 As noted in Chapter 2, the strategic policy context is set by the Adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (Part 1) (2015). This plan recognises Adderbury as a Category A 'Service Village', which is suitable for minor development, infilling and conversions.

4.5 CDC are in the process of developing a new Local Plan, the Cherwell Local Plan Review 2042 which, once adopted, will replace the current Adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (Part 1). The Cherwell Local Plan Review 2042 has recently completed Regulation 19 consultation, which was undertaken between 19th December 2024 and 25th February 2025[4].

4.6 The Regulation 19 version of the new Local Plan identifies new settlement hierarchy categories under Policy SP 1 (Settlement Hierarchy). Adderbury is identified as a 'Category A Village', which are larger villages outside the Green Belt that have essential local services and facilities and often serve nearby smaller villages; they have regular public transport to main towns or local services. In these villages, there is an expectation that most development will consist of infill development, minor development within the built-up limits of the settlement, and conversions.

4.7 Development beyond the built-up limits of settlements will only be permitted where it is in accordance with policies RUR 2 to RUR 5. These policies have a focus on providing specific criteria for development proposals that come forward outside of the built-up limits, including for rural exception sites (Policy

[4] Cherwell District Council (2025): Cherwell Local Plan Review 2042

RUR 2), new dwellings in the countryside (Policy RUR 3), conversion of rural buildings into dwellings (Policy RUR 4) and community-led housing development (Policy RUR 5).

4.8 In the Regulation 19 version of the Cherwell Local Plan Review 2042, Policy RUR 1 (Rural Areas Housing Strategy) established a housing requirement of 75 homes for the neighbourhood area during the plan period.

Site options

4.9 To support the identification of sites for an allocation within the ANPR, an independent and objective site options and assessment (SOA) process has been undertaken to inform plan making. A total of twelve site options were taken forward for assessment, comprising eleven sites put forward through Cherwell District Council's 2024 Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA)[5], and one site identified by Adderbury Parish Council.

4.10 The SOA conclusions were presented via a 'traffic light' rating, indicating whether a site option is suitable, available and achievable for development. A rating of 'red' indicates the site is not suitable for a neighbourhood plan allocation, while a rating of 'green' indicates the site is suitable for a neighbourhood plan allocation. A rating of 'amber' indicates the site is potentially suitable for development subject to the application of appropriate mitigation to address any constraints identified.

4.11 The SOA concluded that two sites are potentially suitable for a residential allocation within the neighbourhood plan (i.e., rated 'amber'). Specifically:

- Part of HELAA403 – Land East of Adderbury; and
- Part of HELAA468 – Land South West of Adderbury.

Additionally, Site ADD.01 has been found suitable for sports and community use through the SOA.

4.12 The two 'potentially suitable' site options identified through the SOA have formed the basis for establishing the reasonable alternatives considered through the SEA, discussed below.

[5] Cherwell District Council (2024): Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA)

Establishing alternatives

4.13 With respect to the two potentially suitable site options, development of the entire site areas would be a significant strategic expansion of Adderbury village which is not supported through the emerging Local Plan. In light of this, the ANPR Steering Group has identified smaller sections within the site boundaries which could deliver 75 homes, specifically: three areas within HELAA403, and one area within HELAA468.

4.14 It is also recognised that part of site HELAA007 has developer interest. Whilst it was given a 'red' rating through the SOA, taking forward part of this site could provide a natural in-filling of land between two existing areas of development in the village. However, it is noted that this site is not considered suitable by the ANPR Steering Group.

4.15 Discussion was also given to the 'Land off Horn Hill Road' site and whether this could also be considered as a reasonable alternative location for housing. The capacity of the site is calculated at 56 dwellings (maximum), after applying CDC's density requirements as stipulated in local policy. Therefore, the site could not meet housing needs on its own unless the site area was increased to incorporate part of the neighbouring site option (Site ADD.01) which has been given a 'green' rating in the SOA for community uses. This could then form a mixed-use scheme at this location. Given that discussions between the community and landowners have not taken place, the Steering Group recognise that this site represents a longer-term aspirational project for the neighbourhood area at this stage. On this basis, the ANPR will likely contain a list of community projects / aspirations which would be supported in principle (subject to wider plan policies) if they were to come forward during the plan period. This will be considered in further detail within the appraisal of ANPR policies in **Chapter 6** of this Environmental Report.

4.16 In light of the above, five spatial strategy options have been assessed as reasonable alternative approaches for meeting the housing requirement of 75 homes in the neighbourhood area. Specifically:

- Option A: Meet housing requirements on Site A.
- Option B: Meet housing requirements on Site B.
- Option C: Meet housing requirements on Site C.
- Option D: Meet housing requirements on Site D; and
- Option E: Meet housing requirements on Site E.

4.17 The spatial strategy options are shown in **Figure 4.1** overleaf.

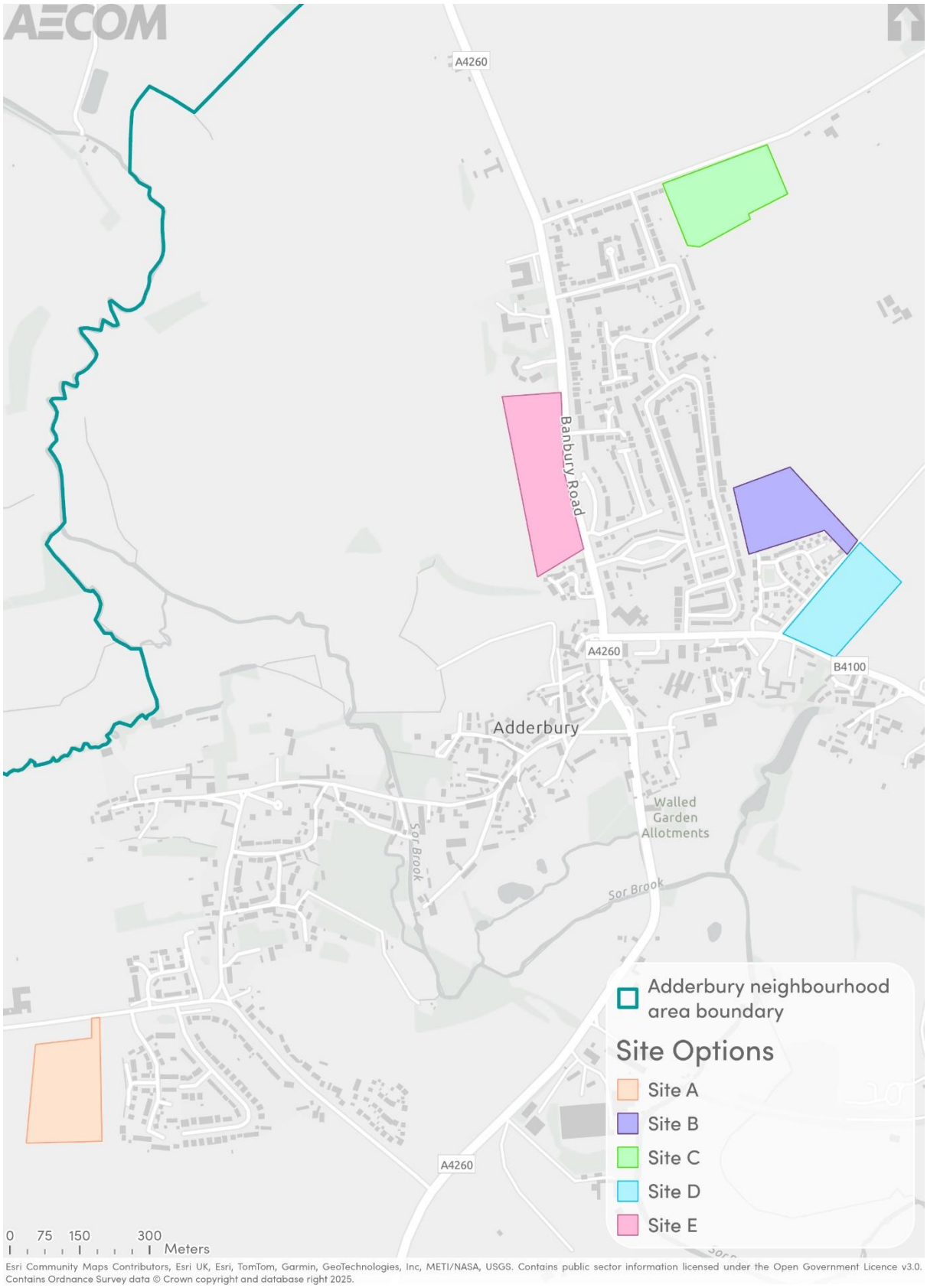

Figure 4.1: Spatial strategy options appraised through the SEA

5. Assessing reasonable alternatives

Methodology

5.1 The five spatial strategy options identified have been appraised through the SEA. For each of the options, the assessment examines likely significant effects on the baseline, drawing on the sustainability themes and objectives identified through SEA scoping as a methodological framework. Where appropriate neutral effects, or uncertainty, will also be noted.

5.2 Within each row of the summary table below (i.e., for each of the topics that comprise the SEA Framework) the columns to the right-hand side rank the alternatives in order of performance and conclude whether the options are likely to have likely significant effects on the baseline.

5.3 An initial discussion of the similarities across the five options has been established under each SEA theme. This is followed by a detailed summary of the key differences between the options, to enable the sustainability trade-offs to be identified.

5.4 Every effort is made to predict effects accurately, however, where there is a need to rely on assumptions to reach a conclusion on a 'significant effect' this is made explicit in the appraisal text. Where it is not possible to predict likely significant effects based on reasonable assumptions, efforts are made to comment on the relative merits of the alternatives in more general terms and to indicate a rank of preference. This is helpful, as it enables a distinction to be made between the alternatives even where it is not possible to distinguish between them in term of 'significant effects'. Numbers are used to highlight the option or options that perform most or least favourably against each SEA theme, with 1 performing the best. Also, '=' is used to denote instances where there are no significant differences in the relative sustainability performance of the options.

Assessment findings

Table 5.1: Summary of assessment findings

SEA theme		Option A	Option B	Option C	Option D	Option E
Air quality	Significant effect?	No	No	No	No	Yes - negative
	Rank	=2	=2	=2	**1**	3
Biodiversity	Significant effect?	No	Yes - negative	Yes - negative	No	Yes - negative
	Rank	**1**	=3	=3	2	4
Climate change mitigation	Significant effect?	No	No	No	No	No
	Rank	=4	3	=4	**1**	2
Climate change adaptation	Significant effect?	No	No	No	No	No
	Rank	3	**=1**	**=1**	2	4
Community wellbeing	Significant effect?	Yes - positive	Yes - positive	Yes - positive	Yes - positive	Uncertain
	Rank	=2	=2	=2	**1**	3
Historic environment	Significant effect?	No	No	No	Yes - negative	Yes - negative
	Rank	**=1**	**=1**	**=1**	2	2
Land, soil and water resources	Significant effect?	No	No	No	No	No
	Rank	2	**=1**	**=1**	3	**=1**
Landscape	Significant effect?	No	No	Yes - negative	No	Yes - negative
	Rank	=2	**=1**	=2	**=1**	3
Transportation	Significant effect?	No	No	No	No	No
	Rank	=2	=3	=2	**1**	**=3**

Similarities across all five spatial strategy options

Air quality

5.6 All five options would deliver growth within 7km of the Cherwell District Council Air Quality Management Area (no. 1), located in Banbury and covering Hennef Way between the junctions with Ermont Way and Concorde Avenue. Given that Banbury has a greater variety of services, facilities and amenities in comparison to Adderbury village, it is likely that growth through any option would result in an increase in journeys to this location – and by extension, the AQMA. This is due to the need for residents to travel outside of the neighbourhood area to access a wider range of goods, services and employment opportunities.

Biodiversity

5.7 There are no internationally or nationally designated sites for biodiversity within proximity to any of the five options. Additionally, growth through any of the five options will not overlap with Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) Impact Risk Zones (IRZs) for the types of development likely to come forward (including residential, rural residential, and rural non-residential development). As such, none of the options are anticipated to require consultation with Natural England.

5.8 All five options would bring forward growth in areas of arable and horticultural land, according to the Living England Habitat Map, with a level of acid, calcareous, neutral grassland associated with each option. Regarding locally important ecological assets, none of the five options would deliver growth in an area of Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) priority habitat.

5.9 It is noted that all five options have the potential to support populations of protected species, as Adderbury is identified as a priority area for countryside stewardship measures addressing Curlew habitat issues.

Climate change and flood risk

5.10 In terms of climate change mitigation, all five options seek to bring forward the same level of development, and as such are anticipated to lead to a similar increase in absolute carbon and greenhouse gas emissions - related to an increase in activity (for example, an increase in domestic activities).

5.11 Additionally, all five options are adjacent to the existing settlement boundary, and as such are likely to provide opportunities to engage with sustainable and active travel into the settlement centre and further afield. This will help to reduce emissions linked to transport.

5.12 In terms of climate change adaptation, none of the options would bring forward development in areas at risk of fluvial flooding.

Community wellbeing

5.13 All five options are considered likely to lead to positive effects with relation to community wellbeing by providing additional land for housing and meeting the identified local need of 75 dwellings across the plan period. All five options are also considered large enough to support a range of housing types and tenures, and all five options are located adjacent to the existing built-up area of Adderbury village.

Historic environment

5.14 Whilst the Oxford Canal Conservation Area intersects the Adderbury neighbourhood area, none of the five options would deliver growth within proximity to this conservation area. As such, growth through any option would not impact upon the integrity of special qualities of the conservation area.

5.15 None of the options are within proximity to a designated battlefield or registered park and garden. Additionally, none of the options would deliver growth in areas with local historic environment records within the site boundaries.

Land, soil and water resources

5.16 All five options would focus growth on sites that are anticipated to be underlain with Grade 2 'Very Good' agricultural land, according to the provisional agricultural land classification (ALC) provided by Natural England. In this respect, growth through any option is likely to result in the permanent loss of land which is some of the 'best and most versatile' land for agricultural purposes, which cannot be mitigated. However, it is recognised that there are few brownfield site opportunities in the neighbourhood area to deliver growth.

Landscape

5.17 None of the sites are within or in proximity to a National Park and National Landscape, and they do not overlap with any Green Belt land.

5.18 Whilst Option A and Option D would deliver growth within the Cotswolds National Character Area (NCA), Option C would deliver growth within the Northamptonshire Uplands NCA. Option B and Option E would deliver growth across both of the NCAs. Development through any of the options is anticipated as likely to impact the overall character of these NCAs, despite growth being focused adjacent to the existing settlement boundaries. As such, it will be important for new development to make a positive contribution to the local character of Adderbury, as outlined in the Statements of Environmental Opportunity (SEOs) for these two NCAs.

Key differences between the options

Air quality

5.19 In terms of proximity to the AQMA designated in Banbury to the north, Option C is located the closest, followed by Option E, then Option B, Option D, and finally Option A. Only growth through Option E would deliver growth adjacent to sustainable transport infrastructure, due to bus stops being located on Banbury Road adjacent to the site's eastern site boundary. However, it is also noted that growth through this option is also likely to increase experienced congestion along Banbury Road, which has the potential to increase local air pollutants – especially at peak times during the week. This is due to impacts on the local highway network linked to ingress and egress of the site, and a greater number of vehicles using Banbury Road.

5.20 All five options seek to provide growth adjacent to the settlement boundary. However, given that not all the options have active travel opportunities, this effect is anticipated to be limited. Growth through Option D and Option E would be best positioned to encourage active travel uptake, due to pavement provisions along adjacent roads. Whilst growth through Option A, Option B and Option C would be within proximity to pavement along adjacent roads, it is

recognised that this would not be consistent as there are gaps in the network. This could reduce the uptake in active travel and continue to support a reliance on private vehicles, thus contributing to air pollutant levels. However, it is noted that development of Option A, Option B or Option C may lend itself to establishing improved pedestrian and cycle connectivity, depending on development design.

5.21 Overall, Option D E is the most favourable with regards to air quality. This reflects its potential to support active travel into the settlement centre of Adderbury, which could reduce air pollutants associated with vehicles. Option A, Option B and Option C are found to be the joint second most favourable options – reflecting their potential to support active travel opportunities subject to development design. Option E is found to be the least favourable; whilst it is located adjacent to existing sustainable transport infrastructure, development is likely to contribute to increased congestion and associated vehicular pollutants. Whilst significant effects are not anticipated under Option A to Option D, significant negative effects could come forward under Option E.

Biodiversity

5.22 Whilst three of the options would deliver growth away from local designations, it is noted that growth through Option B and Option D would deliver development within proximity to the Adderbury Lakes Local Nature Reserve (LNR). LNRs are designated for both people and for wildlife, and offer opportunities to study or learn about nature, or simply enjoy it. As such, development through Option B and Option D have the potential to deliver benefits in relation to biodiversity, as they could provide increased opportunities for residents to engage with nature and promote education and enjoyment. Though it is possible that growth through Option D could impact upon this designated area, given the site is approximately 100m from the designated area, it is screened from the site by existing residential development.

5.23 It is noted that growth through Option E would deliver development approximately 45m south of an area of deciduous woodland BAP priority habitat. Whilst it is possible development through Option E could lead to habitat disturbances in this area (for example, through increased noise and light pollution), it is considered that this will not lead to significant adverse impacts. This is due to existing residential development adjacent to the habitat to the west, and extensive residential development in proximity to the habitat to the east.

5.24 Residential growth will need to deliver a minimum 10% biodiversity net gain in line with national policy requirements. Only Option A would deliver growth in an area that overlaps with the National Habitat Network. The entire site is within an area of Network Enhancement Zone 1, and as such is defined as land connecting existing patches of primary and associated habitats which is likely to be suitable for creation of the primary habitat. Additionally, the site under Option A is adjacent to an area of green infrastructure to the east, identified through the made Adderbury Neighbourhood Plan. This connects to the wider green infrastructure network across Adderbury. As such, it is considered possible that growth through Option A could deliver biodiversity enhancements to area identified as being able to benefit from improvements.

5.25 It is further noted that Option E has an area of existing green infrastructure network within its boundaries, cutting through the site in a south-east to north-

west direction, as well as having an identified opportunity area on its eastern site boundary. Additionally, Option B and Option C have areas of green infrastructure opportunity within their site boundaries – along the western site boundary for Option B, and along the western and northern boundaries for Option C. These areas have been identified by the made Adderbury Neighbourhood Plan. As such, development through any of these options is anticipated to result in the loss of habitats which support protected species, lead to habitat disturbance and reduced biodiversity connectivity. As such, significant mitigation measures would be required if development were to come forward through these options, which may not be delivered through biodiversity net gain enhancements.

5.26 It is noted that alongside supporting the protected Curlew bird species, Option B, Option C and Option E have the potential to support Corn Bunting bird populations.

5.27 Considering the above, Option A is ranked the most favourably. This reflects the enhanced potential of the site to benefit from biodiversity net gain in line with national policy. Following this is Option D, due to growth coming forward within proximity to the Adderbury Lakes LNR – which could benefit biodiversity through increased levels of resident engagement and education. Option B and Option C are also less favourable options; this is due to the overlap of the sites with the green infrastructure network identified through the made Adderbury Neighbourhood Plan. Development through either of these two options could result in significant impacts to biodiversity quality and connectivity. Finally, Option E is ranked the least favourably – this reflects the proximity of the site to an area of important habitat, and an overlap with the identified green infrastructure network.

5.28 Overall, neutral effects are considered likely for Option A and Option D; significant negative effects are considered likely for Option B, Option C and Option E.

Climate change

5.29 All five options seek to provide growth in sustainable locations in relation to carbon emissions (i.e., adjacent to the settlement boundary, and therefore in proximity to accessing key services and facilities). Growth through Option D would be the closest to existing infrastructure and would likely allow for a good level of active travel into the settlement centre through pavement on Aynho Road. It is also possible that active travel into the centre from Option B could be supported by Fleet Farm Way, and active travel access from Option E would likely be supported by Banbury Road. It is also noted that Banbury Road has bus stop provisions to allow for sustainable transport to wider locations and could help to reduce emissions linked to private vehicles for longer journeys. Growth through Option A and Option C are unlikely to support active or sustainable travel, reflecting their distance from the settlement core and the reduced pavement provision along New Milton Road (Option A) and Twyford Road (Option C).

5.30 Whilst all five options seek to bring forward development away from areas at risk of fluvial flooding, Option E would bring forward growth in an area with overlapping surface water flood risk. This medium and high risk is located within the south-eastern corner of the site and is potentially linked to the topography of the site, which slopes down in a southwards direction. As such,

it is considered likely that development through this option could result in an exacerbation of flood risk – impacting upon development across the wider site (not just the area at elevated risk) and potentially existing development to the south.

5.31 It is noted that whilst surface water flood risk does not impact the sites under Option A and Option D, there is low risk of surface water flooding on the adjacent roads – Milton Road to the north of Option A, and Aynho Road to the south of Option D. Given that the site under Option A slopes downwards in a south to north direction, it is possible that development through this option could result in impacts to surface water flooding on the adjacent road, though given the risk is currently low it is not anticipated that this would be significant. As the site under Option D is level, the risk of exacerbating surface water flood risk on Aynho Road through development is lower.

5.32 Growth through Option B and Option C is not considered likely to impact upon surface water flood risk in Adderbury. The site under Option B does have an area of slightly higher elevation in its north-eastern extent, but the remaining site is level with the surrounding residential development and is removed from areas at risk of surface water flooding. Furthermore, the site under Option C is located at a higher elevation than Adderbury village to the south but is at the same elevation as adjacent development and is removed from surface water flood risk.

5.33 Reflecting on the above, in relation to climate change mitigation Option D is ranked the most favourably. This is due to growth being located closest to the village centre with a good active travel provision. This is followed by Option E, due to the sustainable and travel provision adjacent to the site that could encourage a reduction in transport related emissions. Option E is ranked third most favourably, reflecting the proximity of the site to the settlement centre. Growth through Option A and Option C are ranked least favourably in relation to climate change mitigation, due to their distance from the settlement centre and their reduced access to active and sustainable transportation opportunities. No significant effects are considered likely through any of the five options.

5.34 In relation to climate change adaptation, Option B and Option C are ranked most favourably, given growth through either of these options would not exacerbate flood risk within the neighbourhood area. This is followed by Option D; reflecting the likely proximity of new growth to areas at risk of surface water flooding on Aynho Road to the south. Option A is ranked the second least favourably – whilst there is no risk of flooding within the site boundaries, there is risk of surface water flooding on New Milton Road to the north. As the site under Option A slopes downwards in a norther direction, it is possible development could exacerbate flooding experienced on this road. Option E is ranked the least favourably, given it overlaps with an area at risk of surface water flooding. As such, development at this location could be at risk of flooding or could lead to flooding of existing properties to the south. Neutral effects are considered likely for Option B, Option C and Option D, uncertain effects are considered likely for Option A and Option E.

Community wellbeing

5.35 The options are positioned well to encourage an uptake in healthy lifestyles through engagement with active travel, such as walking and cycling. This is especially true for Option A to Option C, which offer potential for engagement

with walking given their connectivity to public rights of way and national footpath routes.

5.36 Additionally, a number of the options will deliver growth within proximity to local open spaces, as defined by the made ANP. Option A is adjacent to a local open space to the east (Adderbury Fields Estate Open Space, south of Milton Road), Option B is within approximately 30m of John Harper Road Estate Open Space to the south, and Option D is within 15m of the Henry Jepp / Long Wall Close Open Space (to the south across Aynho Road). Option E is adjacent to several open spaces - The Crescent Open Space, the Griffin Close Open Space, and the small copse of trees to the south of Greenhill and Summers Close off Banbury Road, to the east and north of the site.

5.37 The proximity of local open spaces is considered likely to bring forward positive effects for development under Option A, Option B, Option D or Option E. This is due to these options being likely to have greater access to spaces that allow for safe engagement with physical activity, whilst also providing space for the community to come together. However, development through these options could also impact upon the wellbeing of the existing community, for example through changes to current access patterns. This is likely to be most prevalent for Option E, given it is within proximity to a greater number of spaces.

5.38 It is also noted that growth through Option A would come forward within proximity to Site ADD.01 – which was assessed under the SOA for sports and community use. The SOA awarded this site a 'green' rating, reflecting its suitability to accommodate new community infrastructure. As such, growth through Option A would likely be within close proximity to additional community infrastructure, which would support the physical and mental health and wellbeing of new and existing residents in Adderbury.

5.39 It is further recognised that growth through Option D would deliver housing within proximity to the Adderbury Lakes LNR. Local nature reserves are designated for both people and for wildlife and offer people opportunities to study or learn about nature, or simply enjoy it. As such, development through Option D has the potential to deliver enhanced benefits in relation to community wellbeing, as it will provide good access to additional space for engagement with the outdoors. This is anticipated to benefit both the physical and mental health of residents.

5.40 Overall, Option A to Option D are considered to lead to significant positive effects. This is due to the likelihood of meeting the identified housing need in the neighbourhood area, which could support a range of housing types and tenures. Option D is found to be the most favourable in relation to community wellbeing, reflecting its proximity to local open spaces and the Adderbury Lakes LNR – which is anticipated to work well towards enhancing physical and mental health. Option A, Option B, and Option C are ranked equally as the second most favourable options, based on the likelihood of bringing forward growth within proximity to community infrastructure, local open spaces, and their connectivity to support active lifestyles. Whilst Option E is located within proximity to a number of local open spaces, there is uncertainty over how development at this location could impact upon the existing community and access patterns. As such, uncertain effects are concluded most likely for this option under the community wellbeing SEA theme.

Historic environment

5.41 Option A, Option B, and Option C would Option D would deliver growth away from designated heritage features (scheduled monuments and / or listed buildings). Comparatively, Option D is located approximately 20m north of the Grade II listed The Plough; a public house with 17th, 18th and 20th century features. Given this designated feature is within proximity to the site under Option D, it is development could impact upon its significance through changes to the structure's setting and views.

5.42 Additionally, all but Option D would deliver growth away from the Adderbury Conservation Area. Development through Option D would bring forward growth approximately 20m north of the designated area – on the opposite side of Aynho Road. It is likely that development through this option will result in adverse impacts to the historic environment in this respect, given its potential to change the setting and significance of the conservation area. This is significant in the local context, given that the community has observed that recent development has not necessarily reflected the special architectural and historic character and appearance of the designated area.

5.43 It is noted that growth through Option E is also likely to have an effect on the historic environment, through impacting upon important views across the open countryside to the historic core of the village, which includes the Grade I listed St Mary the Virgin church and the Adderbury Conservation Area. As such, development through this option is anticipated to cause considerable, unnecessary and unjustified harm to the setting and significance of designated heritage assets.

5.44 It is further noted that growth through Option D and Option E would be located within proximity to buildings and structures of local importance, as identified through the made Adderbury Neighbourhood Plan. Option D would be within proximity to the walled lambing paddock on Aynho Road, and Option E would be within proximity to The Crescent, Twyford, and Twyford Tea Gardens on Banbury Road. It is possible that development through either of these options could impact upon the significance of these important local assets through changes to their built setting or how they are perceived in the wider landscape.

5.45 Taking the above into consideration, Option A, Option B and Option C are ranked equally, and are the most favourable. This reflects their relative distance from designated historic environment features, areas and assets. Option D and Option E are ranked joint least favourably, reflecting their likelihood to impact upon designated historic environment assets and areas, as well as locally important features. Significant negative effects are considered likely for both of these options.

Land, soil, and water resources

5.46 The post-1988 ALC data indicates that Option B is underlain by a mix of Grade 2 and Grade 3a agricultural quality land; the western half of Option C is underlain by a mix of Grade 2 and Grade 3a agricultural quality land; the southern half of Option D is underlain by Grade 2 agricultural quality land; and Option E is underlain by a mix of Grade 2 and Grade 3a agricultural quality land. Given the provisional dataset identifies that there is Grade 2 agricultural quality land under Option A, it is possible that this site is underlain by best and most versatile land.

5.47 Option A, Option B, Option D and Option E would deliver growth within the Sor Brook (Broughton to Cherwell) water body catchment; comparatively, Option C would deliver growth within the Cherwell (Cropredy to Nell Bridge) water body catchment. Both of these water bodies and their associated catchments were awarded a moderate ecological status in 2019 and 2022. Whilst Option B, Option C, Option D and Option E are removed from watercourses and drains in the neighbourhood area, Option A would deliver growth approximately 46m west of a drain that is adjacent to the existing settlement boundary. It is possible development at this location could impact upon the capacity of this drain, due to it needing to store a greater level of surface water runoff.

5.48 It is also noted that growth through Option D would bring forward growth within proximity to the Adderbury Lakes – approximately 115m to the south. Whilst it is acknowledged that growth would have a limited impact upon the lakes due to the distance and the level of existing development between them and the site, it is possible development could increase surface water runoff entering the water system. This could impact upon water quality through potential increases or changes to pollutants entering the water system.

5.49 Overall, Option B, Option C and Option E are found to be the most favourable of the options. Whilst they are within an area of Grade 2 ALC land, the proportion is lower due to the overlap with Grade 3a ALC (though it is noted that this is also considered to be productive agricultural quality land alongside Grade 2). These options are also a distance from water bodies and important water structures. Comparatively, Option D is within an area of Grade 2 ALC land – as such, development of this site could result in a greater likelihood of loss of productive agricultural land. Furthermore, this option would bring development forward within proximity to Adderbury Lakes – and could increase pollutant runoff into it. Whilst Option A was not examined under the post-1988 assessment, it has a provisional Grade 2 ALC status. Additionally, growth through this option would bring forward residential growth within proximity to a drain – which could also impact upon water quality in the wider environment.

5.50 Overall, Option A is found to be a less favourable option, given the uncertainty around its potential to support agricultural activities. Option D is found to be the least favourable. No significant effects are anticipated through any of the 5 options; however, all are considered likely to lead to negative impacts reflecting their removal of productive agricultural land. However, it is recognised that brownfield site opportunities within the neighbourhood area are limited.

Landscape

5.51 Option A, Option B and Option D are at a similar elevation to existing development in Adderbury, and as such are unlikely to have a significant visual impact upon the wider landscape (it is acknowledged that local views from adjacent residential development are likely to be impacted). In contrast, Option C and Option E are at a higher elevation. Option E inclines in a northward direction between Adderbury and Twyford, and Option C is entirely within an area of higher elevation adjacent to Twyford. These two options have the potential to impact upon longer distance views due to this elevation, including views over the existing Adderbury settlement and across the Sor Valley. For Option E, this is anticipated to cause significant and unacceptable harm to the rural landscape character and quality of the area, and the setting of the village

as experienced by local residents, visitors and users of the local transport and travel network.

5.52 It is recognised that the site under Option E was awarded a 'red' rating in relation to landscape sensitivity and visual amenity through the SOA (assessed under HELAA007), reflecting the impact development would have on the open countryside. However, the size of the site under Option E is a smaller parcel of land – and it is acknowledged that development through Option E could be viewed as providing a natural in-filling of land in between two existing areas of development, and as such could have a slightly reduced landscape impact.

5.53 It is recognised that Option A would deliver growth within an important, locally identified landscape gap between Adderbury and Milton (designated under the made Adderbury Neighbourhood Plan). Whilst it is acknowledged that development at this location could contribute to coalescence between the settlements, it is noted that there is existing development to the north-west of the site (Colegrave Deliveries). As such, this effect is limited – though it is possible that development through Option A could encourage further growth westward further into this landscape gap.

5.54 Considering the above, Option B and Option D are found to be the most favourable. This reflects their limited landscape impact; both sites under these options are located adjacent to the existing settlement boundary, and at a similar elevation to existing residential development. As such, their landscape and wider visual impact is reduced. This is then followed by Option A and Option C, following their potential to lead to landscape impacts through the partial loss of an important landscape gap, and changes to visual amenity. Option E is ranked the least favourably, due to its potential to significantly impact upon landscape character and quality. Option C and Option E are anticipated to have significant negative effects.

Transportation

5.55 Growth through all options but Option B would have direct access onto the local road network; Option A onto New Milton Road to the north, Option C to Twyford Road to the north; Option D to Aynho Road to the south, and Option E to Banbury Road to the east. However, it is noted that access to Option B could be established from Fleet Farm Way and John Harper Road to the south / south-east of the site. Access could also be delivered through the single lane track to the south-east of the site – though it is noted that there is uncertainty over how suitable this would be. This is due to the narrow nature of the track, potential issues with its capacity to accommodate additional vehicles linked to new development, and uncertainty over whether it is private or not.

5.56 It is noted that growth through Option E is likely to impact upon wider transport connectivity. This is due to increasing traffic on Banbury Road through ingress and egress into the new development area, which is likely to contribute additional congestion to a busy A road that already experiences traffic issues at peak times.

5.57 When considering pedestrian connectivity, only Option D and Option E currently offer a good level of active travel opportunity. This is due to their adjacent roads (Aynho Road for Option D, and Banbury Road for Option E) having pavement provision to allow for safe walking and cycling into the settlement centre of Adderbury. However, it is noted that if access to Option B was

established via Fleet Farm Way and John Harper Road, then this option would also allow for safe pedestrian and cycle connectivity. Option A and Option C do not have safe pedestrian and cycle access, due to not being well connected to pavement. However, it is noted that pavement provision on New Milton Road (Option A) and Twyford Road (Option C) could be extended to the sites and allow for safe pedestrian and cycle connectivity.

5.58 In terms of supporting sustainable transport access, all options but Option E are located a distance from bus stops – Option E would focus growth adjacent to Banbury Road, which would provide safe pedestrian access to 4 bus stops. Additionally, growth through Option D would be approximately 500m from the nearest bus stop on Banbury Road but would allow for safe pedestrian access along Aynho Road. In comparison, whilst Option A is approximately 300m west of the nearest bus stop on Horn Hill Road, and Option C is approximately 370m north-east of the nearest bus stop on Banbury Road, neither option has connections to continuous pavement to allow for safe pedestrian access. Option B could provide pedestrian access to the nearest bus stop via Fleet Farm Way and John Harper Road, which connects to Aynho Road, but this is dependent on how access to the site is achieved.

5.59 Considering the above, Option D is ranked the most favourably – due to its active transport and sustainable transport connectivity. Following this is Option A and Option C, reflecting their distance from sustainable transportation opportunities and their potential to support active travel uptake. Option E is ranked second least favourably; whilst it has good access to sustainable and active travel opportunities, it is likely to contribute additional traffic on Banbury Road, which could exacerbate experienced transport-related issues, such as congestion. Option B is ranked least favourably in relation to transportation due to uncertainty around access to the site, and its lack of active and sustainable transportation connectivity. Significant effects are not considered likely for any of the options, though it is likely development through any of the five options will result in a negative impact due to increased vehicles on the road network linked to new development.

Developing the preferred approach

5.60 The SEA has identified the relative sustainability merits of the options against the SEA themes. No one option performs the best overall, reflecting the different opportunities and constraints each option presents with respect to each theme. In this respect, it is anticipated that any identified significant effects associated with the ANPR's preferred approach will be addressed through the policy framework within the plan (including via site-specific mitigation and via more broad development management measures) and at the planning application stage.

5.61 In anticipation of any changes to the local housing requirement during the plan period, it is likely the ANPR will identify a site to meet the 75 home requirement, and could identify an additional 'reserve site'. Development at this site would be supported in principle, subject to the policy framework within the ANPR and Local Plan.