

Non-Technical Summary

Introduction and Background

- I. Spelthorne began the production of a new National Planning Policy Framework compliant Local Plan in 2014 to replace the existing 2009 Plan. The new Local Plan will look ahead to 2037 and will set out policies and allocations to guide development in the Borough.
- II. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the 2004 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Regulations require that a Sustainability Appraisal must be undertaken as part of the preparation of a Local Plan. In addition, the SEA Regulations 2004 requires Strategic Environmental Assessment or 'SEA' to be undertaken on all plans and programmes which are likely to have 'significant environmental impacts'.
- III. The purpose of a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is to assess development policies and proposals against the sustainability objectives which relate to the NPPF definition of sustainability; the balancing of environmental, economic and social objectives.
- IV. This appraisal is part of an iterative process, which has helped to inform the selection of strategic options, the development of policies and the selection of sites, all of which aim to identify sustainable development outcomes for Spelthorne. The Sustainability Appraisal timetable has been as follows:
 - A consultation on the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report (October – November 2016)
 - A consultation on the Issues and Options Regulation 18 Local Plan Sustainability Appraisal Report (May – June 2018)
 - A consultation on the Preferred Options Regulation 19 Local Plan Sustainability Appraisal (November 2019 – January 2020)
 - This report on the Regulation 19 Local Plan Sustainability Appraisal (June – September 2022)

Scope of the SA

- V. The SA process began with the preparation of the SA Scoping Report. The Scoping Report has been updated for the Regulation 19 Local Plan stage. The Scoping Report:
 - Reviews other relevant programmes, plans and strategies that have an influence on sustainability to establish the policy context of the Plan and the SA;
 - Details the characteristics of the current environmental baseline in Spelthorne;
 - Identifies key sustainability issues in the Borough; and
 - Sets out a Sustainability Appraisal Framework for assessing policies and policy options and the overall predicted effects of the plan.

Policy Context

- VI. A comprehensive review of the plans and programmes at a national, regional, county and local level was undertaken. The contents, objectives and relationships of these plans and programmes to the Local Plan was also reviewed to ensure these were

considered during the SA Process. An example of a relevant plan/programme includes the National Planning Policy Framework. The full list of the identified plans and programmes, and their relevance to SA, is provided in Appendix A of the Scoping Report.

Environmental Baseline

- VII. Among the important decisions considered during the Scoping Stage was the baseline data, quantity of data and how should it be used in order to carry out the SA. Data related to the existing economic, social and environmental characteristics of Spelthorne was compiled within the Scoping Report, in order to provide the evidence base from which sustainability issues and opportunities could be identified.

Key sustainability issues and opportunities

- VIII. The key sustainability issues and opportunities that were subsequently identified related to the themes of: Population and Community, Health and Wellbeing, Economy & Employment, Transport, Material Assets, Cultural Heritage & Historic Environment, Landscape/Townscape, Climate, Biodiversity, Soil & Land, Water, Air and Waste. The baseline data and key sustainability issues are presented in the SA Scoping Report.

The Sustainability Appraisal Framework

- IX. The SA Framework comprises 12 SA Objectives that have been derived from the policy context, baseline data and key sustainability issues and opportunities. Each proposal in the Plan is assessed for its likely effects on each SA Objective, which is largely achieved by using the Decision Aiding Questions listed in the SA Framework for each SA Objective. The SA Framework, which is presented in its entirety in the main body of this report, includes the following SA Objectives:

Objective
1. To provide sufficient high-quality housing to enable people to live in a home suitable to their needs and which they can afford.
2. To facilitate the improved health and well-being of the whole population and reduce inequalities.
3. To increase resilience to, reduce the risk of, and minimising the harm from flooding
4. To reduce land contamination and protect soil quality and quantity
5. To reduce air and noise pollution
6. To conserve and enhance biodiversity, habitats and species
7. To conserve and enhance the historic environment, heritage assets and their settings.
8. To protect, enhance and manage Borough's open space and landscape character.
9. To promote sustainable modes of travel, improve accessibility to public transport and reduce road congestion
10. Maintain high levels of employment and economic growth which is inclusive and sustainable across the Borough.
11. To limit the impact of Climate Change and promote the efficient use of resources, to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and move to a low carbon economy.
12. To maintain and improve water quality and promote the efficient use of water.

What has been assessed in the SA?

- X. An Interim SA Report was prepared in May 2018 to accompany the Regulation 18 consultation on the Issues and Options Plan. This Interim SA Report provided assessments that predicted and evaluated the likely sustainability effects of the Council's spatial strategy options for the Local Plan. These assessment results, which assessed each of the four spatial strategy options considered the sustainability performance of each against the SA framework and helped to inform the Council's decision-making process with regards to which options to pursue in the Plan.
- XI. A follow up Interim SA Report was then prepared in November 2019 to assess the likely significant effects of the Council's Preferred Options Plan. The preferred policies and site allocations were accompanied by a range of alternative options. These assessment results, which essentially indicate the sustainability costs and benefits of each policy and site option, helped to determine which options to take forward through the Plan, weighing up the impacts against the SA Framework.
- XII. Following on from the Interim SA stage, this SA Report to accompany the Draft Local Plan has been prepared. This Report updates the assessments made in the previous iteration of the Preferred Options Spelthorne Local Plan (Regulation 18). The assessments in this report, and the recommendations alongside them, have assisted with the Council's decision-making process when refining the allocation sites and policies proposed in the Draft Spelthorne Local Plan.
- XIII. The Draft Spelthorne Local Plan has been assessed for its compatibility with, or likely effects on, each SA Objective. The following elements have been assessed in order to predict and evaluate their likely impacts on the SA Framework:
 - The Growth and Spatial Strategy for the Spelthorne Local Plan
 - The Destination and Strategic Objectives of the Plan
 - Development policies
 - Site Allocation policies
- XIV. To satisfy the requirements of the SEA Directive and the SEA Regulations, and in order to ensure legal compliance in light of relevant case law, the Council has considered reasonable alternatives to each of the proposals in the Plan. Each of the reasonable alternatives considered by the Council has also been considered for its likely sustainability effects using the SA Framework. Preferred options and reasonable alternatives have been assessed using the same methodology and to the same level of detail. The common approach to assessments for all options and alternatives has allowed the Council to compare the sustainability performance of different options and make evidence-led decisions. The Council's approach to the consideration of reasonable alternatives has been in accordance with all relevant requirements of the Directive, Regulations and case law.
- XV. When identifying and describing effects in SEA, the following effect characteristics are accounted for:
 - Whether the effects are positive or negative;
 - The magnitude and spatial extent of effects;
 - The probability, duration, frequency and duration of effects;

- The cumulative nature of effects;
 - The transboundary nature of effects; and
 - The value and vulnerability of that which is being affected.
- XVI. Based on the assessment results, this SA Report also provides recommendations for either enhancing a proposal's positive effects, or measures for avoiding or reducing likely adverse effects.

The difference the SA process has made

- XVII. The development and appraisal of policies and site allocations is an iterative process, with policies and allocations being refined to take account of the appraisal and consultation responses from consultation bodies, stakeholders and the public. All responses received on the previous iterations of the Local Plan have been analysed and published. As a result of consultation responses identifying likely impacts changes have been made to address potential issues.
- XVIII. As the policy approaches were developing, each was appraised to evaluate any specific impacts; the identification of these impacts and proposals for mitigation and improvement helped fine-tune the plan in order to enhance its sustainability. At the Issues and Options stage and Preferred Options stage, recommendations were made in order to improve the sustainability credentials of the Plan. These are recorded in the SA Report as well as how these have been taken into account. This has entailed rewording and strengthening development policies and also enhancing allocation policies to offset potential negative impacts.
- XIX. The SA Scoping Report has been updated for the Regulation 19 stage of the Plan. Baseline information and relevant plans, policies and programmes have been kept under review in order to inform the key issues facing the borough. This and other evidence has fed into the development of the spatial strategy, plan policies, allocation sites and possible mitigation measures to address adverse effects.
- XX. Overall, the SA process has influenced the Local Plan resulting in a more sustainable plan, ensuring environmental, as well as social and economic factors have been integral to decision making throughout its preparation.

Sustainability Appraisal Assessment Results

Destination and Objectives

- XXI. The Destination and Objectives are set out within the Local Plan, showing what it is hoped the Local Plan will help to achieve, with nine strategic objectives that will help to realise and arrive at the destination. The Destination and Objectives were assessed for their compatibility with the SA Framework. On the whole, the Council's Destination and Objectives proposed for the Draft Spelthorne Local Plan were found to be highly compatible with the SA Framework and would be expected to help ensure the plan delivers socially, economically and environmentally sustainable land uses and development over the plan period.

Growth and Spatial Strategy

- XXII. Fundamental to the plan is the total quantity and location of development the Spelthorne Local Plan will seek to secure in the Borough over the plan period (i.e. the number of homes to meet objectively assessed needs for the Borough and the number of jobs created over the plan period).
- XXIII. The growth proposed in the Spelthorne Local Plan is the result of a detailed, evidence-led and objective approach taken by the Council to calculate the Borough's development needs and to view this in terms of what Spelthorne can accommodate and what would deliver the most sustainability benefits.
- XXIV. Using the Government's standard method for calculating housing need, Spelthorne has a requirement for 618 dwellings per annum (9,270 over the plan period of 2022 – 2037).
- XXV. Since the Preferred Options consultation, the COVID-19 pandemic has created uncertainty regarding employment land needs, with trends towards greater remote-working and the desire for more goods and services to be provided directly to homes. As such, the ELNA has been updated to take account of the changes in employment floorspace and associated job impacts. Overall, this has resulted in a need for 19,109sqm of employment floorspace, an overall increase of 10,495sqm since the 2018 ELNA. However due to the instability in the market associated with the pandemic, there is uncertainty regarding the amount of employment floorspace required over the plan period. It is therefore considered appropriate to assess the position at the five year review stage when it is hoped there will be more certainty.
- XXVI. Following the identification of development needs for the Borough, the Council explored a range of options of various levels of growth and spatial distribution for the Plan to deliver. The proposed growth and spatial strategy options identify high-level distribution patterns and the associated level of development these could potentially accommodate. Four different options were initially considered at the Issues and Options stage, with a fifth option also assessed at the Preferred Options stage. These are as follows:
- Option 1: Aim to meet all need for housing, including affordable and G&T pitches, employment, and other development in the urban area without amending Green Belt boundaries. Increase densities, prioritise housing need and build on open space and re-provide sports and recreation facilities in the Green Belt.
 - Option 2: Amend the Green Belt boundary significantly to meet housing and employment need. This option would include safeguarding land in the Green Belt for future need beyond the plan period. The Green Belt designation would only be retained for sites that are strongly performing and/or perform a strategic Green Belt function.
 - Option 3: Focus new development in Staines-upon-Thames by making use of a Master Plan approach for development that increases opportunities for new high rise residential buildings. Significantly increase densities in the Staines area; prioritise housing need by allowing employment sites to be redeveloped; allocate sites for housing elsewhere in the Borough but only at an appropriate density.

- Option 4: Increase densities in town centres and near transport facilities where the character can accommodate it, allowing high rise development where appropriate and where they are of high-quality design. Release some weakly performing Green Belt that would not adversely affect the integrity of the strategic Green Belt. Make use of a masterplan approach for Staines.
 - Option 5: Consider Kempton Park Garden Village as an alternative option. Allow as much need as possible in the urban area and release the site to provide 3,000 new homes. Develop sites identified in the Strategic Land Availability Assessment as suitable in the urban area in addition.
- XXVII. Each of these spatial options were assessed in detail in the SA to identify their likely sustainability impacts, in order to inform the Council's decision-making process. The results of these assessments are presented in their entirety in the Preferred Options SA with a summary in Chapter 3 of this report.
- XXVIII. Option 1 would meet all housing needs in the urban area but this would not provide for a suitable mix of dwellings to meet specific needs and would come at a cost of other land uses, resulting in a loss of employment floorspace and potentially open space. This option is likely to result in a high proportion of high-density housing and an efficient use of previously development land with the opportunity for sustainable transport hubs but would mean concentrating development in flood risk areas and possible negative impacts on open space and townscape. Overall, this option is not considered to have balanced effects in terms of the SA objectives with too many compromises economically and environmentally against housing provision.
- XXIX. Option 2 would entail amending the Green Belt boundary significantly to meet development needs. This option would allow for all needs to be met and for a wide mix of units to be provided however there would be a notable loss of permeable land which could increase flood risk. Additionally, this option would significantly alter the Borough's landscape with knock on negative impacts expected for biodiversity, pollution and land take. Overall the benefits of meeting housing needs are not considered to outweigh the likely significant impacts on the environment.
- XXX. Option 3 would focus growth in Staines town centre as the Borough's main town. It is unlikely that this option would meet all development needs without significant changes to the character and operation of the town. This option is expected to have significant negative impacts on health and wellbeing with high rise development likely to be the main form of development which could lead to exclusion. Open space provision is also not likely to meet needs. As a notable proportion of Staines is at risk of flooding, this option would also put a significant number of people at risk. This option would however make an efficient use of land by focusing on previously developed land, however the concentration of development in this area is expected to negatively impact heritage, pollution and the town's economic growth. Overall, this option was rejected as it does not meet development needs and is expected to have negative impacts across many of the SA objectives.
- XXXI. Option 4 would seek to disperse development across the borough, incorporating elements of Options 1- 3. This option would meet development needs and allows for a more balanced approach. A mix of housing could be provided with the protection of the Borough's open spaces and employment uses. This option would result in a small amount of greenfield land take however prioritises previously developed land and

that which holds a more limited environmental value. Whilst this option would introduce development into flood risk areas and may impact the environment where greenfield land is allocated, the majority of development would be focused in the urban area and would seek to improve sustainability and connections between settlements through a dispersed approach to growth. This option was identified as the preferred approach given its more balanced performance against the SA Objectives.

- XXXII. Option 5 would entail the creation of a new settlement area at Kempton Park racecourse of 3,000 new homes. This option is likely to meet development needs in full and would provide a mix of units with the provision of new public open space and new community facilities, however would have largely negative impacts on the environment, particularly pollution, resource use and landscape. This option would also result in the loss of the racecourse which could have negative economic implications, whilst the location adjacent to Sunbury Cross and the M3 is likely to have knock on effects on the strategic and local road networks. Overall, the negative impacts against the SA Framework are considered to outweigh the positive therefore this option was rejected.
- XXXIII. The spatial strategy proposed in the Spelthorne Local Plan mostly aligns with Option 4 but has been enhanced to maximise positive sustainability effects and reduce negative impacts on the Green Belt.

Development Policies

- XXXIV. The Draft Spelthorne Local Plan presents a range of policies to guide development in the borough over the plan period. These are related to the following themes:
- Strategic Policies
 - Spatial Policies
 - Housing
 - Environment
 - Economy
 - Design
 - Infrastructure and Delivery
- XXXV. The results of the assessments of policies identified largely positive effects against the SA Framework. It is likely that these policies will ensure that the development needs of Spelthorne are satisfied, whilst also addressing deprivation and inequalities. The policies seek to enhance community health and wellbeing and protect residents against environmental impacts such as pollution. Policies seek to ensure that infrastructure provision is in place and can support new development to help reduce pressure on existing facilities. The policies also seek to protect employment floorspace and businesses in Spelthorne and protect and enhance the Borough's array of built assets and historic areas.
- XXXVI. The scale of growth proposed through the Local Plan poses a risk to the natural environment in Spelthorne. However, by taking the strategic approach identified in the Draft Spelthorne Local Plan, the impact of risk is reduced. There is though, a large increase in the number of homes that would result in a small net loss of greenfield land, however this does avoid valuable soils and seeks to use this land to provide a mix of homes. The Plan does however prioritise brownfield land and the

urban area which are considered to make a highly efficient use of land. New development would also be expected to make it increasingly difficult to achieve carbon dioxide emission reduction targets and quality improvement targets primarily due to the energy consumption and car-use of local people. The policies, however, seek to minimise this and rightly recognise the importance of improving air quality, particularly as the whole borough is an Air Quality Management Area. The policies recognise the risk development poses to meeting Climate Change objectives, however they also acknowledge the opportunities this presents to improve energy efficiency and transition to a zero carbon economy.

- XXXVII. Whilst the scale of growth poses a threat to biodiversity in Spelthorne, the Spatial Strategy, combined with various Development Policies, would minimise this risk and, will see a minimum biodiversity net gain being achieved. Crucial to achieving this will be careful monitoring of the quality and connectivity of Spelthorne's ecological network, with Green and Blue Infrastructure prioritised in the Plan.

Site Policies

- XXXVIII. The Draft Spelthorne Local Plan includes 55 site allocations. The overall intention of these site policies is to identify specific parcels of land within the Borough at which defined quantities of specific types of development would, in principle, be supported by the Council (only where proposals for such development conforms with Development Policies). The range of sites identified and allocated by the Council, alongside windfall development sites, would be expected to ensure that the development needs of Spelthorne over the Plan period can be satisfied.
- XXXIX. A range of alternative site options have been assessed to consider their sustainability performance and to ensure that their sustainability costs and benefits can be weighed up. These are available in Appendix B of this SA report.
- XL. The predicted and evaluated sustainability effects of the sites allocated through the Draft Spelthorne Local Plan varies from site to site depending on the scale and type of development proposed in relation to the location and the proximity to constraints and assets. The majority of allocation sites are within the urban area, are previously developed land and are located within existing communities benefitting from good access to key services, amenities and facilities. The sites would therefore be expected to help combat the risk of social exclusion for local people whilst ensuring they can pursue healthy, active and high-quality lifestyles. Residents would be likely to only need to travel short distances to access key services, amenities and facilities, as well as employment opportunities, and would have good sustainable transport modes for when they do travel. In so doing, the locations of the sites should enable relatively efficient lifestyles for residents.
- XLI. A large portion of the allocated sites comprise brownfield land in urban locations. Development in these locations delivers a range of sustainability benefits, including an efficient use of land with soil losses minimised; development in-keeping with the local character; minimising impacts on biodiversity and ecological connectivity, with good opportunities for biodiversity net gains and more efficient energy and utilities networks. It is however expected that the proposed allocations within the urban area would still likely result in a net increase in carbon emissions, air pollution, water

consumption, energy consumption, and transport movements, in relation to existing levels.

- XLII. The Local Plan seeks to allocate 15 Green Belt sites to help provide a mix of homes to meet specific community needs. These sites are all adjacent to the existing urban area and previously developed land has been a key consideration in decision making in order to make an efficient use of land. These sites will help to meet housing needs but would result in a loss of permeable land and may also negatively impact biodiversity.

Habitats Regulation Assessment

- XLIII. The Council has produced a Habitats Regulation Assessment to consider whether or not the Local Plan would adversely affect the integrity of any European site. The HRA helps inform the Councils’ decisions on where to locate development by assessing policies and site allocations in terms of their impact on the SPA, ensuring any significant impact is avoided or identifying how and where mitigation can be employed.
- XLIV. The Council began work on the HRA in 2020 following the completion of the Preferred Options consultation, which identified draft site allocations and policies.

Consideration of the Effects

Cumulative effects

- XLV. The policies and site allocations proposed in the Draft Spelthorne Local Plan were assessed on an individual basis, in detail, as shown in the appendices of this report. However, these sites and policies would not be adopted in isolation. The effects of policies and sites would combine to result in cumulative effects across the Borough. An assessment of the likely cumulative effects of sites and policies in combination was also carried out in this report.
- XLVI. The following positive cumulative effects of all proposals in the Draft Spelthorne Local Plan were identified:

SA Objective	Cumulative effects of the Draft Local Plan
To provide sufficient housing to enable people to live in a home suitable to their needs and which they can afford	The Plan seeks to allocate a range of sites that will enable a mix of homes to be delivered. The various needs of the community have been considered in the policies and also in the allocations, with overall housing needs to be met, Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling showpeople pitches and plots identified, a mix of housing and flats of differing size and also catering for specialist accommodation needs.
To facilitate the improved health and well-being of the whole population and reduce inequalities	Whilst the planned level of development may put pressure on existing healthcare facilities in the Borough, the plan seeks to boost active and sustainable travel choices and also encourages healthy lifestyles for all. Policies have been designed to support improved health and wellbeing, for example through improved access to health and community infrastructure, green and blue infrastructure, alternative travel options, place making and local neighbourhood enhancements.
To reduce land contamination and	Development proposed in Spelthorne would be expected to result in a small but permanent net loss of soils however only a small

protect soil quality and quantity	proportion of allocation sites are greenfield. The Local Plan strategy aims to prioritise previously developed land and avoids important and the most versatile land.
To conserve and enhance biodiversity, habitats and species	Development in Spelthorne will predominantly be an opportunity to enhance the biodiversity value of sites, given their brownfield status. On greenfield land that results in the loss of habitats and could affect priority species, the allocation policies and Policy E6 (Biodiversity) identify measures for biodiversity net gain and to offset any negative impacts. Cumulatively, development across Spelthorne would facilitate population growth. The increase in local residents and workers would be expected to increase the pressure on local nature reserves, wildlife sites and other green spaces due to the increased visitor pressure and footfall however the Local Plan strategy prioritises previously developed land meaning cumulatively there will be opportunities to enhance and facilitate improvements.
To promote sustainable modes of travel, improve accessibility to public transport and reduce road congestion	Development in and around town centres has good access to public transport. The Local Plan strategy prioritises sustainable locations and the identified allocations are generally well-located with good sustainable and active travel links. Policy ID2 (Transport) seeks to promote a modal shift and steer movements away from the private vehicle.
Maintain high levels of employment and economic growth which is inclusive and sustainable across the Borough	It is expected that development proposed in Spelthorne would help to provide a major boost to local prosperity and growth. It is expected that new residential development would help to increase footfall in central and shopping areas of Spelthorne, particularly Staines. The protection of employment land would also provide residents of Spelthorne with employment opportunities that are in accessible locations.
To limit the impact of Climate Change and promote the efficient use of resources, to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and move to a low carbon economy	Development proposed across Spelthorne could cumulatively lead to an increase in GHG emissions as a result of the construction and occupation of the large number of homes and the subsequent increase in traffic likely associated with this. Development in town centres has good access to sustainable transport links. Given the provision of services and facilities within the borough's main centres, a notable amount of new residents in the borough will be able to walk and cycle to access these. Policy DS2 (Responding to the Climate Emergency) seeks to minimise travel, incorporate sustainable design/construction and promote zero carbon. Cumulatively, these measures are considered to counteract negative impacts and ensure new developments help achieve climate change targets.

XLVII. The following minor adverse cumulative effects of all proposals in the Draft Spelthorne Local Plan were identified:

SA Objective	Cumulative effects of the Draft Local Plan
To increase resilience to, reduce the risk of, and minimising the harm from flooding	Flood risk is a key constraint in Spelthorne with the River Thames and its tributaries coursing through the Borough. The Plan distributes much of the desired development in locations where flood risk is not a concern. However, this was clearly not feasible for all sites and, particularly for those in the centre of Staines, some sites allocated for development are at a high risk of fluvial or surface water flooding. Some of the policies put forward in the draft Local plan, including E2 on Flood Risk, will help to minimise the extent of flood risk at these sites, such as due to the incorporation of SuDS within development proposals. Furthermore, Policy SP1 on Staines upon Thames makes clear that the provision of flood

	risk management is a key component of the policy, and integral to ensuring the proposed development can take place in such a strategic location.
To reduce air and noise pollution	It is considered to be likely that development proposed across Spelthorne would cumulatively result in a net increase in air pollution in the local area, largely as a result of increases in local road traffic. All of Spelthorne is already designated an Air Quality Management Area therefore additional development is likely to contribute to air quality impacts. Policy E3 (Environmental Protection) seeks to mitigate impacts on air and noise pollution, whilst policy DS2 (Responding to the Climate Emergency) aims to lower emissions and encourage more sustainable energy use.
To promote sustainable modes of travel, improve accessibility to public transport and reduce road congestion	The Local Plan strategy prioritises sustainable locations and the identified allocations are generally well-located with good sustainable and active travel links however car use is expected to rise overall. Policy ID2 (Transport) seeks to promote a modal shift and steer movements away from the private vehicle. The concentration of development in Staines is likely to facilitate a modal shift and encourage sustainable living in the town, with residents having access to local services and a reduced need for car travel. The allocations identify a need to mitigate impacts on the road network and Policy ID2 looks to provide safe and attractive pedestrian and cycling links that encourages sustainable and efficient movement.
Maintain high levels of employment and economic growth which is inclusive and sustainable across the Borough	It is expected that development proposed in Spelthorne would help to provide a major boost to local prosperity and growth. It is expected that new residential development would help to increase footfall in central and shopping areas of Spelthorne, particularly Staines. However, construction of new homes will help to support the house building economy more widely. Improved sustainable transport options to key employment areas will also facilitate access to employment. Policies EC1 (Meeting Employment Needs), EC2 (Retail) and EC3 (Local Centres) will help to ensure that key locations are protected and enhanced.
To maintain and improve water quality and promote the efficient use of water	Some of the sites currently allocated for development in Spelthorne are adjacent to waterbodies such as the River Thames and reservoirs. All of the development in these locations pose a cumulative risk to the quality of water, such as due to altered surface runoff rates or contamination during the construction phase. It is also expected that all sites in combination would result in a net increase in water consumption across Spelthorne. Best efforts will be needed to avoid contamination of the River Thames. Policy E3 (Environment Protection) seeks to mitigate impacts on water quality.

Transboundary effects with development in neighbouring authorities

- XLVIII. Following the assessment of cumulative effects caused by all Draft Spelthorne Local Plan proposals in combination, an assessment of the cumulative effects of proposals in the plan in combination with development planned in neighbouring authorities was also carried out.
- XLIX. Positive cumulative effects of all proposals in the Spelthorne Local Plan in combination with development plans in neighbouring authorities were identified for SA Objectives: Housing, Health & Wellbeing, land & soil, biodiversity, transport, economy and Climate Change.

- L. Minor adverse cumulative effects of all proposals in the Spelthorne Local Plan in combination with development plans in neighbouring authorities were identified for SA Objectives: Water, Pollution and Flood Risk.
- LI. It is important to note that likely effects are complex, and effects summarised as 'positive' or 'adverse' often involve a mixture of both positive and adverse effects. The SA adopts a precautionary approach that dictates that, where there is uncertainty of an overall effect, adverse effects should be highlighted.

Mitigation

- LII. The assessment of proposals in the Draft Spelthorne Local Plan has identified the likely significant effects, including those that are positive and adverse. Where adverse effects were identified, recommendations have been made to help avoid or minimise these effects. Where positive effects have been identified, recommendations have been made to enhance these effects where feasible. Recommendations are included within the policy and sites assessments in the appendices of this report.

Monitoring

- LIII. This SA Report also proposes a Monitoring Framework. The Monitoring Framework is proposed to measure the performance of the Draft Spelthorne Local Plan against defined indicators. Indicators in the Monitoring Framework have been developed based on:
 - The objectives, targets and indicators that were developed for the SA Framework;
 - Features of the baseline that will indicate the effects of the plan;
 - The likely significant effects that were identified during the assessment; and
 - The mitigation measures that were proposed to offset or reduce significant adverse effects.
- LIV. Feedback from the monitoring process will help to provide more relevant information that can be used to pinpoint specific performance issues and significant effects, and ultimately lead to more informed decision-making. In addition to monitoring the sustainability effects of the Spelthorne Local Plan, it will also be necessary to monitor changes to the environmental, social and economic context and baseline conditions.
- LV. Monitoring in accordance with the SEA Directive can be incorporated into existing monitoring arrangements. The Council prepares an annual Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) to review progress on local development document preparation and monitor the outputs and implementation of current policies. It is expected that the proposed Monitoring Framework in this report would be incorporated into the AMR.
- LVI. The Monitoring Framework proposes monitoring recommendations for predicted significant effects based on the assessment of the Local Plan Review. The framework will be developed further in the next stage of the SA Report, following feedback from consultees, and further refinement of the assessment of significant effects to be monitored.

Conclusion

- LVII. The Council has conducted the Sustainability Appraisal in line with the SEA Regulations. The appraisal shows that the Regulation 19 Draft Local Plan policies will have a positive effect, to varying degrees, against all Sustainability Appraisal objectives. Cumulatively, the Regulation 19 Draft Local Plan will have a positive effect on the sustainability of Spelthorne. Furthermore, the sites allocated for development are the most sustainable sites considered against all reasonable alternatives.