

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

SEA Environmental Report

Adderbury Parish Council

March 2026

## Quality information

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## Table of Contents

<b>Non-Technical Summary</b> .....	<b>i</b>
<b>1. Introduction</b> .....	<b>1</b>
SEA explained.....	1
Structure of this Environmental Report.....	1
<b>2. Local Plan context and vision for the ANP</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>3. What is the scope of the SEA?</b> .....	<b>5</b>
Key issues.....	6
SEA Framework .....	8
<b>4. Consideration of reasonable alternatives</b> .....	<b>12</b>
Strategic parameters.....	12
Site options .....	13
Establishing alternatives.....	14
<b>5. Assessing reasonable alternatives</b> .....	<b>16</b>
Methodology.....	16
Assessment findings .....	17
Similarities across all five spatial strategy options.....	18
Key differences between the options.....	19
Developing the preferred approach.....	27
<b>6. Appraisal of the Regulation 14 version of the ANP</b> .....	<b>29</b>
Introduction .....	29
Adderbury Neighbourhood Plan policies .....	29
Methodology.....	29
Air quality .....	30
Biodiversity .....	30
Climate change .....	31
Community wellbeing .....	32
Historic environment.....	33
Land, soil, and water resources .....	34
Landscape.....	35
Transportation .....	36
Conclusions and recommendations .....	37
<b>7. Next steps</b> .....	<b>39</b>
Plan finalisation .....	39
Monitoring .....	39

# Non-Technical Summary

## What is Strategic Environmental Assessment?

A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) has been undertaken to inform the Adderbury Neighbourhood Plan (hereafter referred to as “the ANP”). This process is required by the SEA Regulations.

Neighbourhood Plan groups use SEA to assess Neighbourhood Plans against a set of sustainability objectives developed in consultation with interested parties. The purpose of the assessment is to help avoid adverse environmental and socio-economic effects through the Neighbourhood Plan and identify opportunities to improve the environmental quality of the area covered by the Neighbourhood Plan and the quality of life of residents.

## What is the ANP?

The ANP has been prepared as a Neighbourhood Development Plan under the Localism Act 2011 and the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.

## Purpose of this Environmental Report

This Environmental Report, which accompanies the Regulation 14 version of the ANP, is the latest document to be produced as part of the SEA process. The first document was the SEA Scoping Report (February 2025), which included information about the neighbourhood area’s environment and community.

The purpose of this Environmental Report is to:

- Identify, describe, and evaluate the likely significant effects of the ANP and alternatives.
- Provide an opportunity for consultees to offer views on any aspect of the SEA process which has been carried out to date.

The Environmental Report contains:

- An outline of the contents and main objectives of the ANP and its relationship with other relevant policies, plans and programmes.
- Relevant aspects of the current and future state of the environment and key sustainability issues for the area.
- The SEA Framework of objectives against which the ANP has been assessed.
- The appraisal of alternative approaches for the ANP.
- The likely significant effects of the ANP.
- The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects as a result of the ANP.
- The next steps for the ANP and accompanying SEA process.

# Consideration of reasonable alternatives

## Introduction

In accordance with the SEA Regulations the 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 alternatives appraised.

## Strategic parameters

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.

Cherwell District Council (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 completed Regulation 19 consultation, which was undertaken between 19th December 2024 and 25th February 2025<sup>1</sup>. Subsequently, CDC submitted its Cherwell Local Plan Review 2042 to the Secretary of State for Independent Examination on 31 July 2025.

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.

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 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).

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

To support the identification of sites for an allocation within the ANP, 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)<sup>2</sup>, and one site identified by Adderbury Parish Council.

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<sup>1</sup> Cherwell District Council (2025): [Cherwell Local Plan Review 2042](#)

<sup>2</sup> Cherwell District Council (2024): [Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment \(HELAA\)](#)

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.

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.

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.

### **Establishing reasonable alternatives**

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 ANP 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.

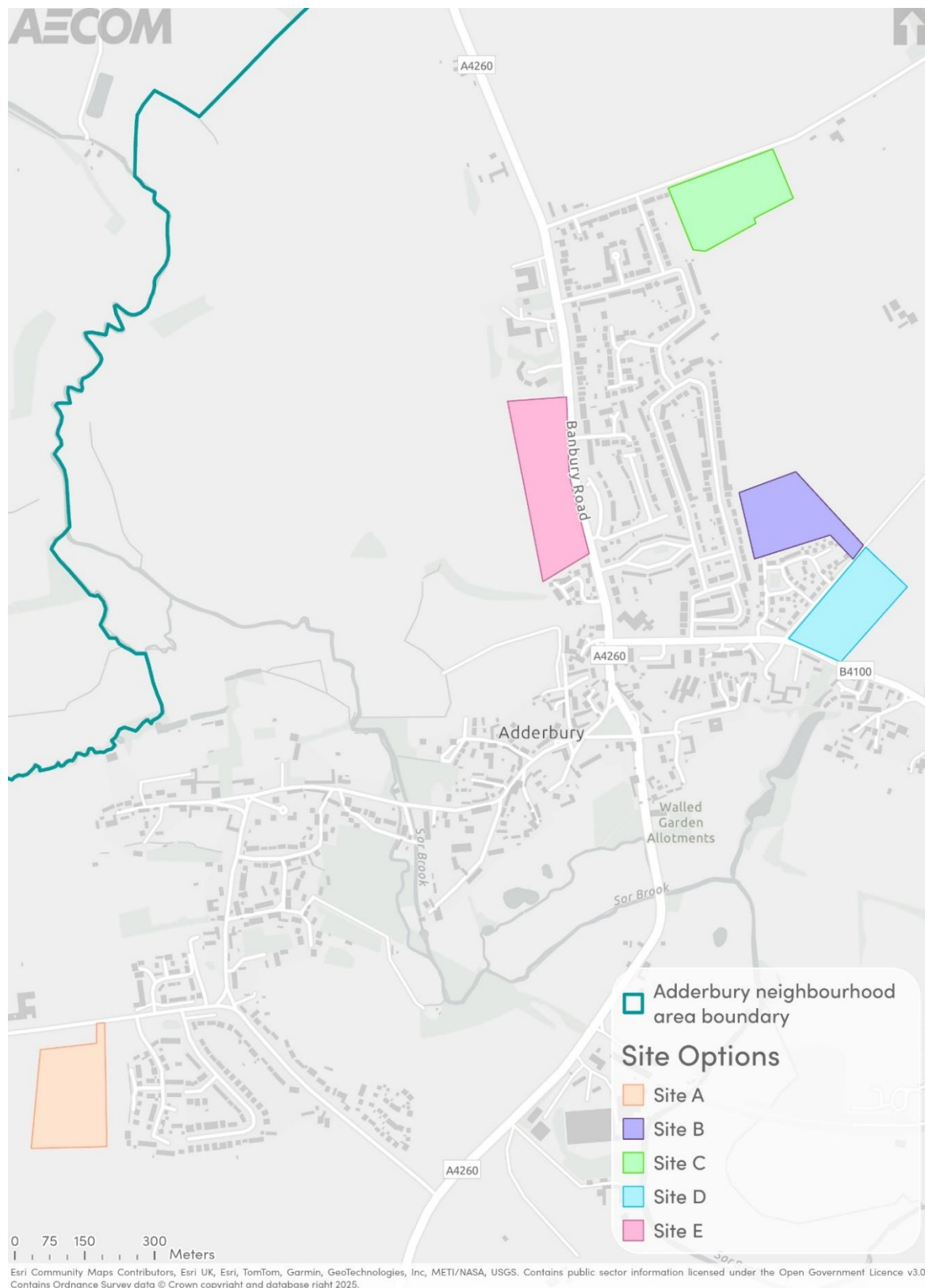
It is also recognised that part of site HELAA007 has developer interest. Whilst it was given a ‘red’ rating through the SOA, taking forward part of this site could provide a natural in-filling of land between two existing areas of development in the village. However, it is noted that this site is not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

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 ANP 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 ANP policies in **Chapter 6** of this Environmental Report.

In light of the above, five spatial strategy options (see **Figure NTS1** below) 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.



**Figure NTS1: Spatial strategy options tested through the SEA**

## Assessing reasonable alternatives

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.

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. 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.

Within the main body of the Environmental Report (see **Chapter 5**) 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.

**Table NTS1: 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					

SEA theme		Option A	Option B	Option C	Option D	Option E
	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

## Developing the preferred approach

The preferred approach for the ANP has been informed by the SOA findings, SEA findings, and the wider evidence base (including feedback received from community consultation events). This is considered below.

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 ANP'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. This is considered in **Chapter 6** of this Environmental Report.

A community consultation on the site options took place over 4 weeks from 19<sup>th</sup> January 2026 to 16<sup>th</sup> February 2026, with a view to informing the choice of site allocation for ANP. **Option A** 'Land South of Milton Road' was the most preferred by all those who participated, based on feedback and comments, and is allocated for 75 homes through Policy AD2. Further details on the site selection process can be found within **Appendix B** in the ANP.

More broadly, the ANP supports opportunities to deliver new (or improvements to) community infrastructure, allocating Land off Milton Road (to the north of Option A) for sports pitches and a community facility, subject to the provisions of Policy AD11. It also supports improvements to the existing facilities at the Lucy Plackett Field within the village. The ANP acknowledges the progress made by the Parish Council in achieving full planning permission now established in perpetuity, including the discharge of all pre-commencement conditions. Securing the funding and development of the sports pitches and community facility remains a key priority of the Parish Council in conjunction with the community (see Policy AD2). Development proposals within the neighbourhood area will be expected to contribute to the completion of this community project (see Policy AD14).

## Appraising the Regulation 14 draft Plan

For each SEA theme scoped in to the assessment, 'significant' effects of the policy framework within the Regulation 14 version of the ANP on the baseline are predicated and evaluated. Account is taken of the criteria presented within Schedule 2 of the SEA Regulations. For example, account is taken of the probability, duration, frequency, and reversibility of the effects as far as possible. These effect 'characteristics' have been described within the appraisal, as appropriate.

The likely environmental effects associated with the ANP are identified by the following scoring matrix:

- Significant positive effects (++)
- Minor positive effects (+)
- Neutral or no effects (0)
- Minor negative effects (-)
- Significant negative effects (--)

Detailed appraisal findings are presented in **Chapter 6** in the main body of this Environmental Report. A summary of the appraisal findings is presented below.

### **Broadly neutral effects (0) are concluded for the air quality SEA theme.**

Overall, the provisions of the ANP are not considered likely to have significant negative effects on air quality. Whilst the level of growth proposed (up to 75 homes) will inevitably increase road traffic, the absence of any AQMAs within Adderbury and the provisions of the wider policy framework will implement measures which will help to regulate air quality and sequester pollutants.

**Minor positive effects (+)** are concluded for the biodiversity SEA theme. This reflects the absence of any international or nationally designated sites within proximity to the proposed housing site allocation and the wider focus of the ANP policies which enhance ecological connectivity and deliver net gains for nature.

### **Broadly neutral effects (0) are concluded for the climate change SEA theme.**

Whilst an increase in emissions is inevitable as a result of the proposed site allocation, development is necessary to support local housing needs, and on a global scale this is not significant. The adaptation measures proposed for the design of the proposed site allocation should ensure that flood risk issues are appropriately alleviated, with the provisions of the wider policy framework supporting the longer-term resilience of the village to the potential effects of climate change.

**Significant positive effects (++) are concluded for the community wellbeing SEA theme.** The policy framework within the ANP collectively supports a connected, inclusive, and vibrant community, encouraging high-quality and sustainable development to meet locally identified needs. In this respect, the ANP is strongly design-led. This is supported by provisions which support local businesses and employment opportunities, maintaining the role and function of Adderbury as a 'Category A' village within the Local Plan and enhancing the quality of life of residents and visitors.

**Minor positive effects (+) are concluded for the historic environment SEA theme,** recognising the focus on ensuring that new development respects the setting and significance of both designated and non-designated heritage assets and areas.

The design policies set out a comprehensive range of provisions relating to the built environment which will help provide an appropriate basis for the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment associated with future growth.

**Minor negative effects (-) are concluded for the land, soil and water resources SEA theme.** Whilst the ANP incorporates several provisions which will help to regulate environmental quality, measures are primarily focused on addressing potential impacts of new development areas and safeguarding natural assets. The proposed site allocation will result in the permanent loss of land which is some of the 'best and most versatile' land for agricultural purposes. However, it is recognised that there are no known alternative or available brownfield site opportunities in the neighbourhood area which could deliver the housing need.

**Minor positive effects (+) are concluded for the landscape SEA theme.** The policy framework within the ANP emphasises the importance of securing high-quality design through new development areas which respects Adderbury's special character and distinctiveness. The provisions will also safeguard the integrity of locally important strategic gaps, aligning with the policy direction within the emerging Local Plan by preventing coalescence, preserving sense of place and identity.

**Minor positive effects (+) are concluded for the transportation SEA theme.** The policy framework supports active travel and encourages a shift toward more sustainable modes of transport where feasible. It also includes measures to address local priorities, for example in relation to improving connectivity and walkability between key locations.

**The SEA does not propose any recommendations** at this stage of plan making.

## Next steps

### Plan finalisation

This Environmental Report accompanies the ANP for Regulation 14 consultation.

Following Regulation 14 consultation, responses will be considered in finalising the ANP and SEA for submission. Following submission, the ANP and supporting evidence will be published for further consultation and then subjected to Independent Examination. At Independent Examination, the ANP will be considered in terms of whether it meets the Basic Conditions for Neighbourhood Plans and is in general conformity with the Local Plan.

If the examination leads to a favourable outcome, the ANP will then be subject to a referendum, organised by CDC. If more than 50% of those who vote agree with the ANP, then it will be 'made'. Once 'made', the ANP will become part of the Development Plan for Cherwell, covering the neighbourhood area.

### Monitoring

The SEA regulations require 'measures envisaged concerning monitoring' to be outlined in this report. This refers to the monitoring of likely significant effects of the ANP to identify any unforeseen effects early and take remedial action as appropriate.

It is anticipated that monitoring of effects of the ANP will be undertaken by CDC as part of the process of preparing its Annual Monitoring Report (AMR). No significant negative effects are considered likely in the implementation of the ANP that would warrant more stringent monitoring over and above that already undertaken by CDC.

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# 1. Introduction

## Introduction

- 1.1 AECOM has been commissioned to undertake an independent Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in support of the emerging Adderbury Neighbourhood Plan (hereafter referred to as the 'ANP').
- 1.2 The ANP is being prepared under the Localism Act 2011 and the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, and in the context of the local planning framework for Cherwell District Council.
- 1.3 The neighbourhood area covers the civil parish of Adderbury, and is located to the west of King Sutton, and south-east of Banbury.

## SEA explained

- 1.4 SEA is a mechanism for considering and communicating the potential impacts of an emerging plan, and potential alternatives in terms of key environmental issues. The aim of SEA is to inform and influence the plan-making process with a view to avoiding and mitigating potential negative impacts and maximising the potential for positive effects. Through this approach, the SEA for the ANP seeks to maximise the emerging plan's contribution to sustainable development.
- 1.5 Two key procedural requirements of the SEA Regulations are that:
  - i. When deciding on '*the scope and level of detail of the information*' which must be included in the Environmental Report there is a consultation with nationally designated authorities concerned with environmental issues.
  - ii. A report (the 'Environmental Report') is published for consultation alongside the draft plan (i.e., the draft ANP) that presents outcomes from the environmental assessment (i.e., discusses 'likely significant effects' that would result from plan implementation) and reasonable alternatives.
- 1.6 This 'Environmental Report' is concerned with item 'ii' above.

## Structure of this Environmental Report

- 1.7 This document is the SEA Environmental Report for the ANP and hence needs to answer all four of the questions listed below with a view to providing the information required by the SEA Regulations. Each of the four questions is answered in turn within this report, as follows:

**Table 1.1: Questions that must be answered by the SEA Environmental Report to meet the regulatory requirements<sup>3</sup>**

Environmental Report question	In line with the SEA Regulations, the report must include... <sup>4</sup>
What is the plan seeking to achieve?	An outline of the contents and main objectives of the plan.
What's the scope of the SEA?	Relationship with other relevant plans and programmes. The relevant environmental protection <b>objectives</b> , established at international or national level. Any existing environmental <b>problems</b> which are relevant to the plan including those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance.
	The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan. The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected. Any existing environmental <b>problems</b> which are relevant to the plan including those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance.
	What is the sustainability 'context'?
What is the sustainability 'baseline'?	The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan. The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected. Any existing environmental <b>problems</b> which are relevant to the plan including those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance.
What are the key issues and objectives?	Key <b>problems / issues</b> and <b>objectives</b> that should be a focus of (i.e., provide a 'framework' for) assessment.
What has plan-making/SEA involved up to this point?	Outline reasons for selecting the <b>alternatives</b> dealt with. The likely significant effects associated with <b>alternatives</b> . Outline reasons for selecting the preferred approach in-light of <b>alternatives</b> appraisal/a description of how environmental objectives and considerations are reflected in the current version of the plan.
What are the assessment findings at this stage?	The likely significant effects associated with <b>the Regulation 14 version of the plan</b> . The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects of implementing <b>the Regulation 14 version of the plan</b> .
What happens next?	The next steps for the plan making / SEA process.

<sup>3</sup> UK Government (2004): [The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004](#)

<sup>4</sup> NB this column does not quote directly from Schedule II of the Regulations. Rather, it reflects a degree of interpretation.

## 2. Local Plan context and vision for the neighbourhood plan

### Local Plan context for the ANP

- 2.1 The strategic policy context is set by the Adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (Part 1), adopted in 2015. This plan recognises Adderbury as a Category A 'Service Village', which is suitable for minor development, infilling and conversions.
- 2.2 Cherwell District Council (CDC) are in the process of developing a new Local Plan, the Cherwell Local Plan Review 2042 (hereafter referred to as 'the LPR'), which, once adopted, will replace the Adopted Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (Part 1). The LPR was submitted for Regulation 19 consultation between 19<sup>th</sup> December 2024 to 25<sup>th</sup> February 2025. Subsequently, Cherwell District Council submitted its Cherwell Local Plan Review 2042 to the Secretary of State for Independent Examination on 31 July 2025.
- 2.3 Under Policy SP 1: Settlement Hierarchy, Adderbury is identified as a Category A Village. This level in the settlement hierarchy is described as "Larger villagers outside of the Green Belt that have essential local services and facilities and often serve nearby smaller villages". They also have regular public transport to main towns or local service centres. Under Policy RUR 1: Rural Areas Housing Strategy, Adderbury is allocated 75 homes over the plan period.

### Vision, aims and objectives of the ANP

- 2.4 The vision for the ANP captures the community's views and aspirations for the neighbourhood area as expressed through the neighbourhood planning process. It forms the basis on which the neighbourhood objectives and proposed policies have been formulated.
- 2.5 The vision for the ANP, covering the period up to 2042, is as follows:
  - "To continue as a thriving, modern, viable and sustainable rural village for work, rest, and play"*
  - "Our vision is that by the end of the plan period, Adderbury will have grown successfully and naturally as a community, with new and old residents alike benefiting from community facilities and services, which have survived and flourished.*
  - "New homes will have helped meet local housing needs and enabled investment in improving local facilities*
  - "Much of it will have been completed in the early years of the plan and growth since that time will have been only through the occasional small infill scheme. These schemes will have been well-designed to ensure the rural character of the village has been preserved.*
  - "The special landscape setting of the village will have been maintained and the Twyford area of Adderbury will have remained very separate from the major developments around Bodicote and Banbury. This will have also sustained the*

*setting of the Conservation Area as part of a wider green infrastructure network of fields, open spaces, trees, streams, bridleways, cycleways and footpaths from the village into the countryside.”*

2.6 The vision is accompanied by five objectives:

- To manage the incremental growth of the village through sensitive infill with a strong emphasis on landscape, and to protect the surrounding countryside from harmful development. A design code is to be incorporated to manage this.
- To ensure that when development takes place beyond the current boundary of the village, this does so as a result of support and allocation under the Neighbourhood Plan and that it enhances and complements the heritage character of the village.
- To transform the quality and diversity of community facilities in the village to serve the local community
- To conserve the special heritage character of the village and its landscape setting; and,
- To protect and improve the ecological value and connectivity of the green infrastructure assets of the village and wider parish.

## 3. What is the scope of the SEA?

- 3.1 The SEA Regulations require that: *‘When deciding on the scope and level of detail of the information that must be included in the report, the responsible authority shall consult the consultation bodies’.*
- 3.2 In England, the consultation bodies are Natural England, the Environment Agency, and Historic England<sup>5</sup>. These authorities were consulted on the scope of the SEA between February 2025 and March 2025.
- 3.3 The purpose of scoping was to outline the ‘scope’ of the SEA through setting out the following information:
- A context review of the key environmental and sustainability objectives of national, regional, and local plans and strategies relevant to the ANP.
  - Baseline data against which the ANP can be assessed.
  - The key sustainability issues for the ANP; and
  - An ‘SEA Framework’ of objectives against which the ANP can be assessed.
- 3.4 The full SEA Scoping Report is available on the Neighbourhood Plan website and accompanies the evidence base for the ANP at Regulation 14 consultation.<sup>6</sup>
- 3.5 Responses received on the Scoping Report, and how they were addressed, have been summarised below.

**Table 3.1: Consultation responses received on the SEA Scoping Report**

Consultation Response	How the Response was Considered and Addressed
<p><b>Historic England</b> <i>Historic Environment Planning Adviser</i> <i>(response received on 19<sup>th</sup> March 2025)</i></p> <p>In terms of the historic environment, we consider that the report has identified the plans and programmes which are of most relevance to the development of the plan, that it has established an appropriate baseline against which to assess the plan’s proposals and that it has put forward a suitable set of objectives and indicators.</p> <p>Overall, we believe that it provides an appropriate framework for assessing significant effects which this plan might have upon the historic environment.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The identification of any likely significant effects to the historic environment associated with the policies and proposals within the ANP are discussed in further detail within Chapter 5 and Chapter 6 of this Environmental Report.</p>

<sup>5</sup> In-line with Article 6(3) of the SEA Directive, these consultation bodies were selected because ‘by reason of their specific environmental responsibilities, [they] are likely to be concerned by the environmental effects of implementing plans and programme’.

<sup>6</sup> Including the context review and baseline data for the neighbourhood area, for each SEA theme.

## Consultation Response

## How the Response was Considered and Addressed

Historic England strongly advises that conservation and archaeological advisers are closely involved throughout the preparation of the SEA of this plan.

Comment noted. Historic England's guidance has been a useful source of reference throughout the SEA.

Historic England has produced guidance for all involved in undertaking SEA exercises which gives advice on issues relating to the historic environment.

### Natural England

*Consultations Team*

*(response received on 27<sup>th</sup> March 2025)*

Natural England has no specific comments to make on the scope of this neighbourhood plan's SEA.

Comment noted. Natural England's annex has been a useful source of reference throughout the SEA.

However, we refer you to the advice in the attached annex which covers the issues and opportunities that should be considered when preparing a Neighbourhood Plan.

### Environment Agency

No response received

3.6 The key sustainability issues and SEA Framework are presented below.

## Key issues

### Air quality

3.7 There are 2 AQMAs within proximity to the neighbourhood area which could be negatively impacted through development in Adderbury, as it is likely growth in the neighbourhood area will increase the number of residents and vehicles travelling to Banbury.

### Biodiversity

3.8 Whilst the Adderbury neighbourhood area does not have any international or national biodiversity designations within or in proximity to its boundaries, there is the Adderbury Lakes LNR in the centre of the neighbourhood area. This is maintained by the Adderbury Parish Council. Additionally, there are a variety of BAP Priority Habitats across the neighbourhood area. As such, it is likely Adderbury is an important area for local biodiversity, positively contributing to ecological networks. New development within the neighbourhood area has the potential to impact ecological networks.

3.9 The green infrastructure network identified through the adopted Adderbury Neighbourhood Plan likely contributes to biodiversity value through enhancing connectivity. As such, development through the ANP could positively contribute to this by seeking development that contributes additional green space and infrastructure.

## Climate change and flood risk

- 3.10 Fluvial flood risk is associated with watercourses that are within proximity and cross the neighbourhood area. Surface water flood risk in the Adderbury neighbourhood area is largely associated with the local drainage pattern. As such, an increase in development has the potential to exacerbate flood risk in the neighbourhood area through increased surface water runoff.
- 3.11 Whilst there has been a decrease in transport emissions in Cherwell district between 2005 and 2022, it remains the largest contributing sector of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. Whilst it is acknowledged that reducing emissions linked to transport is largely the responsibility of the local transport authority, the ANP could seek to address transport emissions locally through encouraging opportunities to strengthen active and sustainable travel routes and reducing the need to travel outside of the neighbourhood area. This would likely help to reduce the number of private vehicles on the local road network in the Adderbury neighbourhood area (excluding those vehicles that travel through the neighbourhood area via the motorway).

## Community wellbeing

- 3.12 The neighbourhood area experiences deprivation linked to barriers to housing and services. Bringing forward new housing will likely contribute to reducing deprivation linked to housing; however, this is dependent on the location and housing mix (in terms of types, tenures and affordability).
- 3.13 The adopted Adderbury Neighbourhood Plan seeks to protect (and, where possible, improve) existing community assets and local services. The ANP presents an opportunity to continue the safeguarding and enhancement of these facilities (where appropriate) and could allow for additional community facilities and infrastructure to be protected.

## Historic environment

- 3.14 There are a number of designated heritage features in the neighbourhood area that contribute to the historic character of Adderbury. Development that is proposed in close proximity to any designated heritage assets and areas will need to consider how it could impact upon their intrinsic qualities and settings, and their contribution to the significance of the wider historic environment.
- 3.15 It will be important for the ANP to consider the objectives and aims included within the conservation area appraisals. This will likely help to encourage development to reflect the special architectural and historic character and appearance of the area.
- 3.16 It is recognised that the ANP presents an opportunity to increase the understanding of and access to historical assets and areas, especially those of a local and / or non-designated nature. This includes the local heritage assets listed in the adopted Adderbury Neighbourhood Plan.

## Land, soil and water resources

- 3.17 Allocating land for development could influence changes to land, soil and water resources. It will be important for development to be focused away from the pockets of Grade 2 provisional ALC land in the neighbourhood area and avoid

removing land in agricultural use as far as possible. This could be achieved by focusing growth in areas of Grade 4 provisional ALC and within and in proximity to the Adderbury settlement boundary. The conservation of higher quality soil could be achieved through extending the existing green infrastructure network, designated in the adopted Adderbury Neighbourhood Plan.

- 3.18 Given the overlap of the Adderbury neighbourhood area with three different water body catchment areas, the drinking water protected area and safeguarding area for surface water resources, and the NVZ, it is possible development could impact upon water quality. The ANP could help to mitigate this by encouraging development to include measures that ensure water pollution does not occur at the different development phases.

## Landscape

- 3.19 The Adderbury neighbourhood area sits within a diverse landscape, including across two NCAs and multiple local character areas. As such, development will need to be considerate of the varying landscape features and sensitivities. The ANP has the potential to positively contribute to landscape amenity through encouraging development to integrate with the various national and local landscape characters. This will maintain the unique landscape value of the neighbourhood area.

- 3.20 Whilst it is noted that landscape sensitivity assessments have not been undertaken for the whole neighbourhood area, it is likely the northern part of the neighbourhood area experiences greater sensitivity regarding settlement form and edge.

## Transportation

- 3.21 There are good opportunities to engage with sustainable and public transportation in the neighbourhood area, given the bus service provision and the proximity of trains stations to the neighbourhood area. However, whilst these are likely to be used by residents in the neighbourhood area for some journeys, private vehicles are potentially relied upon more, given they allow for easier and more convenient access to nearby settlements. It is therefore likely that new development will contribute additional private vehicles to the local road network. The ANP can help to mitigate this increase by encouraging development to come forward within proximity to active travel opportunities, including pavement and the PRow network, to encourage an uptake in walking and cycling for access to nearby services and facilities.

## SEA Framework

- 3.22 The SEA Framework provides a way in which environmental effects can be defined and subsequently analysed based on standard 'tests'. Each proposal within the current version (i.e., the Regulation 14 version) of the ANP will be assessed consistently using the Framework.

**Table 3.2: SEA Framework**

SEA theme	SEA objective	Supporting assessment questions
Air quality	Support objectives to improve air quality within and surrounding the neighbourhood area and minimise impacts on nearby AQMAs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement measures (such as green infrastructure) which will help to support good air quality in the neighbourhood area?</li> <li>• Promote and encourage more sustainable transport options?</li> <li>• Encourage development which reduces the need to travel?</li> </ul>
Biodiversity	Protect and enhance biodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protect and enhance designated sites for biodiversity and priority habitats, supporting the integrity of ecological networks?</li> <li>• Achieve biodiversity and environmental net gains and support the delivery of ecosystem services and multifunctional green infrastructure networks?</li> <li>• Increase the resilience of biodiversity in the area to the effects of climate change, including through enhancements to ecological networks?</li> <li>• Support access to, interpretation of, and understanding of biodiversity?</li> </ul>
Climate change and flood risk	Reduce the contribution to climate change made by activities within the neighbourhood area and increase resilience to the potential effects of climate change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoid vulnerable development in areas of elevated flood risk?</li> <li>• Promote the use of more sustainable modes of transport, including walking, cycling, public transport, and electric vehicle (EV) infrastructure?</li> <li>• Increase the number of new developments meeting or exceeding sustainable design criteria?</li> <li>• Generate energy from low or zero carbon sources, or reduce energy consumption from non-renewable resources?</li> <li>• Improve and extend green infrastructure networks in the neighbourhood area?</li> <li>• Sustainably manage water runoff, and reduce runoff where possible?</li> </ul>
Community wellbeing	Ensure growth in the neighbourhood area is aligned with the needs of all residents, improving accessibility, anticipating future	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality, affordable housing?</li> <li>• Support the provision of a range of house types and sizes?</li> <li>• Meet the needs of all sectors of the community?</li> </ul>

SEA theme	SEA objective	Supporting assessment questions
	needs and specialist requirements, and supporting cohesive and inclusive communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide flexible and adaptable homes that meet people's needs, particularly the needs of an ageing population?</li> <li>• Improve the availability and accessibility of key local facilities, including specialist services for disabled and older people?</li> <li>• Encourage and promote social cohesion and active involvement of local people in community activities?</li> <li>• Facilitate green infrastructure enhancements, including improved access to open space?</li> <li>• Maintain or enhance the quality of life of existing residents?</li> </ul>
Historic environment	Protect, conserve and enhance the historic environment within and surrounding the neighbourhood area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conserve and enhance buildings and structures of architectural or historic interest, both designated and non-designated, and their settings?</li> <li>• Protect the integrity of the historic setting of key features of cultural heritage interest?</li> <li>• Detail how development may contribute to the significance of heritage assets in conservation areas and allow that significance to be appreciated?</li> <li>• Support the undertaking of early archaeological investigations and, where appropriate, recommend mitigation strategies?</li> <li>• Support access to, interpretation and understanding of the historic evolution and character of the neighbourhood area?</li> </ul>
Land, soil and water resources	Ensure the efficient and effective use of land, and protect and enhance water quality, using water resources in a sustainable manner.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote the use of previously developed land wherever possible?</li> <li>• Identify and avoid the development of BMV agricultural land?</li> <li>• Support the minimisation, reuse, and recycling of waste?</li> <li>• Avoid any negative impacts on water quality and support improvements to water quality, including the Oxford Canal?</li> <li>• Ensure appropriate drainage and mitigation is delivered alongside proposed development?</li> <li>• Protect waterbodies from pollution?</li> </ul>
Landscape	Protect and enhance the	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protect and / or enhance local landscape character and quality of place, including the</li> </ul>

SEA theme	SEA objective	Supporting assessment questions
	character and quality of the immediate and surrounding landscape.	<p>character types identified within the Adderbury Conservation area appraisal?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conserve and enhance local identity, diversity, and settlement character?</li> <li>• Identify and protect locally important viewpoints which contribute to character and sense of place?</li> <li>• Retain and enhance landscape features that contribute to the water setting, or rural setting, including trees and hedgerows?</li> </ul>
Transportation	Promote sustainable transport use and active travel opportunities and reduce the need to travel.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage a shift to more sustainable forms of travel and enable sustainable transport infrastructure enhancements?</li> <li>• Improve local connectivity and pedestrian and cyclist movement?</li> <li>• Facilitate working from home to reduce the use of private vehicles to access workplaces outside of the neighbourhood area?</li> <li>• Reduce the impact of the transport sector on climate change?</li> <li>• Improve road safety and reduce pollution from vehicles?</li> </ul>

## 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 ANP.
- 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

- 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 completed Regulation 19 consultation, which was undertaken between 19th December 2024 and 25th February 2025<sup>7</sup>. Subsequently, Cherwell District Council submitted its Cherwell Local Plan Review 2042 to the Secretary of State for Independent Examination on 31 July 2025.
- 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 RUR 2), new dwellings in the countryside (Policy RUR 3), conversion of rural

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<sup>7</sup> Cherwell District Council (2025): [Cherwell Local Plan Review 2042](#)

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

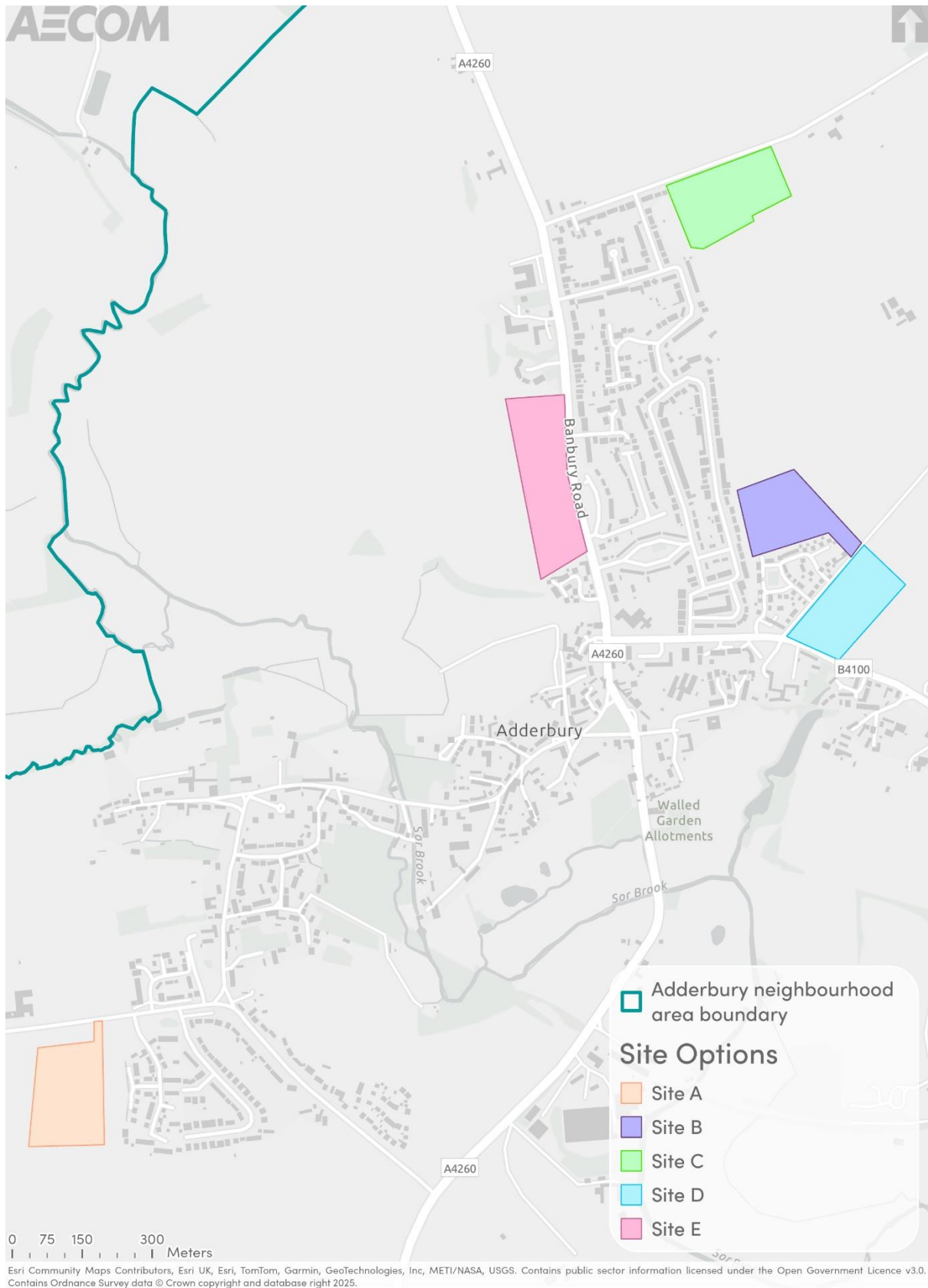
- 4.9 To support the identification of sites for an allocation within the ANP, an independent and objective site options and assessment (SOA) process has been undertaken to inform plan making. A total of twelve site options were taken forward for assessment, comprising eleven sites put forward through Cherwell District Council's 2024 Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA)<sup>8</sup>, 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.
- 4.12 Additionally, Site ADD.01 has been found suitable for sports and community use through the SOA.
- 4.13 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.

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<sup>8</sup> Cherwell District Council (2024): [Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment \(HELAA\)](#)

## Establishing alternatives

- 4.14 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 ANP 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.
- 4.15 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 ANP Steering Group.
- 4.16 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 ANP 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 ANP policies in **Chapter 6** of this Environmental Report.
- 4.17 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.
- 4.18 The spatial strategy options are shown in **Figure 4.1** below.



## 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	<b>1</b>	3
Biodiversity	Significant effect?	No	Yes - negative	Yes - negative	No	Yes - negative
	Rank	<b>1</b>	=3	=3	2	4
Climate change mitigation	Significant effect?	No	No	No	No	No
	Rank	=4	3	=4	<b>1</b>	2
Climate change adaptation	Significant effect?	No	No	No	No	No
	Rank	3	<b>=1</b>	<b>=1</b>	2	4
Community wellbeing	Significant effect?	Yes - positive	Yes - positive	Yes - positive	Yes - positive	Uncertain
	Rank	=2	=2	=2	<b>1</b>	3
Historic environment	Significant effect?	No	No	No	Yes - negative	Yes - negative
	Rank	<b>=1</b>	<b>=1</b>	<b>=1</b>	2	2
Land, soil and water resources	Significant effect?	No	No	No	No	No
	Rank	2	<b>=1</b>	<b>=1</b>	3	<b>=1</b>
Landscape	Significant effect?	No	No	Yes - negative	No	Yes - negative
	Rank	=2	<b>=1</b>	=2	<b>=1</b>	3
Transportation	Significant effect?	No	No	No	No	No
	Rank	=2	=3	=2	<b>1</b>	<b>=3</b>

## 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 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 Milton Road to the north. As the site under Option A slopes downwards in a northern 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 17<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century features. Given this designated feature is within proximity to the site under Option D, its 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 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 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 preferred approach for the ANP has been informed by the SOA findings, SEA findings, and the wider evidence base (including feedback received from community consultation events). This is considered below.
- 5.61 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 ANP'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. This is considered in **Chapter 6** of this Environmental Report.
- 5.62 A community consultation on the site options took place over 4 weeks from 19<sup>th</sup> January 2026 to 16<sup>th</sup> February 2026, with a view to informing the choice of site allocation for ANP. **Option A** 'Land South of Milton Road' was the most preferred by all those who participated, based on feedback and comments, and

is allocated for 75 homes through Policy AD2. Further details on the site selection process can be found within **Appendix B** in the ANP.

5.63 More broadly, the ANP supports opportunities to deliver new (or improvements to) community infrastructure, allocating Land off Milton Road (to the north of Option A) for sports pitches and a community facility, subject to the provisions of Policy AD11. It also supports improvements to the existing facilities at the Lucy Plackett Field within the village. The ANP acknowledges the progress made by the Parish Council in achieving full planning permission now established in perpetuity, including the discharge of all pre-commencement conditions. Securing the funding and development of the sports pitches and community facility remains a key priority of the Parish Council in conjunction with the community (see Policy AD2). Development proposals within the neighbourhood area will be expected to contribute to the completion of this community project (see Policy AD14).

## 6. Appraisal of the Regulation 14 version of the ANP

### Introduction

6.1 The aim of this chapter is to present appraisal findings and recommendations in relation to the Regulation 14 version of the ANP. This chapter presents:

- An appraisal of the current version (i.e., the Regulation 14 version) of the ANP under the eight SEA theme headings; and
- The overall conclusions at this current stage.

### Adderbury Neighbourhood Plan policies

6.2 **Table 5.1** sets out the Adderbury Neighbourhood Plan policies.

**Table 5.1 ANP policies**

Policy reference	Policy name
AD1	Settlement Boundary
AD2	Housing Site Allocation
AD3	Green Infrastructure
AD4	Key Open Spaces
AD5	Local Green Spaces
AD6	Strategic Open Spaces Outside the Settlement Boundary
AD7	Strategic Gaps
AD8	Managing Design within the Settlement Boundary
AD9	Managing Design of New Housing
AD10	Buildings and Structures of Local Importance
AD11	New Community Facilities
AD12	Community Assets and Local Services
AD13	Promoting New Employment and Tourism
AD14	Community Infrastructure Levy / S106 Community Funds

### Methodology

6.3 The assessment identifies and evaluates 'likely significant effects' on the baseline, drawing on the sustainability objectives identified through scoping (see **Table 3.2**) as a methodological framework.

6.4 Every effort is made to predict effects accurately; however, this is inherently challenging given the strategic nature of the policies under consideration and understanding of the baseline (now and in the future under a 'no plan' scenario) that is inevitably limited. Given uncertainties there is a need to make

assumptions, e.g., in relation to plan implementation and aspects of the baseline that might be impacted. Assumptions are made cautiously and explained within the text (with the aim of striking a balance between comprehensiveness and conciseness). In many instances, given reasonable assumptions, it is not possible to predict 'significant effects', but it is possible to comment on merits (or otherwise) of the draft plan in more general terms.

- 6.5 Finally, it is important to note that effects are predicted taking account of the criteria presented within Schedule 1 of the SEA Regulations. So, for example, account is taken of the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of effects as far as possible. These effect 'characteristics' are described within the assessment as appropriate.

## Air quality

- 6.6 There are no air quality management areas (AQMA) within Adderbury; as such, allocating any site for development is unlikely to lead to air quality concerns in the neighbourhood area. However, the proposed site allocation would deliver growth within 7km of the Cherwell District Council AQMA (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 during the plan period would result in an increase in journeys to this location – and by extension, the AQMA.
- 6.7 Nonetheless, the policy framework within the ANP incorporates provisions which will likely have indirect benefits for air quality. For example, the site allocation policy (see AD2) and green infrastructure policy (see AD3) will safeguard and enhance the natural environment, including natural pollutant sequesters which help to regulate air quality. Additionally, the design policies (see AD8 and AD9) support opportunities to improve safety, connectivity, and accessibility through design to encourage pedestrian and cycle movement. This may help to limit road traffic and emissions from vehicles.
- 6.8 **Broadly neutral effects (0) are concluded for the air quality SEA theme.** Overall, the provisions of the ANP are not considered likely to have significant negative effects on air quality. Whilst the level of growth proposed (up to 75 homes) will inevitably increase road traffic, the absence of any AQMAs within Adderbury and the provisions of the wider policy framework will implement measures which will help to regulate air quality and sequester pollutants.

## Biodiversity

- 6.9 There are no internationally or nationally designated sites for biodiversity within proximity to the proposed site allocation. 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).
- 6.10 Residential growth will need to deliver a minimum 10% biodiversity net gain in line with national policy requirements. The proposed site allocation 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. As such, growth at this location

could deliver biodiversity enhancements to area identified within the National Habitat Network as being able to benefit from improvements. This is considered through the site allocation policy (see AD2) which aims to secure an interconnected green infrastructure network through the design of the scheme. Details include additional planting, bolstering of trees and hedgerows, and managing the transition between the built environment and open countryside.

- 6.11 More broadly with respect to the policy framework, Policies AD3-AD6 seek to protect and enhance green and blue infrastructure networks within the neighbourhood area. Policies AD8 and AD9 have a strong focus on managing the design of new development areas. Several provisions will have indirect benefits for local ecology, including via encouraging nature-focused amenity spaces, natural planting to provide buffers and wildlife corridors, and supporting landscape-led developments which take account of biodiversity net gain targets. Additionally, development proposals within the neighbourhood area will be expected to contribute to the maintenance of the Adderbury Lakes Local Nature Reserve (see Policy AD14).
- 6.12 **Minor positive effects (+)** are concluded for the biodiversity SEA theme. This reflects the absence of any international or nationally designated sites within proximity to the proposed housing site allocation and the wider focus of the ANP policies which seek to enhance ecological connectivity and deliver net gains for nature.

## Climate change

- 6.13 Growth within the neighbourhood area will inevitably lead to increases in emissions, linked to the construction phases of development, an increase in the built footprint of the village, and an intensification of uses across the site allocation. However, with a view to supporting a limitation of emissions, the proposed site allocation (see Policy AD2) is adjacent to the village boundary and as such is likely to provide opportunities to engage with sustainable and active travel into the village centre and further afield. This will help to reduce emissions linked to transport. Additionally, Policy AD9 (specifically Section 9.8) encourages new homes to target Passivhaus standards of sustainability which includes measures to improve energy efficiency through design.
- 6.14 In terms of climate change adaptation, the proposed site allocation is not within Flood Zone 2 or 3 and does not have a high risk of fluvial flooding. With respect to surface water flood risks, a Section 19 Flood Investigation Report for Adderbury<sup>9</sup> references the potential surface water flood risk to Round Close Road from surrounding locations (including from land to the south of Milton Road). Whilst the proposed site allocation has a low surface water flood risk potential, the topography of the site slopes down to the north. On this basis, it is possible that development at this location (which will incorporate areas of hardstanding) could potentially increase surface water flooding on Milton Road (and the surrounding areas).
- 6.15 With reference to a subsequent note from Oxfordshire County Council's Flood Risk Officer in February 2026, *"NPPF paragraph 181 requires development to not increase flood risk elsewhere. This is normally achieved through providing sufficient attenuation storage and restricting runoff rates, so that runoff rates*

<sup>9</sup> Oxfordshire County Council (July 2025): 'Section 19 Flood Investigation Report for Adderbury' in response to flood incidents on the 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2024 and the 24<sup>th</sup> November 2024.

*and volumes from the developed site do not exceed those for the undeveloped site. See also paragraph 182. The detail of any drainage system for the proposed development (including the discharge location) would not be provided for a neighbourhood plan; this is assessed as part of a planning application.”*

- 6.16 In the context of the above, the proposed site allocation presents an opportunity to mitigate and attenuate water flow to deal with the longer-term impacts of climate change (i.e., from more severe storm events) and improve resilience. This is reflected within the site allocation policy which states that flood management would be carefully considered as part of design development of any scheme, as also required by local and national planning policy. Specifically, Policy AD2 states that the design of the scheme should incorporate a new attenuation basin on the frontage of Milton Road as part of an approved surface water flood risk management strategy, integrating with green infrastructure networks on the site. This is further supported by the provisions of Policy AD9 which affirm that new housing developments should successfully integrate surface and fluvial water management into the landscape design and provide evidence that the proposals would not exacerbate any wider flooding issues in the neighbourhood area.
- 6.17 **Broadly neutral effects (0) are concluded for the climate change SEA theme.** Whilst an increase in emissions is inevitable as a result of the proposed site allocation, development is necessary to support local housing needs, and on a global scale this is not significant. The adaptation measures proposed for the design of the proposed site allocation should ensure that flood risk issues are appropriately alleviated, with the provisions of the wider policy framework supporting the longer-term resilience of the village to the potential effects of climate change.

## Community wellbeing

- 6.18 The emerging Cherwell Local Plan Review 2042 (see Policy RUR 1) proposes a housing requirement of 75 homes for Adderbury. To deliver the housing need, the Regulation 14 version of the ANP allocates ‘Land South of Milton Road’ for 75 homes (see Policy AD2), with the preferred approach informed by the findings of the SOA, SEA and community consultation events to date. This is further discussed in **Chapter 4** and **Chapter 5** of the Environmental Report.
- 6.19 Policies AD8 and AD9 have a strong focus on managing the design of new development areas. For example, Section 9.4 within Policy AD9 stipulates that new housing developments should incorporate an appropriate mix of housing in terms of types and tenures, whilst also ensuring adaptability and accessibility through design. The provisions have been informed by the findings of a Housing Needs Assessment which accompanies the evidence base for the ANP, with key objectives to improve affordability, meet the needs of demographic trends, and diversification from the high proportion of larger properties in the village.
- 6.20 The proposed site allocation is adjacent to a local open space to the east (Adderbury Fields Estate Open Space, south of Milton Road). The proximity of local open spaces will facilitate opportunities to engage with physical activity, whilst also providing space for social interaction. It is also noted that the proposed site allocation is directly to the south of Site ADD.01 (Land off Milton Road), which is allocated through Policy AD11 for sports pitches and a

community facility. The SOA process (contributing to the evidence base for the ANP) awarded this site a 'green' rating, reflecting its suitability to accommodate new community infrastructure. As such, the proposed site allocation may benefit from proximity to new community infrastructure (in the longer term) which would support the physical and mental health and wellbeing of local residents. Securing the funding and development of the sports pitches and community facility remains a key priority of the Parish Council in conjunction with the community (see Policy AD2). Development proposals within the neighbourhood area will be expected to contribute to the completion of this community project (see Policy AD14).

- 6.21 Policies AD3-AD5 highlight the value of the neighbourhood area's green infrastructure networks and seeks to protect and enhance key assets during the plan period. This includes informal open spaces, local green spaces, allotments, playing fields and play areas. Green infrastructure provides space for recreation and relaxation, and access to nature has been evidenced to improve people's health and wellbeing, through encouraging healthy outdoor recreation and relaxation. The policy will therefore encourage opportunities to plan for healthy communities, support social interaction and promote healthy and active lifestyles for residents.
- 6.22 With reference to the community and economic vitality of the neighbourhood area, Policy AD12 supports proposals to improve the viability of established community uses at key facilities and Policy AD13 encourages proposals for new employment and tourism uses. Proposals to expand existing (or create new) local shops or commercial premises will also be supported, subject to the provisions within the wider ANP policy framework. The provisions of these policies will support local businesses and employment opportunities, maintaining the role and function of Adderbury as a 'Category A' village within the Local Plan and enhancing the quality of life of residents and visitors.
- 6.23 **Significant positive effects (++) are concluded for the community wellbeing SEA theme.** The policy framework within the ANP collectively supports a connected, inclusive, and vibrant community, encouraging high-quality and sustainable development to meet locally identified needs. In this respect, the ANP is strongly design-led. This is supported by provisions which support local businesses and employment opportunities, maintaining the role and function of Adderbury as a 'Category A' village within the Local Plan and enhancing the quality of life of residents and visitors.

## Historic environment

- 6.24 There are a number of designated heritage features in the neighbourhood area that contribute to the historic character of Adderbury. Development that is proposed in close proximity to any designated heritage assets and areas will need to consider how it could impact upon their intrinsic qualities and settings, and their contribution to the significance of the wider historic environment. In this context, the proposed site allocation (see Policy AD2) does not contain and is not within the setting of any designated heritage assets and areas. Nonetheless, the ANP incorporates several provisions which will support the heritage significance of the village and surrounding environs. This is considered below.

- 6.25 Policies AD8 and AD9 have a strong focus on managing the design of new development areas. Policy AD8 outlines that development within the settlement boundary should pay special attention to the characteristics provided in the Adderbury Conservation Area Appraisal and successfully integrate with the wider village and its environs. Criteria focusing on the built form, use of materials, layout and scale of development within defined character areas is also provided (see Sections 8.1 to 8.12 in Policy AD8).
- 6.26 More broadly with respect to the policy framework, Policy AD10 identifies ten locally important buildings and structures for their architectural and/or heritage interest. The provisions will support the integrity of non-designated assets of local significance, with proposals assessed against the potential scale of any harm or loss of the assets. Along with the aforementioned design policies (AD8 and AD9), the provisions will help to ensure that proposals are sympathetic to the heritage significance of both designated and non-designated heritage assets and areas in the parish, with particular regard to the Adderbury Conservation Area.
- 6.27 **Minor positive effects (+) are concluded for the historic environment SEA theme**, recognising the focus on ensuring that new development respects the setting and significance of both designated and non-designated heritage assets and areas. The design policies set out a comprehensive range of provisions relating to the built environment which will help provide an appropriate basis for the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment associated with future growth in the neighbourhood area.

## Land, soil, and water resources

- 6.28 Reflecting Natural England's provisional agricultural land dataset, the proposed site allocation (see Policy AD2) is underlain by Grade 2 agricultural land. In this regard, development at this location will 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 no known alternative or available brownfield site opportunities in the neighbourhood area which could deliver the housing need.
- 6.29 The proposed site allocation would deliver growth approximately 50m west of a drain that is adjacent to the village. 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. This may adversely impact upon water quality in the wider environment. However, Policy AD2 states that the design of the scheme should incorporate a new attenuation basin on the frontage of Milton Road as part of an approved surface water flood risk management strategy, integrating with green infrastructure networks on the site. These provisions aim to ensure that the capacity of the drain is not impacted by development.
- 6.30 The provisions of Policy AD1 will help to protect the open countryside from inappropriate development, with proposals outside of the settlement boundary required to align with the wider policy framework within the ANP and suitable for a countryside location. This will help to prevent urban sprawl and safeguard the more rural areas of the parish, which will indirectly benefit land, soil and water resources.

- 6.31 More broadly with regard to the policy framework, policies AD3-AD6 focus on protecting and enhancing green and blue infrastructure networks within the neighbourhood area. This will indirectly support land, soil and water resources by safeguarding natural features which help to regulate environmental quality.
- 6.32 **Minor negative effects (-) are concluded for the land, soil and water resources SEA theme.** Whilst the ANP incorporates several provisions which will help to regulate environmental quality, measures are primarily focused on addressing potential impacts of new development areas and safeguarding natural assets. The proposed site allocation will result in the permanent loss of land which is some of the 'best and most versatile' land for agricultural purposes. However, it is recognised that there are no known alternative or available brownfield site opportunities in the neighbourhood area which could deliver the housing need.

## Landscape

- 6.33 With reference to landscape designations, the proposed site allocation is not within or in proximity to a National Park or National Landscape and does not overlap with any Green Belt land. The proposed site allocation is also not located in the Milton Strategic Gap presented within the emerging Cherwell Local Plan (which is located entirely north of Milton Road) and therefore does not conflict with emerging Local Plan policy. Whilst additional growth to the west of the village may encroach into the Milton Gap and contribute to coalescence between the settlements, it is acknowledged that the level of growth would not substantially harm the integrity or effectiveness of the Milton Gap. Policy AD7 within the ANP confirms that development proposals within a strategic gap will only be supported if it can be demonstrated that the scheme would not harm, individually or cumulatively, its open character.
- 6.34 Regarding local landscape and villagescape character, the proposed site allocation (whilst sloping) is at a similar elevation to surrounding development. Therefore, growth at this location is unlikely to have a significant visual impact upon the wider landscape, although it is acknowledged that local views from adjacent residential development are likely to be impacted. Policies which aim to safeguard and enhance the neighbourhood area's green and blue infrastructure networks (see AD3-AD5) will support the integrity of the public realm and protect the special character of the village. The site allocation policy (see AD2) also aims to secure an interconnected green infrastructure network through the design of the scheme, including additional planting bolstering of trees and hedgerows, and managing the transition between the built environment and open countryside. Locally, this is particularly important when considering the role of open spaces and landscape gaps in maintaining the sense of place, distinctiveness, and visual amenity of the village.
- 6.35 Policy AD1 supports development within the settlement boundary, with proposals outside of the settlement boundary not supported unless it can be demonstrated that they align with the wider ANP policy framework. Along with Policy AD6, which proposes four strategic open spaces outside of the settlement boundary, this will help prevent urban sprawl into the open countryside and more rural areas of the parish. The policy will also help to safeguard the integrity of important local landscape gaps which seek to preserve settlement identity and prevent coalescence.

- 6.36 Furthermore, Policies AD8 and AD9 have a strong focus on managing the design of new development areas. The design code for new homes outlined in Policy AD9 affords particular consideration to elements which will indirectly benefit landscape and villagescape character. This includes with respect to scale, massing and form, architectural language and detailing, boundaries and development edges, and landscaping and amenity space.
- 6.37 **Minor positive effects (+) are concluded for the landscape SEA theme.** The policy framework within the ANP emphasises the importance of securing high-quality design through new development areas which respects Adderbury's special character and distinctiveness. The provisions will also safeguard the integrity of locally important strategic gaps, aligning with the policy direction within the emerging Local Plan by preventing coalescence, preserving sense of place and community identity.

## Transportation

- 6.38 The proposed site allocation is located to the south west of the village, and pavement provision along Milton Road in its current form may limit opportunities to connect the site the village centre via active travel (i.e., walking or cycling). Opportunities to improve pedestrian connectivity between the site and the village centre should be encouraged. Nonetheless, it is acknowledged that pavements along Milton Road have recently been upgraded and a new pedestrian crossing installed, to improve accessibility. The site allocation policy (see AD2) also encourages a layout which would support active travel, ensuring that routes are integrated and connect to surrounding areas.
- 6.39 With further regard to the design of new housing, Policy AD9 includes criteria for street pattern, access, and parking. The provisions will support opportunities to improve safety, connectivity, and accessibility through design, whilst also aiming to reduce the visual prominence of vehicles and encourage pedestrian and cycle movement. In this respect, the provisions within the policy framework align with the sustainable transport hierarchy. This is important in the local context, given the proposed site allocation is located approximately 1km to the south west of the village centre, with key congestion areas prevalent around the traffic light junction of Aynho Road and Oxford Road.
- 6.40 **Minor positive effects (+) are concluded for the transportation SEA theme.** The policy framework supports active travel and encourages a shift toward more sustainable modes of transport where feasible. It also includes measures to address local priorities, for example in relation to improving connectivity and walkability between key locations.

## Conclusions and recommendations

6.41 The likely environmental effects associated with the ANP are identified by the following scoring matrix:

- Significant positive effects (++)
- Minor positive effects (+)
- Neutral or no effects (0)
- Minor negative effects (-)
- Significant negative effects (--)

6.42 **Broadly neutral effects (0) are concluded for the air quality SEA theme.**

Overall, the provisions of the ANP are not considered likely to have significant negative effects on air quality. Whilst the level of growth proposed (up to 75 homes) will inevitably increase road traffic, the absence of any AQMAs within Adderbury and the provisions of the wider policy framework will implement measures which will help to regulate air quality and sequester pollutants.

6.43 **Minor positive effects (+) are concluded for the biodiversity SEA theme.** This reflects the absence of any international or nationally designated sites within proximity to the proposed housing site allocation and the wider focus of the ANP policies which seek to enhance ecological connectivity and deliver net gains for nature.

6.44 **Broadly neutral effects (0) are concluded for the climate change SEA theme.** Whilst an increase in emissions is inevitable as a result of the proposed site allocation, development is necessary to support local housing needs, and on a global scale this is not significant. The adaptation measures proposed for the design of the proposed site allocation should ensure that flood risk issues are appropriately alleviated, with the provisions of the wider policy framework supporting the longer-term resilience of the village to the potential effects of climate change.

6.45 **Significant positive effects (++) are concluded for the community wellbeing SEA theme.** The policy framework within the ANP collectively supports a connected, inclusive, and vibrant community, encouraging high-quality and sustainable development to meet locally identified needs. In this respect, the ANP is strongly design-led. This is supported by provisions which support local businesses and employment opportunities, maintaining the role and function of Adderbury as a 'Category A' village within the Local Plan and enhancing the quality of life of residents and visitors.

6.46 **Minor positive effects (+) are concluded for the historic environment SEA theme,** recognising the focus on ensuring that new development respects the setting and significance of both designated and non-designated heritage assets and areas. The design policies set out a comprehensive range of provisions relating to the built environment which will help provide an appropriate basis for the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment associated with future growth in the neighbourhood area.

6.47 **Minor negative effects (-) are concluded for the land, soil and water resources SEA theme.** Whilst the ANP incorporates several provisions which will help to regulate environmental quality, measures are primarily focused on

addressing potential impacts of new development areas and safeguarding natural assets. The proposed site allocation will result in the permanent loss of land which is some of the 'best and most versatile' land for agricultural purposes. However, it is recognised that there are no known alternative or available brownfield site opportunities in the neighbourhood area which could deliver the housing need.

**6.48 Minor positive effects (+) are concluded for the landscape SEA theme.**

The policy framework within the ANP emphasises the importance of securing high-quality design through new development areas which respects Adderbury's special character and distinctiveness. The provisions will also safeguard the integrity of locally important strategic gaps, aligning with the policy direction within the emerging Local Plan by preventing coalescence, preserving sense of place and community identity.

**6.49 Minor positive effects (+) are concluded for the transportation SEA theme.**

The policy framework supports active travel and encourages a shift toward more sustainable modes of transport where feasible. It also includes measures to address local priorities, for example in relation to improving connectivity and walkability between key locations.

**6.50 In light of the above, the SEA does not propose any recommendations at this stage of plan making.**

## 7. Next steps

### Plan finalisation

- 7.1 This Environmental Report accompanies the ANP for Regulation 14 consultation.
- 7.2 Following Regulation 14 consultation, responses will be considered in finalising the ANP and SEA for submission. Following submission, the ANP and supporting evidence will be published for further consultation and then subjected to Independent Examination. At Independent Examination, the ANP will be considered in terms of whether it meets the Basic Conditions for Neighbourhood Plans and is in general conformity with the Local Plan.
- 7.3 If the examination leads to a favourable outcome, the ANP will then be subject to a referendum, organised by Cherwell District Council. If more than 50% of those who vote agree with the ANP, then it will be 'made'. Once 'made', the ANP will become part of the Development Plan for Cherwell, covering the defined neighbourhood area.

### Monitoring

- 7.4 The SEA regulations require 'measures envisaged concerning monitoring' to be outlined in this report. This refers to the monitoring of likely significant effects of the Neighbourhood Plan to identify any unforeseen effects early and take remedial action as appropriate.
- 7.5 It is anticipated that monitoring of effects of the ANP will be undertaken by Cherwell District Council as part of the process of preparing its Annual Monitoring Report (AMR). No significant negative effects are considered likely in the implementation of the ANP that would warrant more stringent monitoring over and above that already undertaken by Cherwell District Council.

