

Cabinet

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Annex 1 – Swindon Borough Local Plan – Pre Submission Draft Document

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Swindon Borough Local Plan 2026

Pre-Submission Document

December 2012

FOREWORD

This is a time of challenge and opportunity for Swindon Borough. Whilst the building blocks for successful economic growth remain, against a background of economic recession and public sector spending cuts, the need to plan responsibly and realistically is of greater importance. We have a responsibility not only to deliver the much-needed regeneration of the town centre but also plan for growth in a way that benefits existing and future residents of the Borough. Sustainable development is not just about providing homes, local jobs and a vibrant and successful town centre; it is also about creating inclusive, cohesive, safe and healthy communities. Fundamental to this is the timely provision of infrastructure.

This consultation document has been produced following on from Royal Assent of the Localism Act 2011, which includes measures to revoke Regional Strategies and to allow local authorities to set their own targets for economic and housing growth through the development of a Local Plan. The National Planning Policy Framework (2012) states that one of its key principles should be a proactive approach to driving and supporting sustainable economic development in order to deliver the homes, business and industrial units, infrastructure and thriving local places that the country needs. Swindon needs to rise to this challenge whilst meeting the other planning principles of conserving environmental and heritage assets and responding to the impact of climate change. Therefore the Council has taken a responsible and balanced approach to delivering growth that is achievable, deliverable and suitable. The message from the Council is “we are open for business”; but growth should be plan-led to ensure local empowerment and give clarity and certainty to both investors and residents alike.

This Local Plan provides the policy framework to deliver sustainable growth to 2026 and beyond. It provides a clear strategy for how we can address the challenges we face and identifies how much, where, when, and how new development will take place in Swindon Borough.



Rod Bluh
Leader of the Council



Dale Heenan
**Cabinet Member for Strategic
Planning and Sustainability**

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1. Introduction

What is the Local Plan?

- 1.1 The **Swindon Borough Local Plan 2026** is the main planning policy document for the Borough. It sets out how much housing, employment and retail development the Borough needs up to the year 2026 and where this should be. The plan also sets out what infrastructure will be needed to enable this development to take place. It includes policies to ensure development is of the highest quality, avoids environmentally sensitive locations, respects the existing built environment and meets the needs of present and future residents.
- 1.2 The Local Plan includes:
- a vision and strategic objectives for the development of Swindon Borough up to 2026;
 - clear policies to guide decisions on planning applications;
 - broad locations of development and the allocation of strategic sites;
 - the infrastructure requirements required in support of the proposed development;
 - the strategic context for the allocation of specific sites in either a future Council planning document and/or Neighbourhood Plans;
 - a key diagram, illustrating the main provisions and the strategic site allocations;
 - an indication of how the plan will be delivered; and
 - indicators to monitor the progress of the Plan.
- 1.3 **The Plan should be read as a whole**, with proposals for development being considered against many policies depending on the details of the proposal and its location.

The Evolution of the Swindon Borough Local Plan

- 1.4 The Statement of Community Involvement (adopted January 2007) sets out how, at that time, the Council intended to involve the community in the preparation of the Borough's main planning

documents. The Local Plan has been prepared in accordance with that Statement.

- 1.5 Until the Localism Act was introduced in 2011, Swindon Borough Council had been preparing a Core Strategy as part of the Local Development Framework. This was in line with previous planning legislation introduced by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Following the introduction of a revised development planning process by the Localism Act, and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published in March 2012, the Council has been using the work done on the preparation of a Core Strategy to form the basis of this new Local Plan. This pre-submission consultation draft has been produced with particular reference to paragraph 154 of the NPPF as follows:

Local Plans should be aspirational but realistic. They should address the spatial implications of economic, social and environmental change. Local Plans should set out the opportunities for development and clear policies on what will or will not be permitted and where. Only policies that provide a clear indication of how a decision maker should react to a development proposal should be included in the plan.

- 1.6 Work on the Core Strategy has developed through four previous rounds of public consultation plus numerous workshops and sessions with Town and Parish Councils and community groups. At each stage the Core Strategy has been revised in light of the comments received.
- 1.7 The public consultation exercises were undertaken at key stages in the preparation and were as follows:
- **Swindon Borough Core Strategy Issues and Options (April 2007).** This set out the issues facing Swindon Borough and a series of options for responding to those issues.
 - **Swindon Borough Core Strategy Preferred Options (March 2008).** This set out for consultation the Borough Council's

proposed policy directions, and highlighted alternatives where appropriate.

- **Swindon Borough Core Strategy Proposed Submission Document (July 2009).** This was intended to be the last stage of consultation before the Core Strategy was submitted to the Secretary of State. The public consultation raised general concerns about the overall level of growth at Swindon, and in particular the provision of essential infrastructure in uncertain economic times, and it was becoming evident that the housing targets were unachievable. This was at odds with the targets set through the emerging Regional Strategy. Subsequently, the new Coalition Government announced its intention to abolish the Regional Strategies and allow local planning authorities to determine their own housing targets.
- **Swindon Borough Core Strategy Revised Submission Draft (March 2011).** This contained significant changes in relation to overall housing numbers and the spatial distribution of these. However, whilst there remained public concerns over the scale of growth and in particular the allocation of greenfield sites to meet the revised targets, the business community expressed the view that the assumptions regarding the economy of Swindon were unduly pessimistic and the resultant strategy could undermine economic growth.

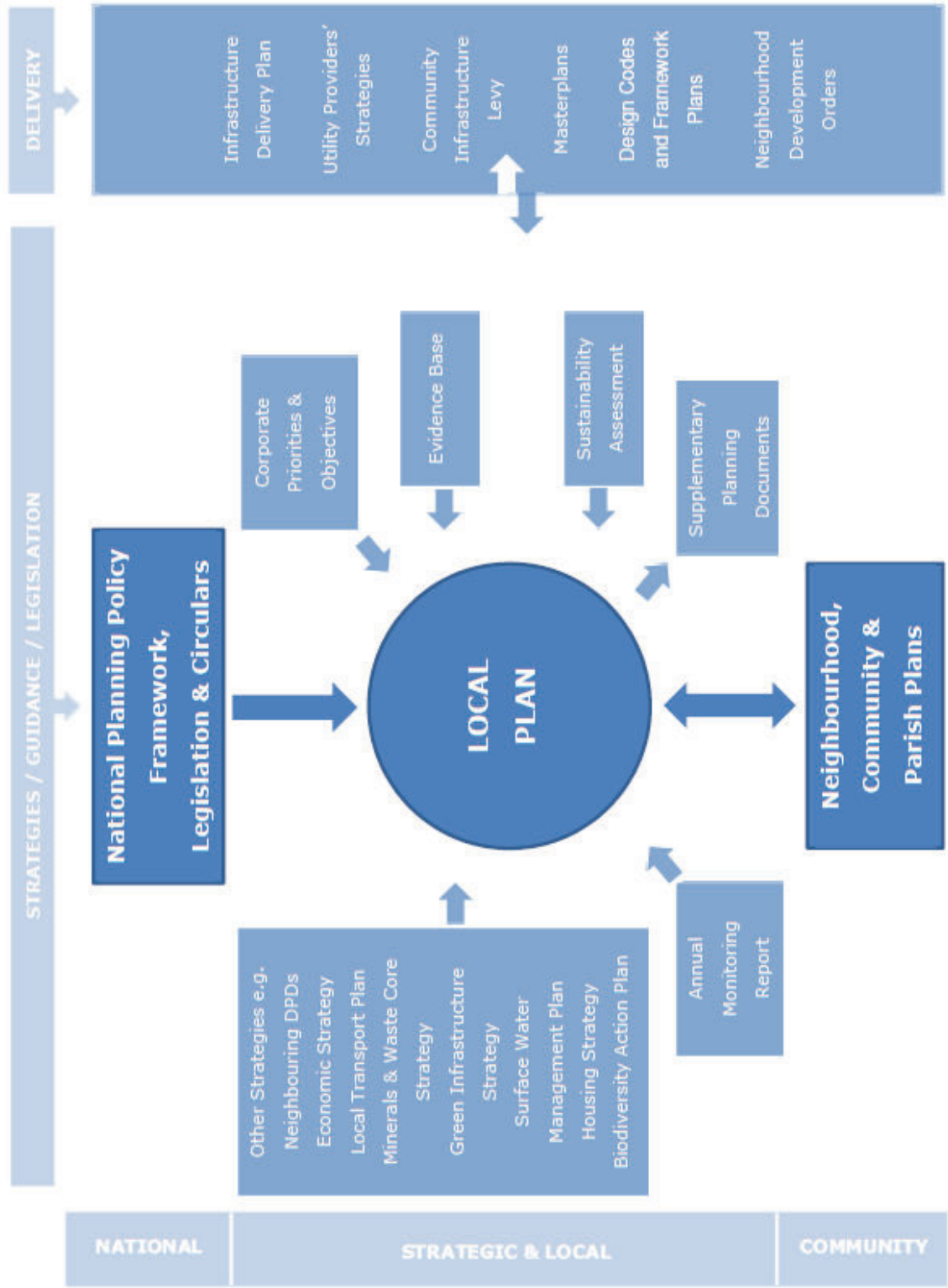
- 1.8 Significant public involvement has been undertaken during the preparation of this Local Plan. Specifically during the autumn of 2010 a series of community participation events were held across the Borough. The outcomes of these events are detailed in the Shaping Your Community Report (2011).
- 1.9 In light of the comments received and the publication of the NPPF, revisions have been made to the Core Strategy, translating it into a Local Plan. These revisions are sufficient to warrant a further round of public consultation before it is submitted for examination.

- 1.10 The Borough Council has already adopted the Swindon Central Area Action Plan (2009), which provides the planning framework to facilitate the delivery of the regeneration of Central Swindon. There are two policies detailed in the Swindon Central Area Action Plan which will be replaced by policies in the Local Plan. These are also detailed in Appendix 1.
- 1.11 A small number of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) are considered necessary to provide more detailed advice on specific topics and areas in support of the Local Plan. Further details on the contents of these SPDs are referenced at the appropriate policy. The SPDs which will accompany this Plan are:
- The Swindon Design Toolkit;
 - Green Infrastructure;
 - Transport Requirements for Development;
 - Swindon Sustainable Design and Construction;
 - Developer Contributions;
 - South Marston Village; and,
 - Eastern Villages Development Area
- 1.12 The Local Plan includes a Proposals Map, which shows the geographical areas to which policies contained within the Plan relate. It should be noted that, unless detailed in the relevant policy within this Plan, the defined settlement boundaries will remain unchanged until such time when they are reviewed either through development of Neighbourhood Plans or further site allocations work undertaken by the Council.
- 1.13 An Infrastructure Delivery Plan (formerly known as the Implementation and Monitoring Plan) sits alongside the Local Plan. It provides more detailed information on the Borough's infrastructure needs and how they will be met.
- 1.14 For clarity, the Development Plan for Swindon Borough will consist of:
- The Swindon Borough Local Plan 2026 (on adoption),
 - The Swindon Central Action Plan (2009),

- The Wiltshire and Swindon Minerals Core Strategy 2006-2026 (2009),
- The Wiltshire and Swindon Minerals Development Control Policies Development Plan Document (2009),
- The Wiltshire and Swindon Aggregate Minerals Site Allocation Development Plan Document (on adoption),
- The Wiltshire and Swindon Waste Core Strategy 2006-2026 (2009),
- The Wiltshire and Swindon Waste Development Control Policies Development Plan Document (2009),
- The Wiltshire and Swindon Waste Site Allocations Development Plan Document (on adoption), and
- any subsequent Site Allocation Plans and Neighbourhood Plans (on adoption)

1.15 The Council will produce an Annual Monitoring Report to measure the progress and effectiveness of the Development Plan.

Figure 1 Relationship with Other Plans, Documents and Strategies



Relationship to other Strategies, Plans and Priorities

- 1.16 The Swindon Borough Local Plan is influenced by many other policies and strategies that affect the future development of the Borough. Figure 1 shows the relationship between the Local Plan, other planning documents, national policy and other strategies.

National

- 1.17 In March 2012 the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published which sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It sets out the Government's requirements for the planning system only to the extent that it is relevant, proportionate and necessary to do so. It provides a framework within which local people and their accountable Councils can produce their own distinctive local and neighbourhood plans, which reflect the needs and priorities of their communities.
- 1.18 The NPPF must be taken into account in the preparation of local and neighbourhood plans, and is a material consideration in planning decisions. This Pre-Submission document has been prepared to be in conformity with the NPPF.
- 1.19 International and national bodies have set out broad principles of sustainable development. Resolution 42/187 of the United Nations General Assembly defined sustainable development as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The UK Sustainable Development Strategy Securing the Future set out five 'guiding principles' of sustainable development and four priorities:

Principles:

- ▶ Living within environmental limits
- ▶ Ensuring a strong, healthy and just society
- ▶ Achieving a sustainable economy
- ▶ Promoting good governance
- ▶ Using sound science responsibly

Priorities:

- ▶ Sustainable production and consumption
- ▶ Climate change and energy
- ▶ Natural resource protection and environmental enhancement
- ▶ Creating sustainable communities

Local

- 1.20 The Local Plan articulates the planning strategy which will help to enable the delivery of other Borough Council plans, strategies and priorities in the Borough. The key ones are summarised in the following paragraphs. Reference is also made to them and others throughout the Plan, particularly where there are clear linkages to specific policies of the Plan.
- 1.21 **The Swindon Sustainable Community Strategy: A Shared Vision for Swindon 2008–2030** is the overall vision of how we want our Borough to be by 2030. From this big picture, all types of organisations, from public services like the police and health agencies to community groups and parishes, will take their cue to develop plans and policies to make this Vision a reality.
- 1.22 The vision in the Community Strategy is based around six themes:
- Swindon as a destination of choice;
 - all people are benefiting from our growing economy;
 - we have safeguarded our environment for future generations;
 - a healthy, caring and supportive community;
 - a place where high aspirations are supported by superb education provision for all ages; and
 - a place where local people can have real influence and where they feel safe.
- 1.23 **‘One Swindon’** sets out a commitment to a new partnership of the public sector working with the business, community and voluntary sectors and above all local people to deliver on a shared focus over the period 2011 – 2015. The following priorities for One Swindon have been developed:

- ▶ I like where I live;
- ▶ We can all benefit from a growing economy and better town centre;
- ▶ Everyone is enjoying sports, leisure and cultural opportunities; and
- ▶ Living independently, protected from harm, leading healthy lives and making a positive contribution.

1.24 The Council's **Corporate Strategy 2012** sets out the priorities for the council over the next 3-5 years:

- ▶ Work with residents to create neighbourhoods, which are clean and cared for;
- ▶ Create the environment for good economic growth;
- ▶ Rebalance the mix of our interventions to prevent or reduce vulnerability and health inequalities;
- ▶ Work together with young and older people, families and communities to help them reach their potential; and
- ▶ Make full use of Swindon's untapped resources, while better prioritising the Council's spending

1.25 The Local Plan is aligned to and enables the spatial delivery of the **Swindon Borough Economic Strategy**. The Economic Strategy identifies the following priorities:

- ▶ Create a Place of Opportunity for Young People;
- ▶ Develop Higher Education Facilities for Swindon;
- ▶ Position Swindon as a hub of advanced engineering and technology;
- ▶ Revitalise Swindon town centre;
- ▶ Establish Swindon as a regional leisure destination; and
- ▶ Create Low Carbon Swindon.

1.26 **The Local Investment Plan** sets out Swindon's long-term investment needs which are required to support the development strategy and has been developed with input from partner organisations and the community. It seeks to build on information in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan and bridge any funding shortfalls. It will be updated on a regular basis in light of changing circumstances.

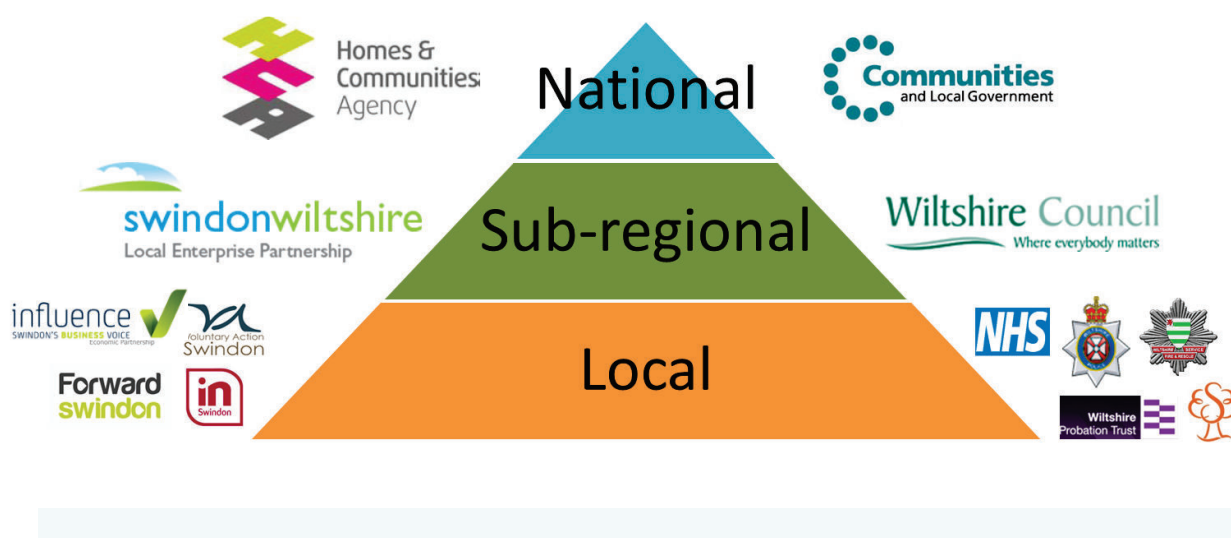
Other Local Strategies & Evidence Base

- 1.27 There are numerous other Borough Council and partner organisation strategies that have informed the development of the Local Plan. These and others are also referenced throughout the Plan where they have a specific relationship with a policy or theme and a full list of evidence base documents can be found in Appendix 3. In developing the Local Plan, the Borough Council has undertaken or commissioned research into a variety of subject areas to help shape its policies. In many cases this has involved working closely with other stakeholders, including infrastructure providers and other public and private sector bodies and organisations that are responsible for delivering change, to produce the various studies and strategies.
- 1.28 The Borough Council is working with the business community through the Wiltshire and Swindon Enterprise Partnership to enable economic growth. It is also working with Influence Swindon to understand the business community needs.

Duty to Co-operate

- 1.29 The Localism Act 2011 introduced a requirement on local planning authorities to co-operate with neighbouring local authorities and other bodies with a regulatory or strategic interest in Local Plan issues. The “Duty to Co-operate” (The Duty) includes the need to consider the impact of the strategy as a whole and its proposals for major development on other places close to Swindon Borough and on those places where the Plan’s proposals have a strategic impact. As a result, the Borough Council has produced a ‘Duty to Co-operate Statement’ which documents how the Council has fulfilled the Duty and how the bodies referred to in the Act and their recommendations have helped to shape the Plan. As shown in Figure 2 below, this includes our relationships with Communities and Local Government (CLG), the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA), Wiltshire Council and Forward Swindon.

Figure 2: Relationship with prescribed and other bodies



Sustainability Appraisal

- 1.30 The achievement of sustainable development is the core principle underpinning the planning system. This Pre-Submission Document is accompanied by a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) Report, which aims to ensure that the principles of sustainable development have been incorporated throughout the development of the Local Plan. The Sustainability Appraisal Report incorporates a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), meeting the requirements of EU Directive 2001/42/EC.

Habitats Regulations Assessment

- 1.31 This Pre-Submission document is accompanied by a Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) to meet the requirements of The European Directive (92/43/EEC) on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and Wild Flora and Fauna (the Habitats Directive). The HRA is

required to be undertaken on proposed plans or projects which are likely to have a significant effect on one or more Natura 2000 sites either individually, or in combination with other plans and projects.

Diversity Impact Assessment

- 1.32 Diversity Impact Assessments analyse functions and policies to make sure that Swindon Borough Council's duty to promote equality and recognise diversity are met. The Local Plan has been subject to a Diversity Impact Assessment in line with the Council's guidelines.

Health Impact Assessment

- 1.33 A Health Impact Assessment (HIA) has been undertaken on the Local Plan to assess the potential effects that the policies may have on the health of the population and the distribution of those effects within the population.

Making Representations to this Local Plan

We need your views

- 1.34 Your views are sought on the contents of this Plan. The Borough Council will summarise the main issues raised by the consultation, and, before the document is formally submitted to the Secretary of State for adoption, will consider what changes may need to be made to it. All comments that we receive, together with the Council's proposed changes, will be submitted to the Secretary of State to be considered as part of the examination of the Local Plan. An independent Planning Inspector will examine the Local Plan before it can be adopted, and will consider whether the strategy complies with legal requirements and is 'sound'. Whilst the issues raised by the consultation will be taken into account, the Public Examination will focus only on matters that help the Inspector assess the soundness of the Plan. Therefore, representations submitted should relate only to the requirements of legal compliance or the 'Tests of Soundness.'
- 1.35 Representations should be made on the accompanying form made available during the period of consultation. The form includes a guidance note on how to respond and an explanation of the legal requirements and test of soundness.
- 1.36 Comments can be made by :
- ▶ e-mail to forwardplanning@swindon.gov.uk
 - ▶ Online, using the online form on the Council's website www.swindon.gov.uk/corestrategy
 - ▶ In writing using the response forms provided, to the following address:

**Planning Service,
Freepost SCE5251,
Swindon Borough Council,
5th Floor, Wat Tyler House West,
Beckhampton Street,
Swindon
SN1 1JH**

- 1.37 Please ensure that you include your name and address with any comments. Please note that all comments will be placed on a public register that will be available for the general public to view, and will be forwarded to the Inspector who will conduct the Public Examination.
- 1.38 The Sustainability Appraisal Report, Appropriate Assessment Report and evidence base documents are also available for public consultation.
- 1.39 There will be an eight-week period of formal consultation on the Local Plan and associated reports.

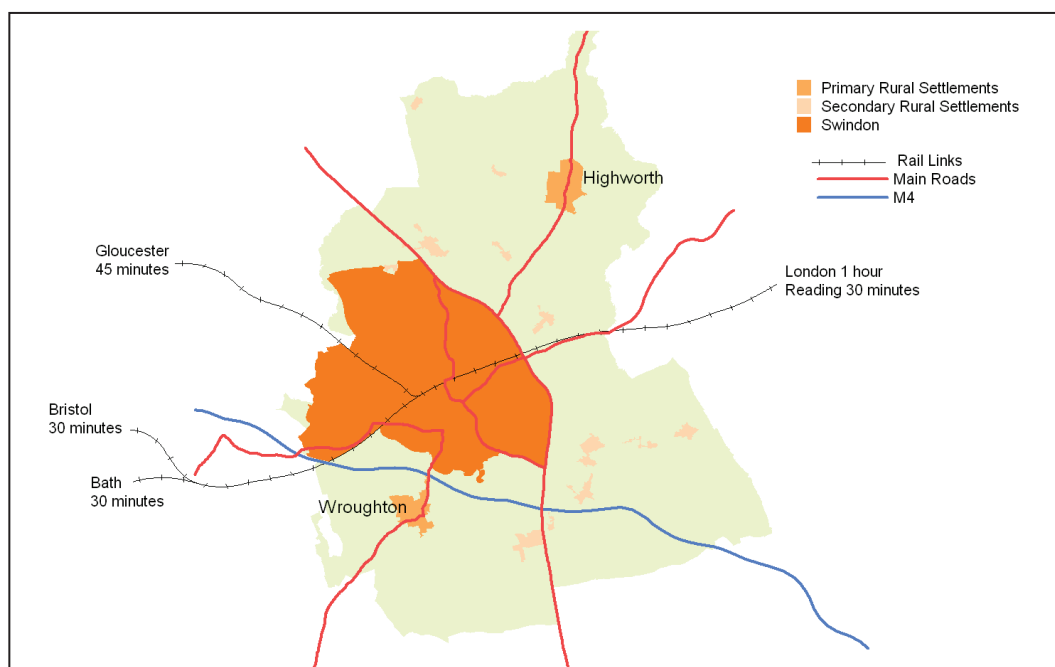
The deadline for comments is xxx pm on xxx

2 Context, Spatial Vision and Strategic Objectives

Context

- 2.1 The Borough is 230km² (89 square miles) in area and is home to about 209,000¹ people. It consists of the town of Swindon itself, the market town of Highworth, the large village of Wroughton, and a number of smaller villages and hamlets. Swindon is a daily destination for many people. Swindon is at the heart of the M4 corridor and has excellent links to the rest of the UK and beyond, together with a superb natural setting.

Figure 3 Map of Swindon Borough



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- 2.2 Swindon probably derives its name from the Saxon 'swine dun' (hill where pigs were raised) although its occupation extends before that period to when Prehistoric and Romano-British settlers were attracted to the ridge. Latterly it developed throughout the Medieval period when it became established as a small market town with a charter being given in 1626. It prospered but remained relatively small until the coming of the Wiltshire and Berkshire Canal in 1810 and shortly

¹ 2011 Census First Release

afterwards the railway, which was the key driver in the town's expansion.

- 2.3 Modern Swindon was established on Brunel's vision, when he located his railway works here in the 1840s and a special and significant heritage remains from this Victorian era. Swindon has a post-war history of confident and continuous growth. In the face of decline in the railway industry, the attraction of new industries and new people was seen as the town's only means of escaping from economic decline. The 1950s and 1960s saw considerable migration from the rest of the UK, particularly from London.
- 2.4 Swindon has transformed itself from a town dominated by the railway industry into one with a prosperous economy with a mix of modern industries. It has attracted considerable inward investment from national and international businesses, including Honda, BMW, Zurich, Nationwide, WH Smith and The National Trust. The remainder of the Borough is characterised by small market towns, villages and high quality landscape, including parts of the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the Thames Vale.
- 2.5 Swindon Borough has a rich variety of historic and natural features that add to the local distinctiveness, character, appearance and sense of identity of the Borough's towns, villages and countryside.

The Challenge for Swindon Borough

- 2.6 Working with the community and with other organisations, the challenge is to deliver economic growth in Swindon Borough in a way that is balanced, sustainable and improves the quality of life of all.
- 2.7 Creating sustainable communities is about more than just housing. It is also about:
- ▶ increasing jobs and economic growth, promoting social justice and improving the quality of life;
 - ▶ meeting the needs of a changing population, particularly one that is ageing;

- ▶ encouraging people to get involved in the decisions that affect their community;
- ▶ ensuring the delivery of better public services;
- ▶ building schools, hospitals and transport as an integral part of development, not an afterthought;
- ▶ improving the environment, for example by making streets, parks and squares cleaner, safer and greener, and building more environmentally friendly buildings;
- ▶ responding to the threats posed by climate change, and
- ▶ recognising and understanding the social and economic value of historical, cultural and natural assets.

2.8 Swindon has a strong potential for growth, however there remain significant threats to economic success, particularly:

- ▶ the poor performance of Swindon town centre, specifically in terms of the retail and office offer;
- ▶ a lower level of higher-educational qualifications of residents compared to competing towns and cities;
- ▶ the perceived poor image of Swindon; and
- ▶ a low retention of wealth within the Borough

2.9 Unplanned and un-coordinated growth could damage the longer-term investment prospects for the Borough. Past experience of the town's expansion has demonstrated that the more successful areas of growth have been where a long-term vision and plan has been in place. Equally, the Council is keen to learn from recent developments and has undertaken resident surveys of new estates to inform this Plan.

2.10 A considerable amount of new and improved infrastructure will be needed to support the new developments proposed. A significant amount will be funded from the new developments themselves, by means of planning permission conditions and/or development contributions.

Swindon's Economic Prospects

2.11 The headline messages about Swindon's comparative performance are:

- ▶ Swindon continues to have a **productive economy** with one of the highest gross value added (GVA) per capita figures amongst locations outside London. However, it has fallen behind Milton Keynes, Newbury and Reading and has seen growth slow significantly in the last decade compared to other competitor locations.
- ▶ The Borough has also seen **employment losses over the past decade**, a period when many comparator locations saw growth. Youth unemployment has become a particularly acute problem as the recession took hold.
- ▶ The Borough's resident **skills base is well matched to its current economy** in which manufacturing, logistics/distribution and consumer services play a large part.
- ▶ However, it is a **relatively lower skilled location**. Residents tend to have higher proportions of lower level skills and work in lower skilled occupations than other locations.
- ▶ The Borough is **well located**, with excellent access via road and rail to London, Heathrow, the Greater South East, the Midlands, the West Country and Wales.
- ▶ Swindon's excellent location also enables it to draw on an **extensive labour market** along the M4 corridor and Great Western rail route. In this respect, it should be well placed to capture a share of future economic growth in south east/south west England.
- ▶ It is a **cost competitive location** in which house prices are lower than many areas and which compares favourably to other locations in terms of commercial property prices.

The Local Plan's Role in Responding to the Challenge

- 2.12 The Local Plan has a key role in realising the economic advantages of Swindon and in helping to address those aspects in which the Borough is comparatively weak, whilst at the same time conserving and enhancing the natural and built environment and improving the quality of life for its residents. It does this by allocating sufficient land for economic growth and setting out clear policies on which to make decisions. These are set out in Part 3 and in more detail in Parts 4 and 5 of this Local Plan.

The Spatial Vision

“The Borough of Swindon will become a place where people choose to live, visit and invest. As an important regional centre, Swindon’s appeal will stem from having an attractive and well-equipped town that has successfully blended traditional architecture with high quality contemporary buildings that incorporate sustainable design and construction principles.

The achievement of a high quality public realm in the heart of the town linked to the countryside will provide a real focal point for visitors and Swindonians alike.

Swindon will become one of the best business locations in the UK, offering a high quality of life, not just to its residents, but also to those from a much wider catchment area. New jobs will be created and there will be the fullest range of employment opportunities for the whole community.

Swindon will be at the centre of a network of multifunctional green spaces linking the town to the wider countryside. Swindon will have responded to the needs of a growing population in a way that has protected and enhanced our natural and historic environment.

People in Swindon will have the opportunity to live active, healthy and learning lifestyles.”

- 2.13 The Spatial Vision is drawn from the **Swindon Sustainable Community Strategy: A Shared Vision for Swindon**, which has been widely consulted on and received general support.

The Strategic Priorities for Swindon Borough Local Plan

- 2.14 The key development priorities which guide the Local Plan’s Objectives are set out below:

- ▶ Deliver growth that is balanced and sustainable, and provides the necessary infrastructure, while addressing the impacts of climate change.

- ▶ Deliver regeneration in a way that meets the needs of Swindon's future, but conserves and enhances the best of the past.
- ▶ Recognises the important role of green infrastructure to enhance the quality of life for existing and future residents

2.15 The delivery of these priorities is underpinned by a need for high-quality design, and a need to protect and enhance existing and deliver new green infrastructure, ensuring that opportunities for designing in measures to improve mental and physical wellbeing meet local community needs and aspirations.

The Local Plan Objectives

2.16 Underpinning the Spatial Vision for Swindon and the Borough Council's priorities is a themed set of Objectives based on the strategies of the Borough and its partners, and developed through consultation. These are illustrated in Figure 3 and set out below:

Strategic Objective 1: High Quality Sustainable Development – to improve the image of Swindon, enable inclusive communities and address climate change by the provision of high quality, well designed and sustainable development.

Strategic Objective 2: Infrastructure - to meet the infrastructure needs for and arising from the growth of Swindon (including health and community needs) in a timely and co-ordinated manner and being adequately funded.

Strategic Objective 3: Economy - to meet the needs of local businesses and the forecast growth in the local economy, and to enhance Swindon's position as the UK's best business location.

Strategic Objective 4: Housing - to meet the Borough's housing needs by the provision of well-designed sustainable housing, at sustainable locations and at a range of types and densities according

to local needs and circumstances, and that promotes the effective use of land.

Strategic Objective 5: Education - to meet the need for education provision arising from the anticipated growth in population and to enable an improvement in skills and qualifications, particularly through the provision and support of tertiary education opportunities.

Strategic Objective 6: Community and Health – to promote healthy lifestyles and to meet the need for community and health facilities arising from growth and demographic change in the Borough.

Strategic Objective 7: Transport - to support Swindon's growth by the provision of a comprehensive and sustainable transport network that is efficient, safe, affordable, accessible and easy to understand, and offers a genuine choice of modes.

Strategic Objective 8: Culture and Leisure: - to enable the provision of cultural and leisure facilities commensurate with Swindon's size and growth in population and realise Swindon's potential as Regional Leisure Destination

Strategic Objective 9: Green Infrastructure - to provide an attractive and inspirational environment to live, work, learn and play, by the provision of a far-reaching network of connected and multi-functional green spaces linked to the wider countryside.

Strategic Objective 10: Natural, Built & Historic Environment - to ensure that development respects, enhances, and conserve the best of the existing built, historic and natural environment in the Borough.

Figure 4 –The Local Plan Strategic Priorities and Objectives



3 Sustainable Development Strategy

Sustainable Development Strategy

Strategic Objectives

The Sustainable Development Strategy flows directly from and helps to implement all Strategic Objectives set out in section 2 of this Plan.

- 3.1 Part 3 presents the sustainable development strategy for Swindon Borough for the period to 2026. It sets out policies which:
- ▶ establish sustainable development principles by which all development proposed in the Borough will be assessed;
 - ▶ propose the appropriate amount and broad location of future development in the Borough, based on robust evidence and consultation; and
 - ▶ determine how development will be managed including how the presumption in favour of sustainable development will be applied.
- 3.2 The greatest challenge in planning for growth and change is to ensure that a balance is struck between responding to local needs, accommodating growth in population and nurturing and enabling growth in the economy, whilst at the same time protecting and conserving vital assets, facilities and services and what is good about our built and natural environments. It is the purpose of this Plan to ensure that this balance is struck in the interests of all its existing and future residents, workforce and visitors.
- 3.3 Within these constraints, opportunities and needs, the Local Plan sets out clearly how development proposals are going to be fulfilled; where, by when and how growth and change will be managed. To regulate this change, robustly evidenced policies have been developed to guide and enforce the strategy and steer decisions on proposals for development throughout the Borough. However, planning cannot make

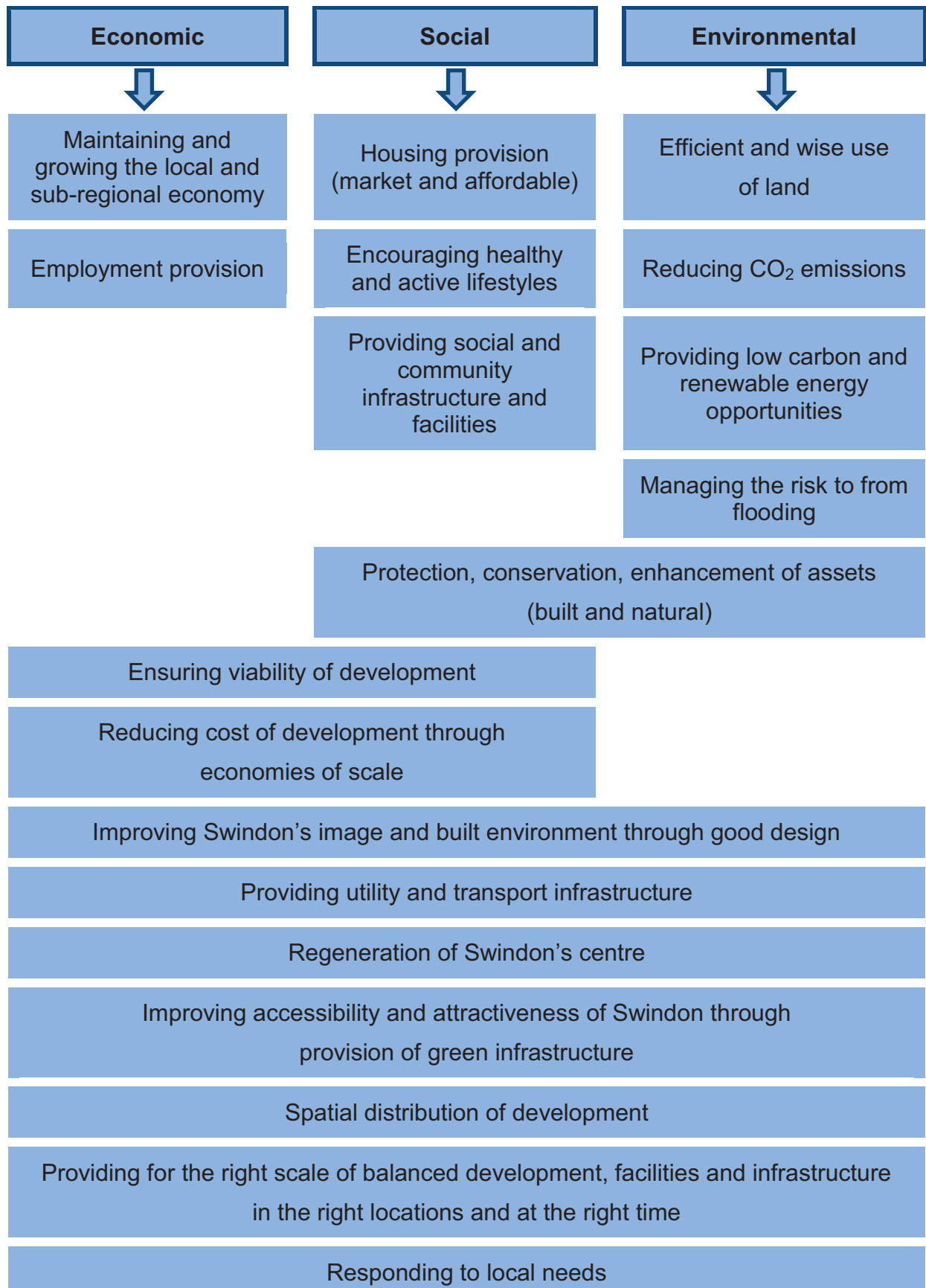
desired changes happen; it can only ensure that the right set of policies and plans are in place to help enable them to happen.

- 3.4 The choices made through this Plan and the consultations which have run before it, have been based on the principles of providing sustainable and balanced development and, within the context of the ability of the local authority, development industry and other bodies and agencies, to deliver this change.
- 3.5 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) encapsulates the approach that planning must take to planning for and delivering balanced growth and change. This continues a direction of travel set in motion by the UK Sustainable Development Strategy ‘Securing the Future’¹, and by the United Nations before it when it defined ‘sustainable development’ as “meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”.² The NPPF defines “sustainable” as “ensuring that better lives for ourselves don’t mean worse lives for future generations” and development as “growth”. It suggests that in delivering sustainable development, the planning system needs to perform social, economic and environmental roles and that the principle of sustainable development should be a “golden thread” throughout planning. In broad terms, ‘sustainable development’ can be read as providing ‘balanced development’.
- 3.6 In Swindon Borough there are a multitude of issues that this Plan must address when setting a framework for the effective management and delivery of sustainable and balanced development. Many sit across social, economic and / or environmental roles rather than neatly fitting within one category. These include (but are not limited to), those listed in Figure 5 (in no order of priority).

¹ *Securing the Future* set out five ‘guiding principles’ of sustainable development: living within the planet’s environmental limits; ensuring a strong, healthy and just society; achieving a sustainable economy; promoting good governance; and using sound science responsibly.

² See United Nations. 1987. [Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development](#), General Assembly Resolution 42/187, 11 December 1987

Figure 5 Key Issues for Swindon Borough Local Plan



Policy SD1 Sustainable Development Principles

To enable the delivery of sustainable development and sustainable communities in the Borough all development proposals will:

- **be of high quality design;**
- **promote healthy, safe and inclusive communities;**
- **respect, conserve, and enhance the natural, built and historic environment;**
- **assess and address the impact of climate change through mitigation and / or adaption measures;**
- **provide or contribute to the assessed local and borough wide infrastructure and service requirements;**
- **contribute to the retention and growth of the local economy and complement town centre regeneration;**
- **be accessible by walking, cycling and/or public transport; and,**
- **use land and resources (such as water, energy, minerals and waste) in an efficient and effective way; and**

3.7 In the planning context, sustainable development principles need to be about bringing together a combination of factors to help ensure that new development minimises and mitigates against its impact where it is proposed, provides adequate and accessible services and facilities for the residents or employees who use that new development and overall delivers a “balanced development” which respects the social, environmental and economic demands placed upon it. In short, they are the critical components required to deliver balanced growth and change.

3.8 Policy SD1 sets out the core development principles which underpin this Local Plan and the development proposals which will come forward

in the Borough. They represent a sustainable and balanced approach to the provision of new development and respond to:

- ▶ Swindon Borough’s strategic objectives and priorities identified in Parts 1 and 2 of this Plan, translating them into “on the ground” positive requirements and outcomes;
- ▶ the key issues pertinent to Swindon Borough identified in section 2 above, enabling real progress to be made through planning in response to the challenges faced by the Borough at the local and sub-regional levels, and to play its part in responding to similar challenges at the national and international levels;
- ▶ the need for all new development to contribute to sustainable and balanced growth and positive change for the better in Swindon Borough; and,
- ▶ the Government’s desire, through the NPPF, to see sustainable economic growth at the heart of planning which respects and balances all social, economic and environmental factors with the need for development.

3.9 In doing so the criteria provide the basis of standards and requirements that all new development in the Borough, whatever the scale and wherever it is located, should meet. The policy provides the platform for more detailed policies which follow in Parts 4 and 5 of this Plan.

Evidence Base

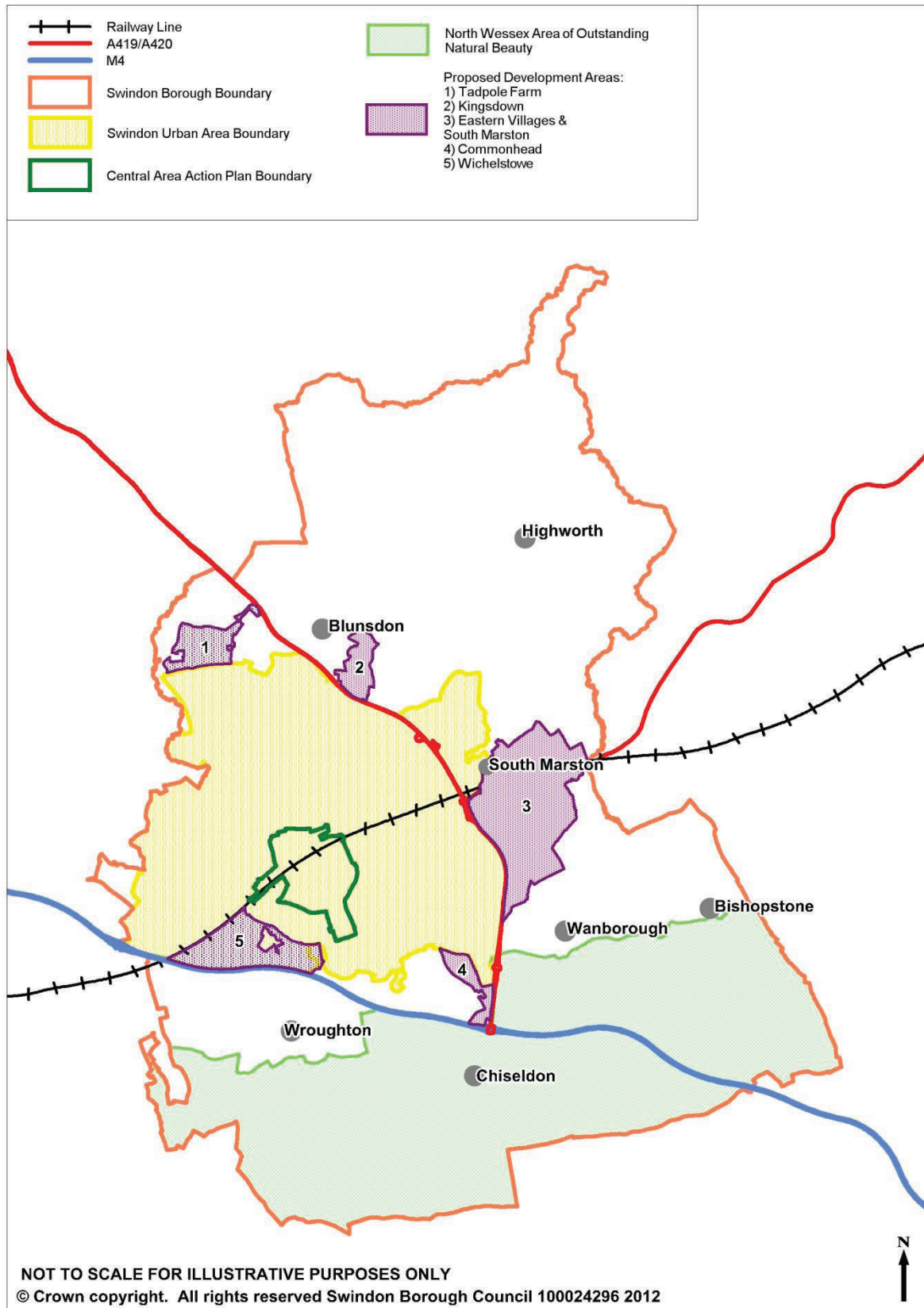
Key Evidence Documents:

- The Swindon Sustainable Community Strategy: A Shared Vision for Swindon 2008–2030 (2008)
- Swindon Climate Change Action Plan (2006)
- Swindon Economic Strategy (2012)
- Active Swindon Strategy (2009)

Delivery and links with other key policies

- 3.10 The delivery of sustainable development will be achieved through:
- The implementation of the sustainable development strategy in this Plan and associated Development Plan Documents (DPDs);
 - Neighbourhood Plans and Neighbourhood Development Orders adopted by the Borough Council;
 - Collaboration with other local authorities, Neighbourhood Forums, Parish Councils, developers, infrastructure providers and other key stakeholders as appropriate to enable the delivery of the above Plans and proposals for sustainable growth and development; and,
 - The consideration of development proposals within and outwith of these processes through the application of SD2 and SD3 and other relevant policies in this Plan.
- 3.11 The Swindon Design Toolkit Supplementary Planning Document will set out our approach to successful regeneration and place making to deliver the best and most sustainable outcomes for Swindon. Targeted investment beyond the standard at key destinations can help deliver high quality development that can help in transforming Swindon's image and redressing its design legacy.
- 3.12 As the policy setting out the key principles for the strategy, policy SD1 links through to all other policies in this plan.

Figure 6 - Key Diagram



Policy SD2: The Sustainable Development Strategy

- a. Recognising its role and function in the wider area development in the Borough will be concentrated at Swindon through a combination of:
- realising development opportunities within Swindon’s urban area; and,
 - allocated strategic sites at; Wichelstowe, Commonhead, Tadpole Farm, Kingsdown and the proposed New Eastern Villages, Rowborough and expanded South Marston, as defined on the Key Diagram;
- b. The Swindon Central Area, as defined on the Key Diagram and at Figure 7, will be the main focus and first preference for the location of built civic, cultural, further education, office, retail, leisure and regional sports facilities.
- c. Outside Swindon:
- rural development will be located primarily at Highworth and Wroughton, which (of the rural settlements) are the most accessible and maintain the largest range of facilities;
 - South Marston will be extended as part of the allocated strategic extension sites in part a. above;
 - development at Broad Blunsdon, Chiseldon, Wanborough and Bishopstone will be supported where it delivers (at least) the quantum of development identified in the Plan and responds positively to address local needs through the Neighbourhood Plan process or further site allocation work as detailed in policy LN1; and,
 - development proposals in rural and countryside locations outside these named settlements will be permitted where:
 - local needs have been identified and allocated through a

Neighbourhood Plan or Neighbourhood Development Order, and /or;

- it supports the expansion of tourist and visitor facilities in appropriate locations where identified needs are not met by existing facilities in rural service centre; or
- the proposals satisfy the policy requirements of this Plan.

d. Sustainable economic and housing growth will be delivered in Swindon Borough during the plan period through the provision of:

- 120.26 hectares of employment land through:
 - 77.5 hectares of additional employment land; and,
 - 42.76 hectares with permission and existing allocations
- About 22,000 homes between 2011 and 2026, phased as follows:
 - 1,150 per annum between 2011 and 2016; and,
 - 1,625 per annum between 2016 and 2026.

e. This quantum of employment land and housing numbers for the period 2011-26 will be distributed as set out below:

Table 1. Housing and Employment Land Distribution

	Dwellings	Additional Employment Land & Floorspace
Swindon's Central Area	about 1,000	90,000 m² office
Remainder Swindon's existing urban area	about 3,500	
Northern Development Area	589	
Wichelstowe	4,064	12.5 hectares
Commonhead	890	15 hectares

Tadpole Farm	1,695	5 hectares
New Eastern Villages	about 6,000	about 40 hectares
Rowborough	about 1,500	
South Marston Village: Greenfield	500	
Brownfield	about 140	
Kingsdown	about 1,650	
Highworth	at least 200*	5 hectares
Wroughton	at least 150*	
Other Villages	at least 100*	
<p>* See paragraph 3.24 below</p> <p>The Northern Development Area, Wichelstowe, Commonhead and Tadpole Farm have existing permissions. The number of dwellings and employment land for these areas are per the existing permissions.</p>		

3.13 The development strategy aims to meet Swindon's development needs whilst protecting the Borough's most important assets. Development is to be concentrated primarily at Swindon as the focal point for the economy, services and facilities and transport for the Borough and the wider-area. Urban concentration is the most sustainable development strategy because:

- ▶ it will create a better balance between job growth and housing, and; and
- ▶ critical mass and economies of scale can be more easily attained making the best use of existing and planned infrastructure and making the most efficient use of public resources and developer contributions.

3.14 The convenience and low prices of large supermarkets and the flexibility, choice and mobility provided by the car are increasingly undermining the prospects and viability of shops and services in smaller towns and villages. A limited amount of development has the

potential to help support the long-term viability of these and other local facilities, and provide local job opportunities.

- 3.15 The Council recognises that not all of Swindon's needs can be met within the existing urban area. Therefore Swindon is adopting a rational and responsible approach to town expansion in order to deliver the best and most sustainable outcomes for the town. Accordingly, development opportunities should be realistic and not compromise the existing or emerging longer-term vision and strategy. To ensure that this takes place, due consideration has been given to constraints and advice received both from statutory and non-statutory bodies and organisations to ensure that the allocations of the Local Plan are realistically capable of being implemented.

Economic Growth

- 3.16 The Swindon Borough Economic Strategy demonstrates the potential for continued economic growth for the Borough over the next 15 years, based on a number of priority key sectors. Economic growth not only secures future jobs for residents, but also provides much continued investment in the town that enables improving infrastructure and services. This Local Plan's key role in supporting economic growth is through the identification of sufficient and deliverable employment land and housing commensurate with growth forecasts. Since the previous draft of the Core Strategy (2011) work has been undertaken to address comments that the strategy was based on a single economic growth projection. This work has produced a base scenario and higher growth scenario. (increase in jobs 2011-26), as follows:

- Base scenario +10,400
- High scenario +19,600
- Core Strategy (2011) +14,500 (for comparison)

- 3.17 On the basis of the following requirements the high scenario has been adopted as the target to be met. The Local Plan needs to:

- be NPPF compliant;

- be in line with the Borough’s Economic Strategy – prioritising of sectors;
- acknowledge the aspirations of the Local Economic Partnership;
- send out a ‘positive message’ to the business community that Swindon is ‘open for business’, and
- respond positively to the Government’s growth announcements.

3.18 The development strategy for the Borough has been developed based on a position of moving from recession to recovery during the Plan period, whilst recognizing that this recovery could be a slow transition to one of growth. On this basis, should the economy recover either much quicker or much slower than anticipated by the Plan’s evidence base, and the strategy no longer becomes a true reflection of the pace or type of growth and change expected at the time of adoption, the Plan will be reviewed to adjust the strategy to reflect the different pace of change.

Employment Land

3.19 To meet future employment land (B-use Class) an additional requirement of 77.5 hectares of employment land has been identified. This is addition to permissions³ yet implemented (42.76ha) and allocations taken forward from the Adopted 2011 Local Plan (3.2ha), as set out in Table 2 below. In addition 90,000m² of B1 (office) floorspace is provided for in the Swindon Central area.

Table 2 – Employment Land with permission and existing allocations

Site	Area (hectares)	Potential Likely Use
Delta 300	0.3	Light industrial or distribution
Edison Road, Dorcan	2.42	Light industrial
Penny Lane, Drakes Way	1.12	Office

³ Excluding Commonhead, Tadpole Farm and Wichelstowe.

Europa/Brittania	1.65	Manufacturing
Adj. to Abbey Stadium	4	Office – business park
Hillmead (2 sites)	7.9	Light industrial or distribution
Keypoint- K3	2.9	Distribution
Rivermead	1.3	Light industrial or distribution
Site 10a – South Marston Park	0.6	Office
Site 10b – South Marston Park	1.45	Distribution
Site 4 – South Marston Park	0.7	Light industrial or distribution
G-Park (remainder)	15.25	Large Distribution
Adjacent Kembrey Park	0.79	Office
Plot 9 Windmill Hill	2.38	Office
Total	42.76	

- 3.20 The existing available sites are mainly small sites with the exception of the remainder of the G-Park site. In order to provide for a range of sites to meet market expectations; to allow for expansion and relocation of existing businesses in Swindon; and to allow for churn, a substantial amount of new employment land is allocated. In particular, it is recognised that Swindon's location makes it an attractive to regional distribution centres. These large distribution units have a role to play in a balanced approach to economic growth in the Borough, but are land-hungry, typically 15 to 20 hectares. It is also critical that land is available in the both the short and longer term to realise the aims of the economic strategy. Thus the additional allocations include provision for

advanced manufacturing, and low carbon, creative and ICT industries. Table 3 below sets out the additional allocations and the likely potential uses and their delivery timescale.

Table 3 – Employment Land Allocations

Allocation	Area	Potential Use	Likely time scale
Wichelstowe	12.5 ha	B1b/c – Advanced Technology Park and Low Carbon R&D	5-10 years
Commonhead	15 ha	B1a – Prestige Business Park	10-15 years
New Eastern Villages	2.5 ha	B1a – Office Space Business Professional Financial Services	0-5 years
	7.5 ha	B1c/B2 – advanced manufacturing	0-5 years
	30 ha	B8 – Medium & Large Distribution	0-5 years
Tadpole Farm	5 ha	B1a/b –Low Carbon and creative sectors	5-10 years

Housing

- 3.21 On this basis of new economic projections and to meet locally derived demand for new housing, about 22,000 additional homes are required for 2011-2026. After taking account of completions between 2006 and 2011 (6,852), this equates to about 29,000 houses for the period 2006 to 2026. Approximately one-third of the additional housing requirement is needed to meet local needs through forecast changes in household and demographic structures in the Borough.

- 3.22 This revised requirement represents 1466 new homes per year on average (2010 to 2026), a 28% increase on the annual average completions since 1996, and thereby providing for a significant boost in housing as required by the NPPF. However, as economic growth projections over the short-term are less optimistic than they would be during a period of strong economic growth, the phasing of the release of housing sites is particularly important - there is no advantage in releasing too many development sites which are unlikely to be delivered. To prevent unnecessary release of additional greenfield housing sites the housing targets are phased to an annual average of 1,150 dwellings a year for the period to 2016, with 1,625 per annum from 2016 to 2026. Housing and economic growth will be regularly assessed to ensure they are consistent with the assumptions underpinning this Plan. If proven to be significantly out-of step a review of the targets will be undertaken which may result in an extension of the phasing period.⁴ A housing trajectory is shown at Appendix 6.
- 3.23 Development of previously developed land will be maximised. However, this alone will not be sufficient to deliver the housing numbers required by 2026. To complement development in the urban area, additional housing is allocated at Kingsdown and the New Eastern Villages, Rowborough and expanded South Marston Village, in addition to the existing planning consents at Wichelstowe, Commonhead and Tadpole Farm. More detail policies for these allocations are included within the New Communities (Section 5) of this Plan. Limited development is also proposed at the remaining settlements to support the viability of local services and facilities, particularly Highworth and Wroughton, which have the greatest range of services and facilities, and are the most accessible.
- 3.24 Outside of the strategic allocations at the new communities, the Local Plan sets an approximate number of dwellings which it has been demonstrated through evidence are broadly appropriate, in terms of

⁴ A review of housing targets would be subject to the statutory process including public consultation, sustainability assessment and examination.

scale and fit within the overall spatial strategy for the Borough, for the places specified. The Neighbourhood Planning process allows for the additional allocation of specific numbers of dwellings above that set in adopted Local Plans, where they have been tested through the Neighbourhood Planning process, and the Plans proceed to adoption by the Borough Council. Policy LN1 sets out the approach to Neighbourhood Planning which will be taken within the Borough.

- 3.25 There is a significant cross border relationship with Wiltshire Council. The former emerging Regional Strategy for the South West proposed that part of Swindon's housing need be met on land to the west of Swindon within Wiltshire. Due to the levels of growth being proposed there is no longer a need to provide growth on land to the west of Swindon within Wiltshire due to alternative proposals. Should the proposed strategy and level of growth for Swindon change, Wiltshire Council and Swindon Borough Council as co-operating authorities, will continue to discuss the most appropriate strategy for Swindon's future growth. If land to the west of Swindon area becomes a potential option for growth again appropriate consultation will be undertaken and if necessary the two authorities can pursue a single issue joint Site Allocations DPD for this area.
- 3.26 In accordance with NPPF the Council will identify and update annually a supply of deliverable sites to provide 5-years' worth of housing against the targets in this plan with an additional buffer of 5% moved forward from the later part of the plan period. Should there be a shortfall identified the Council will rapidly review the allocations of housing sites in the Local Plan to ensure a continuation of supply. Housing sites that come forward that are not in accord with policy DS2 and where there is a shortfall of supply identified will be assessed against Policy DS1 and DS3.

Evidence Base

Key evidence base documents include:

- Swindon Workspace Strategy (2009)
- Swindon Employment Land Review (2007)
- Swindon Borough Economic Strategy (2012)
- Swindon Borough Core Strategy Economic Review Document (2012)
- Swindon Housing Requirement Update Report (2011)
- Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (2009)
- Swindon Joint Study (2005)
- Small Scale Urban Extensions Study (2008)
- West of Swindon Update Report (2012)
- Swindon Housing Market Assessment (2006) & (2012)
- Swindon Housing Needs Survey (2006); and
- Swindon Market Area Housing Strategy (2009)
- Swindon Borough Housing Monitoring Report (2012)

Delivery and links with other key policies

The delivery of the strategy will be achieved through:

- Alignment of proposals with other related (but non-planning) strategies and plans identified in the “Evidence Base”, particularly the Swindon Borough Economic Strategy (2012) above;
- Land identification for urban extensions in Part 5 of this Plan
- The adopted Central Area Action Plan;
- Framework Plans and masterplanning for new communities;
- The implementation of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan;
- Swindon Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document;
- Public funding where it can be secured, developer contributions and / or the Community Infrastructure Levy;
- Forward Swindon
- The Local Investment Plan

3.27 The Duty to Co-operate Statement also signposts where co-operation and collaboration with key stakeholders has influenced decision-making on the sustainable development strategy.

- 3.28 The Local Plan should be read as a whole, with proposals for development being considered against many policies depending on the details of the proposal and its location.

Policy SD3: Managing Development

- a. When considering development proposals, a positive approach will be taken to reflect a presumption in favour of sustainable development. This means:

- applicants will work with the local planning authority to find solutions which mean that proposals can be approved wherever possible, and to secure development that improves the economic, social and environmental conditions, and promotes health and well-being, for those people living and working in Swindon Borough;
- planning applications that are in accordance with the policies in this Local Plan (and with policies in adopted neighbourhood plans) will be approved, unless material considerations indicate otherwise; and,
- where there are no policies relevant to the application or relevant policies are out of date at the time of making the decision then the Borough Council will grant permission unless material considerations indicate otherwise – taking into account whether:
 - any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework taken as a whole; or
 - specific policies in that Framework indicate that development should be restricted

- b. At all major development areas:

- **following outline permission being given to proposals comprehensive Design Codes and / or Framework Plans will be adopted prior to the approval of any Reserved Matters;**
 - **management strategies will be agreed to secure the long term maintenance of infrastructure prior to development, and**
 - **the production of Diversity Impact Assessments and Health Impact Assessments will be encouraged**
- c. For the Swindon Central Area a Masterplan will be produced to give further guidance to development proposals to realise the aims of this Plan and the Central Area Action Plan**
- d. For the Strategic Allocations a tariff or model legal agreement will be developed to ensure timely delivery of infrastructure, maintenance and mitigation and fair and equitable contributions between phases. This will require landowners to enter into equalisation agreements.**
- e. For the New Eastern Villages (including Rowborough), and South Marston Village Supplementary Planning Documents will be adopted.**

3.29 In setting out national policy guidance, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) seeks to oversee the delivery of sustainable growth and change, having at its core a “presumption in favour of sustainable development”. The NPPF states that the presumption should be seen as a “golden thread” through both plan-making and decision taking. Paragraph 15 states that:

“Policies in Local Plans should follow the approach of the presumption in favour of sustainable development so that it is

clear that development which is sustainable can be approved without delay. All plans should be based upon and reflect the presumption in favour of sustainable development, with clear policies that will guide how the presumption should be applied locally.”

- 3.30 Policy SD3 aims to meet these requirements, setting out clearly what the presumption means in the Swindon context, whilst at the same time taking into account the wording of the Government’s model policy on the “presumption in favour of sustainable development” which it recommends is included in each development plan.
- 3.31 Design Codes and Framework Plans must be approved prior to Reserved Matters approval to guide the physical development of the site. They should provide a clear sense of identity, character and provide a clear land use and movement structure to support the vision and principles. It will be critical in their preparation that a partnership approach is adopted between the Local Planning Authority, developers, stakeholders and service providers. They will:
- ▶ help to deliver high quality sustainable development;
 - ▶ help facilitate delivery; and,
 - ▶ provide certainty and clarity to developers, community groups and parish councils.
- 3.32 The Council is committed to reducing inequalities across all Swindon’s communities and put in measures to improve the health of residents. Development has a role in such a process and working with the Council developers are encouraged to undertake Diversity Impact Assessments and Health Impact Assessments at an early stage in the application process to deliver schemes that are of the highest quality in this regard.
- 3.33 A model Section 106 agreement will be developed for the allocated strategic sites for the following reasons:

- ▶ development of this scale generates the need for an entirely new set of infrastructure, services and facilities and needs to be calculated differently;
- ▶ there are high cost infrastructure items that the existing policy would not generate enough funds to deliver;
- ▶ funding needs to be directed to the highest priority infrastructure, which may not be consistent with the Developer Contributions SPD; and,
- ▶ external funding will need to be secured to deliver high cost infrastructure items in the form of gap-funding to deliver sustainable development.

3.34 In order that the New Eastern Villages and expanded South Marston are delivered in a co-ordinated and timely manner, with the requisite infrastructure, Swindon Borough Council will prepare Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) for the New Eastern Villages (including Rowborough) and, with the South Marston Parish Council, for South Marston village. These will be adopted following the adoption of the Local Plan. These SPDs will :

- ▶ provide a more detailed planning context against which to consider planning applications and to provide Swindon Borough Council with the confidence to approve a first phase;
- ▶ provide the mechanism to control the quality of development and to ensure that the needs and aspirations of Swindon Borough Council, its partners and the community are achieved;
- ▶ provide a mechanism to identify in more detail and deliver the necessary infrastructure and mitigation schemes;
- ▶ ensure that development is phased in a sustainable way, which is both economically viable and provides the opportunity for behavioural change and more environmentally sustainable living; and
- ▶ enable local communities, particularly in South Marston, to have a greater input into the planning and development of the area.

- 3.35 A draft Swindon Town Centre Masterplan has been produced which on adoption will form an important framework to guide and steer development at a detailed level in the Central Area.

Additional evidence base document:

- The Government's model Local Plan policy on the application of the presumption in favour of sustainable development (2012);

Delivery and links with other key policies

Effective management of development will be achieved through the application of this policy and through:

- Alignment of proposals with other related (but non-planning) strategies identified in the "Evidence Base" above;
- Implementation of the adopted Swindon Central Area Action Plan;
- Implementation of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan;
- A Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document;
- An 'New Eastern Villages' Supplementary Planning Document;
- A 'South Marston Village' Supplementary Planning Document
- Swindon Central Area Masterplan
- New community development Framework Plans, design codes and masterplans;
- Early and continuing dialogue between the Council, local community and developers;
- The development management process; and,
- Neighbourhood Plans and Neighbourhood Development Orders which might be developed by Neighbourhood Forums and are then consequently adopted by the Council, and / or, further work on the detailed location and specification of individual development sites undertaken by the Council (through masterplanning, site allocations work, development briefs and so on) augmented by Parish and other Community Plans.

4 Enabling Sustainable Development

Theme 1 – High Quality Design and Sustainable Development

The High Quality Design and Sustainable Development theme's policies flow directly from and help to implement the following Strategic Objectives set out in section 2 of this Plan:

SO1: High Quality Sustainable Development

SO3: Economy

SO4: Housing

4.1 Theme 1 sets out policies to:

- ▶ ensure high quality design in all new development;
- ▶ ensure that new development is constructed to the highest possible sustainable construction standards to help meet targets in the reduction of carbon dioxide emissions;
- ▶ assess and determine proposals for development in accordance with these high quality design and sustainability standards

Key issues

- 4.2 The quality of Swindon's urban environment is perhaps one of the most emotive issues to residents of Swindon. Well-designed buildings and urban space help give a sense of place and identity and contribute to civic pride. Design plays an important role in shaping a healthy and safe environment, and can contribute to healthy and active lifestyles. This is not only through the construction of high quality buildings and public realm but also through the provision of open spaces and other 'soft' or 'green' infrastructure, as detailed in Theme 7 of this Plan. To realise Swindon's economic potential, well-designed fit for purpose employment space will be required, as well as an attractive working and living environment.
- 4.3 The changing climate has implications for the design of buildings and the urban environment. There are requirements set through legislation

and applied through Building Regulations for new developments to reduce the amount of carbon dioxide they emit. As targets regarding emissions tighten, buildings will need to be designed to incorporate both on-site and off-site measures to offset carbon dioxide emissions such as energy saving and renewable and low carbon energy generation solutions. These types of measures will also assist in addressing concerns about the future security of energy supply and higher energy costs.

- 4.4 Significant steps have already been taken to affect positive change to the Swindon central area's urban landscape and overall appearance through the adoption of the Swindon Central Area Action Plan (CAAP). However, local planning policies need to be set to help ensure that the aspirations of the CAAP are realised and to ensure high quality sustainable design and construction is delivered across the Borough.
- 4.5 Planning for well-designed large scale developments, will require a significant amount of co-ordination to be delivered successfully. Masterplans and design guides play a critical role in achieving high quality design in such developments as set out in Policy SD3.
- 4.6 As well as the application of policies in this Plan other organisations, both private and public, have a role in delivering high quality design and sustainable construction standards. This includes, but is not limited to, private developers, the Design Council (CABE) and the application of Building Control standards.

Key Evidence Base for Theme 1

- Swindon Design Guide (2006)
- Swindon Sustainable Development Policies Study (2009)
- Swindon District Heating Feasibility Study (2011)
- Swindon Energy Framework (2012)

Policy DE1: High Quality Design

- a. High standards of design are required for all types of development. Proposals for development shall respond to the objectives of sustainable development through high quality design and place-making principles. To ensure this, proposals should address and will be assessed against all the following design principles:
- context and character, and
 - layout, form and function of the development, including:
 - accessibility;
 - integration;
 - legibility;
 - inclusivity;
 - safety & security;
 - efficiency;
 - permeability; and
 - adaptability;
 - amenity; and
 - the quality of the public realm
- b. All development should address and incorporate the following considerations as applicable:
- sustainable construction (in accordance with Policy DE2);
 - managing flood risk (in accordance with Policy EN6);
 - transport (in accordance with Policy TR2);
 - green infrastructure (in accordance with Policy EN1); and
 - the historic environment (in accordance with Policy EN10)

- 4.7 Development proposals can only be acceptable and sustainable where they meet the requirements for high quality design. Swindon Borough Council considers that high quality design transcends development scale and is an essential requirement of all proposals across the Borough. Policy DE1 sets out the design principles that development proposals should be assessed against. These include: the place and setting of the development (context & character); how the development will feel and work for the users of it (layout, form & function); how it will provide for people's needs and protect important features (amenity); and what benefits the development will bring to the urban environment (quality of the public realm). The result should be a more attractive environment, embracing high quality place-making ideals, well-functioning and robust enough to withstand future changes.

Design Principles

Character and Context

- 4.8 Each place has its own distinctive character and possesses inherent design assets and opportunities. As such, all development must be in context with the existing natural, built and historic environment and proposals must respond positively to enhance or create distinctive character and identity.

Layout, Form and Function of Development

- 4.9 Assessing the quality of design requires an understanding of the considerations of layout, form and the functioning of proposals. "Layout" refers to the structuring or setting out of development, the way buildings, routes and open spaces relate to one another, "Form" refers to the detailed aspects which make up the configuration of the three-dimensional built form, and "Function" refers to the utility or need required to satisfy the proposed use and its users.
- 4.10 Layouts should be designed to ensure a clear and logical structure which is easy to navigate and understand. This should be achieved

through a well-ordered and defined public realm, with clear relationships between uses, buildings, routes and spaces.

- 4.11 The network of streets and public spaces should connect visually and physically as a sequence of public spaces that form part of a high quality public realm network.
- 4.12 The function of development layouts should take into account how all the aspects of the development proposal will operate, by considering their inter-relationships and synergies. This should be achieved without compromising the quality of the public realm and sense of place. In considering the function of development proposals, layouts will need to accommodate the necessary service, utility and amenity requirements appropriate to it. Such requirements should be provided in a way that does not compromise the social, environmental or economic benefits of the scheme proposed.
- 4.13 Development layouts should aim to achieve the following principles as follows:
- *Accessibility* by all modes of transport giving priority to pedestrians and cyclists.
 - *Integration* between new development and the existing context and character relating to: the historic environment; urban structure; urban grain; green infrastructure; public realm; and public and community facilities.
 - *Legibility* - through clear and logical structure that is easy to navigate and understand. This should be achieved through a well-ordered and defined public realm, with clear relationships between uses, buildings, routes and spaces.
 - *Inclusivity* across all user groups through the principles of inclusive design. Inclusive access to places, spaces and buildings is a crucial part of achieving social equality.
 - *Safety & Security* - development must be safe, secure and attractive to minimise opportunities for criminal activity and reduce the fear of

crime. This will be assessed in terms of mix of uses, active frontages onto streets, access routes and routes through the development (including integrated routes), public realm, surveillance, lighting, clear entrance points and the location and extent of planting.

- *Efficiency* - in design and layout to optimise energy efficiency through passive solar design considerations; and in the use of land without compromising existing and proposed amenity.
- *Permeability* - by creating development which is well connected to the surrounding movement network and which enables ease of movement within and across the site.
- *Adaptability* - in the robustness of the pattern, arrangement, size and configuration of plots and blocks of development and of building design to allow for change over the long term.

4.14 *The Form* of development proposals should create a strong contextual response to site and be of good quality architecture in order to create distinctive identity. The form of development proposals will be assessed in terms of siting and orientation, scale, proportion, shape, massing, rhythm, materials, colour and architectural detailing.

4.15 The quality of architecture is a fundamental in achieving a high quality built environment. A positive approach to good quality architecture will be expected in the Borough and will be assessed in relation to the considerations above. The Borough Council considers that innovative and exemplar architecture has a key role in improving Swindon's quality and image. Where development proposals are outstanding or innovative and which help to raise the standards of urban design and architecture, they will be afforded significant weight.

Amenity

4.16 Development proposals must ensure convenience and levels of comfort and enjoyment, and promote good health and well-being. This will be assessed in terms of light, privacy, visual intrusion, internal

space standards, noise, smell, pollution, and light pollution or other disturbances.

- 4.17 Development proposals should also respect and accommodate any existing feature of acknowledged importance, including (but not limited to) trees, hedgerows, and historic structures and buildings on, or in the vicinity of, the site.
- 4.18 Residential development should provide an acceptable level of internal and external amenity for all types of dwellings in order to protect future users and contribute to sustaining populations within their communities over the long term. Accommodation that falls below an acceptable level inevitably compromises its function and usability over the long term, and can have a cumulative negative impact on the local area. It can also have a negative impact on the health and well-being of the residents themselves. Swindon Borough Council will issue supplementary guidance in respect of space standards applicable to residential development. Such guidance will be in the context of sustainable development as it relates to the efficient use of land, and will provide equitable minimum standards to ensure new housing is of a high quality that maintains long-term social benefits to the wider community.
- 4.19 Features of acknowledged importance form an important aspect of existing amenity established over time. They often form an inherent part of the character of an area, its identity and its enjoyment by local residents. Development proposals should respect and integrate such features where appropriate.

Quality of the public realm

- 4.20 The quality of the public realm and open space is a key issue in creating and maintaining a sense of place and providing for social cohesion. A very high quality approach to the design of new, and works to existing, public realm and open space is required.
- 4.21 Public realm includes streets, hard and soft spaces and routes used by the public. The design of public space should take careful consideration

of the proximity and accessibility to local residents and all public realm should be designed with the principles as set out under layout, form and functioning of development above.

- 4.22 Streets perform a major role in defining the quality and character of the urban environment. Their detailed design and the integration of the buildings and other structures fronting them are key attributes to establishing local identity. Streets should be designed with a strong place-making approach justified through good sections and plans in order to establish their specific role and function for each site.

Design Considerations

- 4.23 Major development proposals must be prepared in a co-ordinated manner taking into account the local, physical, social, economic and environmental context at the earliest stage of the design process.
- 4.24 Policy DE1 requires that the following considerations are taken into account in the design of development:
- *Energy and sustainable construction* – to ensure the design, layout, and orientation, including the passive solar design, of the development, support and achieve energy efficiency, generation and sustainable construction methods.
 - *Flood risk* – to ensure that the location, layout, and design, incorporating sustainable drainage systems (SuDS), mitigates and manages flood risk arising from new development.
 - *Transport* – to ensure that the design and layout of the development integrates into the transport network for all modes of travel.
 - *Green infrastructure* – to ensure that the design and layout of the development protects and enhances green infrastructure, and to integrate measures to improve mental and physical wellbeing into the design.
 - *Historic environment* – to ensure that historic assets and their settings are protected and integrated into the design where appropriate.

Where to find additional information

- Swindon Design Guide (2006)
- Swindon Shop-Front Guide (2006)
- Manual for Streets, Department for Transport (2007)
- Manual for Streets 2, Department for Transport (2010)

Delivery and links with other key policies

4.25 High quality design will be delivered through the application of this policy and through:

- the Swindon Design Toolkit, which will provide further detail on:
 - ▶ Urban Design Principles & Policy;
 - ▶ Context and Character;
 - ▶ Green Infrastructure;
 - ▶ Residential Layouts;
 - ▶ Transport Requirements for Development;
 - ▶ Sustainable Design and Construction;
 - ▶ Residential Extensions and Alterations;
 - ▶ Residential Space Standards;
 - ▶ Shopfronts and Signage;
 - ▶ Access for All; and
 - ▶ Public Art.
- design and access statements, the detailed requirements for which are included in Council guidance;
- design briefs and masterplans; and,
- the development management process.

4.26 Information submitted with a planning application should be proportionate to the scale, significance and impact of the proposal.

4.27 Where necessary, the Borough Council as the Local Planning Authority will seek the advice and recommendation of recognised local, regional or national design review panels to provide assessment and support to ensure high standards of design on development proposals are achieved.

- 4.28 The Borough Council will produce a measurable standard of criteria against which development proposals can be assessed. This will assist the design process from early on and assess design quality over time,
- 4.29 Where a Design and Access Statement is required, it must clearly set out the overall design approach, site constraints and key considerations for the site. The Borough Council will produce guidance on what should be included within a Design and Access Statement.
- 4.30 All applications for major development¹ will be deemed premature until a Design Brief / Masterplan has been prepared, that has been subject to public consultation undertaken broadly in line with the Statement of Community Involvement. Those commissioning development projects should aim to achieve high quality design. It is recommended that appropriately qualified and experienced design professionals such as registered architects, urban designers, landscape architects and public artists are engaged at an early stage of the development proposal to ensure all aspects of design are considered.

Policy DE2: Sustainable Construction

- a. Development shall demonstrate passive solar benefits, (heating, ventilation, cooling and lighting) in accordance with Policy DE1, through the layout and design of the site, and orientation and design of buildings
- b. All major development¹ shall meet the following sustainable construction standards²

<i>Development type</i>	<i>By April 2013³</i>	<i>2013 – 2016³</i>	<i>2016³</i>
Residential	Code for Sustainable	Code for Sustainable	Code for Sustainable

¹ The definition of major development is in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) order 2010. In essence, it means 10 dwellings or more, or 1000sqm of floor space.

² “Zero carbon” requirements reflect current Government timescales.

³ Timescales in line with current building regulations which may be subject to change

	Homes level 3 (In full)	Homes level 4 (In full)	Homes level 5 (In full)
Non-residential	BREEAM Excellent		
<p>c. Where on-site provision of renewable technologies is not appropriate, new development can meet CO₂ reduction requirements through off-site provision by making ‘allowable solutions contributions’. Funds gathered will be used for wider energy efficiency and energy generation initiatives.</p> <p>d. The use of combined heat and power (CHP), and/or combined, cooling, heat and power (CCHP) with district heating is encouraged. Within the identified “District Heating Priority Areas” and urban extensions, as shown on the Proposals Map, major development shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ demonstrate a thermal master-planning approach considering issues such as mix of uses, anchor loads, density and heat load profiles to maximise opportunities for the use of district heating; and ■ incorporate infrastructure for district heating and connect to existing systems where and when they are available or fully justify any alternative approach. 			

- 4.31 Policy DE2 aims to ensure new developments are designed and constructed to minimise their environmental impact, and contribute to meeting statutory targets for reductions in carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions. Sustainable energy is a key focus for the Council and the approach to this follows the energy hierarchy in addressing energy conservation and energy efficiency before considering low and zero carbon energy generation. Whilst this policy focuses on new development, opportunities to improve the energy efficiency and resilience of existing buildings are encouraged.

Passive Solar Benefits

- 4.32 A design which takes advantage of natural heat and light from the sun (known as “passive solar gain”), and uses air movement for ventilation, can reduce the need for artificial light, heat, cooling and ventilation. Designing in energy efficiency should begin at the start of the planning process to ensure maximum savings are made and potential risks around overheating are fully addressed.
- 4.33 Different approaches are required depending on the size and use of buildings, but all must demonstrate that they have given consideration to how the principles of passive solar gain could be applied.

Sustainable Construction

- 4.34 The sustainable construction requirements of this policy mirror the national timescale for zero carbon development. The national zero carbon requirement relates to CO₂ reduction and will be implemented through the Building Regulations. Each zero carbon milestone to 2016 also relates to a level of the ‘Code for Sustainable Homes’, which includes wider issues such as water use and sustainable materials. The aim of this element of the policy is to harmonise the zero carbon timescale with the wider requirements of the Code for Sustainable Homes.
- 4.35 Additionally, for non-residential development, a requirement of BREEAM “excellent” is required of all major development to ensure sustainable construction issues are addressed in all forms of development.

Allowable solutions

- 4.36 The requirement for new buildings to be ‘zero carbon’ will occur within the timescale of this plan and is likely to require the adoption of ‘Allowable Solutions’. Allowable Solutions is a concept that has been developed to account for the fact that it may not always be possible to achieve zero carbon on-site using carbon compliance measures (i.e.

energy efficiency and renewable energy). Whilst the exact definition for measures that would meet the requirements for allowable solutions has not yet been established, it is likely to include additional measures that may be either 'on-site' (but not duplicating carbon compliance measures), 'near site' (within the Local Planning Authority area) or 'off-site' (outside the Local Planning Authority area).

- 4.37 Allowable solutions could make a significant contribution to delivering sustainable energy schemes within Swindon. The Council intends to establish a Community Energy Fund to use Allowable Solutions payments to deliver additional benefits in Swindon. These measures may include but are not limited to energy efficiency measures in existing buildings, decentralised energy networks, or renewable energy schemes. The fund will deliver carbon reduction and maximize the benefits to local communities.

District Heating

- 4.38 District heating schemes deliver heating and hot water to multiple buildings from a local plant via a network of insulated pipes buried underground. These can often be installed at the same time as the other services when a site is being developed and can also be retrofitted to existing buildings. District heating can be combined with electricity production combined heat and power (CHP) or in combined cooling, heat and power (CCHP). This is an efficient form of decentralised energy supply providing heat and electricity at the same time.
- 4.39 District Heating feasibility work undertaken in Swindon indicates the areas with the most immediate potential for district heating are the existing areas of high heat demand in the urban area of Swindon and the larger new development areas where district heating infrastructure can be laid in step with new development. The Town Centre and industrial areas around Stratton and South Marston, along with the new urban extensions, are therefore the focus of this policy.

- 4.40 Further detail on the requirements of this policy including testing economic and technical feasibility, how the CO₂ offset fund works, and what should be submitted with a planning application will be included within a Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document.

Delivery and links with other key policies

- 4.41 The delivery of sustainable construction will be achieved through the application of this policy and through:
- the application of Building Regulations (Part L) standards as a minimum requirement;
 - working in partnership with key stakeholders such as the Swindon Energy Partnership, local communities, businesses, Parish Councils and amenity groups;
 - application of The Swindon Energy Framework;
 - the development management process; and,
 - the requirement of a post-construction review and certification of sustainable construction standards, required by condition.
- 4.42 Major developments will require a 'Code for Sustainable Homes' and/or BREEAM pre-assessment estimator/design stage assessment undertaken by accredited assessors in line with the targets.

Theme 2 - Delivering Sustainable Economic Growth

The Economy theme's policies flow directly from and help to implement the following Strategic Objectives set out in section 2 of this Plan:

SO1: High Quality Sustainable Development

SO3: Economy

SO5: Education

4.43 Theme 2 sets out policies to:

- ▶ enhance existing and provide new high quality employment space;
- ▶ direct new employment provision to the appropriate locations;
- ▶ support key employment sectors and the aspiration for a University;
- ▶ protect and enhance the role of the town and local centres; and,
- ▶ provide a framework for farm diversification

4.44 It provides a planning framework to help retain current levels of economic activity and productivity and help provide the built infrastructure to enable recovery and sustainable economic growth. In doing so it will help ensure Swindon remains “open for business” and is supportive of the needs of businesses across the Borough.

Key issues

4.45 Sustainable economic development is a key element of the National Planning Policy Framework. Historically, Swindon's economy has been very successful based on its location, the diversity and resilience of the sectors present in the Borough, land availability, comparatively low commercial property prices and high business start-up rates. According to the latest data, in 2009 the Gross Value Added (GVA) per head at current basic prices for Swindon was £27,616; this is 138.1% of the UK average. What is notable about the Swindon economy in terms of

sector output is the relatively small role of the public sector (only 12.3% of GVA) and relatively large production (including manufacturing) sector at 25% of GVA.

- 4.46 The recent economic recession, however, has had a significant impact on Swindon's local economy with a rise in unemployment observed. The future focus for Swindon's should be on maintaining the existing economic base, adapting to changes and realising opportunities in key employment sectors and sustaining economic recovery. The restructure of the economic base of Swindon as guided by the Swindon Economic Strategy is critical issue for the Local Plan to address.
- 4.47 The retail sector has also felt the impact of the recession as consumer spending has fallen and the types of goods being bought change. The Town Centre continues to provide an important economic and social role for the Borough and the wider area, augmented by district and local centres. Supported by the NPPF, local policies should support the role of the Town Centre whilst allowing it to adapt to changing patterns of consumer spending. A key part of this will be to achieve a "step-up" in the quality of the central urban area of the town, encapsulated by the Central Area Action Plan and the policies in Theme 1 of this Plan.
- 4.48 Central to developing a more sustainable economy will be ensuring that school-leavers have access to training and skills development, through both continuing through to further education and finding a place with local employers. Providing such opportunities locally will help to ensure that Swindon has a competitive workforce which does not seek to leave the area for training and jobs elsewhere. For a town of Swindon's size, provision of these types of opportunities would be strengthened further through development of a University or enhanced tertiary provision.
- 4.49 For businesses to have the opportunity to grow and thrive, they need the right type of building space to do so, whether that is for office, industrial or other employment uses. It will be important to ensure that a range of the right type and size of employment buildings is available

to allow such growth and change to occur, from start-up units to flexible space to larger scale warehousing. It is important that employment floorspace which responds to economic needs in Swindon should be provided at the right time, so that it does not lay dormant for extended periods, although the commercial building market will be a key barometer of need and is likely to react accordingly.

- 4.50 Broadly speaking, economic development will need to be supported by an appropriate level of housing growth to help retain Swindon residents who work in the town and also provide capacity for economic migrants who find work in Swindon and would also like to live in the town. The quantum of housing and employment growth allocated in this Plan in Policy SD2 responds, in part, to that relationship.
- 4.51 Swindon currently lacks a university presence, which is unusual for a town of Swindon's size. The business community has highlighted the importance of attracting a university to deliver the skills needed to support Swindon's future economic growth, raising Swindon's profile and establishing the town as a destination. The delivery of a university would be beneficial for economic growth; however it is not reliant upon it. Without a university Swindon's growth prospects remain significant but a university would add significant value as a hub for attracting and retaining visitors, increasing skill levels, aligning them with business needs and reinforcing strong local economic sectors.
- 4.52 The Swindon Economic Strategy provides further detail on these and other issues and action needed to develop the local economy.
- 4.53 The private sector has a critical role in the economic recovery of the town, augmented by the work of the Borough Council and Forward Swindon in facilitating investment and through the implementation of the Economic Strategy, with which the Swindon Borough Local Plan 2026 is aligned. Planning policies should also enable the delivery of infrastructure to support businesses and the economic needs of the Borough.

Key Evidence Base for Theme 2

- Swindon Joint Study (2005)
- Swindon Employment Land Review (2007)
- Swindon Workspace Strategy (2009)
- Swindon Borough Economic Strategy (2012)
- Economic Testing of Swindon Core Strategy (2012)
- Retail and Leisure Study Update (2007)
- Swindon Retail Capacity Update (2009)

Policy EC1: Economic Growth through Existing Business and Inward Investment

- a. Inward investment and the growth and retention of existing business will be enabled by:
- promoting Swindon Central Area as the first preference for office development;
 - protecting the best employment sites for employment use (B-class) and enabling development opportunities at others where it will enhance investment opportunities;
 - identifying new employment sites;
 - supporting large inward investment proposals where there is significant net economic or social benefit; and
 - the provision of a university and/or enhanced higher education facilities in Swindon Central Area to meet business skills needs, enhance the town's profile and provide a local highly qualified and skilled workforce
- b. Opportunities to develop the following key employment sectors will be particularly supported:
- specialist manufacturing in East Swindon;
 - financial and business services at the Central Area;

- **distribution and logistics in the A419 corridor;**
- **environmental, tourism and leisure, information communication technologies (ICT), education, health, retailing and creative industries at appropriate locations; and**
- **low carbon development and manufacturing at appropriate locations and in conjunction with Policy IN4**

- 4.54 The objectives of the Swindon Economic Strategy are to develop sectors of the economy that are already strong and to grow sectors with long-term potential through inward investment and business retention. Other sectors will not be restricted, but Policy EC1 sets out the planning framework to support these key sectors.
- 4.55 There is potential for specialist manufacturing growth, particularly in the motor vehicles industry, as a cluster in east Swindon, associated with existing employers and transport links. Distribution and logistics are centred on the A419 corridor, which will continue to be a key location for growth in this sector. The potential for growth in the financial and business sector remains strong in the medium and long term, especially in supporting regeneration in Swindon's Central Area. Given the varied nature of activity and workspace requirements in the ICT, creative and environmental industries, a flexible approach to this sector is supported, particularly in their potential to contribute to town centre regeneration and rural employment.
- 4.56 Retail, leisure, tourism, health and education make an important contribution to the economy. By 2026 it is anticipated that these sectors will account for 39% of total job growth. (Regeneris High Scenario). Growth in these sectors should complement growth in other sectors to ensure a balanced and mixed economy.
- 4.57 Should any large inward investment proposals come forward these will be supported, especially where it would support town centre regeneration and provide significant employment opportunities. The

town centre will be the first priority for the location of such investment, but where the town centre would not be suitable; development must not harm town centre regeneration or conflict with other policies of this plan and must be accessible with a good range of travel choices.

- 4.58 The retention of key employment areas for employment use is seen as important in providing for a range of sites across the Borough. Policy EC2 provides more detail on the protection afforded to such areas. Intensification of existing employment sites will be supported to allow business to expand and encourage development in accessible locations subject to other policies in this Plan.
- 4.59 A vibrant and prosperous town centre is essential to support economic growth and prosperity. Office development will be focused at Swindon's Central Area to support regeneration, particularly in the early phases of the plan, and provision is made for additional office floorspace in Policy SD2 and within the adopted Swindon Central Area Action Plan.
- 4.60 To provide for future investment and business expansion, additional employment allocations are made at Commonhead, Wichelstowe, Tadpole Farm and the New Eastern Villages as detailed in Policy SD2.

Delivery and links with other key policies

- 4.61 Economic growth through existing business and inward investment will be enabled through the application of this policy and through:
- Alignment of proposals with other related (but non-planning) strategies and plans identified in the "Evidence Base" above;
 - The adopted Swindon Central Area Action Plan;
 - The actions of Forward Swindon; and,
 - Implementation of the Swindon Economic Strategy.

Policy EC2: Employment Land and Premises (B Use Classes)

- a. The Key Employment Areas defined on the Proposals Map and listed below, shall be retained primarily for employment generating uses within the Use Classes B1, B2 and B8. Planning permission will be given for Class B1, B2 and B8 uses, and for sui generis uses, in these areas, subject to the Class B1(a) office development not adversely impacting upon the regeneration of Swindon Central Area.
- b. The change of use or redevelopment of land and buildings or development for other uses, within the key employment areas and Central Swindon, shall only be supported where it can be demonstrated that:
 - the development proposal will not adversely impact upon the regeneration of the Swindon Central Area; and
 - the premises has been vacant for 6 months or more and genuine marketing for commercial (B class) uses for that period of time, at reasonable market values, has proved unsuccessful, and
 - a sequential site search has been undertaken that takes account of the current quality of the Employment Area such that loss of the highest quality employment land is minimised, assessing the following factors:
 - strategic and local road access;
 - access to labour, public transport and services;
 - compatibility of adjacent land uses;
 - site characteristics, conditions and development constraints; and
 - attractiveness to the market including vacancy and market activity; and,

- proposals for retail development have undertaken a sequential site search in accordance with Policy EC3

In addition the change of use proposal should demonstrate at least one of the following criteria:

- the development proposal will generate the same number, or more permanent jobs than could be expected from the existing, or any potential employment use; and/or
- the site is not appropriate for the continuation of its present or any employment use due to a significant detriment to the environment or amenity of the area; and/or
- the site is no longer capable of meeting modern business needs; and/or
- it can be shown that the loss of a small proportion of employment floorspace would facilitate the redevelopment and continuation of employment uses on a greater part of the site, providing the same number or more permanent jobs than on the original whole site; and/or
- the change of use is to facilitate the relocation of an existing business from buildings that are no longer fit for purpose to more suitable premises elsewhere within the Borough and no other B-class occupiers are likely to take up the site

- c. At the strategic allocations of Wichelstowe, Commonhead, Tadpole Farm, Kingsdown and the Eastern Villages, employment land allocations will be implemented in accordance with Policies NC1, NC2, NC3, NC4 and NC5. To ensure the delivery of sustainable mixed-use developments, these sites will be protected for specified B class employment uses for a period of 18 months from completion of buildings. After this point, proposals for the change of use of buildings or redevelopment will be subject to Policy EC2b.

- d. Proposals for office development (Use Class B1(a)) over 1,000m² gross floorspace which are located outside of Swindon's Central Area will be supported where they:**
- **do not harm or undermine the regeneration of Swindon's Central Area; and,**
 - **demonstrate a sequential approach to site selection in order of preference and priority as follows:**
 - 1. Swindon's Central Area**
 - 2. Swindon's urban area well served by public transport or the employment allocation at the New Eastern Villages; within the floor space limits specified in NC4) and,**
 - 3. Peripheral sites in locations that are accessible by a choice of transport modes.**
- e. Where employment development does not comply with parking standards, development may be permitted where the impact of off-street parking, safety and amenity is acceptable, including parking provision for disabled people. Parking dedicated for the use of disabled persons should always be provided in accordance with the required standard.**

4.62 Swindon Borough has a large amount of employment land for a centre of its size, providing a good range of premises suitable for industry and business in a variety of locations. The majority of Class B uses occupy sites on the key employment sites in the Borough, which provide the infrastructure and facilities to enable their continued role and function.

4.63 The Key Employment Sites have been identified taking account of the following factors:

- Quality and range of units;
- Current and historic vacancy;
- Accessibility;

- Nature and range of uses; and
- Environmental quality

The key employment sites in the Borough are:

Area Name
Blackworth, Highworth
Blagrove/Euroway
Bridge End Road
Central Trading Estate
Cheney Manor
Churchward
Delta
Dorcan
Drakes Way
Elgin
Europa/Britannia
Greenbridge
Groundwell
Groundwell West
Gypsy Lane South
Hillmead
Isis/Stratton Road
Kembrey Park
Keypoint, South Marston
Marshgate
Parsonage Farm (BMW)
Pipers Way (Nationwide)
Pipers Way (Intel)
River Ray
Rivermead
Rushey Platt
Techno
The Triangle (G-Park)
South Marston Airfield (Honda)
South Marston Park
Westlea
Westmead
Windmill Hill

- 4.64 'Good quality' employment sites benefit from good strategic and local access and may display evidence of recent investment. Vacancies are generally relatively low and the market attractiveness is generally high.
- 4.65 Existing employment land is vital to ensure the supply of employment opportunities and sustainable economic growth. Key employment sites are particularly valuable and the loss of this land may generate additional pressure for the release of new land in less acceptable locations. The key employment sites are therefore protected primarily for Class B uses and as such, the loss of these sites is not acceptable unless it can be demonstrated that the site has been unsuccessfully marketed at a reasonable market value for a continuous period of 6 months or more.
- 4.66 Proposals for other employment uses falling outside the B use Class can provide significant employment opportunities and may be acceptable in employment areas. Other uses may also positively contribute to the viability and vitality of employment areas or provide appropriate support services to assist in the day-to-day functioning of the employment areas. Proposals for non-B Class uses will be assessed on their own merits informed by the Workspace Strategy (2009). In addition to the main criteria, the number and quality of jobs provided by a proposed non-B Class use will be an important consideration. Applicants are encouraged to submit a pre-application enquiry for proposals relating to non-B Class uses to obtain a view on the acceptability of the alternative use.
- 4.67 The Borough Council will monitor the occupancy of the key employment sites to ensure that the methodology applied benefits their vitality and viability.
- 4.68 There are a number of existing older employment areas within Swindon which are in need of some form of redevelopment to ensure that they are more fit for purpose for modern business needs. Whilst the Council recognises these needs, this Plan is not considered the appropriate planning document within which to include a detailed, structured and

managed approach to their redevelopment. Such longer-term potential managed release and redevelopment of sites will be explored through further work on possible options for change in the future. Small scale redevelopment proposals may be appropriate, initiated by the private sector, where they satisfy the criteria of the policy and do not undermine the role and function of the employment area as a whole.

- 4.69 The Council is seeking to encourage an increase in floorspace for Class B1 (a) office use in the Central Area as part of the regeneration of that area. Class B1 (a) uses attract significant numbers of people and as such are best located where there is maximum accessibility for public transport. However, it is recognised that some vacant office space can be difficult to fill, not only due to economic circumstances but also due to it not meeting market requirements for modern office accommodation, particularly if it is old stock. Policy EC2 provides sufficient flexibility for such office buildings to change to alternative uses, if it meets the policy criteria.
- 4.70 The Council acknowledges that there will be continued demand for office accommodation outside Swindon's Central Area. In accordance with the NPPF, the Council has set a local threshold of 1,000m² floorspace for out-of-centre office development. Proposals exceeding this threshold will be subject to an impact assessment in line with paragraph 26 of the NPPF. Such applications will also be required to demonstrate that the sequential approach has been applied to justify the site selection. A sequential test will be assessed in accordance with paragraph 24 of the NPPF. The sequential approach will become more flexible as the Central Area regeneration becomes substantially complete.
- 4.71 Proposals for development will be considered against policies DE1 and DE2. In all cases, due consideration will be given to design, sustainability and the highways impact of the proposal.
- 4.72 In order not to constrain economic development, development for employment proposals will be permitted where parking standards

cannot be achieved providing the impact in terms of parking, safety and amenity is acceptable.

Delivery and links with other key policies

- 4.73 Employment land and premises shall be enhanced and new premises delivered through the application of this policy and through:
- Alignment of proposals with other related (but non-planning) strategies and plans identified in the “Evidence Base” above;
 - Implementation of the adopted Swindon Central Area Action Plan;
 - Up-to-date monitoring of the quality and quantity of employment premises;
 - Commercial and employment premises developers;
 - The development management process;
 - Discussion on pre-application proposals prior to applications being submitted and,
 - Neighbourhood Plans and Neighbourhood Development Orders which might be developed by Neighbourhood Forums and are then consequently adopted by the Council, and / or,
 - further work on the detailed location and specification of individual development sites undertaken by the Council (through masterplanning, site allocations work, development briefs and so on) augmented by Parish and other Community Plans;

Policy EC3: The Role of the Centre and Town Centre Uses

- a. Proposals for main town centre uses⁴ (not including offices covered by Policy EC2c above) outside Swindon Central Area shall be permitted:**

⁴ Defined in the Glossary of the NPPF as Retail development (including warehouse clubs and factory outlet centres); leisure, entertainment facilities the more intensive sport and recreation uses (including cinemas, restaurants, drive-through restaurants, bars and pubs, night-clubs, casinos, health and fitness centres, indoor bowling centres, and bingo halls); offices; and arts, culture and tourism development (including theatres, museums, galleries and concert halls, hotels and conference facilities)

- where they do not harm or undermine the regeneration of Swindon's Central Area; and,
- where they do not undermine the vitality and viability of existing District, Primary Rural Centres and Local Centres
- a sequential approach to site selection has been undertaken and demonstrated, where a proposal's delivery is not dependant on location at a specific site because its use is tied to that location, in order of preference and priority as follows:
 1. Swindon Town Centre;
 2. Edge of Town Centre;
 3. District and Primary Rural Centres: Cavendish Square, Gorse Hill, Highworth Town Centre, Orbital Retail Park, Old Town, West Swindon, Wroughton Village Centre and the Eastern Villages District Centre
 4. Local Centres: as shown on the proposals map including those at Wichelstowe, Commonhead, Tadpole Farm and Kingsdown developments

b. Outside the defined hierarchy of centres:

- proposals for new single shop units (Class A1⁵) will be permitted where it can be demonstrated that they provide only for the daily shopping needs of the local population and do not harm the vitality and viability of existing centres; and
- existing single shop units (Class A1) will be protected from changes of use to non-Class A1 uses, where the proposed use is not compatible with the local area in which it is set

c. To protect the shopping function of the Town Centre and other centres, as defined on the Proposals Map:

⁵ All use class references relate to Use Class Order (1995) as amended (2006).

- in the Town Centre, Class A1 uses should occupy at least 75% of the primary frontage and 60% of the secondary frontage;
 - in District and Primary Rural Centres Class A1 uses should occupy at least 70% of the street frontage; and,
 - in Local Centres Class A1 uses should be predominant. Proposals for non-class A1 uses will be permitted only where they enhance the local retail centre function and do not by themselves or cumulatively harm the vitality and viability of the centre's retail function
- d. All retail development proposals with a floorspace exceeding 600m² should be accompanied by a Retail Impact Assessment to ensure they would not have an adverse impact on the town centre or hierarchy of centres.
- e. Within the town centre, or any district or Primary Rural centre, where the percentage of the street frontage is already at or below the threshold of the desired Class A1 Uses (retail) identified above, proposals for more than 323m² for non-A1 uses will normally be permitted where they demonstrate that:
- at least 12 consecutive months active marketing of the premises for Class A1 Use (retail) has been undertaken; and,
 - the proposed use is appropriate for its location
- f. Street trading will be permitted where it satisfies other development management policies, and is in accordance with the adopted Street Trading & Ancillary Retail Kiosks Development Management Guidance Note.

4.74 Annex 2 of the NPPF defines “town centres”, a definition which includes reference to district and local centres. In the context of this Plan, district centres comprise a group of shops, usually including a supermarket and a range of non-retail uses such as banks and building

societies, public facilities and restaurants. Local centres include a range of shops of a more local nature to serve the day-to-day needs of the community.

- 4.75 Retail development is to be focused at existing centres, with the priority being Swindon Town Centre. Higher density, mixed-use schemes are advocated in these locations. An approach which encourages main town centre uses to be subject to a sequential test when proposed outside of the centre, the effective use of land and mixed-use development is supported by the NPPF.
- 4.76 There will be continued pressure for more out-of-centre development of retail warehouses, and pressure to relax bulky goods conditions on existing retail warehouses in Swindon. It will be important to resist such pressure in order to protect the vitality of the town centre. There will also be continued pressure from out-of-centre food retailers to develop more space for comparison goods sales, particularly in existing out-of-centre superstores. There is a strong presumption against new out-of-centre developments. However, small extensions to existing schemes may be permitted where they meet the requirements of the Policy, and some account is to be taken of applicants' business models.
- 4.77 A new district centre to serve the New Eastern Villages will need to be anchored by a food superstore in a highly accessible location.
- 4.78 Current national policy concerning the continued vitality of the town centre encourages local planning policies to produce a competitive town centre which can provide consumers with a diverse range of retail offer and individuality. It aims to support the creation of a well-defined hierarchy of centres, whilst ensuring the network is resilient to any anticipated economic changes. The NPPF advises the Local Planning Authority to request an impact assessment for all retail developments which exceed the floorspace threshold. If the local planning authority has not implemented any local thresholds, then applications will be assessed against the national threshold of 2,500m².

- 4.79 Swindon Borough Council consider that the national threshold of 2,500m² may result in developments that have the potential to adversely affect the vitality and viability of the town centre and/or other defined centres. Using evidence on average gross unit size in existing centres a locally set threshold of 600m² has been set. Any development proposals greater than this threshold will be assessed in terms of the proposal's impact on any existing and future investment in the surrounding area and its impact on the vitality and viability of the town centre. The threshold will be applied to all new buildings providing retail floorspace and to any alterations to a development where an extension would result in the total floorspace of that store exceeding the threshold. It will be relevant to all locations within the borough, whether they are situated in the town centre, on the edge of centre or out of town.
- 4.80 Policy EC3 encourages the clawing back of Class A1 Uses in local, rural and district centre frontages where there are currently lower levels than aspired to by this Plan. This is in the interest of protecting the retail function of such centres and ensuring that measures are put in place to encourage and re-establish the viability and vitality of those frontages that have in the past seen an unacceptable loss of retail.
- 4.81 The Old Town and Fleet Street areas are coming under pressure for change of use for A3/A4/A5 uses⁶. This undermines the function of these areas during the day. The same approach would protect the local centres from a proliferation of A5 uses.
- 4.82 Although street trading (including hot food vending, ice cream vans, markets and stalls) can be a positive addition to a retail centre, this informal way of trading should be carefully controlled to ensure a positive rather than negative impact on the centre in which it is located. It is noted that the term "street" includes any road, footway, or other area to which the public have access.

⁶ The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) places uses of land and buildings into various categories called Use Classes. A Use Class is a grouping together of similar land uses. For example, restaurants and cafes are A3, drinking establishments such as pubs and wine bars are A4, and hot food takeaways are A5.

- 4.83 Annual monitoring of implementation is to be undertaken which will encompass a regular review of town centre vitality and viability.

Delivery and links with other key policies

- 4.84 Retail and leisure development shall be appropriately located and of an appropriate scale through the application of this policy and through:
- alignment of proposals with other related (but non-planning) strategies and plans identified in the “Evidence Base” above;
 - implementation of the adopted Swindon Central Area Action Plan;
 - up-to-date monitoring of retail and leisure premises and facilities;
 - commercial premises developers;
 - the development management process;
 - discussion on pre-application proposals prior to applications being submitted; and,
 - Neighbourhood Plans and Neighbourhood Development Orders which might be developed by Neighbourhood Forums and are then consequently adopted by the Council, and / or,
 - further work on the detailed location and specification of individual development sites undertaken by the Council (through masterplanning, site allocations work, development briefs and so on) augmented by Parish and other Community Plans;

Policy EC4: Conversion of Buildings to Employment Use in the Countryside

In the countryside, proposals for the conversion of a building or structure for employment use not related to policy EC5 shall be permitted provided:

- it is structurally sound and capable of conversion without substantial reconstruction;
- the conversion maintains the original character of the building and does not have a detrimental effect on the fabric

and character of any adjacent buildings, including listed buildings, or the landscape character type generally;

- **utilities can be provided and the building has adequate access to a metalled road without creating traffic hazards and without involving road improvements incompatible with the character of the area; and**
- **the conversion does not lead to a dispersal of employment activity on such a scale as to adversely affect the vitality of neighbouring rural settlements.**

- 4.85 Re-using or adapting existing rural buildings has a valuable role in meeting the need for commerce and industry in rural areas. It helps to reduce the demand for new buildings, can provide local jobs and improve derelict or vacant buildings.
- 4.86 The Borough Council wishes to support such proposals provided they are appropriate in scale and impact to their countryside location.
- 4.87 Where buildings in the countryside have either become so derelict that reuse is only possible following complete or substantial reconstruction, or their construction and materials are such as to require considerable alteration to make the building suitable for the new purpose, the proposal will be assessed as if it were for an entirely new development in the countryside. In such cases proposals will be considered under Policy SD2.
- 4.88 The Borough Council seeks to ensure that countryside buildings retain their original character wherever possible. It is, however, acknowledged that alterations may be required to upgrade the appearance or quality of a building to adapt it for employment use. Such changes will be acceptable provided they maintain the original character of the building and its surroundings.
- 4.89 Consideration will also be given to the transport implications arising from proposals to convert buildings in the countryside to employment

use, as the road network in rural areas frequently has lower capacity levels to accommodate increased volumes of traffic.

- 4.90 Any proposals should be appropriate in scale for their location. The conversion of buildings to employment use will only be acceptable where they do not significantly affect the vitality of nearby rural settlements.

Delivery and links with other key policies

- 4.91 Appropriate conversion of buildings to employment use in the countryside will be delivered through the application of this policy through the development management process. Applicants will be encouraged to have early pre-application discussions with the Council to ensure that criteria are satisfied.

Policy EC5: Farm Diversification

In rural areas, proposals for economic activities that bring about farm diversification (as defined by the EU) shall normally be permitted, providing that:

- the proposals are operated as part of a viable farm holding and contribute to the viability of the holding;
- it is not detrimental to the character and appearance of existing buildings and their setting within the Landscape Character Area;
- existing buildings are used in preference to new buildings or extensions;
- utilities and other infrastructure is available or can be provided; and
- there is access by means of an existing road; no traffic hazards are created or increased; and road improvements incompatible with the character of the surrounding area are

not required.

- 4.92 Paragraph 28 of the National Planning Policy Framework supports economic growth in rural areas by taking a positive approach to sustainable new development, including the promotion of the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses.
- 4.93 The policy refers to the EU definition of farm diversification in order to provide clarity and consistency, and to conform with nationally collected statistics. The EU defines farm diversification as all activities other than farm work that have an economic impact on the holding. These activities must make use of the farm's resources (such as the land, buildings or machinery) or products. If only the farm's labour force and no other resources are used for the activity then this is not classed as being a diversified activity. Agricultural work for other holdings is included. Exclusions are: pure financial investments, commercial activity on the holding which is not linked to any agricultural or horticultural activity (e.g. a hairdresser or insurance company), renting out the land for diverse activities where there is no further involvement in these activities, and letting out of buildings. Included in the definition are:
- Contracting and haulage, including any agricultural contracting, haulage and clearing snow.
 - Tourism, which includes accommodation and sport/leisure activities.
 - Environment, which includes aquaculture and forestry.
 - Processing and food manufacture, including animal or arable products (e.g. cheese- making), handicraft and wood processing.
- 4.94 Diversification provides opportunities to generate additional income for the farming business, reduces reliance on a single income stream and reduces risk. Policy EC5 sets out the criteria within which farm diversification can contribute to a prosperous and viable rural economy in the Swindon rural area in accordance with the principles set out in

SD1. In doing so the policy ensures that farm diversification as promoted in paragraph 28 of the NPPF meets the definition of sustainable development as set out in paragraph 7 of the NPPF. It also ensures that farm holdings can remain viable, and agricultural buildings can remain in use, without causing harm to the environment by new construction, and without increasing traffic hazards on rural roads.

Additional evidence base document:

- Farming Statistics : Diversification and Renewable Energy Production on Farms in England 2010, National Statistics & DEFRA, January 2012

Delivery and links with other key policies

- 4.95 Appropriate farm diversification will be delivered through the application of this policy through the development management process. Applicants will be encouraged to have early pre-application discussions with the Council to ensure that criteria are satisfied.

Theme 3: Housing and Accommodation

The Housing and Accommodation theme's policies flow directly from and help to implement the following Strategic Objectives set out in section 2 of this Plan:

**SO1: High Quality Sustainable Development; and,
SO4: Housing**

- 4.97 Theme 3 sets out policies to:
- ▶ deliver planned housing growth set out in the Plan;
 - ▶ deliver affordable housing to meet current needs
 - ▶ assess and determine proposals for housing development and other types of accommodation which come forward in locations where this Plan does not propose additional development, including small scale development; and,
 - ▶ assess and determine proposals for specific types of accommodation

Key issues

- 4.98 Housing and accommodation is important to us all and across all sections of society. In Swindon, there are a number of key housing issues facing its population and which demonstrate a need for housing growth in the Borough.
- 4.99 As incomes on average remain constant or go down in real terms, housing is becoming more expensive. The “affordability gap” between earnings and the ability to pay rent for accommodation affects those who are trying to access the rental market (private rented or social housing) the most.
- 4.100 Government policy continues to place an emphasis on sustainable economic (and housing) growth, to which Swindon is responding to through its spatial strategy encapsulated in the Sustainable Development Strategy. As the economy changes and recovers from recession, additional housing will be needed to support economic

migration to the area and retain Swindon's resident workers of all ages, from those moving to their first rented or owned home at a young age to those seeking to upsize or downsize to or from a family home. In particular a range of housing is needed, including at the high end of the market, to attract economic migrants to the Borough.

- 4.101 Nationally and locally there is an ageing population, with people living longer and needing more accessible accommodation. This will include provision of different types of adaptable accommodation such as lifetime homes and lifetime neighbourhoods with nearby access to facilities and services required particularly by the elderly.
- 4.102 Despite the changes to the economy, with the cost of market housing falling since before the recession, access to homes for first time buyers in particular has remained difficult.
- 4.103 However, effective planning for housing is not all about housing provision at any cost anywhere. The delivery of housing in sustainable locations and to the appropriate scale is as important and there clearly parts of the Borough where, set against the Government's presumption in favour of sustainable development, there will be limitations on housing development that should and should not be built.

Addressing the key issues

- 4.104 Planning has a key role to play in helping to resolve many of these issues. However, the Local Planning Authority's and planning system's key role in helping to deliver positive change is as an enabler. It cannot guarantee that planned changes will happen. Other mechanisms, legislation and bodies (private and public sector) have key roles in the implementation and regulation of housing and accommodation growth and change (including, but not limited to, private developers, Registered Social Landlords / Housing Associations and the Council's Building Control and Housing teams).

Key Evidence Base for Theme 2

- Swindon Joint Study (2005)

- Swindon Housing Market Assessment Final Report (2006)
- Swindon Housing Needs Assessment (2006)
- Small Scale Urban Extensions Study (2008)
- Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (2009)
- Swindon Housing Market Area Housing Strategy (2009)
- Swindon Housing Requirement Update Report (2011)
- Swindon Housing Market Assessment (2012)

Policy HA1: Mix, Types and Density

- a. Housing development should be design-led, in particular:**
- **densities, house types and sizes should be respect the character of the surrounding area;**
 - **there should be a variety of densities, house types and sizes within larger developments;**
 - **higher densities should be directed towards Swindon's Central Area and locations served by a good range of services and facilities; and**
 - **lower densities and larger homes should be provided to satisfy the higher value end of the market where they are in accord with the context and character of the local area**
- b. Large development proposals will be expected to consider the contribution self-build can make to the mix and type of development**

4.105 To gain an understanding of the types of housing that are needed in Swindon Borough, a Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) has been undertaken. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires that SHMAs should identify the scale and mix of housing and the range of tenures that the local population is likely to need during the lifetime of the Plan. This housing needs to be

responsive to demand, meet future anticipated household and population growth, and address the need for all types of housing and the needs of different groups of people in the local community.

- 4.106 The type and mix of new housing can play a role in improving the physical environment; diluting concentrations of disadvantage; attracting industry to locate to Swindon and higher skilled workers to live here; and improving Swindon’s overall image. Whilst there is a pressing need for affordable housing in the rural parts of the Borough, especially Blunsdon & Highworth and Ridgeway wards (see Policy HA2), building more prestigious homes in Swindon or high quality landmark schemes in the town centre can contribute to the improvement of the urban environment. The Local Plan needs to have policies in place to articulate the preferred “look and feel” to new housing development in Swindon Borough, whether large or small scale and whether in the urban or rural setting.
- 4.107 A key challenge already identified for Swindon is to ensure that new development is well-designed to help bring about and create high quality urban environments. Swindon is promoting a design led approach to housing that reflects the character of the local area. This is the starting point for the approach to the design and density of development, but where it is innovative, high quality or highly accessible an alternative design approach may be acceptable. Therefore, all new housing development will have the highest regard to good design in accord with Policy DE1 in particular.
- 4.108 Overall, forecast demand and need for housing suggests growth in one-person households as Table 4 shows, translating to a future need for predominantly 1 and 2 bedroom properties.

Table 4

Household Type	2011	2016	2021	2026
Couples	46%	44.5%	43.5%	42.5%
Singles	31%	32.5%	34%	35%

Multi-person e.g. families	23%	23%	22.5%	22.5%
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- 4.109 However, when considering these figures it is too simplistic to plan just for smaller dwellings, as this does not take into account the demand from some small households for larger properties. It is essential to get a mix of housing that best reflects the needs and aspirations of Swindon's growing population and when considered alongside the forecasts of household types, this suggests accommodating, in particular, a growing population of older people and meeting the needs of younger families.
- 4.110 Providing a mix of housing types and sizes helps to provide new development with character whilst different sized households with a variety of socio-economic make-up can help to foster a sense of community and variety, and prevent homogenous neighbourhoods forming. Policy HA1 responds to the guidance in the NPPF which requires plans to provide for a full range of types of market and affordable housing to reflect locally assessed needs, identified through the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) and to provide mixed and inclusive communities.
- 4.111 New housing in Swindon in recent years has been characterised by high-density schemes often dominated by flats. Over the period 2006 to 2010, approximately 41 per cent of new housing was in the form of flats with only 12.5 per cent in the form of lower density four bedroom houses. The proportion of four-bed homes fell to a low of 5.2 per cent in 2009/10 with the balance made up of an increase in the proportion of two-bed houses. Table 5 illustrates the number of completions in recent years by dwelling size (number of bedrooms) and Table 6 shows the densities achieved since 2006..

Table 5: Dwelling Size and Past Distribution of Housing Completions

	Flats			Houses			
	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	1 bed	2 bed	3 bed	4 bed
2006/7	13	29	0	5	13	25	16
2007/8	12	30	1	0	13	27	17
2008/9	13	32	0	2	13	28	11
2009/10	7	34	0	3	26	24	5

Source: Swindon Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2011.

- 4.112 Translating this into the number of dwellings per hectare, densities have started to fall in recent years.

Table 6: Density of Past Housing Completions

	2006/7	2007/8	2008/9	2009/10	2010/11
Northern Development Area	45.15	44.23	44.17	33.85	26.02
Wichelstowe	0	0	63.14	58.79	50.90
Swindon remainder	88.30	82.18	68.48	62.35	49.54

Source: Swindon Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2011

- 4.113 The NPPF supports the local planning authorities setting their own approach to housing densities to reflect local circumstances. Housing densities help to define the character of new housing development. What might be appropriate in one location may be inappropriate in another and so it is important that densities respect the character of the urban or rural area within which they are located. Without dictating strict housing densities in the Borough, Policy HA1 aims to encourage higher densities, for example, in the central area and allow lower densities, for example, in more rural locations.
- 4.114 Other factors will influence the appropriate density of new development. Higher density development will, for example, help to encourage walking and cycling, the economic viability of public transport and minimise the need for developing greenfield land. Lower density housing will help meet demand for larger and higher value homes not currently well catered for in Swindon. The application of design codes and other mechanisms such as the development

management process will help to ensure that the right densities are applied to proposed housing developments.

4.115 The criteria required to guide the type, mix and density of new housing development should look like cannot be designed as a “one size fits all” standard and so policy needs to be responsive to and set a framework which allows appropriate scale, density, type and mix of housing depending on its location. The detail of housing development identified in the Local Plan and in other locations will need to be brought out further through the application of other policies in this plan, masterplans, design codes, management plans and planning applications.

4.116 The self-build sector is a component of the housing supply, but currently is largely restricted to single dwellings. In order to increase the supply of housing larger developments should consider how self-build units can be incorporated in the proposal. The Council will work with developers to agree a suitable approach to delivering self-build homes as part of larger schemes. The Council will also work with the Self-Build community to further understand their requirements and promote on their behalf.

Delivery and links with other key policies

- 4.117 The appropriate mix, type and density of housing developments shall be delivered through the application of this policy and through:
- alignment of proposals with other related (but non-planning) strategies and plans identified in the “Evidence Base” above;
 - implementation of the adopted Central Area Action Plan;
 - engagement between the Council, developers and the community;
 - development of Framework Plans, Design Codes and masterplans;
 - phasing to control the release of housing land which will better match the housing requirements generated by Swindon’s changing economy;
 - using previously developed land wherever possible;
 - an up-to-date understanding of development viability;
 - the development management process; and,

- Neighbourhood Plans and Neighbourhood Development Orders which might be developed by Neighbourhood Forums and are then consequently adopted by the Council, and / or,
- further work on the detailed location and specification of individual development sites undertaken by the Council (through masterplanning, site allocations work, development briefs and so on) augmented by Parish and other Community Plans;

Policy HA2: Affordable Housing

- a. On all developments of 15 homes or more, or on sites larger than 0.5 hectares and subject to economic viability assessment:**
- **a target of 30%⁷ affordable homes should be provided on-site; or**
 - **a proportionate contribution should be provided towards affordable homes off-site where on-site provision is not suitable.**
- b. Where affordable homes are to be provided on-site affordable housing should be integrated within the design and layout of a development and of a mix and tenure that reflects current need.**

4.118 According to the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA), in September 2010 there were 6,166 households classed as ‘in housing need’ on the Council’s Housing Register, representing around 7 per cent of all households in the Borough. Those staying with friends or relatives made up almost half of this total. The greatest need from households on the Register is for one-bedroom accommodation. 59.4 per cent of all households on the Register require one-bedroom; 20.5 per cent require two-bedrooms; 17.9 per cent require three-bedrooms; and, 2 per cent require four or more.

⁷ This level of provision should be delivered with nil public subsidy, unless otherwise agreed by the council

- 4.119 The SHMA has established that there is an annual average shortfall in Swindon Borough of around 801 affordable homes. As a result, it recommended that Swindon Borough should maintain its existing policy of seeking a 30% affordable housing contribution on sites large enough to qualify. Additionally, it stressed a need to increase the supply of affordable housing in the rural wards of Ridgeway, and Blunsdon & Highworth, where the current supply is most limited, and housing is least affordable.
- 4.120 The number of affordable homes that can be provided is constrained by both available public sector funding and the level of cross subsidy that can realistically be achieved from land value enhancement associated with planning permission (planning gain). In current housing market conditions, the number of affordable homes which can be delivered is inextricably linked with the development of market homes and if planning policies push for too high a quota of affordable homes it may both reduce the overall number of dwellings built, and the proportion of those that are affordable. It is also important that the delivery of all types of housing is not undermined by development sites becoming unviable, which can happen as a result of the recession's impact on land values and the high cost of borrowing.
- 4.121 In light of concerns over the viability of delivering development to accommodate affordable housing to the thresholds identified in the SHMA as a result of the recession, the Borough Council commissioned independent consultants (GVA) to test the viability of delivering affordable housing and tenure split, having regard to the NPPF. With regard to the appropriate proportion of affordable housing to be sought, the study recommended that "taking into consideration the need for development to contribute towards strategic infrastructure through a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), as well as on-site S.106, that the Borough can provide for its anticipated growth agenda. The Council takes an approach to affordable housing based on the assumption of today's 'weak' market conditions, and allows itself flexibility when negotiating affordable housing provision by setting an affordable

housing TARGET of 30%.” The accompanying Community Infrastructure Levy Study, which should be read in conjunction with the viability study, demonstrated that in the vast majority of developments, development is viable with more than 20% affordable housing. The study also noted that “Should the Council believe that development could in theory afford to contribute lower or higher levels of affordable housing without prejudicing its ability to contribute to CIL and on site S.106, the Council should enter into negotiations with the respective developer / landowner to determine the appropriate level of affordable housing.” This suggests that site by site viability testing should take place for the foreseeable future.

- 4.122 Therefore, in order to maintain an up-to-date understanding of deliverability, the SHMA will be updated periodically (which will include review of the overall affordable housing target) and individual development schemes’ viability and ability to deliver affordable housing will be tested through an ‘open book’ approach as part of the planning application / development management process. Where the provision of on-site affordable housing is demonstrated to be unviable, contributions to the provision of affordable housing off-site to the scale which would have been required on-site can be made (where it is in accord with paragraph 50 of the NPPF).
- 4.123 Intermediate housing⁸ is important in the delivery of the affordable housing requirements. The SHMA recommended that the relative affordability that the market presents on new housing schemes, as well as the effective affordability of the ‘affordable housing’ (particularly low cost home ownership), should be taken into account when considering proportions of market, affordable and intermediate housing on a site. It also recommends that Registered Providers and housing developers should be required to demonstrate on a scheme-by-scheme basis the

⁸ “Intermediate market housing refers to affordable homes for sale through schemes such as shared-ownership, or rented properties offered at a discount to market rent, usually 80 per cent. Both forms of intermediate housing have increasingly been included in the supply of new affordable homes.” p.197, SHMA

market demand for additional one and two bedroom flats for the intermediate sale and key worker market.

- 4.124 With regard to tenure split, the consultant report which tested viability also looked at the appropriate split in Swindon Borough. It recommended that “the tenure split within the affordable housing provision does not have a significant effect on development viability, and we would therefore suggest that the Council considers its housing need and the desire of its Members and RP’s (Registered Providers) to adopt the ‘Affordable Rent’ model in coming to a decision on which tenure split would be most advantageous for the Borough.”
- 4.125 In all cases, where the affordable housing is a proportion of the overall scheme, in the interests of developing inclusive, mixed and socially integrated communities in Swindon, affordable and intermediate housing should be well-designed and integrated with the rest of the development scheme. This approach is supported by the NPPF⁹.
- 4.126 In summary, Policy HA2 is designed to help deliver affordable housing in response to the evidence gathered in the SHMA, whilst introducing some flexibility which recognises that the current housing market is struggling to deliver the scale of housing (market, intermediate and affordable) due to the impact of the recession. The required thresholds introduced in the policy are derived directly from the SHMA and have been tested as part of the viability assessment and are aligned with the NPPF, which requires local planning authorities to use their evidence base to ensure that “their Local Plan meets the full, objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing” (paragraph 47).

Delivery and links with other key policies

- 4.127 The delivery of affordable housing shall be achieved through application of this policy and through:

⁹ See paragraph 50 of the NPPF.

- Alignment of proposals with other related (but non-planning) strategies and plans identified in the “Evidence Base” above;
- The provision of affordable and intermediate housing by developers and Registered Social Landlords (RSLs);
- Engagement between the Council and developers and the negotiation of developer contributions towards the provision of affordable housing based on the Council’s adopted Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document;
- The development management process; and,
- Neighbourhood Plans and Neighbourhood Development Orders which might be developed by Neighbourhood Forums and are then consequently adopted by the Council, and / or,
- further work on the detailed location and specification of individual development sites undertaken by the Council (through masterplanning, site allocations work, development briefs and so on) augmented by Parish and other Community Plans.

Policy HA3: Wheelchair Accessible Housing

Development proposals for 50 dwellings or more should provide at least 2% of the dwellings to be suitable for occupation by wheelchair users to ensure all delivered housing is of a high quality and there is a wide choice of housing available.

4.128 An underlying theme within the National Planning Policy Framework is the creation of healthy and inclusive communities. Inclusive access and good design are key to creating sustainable communities and lifetime neighbourhoods, and therefore important in achieving sustainable development. Ensuring that future homes meet the needs of a wide range of people is essential in the creation of a mixed and sustainable community. This is particularly important if we are to meet the challenges of development and relieve the forecast unsustainable pressure on homes, social care and health services.

- 4.129 Dwellings built to wheelchair housing standards should be designed specifically to meet the diverse and changing needs of wheelchair users and the multiplicity of impairments that some wheelchair users experience. Lifetime Homes, while suitable and offering choice for some people with impairments will not have the additional spatial requirements all wheelchair users need to access every room and facility of the dwelling.
- 4.130 The Inclusive Design Access for All Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) highlights the different specifications in respect of Lifetime Homes and Wheelchair Accessible Housing.

Additional evidence base document:

- Wheelchair Accessible Housing in New Housing Developments (2012)

Delivery and links with other key policies

- 4.131 The delivery of wheelchair accessible housing shall be delivered through the application of this policy and through the development management process.

Policy HA4: Subdivision of Housing and Houses in Multiple Occupation

- a. Proposals for sub-division of dwellings into flats and for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs), where planning permission is required shall only be permitted where:
- the internal floorspace of the original dwelling is at least 100m²;
 - they will not harm the character of the area, streetscene or amenity of neighbouring residents including through the provision of parking, refuse and cycle storage;
 - the application of car parking standards does not result in the loss of the majority of existing front and rear garden space and

landscaping;

- **they will not harm traffic or pedestrian safety due to increased parking pressures or exacerbate existing parking problems; and**
- **room sizes and internal arrangements meet the current standards defined by Swindon Borough Council**

- b. In order to support mixed and balanced communities, and to ensure that a range of household needs continue to be accommodated throughout the Borough, applications for changes of use to a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO)¹⁰ shall only be permitted where the proposal would not adversely affect the character of the surrounding area or lead to an unacceptable concentration of Houses in Multiple Occupation within a given area.**

4.132 Although the sub-division of dwellings can increase the number of dwellings available and is a means of bringing empty property back into use, they can have a detrimental impact on neighbouring properties. It is important that the subdivision does not create a building that is out of context with its surroundings. The subdivision of houses into self-contained units of accommodation should only be undertaken with great care and should have regard to the subsequent effects on the amenities of the neighbouring occupiers and the character of the area.

4.133 The policy specifies a minimum size for properties to be subdivided. Swindon has a number of smaller older properties that are effectively one room width. The experience of development management has shown that the conversion of these properties does cause difficulties for the amenity of potential occupiers, and that this minimum requirement effectively excludes these inappropriate properties. This

¹⁰ For the purposes of this policy, dwellings in use as Class C4, mixed C3/C4 use and HMOs in *sui generis* use will be considered to be HMOs.

standard has been supported at appeals and remains an effective way of controlling subdivision. Similarly, the subdivision of a property should not result in unsuitably small rooms and cramped living conditions for the future occupiers. A Residential Space Standards Supplementary Planning Document will set out minimum standards for room sizes.

- 4.134 The availability of parking will also be a factor. The amount of parking to be allowed at subdivisions will be a factor of the intensity of the proposed habitation, the space available for parking and the need to avoid creating highway problems and annoyance for neighbouring residents.
- 4.135 Houses in Multiple Occupancy (HMOs) provide more flexibility and accessibility than owner occupation and conventional affordable housing, and have an important role in sustaining the flexibility of the labour market. However, a concentration of HMOs can have an accumulative adverse impact on the local area. There are concerns in some local communities, particularly close to the Town Centre, about the current proliferation of HMOs already in existence. Proposals in these areas should be considered with particular regard to protecting the existing community and the character of the area.
- 4.136 In April 2010 the Use Classes Order was amended and a new Use Class (C4 Houses in Multiple Occupation (HiMO)) was created. The definition has been based on that used in the Housing Act (2004)¹¹. The General Permitted Development Order(6) (GPDO) grants automatic planning permission for certain categories of development, meaning there is no need, in these instances, to submit a planning application. This is known as ‘permitted development’ and includes cases where a change from one Use Class to another does not require planning permission. In October 2010 the GPDO was amended to include the change of use from a Use Class C3 ‘dwelling house’ to a Use Class C4 ‘HiMO’ in the categories of permitted development, removing the need to apply for planning permission.

¹¹ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/34/section/254>

- 4.137 At the same time, the Government stated that where an authority wanted to retain planning control by maintaining the requirement to submit a planning application, they could use existing powers to do so, called Article 4 Directions. In the case of HiMOs, an Article 4 Direction can be used to remove the permitted development right for a change from Use Class C3 to Use Class C4. The removal of permitted development rights in any area covered by an Article 4 Direction would mean that planning permission would be required for a change of use from C3 to C4.
- 4.138 At present, the Borough Council has no Article 4 direction in place in relation to HMOs. However, in order to have a policy in place to guide change of use in the event of an Article 4 direction being invoked in the future, Policy HA4 includes HMOs as well as sub-division of dwellings.
- 4.139 The NPPF (para. 50) makes reference to creating sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities. An over concentration of any one particular type of housing or household would not be in-line with the aim of creating mixed communities. In setting a local threshold above which no further HiMOs will generally be granted planning permission, a balance needs to be struck. There is a need to maintain a mix of dwelling types in areas of high demand for HMOs, whilst not reducing the overall supply of HMOs across the Borough and therefore limiting the housing available to meet the needs of the population.
- 4.140 At the time of issuing any Article 4 Direction the Borough Council will set a local threshold of the percentage of HMOs within a set distance of any proposed HMO application, based on local circumstances. For guidance a reasonable threshold is that the number of Houses in Multiple Occupation should not exceed 20% of the total number of properties within a 100 metre diameter buffer of the application property. Consultation will be undertaken with the local community to determine the appropriate thresholds. The Borough Council will use planning and housing records to determine the local concentration of HMOs in a given area.

Additional Evidence Base

- Development management experience supported by appeal decisions.

Delivery and links with other key policies

- 4.141 The subdivision of dwellings and larger houses in multiple occupation will be considered through the application of this policy when assessing development proposals and through:
- the development management process;
 - the use Article 4 Directions where necessary for part or whole of the Borough to remove permitted development rights for HMOs;
 - checking the location of proposals against a database holding all existing HMOs, in order to determine if the proposed location would fall within an area of concentration; and
 - development of a supplementary guidance setting out in greater detail how the policy will be applied(c)

Policy HA5: Rural Exception Sites

- a. **As an exception to the rural strategy principles in Policy SD2c, housing development to meet local affordable housing needs may be permitted outside defined rural settlement boundaries where it can be demonstrated that the following criteria can be met :**
- **no other suitable sites are available within the settlement boundary;**
 - **the housing shall remain affordable in perpetuity to people with a local connection;**
 - **there is evidence of local need, through the Council's Strategic Housing Market Assessment and/or a Local Needs Survey;**
 - **the proposal is appropriate in scale and style taking into account landscape value, settlement character, and site characteristics;**

- **environmentally sensitive sites such as SSSIs are not affected;**
- **good design principles are demonstrated that meet the Council’s residential design standards, with the design process beginning from the outset;**
- **an option with the landowner is secured at an early stage in the development process to ensure the scheme can proceed.**

- b. Where such a proposal is initiated and supported by the local community and it is aligned with the Local Plan policies, there will be a presumption to grant.**
- c. In exceptional circumstances, where it is demonstrated, by means of a viability assessment, that there is insufficient public funding to make the scheme viable, an element of private market housing will be acceptable to provide a cross subsidy, secured through a legal obligation. The market housing would need to meet the same design principles as the affordable element.**

4.142 In the past there has been the opportunity for Rural Exception Sites to come forward outside rural settlement boundaries, where housing would not normally be permitted, to enable the provision of affordable housing in rural areas. However, these have been insufficient to meet the need for affordable housing, especially in recent years with the reduced availability of public funding. The National Planning Policy Framework encourages the allocation of sites for affordable housing, and the Plan proposes that rural exception sites should be allowed for at rural settlements adjacent to the settlement boundaries, and within rural settlements where there is no defined settlement boundary. Preferably sites will be allocated through forthcoming Neighbourhood Plans or through further site identification and allocation by the Council), but it is not practical to expect that all sites will be identified in this way. It is also proposed that rural exception sites should reflect a recommendation in the Taylor Review of Rural Economy and

Affordable Housing Living Working Countryside (2008) regarding Community Led Affordable Housing.

Additional Evidence Base Document:

- Taylor Review of Rural Economy and Affordable Housing Living Working Countryside (2008)

Delivery and links with other key policies

- 4.143 The delivery of housing on exceptions sites shall be achieved through the application of this policy and through:
- engagement between the local community, developers, land owners and the Council;
 - the development management process; and,
 - allocations to be made through development of Neighbourhood Plans, Neighbourhood Development Orders or further work undertaken by the Council on site specific allocations in rural areas where community-led neighbourhood planning does not take place

Policy HA6: Agricultural Workers Dwellings

- a. Planning permission for a new dwelling in the countryside based upon the essential needs of agriculture and forestry shall only be granted provided that:
- an independent appraisal is submitted with the application demonstrating that there is a functional need for the proposed dwelling which cannot be met by existing suitable accommodation available in the area, or by rearranging duties and responsibilities between workers; and
 - the size of the proposed dwelling is appropriate to its functional need; and
 - in all cases a financial test is also submitted to demonstrate the viability of the business proposed or as proposed to be expanded; and

- **the dwelling cannot be provided by adapting an existing building on the holding; and**
- **the proposed dwelling is located within or adjacent to the existing farm buildings or other dwellings on the holding; and**
- **the design of the proposed dwelling is in harmony with the landscape character type and appearance of the countryside, particularly in the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty; and**
- **occupancy is limited by way of a planning condition or obligation**

- b. Any proposal for a farm unit which has been subject to fragmentation, or is known to be about to be affected by it, shall be subject to planning obligations to tie the dwellings to adjacent farm buildings to prevent them being sold separately.**

4.144 Policy HA6 is intended to ensure a consistent approach by the Local Planning Authority in determining applications for new dwellings outside the settlement boundaries. In the open countryside isolated new dwellings are not normally permitted as they conflict with strategies to protect the countryside and are generally in unsustainable locations. However, those who work in the rural economy may need to live in close proximity to where they work. Consequently, to conform to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), proposals of this nature are allowed as an exception to development constraints in the countryside.

4.145 The criteria specified are considered appropriate to determine whether such a special justification is valid and to detect possible abuse. Each appraisal should be submitted with the application and be undertaken at the applicant's expense by an independent and qualified agricultural consultant. Where required, this financial appraisal should show in particular that the net income generated by the business is wholly

capable of supporting the proposed size and cost of the dwelling, and the livelihood of its occupant, on a sound continuing basis.

- 4.146 Should these appraisals establish the need for a dwelling in principle, the availability of any suitable existing accommodation in the vicinity (such as the nearest settlement) will be regarded as material in determining the application. Where no such accommodation exists, inordinately large or extensive new dwellings relative to the needs of the enterprise, or those of inappropriate design for their location, will not be permitted. Where the Local Planning Authority is concerned about possible abuse of this exception policy, the history of the holding, the recent pattern of land use and building and recent disposals of land and property may be investigated. Such information will be treated as material to the Local Planning Authority's determination of planning applications, as part of the consideration of the individual merits of each case. Such a sale could constitute evidence of lack of agricultural need.
- 4.147 To ensure that new dwellings permitted to meet such special needs remain available to meet any continuing essential needs of agriculture or forestry enterprises in the locality an occupancy condition will be attached by the Local Planning Authority to all permissions granted under this policy. Consideration will also be given to agreeing occupancy conditions on existing dwellings under the control of the applicant, which do not have such conditions, but need at the time of the application to be used in conjunction with the enterprise. Fragmentation has resulted in a new set of problems in relation to agricultural policy. The separate sale of farmhouses, divorced from the rest of the farm, has brought about the loss of much needed residential accommodation. To prevent this situation continuing in the future, planning obligations may be attached to agricultural workers consents to tie them to the associated unit.
- 4.148 Entirely new sites where there are currently no existing buildings at all are especially sensitive and could be unnecessarily damaged were partial implementation and/or the abandonment of a proposed

enterprise to occur. To ensure that such opportunities are not unnecessarily denied, in circumstances where the functional and financial tests have resulted in a finely balanced conclusion, the Local Planning Authority will be prepared to consider inviting an application for a mobile home on a temporary basis, normally for three years. Such temporary permission would rarely be renewed other than to provide continued accommodation whilst a permanent dwelling was promptly constructed on any such site as might have been permitted for that purpose.

Delivery and links with other key policies

- 4.149 Agricultural workers' dwellings will be considered through the application of this policy when assessing proposals and through the development management process.

Policy HA7: Conversion of Buildings to Residential Use in the Countryside

In the countryside, proposals for the conversion of an existing building or structure to residential shall be permitted provided they comply with the following criteria:

- the building is worthy of retention, structurally sound and capable of conversion without substantial reconstruction; and
- the conversion is in keeping with the original character of the building and enhances the fabric and character of any adjacent buildings, or the landscape character type generally; and
- the number of units and density of development is appropriate to the building's location; and
- the building shall have an existing curtilage or a curtilage can be created which does not adversely affect the landscape character type, the building itself or any adjacent structure;

and

- **utilities can be provided and the building has adequate access to a metalled road without creating traffic hazards and without involving road improvements incompatible with the character of the area**

- 4.150 Planning applications involving the conversion and reuse for residential purposes of buildings previously used for various other purposes have become increasingly common. This trend is associated both with changes within the agricultural industry and greater demand from people to live in the countryside. Whilst applications for employment and community use, particularly of traditionally designed buildings, will prevail conversions for residential purposes will be considered where the location is acceptable and where the development is appropriate to the original building. Where suitable the conversion and re-use of a building can help to reduce the demand for new developments in the countryside.
- 4.151 In accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, new isolated homes will be avoided in the countryside, unless redundant or disused buildings would be re-used during the development, leading to an enhancement of the immediate setting. The Local Planning Authority would wish to support such proposals, provided they are appropriate in scale, enhance the original character of the building and its surrounding landscape, and minimise the impact on their countryside location. Proposals which result in the long term safe guarding of a heritage asset will also be encouraged by the Borough Council.
- 4.152 The NPPF) attaches great importance to developments being of a high quality design; as such the Borough Council requires all proposals to improve the visual appearance and character of the area. Ensuring the vitality of rural communities is maintained or enhanced is also an

important consideration during the Local Planning Authority's decision making process.

- 4.153 The Council is seeking to ensure that countryside buildings are retained in their original form as far as possible, that re-use of buildings is sought for employment or community use first of all and only in circumstances where this cannot be achieved should it be residential (thereby avoiding the urbanisation of the rural area). Where residential conversion may in such cases be acceptable in principle, a proliferation of such schemes may be detrimental to a sparsely populated area. Development of this nature is therefore expected to be modest in scale and take account of the building's features and its landscape setting. Avoidance of traffic hazards and inappropriate locations in relation to public services and utilities is also sought together with creation of a dwelling of adequate size.
- 4.154 Where buildings in the countryside have either become so derelict that re-use is only possible following complete or substantial reconstruction, or their construction and materials are such as to require considerable alteration to make the building suitable for the new purpose, the proposal will be assessed as if it were for an entirely new development in the countryside. In such cases proposals will be considered under Policy DE1. Any proposed dwelling which will be strictly for the use of a rural worker will be considered under Policy HA6.

Additional Evidence Base Documents:

- Rural Facilities Study (2008)
- Swindon Core Strategy Rural Issues Paper (2009)

Delivery and links with other key policies

- 4.155 The conversion of buildings to residential use in the countryside will be considered primarily through the application of this policy through the development management process. Applicants will be encouraged to have early pre-application discussions with the Council.

Policy HA8: Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople Pitches and Sites

- a. Provision for gypsies and travellers and travelling show people will be made in accordance with the updated Need Assessment. The location(s) of this additional requirement will be identified in a Site Allocations Development Plan Document
- b. Development to accommodate Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Show People will be permitted provided that the site:
 - is accessible to shops, schools and health facilities by public transport, on foot or by cycle;
 - has good access to the highway network and will not cause traffic congestion or safety problems;
 - has sufficient space for the parking and manoeuvring of all vehicles associated with the occupiers;
 - is provided with adequate on-site services for water supply; power; drainage; sewage disposal; and waste disposal facilities;
 - includes appropriate landscape measures to avoid any adverse visual impact and to ensure adequate levels of privacy and residential amenity for occupiers and adjacent occupiers, that avoid the use of high walls and fences;
 - does not accommodate non-residential uses that would not cause, by virtue of smell, noise or vibration, significant adverse impact on neighbouring business or residents; and
 - is in accord with the Flood Risk Policy EN6
- c. In addition, development for travelling show people will be

permitted provided that the site:

- **be occupied by bona fide members of the Showmen's Guild, and**
 - **includes sufficient space for storage and maintenance of equipment separate from residential caravans.**
- d. **Unless the site is in close proximity to an existing children's recreational area, the site should also include a designated area for children's games and recreation.**

- 4.156 The residential accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers are currently met on 2 sites within the Borough, at Hay Lane (37 plots) and Small Acres (Kingsdown Lane - 3 plots). Hay Lane is Council owned and maintained whilst Small Acres is privately owned. In addition 12 pitches are provided at the Chiseldon Firs Council transit site. From time to time unauthorised encampments occur within the Borough and there is no recognisable pattern to their timing, duration or location.
- 4.157 The Wiltshire and Swindon Gypsy and Travellers Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) (2006) identified a need for 8 additional residential pitches and no increase in transit pitches at Swindon Borough by 2011.
- 4.158 Travelling showpeople require a permanent base where they can maintain, store and repair their equipment and where they can station their caravans, when they are not travelling for the purposes of their business. Guidance on the requirements for travelling showpeople is given in the Showmen's' Guilds' Model Standard Package for Sites (2007).
- 4.159 Further work to identify sites for the allocation of additional pitches will be undertaken following adoption of this Plan. The Council will continue to work with the nomadic community to understand their requirements.
- 4.160 The design and layout of sites should take account of the CLG Good Practice Guide 'Designing Gypsy and Traveller sites' (2008).

- 4.161 Sites for nomadic communities should follow the same basic criteria as brick and mortar housing in terms of their sustainable credentials. However it must be recognised that there are specific aspects of such sites that need additional criteria to be specified.
- 4.162 Many gypsies and travellers would like to run their business from the sites on which their caravans are stationed. It is important to ensure that where this occurs there is no adverse impact on existing residents in the vicinity from noise, fumes, or other disturbances that could arise. Proposals will have to meet highway safety standards, especially in the manoeuvring of large vehicles and trailers.
- 4.163 The objective is to create sites that are well designed and are sympathetic to the local landscape. The use of shrubs and trees on the edge of the site will be encouraged in order to avoid creating the feeling of isolation, however it is recognised that for safety, security fences and walls will sometimes also be needed.

Additional evidence base documents:

- Wiltshire and Swindon Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (2006)

Where to find further information:

- Showmen's Guilds' Model Standard Package for Sites (2007)
- Good Practice Guide 'Designing Gypsy and Traveller sites' (2008).

Delivery and links with other key policies

- 4.164 This policy will be implemented through planning decisions taken in the development management process and through:
- The development management process;
 - Neighbourhood Plans and Neighbourhood Development Orders which might be developed by Neighbourhood Forums and are then consequently adopted by the Council, and/or,
 - further work on the detailed location and specification of individual sites undertaken by the Council (through masterplanning, site allocations

work, development briefs and so on) augmented by Parish and other Community Plans

Theme 4 - Transport

The Transport theme's policies flow directly from and help to implement the following Strategic Objectives set out in section 2 of this Plan:

SO4: Transport

SO6: Community and Health

4.165 Theme 4 sets out policies to:

- ▶ improve key transport gateways and corridors;
- ▶ provide good access to Swindon town centre and key destinations;
- ▶ reduce severance caused by transport corridors and the dominance of the car on the streetscene;
- ▶ minimise the environmental impact from transport (for example, vehicle emissions);
- ▶ minimise congestion and therefore journey time, noise and air quality;
- ▶ promote healthy lifestyles and travel choices and maximise opportunities to walk and cycle;
- ▶ support good public transport provision; and
- ▶ encourage innovative transport initiatives for rural areas

Key issues

- 4.166 The transport issues faced in Swindon are common to many other towns and cities across the country. These include, for example, traffic congestion at peak travel times, a lowering of air quality during those peak times in certain parts of the town and maintaining an effective public transport (bus) service, particularly to and from rural areas outside the town.
- 4.167 New development will also pose further challenges such as good integration with and minimising impact on the existing transport network, extending public transport services into those areas and achieving good levels access throughout the day.

- 4.168 Effective accessibility is important in all modes of transport, from walking and cycling to public transport to the private car and transportation of goods, to all ages and across all parts of the economy. Therefore, there remains a need to improve the transport network to improve accessibility and reduce journey times, but also to improve air quality and reduce transport emissions. Whilst maintaining and improving the existing network, being able to provide the opportunity for more people to take their shorter trips by foot or bicycle, and to do this safely, is still a key issue.

Addressing the key issues

- 4.169 We are all dependent on transport to live our lives the way we do. We use transport for work, leisure, shopping, the “school run” and countless other activities. There are many factors influencing our choice of transport such as convenience, distance and time, the weather, our economic circumstances, congestion on our roads and necessity when our choices are limited. People’s behaviour is also a key determinant of the use of transport modes. Many of these issues cannot be dealt with through planning policies, but they can provide the platform to improve transport networks (of all modes), enhance sustainability and influence how people use transport by providing the opportunities to make more sustainable access to services, facilities and destinations easier.

Key Evidence base for Theme 4

- Swindon Climate Change Action Plan (2006)
- Swindon Workspace Strategy (2009)
- Swindon Transport Strategy (2009)
- Swindon Borough Local Transport Plan (2011 - 2026)
- Active Swindon Strategy (2009)
- Implementing the Network Management Plan
- The Strategic Plan for Accident Reduction
- The Rights of Way Improvement Plan

Policy TR1: Sustainable Transport Networks

- a. The council will use its planning and transport powers to help reduce the need to travel, and support and encourage the sustainable, safe and efficient movement of people and goods within and through the Borough. This will be achieved by:
- enabling a reliable and efficient transport network that:
 - minimises congestion;
 - maximises consistent journey times;
 - prioritises trips to and from Swindon town centre; and
 - supports the distribution and logistics employment sector
 - promoting and improving safety, security and healthy lifestyles through:
 - maximising opportunities to walk and cycle;
 - reducing severance caused by transport corridors and the dominance of the car on the streetscene;
 - education, training and enforcement;
 - engineering and design and highway maintenance; and
 - overlooking and surveillance of bus stops, car parks, footpaths and cycleways to increase safety.
 - promoting equality of opportunity and access to services and facilities for all by:
 - delivering walkable mixed use development;
 - inclusive design;
 - good public transport provision; and
 - encouraging innovative transport initiatives for rural areas
 - minimising emissions from transport by:
 - reducing the need to travel;
 - promoting more sustainable travel choices;

- **personal, workplace and school travel planning; and**
- **designing the built environment to encourage healthy lifestyles and travel choices.**
- **supporting and contributing towards improving Swindon's sense of place and quality of life by:**
 - **integrating public realm and green infrastructure into the design of transport schemes;**
 - **minimising the impact of congestion, noise and air quality;**
 - **improving the legibility and ease of movement within Swindon town centre; and**
 - **improving the image and experience of using Swindon's public transport.**
- **targeted investment to improve key junctions and corridors**
- **enabling the provision of a rapid transit network from the new urban extensions to Swindon Town Centre**
- **medium to long distance vehicle movements will be positively encouraged through site access/egress locations, road design, and other highway measures to access the strategic highway network at its nearest point in Swindon rather than rat-run through inappropriate rural roads in the Borough, Wiltshire and adjacent areas**

b. The route of the Purton Road to Iffley Junction Relief Road as shown on the Proposals Map is safeguarded to enable its future construction.

4.170 Swindon's position on the strategic transport network, with fast links by road and rail to London, Heathrow and many other areas is a key strength for the town. Within Swindon there is congestion at peak hours but it can be unpredictable in the places it affects and the times it occurs. North-south movements are particularly affected.

- 4.171 Generally residents have good access to services and facilities on foot or by public transport within Swindon, but this is more limited in the rural areas. There are also difficulties in making bus journeys across Swindon without the need to change in the town centre. The railway line is a barrier between the town centre and the northern parts of the town, particularly by walking or cycling.
- 4.172 The aims for transport at Swindon are to deliver a vibrant local economy, improve the sense of place and reduce the need to travel. Short distance trips by walking and cycling will be encouraged through design, mixed use development and housing density. Encouraging trips to Swindon town centre is important in supporting regeneration objectives, attracting investment and jobs and diverting trips that currently leave Swindon for other destinations. The strategy recognises that not all trips will be made to the town centre and therefore aims to encourage journeys within the town. Access to the strategic transport network is critical to Swindon's economy and it is essential that growth does not undermine this strength.

Reliable and Efficient Transport Network

- 4.173 The transport network has an important role to play in supporting economic growth, regeneration and housing growth. Congestion and poor journey time reliability results in lost productive time for businesses and impacts on the cost and time spent on journeys to and from work. This is particularly important for freight movement in Swindon's distribution and logistics sector.
- 4.174 To support town centre regeneration and Swindon's economic growth the aim is to facilitate ease of movement into, out of and around the town centre. Sustainable travel choices will be enhanced so that the car does not dominate or have a detrimental impact on the environment, or the quality of the experience in the town centre. The strategy seeks to improve the capacity and performance of the existing road network by discouraging through traffic and reducing circulating traffic.

Safety, Security and Health

- 4.175 The attractiveness of walking and cycling in Swindon will be improved to support healthy lifestyle choices but also to address climate change, congestion and improve air quality. Reliance on car use can lead to inactive lifestyles whilst walking and cycling are a good way to improve health as it builds exercise into everyday activities.
- 4.176 Road safety at Swindon has been steadily improving since the mid-nineties. Education and enforcement will be promoted to support responsible driving and continue to assist in developing practical skills needed when using our roads. The design, layout and maintenance of the transport network will create a safe environment that is a pleasant and attractive place to be. Fear of crime is a significant factor in discouraging travel choices for some sections of our community, especially those travelling alone and at night. Waiting at bus stops and taxi ranks, entering multi-storey car parks, isolated footpaths and cycleways and poor security of cycle racks all discourage sustainable travel choices and personal mobility.

Minimising Emissions from Transport

- 4.177 Swindon must play its part in reducing greenhouse gas emissions whilst facilitating economic growth. CO2 emissions from transport account for around 26% of Swindon's total and are in line with regional and national averages. Decarbonising transport is a key aspect in mitigating climate change nationally. Swindon's approach will largely focus on influencing travel behaviour by promoting low carbon alternatives to the car.
- 4.178 Travel planning, promotional activities, access to travel information, investment in walking, cycling and public transport infrastructure and better integration between travel modes will be at the heart of Swindon's strategy. Mixed-use development and sustainable urban design also have an important role in reducing the need to travel. There are opportunities for Swindon to investigate and pioneer alternative fuels and vehicle technology.

Sense of Place and Quality of Life

- 4.179 The railway lines and road corridors sever communities and act as a barrier to movement especially by walking and cycling. This will be particularly important to address at the 'New Eastern Villages'. It will be expected that transport infrastructure in Swindon should go beyond a traditional engineering solution to make a positive contribution to Swindon's sense of place, image and the quality of life of its residents.
- 4.180 Delivering a high quality, safe and easy to understand transport network through the town centre with clear links to the wider urban area is an essential part of the strategy to make it a more attractive place to visit and invest in. Clear cycleway signage from existing and new communities and cycle parking will be important in supporting travel choice to the town centre.

Swindon's Transport Priorities

- 4.181 The Transport Strategy aims to reduce reliance on the car by improving travel choices. A combination of public transport, cycling and walking will maximise that choice, but infrastructure investment and a comprehensive parking strategy must support it. It recommends delivery of a high frequency rapid transit network linking the urban extensions, through Swindon's existing communities to Swindon town centre. The Strategy supports the provision of a new town centre bus exchange and a new orbital bus service providing for trips that do not need to travel through the town centre and Urban Traffic Management and Control systems (UTMC). UTMC will improve network efficiency and provide priority for public transport removing key conflict points across busy and congested highway links. Targeted investment in the following priority transport corridors to promote travel choices, will support trips to Swindon town centre:

- ▶ Covingham Road / Dorcan Way
- ▶ Cricklade Road
- ▶ Great Western Way
- ▶ Marlborough Road / Queens Drive
- ▶ Mead Way

- ▶ Oxford Road / Drakes Way
- ▶ Thamesdown Drive / Oakhurst Way Corridor

- 4.182 From Swindon's first Local Transport Plan and into LTP2 the Council pursued the idea of a Major Scheme bid around increasing highway capacity on the Purton Road to Iffley Junction (Great Western Way) corridor in the north and north west of Swindon. Substantial S106 developer contributions were secured from the Northern Sector urban extension in order to mitigate the traffic impacts of the development. The scheme that was identified provided increased capacity from Thamesdown Drive through to Great Western Way either through a new road on one of a number of alignments or by upgrading the existing link provided by Mead Way. To reflect changes in the transport policy background during LTP2 the potential Major Scheme bid was re-focussed as the "North Swindon Transport Strategy" which combined a public transport priority corridor between the Northern Sector and the town centre with measures to address the traffic issues on the Purton Road to Iffley Junction corridor.
- 4.183 The delivery of the Purton Road to Iffley Junction relief road remains a long-term ambition of the Council. It is important that development proposals do not prevent its construction and therefore the route is safeguarded. At present there is not sufficient funding to deliver the relief road.
- 4.184 Investment in completing the cycling network in particular and increasing the permeability of walkways where there are barriers and a perceived lack of safety will be a critical in complementing the priority transport corridor approach.

Access to Services and Facilities

- 4.185 Swindon's communities should be walkable neighbourhoods, well served by public transport to ensure all people are able to access health and education facilities, employment, retail and leisure facilities. This is particularly important to people without access to a car, on low incomes, living in rural areas, with disabilities and young and old

people. In general Swindon has good access to services and facilities and bus coverage is good to Swindon town centre. However cross-town trips require passengers to change in central Swindon. This is time-consuming, inconvenient and in effect limits personal choice for certain members of the community. In rural areas opportunities for walking, cycling and access to public transport is limited due to its isolated nature. Conventional rural public transport will be promoted and cost-effective community-based and demand responsive transport schemes will be explored.

Delivery and links with other key policies

- Alignment of proposals with other related (but non-planning) strategies and plans identified in the “Evidence Base” above;
- Framework Plans and masterplanning for new communities;
- Public funding where it can be secured, developer contributions and / or the Community Infrastructure Levy;
- The Infrastructure Delivery Plan; and,
- The Local Transport Plan
- Implementation of the adopted Central Area Action Plan.

Policy TR2: Transport and Development

- a. New development should be located and designed to reduce the need to travel and to encourage the use of sustainable transport alternatives, particularly walking and cycling, and provide the potential to maximise bus travel.**
- b. Development shall be permitted where proposals provide access that is appropriate to the scale, type and location without detriment to highways safety and local amenity, and where there is an existing safe and convenient pedestrian and cycle access or provision is made for such access.**
- c. Development shall be permitted where proposals will not**

prejudice or impede an existing or planned cycle route, or provision is made for a more satisfactory route.

- d. Development that results in the loss of existing rights of way or their disruption shall only be permitted when adequate, acceptable alternative provision or diversions be arranged.**
- e. Development shall be permitted where proposals do not remove, narrow or materially impair the approved line of the Thames Path or Ridgeway National Trails, and/or public access to them.**
- f. Developments shall provide appropriate mitigating measures to offset any adverse impacts on the transport network at both the construction and operational stages.**
- g. To assess and mitigate the impact of development and to promote sustainable travel choices, the following information will be required to support planning applications:**
 - A Transport Assessment: where the proposed development is likely to have significant transport and related environmental impact (in accordance with Department for Transport guidance);**
 - A Transport Statement: where the development has relatively minor transport implications (in accordance with Department for Transport guidance); and**
 - A Travel Plan: where the proposed development is likely to have significant transport and related environmental impact (in accordance with Department for Transport guidance).**
- h. Parking provision, including secure cycle and motorcycle parking, should be provided in accordance with the Council's adopted parking standards.**

- 4.186 It is desirable for new developments to be located where there is good public access, in order to reduce the need to travel by car. In all cases development should provide a level of access that is appropriate to its location, and the type and nature of the vehicles that will use it. All proposals must ensure that they do not constitute an unacceptable impact on local amenity as a consequence of inadequate access and must not compromise highways safety. Development should provide for access by public transport, cycling and walking, including proper provision for access for all sections of the community in accordance with Policy DE1
- 4.187 As well as the need to improve the cycle network, there is a need to make sure development proposals do not harm existing provision. As new routes may be included in further Local Transport Plan (LTP) they cannot all be known at present, this policy seeks to protect any future routes that may be identified through a revised LTP.
- 4.188 The rights of way within the Borough provide a range of important functions including access and recreation. Where rights of way are affected by development, adequate and acceptable diversions should be put in place. Permission to divert, remove or create rights of way must be sought through the appropriate legislation.
- 4.189 Two national trails pass through the Borough, the Thames Path and the Ridgeway, and are shown on the Proposals Map. The Council recognises their national and local importance and will ensure that these routes are protected from any development which would adversely affect the route itself or the character of the area through which they pass.
- 4.190 The requirements of this policy will be achieved through the preparation of comprehensive documents to support a planning application. Applicants are encouraged to seek advice from the Council at the pre-application stage to ensure that the content and structure of these documents meets the requirements of the policy. The documents will take a holistic approach to the impact of development on the transport

network. The documentation should have regard to the Council's other policies on transport.

- 4.191 The Council's Transport Requirements for Development guidance sets out the thresholds for the above documents. However, such requirements are not exhaustive and additional information may be required depending upon scale of development and local circumstances. The key factor is that applicants liaise with the Council at the earliest opportunity preferably at the pre-application stage, thus ensuring that the content and structure of the documentation submitted meets the required standard.

Where to find more information

- Department for Transport guidance on travel assessments and transport statements.

Delivery and links with other key policies

- 4.192 Transport requirements placed upon development proposals will be considered through the application of this policy as development proposals are brought forward and through:
- Alignment of proposals with other related (but non-planning) strategies and plans identified in the "Evidence Base" above;
 - The implementation of The Swindon Borough Local Transport Plan (including any subsequent reviews)
 - The development management process; and,
 - Early discussion with developers about transport requirements, preferably at the pre-application stage will help to ensure that requirements are understood and met.

Theme 5 - Infrastructure Needs

The Infrastructure Needs theme's policies flow directly from and help to implement the following Strategic Objectives set out in section 2 of this Plan:

SO2: Infrastructure Requirements

SO6: Community and Health

SO7: Transport

SO8: Culture and Leisure

SO9: Green Infrastructure

4.193 Theme 5 sets out policies to:

- ▶ require strategic, local and site-specific infrastructure to be provided as a result of needs generated by new development;
- ▶ ensure that the particular issues related to wastewater and water supply resulting from new development are addressed;
- ▶ support and require ICT infrastructure to be in place to support Swindon's residents and businesses; and,
- ▶ encourage the development of low carbon and renewable forms of energy generation.

Key issues

4.194 Infrastructure is critical to support the provision of all development. Whether transport infrastructure, Information Communication Technology (ICT), utilities such as water supply or sewerage (wastewater) systems, or energy generation, such supporting infrastructure must be in place for new development. Whilst much of this type of infrastructure is provided through statutory undertakings (for example, essential water, wastewater, gas or electricity provision), new development can put additional pressure on existing infrastructure requiring upgrades or new facilities to cope with the change. This is particularly the case with utility infrastructure.

- 4.195 As well as the identification and provision of new infrastructure, ensuring that it is provided at the right time can be critical, both from a deliverability and cost point of view, as well as ensuring that the capacity is in place to serve new development when it becomes occupied.
- 4.196 Set against rising demand from new and existing development and the impact of a changing climate, water supply is an issue which will need to be monitored. Likewise, the capacity to treat wastewater to required standards in Swindon as a result of additional development during the plan period will also need to be monitored.
- 4.197 With ICT and in particular broadband speed becoming increasingly more important to business and commerce, ensuring that Swindon maintains or exceeds industry standard high speed communication will be a key factor in helping the recovery of the economy particularly in some high-tech sectors and multi-national companies.
- 4.198 As Theme 1 has already demonstrated, our changing climate is leading to new innovations in sustainable construction and measures to reduce carbon dioxide emissions to comply with legislation and regulation. With the cost of energy rising and the security of supply becoming an issue, opportunities are being taken to develop low carbon and renewable energy technologies from the small to large scale.

Addressing the key issues

- 4.199 The planning system and in particular the policies set by this Plan will play a key role in helping to ensure that key strategic, local and site-specific infrastructure is provided at the right time and in the right place to absorb the impact of and provide for new development. Other mechanisms, in particular statutory requirements related to provision for new development, will play a key role. It is particularly important that planning policies, through their application to proposals for new development, help to ensure that unnecessary additional burden is not placed upon existing infrastructure and needs generated by new development are provided for satisfactorily.

- 4.200 In addition to the policies in this plan, the on-going Infrastructure Delivery Plan will play a key role in helping to identify, co-ordinate and deliver key infrastructure in the Borough.

Key evidence base for Theme 5:

- Swindon Joint Study (2005)
- Swindon Transport Strategy (2006 – 2011)
- Local Transport Plan (2009)
- Green Infrastructure Strategy (2011)
- Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2008)
- Swindon Water Cycle Study Phase 1 (2007) and Phase 2 (2012)
- Swindon School Place Planning Study Update (2011)
- Delivering Excellence for Swindon - Integrated Strategic Framework 2008 -2013 (Swindon PCT)
- Rural Facilities Survey (2008)
- Swindon Core Strategy Rural Issues Study (2009)
- Various New Eastern Villages, South Marston and West of Swindon Studies

Policy IN1: Infrastructure Provision

- a. In order to make a positive contribution to the sustainable growth of Swindon, all development, including development adjacent to but outside the Swindon Borough boundary, shall where appropriate, and within the context of economic viability make provision to:
- meet the cost of new infrastructure made necessary by the development;
 - mitigate the impact of development on existing infrastructure;
 - provide for the ongoing maintenance of infrastructure delivered as a result of development where appropriate;

- **contribute to the delivery of strategic infrastructure to address the cumulative impacts of development; and,**
- **contribute to initiatives to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of infrastructure**

- 4.201 In order to achieve sustainable development it is important that infrastructure and services are provided to support new and existing communities and facilitate economic development.
- 4.202 The coordinated delivery of adequately funded infrastructure at the right time and in the right place is key to a successful and sustainable Swindon Borough. Identifying and securing sources of funding to facilitate the provision of, or directly deliver infrastructure to support housing and economic growth is vital.
- 4.203 This policy reflects infrastructure provision across the following levels:
1. **Strategic Infrastructure** will usually be delivered off-site and is outlined in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, which includes a phased identification of needs to support Borough-wide growth to 2026. These infrastructure items have been identified through relevant supporting studies and evidence based documents. Some infrastructure needs may be cross-boundary.
 2. **Local Infrastructure** can be delivered in a variety of ways including on-site delivery integral to larger scale developments and through off-site investment in existing infrastructure within the vicinity of the development to mitigate the cumulative impact of development. These infrastructure items are identified through relevant evidence based documents.
 3. **On-site or site specific Infrastructure** relates to needs arising where there is direct linkage between the new development and supporting infrastructure and should be delivered integral to the development, such as affordable housing or open space. In exceptional circumstances, where off-site provision is considered

an acceptable alternative, a contribution in lieu of on-site delivery may be sought.

4.204 Infrastructure items covered by this policy include:

- Education and Children's Services¹²
- Transport Infrastructure
- Green Infrastructure, including open space (including maintenance)
- Affordable Housing
- Public Art
- Cultural Facilities
- Leisure Facilities
- Public Realm
- Adult Social Care
- Community, Faith and Neighbourhood Facilities
- Waste
- Water Supply and Treatment
- Local and Strategic Health Facilities
- Emergency Services
- Community Forest.

4.205 This list is not exhaustive. Where a development has unique and/or significant impact on an area, scope may exist to secure provision to address such impact. Furthermore, where service areas or the community are in a position to draw attention to a newly generated need for infrastructure resulting from development, or the cumulative impact of development, scope may exist to secure its provision by legal agreement, or as a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) chargeable item as appropriate.

¹²Incorporates Primary schools, Secondary schools, Early years and Children's Centres, Post 16, Special Education Needs and Child Social Care

Legislative Framework

- 4.206 The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) and supported by the Planning Act 2008 alongside the Community Infrastructure Levy (“CIL”) Regulations 2010 (Statutory Instrument 2010 No.948) as amended under the Localism Act 2012, (or any regulations that supersede these) sets out the Government’s approach for securing development contributions towards future infrastructure provision. The Government’s approach is to scale back the scope of section 106 of the TCPA 1990 (as amended) to focus on site specific mitigation in favour of the application of a standardised CIL tariff secured under a local charging schedule as the framework for managing delivery of infrastructure that is required as a consequence of the cumulative impact of development.
- 4.207 The Council will update and amend local policy and guidance as required to reflect a transition from the delivery of infrastructure under planning obligation that constitutes a CIL chargeable item into a localised charging schedule. Thereafter it will ensure that its policy and guidance remains reflective of future legislative change.

The Market

- 4.208 The Local Plan is a long-term plan and must incorporate a degree of flexibility. This is increasingly important given fluctuations in market conditions. A policy framework should be in place for the Council to make practical, commercially sensitive decisions about development that facilitates its delivery without disadvantaging established or new communities. This demands a balance of interests across private and public sectors.

The Economic Viability of Development

- 4.209 Development furthermore can, on occasion, face genuinely abnormal costs that could threaten its economic viability, thus compromising sites from being brought forward. The viability of development is material to any decision and requires consideration in the context of the future delivery of infrastructure provision. Exceptional circumstances may

arise under which benefits of development outweigh the harm of not providing for infrastructure contributions e.g. bringing buildings back into use, key regeneration schemes, regenerating important listed buildings.

- 4.210 In adopting a CIL charging schedule for Swindon economic viability will inform rate settings. The assessment of the viability of the development reflects a snapshot of time. For this reason it is important to ensure that policy and guidance incorporate flexibility to accommodate and consider the commercial reality of changes in market conditions over the lifetime of a planning permission and its development construction period.
- 4.211 It is important to safeguard against the banking or extending of planning permissions granted during challenging economic periods, for implementation at a time of improved market conditions, as the implementation of permissions will assist in the stimulation of continued development activity. The drafting of guidance and the application of local policy will address such matters.

Evidence Base

Swindon Borough Community Infrastructure Viability Report (GVA) (2012)

Delivery and links with other key policies

- 4.212 The required strategic, local and on-site infrastructure to support development will be secured through the application of this policy and through:
- alignment of proposals with other related (but non-planning) strategies and plans identified in the “Evidence Base” above;
 - The Infrastructure Delivery Plan;
 - public funding where this can be secured, developer contributions, the Community Infrastructure Levy and / or other funding mechanisms;
 - testing of the economic viability of sites where appropriate;
 - the development management process; and,

- the development of a Supplementary Planning Document which will in the context the type and scope of infrastructure needs (supported by evidence) arising as a consequence of development Borough-wide, and adjacent to but outside the administrative boundary:
 - i. explain how and when infrastructure requirements are to be secured and delivered by planning obligations;
 - ii. explain the process by which infrastructure requirements are to be administered and monitored;
 - iii. explain the mechanism(s) to be used to support infrastructure delivery both on-site and off-site, through for example:
 - community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule;
 - commuted sums; and,
 - section 106 agreements.
 - iv. explain the mechanism for the operation of the impact of economic viability and development, in the local context

4.213 The Duty to Co-operate Statement also signposts where co-operation and collaboration with key stakeholders has influenced decision-making on the approach to infrastructure provision.

Policy IN2: Water Supply and Wastewater

- a. **Future water supply will be addressed through the implementation of demand management measures in new development to reduce the use of water and the prevention of leakage to increase supply.**
- b. **The development or expansion of water supply or sewerage waste/water treatment facilities, including sewage sludge, shall normally be permitted either where needed to serve existing or proposed new development, or in the interests of long term water supply and waste water management provided that the need for such facilities outweighs any adverse land use or environmental impact that any such adverse impact is minimised.**

- c. **Future wastewater treatment and improvements in related river quality will be addressed through the timely expansion of the Rodbourne Sewage Treatment Works and / or an additional Sewage Treatment Works to the east of Swindon to serve the New Eastern Villages developments, if proven to be the most sustainable option, particularly to ensure delivery of the housing trajectory.**
- d. **Development proposals should take account of the capacity of existing off-site water and sewerage/waste water treatment infrastructure and the impact of development proposals on them. Where necessary, the Council will seek improvements to water and/or sewerage/waste water treatment infrastructure related and appropriate to the development so that the improvements are completed prior to occupation of the development.**

4.214 Water supply and wastewater treatment are issues which cover a much wider area than Swindon Borough's boundaries, with both fitting more closely to utility company areas and river catchments. This Plan's proposals need to be seen within that wider functional context.

4.215 A key part of the evidence base for this Plan has been the Water Cycle Study. It was developed to provide an understanding of the needs which could arise for future water supply and wastewater treatment from the scale and possible location of development proposed. The study was undertaken to ensure that proposed growth does not adversely impact on the existing water cycle environment and that new water services infrastructure can be planned for and provided alongside new development in a sustainable, timely, phased and cost effective manner.

4.216 The main water and wastewater issues which have been explored in relation to the proposed growth in the Local Plan are:

- ▶ uncertainty over water resources environmental capacity;

- ▶ uncertainty about the capacity of the river systems to accept any increase in treated effluent without worsening water quality; and,
- ▶ the ability to supply required freshwater to new development.

- 4.217 Further exploration of these issues through the phase 2 water cycle study highlighted the following conclusions.
- 4.218 In terms of wastewater, additional infrastructure can be provided in the longer term which will allow development to proceed within acceptable environmental standards, with the exception of achieving “good ecological status” for the discharge of phosphate. Notwithstanding this, the study found that additional development of the scale proposed will not lead to further deterioration of current status of the watercourses in terms of phosphate. However, any action taken to improve compliance with phosphate targets will need to be managed and coordinated on a whole river catchment basis as part of the Thames River Basin Management Plan. Whilst outside the remit of this Plan it is likely, therefore, that a programme of water quality improvements to manage phosphate discharges, in line with the Water Framework Directive will need to be initiated.
- 4.219 The Local Plan is limited in the policies it can set out to help improve phosphate levels, with many actions being outside the remit of the planning system. However, Policy IN2 introduces a requirement to reduce demand for water in new developments, which will reduce the risk of a deterioration of standards. This policy criterion is also effective in helping to manage demand and increase water efficiency in line with sustainable building standards and to mitigate against the potential impacts of water extraction.
- 4.220 Thames Water has plans in place to provide the necessary sewerage infrastructure to increase capacity in line with proposed new developments, and to fulfil requirements identified by Ofwat.
- 4.221 Whilst there are still uncertainties about the availability of water for Swindon, it is not considered by the water cycle study findings to be a barrier to the Local Plan proposed scale of and locations for

development. Thames Water and the Environment Agency consider that the demand for water within the Severn and South West Oxfordshire (SWOX) resource zone, in the period to 2026, can be met with a combination of demand management measures and planned water resource infrastructure schemes.

- 4.222 In light of the study's conclusions, policy IN2 seeks to ensure that there is adequate water supply, surface water, foul drainage and sewerage treatment capacity to serve all new developments. Developers will be required to demonstrate that there is adequate capacity both on and off the site to serve the development and that it would not lead to problems for existing users. In some circumstances this may make it necessary for developers to carry out appropriate studies to ascertain whether the proposed development will lead to overloading of existing infrastructure. Where there is a capacity problem and no improvements are programmed by the water company, the Council will require the developer to fund appropriate improvements which must be completed prior to occupation of the development.
- 4.223 The policy also provides for the development or expansion of water supply or sewerage waste/water treatment facilities, including sewage sludge, to normally be permitted either where needed to serve existing or proposed new development, or in the interests of long term water supply and waste water management (provided that the need for such facilities outweighs any adverse land use or environmental impact that any such adverse impact is minimised).

Additional evidence base documents:

- Thames Water Resources Management Plan 2010-35; and,
- Thames Water Resources Five Year Plan 2010-15.

Delivery and links with other key policies

- 4.224 Future wastewater treatment and water supply related to the provision of new development, will be addressed through the application of this policy and through:

- Alignment of proposals with other related (but non-planning) strategies and plans identified in the “Evidence Base” above;
- Working closely with the Environment Agency and Thames Water (as the responsible utility service infrastructure provider for wastewater and water supply) to continue to assess, understand and monitor requirements;
- Developer contributions and / or the Community Infrastructure Levy;
- The development management process; and,
- The implementation of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

4.225 The Duty to Co-operate Statement also signposts where co-operation and collaboration with key stakeholders has influenced decision-making on the approach to water supply and wastewater.

Policy IN3: ICT and Telecommunications

- a. **All Information Communication Technology (ICT) and telecommunications proposals should be sited and designed in such a way that the appearance of the surrounding area is not adversely affected by the development. Proposals for ICT and telecommunications developments shall be supported provided that:**
- **the siting of the proposal and any other additional equipment involved with the development does not unduly detract from the appearance of the surrounding area or form an intrusive addition to the street scene; and**
 - **the amenities of any neighbouring sites are not unacceptably harmed by the proximity of the proposed telecommunication development; and**
 - **the colour and profile are sympathetic to the sites surroundings and the size of the development is kept to a technical minimum to ensure any adverse impact on the environment is minimised; and**

- **there is justification demonstrating that all alternative sites and potential mast sharing opportunities which fulfil the functional requirements of the development have been assessed**

- b. Development should where possible make provision to incorporate super-fast broadband.**

4.226 Information Communication Technology (ICT) and telecommunications equipment, especially mobile communications has fast become integral to the growth of many business operations as well as being widely used by individuals. It is therefore essential that everybody should have access to a wide range of services and have the opportunity to use the latest technologies. The National Planning Policy Framework also states that the development of high speed broadband and other communication networks can play a vital role in enhancing the provision of local community facilities and services. To ensure this can be achieved the local planning authority need to support the facilitation of telecommunications growth but must also ensure that any adverse impact to the character of the built form or physical environment is minimised.

4.227 This criteria based policy aims to provide a thorough assessment for all telecommunication proposals, whether they are prior approval applications or developments requiring full planning permission. It provides guidance for both new and replacement masts, whilst providing the flexibility to allow for an efficient expansion of the network and to meet the demands imposed by technological advancements.

4.228 Appropriate camouflage and screening may be necessary where the proposed development would cause an intrusive visual impact on the surroundings. Reasonable justification should be provided by the applicant to demonstrate why the chosen site is the preferred option. In order to ensure this has been reasonably considered, the local planning authority requires evidence demonstrating that mast sharing

has been investigated and that alternative sites have been explored. The onus is on the developer to demonstrate that the preferred site is the most suitable for the proposal; without sufficient information being provided the local planning authority have the right to refuse an application. They should also seek to demonstrate how the needs of the occupiers will be met.

- 4.229 The National Planning Policy Framework also requires the applicant to supply information relating to the outcomes of any consultations with local communities or other organisations which have an interest in the proposal. It is especially important to gain these views if the proposed siting is close to a sensitive location such as a school or hospital. In accordance with the Mobile Operators Association's (MOA) Ten Commitments, the proposal must be able demonstrate that it complies with the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) Guidelines for public exposure.
- 4.230 Fast broadband connection is an increasing critical factor businesses and residents alike. Developers are encouraged to engage with broadband providers at the earliest opportunity to enable the highest possible internet connections speeds be provided in new developments.

Where to find further information:

- Mobile Operators Association's (MOA) Ten Commitments

Delivery and links with other key policies

- Alignment of proposals with other related (but non-planning) strategies and plans identified in the "Evidence Base" above;
- Working closely with the Telecommunications Industry and their representatives to continue to assess, understand and monitor requirements;
- The development management process
- The implementation of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan

Policy IN4: Low Carbon and Renewable Energy

- a. **Appropriate renewable and low carbon energy infrastructure which has benefits for local communities and the local economy will be encouraged and supported. Proposals for low carbon and renewable energy infrastructure, including large-scale freestanding installations, will be assessed under national policies and against the following:**
- **social and economic benefits (including local job creation opportunities);**
 - **the impacts on, and benefits to local communities; and,**
 - **environmental impact.**
- Any heat produced as part of a renewable energy or combined heat and power (CHP) installation should be productively used on-site or linked to a district energy network.**
- b. **A locally delivered modular district energy network shall be enabled and supported which is**
- **focused around areas of high and constant heat demand, and**
 - **capable of incorporating additional low and zero carbon energy sources and generation technologies e.g. biomass, waste and combined heat and power.**
- c. **Energy efficiency and low carbon energy generation schemes brought forward by communities, or with major community benefits, will be encouraged and supported in principle.**
- d. **Proposals for wind turbines, including any ancillary buildings and structures, shall be permitted only where there is no unacceptably adverse impact due to noise, shadow flicker, amplitude modulation, reflected light or electronic disturbance on:**
- **the built and natural heritage, and/or**
 - **the amenity of properties, and/or**

■ **areas important for tourism or recreational use of the countryside**
Visual impact shall be minimised through siting, landscaping, design and use of materials.

Energy infrastructure

- 4.231 The UK Renewable Energy Strategy sets out to achieve 15% of energy to be generated from renewable sources by 2020. Policy IN4 aims to contribute to this and to facilitate a secure, sustainable and affordable energy supply for communities and businesses in Swindon. The policy seeks to achieve an increase in the level of renewable energy generation in the Borough through integrating renewable / low carbon energy in new development and providing a positive framework for considering large scale proposals for renewable/low carbon development.
- 4.232 Local sources of renewable and low carbon energy currently meet less than 1% of Swindon's current energy demand (RegenSW). The development of local and more sustainable sources of electricity and heat is therefore a priority to support a long-term low carbon growth and secure energy future for Swindon, whilst addressing wider climate change issues. The main large-scale opportunities for renewable and low carbon energy in Swindon are likely to be from wind, energy from waste, biomass and solar.
- 4.233 Whether through direct connection to an energy scheme (e.g. district heating) or through access to a more sustainable energy supply and jobs associated with the low carbon economy, communities and businesses are well placed to benefit from renewable energy schemes. The policy aims to maximise community and business benefits of renewable energy development whilst providing a robust framework for assessing potential impacts.
- 4.234 The Council has adopted a Sustainable Energy Framework to ensure the new skills and jobs are secured locally as we move to a low carbon economy. Linked to this, a business focused Energy Partnership, which

brings together key stakeholders in Swindon, has been formed to ensure best practice is shared and development occurs in an integrated way.

District energy network

- 4.235 A local district energy network supplying heat, cooling, and electricity and utilising waste to energy, biomass and other efficient energy sources has the potential to deliver a sustainable and cost effective energy supply to business and residents in Swindon. Greatest potential in the short term is within Swindon's urban area where heat demand is high from employment areas in South Marston, Stratton and Swindon town centre. In the medium to longer term the network could include additional heat sources and benefit existing communities in east Swindon, and support town centre regeneration.
- 4.236 An integrated approach to waste and energy is a significant opportunity in Swindon. Swindon Borough Council has a legal obligation to reduce its quantity of waste sent to landfill, with its existing landfill contract ending in 2016. Swindon's approach seeks to minimise waste, maximise reuse, recycling and composting and the delivery of additional waste treatment capacity. The strategy aims to develop a waste to energy solution for non-recyclable municipal waste, which is a key opportunity to contribute to a more sustainable energy supply for Swindon.

Community Schemes

- 4.237 There are growing opportunities for communities to benefit from sustainable energy schemes. Whether brought forward through neighbourhood planning or otherwise, such schemes are encouraged and will be supported in principle.

Wind Turbines

- 4.238 Wind Turbines are a potential source of renewable energy in the Borough but should be in the context of their surroundings. The National Planning Policy Framework (para. 97) states that local planning authorities should design their policies to maximise renewable

and low carbon energy development while ensuring that adverse impacts are addressed satisfactorily, including cumulative landscape and visual impacts. It adds that in assessing the likely impacts of potential wind energy development when identifying suitable areas, and in determining planning applications for such development, planning authorities should follow the approach set out in the National Policy Statement for Renewable Energy Infrastructure (read with the relevant sections of the Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy Infrastructure, including that on aviation impacts). Large scale wind-turbines (individual or collectively) are unlikely to be supported in close proximity to residential properties, but will be assessed on a site by site basis according to the height of the turbine and local factors such as land-form, orientation, vegetation and other buildings.¹³

North Wessex Downs AONB

4.239 The North Wessex Downs AONB is particularly sensitive to developments that are visually prominent, of an urban, suburban or industrial nature or are noisy, therefore within or in close proximity to the AONB, large-scale renewable energy developments are unlikely to be supported.

Additional evidence base documents include:

- Emerging Swindon and Wiltshire Waste Local Plan (2012)
- Sustainable Development Policies Report (2009)
- Swindon District Heating Feasibility Study (2011)
- North Wessex Downs AONB - A Study of Landscape Sensitivities and Constraints to Wind Turbine Development (2006)

¹³ England has no separation distance, although noise limits suggest a minimum separation distance of 350 metres for a typical wind turbine (Deleted companion guide to PPS22). Scotland has guidance suggesting 2km (largely on visual impact) and Wales suggests 500m between a wind turbine and housing, however neither imposes a blanket restriction on development within these distances. This footnote is for information only.

- North Wessex Downs AONB Position Statement on Renewable Energy (2012)

Delivery and links with other key policies

- 4.240 The delivery of renewable and low carbon energy schemes shall be achieved through the application of this policy and through:
- Alignment of proposals with other related (but non-planning) strategies and plans identified in the “Evidence Base” above;
 - Development of a Sustainable Design and Construction Supplementary Planning Document setting out the detailed issues involved in determining applications for large scale renewable energy infrastructure including factors such as noise, emissions and visual impact.
 - ad hoc advice on key emerging issues as necessary, due to the rapidly changing nature of related issues;
 - working in partnership with key stakeholders such as the Swindon Energy Partnership, local communities, businesses, Parish councils and amenity groups;
 - the application of the Swindon Energy Framework which sets out a co-ordinated approach to the delivery of infrastructure through the formation of an energy partnership involving key energy users in Swindon. Working in partnership with Forward Swindon, a further aim of the Framework is to put in place an approach to reap the benefits of the “green” economy by ensuring Swindon benefits from jobs and skills related to renewable energy and environmental technology; and,
 - The development management process.

Theme 6 – Healthy and Supported Communities

The Education, Community and Health Facilities theme’s policies flow directly from and help to implement the following Strategic Objectives set out in section 2 of this Plan:

SO2: Infrastructure Requirements

SO5: Education

SO6: Community Facilities

SO8: Culture and Leisure

SO9: Green Infrastructure

4.241 Theme 6 sets out policies to:

- ▶ protect existing facilities where there is a demonstrable need for their continued presence;
- ▶ provide new and / or expanding schools, colleges and higher education provision;
- ▶ increase opportunities to use and access sport, leisure, cultural and community facilities;
- ▶ ensure that required health and emergency service facilities are provided; and,
- ▶ to integrate and co-locate services and facilities in flexible, multi-use buildings which complement each other in terms of type of provision, requirements and physical space needs.

4.242 Facilities which are covered by this theme include education, sport, leisure, social care, faith, library, youth and other “cultural” facilities, as well as facilities for the fire, ambulance and police services. Together, these types of facility play a key role in creating and sustaining healthy, inclusive communities. Other, related facilities which also play a key role in the wellbeing of local communities include formal and informal

green infrastructure spaces which are covered in theme 7 “Natural and Built Environment” and particularly in Policy EN1: Green Infrastructure.

Key issues

- 4.243 Education, community and health facilities and services are central to maintaining our welfare and a healthy lifestyle throughout our lifetime. From schools to care facilities, they are important to all sections and all ages of society.
- 4.244 The provision of these types of facility is key to the development of sustainable and inclusive communities, particularly given the scale of new development proposed in Swindon. In turn, such provision will help to support the area’s ambition to grow and sustain the local economy, with an accessible and high quality urban environment. The provision of green infrastructure as a key component of wider community provision, giving people the opportunity to access and use outdoor space and have active and healthy lifestyles, is covered in Theme 7 of the Plan. Whilst the retention and improvement of existing facilities is important, current gaps in provision and needs arising from new development will also need to be met.
- 4.245 The provision of such facilities is undergoing change, with less funding available since the start of the recession for the development of new public service buildings and providing the services themselves. New solutions are likely to be a key part of future provision including shared services, providers and buildings, particularly as the role of the public and private sectors in their provision changes. At the same time, the impact of the recession has meant that there is less funding available to be secured through developer contributions (section 106 payments) and other funding mechanisms used to provide necessary infrastructure and facilities arising from needs generated from new development.

Addressing the key issues

- 4.246 In order to support community facilities, the Local Plan introduces policies which require new facilities as a result of needs placed upon

facilities and services arising from the additional resident population in the Borough. This will ensure that new development pays for new community infrastructure where necessary. Policies will also help to ensure that provision is made in the right places at the right time.

- 4.247 In addition to the policies in this Plan, the on-going Infrastructure Delivery Plan will play a key role in helping to identify, co-ordinate and deliver wellbeing facilities.
- 4.248 Although Swindon is relatively prosperous there are challenges around health, education and economic inequality between communities. As well as a growing population, Swindon is experiencing a large increase in the proportion of elderly residents, which presents a particular challenge in meeting that part of the population's health and social needs. It is also important to meet the needs of Swindon's young population, the more deprived communities, the ethnic minority population and those with other specific needs.
- 4.249 Development will be located and designed in order to promote social inclusion and community cohesion. The physical environment cannot determine social outcomes; however it can contribute to and influence them. Facilities for social, community and faith purposes are important in promoting social cohesion. Such facilities can be in public ownership, including Parish/Town Councils, as well as community and voluntary groups. Such facilities should be accessible to all and well located to the population they serve.
- 4.250 The Active Swindon Partnership highlights significant health inequalities between affluent and deprived communities. There is a particular need to invest in deprived communities.
- 4.251 Part of the response to this issue and also in response to the desire for healthy and active communities in the Borough is dealt with in Theme 7 "Natural and Built Environment", where active and healthy lifestyles are supported through the application of policies which cover the provision of green infrastructure, protection and management of outdoor space and protection and enhancement of sports and leisure facilities. The

provision of new and improved green infrastructure will help to increase opportunities to walk and cycle, thereby encouraging more sustainable travel choices, and promote good health and mental wellbeing.

- 4.252 The Council is promoting the concept of Lifetime Homes and Lifetime Neighbourhoods. Lifetime Homes aim to ensure a home is flexible enough to meet existing and changing needs of most households, from young families to older people and those with temporary or permanent physical impairments. Lifetime Neighbourhoods are welcoming, accessible, and inviting for everyone, regardless of age, health or disability. They are sustainable in terms of changing climatic conditions, and provide housing, transport, service, public services, civic space and amenities which make it possible for everyone to take part in the life of the community around them.
- 4.253 There are 62 primary schools and 11 secondary schools within the Borough. As Swindon has expanded it has led to peaks and troughs of school place demand. At present there is significant pressure for places in the north of Swindon, the town centre and Old Town and there is an increasing surplus of places in the east of Swindon. There are 3 primary and 3 secondary special schools, supported by 12 Special Resource Provisions attached to mainstream schools.
- 4.254 Post-16 provision is supplied predominately by Swindon College and New College, complemented by Sixth Form at Ridgeway and St Josephs, Swindon Academy and Uplands. The proportion of Swindon's residents with a degree or equivalent qualification is lower than the national average¹⁴, in part due to the lack of a university in the town.

Key Evidence Base for Theme 6:

- Active Swindon Strategy (2009)
- Big Arts Plan (2009)
- Cultural & Leisure Strategy for Swindon (2003)
- Delivering Excellence for Swindon Strategic Plan – PCT (2008)

¹⁴ 2001 Census

- Healthcare Impact Assessment (2006)
- Leisure Facilities Strategy for Swindon
- Swindon Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (2009) and Review (2012)
- Swindon Green Infrastructure Strategy (2011)
- Swindon Playing Pitch Strategy (2007)
- Wiltshire Fire Community Risk Strategy (2009 & 2011 update)
- Wiltshire Police Authority Policing Plan & Strategy (2010)
- Policing Demand and Accommodation Strategy
- Swindon Library Strategy (2011)

Policy CM1: Education

- a. To meet the long-term primary and secondary school place needs the provision for the following should be made:
- 11 new primary schools (or 22 new forms of entry in total);
 - 3 new secondary schools, expansion of existing schools and the use of projected surplus places (or 22 new forms of entry in total); and
 - Additional temporary primary and secondary school accommodation at the urban extensions to manage the temporary demographic peak in pupils
- b. To meet the long-term needs for post-16 education provision, the following will be enabled:
- expansion of Swindon College and New College;
 - provision of a 13-19 year-old Specialist Vocational Centre;
 - provision of new 6th Forms at existing and new Secondary Schools; and,
 - a new university or enhanced tertiary facility in Swindon's Central Area

- c. To meet long-term Special Education Needs (SEN) the following will be enabled:**
 - the extension of existing SEN facilities;
 - provision of Special Resource facilities at new and existing primary and secondary schools; and
 - provision of a new 0-19 SEN facility as part of an integrated education campus for severe, profound and multiple learning difficulties
- d. To meet the long-term early years needs the following will be enabled:**
 - the provision of nursery facilities at all new primary schools; and
 - the provision of facilities by the private and voluntary sector
- e. Schools should be sited within the heart of their communities and be designed to provide safe walking and cycling access**

4.255 The Community Strategy aims to ensure children and young people are safe and healthy, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution and achieve economic well-being. The aim is to create a 'learning town' at Swindon, with a seamless partnership of schools, a university, colleges and early years. This approach will develop the quality and skills of the Swindon workforce ensuring business needs are met and to provide the best opportunities for young people in Swindon gaining levels of achievement above the national average.

Schools

4.256 There will be a need for an additional 22 forms of entry for primary schools and 22 forms of entry for secondary schools to accommodate growth in the child population. Additionally the temporary peak in pupil demand must be managed without over-providing schools that would create a revenue burden and possibly lead to school closures in the longer-term. Temporary accommodation is proposed to manage this

peak, which is anticipated to be up to 50% of the final school place need.

Post-16 Provision

- 4.257 Growth in post-16 places is anticipated both as a consequence of growth and to meet changing national requirements. In practice this will only apply to young people not in education, employment or training (NEET). Based on Swindon's existing NEET figures, this will be at around 600 pupils a year, or 6 forms of entry across the Borough. The long-term strategy for post-16 provision will be formalised through the Higher Education Strategy.

Special Education Needs

- 4.258 Swindon's Special Education Needs Inclusion Policy aims to give children and young people with Special Education Needs (SEN) every opportunity to reach their full potential in an inclusive environment. The strategy aims to maximise integration of SEN at mainstream schools where possible, largely through attached Special Resource Provision. However there will remain a need to educate children and young people with Severe Learning Difficulties and Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties in a specialist provision.
- 4.259 A new 0-19 special school for severe, profound and multiple learning disabilities will be needed to accommodate the impact of housing growth, ideally co-located with a secondary school. There may also be a need to expand existing schools catering for children and young people with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties if demand increases.

Early Years Provision

- 4.260 For the purposes of long-term planning a nursery should be provided with every new primary school. The private sector will provide the remaining proportion of nursery facilities to meet market demand.

Additional evidence base documents:

- Swindon School Place Planning Study (2009 and 2011 update)
- Children and Young People's Plan (2008)

- Swindon Borough School Organisation Plan

Delivery and links with other key policies

- 4.261 New education related development will be managed and assessed through the application of this policy and through:
- Alignment of proposals with other related (but non-planning) strategies identified in the “Evidence Base” above; Implementation of the adopted Swindon Central Area Action Plan
 - Implementation of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan
 - A Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document
 - Eastern Villages Supplementary Planning Document
 - New community development Framework Plans, design codes and masterplans
 - Public funding where this can be secured, private or academic sector funding, developer contributions and / or the Community Infrastructure Levy
 - The development management process
 - Neighbourhood Plans and Neighbourhood Development Orders which might be developed by Neighbourhood Forums and are then consequently adopted by the Council, and / or, further work on the detailed location and specification of individual development sites undertaken by the Council (through masterplanning, site allocations work, development briefs and so on) augmented by Parish and other Community Plans.

Policy CM2: Active, Healthy and Safe Lifestyles

- a. **Active, healthy and safe lifestyles will be enabled by:**
- **increasing opportunities to walk and cycle and encouraging more sustainable travel choices;**
 - **increasing access to green spaces to promote health and mental wellbeing;**

- **designing out crime and designing in health;**
- **the provision of open space, sports and leisure facilities;**
- **the protection and improvement in the stock of playing pitches; and,**
- **the provision of cultural, health, fire, police, faith and multi-use community facilities**

b. To meet demand, promote sporting participation and achievement the following will be enabled:

- **measures to increase the capacity and quality of existing sports centres;**
- **the provision of new sports centres;**
- **the development of a network of sporting centres of excellence; and**
- **the co-location of sports centres with schools**

c. To improve the cultural offer in Swindon Borough the following will be enabled:

- **the development of a cultural quarter in Swindon Town Centre as a focus for cultural activities;**
- **the promotion Swindon Town Centre as a key centre for the arts and creative industries; and**
- **the enhancement of tourism and cultural venues to help sustain their viability, particularly:**
 - **The Wyvern Theatre;**
 - **The Steam Museum;**
 - **The Science Museum at Wroughton;**
 - **The Swindon & Cricklade Railway; and**
 - **The Wilts & Berks Canal**

- d. Proposals for the redevelopment of Swindon Town Football Club at the County Ground will be supported where they deliver enhanced facilities and do not conflict with town centre regeneration.**

4.262 This theme encompasses not only health and social care but also the promotion of active and healthy lifestyles, community safety, inclusiveness and social cohesion. To realise a greater benefit from a coordinated approach to these issues, Swindon is adopting an integrated service delivery process.

4.263 Design will play an integral part in the delivery of successful facilities which encourage active and healthy lifestyles. In order to help ensure that the opportunities that new facilities can provide are realised and their full potential met, good design will play a key role in ensuring that facilities and environments are safe and designed in a way to encourage return use.

Sport and Activity

4.264 There is a good distribution of sports facilities across the Borough, but there are issues around age and capacity of some. Sports facilities in the Borough include Oasis, the Link Centre, Croft Sport Centre, Dorcan Recreational Complex, the Health Hydro, the County Ground and the Haydon Centre, as well as a range of tennis, golf and other specialist facilities. Some sport facilities are owned and maintained by Parish/Town Councils, and the private sector also has an important role in provision and offering choice.

4.265 Although physical activity levels within Swindon are increasing, there is a high proportion of the Borough's population that is not achieving the level of activity required to impact positively on their health. Swindon aims to increase physical activity, promote it as part of everyday life and increase the capacity of facilities to support it. The Local Development Framework has an important role to play in creating an environment that promotes activity through high quality design, access

to playing pitches and green space and creating opportunities to walk and cycle.

- 4.266 The Local Plan has an important role to play in creating an environment that promotes healthy and active lifestyles and has policies to ensure that existing facilities and opportunities are protected and enhanced. It also seeks to ensure that new opportunities are provided through high quality design, improving access to playing pitches and green and open (including civic) space, and creating opportunities to walk and cycle safely. Policy EN1: Green Infrastructure will also play a key role in meeting these aspirations, facilitating the provision of informal and formal green networks and open space.
- 4.267 Protecting and investing in existing sports facilities is the most efficient way of increasing capacity in the network. In addition, each sports facility will provide a specialism in pursuit of sporting excellence for the whole Borough. Community use of school and college facilities is an important way of increasing local access to both indoor sports facilities and playing pitches without great cost and supports the role of schools in the heart of their community. New facilities will also be needed to serve new communities and to increase access for existing communities.
- 4.268 The following have been identified in the Leisure Facilities Strategy for Swindon as means of delivering a network of specialist sports centres:
- The re-development of the Oasis as a regional leisure facility at the heart of the network
 - Increased capacity at local sports centres to establish a sporting specialism whilst continuing to serve the local community as follows:
 - an enhanced County Ground with a specialist focus on athletics and cricket;
 - new sports facilities at Oakfield with a specialist focus on rugby;
 - an enhanced Dorcan Recreation Complex with a specialist focus on netball and hockey;

- an enhanced Esprit Academy with a specialist focus on gymnastics;
- an enhanced Haydon Leisure Centre with a specialist focus on indoor sports;
- An enhanced Croft Sports Centre with a specialist focus on football and indoor cricket; and
- An enhanced Link Centre with a specialist focus on ice sports, swimming and indoor sports.

Leisure and Culture

- 4.269 Leisure and culture has a distinct role to play in Swindon's physical, economic and social development. Leisure and cultural activities include; the historic environment, arts and theatres, museums and galleries, leisure, sport and recreation and libraries. Examples are the Wyvern Theatre, STEAM Museum, the Science Museum at Wroughton, Swindon Art Gallery, and the Museum of Computers. Swindon Central Area, as the most accessible location, should be the main focus for this type of development.
- 4.270 The attractiveness and diversity of activities for residents and visitors will be crucial in driving regeneration, attracting inward investment and supporting recruitment and retention, especially of higher skilled and higher earning workers. Leisure and culture also has a role to play in community cohesion and social inclusion breaking down barriers and bringing people together. It also has a role to play in promoting Swindon's sense of identity and the image of the town.
- 4.271 Swindon Town Football Club plays an important role in the town's cultural identity, providing a source of inspiration with the potential to encourage sporting excellence. With the costs involved in redeveloping an ageing stadium, a commercial approach to redevelopment is recognised. The scale and mix of uses should not conflict with town centre regeneration.
- 4.272 The Swindon & Cricklade Railway is an important visitor attraction and heritage asset. The Borough Council is supportive of the Swindon &

Cricklade Railway Society's ambitions to extend the track and provide a link to the Swindon to Kemble mainline where it is compatible with the delivery of the Cricklade Country Way, the role and amenity of the Mouldon Hill Country Park, the re-instatement of the Wilts & Berks Canal and the re-doubling of the mainline rail track.

- 4.273 The Science Museum at Wroughton is also an important visitor attraction and heritage asset. The Borough Council supports development in support of the museum activities as long as they are in line with the sustainability principles and in accordance with other policies in this plan as set out in Policy RA2.
- 4.274 Although Swindon caters well for young children, the community have identified that investment is needed to provide activities for older children and young people, such as internet access, pool and table football and recreational spaces where young people can meet. Integrating facilities for young people with other community facilities will be key to their delivery.
- 4.275 This need for closer integration and multi-use of facilities and services across community, cultural, faith, voluntary and public sector services in particular is recognised in Policy CM3: Integrating Facilities and Delivering Services.

Delivery and links with other key policies

- 4.276 Active, healthy and safe lifestyles will be promoted and leisure and sports opportunities delivered through the application of this policy and through:
- Alignment of proposals with other related (but non-planning) strategies identified in the "Evidence Base" above;
 - Implementation of the adopted Swindon Central Area Action Plan;
 - Implementation of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan;
 - A Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document;
 - An Eastern Villages Supplementary Planning Document;
 - New community development Framework Plans and masterplans;

- Public funding where this can be secured, private sector funding, developer contributions and / or the Community Infrastructure Levy;
- The development management process; and,
- Neighbourhood Plans and Neighbourhood Development Orders which might be developed by Neighbourhood Forums and are then consequently adopted by the Council, and / or,
- further work on the detailed location and specification of individual development sites undertaken by the Council (through masterplanning, site allocations work, development briefs and so on) augmented by Parish and other Community Plans.

Policy CM3: Integrating Facilities and Delivering Services

- a. increased local and integrated service delivery will be supported in conjunction with local communities, particularly:**
- flexible multi-use buildings in public and community ownership;
 - co-location of sports centres and playing pitches with schools;
 - agreements to use schools and other public buildings for community use;
 - co-location of doctor, dentist and pharmacy facilities; and
 - to share and integrate police, fire and ambulance facilities.
- b. To meet the long-term health, social care and emergency service needs in the Borough and the wider population the following will be enabled:**
- expansion of The Great Western Hospital as required;
 - enhanced and new social care and local healthcare facilities; and
 - a reorganisation of existing fire infrastructure and provision of new fire stations.

Emergency Services

4.277 The Fire Service provides cover from Central, Westlea and Stratton Fire Stations. Current operational effectiveness and response times for the Fire Service cannot be met at proposed growth areas by the existing distribution of fire stations. Therefore a redistribution of assets is proposed including the provision of new fire stations and co-location with other emergency services, particularly the Ambulance Service to manage growth. To meet future provision the following have been identified :

- shared emergency service facilities at Drove Ambulance Station
- a new fire station in the northeast of Swindon if required
- a new fire station in the southeast of Swindon if required
- increased capacity of Westlea Fire Station

4.278 Wiltshire Police are likely to continue to operate from Gablecross Police Station supported by shared public service facilities where possible and appropriate.

Health and Social Care

4.279 The Great Western Hospital provides acute and emergency health care supported by a range of GP surgeries, dentists, optometrists and pharmacies. Swindon is adopting an integrated approach to health and social care that aims to increase access to services, increase patient choice, provide more personalised services and deliver services more locally. The strategy aims to increase capacity and widen the scope of services provided at existing local health and social care facilities and to provide new facilities to support the increase in population as a consequence of growth. The NHS Trust has identified a need for further land to accommodate growth adjacent to the Great Western Hospital, which will continue to deliver acute and emergency healthcare. The PCT have indicated that the typical ratio is 1,750-1,850 patients per GP.

Multi-Purpose Community Facilities

4.280 The Council and its public sector partners are committed to increasing access to facilities for the community, increasing value and the efficient

use of public assets and delivering services more locally. Providing access to existing schools, their playing pitches and public buildings can create a local community resource without the need for major investment and provide a more efficient and cost effective way of utilising public assets. Co-location of local healthcare facilities will reduce costs and create a one-stop-shop for healthcare needs, and the co-location of ambulance, fire and police services will also help increase the efficiency and reduce costs for the public sector.

Social Inclusion

- 4.281 Homes and other buildings should be designed to overlook streets and spaces to reduce the fear of crime and opportunities to commit crime.

Delivery and links with other key policies

- 4.282 The delivery of integrated facilities and services shall be achieved through the application of this policy and through:
- Alignment of proposals with other related (but non-planning) strategies and plans identified in the “Evidence Base” above;
 - Implementation of the adopted Swindon Central Area Action Plan;
 - Implementation of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan;
 - A Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document;
 - An Eastern Villages Supplementary Planning Document;
 - New community development Framework Plans and masterplans;
 - Public funding where this can be secured, private sector funding, developer contributions and / or the Community Infrastructure Levy;
 - The development management process; and,
 - Neighbourhood Plans and Neighbourhood Development Orders which might be developed by Neighbourhood Forums and are then consequently adopted by the Council, and / or, further work on the detailed location and specification of individual development sites undertaken by the Council (through masterplanning, site allocations work, development briefs and so on) augmented by Parish and other Community Plans.

Policy CM4: Maintaining and Enhancing Community Facilities

- a. **Proposals for new or extended community facilities will be supported, particularly where:**
 - the site is located within or adjacent to existing settlements;
 - it is accessible for all members of the community and promotes social inclusion, and
 - if possible they can be co-located with other community uses
- b. **Proposals that result in the loss of established community facilities shall only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that:**
 - commercial facilities have been genuinely marketed for the established use for at least one year;
 - the facility is no longer economically viable for the established use, or there is a suitable and sustainable alternative to that facility nearby, or the facility is no longer required.

Provision of New or Extended Facilities

- 4.283 Proposals for new facilities or the extension of existing community facilities will be supported where they promote the principle of creating and/or maintaining sustainable communities, for example through the co-location of services on a single site. The development of new sites should be located within or adjacent to existing settlements, and be well located to the intended catchment population to maximise the opportunity to travel to these facilities by sustainable transport means, particularly walking and cycling.
- 4.284 For larger developments, more significant community facilities should be provided, facilities that would normally not have been delivered by the private sector such as the provision of swimming and sports halls and synthetic turf pitches.

Protection of Established Facilities

- 4.285 In order to create and maintain sustainable communities it is also important to retain existing community facilities, such as GP surgeries and community halls.
- 4.286 There continues to be increasing concern over the loss of existing community facilities, and particularly so in rural areas. Typical examples include small convenience stores, post offices and pubs, which can perform a vital function in terms of the economic and social well-being of such areas, although other facilities to which this section relates may also be under threat during the course of the plan period.
- 4.287 Where a development proposal comes forward which involves the loss of an existing community facility, this may be appropriate where sufficient evidence is provided to demonstrate that there is either a suitable and sustainable alternative and/or that the facility is no longer required and/or that the facility is longer economically viable.
- 4.288 Community facilities include:
- ▶ Public Halls (including community/youth centres), Church Halls
 - ▶ Post Offices
 - ▶ Local shops within both urban and rural areas
 - ▶ Indoor and outdoor sports facilities
 - ▶ Schools and non-residential education and training centres
 - ▶ Places of worship
 - ▶ Libraries
 - ▶ Day nurseries/crèches
 - ▶ Health centres, clinics, consulting rooms (including GP surgeries and dental practices)
 - ▶ Museums, art galleries
 - ▶ Public Houses
 - ▶ Leisure facilities
 - ▶ Open space
 - ▶ Emergency services
 - ▶ Cultural event space

► Cemetery/ burial ground

- 4.289 This above list is not exhaustive and all proposals will be considered on a case by case basis, taking into account the importance of the facility to the local community.
- 4.290 During the lifetime of the Plan existing facilities may become no longer 'fit for purpose', through for example legislative requirements; or where it can be demonstrated there is no longer a need for that particular facility. In these circumstances then the re-use for purposes other than community use may be appropriate. The appropriate use for such sites will need to be determined on a site-by-site basis.
- 4.291 An established facility may become economically unviable, particularly where this involves a commercially run facility, for example a post office or pub. The Local Planning Authority would expect clear and genuine efforts to be made and demonstrated to market the premises for the established use, over a period of at least one year. In some instances, multiple use or investigation of assistance (e.g. new technologies, grants) may significantly improve economic viability, particularly where there is active community support to retain the facility.

Evidence Base

- Rural facilities Survey (2008);
- Sustainable Neighbourhoods Study (2009); and,
- Shaping Your Community Report.

Delivery and links with other key policies

- 4.292 Maintaining and enhancing community facilities will be enabled through the application of this policy and through:
- Alignment of proposals with other related (but non-planning) strategies and plans identified in the “Evidence Base” above;
 - Implementation of the adopted Swindon Central Area Action Plan;
 - Implementation of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan;
 - A Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document;
 - An Eastern Villages Supplementary Planning Document;

- New community development Framework Plans and masterplans;
- Public funding where this can be secured, private sector funding, developer contributions and / or the Community Infrastructure Levy;
- The development management process; and,
- Neighbourhood Plans and Neighbourhood Development Orders which might be developed by Neighbourhood Forums and are then consequently adopted by the Council, and / or, further work on the detailed location and specification of individual development sites undertaken by the Council (through masterplanning, site allocations work, development briefs and so on) augmented by Parish and other Community Plans.

Theme 7 - Natural and Built Environment

The Natural and Built Environment theme’s policies flow directly from and help to implement the following Strategic Objectives set out in section 2 of this Plan:

SO1: High Quality Sustainable Development;

SO2: Infrastructure Requirements;

SO6: Community and Health

SO9: Green Infrastructure; and,

SO10: The Natural and Built Environment.

4.293 Theme 7 sets out policies to

- ▶ protect, enhance and manage the natural and built environment
- ▶ ensure that the appropriate provisions are in place to deliver green and open space as part of new development.

Key issues

4.294 The protection of and improvement to both Swindon’s natural and built environment is important to those living in, working in and visiting the Borough. There are a number of key issues pertinent to Swindon which underpin the need for the policies in this theme.

4.295 In the context of the natural environment, Swindon Borough has a wealth of natural and “man-made” green spaces, open spaces and habitats. These spaces are part of our everyday lives: where we work, do business and learn, the way we travel around, where we play, celebrate and spend our leisure time. They play host to wildlife, are part of our cultural heritage and sit in a landscape shaped over the centuries. Their presence, cumulatively, contribute to providing cleaner air in the urban environment, help attenuate flood risk, and help

mitigate against carbon dioxide emissions and the wider challenge of a changing climate.

- 4.296 Given its importance, high quality green infrastructure will need to continue to be integral to new development in the Borough, which will also need to respect flood risk areas and not exacerbate existing flood risk.
- 4.297 The need for improvement to Swindon's built environment is captured through Theme 1 and whilst there is a need to make the town's urban landscape of much higher quality than exists at present, there are, nonetheless, heritage assets which will play a key role in any long-term urban renaissance. Heritage assets in rural areas can also play a key role in cultural, historic and landscape terms. Where heritage assets are not protected by national designations but are valued locally, policies within this theme can afford them some protection.
- 4.298 Valued green spaces and urban landscapes play a major role in enriching our quality of life, environment and the economy. They give us a sense of place and are important to our physical and mental health. The policies in this theme will play a key role in helping to ensure such value is recognised, retained and enhanced.

Addressing the key issues

- 4.299 Planning has a key role to play in helping to respond to many of these issues. Whilst the Local Planning Authority's and planning system's key role in helping to deliver positive change is as an enabler, other mechanisms, legislation and bodies (private and public sector) have key roles in the protection and enhancement of the natural and built environment (including, but not limited to, the Environment Agency, Natural England, English Heritage, private developers and the Council's Environmental Health team).

Evidence Base for Theme 7:

- Swindon Borough Green Infrastructure Strategy (2011);
- Swindon Borough Open Space Audit and Assessment (2007);

- Swindon Biodiversity Action Plan (2005);
- Great Western Community Forest Plan (2002);
- Swindon Water Cycle Study (Phase 1) (2007);
- Swindon Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2008);
- Swindon Sustainable Development Policies (2009);
- Wiltshire and Swindon Waste Core Strategy (2009);
- Swindon Municipal Waste Management Strategy (2006);
- Swindon District Heating Feasibility Study (2011);
- North Wessex Downs AONB Management Plan 2009-14 (2009)
- Swindon Climate Change Action Plan

Policy EN1: Green Infrastructure Network

- a. **Development shall protect and enhance green infrastructure and assets as identified in Appendix 5. This includes the requirement that development must provide for the protection and integration of existing trees, hedges and woodlands.**
- b. **Development shall design green infrastructure to maximise its connections and functions and ensure the sustainable maintenance and management of it.**

4.300 Swindon is set within a beautiful landscape context including the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and the Upper Thames Vale. It includes sections of the Ridgeway National Trail and is part of the Great Western Community Forest. Swindon has a wealth of green spaces including Lydiard Park, Coate Water Park, Mouldon Hill Country Park, Stanton Park, The Lawns and the River Ray and River Cole corridors. There are a range of biodiversity areas within the Borough including farmland, water and wetlands, grassland, gardens and woodland. Protected species present include bats, water vole, white-clawed crayfish and great crested newts. There are 9 nationally protected Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) including two

geodiversity sites, 91 locally designated County Wildlife Sites and 5 Local Nature Reserves.

- 4.301 Community consultation has highlighted the importance of green spaces to the Borough's residents. Swindon's green infrastructure will continue to play a key role in Swindon's sustainable growth and regeneration and it will sit at the heart of a far-reaching network of interconnected green spaces that:
- Connect and enrich biodiversity habitats;
 - Improve access, recreation and tourism opportunities;
 - Enhance landscape character and respect local distinctiveness;
 - Help meet the challenges of climate change; and
 - Realise the potential of historical and cultural heritage features to contribute to local identity and sense of place.
- 4.302 The Swindon Green Infrastructure (GI) Strategy provides a comprehensive plan for the protection of existing and the creation of new green infrastructure in the Borough.
- 4.303 Where trees, hedges or woodlands are present on or adjacent to a development site a full report to BS5837:2012 'Trees in relation to design, demolition and construction – recommendations' will be required when considering the proposal. This will define the minimum distance between construction and retained trees and hedges which the Council may increase where appropriate to account for site specific circumstances and to eliminate post development pressure on trees, hedges and woodlands.
- 4.304 Where it is apparent that trees are at risk the Council will make Tree Preservation Orders to protect individual trees, groups of trees or woodlands.
- 4.305 The Green Infrastructure Strategy aims to realise a multifunctional and connected green infrastructure network throughout the Borough of Swindon, extending into adjoining areas. Within developments it is important to ensure that green infrastructure is designed in such a way that opportunities to provide connectivity at Borough wide and local

level are taken forward. Consideration of sustainable maintenance and management of the green infrastructure must be provided at the application stage.

Delivery and links with other key policies

- A Green Infrastructure Strategy for Swindon 2010-2026 (2011)
- Open Space Audit and Assessment Review (2011)

4.306 Green infrastructure will be delivered through the application of this policy and through:

- A Green Infrastructure Strategy for Swindon 2010-2026 (2011)
- Open Space Audit and Assessment Review (2011)
- A Green Infrastructure Supplementary Planning Document;
- Alignment of proposals with other related (but non-planning) strategies and plans identified in the “Evidence Base” above;
- A Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document;
- An Eastern Villages Supplementary Planning Document;
- New community development Framework Plans and masterplans;
- Public funding where this can be secured, private sector funding, developer contributions and / or the Community Infrastructure Levy;
- The development management process; and,
- Neighbourhood Plans and Neighbourhood Development Orders which might be developed by Neighbourhood Forums and are then consequently adopted by the Council, and / or,
- further work on the detailed location and specification of individual development sites undertaken by the Council (through masterplanning, site allocations work, development briefs and so on) augmented by Parish and other Community Plans.

4.307 The Duty to Co-operate Statement also signposts where co-operation and collaboration with key stakeholders has influenced decision-making on the approach to the provision of green infrastructure.

Policy EN2: Community Forest

Development shall contribute towards the aims and objectives of the Great Western Community Forest (GWCF) in Swindon. This will be achieved by:

- **ensuring a net increase in tree cover through the planting of new woodland and trees;**
- **creating or enhancing habitats for biodiversity, including built structures in accordance with Policies EN1 and EN4; and**
- **ensuring access to local woodlands and opportunities for communities and businesses to benefit from GWCF**

- 4.308 The Great Western Community Forest (GWCF) covers the whole of Swindon Borough and reaches into neighbouring Oxfordshire and Wiltshire. The purpose of GWCF is to create a multi-purpose forest throughout Swindon from the centre of the town and into the surrounding countryside. Multi-purpose forestry encompasses the creation and use of a diverse natural and built environment including trees and woodland, grassland, wetlands, hedgerows, ponds and rivers. A Forest Plan (1994, 2002- 2027) sets out GWCF objectives to meet environmental, social and economic aims. The GWCF is an integral part of developing Swindon's green infrastructure.
- 4.309 A priority for the GWCF is to achieve a substantial increase in tree and woodland cover across Swindon. The range of functions and benefits trees provide are highlighted in Swindon's GI Strategy and include carbon capture, biomass production, and control of micro-climate in addition to landscape, recreation, biodiversity and other eco-system service benefits. The GWCF has an overall target of achieving 30% woodland and tree cover across the Borough although the target for increasing woodland cover in particular areas will depend on location and landscape character. The Forest Plan gives further detail. The

contribution made to increasing tree cover will be dependent to the scale and nature of the development.

4.310 The GWCF aims to deliver biodiversity improvements other than those associated with trees. By seeking to create a mosaic of bio-diverse habitats within a framework of woodland and trees, the GWCF provides a basis for a landscape scale approach to nature conservation throughout the town and into the surrounding countryside. Swindon's Green Infrastructure Strategy calls for the creation of a greater patch-work of semi-natural habitats across the town and, in that context, built structures can play an important role for example through installation of green roofs and green walls.

4.311 The GWCF aims to provide opportunities for the Borough's residents and businesses to directly benefit from multi-purpose forestry.

Associated activities include:

- recreation, community events and activities and health promotion,
- tourism, food production, wood products and the developing carbon economy.
- land-based education and training

4.312 By seeking to integrate social, environmental and economic functions of woodlands, trees and other habitats, GWCF will play a crucial role in contributing to Swindon's approach to developing green infrastructure. The spatial scale of GWCF provides the opportunity to link across authority boundaries into Wiltshire and Oxfordshire.

Additional Evidence:

Great Western Community Forest Plan (2002);

Delivery and links with other key policies and strategies:

- Alignment of proposals with other related (but non-planning) strategies and plans identified in the "Evidence Base" above;
- Community Forest Supplementary Planning Guidance (2004)
- The development management process; and,

- Neighbourhood Plans and Neighbourhood Development Orders which might be developed by Neighbourhood Forums and are then consequently adopted by the Council, and / or, further work on the detailed location and specification of individual development sites undertaken by the Council (through masterplanning, site allocations work, development briefs and so on) augmented by Parish and other Community Plans.

Policy EN3: Open Space

A. All development shall provide or contribute towards public open space in line with open space standards as set out at Appendix 4, including:

- children and teenager's play areas
- outdoor sports facilities
- general recreational Areas
- Allotments

Residential development of 25 dwellings or more should provide open space on site.

B. Public open space assets defined on the Proposals Map will be protected from development unless:

- it can be demonstrated that alternative provision can be made locally of equivalent or better size, quality and accessibility; or
- the proposed development is ancillary to the main use of the site and protects its public open space function; or
- the proposed development is subject to an appraisal to ensure it does not adversely affect local needs and existing quality of open space within the area in accordance with the Council's Standards, as set out in Appendix 4 and in the

most recent Open Space Audit and Assessment); or

- **the proposed development provides community benefit which outweighs the loss of open space.**

Public Open Space

- 4.313 Public open space can be defined a primarily as open land, whether green or hard surfaced, which has a recreational function and public access. This includes parks and gardens, public amenity areas, play areas, allotments, private and public playing fields and other outdoor sports provision such as bowling greens.
- 4.314 The value of open space is well acknowledged and the importance of protecting important areas is made clear in national guidance. The Local Planning Authority considers that important open spaces should be protected from development unless particular circumstances apply. There is considerable variation in the provision of open space across the Borough.
- 4.315 Whilst the Borough has a good level of access to a diverse range of open spaces, particularly to local and major open space, there is an unequal provision of open space within local communities. The Open Space Audit and Assessment Review highlights these shortfalls in local provision, and provides an assessment of quality and accessibility of open space. The Green Infrastructure Strategy highlights the requirement to improve quality of open space within the Borough.
- 4.316 The Council acknowledges the particular importance and role of allotments, not only as open space but also in the production of local food and the health and social benefits they provide to the local community.
- 4.317 In exceptional circumstances the wider community benefits of the development, such as a school or community centre, may outweigh the loss of open space.

Where to find additional information:

- Open Space Audit and Assessment (2004)
- Open Space Audit and Assessment Review (2011)

Delivery and links with other key policies

- 4.318 The protection of existing and provision of new open space will be ensured through the application of this policy when considering proposals for development and through:
- Alignment of proposals with other related (but non-planning) strategies and plans identified in the “Evidence Base” above;
 - Implementation of the adopted Swindon Central Area Action Plan;
 - Discussion with developers at an early (preferably pre-application) stage of requirements for open space;
 - A Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document;
 - An Eastern Villages Supplementary Planning Document;
 - New community development Framework Plans and masterplans;
 - Public funding where this can be secured, private sector funding, developer contributions and / or the Community Infrastructure Levy;
 - The development management process; and,
 - Neighbourhood Plans and Neighbourhood Development Orders which might be developed by Neighbourhood Forums and are then consequently adopted by the Council, and / or, further work on the detailed location and specification of individual development sites undertaken by the Council (through masterplanning, site allocations work, development briefs and so on) augmented by Parish and other Community Plans.

Policy EN4: Biodiversity and Geodiversity

- a. **Development will avoid direct and indirect negative impacts upon biodiversity and geodiversity sites as identified on the Proposals Map. This will be achieved through sensitive site location and layout, and by maintaining sufficient buffers and ecological connectivity with the wider environment. Damage or disturbance**

to local sites will generally be unacceptable, other than in exceptional circumstances where it has been demonstrated that such impacts are:

- **unavoidable and reduced as far as possible or are outweighed by other planning considerations in the public interest, and**
- **where appropriate compensation measures can be secured**

- b. All development shall protect and enhance biodiversity and provide net local biodiversity gain. Where this is demonstrably not achievable, mitigation and compensation measures may be acceptable.**

- 4.319 Biodiversity applies to the variety of life on earth and describes the richness and variety of all living things, from the tiniest microscopic organism to the largest tree. All development proposals have an impact in some way on a habitat and the species that use them. Specific contributions will be sought to improve existing biodiversity sites, as defined on the Proposals Map, and to create new sites to compensate for or mitigate the net biodiversity impact of development.
- 4.320 Biodiversity sites are varied both in scale and type. Sites with national designation, such as Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) are protected nationally. In addition, North Meadow and Clattinger Farm, located within Wiltshire near Cricklade, are identified as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC). Local Nature Reserves are also protected and are of local importance. County Wildlife Sites are sites designated as being of local conservation interest.
- 4.321 It is vital that where development is proposed which would generate increased recreational pressure on protected biodiversity sites, suitable alternative provision is made to offset this impact. In addition, care should be taken in the design of development proposals to ensure compatibility between GI functions - for instance, where sustainable drainage systems are proposed.

Additional Evidence Base

Great Western Community Forest Plan (2002);

Delivery and links with other key policies

- 4.322 Habitats and species which could be affected by development proposals will be protected and enhanced through the application of this policy and through:
- The application of national and local habitat designations;
 - Alignment of proposals with other related (but non-planning) strategies and plans identified in the “Evidence Base” above;
 - A Green Infrastructure Supplementary Planning Document;
 - Public funding where this can be secured, private sector funding, developer contributions and / or the Community Infrastructure Levy; and,
 - New community development Framework Plans and masterplans; and,
 - The development management process.
 - Nature Conservation Development Control Guidance Note (2007)

Policy EN5: Landscape

(Landscape Character and Historic Landscape)

- a. **Proposals for development should ensure that:**
- **the intrinsic character, diversity and local distinctiveness of landscape within Swindon Borough are protected, conserved and enhanced;**
 - **the design of the development and materials used are sympathetic to the surrounding landscape;**
 - **unacceptable impacts upon the landscape are avoided; and,**
 - **where other negative impacts are considered unavoidable, they are satisfactorily mitigated**
- b. **In meeting the requirements of EN5a, applicants for development should demonstrate how they have taken into account Landscape Character Assessments and assessed the potential**

impact of the proposal upon the following attributes of the landscape:

- **existing landscape form, features, topography and character;**
- **the contribution of the landscape to biodiversity and wildlife;**
- **local geology and geo-diversity;**
- **views, visual amenity and the landscape setting;**
- **valuable historic and heritage areas and assets;**
- **environmental amenity such as tranquillity & noise, pollution and light pollution); and,**
- **the existing social, physical, economic and environmental roles and functions of the landscape at the local and strategic scale (for example as a place of cultural and leisure activity, living, employment and separation of settlements)**

- c. The North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is a nationally recognised area of landscape protection. Proposals within the Borough which are within and / or about the North Wessex Downs AONB must accord with relevant criteria set out in the AONB Management Plan. Proposals outside the AONB should not adversely affect its setting.**

- 4.323 Development proposals should take account of their natural surroundings, incorporating and harmonising with the surroundings and the local landscape features. It is essential that new development should help sustain and/or create landscapes with a strong sense of place and local identity and takes account of the following features:
- Biodiversity - locally distinctive and characteristic pattern and species composition of natural features such as trees hedgerows, woodland field boundaries watercourses and water-bodies.

- Geology - locally distinctive and characteristic landforms and topographical features throughout the borough such as locally important views, visually sensitive sky lines, ridges and valleys.
- History - locally distinctive settlement patterns, building materials, and heritage assets.
- Views both in and out - visually sensitive skyline, geological and topographical features.
- The separate identity of settlements and the transition between man-made and natural landscapes at the urban fringe.

4.324 The North Wessex Downs AONB lies to the south, partly within Swindon. Its landscape is predominantly a chalk land landscape of scarp slopes and moulded dip slopes that reflects the underlying chalk geology. National guidance has confirmed that great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in AONBs which have been confirmed as having the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty. AONBs are protected under the existing statutory requirements of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000, specifically under Section 85 it is a legal duty for all relevant authorities to have regard to the primary purpose of AONBs to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the area.

4.325 The North Wessex Downs Management Plan sets out a planning and management approach to the North Wessex Downs and should be used to inform relevant development proposals.

Additional Evidence Base

- The Swindon Urban Fringe Action Plan (2005)

Delivery and links with other key policies

Landscape Character Areas Supplementary Planning Guidance (2004)
Conservation Area Appraisal

4.326 Landscape character and the historical landscape will be protected and enhanced through the application of this policy and through:

- The application of national and local landscape, wildlife and nature designations and protected status;
- Alignment of proposals with other related (but non-planning) strategies and plans identified in the “Evidence Base” above;
- A Green Infrastructure Supplementary Planning Document;
- Public funding where this can be secured, private sector funding, developer contributions and / or the Community Infrastructure Levy;
- New community development Framework Plans and masterplans; and,
- The development management process.

Policy EN6: Flood Risk

- a. The risk and impact of flooding will be minimised through:**
- directing new development to areas with the lowest probability of flooding;
 - ensuring that all new development addresses the effective management of flood risk;
 - ensuring that development does not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere including on adjoining and surrounding land; and
 - ensuring wider environmental benefits of development in relation to flood risk.
- b. The suitability of development proposed in flood zones will be assessed using the Sequential Test, and, where necessary, the Exceptions Test. A sequential approach should be used at site level.**
- c. A site specific flood risk assessment will be required for development proposals of one hectare or greater in Flood Zone 1 and for all proposals for new development (including minor development and change of use) in Flood Zones 2 and 3 and Critical Drainage Areas, and also where proposed development or a change of use to a more vulnerable class may be subject to**

other sources of flooding. Appropriate mitigation and management measures must be implemented.

- d. All development proposals must be assessed against the Swindon Surface Water Management Plan and the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy to address locally significant flooding. Appropriate mitigation and management measures must be implemented.**
- e. All development shall be required to provide a drainage strategy. Developments will be expected to incorporate sustainable drainage systems and ensure that run-off rates are attenuated to greenfield run-off rates. Higher rates would need to be justified and the risks quantified.**

4.327 The local authority together with the Environment Agency (EA) and other partners such as Thames Water, play a key role in the management of local flood risk. Whilst the EA has overall responsibility for managing flood risk, including flood risk associated with main rivers (fluvial), Swindon Borough has the requirement as Lead Local Flood Risk Authority to consider local flood risk, including surface water flooding, which has been identified as a major flood risk issue within Swindon Borough. Together with the requirements of the Flood Risk Regulations 2009, Flood and Water Management Act 2010 and national strategy, local authorities should ensure that local strategy and policy reduces the risk and impact of flooding and that appropriate mitigation measures are implemented. Early consultation with all partners is essential to ensure that proposed development addresses flood risk and impact.

4.328 The aim of the sequential test is to steer new development to areas with the lowest probability of flooding. Within the Technical Guidance to the National Planning Policy Framework, the process to the sequential and exceptions test is set out. The sequential approach should also be used at site level, directing the most vulnerable development to area of lowest flood risk, matching vulnerability of land

use to flood risk. The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Level 1 provides data and information required to apply the Sequential Test and where necessary, the Exceptions Test.

- 4.329 An appropriate site-specific Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) will be required to demonstrate how flood risk from all sources of flooding to the development itself and flood risk to surrounding development will be managed now and taking climate change into account. The FRA should also provide details on escape and evacuation routes shown by the developer to be operational under all conditions.
- 4.330 The Swindon Surface Water Management Plan provides an overview of surface water flooding within Swindon Borough, identifying flooding areas and mitigation measures to reduce surface water flooding where feasible. Sources of surface water flooding include surface water run-off, flooding from groundwater, sewer flooding, watercourse flooding and overland flow. The Local Flood Risk Management Strategy further provides an approach to flood risk management and mitigation measures.
- 4.331 Swindon Borough will require a considered approach to sustainable drainage from the outset of the proposed development, including drainage management. This will include specialist input from the outset of the design and agreement of eventual ownership and management of the components involved.
- 4.332 The design of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) should be in accordance with design criteria as required by the SuDS Approval Body (Swindon Borough) and current best practice guidance. The Flood and Water Management Act, 2010 requires that the SuDS Approval Body (SAB) assess and approve sustainable drainage systems and if approved adopt and maintain these systems. It is required that the SuDS design enables good masterplanning and design within the proposed development. Early consultation with the Local Planning Authority is therefore essential. For major

development, a complete and functional SuDS system that supports the masterplanning should be designed at outline stage.

Additional evidence base documents

- Swindon Joint Study (2005);
- Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (Level 1) (2008);
- Swindon Water Cycle Study Phase 1 (2007) and Phase 2 (2012);
- Environment Agency Flood Risk modelling;
- Surface Water Management Plan (2012);
- Eastern Development Area Site Specific Flood Risk Assessment (East Swindon Development Group) (2007);
- River Basin and Catchment Management Plans (Environment Agency);
- Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment (2012); and,
- Flood Risk Sequential Testing of Potential Development Areas (2012).

Where to find additional information

- Technical Guidance to the National Planning Policy Framework (2012)
- Swindon Surface Water Management Plan (2012)
- The Flood Risk Regulations (2009)
- The Water Management Act (2010)

4.333 Minimising of and mitigating against the impact of flooding as a result of new development proposals will be addressed through this policy and through:

- Alignment of proposals with other related (but non-planning) strategies and plans identified in the “Evidence Base” above;
- Public funding where this can be secured, private sector funding, developer contributions and / or the Community Infrastructure Levy;
- New community development Framework Plans and masterplans.
- Working closely with the Environment Agency to continue to assess, understand and monitor flood risk and associated requirements;
- The implementation of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan;
- Development of a Flood Risk guidance note / SPD;

- The application of National Planning Policy Framework Technical Guidance to development proposals;
- The implementation of appropriate sustainable drainage systems;
- The development of masterplans for major development which incorporate measures to minimise flood risk;
- The development management process; and,
- Neighbourhood Plans and Neighbourhood Development Orders which might be developed by Neighbourhood Forums and are then consequently adopted by the Council, and / or,
- further work on the detailed location and specification of individual development sites undertaken by the Council (through masterplanning, site allocations work, development briefs and so on) augmented by Parish and other Community Plans.

4.334 The Duty to Co-operate Statement also signposts where co-operation and collaboration with key stakeholders has influenced decision-making on the approach to flood risk.

Policy EN7: Pollution

Development that is likely to lead to emissions of pollutants such as noise, light, vibration, smell, fumes, smoke, soot, ash, dust, grit or toxic substances that may adversely affect existing development and vulnerable wildlife habitats, shall only be permitted where such emissions are controlled to a point where there is no significant loss of amenity for existing land uses, or habitats.

4.335 The policy is aimed at all forms of development including residential, retail, industrial and commercial premises, ensuring the protection of the environment from potentially polluting neighbours. In most cases this may entail controls placed on incoming development to ensure that the amenities of existing occupiers in the adjoining area are not adversely affected from potentially polluting neighbours.

Delivery and links with other key policies

- 4.336 The control of pollution in respect of development will be through the application of this policy and through:
- The application of national and local landscape, wildlife and nature designations and protected status;
 - Alignment of proposals with other related (but non-planning) strategies and plans identified in the “Evidence Base”;
 - New community development Framework Plans and masterplans; and,
 - The development management process.

Policy EN8: Unstable Land

- a. **Development of land that is either known to be unstable, or is strongly suspected of instability, shall only be permitted when:**
- an evaluation has been submitted of the level and precise nature of any instability; and
 - there are no significant adverse effects on adjacent sites; and
 - the extent of remedial measure required to achieve a level of land stability suitable for the propose use, capable of supporting future development loads has been identified.
- b. **Where planning permission is granted, conditions may be imposed requiring the execution of any necessary remedial works.**

- 4.337 This policy aims to ensure that where development occurs it can accommodate the specific physical conditions of the land. Development that does not take account of unstable ground conditions can potentially suffer severe structural problems in later life. The situation can result in rebuilding and high financial costs to occupiers/owners.

- 4.338 There are numerous activities that can generate ground instability, both natural and man-made. Within Swindon Borough the risk arising from man-made activities such as mining will be extremely limited. However, natural causes such as sub soil or geological conditions may be more prevalent on slopes.
- 4.339 It will remain the responsibility of any developer to demonstrate to the Local Planning Authority's satisfaction the precise nature, extent and effects of unstable ground conditions, as well as any remedial, preventative or precautionary measures required to overcome unstable ground conditions.

Delivery and links with other key policies

- 4.340 The control of development in respect of unstable land will be through the application of this policy and through:
- Alignment of proposals with other related (but non-planning) strategies and plans identified in the “Evidence Base”;
 - New community development Framework Plans and masterplans; and,
 - The development management process.

Policy EN9: Contaminated Land

- a. **Development of land that is either contaminated, or is strongly suspected of being contaminated, shall only be permitted when:**
- an evaluation has been submitted of the level and precise nature of any contamination and need for removal or treatment; and
 - the potential of existing contaminants to pollute both surface water and ground water, both during and after construction has been established; and
 - the decontamination measures required to achieve a level of land quality suitable for the proposed end use have been identified; and

- **measures are taken to ensure that migrating gas is safely dealt with where development is proposed on land adjacent to an uncontrolled ‘gassing’ landfill site**

- b. Where planning permission is granted, conditions may be imposed requiring the execution of any necessary remedial works.**

- 4.341 It is the responsibility of the prospective developer to investigate the existence and extent of any contamination and to assess the viability of development in economic terms.
- 4.342 In considering proposals for development, the Local Planning Authority should take account of the risks of and from land contamination and how these can be managed or reduced. As a consequence, the Local Planning Authority may, when granting planning permission on a site which may potentially be contaminated impose:
- Conditions requiring the developer to first investigate and assess the extent of contamination, and
 - Where necessary, require that remedial action be taken to neutralise the hazard prior to development commencing.
- 4.343 Development proposals which are adjacent to an uncontrolled ‘gassing’ landfill site will require the developer to demonstrate to the Local Planning Authority that adequate precaution has been taken to ensure that any gas leaking into the development site will be trapped and safely vented away.

Delivery and links with other key policies

- 4.344 The control of development in respect of contaminated land will be through the application of this policy and through:
- Alignment of proposals with other related (but non-planning) strategies and plans identified in the “Evidence Base”;
 - New community development Framework Plans and masterplans; and,
 - The development management process.

Policy EN10: Historic Environment & Historic Assets

- a. Swindon’s historic environment shall be sustained and enhanced. This includes all heritage assets including historic buildings, conservation areas, historic parks and gardens, landscape and archaeology.**
- b. Proposals for development affecting heritage assets shall conserve or enhance their significance and setting.**

Historic Assets

- 4.345 The NPPF attaches ‘great weight’ to the conservation of heritage assets and their significance (Para 132, NPPF). Through strategic objective SO10 the Swindon Borough Council will protect, conserve and enhance the historic environment. Opportunities to protect and better reveal the significance of those assets will be sought to ensure the historic environment plays an integral and positive role in place-making, to positively support and integrate the value of heritage, enhancing the cultural and economic environment.
- 4.346 Swindon contains a rich historic environment including 28 conservation areas, around 1000 listed buildings, 52 scheduled monuments, and over 1000 other features documented as being of archaeological significance/interest. The wealth of assets in the Borough is varied and includes a rich archaeological heritage, Industrial heritage, in particular that associated with the Great Western Railway. Other assets include Swindon’s Old Town and Lydiard Park as well as the varied villages and hamlets in the Borough’s rural areas.
- 4.347 The Historic Environment Topic Paper further describes the heritage assets of Swindon Borough as an evidence base.
- 4.348 The government through the NPPF recognises the importance of all heritage assets both those that are designated and those that have been noted and defined locally. The NPPF defines the term Designated

Heritage Asset to include Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, Scheduled Monuments and Registered Parks and Gardens. Locally defined heritage assets may include buildings, sites, monuments, places, areas, landscape and archaeology.

Listed Buildings

- 4.349 It is required by law¹⁵, that in considering whether to grant permission for development that would affect a listed building or its setting, regard must be had to the desirability of preserving the building, its setting or any features of special architectural interest.
- 4.350 Swindon Borough Council will consider favourably development proposals (including alterations) affecting Listed Buildings where they preserve or enhance the building's character, appearance or setting and not result in a reduction in the buildings significance or the loss of a listed building or its viability by virtue of development proposals negatively affecting opportunities of use.
- 4.351 The adopted supplementary planning guidance will aid decision-making with regard to preserving or enhancing the significance of listed buildings.

Conservation Areas

- 4.352 Conservation Areas are places that the Local Planning Authority has designated as having special architectural or historic interest whose character and appearance it is desirable to preserve or enhance. Swindon currently has 28 such designated areas and these are defined on the Proposals Map.
- 4.353 By law, special attention must be paid, in the exercise of planning functions, to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character and appearance of conservation areas.
- 4.354 The impacts of development on a conservation area may relate to matters affecting its balance of land uses, pattern of daily activity,

¹⁵ Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

vitality and viability, layout or form pattern of spaces between buildings and design.

- 4.355 Matters of design, including: scale, height, bulk shape, massing, and proportions, patterns of opening, vertical or horizontal emphasis, materials and colour are of particular importance and may play a major part in the historic significance of an area. In respect of design regard will also be made to the borough's design policy.
- 4.356 The Borough has prepared appraisals of each of the 28 designated areas to provide a proper assessment of character and appearance. These documents are a material consideration in the determination of planning applications and conservation area consents.

Historic Parks & Gardens

- 4.357 Swindon Borough has three parks that are included on the Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest¹⁶. These parks are Lydiard Park, Queen's Park and Town Gardens. Some parks contain listed buildings and/or are designated as conservation areas with the additional statutory protection.
- 4.358 There are other parks which although do not afford the status of being Registered nonetheless are valuable heritage assets, examples of such park includes the GWR park in the Railway Village Conservation Area and the Lawns Park in Swindon's Old Town.
- 4.359 Development proposals which conserve and opportunities to enhance the character, appearance and significance of such assets will be treated positively.

Scheduled Monuments and Archaeology

- 4.360 Scheduled Monuments as designated¹⁷ and other known significant archaeological sites are defined on the Proposals Map. The NPPF notes that "Local planning authorities should either maintain or have access to a historic environment record". (NPPF para 169). Sites of

¹⁶ National list compiled by English Heritage

¹⁷ Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979

known local or regional significance are contained within the Historic Environment Record (HER), which can be accessed via the Wiltshire County Archaeology Service offices (Chippenham) or via the Internet (<http://history.wiltshire.gov.uk/smr/>)

- 4.361 In addition to the HER, to aid decision-making, information gained from the historic landscape characterisation project will be utilised. This project is the examination of historic and archaeological processes which have influenced the form and use of the whole modern landscape and allows an understanding to be gained of the origins and evolution of rural and urban areas. <http://www.wshc.eu/about-wshc/archaeology/581.html>
- 4.362 Development affecting the Borough's archaeological heritage must preserve in-situ archaeological remains and landscapes of acknowledged significance (as shown on the proposals map) and protect their settings. Investigation via evaluation or other discovery may uncover additional sites to which this policy will apply.
- 4.363 In addition, the Borough Council will require the preservation by record of archaeological remains that are not defined on the Proposals Map but which are subsequently discovered. Such heritage assets will be preserved in situ unless it is proven to the Local Planning Authority to be neither practical nor desirable. In such circumstances, appropriate provision for the excavation, recording, publication and conservation of the remains must be ensured before planning permission is granted. The storage of such remains must also be detailed within a written scheme of investigation as part of the planning process.
- 4.364 Swindon Borough Council has adopted Archaeology SPG relating to archaeological assets.

Buildings of Significant Local Interest

- 4.365 Throughout the Borough there are a number of buildings, structures and facades that, whilst they may not merit listing or have the protection conferred by being situated within a conservation area,

nonetheless have local historic or architectural importance to warrant retention and protection.

- 4.366 The government recognises such heritage assets as noted in the NPPF, and the Borough Council seeks to ensure these are identified, retained and enhanced through adopted SPG (Buildings of Significant Local Interest, 2004 or updated guidance).

Where to find additional information

- National Heritage List for England;
- Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest;
- Conservation Area Appraisals;
- Sites and Monuments Record / Historic Environment Record;
- Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990; and,
- Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979.

Delivery and links with other key policies

- 4.367 The protection and enhancement of heritage assets as a result of development proposals will be secured through the application of this policy and through the development management process.
- 4.368 The Swindon Borough Heritage Strategy will set out in more detail the priorities for conserving and enhancing the Boroughs historic assets.

Policy EN11: Canals

- a. **The alignments of the Wilts & Berks Canal and North Wilts Canal, as shown on the Proposals Map, shall be safeguarded with a view to their long term re-establishment as navigable waterways, by:**
- **ensuring that development protects the integrity of the canal alignment and its associated structures; and**
 - **ensuring that where the canal is affected by development, the alignment is protected or an alternative alignment is provided; and**

- **ensuring associated infrastructure of development does not prejudice the delivery of the canal**

- b. Proposals will be permitted that are designed to develop the canal's recreational and nature conservation potential, in particular, the use of the old line of the canal for walking, cycling and interpretation.**

- 4.369 Within the Borough there are the remains of two canals; the Wilts & Berks Canal which connected the Kennet and Avon Canal at Semington to the River Thames at Abingdon, and the North Wilts Canal which connected the Wilts & Berks Canal at Swindon to the Thames and Severn Canal at Latton, near Cricklade. This route subsequently became part of the Wilts & Berks Canal.
- 4.370 The Government waterways former advisory body, the Inland Waterways Amenity Advisory Council re-classified the status of the Wilts and Berks Canal to a nationally important scheme and identified it as being a priority project. As part of the Wilts & Berks Canal Partnership, the Council proposes to facilitate restoration of the canal within the Borough to obtain maximum environmental and economic benefit for the community.
- 4.371 Canals are recognised for the value they add to developments and their role as catalysts for development. The Council aspires to recreate the canal through the Borough with the aim of linking the Wilts & Berks Canal to the North Wilts Canal.
- 4.372 Although much of the canal line and associated artefacts remain, particularly in the rural parts of the Borough, within the urban area of Swindon, parts of the original route have been built over. Proposals for the reinstatement of the canal along these historic alignments will need to demonstrate that the cultural, historic and natural environment will be protected and enhanced, with no overall adverse effect, and that potential impacts on ecology, landscape, flood risk, water resources (abstraction) and water quality have been fully assessed and taken into account. Proposals for the reinstatement of discrete sections of the

canal will also need to demonstrate that the potential environmental impacts of the restoration project as a whole have been assessed and taken into account.

Additional evidence base document:

Wilts & Berkshire Canal Restoration Study (2011)

Delivery and links with other key policies

- 4.373 Policy EN11 is a discreet policy designed to safeguard the remaining non-developed route of the Wiltshire & Berkshire Canal through Swindon Borough and connect to the network beyond the Borough boundary.

5 Delivering Sustainable Growth and Change

Strategic Policies

Strategic Objectives

The Strategic Policies flow directly from and help to implement all Strategic Objectives set out in section 2 of this Plan.

- 5.1 Whilst Parts 3 and 4 of this Plan have set out clearly what the strategy plans to deliver and how that delivery will be managed, Part 5 provides the ‘spatial articulation’ of the Plan, i.e. answering the question of “where should the development go and what are the requirements of that development?”. The key to managing change and delivering sustainable economic and housing growth will be to ensure that change happens in the right places at the right time, in accordance with the policies in the Plan and in accord with the principles of sustainable development set in policy SD1. It requires an appropriate spatial strategy for all parts of the Borough, from dealing with regeneration, growth and change in existing urban and rural communities, to new major housing development and forming cohesive communities. The Strategic Policies set out the policy framework for the delivery of this sustainable growth and change in Swindon’s existing communities, new communities and rural settlements, providing a more detailed spatial articulation of policies SD2: The Sustainable Development Strategy and SD3: Managing Development in particular.

Policy SC1: Swindon’s Central Area

In order to improve and enhance Swindon’s Central Area:

- a. High quality design shall be required of all new development in Central Swindon, in particular delivering clearly defined public and private space, improved public realm and access for all.**
- b. The following areas will have their own specific role within**

Swindon's Central Area:

- **The Retail Core - the focus of retail-led development;**
- **The Promenade - the focus for cultural activities, but will also provide civic and leisure facilities;**
- **The Commercial Quarter - the focus for a flagship new office area;**
- **The Railway Corridor - the focus for a vibrant, high-density, mixed-use development scheme;**
- **North Star - the location for a new regional leisure facility;**
- **Railway Heritage Area - the focus of visitor activities that are sympathetic to the historic character of the area, would not adversely impact on the amenity of Railway Village residents, and would complement and not undermine the Town Centre offer; and**
- **Old Town - the focus niche shopping and leisure uses, complementing the shopping and leisure offer in the Town centre.**

c. Provision shall be made in the Central Area for:

- **at least 53,700m² net comparison retail floorspace in the Town Centre Primary shopping area (retail core);**
- **at least 90,000m² of new office floorspace;**
- **about 1,000 additional homes;**
- **a new bus interchange;**
- **a new 1,000 space car park to the north of the railway line; and**
- **a community wide approach to renewable energy**

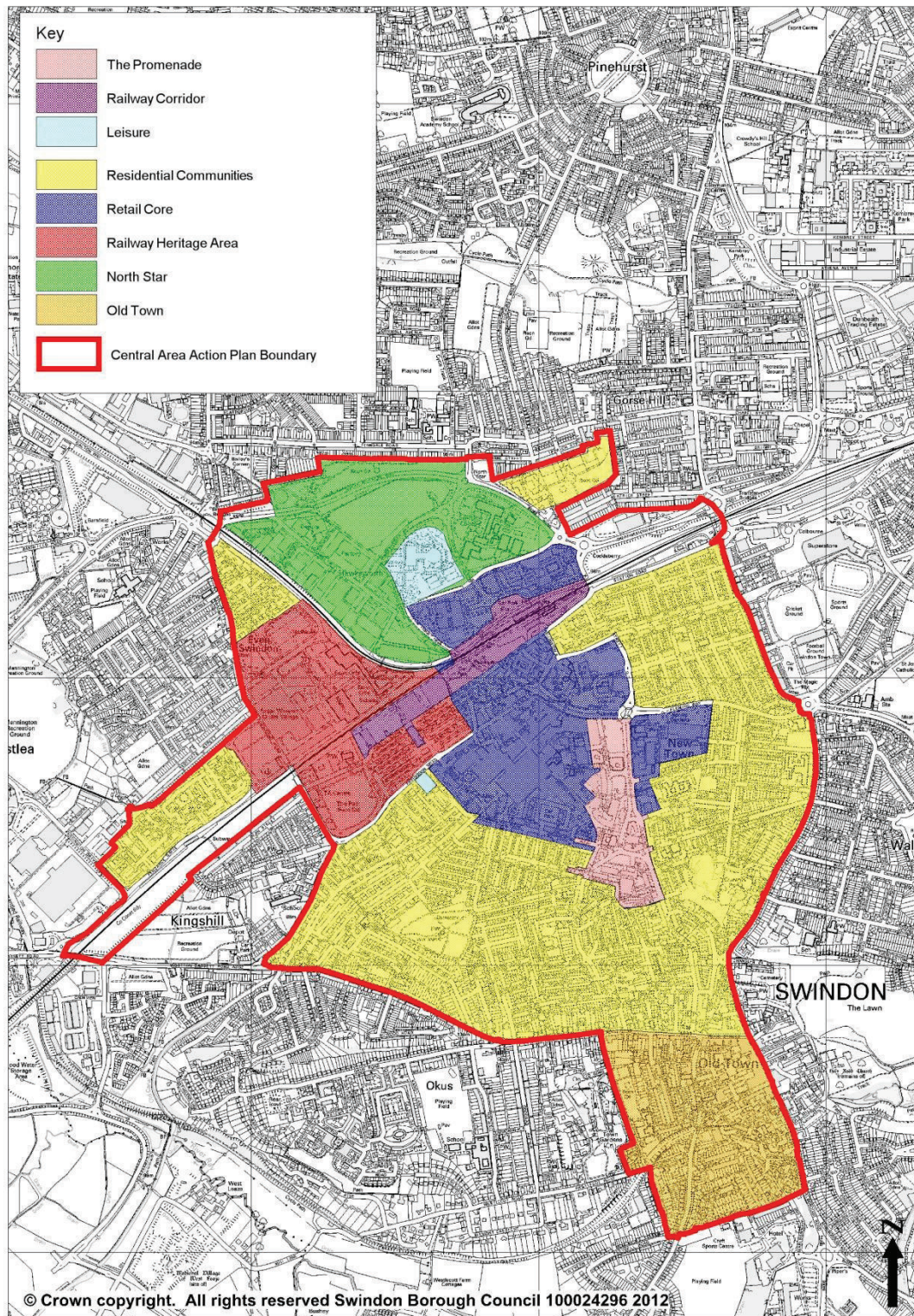
d. A 'Green Spine' will provide:

- **a primary north-south green route that will link Old Town,**

the Town Centre and North Star; and

- **a focal point connecting Swindon's green infrastructure corridors**
- e. High quality, safe and continuous pedestrian routes and cycling networks will be provided, including:**
- **a new rail crossing to address the severance from the Town Centre to North Star, and**
- f. To secure Central Swindon as the focal point for Swindon's network of specialist leisure facilities**
- **the Oasis Leisure Centre will be enabled to be redeveloped and expanded to reinforce its role as Swindon's flagship regional leisure destination; and**
 - **the historic role of the Health Hydro will be enabled to be enhanced for water sports and as a spa facility**
- g. Education provision will be made for:**
- **a new university and/or higher education facilities; and**
 - **2 new primary schools (or 3 forms-of-entry) if required.**
- h. Carfax Street Health Centre will be enabled to be relocated to increase the capacity and improve the quality and accessibility of health facilities within Central Swindon.**
- i. The route of the Wilts & Berks Canal as set out on the Proposals Map will be safeguarded to enable the re-instatement of it as a navigable water body, subject to detailed route assessments**
- j. The regeneration and development of Swindon's central area must integrate positively with, and contribute towards improvement of and mitigate their impact upon existing adjacent communities.**

Figure 7 Swindon Central Area Diagram



5.2 Despite the success of Swindon's historic growth, the town has seen comparative under-investment in infrastructure, particularly in the town centre. Although Swindon is the 30th largest settlement in the country the town centre ranks 65th in the order of centres¹. This lower quality offer does little to contribute to the overall image and attractiveness of Swindon as a place to live, work, shop or spend leisure time.

5.3 The regeneration of the town centre is therefore the top priority for Swindon. A vibrant and attractive town centre is key to commercial and individual investment in Swindon, and in turn, uplift in the economy of the town will see benefits for the rest of the Borough and its communities. Improvements in terms of shops, jobs, leisure and cultural activities and higher education facilities will help to re-establish and promote the town centre as the civic and economic heart of the town. Improving the town centre is the principal way all of Swindon's communities can benefit from planned economic growth.

5.4 A draft Swindon Town Centre Masterplan has been produced and on adoption will form an important framework to guide and steer development at a detailed level in the Central Area.

Retail

5.5 A key part of this regeneration will be the creation of strong retail focus in the town centre on which major retail-led development opportunities will be actively promoted. The aim for the Retail Core is to create a competitive shopping centre, which realises Swindon economic potential in terms of footfall and spending but complemented by leisure, entertainment and community uses. The Retail Core represents Swindon's Primary Shopping Area,

¹ Venue Score system, 2010. Javelin Group

defined in the NPPF², which is set out in the Swindon Central Area Action Plan.

- 5.6 The Swindon Retail Capacity Update 2009 indicates a potential for Swindon town centre to accommodate around 53,700m² of comparison goods floorspace by 2026. The Update also forecasts further additional potential capacity for 34,500m² of retail floorspace by 2026 in the Borough which could be located in the Central area. In terms of the location at which this should be delivered the Update states that some or all of this floorspace should be delivered in Central Swindon using a sequential approach, which is elaborated further in the NPPF.

Office and Employment

- 5.7 The Commercial Quarter will be the focus for delivering office floorspace in the town centre and will therefore help to deliver improved economic performance in the Borough. It will also be complemented by a good mix of other uses (including residential, retail, leisure and cafés and restaurants), to help generate a range of activities and throughout the day and evening. The Railway Corridor will aim to create an attractive gateway to Swindon town centre and to overcome the physical barrier caused by the railway line.
- 5.8 The Renaissance of Central Swindon report concluded that Swindon has the potential to accommodate up to 90,000m² of (B1) office floorspace. Land is allocated in the Central Area Action Plan to accommodate 85,000m² over the period to 2016. This reflects the town centre being the primary focus for commercial development and, in principle, signals a non-

² Annex 2 of the National Planning Policy Framework defines the Primary Shopping Area as the “Defined area where retail development is concentrated (generally comprising the primary and those secondary frontages which are adjoining and closely related to the primary shopping frontage).”

restrictive approach to development for these uses in the town centre. Additional floorspace above this quantum will be acceptable where it is aligned to the Policy; the Central Area Action Plan; and the Town Centre Masterplan. In particular, there is potential for growth in the business and finance and ICT and creative industries sectors in the town centre. The Central Area will also provide significant jobs through retail, leisure and education development.

Town Centre Living

- 5.9 Providing homes in the town centre, to create and promote a strong and vibrant central community, including greater activity through all parts of the day and evening is a key element of town centre regeneration. The downturn in economic conditions means that in the short term opportunities to deliver this type of development will be limited. Revised housing forecasts, indicating lower levels of growth than indicated in the Central Area Action Plan, have therefore been used as the basis for this Plan, although there remains a longer-term commitment to increase the opportunity for town centre living if and when market conditions recover sufficiently to support it. The Council will seek to ensure that an appropriate range and balance of dwelling types is provided in the Central Area including in particular those for families, students, older and disabled people. Communal accommodation for students in support of higher education provision in the central area will also be required.³

Design

- 5.10 Good design plays a critical role in raising the profile of Swindon. This requires consideration of public realm, connections and architecture together, as advocated in good urban design principles and policy DE1. In effect this may be summarised as:

³ Communal Accommodation does not count against housing targets.

good urban structure, strong, clear connections and high quality urban grain. Good design may be achieved through well-designed public spaces to reinforce a sense of place and civic identity along with those strong connecting routes that form the structure underpinning these spaces and finally high quality landmark buildings and architecture to create identity and variety. Care should also be taken to ensure that the Town Centre's high quality older buildings are protected and enhanced to retain the inherent character and variety of built form.

- 5.11 High quality architecture and sustainable forms of development is expected of all new buildings in the Town Centre. Compact forms with mixed-uses encourage walking, cycling, public transport and boosts vitality in the built environment over time. New housing in the Town Centre should make efficient use of land, be functional and employ good standards of internal space and amenity in order to attract more family accommodation and a balanced community over the long-term. Design will be assessed in respect of the requirements of Policy DE1.

Green Spine

- 5.12 The Green Spine is a key component of the regeneration of Swindon town centre and an essential element of the urban structure discussed above. It will contribute to the improvement of the quality of the Town Centre and contribute towards the shift in attitude around Swindon's image. The Green Spine will bring greenery and seasonal variety to the town centre and create a vitally important north-south route sewing together the town centre with Old Town and North Star. It will incorporate strategic cycle and pedestrian routes to reinforce its role as a key corridor of activity. The character of the Green Spine will vary along its route in response to the context and it will perform a major role in local legibility and movement around the town centre.

- 5.13 This will be delivered through on-site landscaping within and adjacent to the spine route, and alternative funding mechanisms.

Leisure and Culture

- 5.14 The **Promenade** will be Swindon's cultural quarter. Uses that support and complement its development will include leisure and food and drink facilities. The Big Arts Plan and Cultural Strategy for Swindon highlight that current facilities do not meet the needs or aspirations of the town, particularly for dance, theatre and music. The Wyvern Theatre, or a future replacement, is likely to form a key hub for performing and digital arts including creative studio spaces.
- 5.15 **North Star** will be the location for Regional Leisure facilities. The Oasis is an important Borough leisure destination; however it is in need of investment. North Star is a highly accessible site, but would benefit from additional railway crossing for pedestrians and cyclists. There are opportunities to realise significant leisure development opportunities there, and achieve one of the key priorities of the Economic Strategy.

Education

- 5.16 As a consequence of housing growth and the changing demographic make-up of Swindon's central area there is increasing pressure for primary school places in the town centre and Old Town. A further two primary school sites are likely to be needed to manage pressures on school places in the short to medium term. The availability of land is limited, therefore more innovative and creative school designs may be required to meet this need using a smaller footprint of land than would be traditionally provided.
- 5.17 Swindon town centre remains the preferred location for the delivery of a university. **North Star** is allocated in the Central Area Action Plan for a university, however opportunities to

deliver a university and/or technical college presence in the town centre would be supported in principle. Such an institution would promote economic growth, and raise aspirations and achievement. Locating such an institution within the town centre will support Swindon's regeneration. A university in a more peripheral location has the potential to undermine the regeneration of the Central Area.

The Railway Village

- 5.18 The Railway Heritage Area within Central Swindon is home to a rich and varied historic environment, encompassing the Swindon Railway Works Conservation Area to the north of the railway and The Swindon Railway Village Conservation Area to the south of the railway. Developments in or adjacent to the Railway Heritage Area should be especially sympathetic to this character area.

Old Town

- 5.19 Swindon's Old Town provides services and shopping for local people as well as a 'specialist' function for the wider area. Development proposals within or near the Old Town Area will be required to contribute towards public realm and wider environmental improvements to the area. This would be in accordance with the Conservation Area Appraisals, the Old Town public realm scheme and Central Area Action Plan.

Access and Movement

- 5.20 The guiding principles for transport in central Swindon are to facilitate ease of movement into, out of and around the area and to support its economic growth and regeneration. The Council seeks to increase the choice of travel options so that the car does not dominate or have a detrimental impact on the environment, or the quality of the experience in the town centre. In alignment with the Transport Strategy, the Local Plan seeks to improve the capacity and performance of the existing road

network by discouraging through traffic and reducing the amount of circulating traffic. Traffic management will ensure road systems operate efficiently to allow the road network to cope with traffic movement.

- 5.21 Promoting the use of public transport together with enhancing provision for pedestrians and cyclists will be key to reducing the dominance of the car. A well-located bus exchange will provide a new gateway for the town centre at the heart of a rapid transit network with links to the north, east and south. Improving accessibility to the rail station will make the most of its role as conduit to the Central Area from beyond the town. Creating a balance between restraint and adequate parking provision within central Swindon will be important in enhancing accessibility and supporting economic development in the area.
- 5.22 The railway effectively severs Central Swindon. Overcoming this barrier to movement within Central Swindon is critical to its regeneration, and in particular linking the Great Western Designer Outlet Centre and North Star to the Town Centre.

Canal

- 5.23 There are long-standing ambitions to re-establish a canal through Central Swindon. It could provide significant economic benefits, be a tourist attraction in its own right and bring a water feature to the central area where there is presently none. The long-term aim is to link the North Wilts and the Wilts & Berks through or around the town centre, subject to detailed route assessment.

Key Evidence Documents:

- Swindon Central Area Action Plan (2009)
- Swindon Retail Capacity Study Update (2009)
- Retail and Leisure Study Update (2007)
- Swindon Green Infrastructure Strategy (2012)

- Swindon School Place Planning Study (2009)
- Swindon School place Planning Study Update (2011)
- Strategy for Major Sports Facilities Provision Swindon 2009 -26
- Renaissance of Central Swindon Report (2003)
- Swindon Central Canal Route Study (2007)

Delivery and links with other key policies and strategies

- Central Area Action Plan Implementation Plan
- The work of Forward Swindon Ltd
- The Swindon Town Centre Masterplan
- Development Management Policies

Policy SC2: Swindon's Existing Urban Communities

- a. In Swindon's existing urban communities, the priorities are:
- the regeneration of the central area; and
 - the protection and enhancement of existing built, semi-natural and natural assets of economic, social and / or environmental value to residents, employees and visitors; and,
 - regeneration at targeted areas in need of renewal and investment, particularly at the local centres
- b. These priorities will be implemented through application of the adopted Central Area Action Plan and other policies of this Plan, in particular:
- the protection and delivery of green infrastructure and open space in accordance with Policy EN1 and EN3;
 - the provision of educational facilities in accordance with Policy CM1;
 - the provision of sports facilities in accordance with Policy CM2;

- **the provision of emergency service facilities in accordance with Policy CM3;**
- **the provision of a district heating network in accordance with Policy IN4; and**
- **improvements to the transport network in accordance with Policy TR1**

5.24 Alongside other policies in Part 5 which identify the spatial strategy for the new communities and rural areas, policy SC2 confirms the spatial priorities for Swindon Borough's existing urban communities. Many of these priorities have already been articulated and justified in Parts 3 and 4 of this Plan and are drawn together in spatial terms in SC2. The protection, improvement and enhancement focus of the policy has its roots in policies SD1 – SD3 and the key policies in which the spatial priorities, aims and objectives are set out are signposted.

5.25 At the heart of the successful implementation of sustainable growth and change in Swindon's existing urban communities will be a need to ensure that:

- ▶ current levels of economic activity are maintained, from which recovery and growth can be developed;
- ▶ the Borough's existing built, semi-natural and natural assets are protected and enhanced; and,
- ▶ the socially, economically and environmentally poorer areas are a focus for neighbourhood renewal and change, including where appropriate, deliverable large or small scale physical regeneration.

5.26 Whilst Swindon Borough is relatively prosperous overall, this picture masks inequality between different communities. There are concentrations of families with worklessness, poor health

and low skills and the challenge is to improve their opportunities to gain employment and improved life chances.

- 5.27 The centre of Swindon already benefits from an adopted Central Area Action Plan, where the focus is on the enhancement of the centre through regeneration and high quality design. The central Swindon area has unique characteristics, which indicate a need for a different approach to the Borough's other existing communities. Central Swindon is not homogenous. There is a concentration of social housing at the Railway Village but other parts of central Swindon have a more equal tenure mix.
- 5.28 Outside of the central area, the Borough's other existing communities and urban areas should also benefit from improvement and enhancement where necessary, of the built, semi-natural and natural environment, raising the quality of living in social, economic and environmental terms.
- 5.29 There is a particular need for this in the wards identified as having high levels of deprivation. Seven areas in the Borough outside of the central area are amongst the most deprived 10% in the country and a further ten are amongst the 20% most deprived⁴. These communities include; Penhill, Parks, Pinehurst, Walcot East, Meadowcroft and parts of Moredon and Toothill. They show similar characteristics and problems regardless of tenure, with a concentration of social housing (although far from exclusively so) and issues relating to income, skills, employment and health. However, residents of these communities have good access to services, facilities and transport and have a resilient sense of belonging. In these wards in particular, there is a case for physical and social regeneration in targeted areas through a programme of neighbourhood renewal and management.

⁴ IMD2008

- 5.30 Policy SC2 gives the spatial representation of the Themes within the existing Swindon Urban Area. The evidence base is listed at each Theme.

Evidence Base

- Sustainable Neighbourhood Study (2009)
- Shaping your community Report (2011)

Delivery and links with other key policies and strategies

- 5.31 The spatial strategy for Swindon's existing communities will be delivered through a combination of the adopted Central Area Action Plan, Neighbourhood Plans (where developed by Neighbourhood Forums), further work undertaken by the Borough Council on specific development sites, the development management process, developer contributions and 'locality working' associated with the locality cluster groups. This work is likely to be augmented by other community plans. Policy LN1 provides further direction on how this will be achieved.

New Communities

Policy NC1: Wichelstowe

- a. Land at Wichelstowe, as defined on the Proposals Map, is allocated for a mixed-use development.
- b. The development at Wichelstowe shall provide:
 - a total of 4,500 homes (including those already completed) an average density of 40 dwellings per hectare and a mix and percentage of affordable homes in accordance with Policy HA2;
 - 12.5 hectares of employment land within use class B1 and B2;
 - a total of 4 local centres, one of which includes a food store

with 2,000 – 2,500m² floorspace in the central neighbourhood;

- **a total of 3 (2-forms of entry) primary schools (or an additional 6 forms-of-entry);**
- **a secondary school (or contributions towards the delivery of 6 forms of entry off-site);**
- **public open space in accordance with the Borough Council's Open Space Standards and extending the River Ray green corridor to the wider countryside;**
- **high quality public realm**
- **community facilities as follows:**
 - **a leisure centre associated with the secondary school; or a combination of on-site leisure facilities and increased capacity and improvements at Croft and Ridgeway; and**
 - **buildings for use by the community, service providers and for worship, including dual-use facilities at all schools; and**
 - **police / emergency services point; and**
 - **health care facilities including GP surgery, dentist and pharmacy in the central neighbourhood; and,**
- **a community wide approach to renewable energy, preferably with a district heating system**

c. Development at Wichelstowe shall protect, enhance and integrate with existing environmental assets, including:

- **the historic environment including the Scheduled Monument of Westleaze Medieval Village**
- **biodiversity, including Old Town Railway Path County Wildlife Site, the river corridors and natural springs**
- **the North Wessex Downs AONB landscape and views from it ,**
- **off-site landscape and biodiversity mitigation south of the M4**

- d. The development at Wichelstowe shall provide sustainable transport links that integrate with Swindon including:**
 - a rapid transit link to Swindon town centre and additional public transport links within the site;
 - walking and cycle links to Swindon’s existing communities and the wider countryside;
 - a link to Junction 16 of the M4;
 - a link from Croft Road to Hay Lane; and
 - a Park and Ride site
- e. The risk of flooding shall be minimised, both within the development and adjacent properties, in accordance with Policy EN6;**
- f. The route for the Wilts & Berks Canal as set out on the Proposals Map shall be safeguarded and protected from development.**
- g. The character and identity of Wroughton will be protected by a principle of non-coalescence between the settlements. The land between Wichelstowe and the village shall remain part of the countryside. However, small scale development within this area, as defined on the Proposals Map, will be permitted where it retains or enhances the existing character of the countryside and:**
 - involves the re-use, conversion or extension of existing buildings at a scale appropriate to their location, in accordance with the criteria specified in Policy DE1; or
 - is an essential requirement directly related to the economic or social needs of the rural community.

5.32 Wichelstowe covers a gross area of around 310 hectares between the London to Bristol railway line , the former railway line between Rushey Platt and Old Town and the M4 to the

south of the town. Wichelstowe was identified in the Swindon Development Appraisal Study 1998. Outline planning permission for the 4,500 dwelling mixed-use development was granted in May 2005 and construction started in Spring 2007. Although development is underway, economic conditions have delayed delivery and created uncertainty over the implementation of the existing consent. Even though Wichelstowe has outline planning permission, future uncertainty over the implementation of the scheme in its current format necessitates its allocation in this Local Plan. Any amendments to the existing scheme or future alternative application will be considered in light of this policy.

- 5.33 The Croft Road to Hay Lane Link is a necessary part of the Wichelstowe Development, to provide access to the development. Although the alignment of the road takes it to the south of the M4 and therefore beyond the Urban Area boundary, this shall not establish a precedent for development south of the M4. It will link Wichelstowe to the A4361 at Pipers Way in the east and the B4005 in the west.

Evidence Base

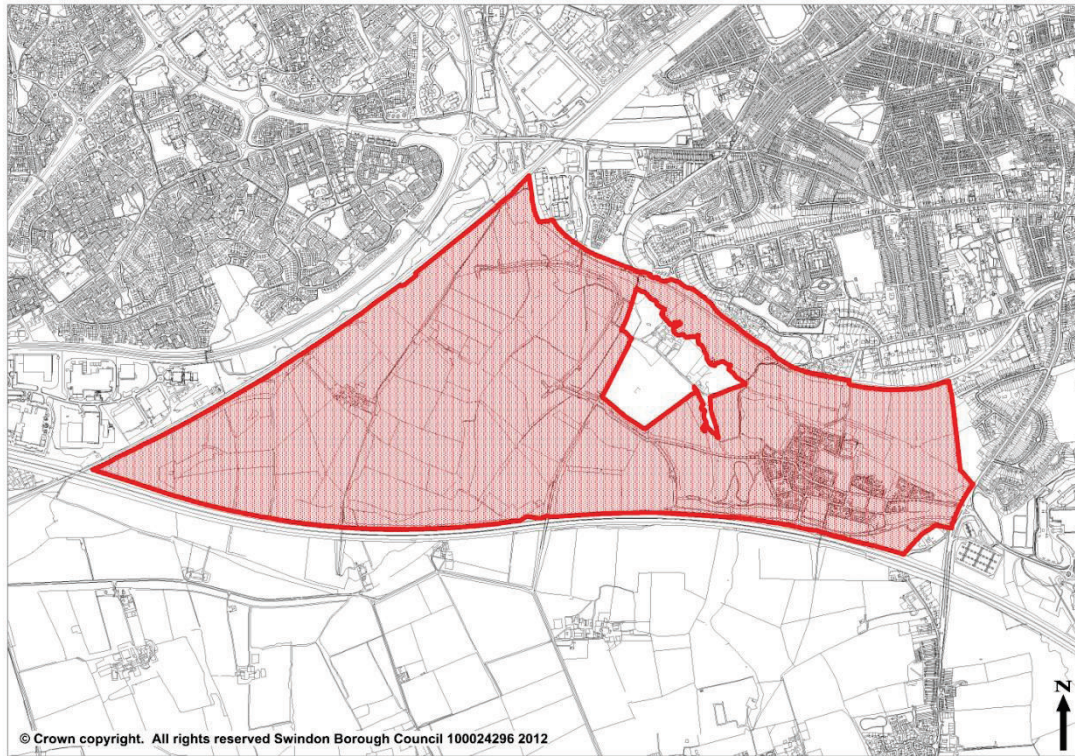
- Swindon Development Area Study (1998)
- Southern Development Planning Masterplan

Delivery and links with other key policies and strategies

- 5.34 Wichelstowe is a key component of the development strategy for the Borough and is linked to many policies and strategies listed in the evidence base. Effective management of development will be achieved through the application of this policy and through:
- Alignment of proposals with other related (but non-planning) strategies identified in the “Evidence Base” above;
 - Implementation of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan;
 - A Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document;
 - Development Framework Plan, design codes and masterplan;

- Continuing dialogue between the Council, local community and developers;
- The development management process;

Figure 8 - Wichelstowe Inset Diagram

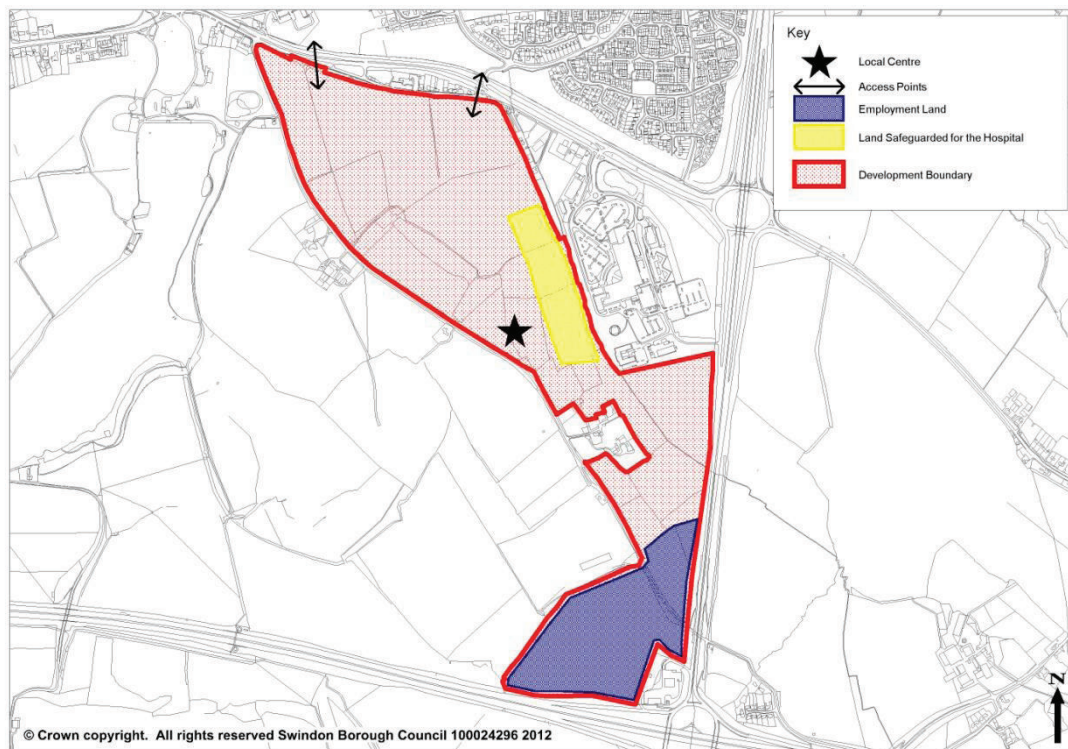


Policy NC2: Commonhead

- a. Land at Commonhead as defined on the Proposals Map, is allocated for a mixed-use development.**
- b. The development at Commonhead shall provide:**
- a total of 890 dwellings at an average density of 30 dwellings per hectare
 - affordable homes in accordance with Policy HA2;
 - 15 hectares of employment land within use-class B1 and/or B2
 - a local centre of a maximum of 1000m² retail floorspace ;
 - a primary school (or 1 form-of-entry) incorporating community facilities;
 - contributions towards the delivery of 1 form of entry secondary school places off-site;
 - temporary accommodation to manage the demographic peak at primary, and contributions as such at secondary schools;
 - Green Infrastructure in accordance with Policy EN1 and which connects to the urban area and wider countryside ;
 - sport, leisure and community facilities in accordance with Policy CM2;
 - high quality public realm;
 - a community wide approach to renewable energy; and
 - 5.5 hectares of land safeguarded for future expansion of the Great Western Hospital, incorporating provision for emergency services if required.
- c. Development at Commonhead shall provide sustainable transport links that integrate with Swindon including:**

- public transport links to Swindon town centre;
 - walking and cycle links to Swindon’s existing communities, Coate Water Country Park and Great Western Hospital; and
 - access to the site from Marlborough Road.
- d. Development at Commonhead shall protect, enhance and integrate with existing environmental assets including:
- Coate Water Country Park and Day House Copse;
 - views to and from the North Wessex Downs AONB and Coate Water Country Park;
 - protection of the existing historic environment, including the setting of listed buildings and on-site archaeological features
 - habitat connectivity and enhanced biodiversity
- e. The area between Coate Water and the new development will be protected from development, and the function of Day House Lane as a green corridor will be safeguarded.
- f. The route for the Wilts & Berks Canal as set out on the Proposals Map will be safeguarded and protected from development.

Figure 9 - Commonhead Inset Diagram



5.35 The Adopted Swindon Borough Local Plan 2011 contained an allocation for a mixed-use urban extension incorporating a university campus on land at Commonhead. The scale of residential development associated with the development was required to enable the development of the university and employment land. The rationale behind this allocation related to a specific campus model, which can no longer be implemented. The residential element of the allocation (without the presence of a university campus) and the economic and social benefits associated with it was re-assessed through the Small Scale Urban Extensions Study. Consequently Commonhead is now re-allocated for a reduced scale of development.

5.36 In April 2012, following an Appeal in December 2011 outline permission was granted for 890 dwellings at Commonhead with employment land and land safeguarded for future expansion of the Great Western Hospital. It is considered necessary to maintain a policy in the Local Plan to guide reserved matter

applications or in the event of a revised outline planning application.

- 5.37 The Swindon and Marlborough NHS Trust and Great Western Hospital have identified that there is a need for land adjacent to the hospital to be safeguarded to accommodate future growth needs.
- 5.38 Given its status, there is a requirement to protect the Day House Copse County Wildlife Site. It is important that the setting and role of Coate Water Country Park is protected over the long-term and therefore the land between it and the Commonhead allocation is safeguarded from development. This area may also aid the local interpretation of the literacy associations of the area
- 5.39 Commonhead will be a sustainable community in terms of design, transport, construction, energy and waste management in accordance with other policies in this Local Plan.

Key Design Principles

- To protect Coate Water Country Park and the landscape context of the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- To ensure that the employment offer complements Swindon town centre

Evidence Base

- Swindon Principal Urban Area Study
- Small Scale Urban Extension Study

Delivery and links with other key policies and strategies

- 5.40 Commonhead is a key component of the development strategy for the Borough and is linked to many policies and strategies listed in the evidence base. Effective management of development will be achieved through the application of this policy and through:
- Alignment of proposals with other related (but non-planning) strategies identified in the “Evidence Base” above;

- Implementation of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan;
- A Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document;
- Development Framework Plan, design codes and masterplan;
- Continuing dialogue between the Council, the local community and developers; and
- The development management process

Policy NC3: New Eastern Villages - including Rowborough and South Marston Village Expansion

- a. Land to the East of the A419as defined on the Proposals Map, is allocated for a mixed-use development. The form of the development shall comprise a series of new distinct villages and an expanded South Marston village.
- b. The development shall provide:
 - an overall average density of 40 dwellings per hectare; comprising:
 - about 6,000 dwellings at the New Eastern Villages (south of the A420);
 - about 1,500 dwellings at Rowborough (north of the A420), and
 - 500 dwellings at South Marston.
 - high quality public realm including outdoor civic public space; and
 - sustainable transport links including:
 - a rapid transit link to Swindon town centre from the Eastern Villages through the district centre as part of phase 1 of the development;
 - additional public transport services to connect with

Swindon and internally within the development;

- **an improved gateway junction at White Hart to manage additional demand and deliver high quality public realm;**
 - **improvements to the Oxford Road/Drakes Way and Covingham Road/Dorcan Way transport corridors;**
 - **a green bridge across the A419 near Covingham Drive to provide for walking, cycling and public transport;**
 - **a new road link to the Commonhead Roundabout;**
 - **a new road link under or across the Bristol to London railway line connecting the development north and south;**
 - **a 1000 (3ha.) space Park and Ride site;**
 - **measures to minimise rat-running through existing adjacent villages and east Swindon.**
-
- **an extensive green infrastructure network that maximises opportunities for habitat connectivity and enhanced biodiversity including a parkland extending the River Cole Green Infrastructure Corridor and connecting with Nightingale Wood;**
 - **sports and leisure facilities, including playing pitches a leisure centre and a 25m swimming pool;**
 - **about 40 hectares of employment land in total (B Class uses) to be located south and east of the A420 and A419 respectively adjacent to the White Hart Junction, in a form that complements the mixed-use District Centre, and safeguards its connection with the wider residential development in the Eastern Villages and distributed as follows:**
 - **2.5 hectares within B1a use-class to be located at and/or**

adjacent to the District Centre;

- **7.5 hectares. within B1b/c or B2 use-class to be located south and west of the District Centre; and**
- **30 hectares within B8 use-class to be located south and west of the District Centre.**
- **a maximum of 12,000m² (gross) of retail and complementary uses, of which no more than 20% will be comparison goods. This will comprise a maximum 10,000m² (gross) anchor food store as well as 1,000m² of other small scale retail and complementary uses within the District Centre. The remaining 1,000m² of retail floor space will be distributed across the three new Local Centres and within the expanded South Marston;**
- **a new learning campus, comprising an 8-form entry secondary school, a 2-form entry primary school, a special school for children with profound, multiple and severe learning difficulties for ages 0-19, and a Children's Centre;**
- **3 new 2-form entry primary schools with early years facilities as well as a 1-form entry extension to the existing primary school at South Marston;**
- **capacity to manage the demographic peak at primary and secondary schools (for up to 4 forms of entry);**
- **community facilities by the means of safeguarded land and/or developer contributions, including flexible, multi-purpose buildings for use by the community, the public sector and for worship at the district centre, local centres and the learning campus;**
- **a health care facility with GP, dentist and pharmacy at the District Centre;**
- **safeguarded land for a fire station towards the southern part of the site, and**

- a sewage treatment works if required.

a. The development will ensure:

- the landscape context and views to and from the North Wessex Downs AONB are respected, including potential off-site mitigation;
- the risk of flooding from the development is minimised, both within the development and at existing neighbouring communities in accordance with Policy EN6;
- biodiversity including the River Cole Corridor and River Cole Meadow County Wildlife Sites is protected, integrated and enhanced; and
- the historic environment, including the Scheduled Monument, Earls court Manor, Great Moorleaze Farm and other Listed Buildings are protected, acknowledged and enhanced.

b. The route for the Wilts & Berks Canal as set out on the Proposals Map will be safeguarded and protected from development.

c. The character and identity of Wanborough, Bishopstone and Bourton will be protected by a principle of non-coalescence between the settlements. The land between the Eastern Village site boundary and the existing villages shall remain part of the countryside. However, small scale development within this area, as defined on the Proposals Map, will be permitted where it retains or enhances the existing character of the countryside and:

- involves the re-use, conversion or extension of existing buildings at a scale appropriate to their location, in accordance with the criteria specified in Policy DE1; or
- is an essential requirement directly related to the economic or social needs of the rural community.

d. The character and identity of South Marston will be protected as set

out in Policy RA3.

- 5.41 Previous drafts of the Local Plan (which took the form of a developing Core Strategy) identified the Eastern Development Area (EDA) for up to 12,000 homes to comply with the draft Regional Spatial Strategy for the South West. This area was identified through the Swindon Joint Study (2005), and the evidence remains in place for this area to be identified as the most sustainable location for a large scale mixed-use development. In line with the overall reduction in the housing requirement in the Borough as a whole, a lower level of housing development is now proposed in this area which is more deliverable and which also better reflects local views gathered during consultation.
- 5.42 However the proposed development is of a sufficient scale to provide the large-scale infrastructure to mitigate the impact of development and provide facilities within the development such as District Centre and secondary school.
- 5.43 A secondary school will be important in establishing a sense of community within the proposed New Eastern Villages and reducing the impact on existing secondary schools in east Swindon. If there is no secondary school within the area, the traffic impact on east Swindon will be amplified. Additionally to deliver other infrastructure items such as a new access to east Swindon at White Hart, and at the Green Bridge, development must be of sufficient critical mass to enable this.
- 5.44 The impact on existing communities, particularly in east Swindon and South Marston is a key consideration. The aim is to maximise the benefits and minimise the negative impacts of the proposed development. The most significant potential impact on existing communities in east Swindon is the traffic impact of

journeys from the proposed New Eastern Villages towards the Swindon town centre. To alleviate potential traffic impact on Oxford Road, Covingham Drive and Greenbridge Roundabout there should be more than one access point towards Swindon town centre.

- 5.45 The vision for the New Eastern Villages is to create sustainable well-designed places where people want to live, work and spend time. Flood risk zones and archaeology within the site prevent development in certain areas, but they also provide the opportunity to provide strong green links through the new community. A series of new villages will be created structured around these green links, which connect the communities together and provide a focus of activity for residents.
- 5.46 The New Eastern Villages will be well integrated with east Swindon and well connected to Swindon town centre. They should deliver a variety of character and design, including innovative and contemporary design that represents an exemplar in sustainable living.
- 5.47 In total, the scale of development will be capitalised upon to deliver strategic infrastructure that could not be achieved by smaller developments. However, development must not compete with the town centre or undermine its regeneration. The identity and character of South Marston, Wanborough and Bourton will also be protected and retained.

Design and development form

- 5.48 The site boundary, as shown on the Proposals Map has been drawn on the basis of it being a sustainable location, particularly in regard to access to the existing urban area and town centre. Consultation in previous drafts of the Local Plan during the Core Strategy process highlighted the concern over impacts on existing nearby rural settlements. The revised site boundary and

scale of development seeks to ensure villages near to the proposed development retain their rural character and identity, and the impact upon them is now reduced. The specific details of land use and landscape requirements in and around the Eastern Villages development will be established through more detailed masterplanning work to ensure a graduated transition between the new communities and the countryside beyond.

- 5.49 The design concept for the development is based on individual “villages” each with its own separate identity, whilst integrating with each other and the existing urban area. The green infrastructure corridors between these settlements is the principal defining site feature and the village concept works well within these existing constraints.

Homes

- 5.50 A design led approach to development is being promoted for the Eastern Villages at an average density of 40 dwellings per hectare. The Eastern Villages development will:
- ▶ Respond to the landscape and existing site conditions;
 - ▶ Deliver the range of infrastructure needed to support a new community of around 16,000 residents, including a learning campus based around a secondary school; and
 - ▶ Meet Swindon’s long term housing demand and need.
- 5.51 **Policy DE1 and HA1** promote a design-led approach to density, which reflects the character of the surrounding area. A variety of area characters and a range of urban forms will be expected within the new villages. This will extend from more concentrated development around the centres to support local shops, leisure and community facilities and public transport to more dispersed lower densities towards the rural edge. An average of 40 homes per hectare will be established as a target across the Proposed Villages as a whole, in order to define the site boundary and

minimise unnecessary additional greenfield development. However, this should be flexibly applied to ensure that the density reflects the design objectives and not the other way round.

Employment

- 5.52 To support long term economic and job growth at Swindon, employment provision is made as part of the development to:
- ▶ Deliver jobs and employment land to support growth in Swindon's key economic sectors;
 - ▶ Create vibrancy within the development;
 - ▶ Provide opportunities for people to live and work in the area; and
 - ▶ Create an eastern gateway to Swindon.
- 5.53 There is strong potential in the east of Swindon to deliver an advanced manufacturing hub associated with existing business, particularly Honda and BMW. Proximity to such large-scale employment and opportunities to develop synergies with them was a key aspect in identifying the area to the east of Swindon for development. Access to the strategic transport network is also a key opportunity to further develop the distribution and logistics sector. These sectors are less appropriate in the town centre and will be important in delivering a balanced and diverse economy across Swindon.
- 5.54 Office development will be an important component of a vibrant mixed-use district centre. The office floorspace at the new district centre should be marketed primarily towards office users less appropriate to the town centre. As the development strategy is delivered, the population increase of Swindon should support the delivery of complementary office sites that do not undermine the role of the town centre.

- 5.55 Office development (Use Class B1a) should be concentrated within the design and built form of the district centre supported by small-scale office premises above shops within the local centres. Land adjacent to the A419/A420, should provide opportunities for the development of advanced manufacturing and distribution and logistics activities (Use Classes B1b-c / B2 / B8).

Centres

- 5.56 The district centre must be large enough and provide a wide enough range of activities to create a strong identity for east Swindon, which will anchor and provide a focus for new and existing communities. However it must not undermine the regeneration or role of Swindon town centre or provide a counter-weight to the town centre.
- 5.57 To achieve this, retail units (excluding an anchor foodstore) will be limited in size, scale and massing, and the district centre should be designed in a permeable 'high street' layout. Retail floorspace in addition to the existing Sainsbury's store will also be limited to 4550m² convenience floorspace with 20% complementary comparison floorspace. The district centre should also provide civic public space to host outdoor events and activities, community facilities and high quality public realm, innovative and contemporary buildings to signal its role as the heart of east Swindon and gateway to the town.
- 5.58 In addition to the district centre, three local centres will be provided as focal points for the villages, serving smaller catchments. These will be small groups of shops that meet the day-to-day shopping needs of the community and which are easily accessible easily by walking or cycling. There will also be provision for small-scale employment and the local centres will also contain multi-use facilities for worship, public sector use

and leisure, community and cultural uses, especially in the evenings.

- 5.59 Each local centre should also provide a smaller scale public realm feature, such as a small square, widened street or managed green space to help create community identity, a sense of place and to signal its location as a community focal point. The design should maximise opportunities to co-locate local centres with primary schools, to generate a scale or activity and to share facilities.

Health and Emergency Services

- 5.60 The scale of development will generate the need for a new health care facility. The Swindon Primary Care Trust has identified that a GP can serve a population of around 1,750 residents, therefore a 11 GP surgery or two smaller surgeries, will be needed, which should be located at the district centre. To support health and social care objectives set out in Policy CM2, the GP surgery(ies) should be co-located with a dentist and pharmacy and be fit for integrated public sector use (see Policy CM3).
- 5.61 The Wiltshire Fire and Rescue service will not be able to maintain current operational effectiveness and response times with the proposed development without a reorganisation of assets. A new fire station will be required to the southeast of Swindon to serve the New Eastern Villages and existing south and eastern areas of the Borough. The preferred site of the Fire Service is land adjacent to Great Western Hospital. However if that site proves to be undeliverable then land at the southern end of the Proposed Eastern Villages area in the employment area should be safeguarded for a new fire station.

Schools

- 5.62 The proposed Eastern Villages will generate a need for additional secondary and primary education facilities. This will be provided by a new secondary school and three new 2-form entry primary schools as well as the expansion of the existing primary school at South Marston. These schools should be at the heart of each village. Initially, secondary school places needs will be met by existing education infrastructure. As development is built out, a new 8-form entry secondary school will be provided on-site. One of the new primary schools will be co-located with the secondary school as part of the learning campus, and this will incorporate a specialist leisure and sports centre to form a learning campus.
- 5.63 In order to manage the projected peak in pupil numbers, each primary school will be capable of expanding to temporarily accommodate an additional form of entry. To manage the projected peak in secondary pupil numbers the new secondary school will be capable of expansion of up to 4-forms of entry. Prior to this physical improvements and capacity may also be required at existing schools.

Green Infrastructure

- 5.64 The development form at the Proposed Eastern Villages will be structured around green spaces, particularly associated with the River Cole corridor and its tributaries. Development will protect and enhance existing green infrastructure, defined in policy EN1, and provide new green infrastructure in accordance with that policy.
- 5.65 There is a range of existing heritage and biodiversity assets within and near to the proposed development. These will be protected, enhanced and integrated within the development. The site will demonstrate net biodiversity gain, through the

creation of new habitats on-site as well as the protection and enhancement of the existing biodiversity present. The impact on views to and from the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty will be mitigated through the landscape assessment and considered in the context of Swindon's existing position in relation to the North Wessex Downs, accepting that development will be visible.

5.66 Proposals for development must integrate and connect with the wider Swindon green infrastructure network extending the River Cole Corridor through the site to Nightingale Wood and the wider countryside.

5.67 The Green Infrastructure network will provide leisure routes and perform flood alleviation and water storage functions, but not exclusively. Public open space and allotment facilities will be provided in accordance with the Council's standards (as set out in Appendix 5).

Transport

5.68 The scale of the development facilitates the provision of a rapid transit system between the new development and Swindon town centre. Such a system should be fast, frequent, safe, reliable and cost-effective. Above all it should be attractive to those who have a choice of transport means. Opportunities to walk and cycle should be maximised, particularly along the green corridors.

5.69 The Green Bridge will provide an additional walking and cycling link across the A419 and public transport route. It will create an attractive and safe route to connect the new development and the existing communities.

5.70 The White Hart Junction has a critical role in high quality urban design and should provide a gateway to the town. Its

reconfiguration should not only facilitate vehicular access to the development but should also facilitate enhanced pedestrian and cycling access. It is important that a second access to the A419 is provided to disperse traffic from the development. Therefore a link to Commonhead roundabout should be provided from the southern part of the development.

- 5.71 North-South routes under the railway line will be provided to strengthen walking and cycling links. New vehicular access should be the primary route to the new Rowborough Village, and to avoid rat-running through South Marston. Transport measures should also seek to avoid rat-running through Wanborough and the existing communities of East Swindon, Stratton and Covingham.
- 5.72 In alignment with the Swindon Transport Strategy a Park and Ride should be provided as part of the development to help reduce the volume of traffic entering Swindon.
- 5.73 Impacts on the A419 and Junction 15 of the M4 must be considered in terms of journey time reliability and safety.

Canal

- 5.74 In order to not prejudice the long-term ambition of linking the Wilts & Berks Canal to the River Thames a route should be safeguarded between Commonhead and Acorn Bridge.

Existing communities

- 5.75 The development to the east of Swindon could benefit existing communities in East Swindon. These include direct benefits by providing of new facilities nearby such as;
- ▶ upgrades and improvements to east Swindon secondary school(s);

- ▶ health, retail and community facilities at the district centre at the north west of the site to provide a focal point for the whole of east Swindon; and
- ▶ new physical links to deliver good quality walking, cycling and public transport links between new and existing communities.

5.76 Indirect benefits include access to new transport links into Swindon town centre, the creation of new jobs within the development and potential energy benefits associated with new energy infrastructure, and developer contributions in general.

5.77 The maintenance of the separate identity of the villages adjacent to the proposed development is an important consideration, which has been emphasised through consultation and community engagement. The land between the development and the villages shall remain part of the countryside with the policy restrictions that apply to development in the countryside in place. It is recognised that there is some development which is appropriate in countryside locations and the policy makes allowances for such development to come forward as appropriate.

Design Principles

- To create new distinct villages with individual identities linked together by green spaces, which integrate with the existing urban area.
- To create a new district centre and focus of activity in the north west of the site to serve new and existing communities at east Swindon.
- To deliver innovative, sustainable, diverse and contemporary development and strategic enabling infrastructure that benefits Swindon as a whole.
- To respect the landscape context, natural and historic environmental features and the identity of the surrounding villages.

- To create a new eastern approach to Swindon and help redefine and improve the image of Swindon.

Evidence Base

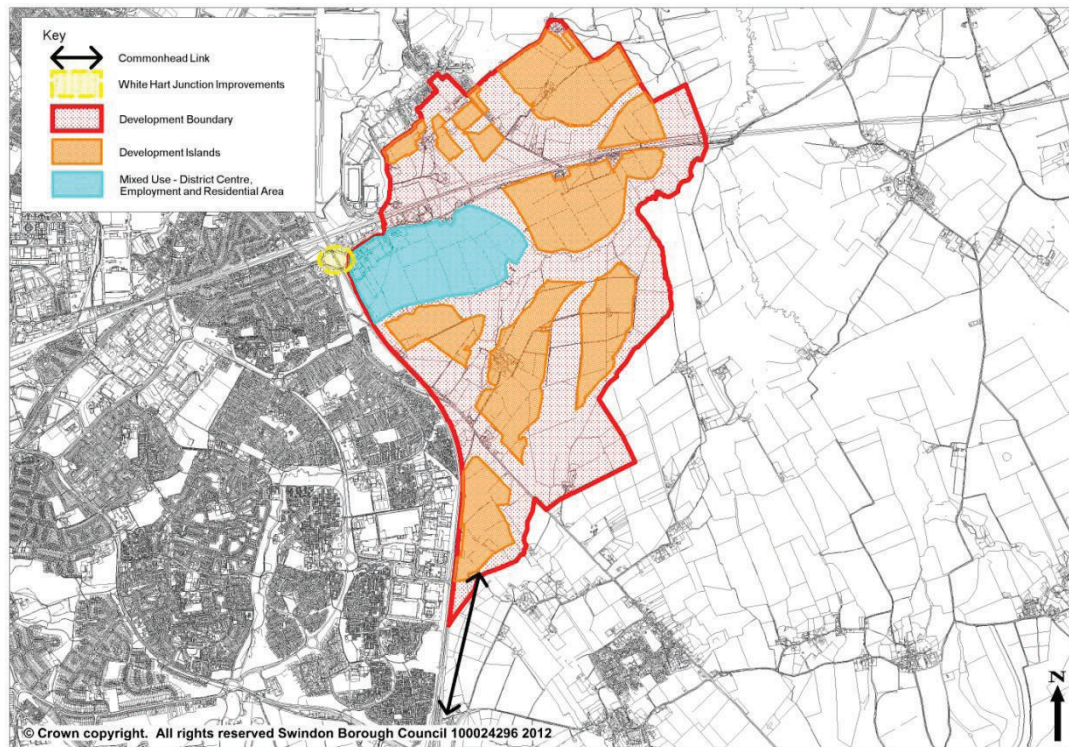
- Swindon Joint Study (2005)
- East of Swindon Evidence Base Update (2011)
- EDA Transport Study (2011) and update (2012)
- Swindon Eastern Development Area Framework (2009)
- Swindon Transport Strategy (2009)
- Swindon Green Infrastructure Strategy (2009)
- Swindon Green Infrastructure Strategy Revision (2011)
- Draft EDA Supplementary Planning Document (2009) and comments received on
- Swindon Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2008)
- Strategy for Major Sports Facilities Provision 2009-2026
- Swindon Retail Capacity Update (2009)
- Swindon School Place Planning Study (2009) & update (2011)
- Wiltshire and Berkshire canal restoration study (2007)
- Swindon Eastern Development Canal Preferred Route (Wilts & Berks Canal Trust – 2012)

Delivery and links with other key policies and strategies

- 5.78 The Proposed Eastern Villages, Rowborough and South Marston are a key component of the development strategy for the Borough and is linked to many policies and strategies listed in the evidence base. Effective management of development will be achieved through the application of this policy and through:

- Alignment of proposals with other related (but non-planning) strategies identified in the “Evidence Base” above;
- Implementation of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan;
- An Eastern Villages Supplementary Planning Document;
- A South Marston Village Supplementary Planning Document
- A Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document;
- Development Framework Plan, design codes and masterplan;
- Continuing dialogue between the Council, the local community and developers; and
- The development management process.

Figure 10 – Proposed Eastern Villages Inset Diagram

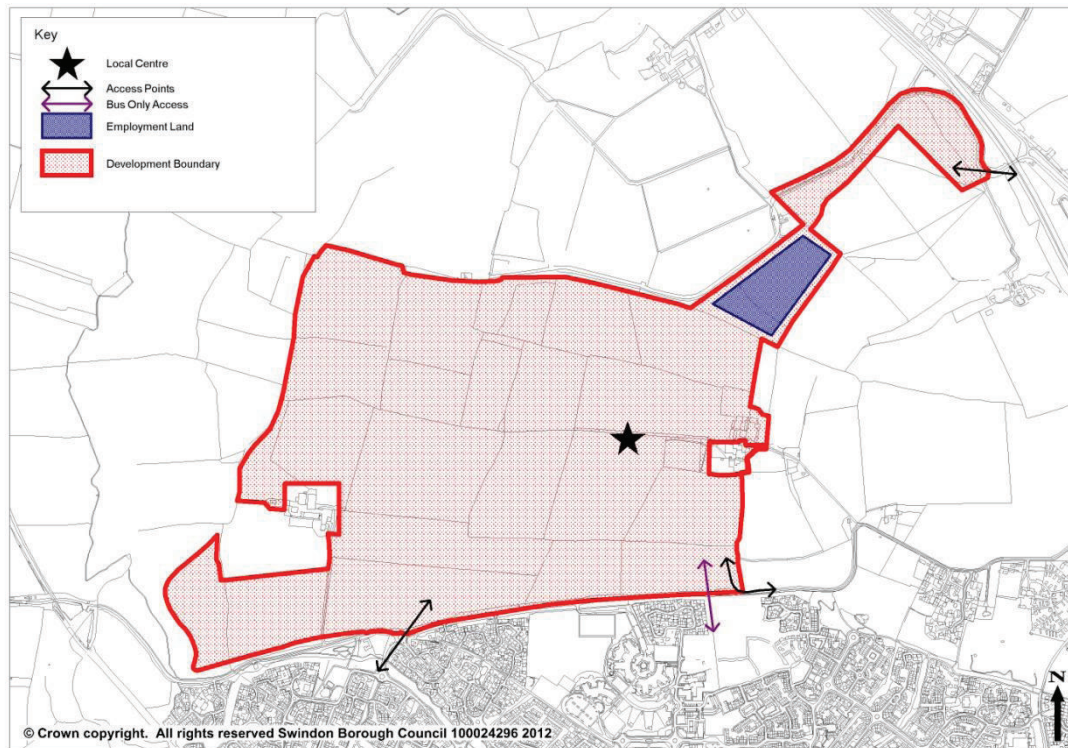


Policy NC4: Tadpole Farm

- a. Land at Tadpole Farm is allocated for a new mixed-use development as defined on the Proposals Map including:**
- b. The development shall provide:**
 - a total of 1,695 dwellings;
 - 5 hectares of employment land (B1 and or B2 Class uses);
 - a mixed use local centre of no more than 1000m² retail floorspace
 - a 2 forms of entry primary school (or 2 forms of entry);
 - contributions towards the delivery of 2 forms of entry secondary school places off-site;
 - temporary accommodation to manage the demographic peak at primary and contributions as such for secondary schools;
 - green Infrastructure in accordance with Policy EN1 which connects with the urban area and countryside, particularly the Cricklade Country Way;
 - a wildlife corridor associated with the River Ray;
 - sport, leisure, and community facilities in accordance with Policy CM2 , including off-site contributions towards indoor leisure facilities; and
 - a community wide approach to renewable energy.
- c. Development at Tadpole Farm shall provide sustainable transport links that integrate with Swindon including:**
 - a Rapid Transit link between Tadpole Farm and Swindon town centre and other public transport links;
 - contributions towards mitigation on the highway network;

- **vehicular access routes from Tadpole Lane and a new route north to connect to Swindon via the former A419**
 - **measures to avoid through traffic from Thamesdown Drive to Blunsdon via Tadpole Lane;**
 - **additional pedestrian and cycle connections between the development and North Swindon**
 - **walking and cycling links to North Swindon, and**
 - **a link to the National Cycle Route 45 at the Cricklade Country Way,**
 - **Development at Tadpole Farm shall protect, integrate and enhance existing assets including habitat connectivity and biodiversity, particularly at the River Ray Corridor**
- d. The development shall include mitigation to reduce the impact of development upon:
- **the strategic landscape of Blunsdon Hill**
 - **the rural area to the north of the site**
 - **the risk of flooding at new and existing communities and avoid development in the area of flood risk associated with the River Ray**

Figure 11 Tadpole Farm Inset Diagram



5.79 Outline planning permission was recently granted for a mixed use development comprising 1690 dwellings, 5 hectares of employment land, primary school and local centre at Tadpole Farm in accordance with the draft Policy NC5 in the Revised Proposed Submission Document Core Strategy (2011). This Local Plan retains Tadpole Farm as an allocation to guide detailed applications and in the event of a new outline application being submitted in the future.

5.80 The South West Regional Spatial Strategy identified an area of search to the north-west of Swindon, to accommodate 2,000 dwellings as urban extension(s) to the town. The Small Scale Urban Extensions Study concluded that Tadpole Farm is the most sustainable location to accommodate development in this area. Tadpole Farm was identified in large part due to the absence of any major environmental constraints and that an urban extension in this location can be accommodated discretely

within the strategic landscape with limited impact upon the character and identity of any surrounding settlements.

- 5.81 The need to ensure a delivery of housing supply on a range of urban extensions to meet economic and demographic needs means Tadpole Farm remains as a location for major development. However, to reflect a move towards lower densities, a reduced scale of development is now allocated in this Plan.
- 5.82 The Small Scale Urban Extensions Study and Swindon Green Infrastructure Strategy highlight the importance of the Cricklade Country Way as a key strategic green infrastructure route. Development proposals must support this role and integration with wider green Infrastructure objectives, including a landscape strategy, which addresses strategic impact to the north of the site and the relationship between Tadpole Farm and Blunsdon Hill.
- 5.83 Access to Tadpole Farm will be primarily from Oakhurst Way and a new northern access road to the former A419 to Blunsdon. Vehicular access will also be from Tadpole Lane. Measures such as signalling and road design should be implemented to discourage trips from Thamesdown Drive to Blunsdon via the new development and Tadpole Lane. The primary route for construction traffic will be from the north.
- 5.84 The Swindon Transport Strategy identifies the requirement for a new rapid transit link and transport route linking north and west Swindon with the town centre. A rapid transit route is critical to deliver the smaller scale urban extensions in a sustainable manner and should be phased in the early part of the development. A cohesive approach to transport and highways infrastructure will be required involving developer contributions

from all sites to deliver a transport solution for north Swindon. A bus only access route is also identified from North Swindon.

- 5.85 The purpose of this is to mitigate the impacts of development upon the existing road network at north and west Swindon alongside the localised transport infrastructure. Impact during the construction phase on existing communities will need to be considered.
- 5.86 There is a considerable area of high flood risk to the west of the proposed site associated with the River Ray. Development will not be permitted in this high flood risk area, and measures should be introduced to reduce existing flood problems at Tadpole Bridge.

Evidence Base

- Swindon Small Scale Extension Study (2008)
- Swindon Transport Strategy (2009)
- Swindon Green Infrastructure Strategy (2009)
- Swindon Green Infrastructure Strategy Revision (2011)

Delivery and links with other key policies and strategies

- 5.87 Tadpole Farm is a key component of the development strategy for the Borough and is linked to many policies and strategies listed in the evidence base. Effective management of development will be achieved through the application of this policy and through:
- Alignment of proposals with other related (but non-planning) strategies identified in the “Evidence Base” above;
 - Implementation of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan;
 - A Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document;
 - Development Framework Plan, design codes and masterplan;

- Continuing dialogue between the Council, the local community and developers; and
- The development management process.

Policy NC5: Kingsdown

- a. Land at Kingsdown is allocated for a new mixed-use development as defined on the Proposals Map including:**
- b. The Development shall provide:**
 - a total of 1,650 dwellings;
 - a mixed use local centre of not more than 1000m² retail floorspace with no more than 20% of that as comparison goods
 - a 2 forms of entry primary school and a children's centre;
 - contributions towards the delivery of 2 forms of entry secondary school places off-site
 - temporary accommodation to manage the demographic peak at the primary school and contributions as such for secondary schools;
 - green infrastructure in accordance with Policy EN1 which connects with Broad Blunsdon and the wider countryside;
 - landscape mitigation to reduce the visual impact of development to the north and east of the site;
 - sport, leisure, and community facilities in accordance with the objectives of Policy CM2;
 - high quality public realm; and;
 - a community wide approach to renewable energy in accord with Policy DE2;
- c. Development at Kingsdown shall provide sustainable transport links that integrate with Swindon including:**
 - •public Transport links from the first phase of development
 - •mitigation contributions for the highway network;

- •vehicular access routes from Cold harbour Junction, the B4109 east of Broad Blunsdon;
 - a new all vehicular bridge across the A419 to connect to the Swindon urban area;
 - •measures to minimise rat running through Broad Blunsdon village and from Cold Harbour Junction; and
 - •connections for walking and cycling to Swindon and Broad Blunsdon
- d. Development at Kingsdown will protect, integrate and enhance existing assets including:
- Bydemill Brook and its tributaries
 - Stratton Wood
- e. Development at Kingsdown shall include mitigation to reduce the impact of development upon:
- existing biodiversity and geodiversity assets in accordance with Policy EN4
 - the risk of flooding at new and existing communities in accordance with Policy EN7
 - the historic environment, including listed buildings and any archaeological features in accordance with Policy EN10.
 - the context and character of Broad Blunsdon at the northern edge of the site, through the design of the development
- f. The character and identity of Broad Blunsdon shall be protected by a principle of non-coalescence between the settlements. The land between the Kingsdown development and the village shall remain part of the countryside. However, small scale development within this area, as defined on the Proposals Map, will be permitted where it retains or enhances the existing

character of the countryside and:

- **involves the re-use, conversion or extension of existing buildings at a scale appropriate to their location, in accordance with the criteria specified in Policy DE1; or**
- **is an essential requirement directly related to the economic or social needs of the rural community.**

5.88 In order to provide an adequate supply of housing to meet the overall requirement and satisfy the 5-year housing land requirement an additional smaller scale urban extension it has been necessary to identify another smaller-scale urban extension to Swindon.

5.89 In the Preferred Options draft of the Core Strategy (2008), land at Kingsdown was allocated for 500 dwellings to meet the requirement within that Plan to be in accord with the draft RSS. However in the Small Scale Urban Extension Study (2008) land at Kingsdown was assessed as being less sustainable than Tadpole Farm. In the subsequent draft of the Core Strategy it was identified as a potential reserve site subject to delivery on other sites with the allocation being assigned to a larger Tadpole Farm allocation. Subsequent capacity work has limited Tadpole Farm to less than 1700 dwellings. With the additional housing requirement land at Kingsdown has been assessed using the evidence of the small-scale urban extension study for its potential contribution to supply of housing.

5.90 The Small Scale Urban Extension Study concluded that it is accessible to employment opportunities in NE Swindon and retail and leisure facilities also in NE Swindon. However such accessibility is subject to direct access the A419, particularly by walking and cycling. In landscape terms development south of Kingsdown Lane is more appropriate than north of it.

- 5.91 In order to provide for the essential infrastructure, particularly crossing the A419, a larger development is required than the initially identified 500 dwellings. Also, to provide for an on-site primary school of 2 forms of entry a residential development of between 1,600 and 2,000 dwellings is required. In consideration of the landscape north of Kingsdown Lane lower density housing is proposed in that area reducing the overall capacity.
- 5.92 To provide for a mixed-use scheme and contribute to the employment land requirement and Economic Strategy priorities the development proposal should include approximately 5 hectares of land suitable for meeting low carbon industry requirements and / or the creative and professional services sectors.
- 5.93 Access to Kingsdown Village shall be by more than one point. The primary access will be via a new bridge over the A419 linking into the Swindon urban area including walking and cycling. In order to deliver a sustainable development it is vital that the vehicular bridge is delivered early in the development. This may be secured through conditions relating to occupancy of residential units.
- 5.94 It is important that any impact on Broad Blunsdon is minimised and mitigated for. The policy includes measures to reduce ‘rat-running’ and for the development to respect the context and character of the village. The area between the proposed development and Broad Blunsdon shall remain part of the countryside to maintain the separate identity of the village.

Evidence Base

- Swindon Small Scale Extension Study (2008)
- Swindon Transport Strategy (2009)
- Swindon Green Infrastructure Strategy (2009)

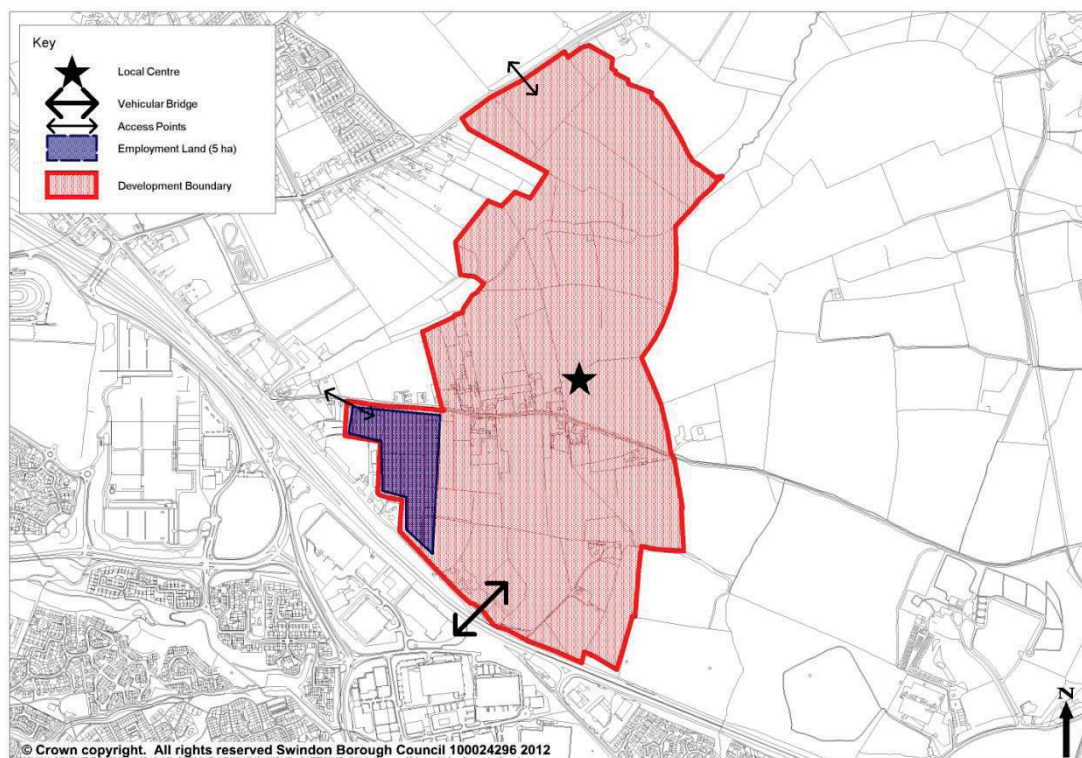
- Swindon Green Infrastructure Strategy Revision (2011)

Delivery and links with other key policies and strategies

5.95 Kingsdown is a key component of the development strategy for the Borough and is linked to many policies and strategies listed in the evidence base. Effective management of development will be achieved through the application of this policy and through:

- Alignment of proposals with other related (but non-planning) strategies identified in the “Evidence Base” above;
- Implementation of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan;
- A Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document;
- Development Framework Plan, design codes and masterplan;
- Continuing dialogue between the Council, the local community and developers; and
- The development management process

Figure 12 – Kingsdown



Rural Settlements

- 5.96 The rural area comprises about three-quarters of the Borough's area, within which are a range of small settlements comprising well-defined communities. The rural areas of the Borough have their own specific requirements in terms of accessibility, economy and community facilities that in general are under greater pressure than in the Swindon Urban Area. These have to be provided in the context of the character and landscape of the surrounding areas. However the growth of Swindon will also impact upon these communities. The decline in employment and the migration of commuters to rural areas has made living in villages less sustainable, and they have increasingly become dormitory settlements.

New Housing Developments

- 5.97 Policy SD2 makes provision for at least 450 new dwellings per year in the rural part of Swindon Borough between 2011 and 2026. The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (2008) confirmed that this level can be delivered but will require a comparison of available sites in consultation with the local communities. Neighbourhood Plans and/or further site specific allocations work undertaken by the Council will allocate specific development sites in accordance with the Local Plan, and in doing so will review settlement boundaries. Whilst most development will occur in the primary settlements, the spatial strategy needs to be flexible enough to enable necessary development in the secondary settlements and smaller villages without setting rigid criteria about the level of existing facilities that is needed in individual settlements to make new housing acceptable.
- 5.98 Sustainable small-scale developments that are necessary to maintain the function of rural life in villages will be acceptable but must come forward in a planned way with support from local

communities. Proposals that introduce new uses to existing buildings can sometimes protect or make an important visual contribution to the rural scene as well as a practical contribution to the local stock of facilities or accommodation. Similarly, the removal of unsightly buildings can have a useful and important visual impact and might introduce additional environmental benefits.

- 5.99 In order to protect the individual characters of the countryside and small villages, unsustainable developments that are not of appropriate scale, design, or function should be prevented. The joint principles of sustainability and the need to keep rural communities vibrant would also be served by improving public transport, for example by encouraging community-based transport.

Employment

- 5.100 The national indications are that in the rural areas the key areas for future job growth are home working, teleworking and small businesses. These types of employment generate less of a need to identify and release land for economic development, and instead require a strategy which enables small businesses by, for example, increasing the provision of live-work space in rural communities. The Council will be supportive of planning applications for workspace extensions to homes (subject to criteria related to scale, noise and disturbance). The local rural economy would also be boosted by encouraging job growth in leisure, education, and tourism (e.g. rural crafts), particularly in the more attractive villages and countryside.

Accessibility and Village Services

- 5.101 Commercial facilities in rural areas, such as shops, post offices, and public houses, increasingly struggle to be economically viable. Services can be brought into the rural area, a principle

that the spatial strategy for rural areas supports. In doing so, it is hoped that the sustainability of rural areas will be improved by reducing the need to travel into Swindon. Whilst the Borough Council has an aspiration to encourage of a range of services in small settlements, it is not something it can directly control.

- 5.102 For rural settlements to thrive resident's local accessibility to services needs to be improved. Opportunities to improve fixed route bus services are limited because often such services are not economically viable and funds are only available to support a few routes. The future is therefore in demand responsive transport and in community-based schemes, which will be encouraged and supported by the Council through successive reviews of the Local Transport Plan. There may also be a need for subsidised transport. If sustainable transport schemes are to be successful, Rural Transport Partnerships need to be developed through the Local Transport Plan, including local communities so that local needs can be identified. Coordination of schemes across administrative areas will require a joint approach with adjacent local authorities. Accessible funding mechanisms are needed, with targets applicable to rural areas.

Evidence Base

Swindon Core Strategy Rural Issues Paper (2009)

Policy RA1: Highworth

- a. Development at Highworth shall be in accordance with Policies SD1 and SD2 and should support the following local priorities:**
- **maintain the separate identity of Highworth as a hill top market town and respect its landscape setting;**
 - **rejuvenation of Highworth town centre to create a lively, thriving and attractive focus for the town by:**
 - **maintaining and enhancing the character and function of Highworth town centre;**
 - **seeking that appropriate development contributes towards the improvement and unification of Highworth town centre and points of access to it;**
 - **preventing the loss of existing shops, services and facilities from Highworth town centre;**
 - **focusing shops, services and facilities at Highworth town centre in accordance with Policy DS1; and**
 - **improving the accessibility of Highworth by means of public transport, walking and cycling**
 - **Support a sustainable market town economy for Highworth by:**
 - **supporting the expansion of existing business and encouraging economic development opportunities in accordance with Policy EC1;**
 - **realising tourist potential, in the form of appropriate attractions and accommodation, as a historic market town and gateway to the Cotswolds; and**
 - **improving the visual and physical appearance of the key points of access into the town.**
 - **Prevention of significant adverse environmental impact.**
 - **Provision of a range of social and recreational facilities.**

- **Protection and enhancement of the role of Pentylands Park, as defined on the Proposals Map, as a place to visit for recreational purposes and related activities; and**

- b. Land north of Blackworth Industrial Estate as shown on the proposal map is allocated for B-Class employment use, with no more than 50% of it being used for B8-use.**

5.103 Highworth is a freestanding settlement seven miles from Swindon and retains a market town function within its catchment area. The town has a well-defined historic centre with a range of services and is surrounded by attractive countryside. In addition, Highworth has a broad employment base that includes a business park at Blackworth Industrial Estate.

5.104 The vision for Highworth (Our Future Is In Our Hands) prepared by the Highworth Community Partnership Group in 2008, suggests that the economic development strategy for Highworth should seek to achieve “an appropriate balance between self-containment and openness to achieve economic viability”. To provide for future local employment opportunities approx. 5ha. of land north of the existing Blackworth Industrial Estate is identified to provide opportunities to provide an appropriate balance. To ensure that a range of job opportunities are provided for, the amount of B8 uses is limited to no more than 50% of the allocation.

5.105 The vision also gives support to the development of sustainable tourism – particularly cultural tourism that would prevent Highworth becoming a ‘tourist trap’.

5.106 New housing development should be at a scale to support the identity of Highworth as a hill-top settlement, and does not increase the level of out-commuting, particularly by private car. However, a limited amount of additional housing is accepted to

maintain the viability and vitality of Highworth, particularly the town centre. Highworth Town Centre is a small centre that suffers from a lack of ‘critical mass’ of shops sufficient to attract shoppers in significant numbers. New housing provision will increase the number of households in Highworth, which will help maintain the viability of shops. There is a pressing need to improve the pedestrian linkage between the Co-op store and Highworth town centre. The street frontage of the High Street should remain primarily for A1 (retail) use-class in line with Policy EC3.

- 5.107 Pentylands Park is an important and cherished local amenity, with ambitions to designate it as a Country Park. It is therefore vital that it is safeguarded from development that would compromise its role and function.
- 5.108 Opportunities should be sought from any future development to improve the key gateways to the town centre, particularly the Fox Roundabout.

Local Priorities

- 5.109 Local priorities for Highworth have been identified through community planning participation events.

Evidence Base

- Shaping Your Community Report (2010)
- Highworth Vision (2008)

Delivery

- Highworth Neighbourhood Plan

Policy RA2: Wroughton

- a. **Development at Wroughton shall be in accordance with Policies SD1 and SD2 and should support the following local priorities at Wroughton:**
- **retain Wroughton’s independent identity from Swindon by maintaining separation between Wichelstowe and the village;**
 - **strengthen links, particularly by public transport, between Wroughton and Swindon including to:**
 - **Swindon’s southern employment areas**
 - **the Great Western Hospital**
 - **West Swindon;**
 - **strengthen the role of Wroughton village centre as a focus for the village by:**
 - **strengthening links between Wroughton High Street and the Ellendune Centre;**
 - **preventing the loss of existing shops and facilities;**
 - **focusing shops and facilities at Wroughton village centre in accordance with Policy EC3; and**
 - **maintaining and enhancing the character of Wroughton High Street.**
 - **maximise opportunities associated with the Science Museum and Wichelstowe to benefit Wroughton and the Borough through:**
 - **realising tourism benefits associated with the Science Museum;**
 - **allowing expansion of museum activities providing the benefits are delivered sustainably and do not conflict with other policies in the Local Plan; and**
 - **access to new services, jobs and facilities.**
 - **the provision of further sports and play facilities.**

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- 5.110 Wroughton is almost adjacent to Swindon and any extension to the north would bring about coalescence. The proximity to a wide range of services in Swindon has meant that a market town function has not developed, and there is a narrow range of services within the settlement. Wroughton also has a limited employment base. Some new employment in the service sector might be acceptable, but no land allocations are required. The vision for Wroughton (The Community Strategic Action Plan for Wroughton 2007-2017), prepared by V4W (Vision for Wroughton Group) has as an aspiration “to maintain its strong village feel, while at the same time ensuring that there is provision for business and economic activity to ensure prosperity and sustainability”. Opportunities were seen at Wichelstowe, encouraging new business start-ups, and developing the sectors of agriculture, tourism and retail, creative and scientific sectors (based on the Science Museum), and potentially people care industries.
- 5.111 There are two major environmental constraints to significant development. Firstly, it remains important that the gap between Wroughton and Swindon is retained to preserve the separate physical and community identity of Wroughton. Secondly, Wroughton adjoins the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Beauty and any development proposals will need to take this into account.
- 5.112 Wroughton Village Centre functions well and contains most of the main services that a village of this size requires. However the Ellendune Centre is in need of rejuvenation.

Local Priorities

5.113 Local priorities for Wroughton have been identified through community planning participation events.

Evidence Base

- Shaping Your Community Report (2010)
- Vision for Wroughton – The Community Strategy Action Plan for Wroughton 2007-2017 (2007)

Delivery and links with other key policies and strategies

- Wroughton Neighbourhood Plan (if commenced)
- A Site Allocations DPD

Policy RA3: South Marston

- a. Development at South Marston shall be in accordance with Policies SD1 and SD2 and must contribute towards the creation of an integrated village with a distinct and separate identity from Swindon and other settlements. Expansion of the village will be as part of the Proposed Eastern Villages strategic allocation and through allocated brownfield opportunities as shown on the Proposals Map.**
- b. Development at South Marston shall:**
 - **ensure it respects the character of the existing village by:**
 - **providing housing at an average of 30 dwellings per hectare; and**
 - **providing affordable housing in accordance with Policy HA2, but at a proportion of no more than 20%.**
 - **provide community, recreation facilities and retail provision of an appropriate scale, as part of a village centre; and**
 - **provide Green Infrastructure in accordance with Policy EN1 proportionate to the scale of expansion; and**
 - **provide an extended recreation ground to include the field to the south-west of the current recreation ground with recreational facilities of an appropriate type and scale; and**
 - **protect historical landscape features, archaeological assets and existing green-infrastructure; and**
 - **deliver primary school places within the village to meet the needs of an expanded South Marston; and**
 - **provide a new road connection between Thornhill Road and Old Vicarage Lane, within the limits of the expanded village and designed so that it does not form a bypass to South**

Marston; and

- **provide traffic management and sustainable transport measures to minimise the volume of traffic, including through traffic, and to reduce the impact on the village, in particular at Pound Corner; and**
 - **ensure other development/redevelopment opportunities on existing (brownfield) sites in the west and north of the village provide strong links with the village and make the appropriate infrastructure contributions to mitigate their impact in broad accordance with the South Marston Village SPD; and**
 - **provide mitigation measures to protect the village from flood risk; and**
 - **realise opportunities to facilitate main drainage and utilities supply to existing properties that currently lack connections where possible.**
- c. To ensure non-coalescence of South Marston with Swindon and the other proposed Eastern Villages the land between the expanded village and the railway to the south shall remain part of the countryside. Development within this area, as defined on the Proposals Map, shall only be permitted where it retains or enhances the existing character of the countryside and:**
- **involves the re-use, conversion or extension of existing buildings at a scale appropriate to their location, in accordance with the criteria specified in Policy DE1; or**
 - **is an essential requirement directly related to the economic or social needs of the rural community.**

5.114 An expanded South Marston forms one of the Proposed Eastern Villages in Policy NC4. South Marston Parish Council conducted a village survey in 2005 (85% household response rate) which demonstrated the importance to South Marston that it retains its

independence and identity and that it does not coalesce with Swindon or other developments. To achieve this, an extension to the village is proposed, which retains a gap between South Marston and other new development. This approach to South Marston meets identified housing needs to the east of Swindon, whilst protecting the identity and character of the village. There are brownfield sites, which provide additional opportunities, which must be incorporated as part of the village.

- 5.115 This development of South Marston will retain a strong and definitive sense of place and provide the opportunity to deliver new local services and facilities within South Marston as a consequence of its increase in size and therefore allow existing residents of the village to benefit from growth. This will enable South Marston to thrive and promote greater self-containment within the village. In 2006, South Marston Parish Council initiated the preparation of a Village Strategy by local residents, which identified the principles of potential development. Any additional development opportunities must demonstrate that they contribute towards the wider plans and objectives for South Marston and fully integrate with the village.
- 5.116 The Village Strategy outlined opportunities for development of the existing industrial sites to the west of the village; the re-routing of traffic through the village away from Pound Corner; and the importance of creating a strong centre to the village around the Recreation Ground and adjacent green space. The proposals for development of the village as a consequence of the Proposed Eastern Villages provide an opportunity to deliver some of these objectives in a way that does not prejudice the strategic objectives for the whole area.
- 5.117 The Borough Council is now engaging with South Marston Parish Council, and in consultation with village residents, in preparing a South Marston Village SPD. This will help support

an integrated approach to the development of the village and will benefit the current and future community of South Marston. Developer contributions will be required from all developments identified through the South Marston Village SPD.

- 5.118 Development should seek to improve the provision of utilities, such as broadband, for existing residents of the village.

Evidence Base

- South Marston Village Strategy (2007)
- On-going joint work with South Marston Parish Council on the South Marston Village Supplementary Planning Document
- Shaping Your Community Report (2010)

Delivery and links with other key policies and strategies

- Integrate with the character of the existing village and its landscape setting and this will be controlled through the preparation of a Village Supplementary Planning Document and Village Design Code.
- New Eastern Villages SPD
- Engagement with the community of South Marston through the Parish Council
- Village Design Codes
- Developer Contributions SPD

Local and Neighbourhood Policies

Strategic Objectives

The Local and Neighbourhood Policies will help to meet all Strategic Objectives set out in section 2 of this Plan, in the local context.

- 5.119 The Local and Neighbourhood Policies set out the approach that will be taken to planning for local communities and neighbourhoods in the Borough. The introduction of the Localism Act 2011 makes new statutory provisions for local communities to play an enhanced role in planning for new development in their local area. This section and its policies will help to guide those processes.

Key issues

- 5.120 The involvement of the local community goes to the heart of successfully planning for and implementing sustainable and inclusive growth and change. Without the input of the community, plans would mean less on the ground and development less responsive to local needs. Proactive engagement with the local community will be key to ensuring that the impact of new development is a positive one and reflects the locality within which it sits. This engagement will need to take place throughout the planning for and delivery of development and there are several stages during which the community's views and input can be sought. However, it does not stop at just engaging: it will be important that the views of the community are taken into account as planning discussions move forward and reasoned justification is given in the consideration of views. It is important that the Council continues to encourage engagement between the private sector (for example, developers) and the local community when planning for new development, but also that the reasons the Council, as local

planning authority, makes decisions either in supporting or opposing development proposals are transparent and communicated effectively.

- 5.121 In order to deliver sustainable development at the appropriate scale for the local communities, this Plan sets out a spatial strategy to deliver the right quantum and quality of growth at the right time. These ‘strategic’ policies provide the framework for delivery in the Borough. In some of the places identified for growth, be it large or small scale, it may be appropriate for there to be more growth than is indicated in this plan. The Neighbourhood Planning process allows for this to take place, where the local community want that to happen.
- 5.122 Traditionally, Parish Plans have been the key document through which local communities could express their aims, objectives and priorities. These plans may continue to be the most suitable vehicle for local communities to express their priorities for the delivery of any number of things such as facilities, services and development. However whilst informative, and sometimes the best and most up-to-date evidence of what a community wishes to see happen in their area, as non-statutory plans they are not always seen to have any real traction in the planning process.
- 5.123 The Localism Act 2011 and changes to national planning policy introduced in 2012 through the National Planning Policy Framework provide the opportunity for local communities to have more control over planning strategy and the delivery of development in their area, where those communities support an increase in the amount of development over that identified in the Local Plan and where their plans are in conformity with the Local Plan. Neighbourhood Plans, which form part of the statutory development plan once adopted by the Council, and Neighbourhood Development Order, which can give permission to development without the need for planning permission to be

granted by the local planning authority, can be drawn up by properly constituted Neighbourhood Forums. They provide two additional mechanisms open to local communities to bring forward development (in addition to existing ways of securing development) over which the local community can have a say in their location and specification.

- 5.124 Notwithstanding any desire to produce a community plan, a key issue relevant to their preparation, whether statutory or non-statutory, will be the amount of resource needed to commit to producing such a document given that such plans should be driven by the community rather than by the Council.

Addressing the key issues

- 5.125 Planning has a key role to play in helping communities to deliver growth and change in the way they want to deliver it, particularly so with the introduction of the new planning system. Whilst it cannot guarantee the delivery of all facilities and services a community may wish for, it can help to protect and enhance existing assets and provide a positive framework to help shape and guide development with the involvement of the community at its heart. Key to effective delivery will be this Plan, as well as more detailed planning work which could be done involving the community such as masterplanning, Neighbourhood Plans (or Development Orders) or further work on specific site allocations.
- 5.126 The Borough Council's Localities have a key role in facilitating neighbourhood forums, and in some cases through the Locality Forum may choose to initiate Neighbourhood Plans.
- 5.127 To provide a positive framework to enable communities to have a say in the future planning of Swindon, this section sets out policies which:
- ▶ provide a commitment to effective communication between the Council and local communities through both plan making and development management processes;

- ▶ support the production of Parish and other community plans which help to provide locally driven evidence and views about need and aspirations;
- ▶ provide advice and support for communities undertaking a Neighbourhood Plan or Development Order process; and,
- ▶ set out a process which will ensure that local scale development required by this Plan is delivered, if not through the development of communities' Neighbourhood Plans, then through further work on the Local Plan.

5.128 In addition, the Council has adopted a Neighbourhood Planning Protocol to help local communities choose the most appropriate vehicle to affect change in their area and advise on the process and support available to them if they choose to develop a Neighbourhood Plan.

Policy LN1: Local and Neighbourhood Planning

- a. **In order to maximise opportunities for Swindon's community to comment on and influence growth and change in the Borough, good communication between the Borough Council, local community, and developers will be maintained through:**
 - **engagement and consultation in the preparation of development plans, masterplans, supplementary planning documents and in determining planning applications;**
 - **encouraging pre-application discussions between developers and the local community; and,**
 - **ensuring that the Borough Council's decision making process is transparent and with reasons for decisions communicated effectively.**
- b. **The production of non-statutory community plans by Parish Councils and other recognised organisations representative of the local community will be supported where possible to help ensure**

objectives, priorities and policies are broadly aligned with those of this Plan.

- c. The preparation of statutory Neighbourhood Plans and Neighbourhood Development Orders by designated Neighbourhood Forums will be supported in accordance with the Council's Neighbourhood Planning Protocol and the requirements of local planning authorities set by the Localism Act 2011 and accompanying Regulations.**
- d. Should Neighbourhood Plans and / or Neighbourhood Development Orders not be commenced to bring forward sufficient allocations of local housing development in conformity with this Plan, or sufficient developer proposals for such housing development not have been approved within the first five years of the plan period, the Borough Council will seek to identify such sites through further separate site specific development plan allocations.**

5.129 There are also 14 parishes, 13 with an elected Parish Council and one with an annual parish meeting and Highworth Town Council, within the Borough, which have a local democratic role and also provide and manage a number of local facilities. The Parish and Town Councils provide a focus for engagement within their communities. There are also a large number of Community and Resident Groups.

5.130 It is also important to take account of the needs and aspirations of those diverse communities that cross administrative boundaries.

5.131 Swindon Borough Council and its partners are also promoting new ways of working. This is about providing the best and most cost effective service possible for our communities by changing how we work, where we work and how we use technology.

- 5.132 Localities, Parish and Town Councils, and Community Groups will be encouraged to prepare community-led plans to establish, prioritise and help deliver the improvements needed in their area. Where the community or neighbourhood action plans are founded on full local consultation and engagement and where they do not conflict with the Local Development Framework, these Plans will be accorded weight as a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.
- 5.133 Through the Community Participation events, the need for better communication in relation to planning applications and decisions was highlighted.
- 5.134 In line with the Statement of Community Involvement. developers shall be encouraged to undertake public consultation on development proposals.
- 5.135 Neighbourhood governance arrangements shall be encouraged to provide a focus for community action.

Evidence Base

- Shaping Your Community Report (2011)
- Swindon Borough Statement of Community Involvement (2007)
- Sustainable Neighbourhoods Study (2009)

Delivery and links with other key policies and strategies

- Neighbourhood Plans
- Site Allocations DPD

Appendix 1

Policies of Swindon Borough Local Plan 2011 proposed to be superseded by the Swindon Borough Local Plan 2026 Pre-Submission Draft

The Town & Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 states that where a Development Plan document contains a policy that is intended to supersede another policy, it must state the fact and identify the superseded policy.

Saved Local Plan Policies Proposed to be Superseded

Local Plan Policy	Issue	Core Strategy Policy (Revised Proposed Submission, 2011)	Local Plan Policy (Pre-Submission Draft, 2012)	Comment
Development Strategy				
DS1	Urban Concentration of Development	DS1 Development Strategy	SD2: Sustainable Development Strategy	Policy framework superseded
DS1A	The Regeneration of Swindon's Central Area	CT1 Swindon: A Destination of Choice SC1 Swindon's Central Area	SD1: Sustainable Development Principles SC1: Swindon's Central Area	Policy framework superseded
DS2	Strategic Development Areas	NC2 Wichelstowe	NC1: Wichelstowe SDS2: The Sustainable Development Strategy	Designation and policy framework superseded
DS3	Commonhead	NC3 Commonhead	NC2: Commonhead	Policy framework superseded

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Local Plan Policy	Issue	Core Strategy Policy (Revised Proposed Submission, 2011)	Local Plan Policy (Pre-Submission Draft, 2012)	Comment
DS4	Master Plan/Framework Plans	NC1 New Communities	NC1: Wichelstowe NC2: Commonhead NC3: Eastern Villages NC4: Tadpole Farm NC5: Kingsdown	Policy framework superseded
DS5	Hierarchy of Rural Settlements	DS1 Development Strategy RA1 Highworth and Wroughton	SDS2: The Sustainable Development Strategy RA1: Highworth RA2: Wroughton RA3: South Marston	Designation and policy framework superseded
DS6	Standards of Design and Amenity	DMP1 High Quality Design DMP2 Energy & Sustainable Construction	DE1: High Quality Design DE2: Sustainable Construction	Superseded
DS7	Urban Design	DMP1 High Quality Design	DE1: High Quality Design SD1: Sustainable development Principles	Superseded
DS8	Infrastructure Needs Resulting from Development	DMP4 Infrastructure needs arising from development	IN1: Infrastructure Provision	Superseded
DS9	Density of Development	CT2 Benefiting from Economic Growth	HA1: Mix, Types and Density DE1: high quality design	Superseded

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The Built and Natural Environment				
ENV1	Development affecting Conservation Areas	CT3 Safeguarding our environment DMP14 Heritage Assets	EN1: Green Infrastructure Network EN2: Community Forest EN3: Open Space EN5: Landscape EN10: Heritage assets	Superseded
ENV2	Development affecting Listed Buildings	CT3 Safeguarding our environment DMP14 Heritage Assets	EN10: Heritage Assets EC4: Conversion of Buildings to employment in the Countryside	Superseded
ENV3	Preservation of Buildings of Significant Local Interest	CT3 Safeguarding our environment DMP14 Heritage Assets	EN5: Landscape Character and Historical Landscape EN10: Heritage Assets	Superseded
ENV4	Protection of Historic Parks and Gardens	CT3 Safeguarding our environment DMP14 Heritage Assets	EN3: Open Space EN5: Landscape Character and Historical Landscape EN10: Heritage Assets	Superseded
ENV5	Development Affecting the Borough's Most Significant Archaeological Remains	CT3 Safeguarding our environment DMP14 Heritage Assets	EN5: Landscape Character and Historical Landscape EN10: Heritage Assets EN11: Canals	Superseded
ENV6	Archaeological Remains of Lesser Importance	CT3 Safeguarding our environment DMP14 Heritage Assets	EN5: Landscape Character and Historic Landscape EN10: Heritage Assets	Superseded
ENV7	Public Art	DMP4 Infrastructure needs arising from development	CM4: Maintaining and Enhancing Community Facilities	Superseded

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ENV8	Access for All	DMP1 High Quality Design	DE1: High quality design SC1: Swindon's Central area	Superseded
ENV9	Development in the Countryside	RA3 Small settlements and the countryside	LN1: Neighbourhood Planning RA1: Highworth RA2: Wroughton RA3: South Marston	Superseded
ENV10	Landscape Character Protection	CT3 Safeguarding our environment RA3 Small settlements and the countryside DMP11 Green Infrastructure	LN1: Neighbourhood Planning EN1; Green Infrastructure Network EN5: Landscape character and Historical Landscape	Superseded
ENV11	North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural beauty	DMP11 Green Infrastructure	EN1; Green Infrastructure Network EN5: Landscape character and Historical Landscape	Superseded
ENV12	Landscape Setting to Highworth	CT3 Safeguarding our environment, RA1 Highworth & Wroughton, DMP11 Green Infrastructure	SC1: Swindon's Existing Urban Communities RA1: Highworth	Superseded
ENV17	Biodiversity – Local Sites	DMP11 Green Infrastructure	EN1: Green Infrastructure Network EN4; Biodiversity and Geodiversity	Superseded
ENV18	Habitat and Species Protection	DMP11 Green Infrastructure	EN4; Biodiversity and Geodiversity	Superseded
ENV19	Community Forest	DMP11 Green Infrastructure	EN2: Community Forest	Superseded

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ENV20	Existing Strategic Green Corridors	DMP11 Green Infrastructure	EN1: Green Infrastructure Network	Superseded
ENV21	Potential Strategic Green Corridors	DMP11 Green Infrastructure	EN1: Green Infrastructure Network	Superseded
ENV22	Ground and Surface Water Protection	DMP3 Flood Risk DMP11 Green Infrastructure	EN6: Flood Risk EN1: Green Infrastructure Network IN2: Water supply and waste water	Superseded
ENV24	Riparian and Other Buffer Zones	DMP11 Green Infrastructure	EN1: Green Infrastructure Network	Superseded

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Employment					
E1	A Sequential Approach to Office Development	CT2 Benefiting from Economic Growth DMP6 Employment development	EC1; Economic Growth through Existing Business and Inward Investment EC2: Employment Land and Premises classes	Superseded	
E2	Large Inward Investment Proposals	CT2 Benefiting from Economic growth		Superseded	
E3	Employment Land Supply	CT2 Benefiting from Economic Growth	EC1; Economic Growth through Existing Business and Inward Investment EC2: Employment Land and Premises classes	Designation and policy framework superseded	
E4	Key Employment Areas	DMP5 Key Employment Sites	EC2: Employment Land and Premises classes	Designation and policy framework superseded	
E6	Keypoint	DMP5 Key Employment Sites	EC1; Economic Growth through Existing Business and Inward Investment EC2: Employment land and Premises	Designation and policy framework superseded	
E7	Employment - Land at Southern Development Area and Land at Commonhead	NC2 Wichelstowe NC3 Commonhead	NC1: Wichelstowe NC2: Commonhead	Designation and policy framework superseded	
E8	Triangle Site	DMP5 Key Employment Sites	EC2: Employment land and Premises	Designation and policy framework superseded	

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E9	Land to the east of the A419 and south of the A420	NC4 Eastern Villages	NC3: Eastern Villages	Designation and policy framework superseded
E10	Pipers Way & Groundwell	DMP5 Key Employment Sites	EC2: Employment land and Premises	Designation and policy framework superseded
E11	Employment at rural settlements	RA3 Small Settlements and the Countryside	EC4: Conversions of Buildings to Employment Use in the Countryside	Superseded
E12	Conversion of Buildings to Employment use in the Countryside	RA3 Small Settlements and the Countryside	EC4: Conversions of Buildings to Employment Use in the Countryside	Superseded
E13	Farm Diversification	RA3 Small Settlements and the Countryside	EC5: Farm Diversification	Superseded

Housing					
H1	Housing Land Provision	CT2 Benefiting from Economic Growth	HA2: Affordable Housing SD2: The Sustainable development strategy	Superseded	
H3	Strategic Housing Allocation and land at Commonhead	CT2 Benefiting from Economic Growth	HA2: Affordable Housing SD2: The Sustainable development strategy NC2: Commonhead	Designation and policy framework superseded	
H4	Residential Development – Phasing and Monitoring	DS1 Development Strategy	HA1: Mix, Types and Density SD2: The Sustainable development strategy NC2: Commonhead	Policy framework superseded	
H5	Residential Development in Swindon and the Primary Rural Settlements	CT2 Benefiting from Economic Growth DMP1 High Quality Design	SC1: Swindon's Central area SC2: Swindon's existing urban communities RA1: Highworth RA2: Wroughton RA3: South Marston	Policy framework superseded	
H6	Residential Development in the Secondary Rural Settlements	CT2 Benefiting from Economic Growth RA3 Small Settlements and the Countryside	HA5: Rural exception sites SD2: sustainable development strategy	Policy framework superseded	
H7	Agricultural Workers Dwellings	RA3 Small settlements in the countryside	HA7: Conversion of buildings to residential use in the countryside HA6: Agricultural workers dwellings	Policy framework superseded	

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H8	Conversions to Residential Use in the Countryside	RA3 Small settlements in the countryside	HA7: Conversion of buildings to residential use in the countryside	Policy framework superseded
H9	Rural Housing Exceptions	RA3 Small settlements in the countryside	HA5: Rural exception sites	Policy framework superseded
H10	The Provision of Affordable Housing in Larger Development Sites	CT2 Benefiting from Economic Growth DMP7 Affordable Homes and Wheelchair Accessible Housing	HA2: Affordable Housing HA3: Wheelchair Accessible Housing	Superseded
H11	Provision for Disabled People in New Housing Developments	DMP7 Affordable Homes and Wheelchair Accessible Housing	HA3: Wheelchair Accessible Housing	Superseded
H12	Subdivision of Dwellings	DMP8 Subdivision and Houses in Multiple Occupation	HA4: Subdivision of Housing/Housing in Multiple Occupation	Superseded
H13	Conversion of Upper Floors to Residential Accommodation	DMP1 High Quality Design	DE1: High quality design	Superseded
H14	Conversion or Redevelopment of Office Space to Residential Accommodation	DMP1 High Quality Design	DE1: High Quality Design	Superseded
H15	Residential Extensions	DMP1 High Quality Design	DE1: High Quality Design	Superseded
H16	Sites for Gypsies	CT2 Benefiting from Economic Growth DMP1 High Quality Design	HA8: Gypsies, Travellers, and Travelling Showpeople Pitches and Sites	Policy framework superseded

Shopping and Associated Uses				
S1	New retail Floorspace	SC1 Swindon's Central Area DMP13 Centres	SC1: Swindon's Central Areas EC3: The role of the centre	Policy framework superseded
S4	Cavendish Square	SC4 East Swindon Communities DMP13 Centres	SC2: Swindon's Existing Urban Communities	Policy framework superseded
S5	Gorse Hill Core Area	SC7 North Central Swindon Communities DMP13 Centres	SC2: Swindon's Existing Urban Communities SC1: Swindon's Central Areas	Policy framework superseded
S6	Gorse Hill Fringe Area	SC7 North Central Swindon Communities DMP13 Centres	SC2: Swindon's Existing Urban Communities SC1: Swindon's Central Areas	Policy framework superseded
S7	West Swindon	SC9 West Swindon Communities DMP13 Centres	SC2: Swindon's Existing Urban Communities	Policy framework superseded
S8	Northern Orbital Centre	SC6 North Swindon Communities DMP13 Centres	EC3: The role of the centre SC2: Swindon's existing urban communities	Policy framework superseded
S9	Southern Development Area Retail	NC2 Wichelstowe DMP13 Centres	NC1: Wichelstowe SC1: Swindon's Central Areas	Policy framework superseded
S10	Highworth	RA1 Highworth and Wroughton DMP13 Centres	RA1: Highworth RA2: Wroughton SC1: Swindon's Central Areas	Policy framework superseded
S11	Wroughton	RA1 Highworth and Wroughton DMP13 Centres	RA1: Highworth RA2: Wroughton SC1: Swindon's Central Areas	Policy framework superseded

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S12	Major Local Centres	DMP13 Centres	SC1: Swindon's Central Area EC3: The role of the centre	Designation and policy framework superseded
S13	Minor Local Centres	DMP13 Centres	SC1: Swindon's Central Area EC3: The role of the centre	Designation and policy framework superseded
S14	Single Small Shops	DMP13 Centres	SC1: Swindon's Central Area EC3: The role of the centre	Superseded
S15	Temporary Retail Development	DMP13 Centres	SC1: Swindon's Central Area EC3: The role of the centre	Superseded
S16	Hot Food Vending Vehicles	DMP1 High Quality Design DMP10 Transport Requirements	EC3: The role of the centre	Superseded

Sport, Recreation Leisure and Tourism				
R1	New or Improved Recreation, Sport and Leisure Facilities	CT4 Healthy, safe and supportive communities DS1 Development Strategy	CM2: Active & Healthy Lifestyles CM4: Maintaining and Enhancing Community facilities	Designation and policy framework superseded
R2	Visitor Attractions	DS1 Development Strategy RA3 Small Settlements in the Countryside	CM2: Active and healthy lifestyles EC3: The role of centres	Designation and policy framework superseded
R4	Protection of Recreational Open Space	DMP11 Green Infrastructure	EN3: Open Space	Superseded
R5	Provision of Open Space in Strategic Development Areas and at Commonhead	NC2 Wichelstowe NC3 Commonhead NC4 Proposed Eastern Villages NC5 Tadpole Farm DMP11 Green Infrastructure	NC1:Wichelstowe NC2 Commonhead NC3:Eastern Villages NC4: Tadpole Farm EN1: Green Infrastructure Network	Superseded
R6	Provision of Open Space Outside the Strategic Development Areas	DMP11 Green Infrastructure	EN1: Green Infrastructure Network	Superseded
R9	Outdoor Recreation and Holiday Accommodation	RA3 Small settlements in the countryside DMP1 High Quality Design DMP10 Transport Requirements	CM2: Active and Healthy Lifestyle. SD2: The sustainable development strategy.	Superseded

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R10	Canals	SC1 Swindon's Central Area NC2 Wichelstowe NC4 Proposed Eastern Village	SC1: Swindon's Central Area NC1: Wichelstowe NC3: Eastern Villages EN11: Canal	Superseded
R12	Hotels and Other Serviced Accommodation	DS1 Development Strategy DMP1 High Quality Design DMP14 Heritage Assets	EC3: The role of centre	Designation and policy framework superseded

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Community Facilities and Utilities Provision				
CF1	Local Health Services	CT4 Healthy, safe and supportive communities DMP12: Community Facilities	CM2: Active & Healthy Lifestyles CM4: Maintaining and Enhancing Community Facilities	Superseded
CF2	Premises for Community, Ethnic and Religious Needs	CT4 Healthy, safe and supportive communities DMP12: Community Facilities	CM3 Integrating facilities and delivering services CM4: Maintaining and Enhancing Community Facilities	Superseded
CF3	Premises for Criminal Justice Agencies	CT4 Healthy, safe and supportive communities	SD2: The sustainable development strategy	Policy Framework Superseded
CF5	Cavendish Square	SC4 East Swindon Communities DMP12: Community Facilities DMP13 Centres	CM4: Maintaining and Enhancing Community Facilities SC1: Swindon's Central Area	Superseded
CF6	Loss of Established Community Facilities	CT4 Healthy, safe and supportive communities DMP12: Community Facilities	CM2: Active & Healthy Lifestyles CM4: Maintaining and Enhancing Community Facilities	Superseded
CF8	Power Lines and Overhead Cables	DMP1 High Quality Design	DE1: High Quality Design	Superseded
CF9	High Voltage Power Lines	DMP1 High Quality Design	DE1: High Quality Design	Superseded
CF10	Telecommunications	DMP1 High Quality Design	DE1: High Quality Design IN3: ICT and Telecommunications	Superseded

CF11	Renewable Energy Development	DMP1 High Quality Design DMP2 Energy and Sustainable Construction	DE1: High Quality Design IN4: Low Carbon and Renewable Energy	Superseded
CF12	Wind Turbine Development	DMP1 High Quality Design DMP2 Energy and Sustainable Construction	DE1: High Quality Design IN4: Low carbon and renewable Energy	Superseded
CF13	Water Supply and Sewerage Infrastructure	CT3 Safeguarding our Environment DMP1 High Quality Design	IN2: Water Supply and Waste Water	Superseded

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Transport				
T1	Transport Requirements of Development	DMP1 High Quality Design DMP10 Transport Requirements	DE1: High Quality Design TR1: Sustainable Transport Networks TR2: Transport and Development	Superseded
T2	Provision of Bus Travel	CT7 Keeping Swindon Moving DMP4 Infrastructure Needs Arising from Development DMP10 Transport Requirements	TR1: Sustainable Transport Networks TR2: Transport and Development	Superseded
T3	Protection of Proposed Bus Lanes or Other Priority Measures	DMP1 High Quality Design DMP10 Transport Requirements	DE1: High Quality Design TR1: Sustainable Transport Networks	Superseded
T4	Park and Ride	CT7 Keeping Swindon Moving NC2 Wichelstowe NC4 Eastern Villages	TR1: Sustainable Transport Networks	Superseded
T5	Access by Foot and Cycle	DMP1 High Quality Design DMP10 Transport Requirements	DE1: High Quality Design TR1: Sustainable Transport Networks	Superseded
T6	Protection of Existing and Proposed Cycle Network	DMP11 Green Infrastructure	EN1: Green Infrastructure Network	Superseded
T7	National Trails	DMP11 Green Infrastructure	EN1: Green Infrastructure Network	Superseded
T8	Protection of Rights of Way	DMP11 Green Infrastructure	EN1: Green Infrastructure Network	Superseded

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T12	Other Road Schemes	CT7 Keeping Swindon Moving NC2 Wichelstowe	TR1: Sustainable Transport Networks NC1: Wichelstowe	Superseded
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Central Area Action Plan Policies proposed to be superseded by the Local Plan

Central Area Action Plan	Issues	Emerging Local Plan Policy (Pre-submission – proposed to replace Central Area Action Plan)	Comment
CAAP4	Canal	SC1: Swindon's Central Area	Superseded by Policy SC1: Swindon's Central Area
CAAP17	North Star	SC1: Swindon's Central Area	Superseded by Policy SC1: Swindon's Central Area

Appendix 2

Testing the compliance of the Swindon Borough Adopted Local Plan (2011) “saved policies” against the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Requirements

The Swindon Borough Local Plan 2011 “saved policies” have been assessed according to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Policies assessed as ‘green’ fulfil NPPF requirements and can be given due weight, policies assessed as ‘amber’ also accord with the NPPF whilst ‘red’ demonstrates a significant gap between the policy and the requirements of the NPPF.

Key	
Gap / conflict? (Y/N)	
	Possible gap in meeting NPPF requirement, conflict with NPPF or issue where plan is silent, which will need to be addressed in the emerging Local Plan.
	The policy could be ‘lifted’ for use (in its current form or amended) in the emerging Local Plan.
	No gaps identified and plan meets NPPF requirement adequately.

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Local Plan Policy	Adopted Local Plan 2011 'saved policies'	NPPF Compliance
DS1	Urban Concentration of Development	
DS1A	The Regeneration of Swindon's Central Area	
DS2	Strategic Development Areas	
DS3	Commonhead	
DS4	Master Plan/Framework Plans	
DS5	Hierarchy of Rural Settlements	
DS6	Standards of Design and Amenity	
DS7	Urban Design	
DS8	Infrastructure Needs Resulting from Development	
DS9	Density of Development	
ENV1	Development affecting Conservation Areas	
ENV2	Development affecting Listed Buildings	
ENV3	Preservation of Buildings of Significant Local Interest	

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Local Plan Policy	Adopted Local Plan 2011 'saved policies'	NPPF Compliance
ENV4	Protection of Historic Parks and Gardens	
ENV5	Development Affecting the Borough's Most Significant Archaeological Remains	
ENV6	Archaeological Remains of Lesser Importance	
ENV7	Public Art	
ENV8	Access for All	
ENV9	Development in the Countryside	
ENV10	Landscape Character Protection	
ENV11	North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural beauty	
ENV12	Landscape Setting to Highworth	
ENV17	Biodiversity – Local Sites	
ENV18	Habitat and Species Protection	
ENV19	Community Forest	
ENV20	Existing Strategic Green Corridors	
ENV21	Potential Strategic Green Corridors	
ENV22	Ground and Surface Water Protection	

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Local Plan Policy	Adopted Local Plan 2011 'saved policies'	NPPF Compliance
ENV24	Riparian and Other Buffer Zones	
E1	A Sequential Approach to Office Development	
E2	Large Inward Investment Proposals	
E3	Employment Land Supply	
E4	Key Employment Areas	
E5	Urban Area Sites	
E6	Keypoint	
E7	Employment - Land at Southern Development Area and Land at Commonhead	
E8	Triangle Site	
E9	Land to the east of the A419 and south of the A420	
E10	Pipers Way & Groundwell	
E11	Employment at rural settlements	
E12	Conversion of Buildings to Employment use in the Countryside	
E13	Farm Diversification	
H1	Housing Land Provision	
H2	Urban Non Strategic Housing Allocations	

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Local Plan Policy	Adopted Local Plan 2011 'saved policies'	NPPF Compliance
H3	Strategic Housing Allocation and land at Commonhead	
H4	Residential Development – Phasing and Monitoring	
H5	Residential Development in Swindon and the Primary Rural Settlements	
H6	Residential Development in the Secondary Rural Settlements	
H7	Agricultural Workers Dwellings	
H8	Conversions to Residential Use in the Countryside	
H9	Rural Housing Exceptions	
H10	The Provision of Affordable Housing in Larger Development Sites	
H11	Provision for Disabled People in New Housing Developments	
H12	Subdivision of Dwellings	
H13	Conversion of Upper Floors to Residential Accommodation	
H14	Conversion or Redevelopment of Office Space to Residential Accommodation	
H15	Residential Extensions	
H16	Sites for Gypsies	
S1	New retail Floorspace	

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Local Plan Policy	Adopted Local Plan 2011 'saved policies'	NPPF Compliance
S4	Cavendish Square	
S5	Gorse Hill Core Area	
S6	Gorse Hill Fringe Area	
S7	West Swindon	
S8	Northern Orbital Centre	
S9	Southern Development Area Retail	
S10	Highworth	
S11	Wroughton	
S12	Major Local Centres	
S13	Minor Local Centres	
S14	Single Small Shops	
S15	Temporary Retail Development	
S16	Hot Food Vending Vehicles	
R1	New or Improved Recreation, Sport and Leisure Facilities	
R2	Visitor Attractions	

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Local Plan Policy	Adopted Local Plan 2011 'saved policies'	NPPF Compliance
R3	Science Museum	
R4	Protection of Recreational Open Space	
R5	Provision of Open Space in Strategic Development Areas and at Commonhead	
R6	Provision of Open Space Outside the Strategic Development Areas	
R7	Open Space Provision in Blunsdon and Chiseldon	
R8	Land Safeguarded for Leisure Uses	
R9	Outdoor Recreation and Holiday Accommodation	
R10	Canals	
R11	Country Parks	
R12	Hotels and Other Serviced Accommodation	
CF1	Local Health Services	
CF2	Premises for Community, Ethnic and Religious Needs	
CF3	Premises for Criminal Justice Agencies	
CF4	Land Reservations for Education Use	
CF6	Loss of Established Community Facilities	

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Local Plan Policy	Adopted Local Plan 2011 'saved policies'	NPPF Compliance
CF8	Power Lines and Overhead Cables	
CF9	High Voltage Power Lines	
CF10	Telecommunications	
CF11	Renewable Energy Development	
CF12	Wind Turbine Development	
CF13	Water Supply and Sewerage Infrastructure	
T1	Transport Requirements of Development	
T2	Provision of Bus Travel	
T3	Protection of Proposed Bus Lanes or Other Priority Measures	
T4	Park and Ride	
T5	Access by Foot and Cycle	
T6	Protection of Existing and Proposed Cycle Network	
T7	National Trails	
T8	Protection of Rights of Way	
T9	Protection of Rail Freight Provision	

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Local Plan Policy	Adopted Local Plan 2011 'saved policies'	NPPF Compliance
T12	Other Road Schemes	

Appendix 3

Evidence Base Documents

Active Swindon – More people, more active, more often 2009-2015 (2009)
Big Arts Plan 2009-2011 (2009)
Community Place Shaping report
Community Risk Strategy, Wiltshire Fire & Rescue (2009)
Comparative Assessment of Potential Development Areas (2004)
Cultural and leisure strategy 2003-2013 (2003)
Cultural Strategy for Swindon 2010-2020
Delivery Excellence for Swindon Strategic Plan 2008-2013 (PCT, 2008)
East of Swindon Evidence Base Update (2011)
Economic testing of Swindon core strategy (2012)
EDA Transport Study, including work on South Marston (JMP Consultants, commissioned in partnership with the Highways Agency)
Environment agency flood risk modelling
Flood risk sequential testing of potential development areas (2012)
Gypsy and Travellers Accommodation Needs Assessment
Healthcare Impact Assessment 2006-2056 (2007)
Healthy Weight Strategy 2009-2011
Highworth (“Our Future Is In Our Hands) (2008)
Housing market assessment report (2006)
Index of Multiple Deprivation
Leisure Facilities Strategy for Swindon
Local transport plan (2009)
Local Transport Plan for Swindon (LTP2) 2006-2011)
Local Transport Plan for Swindon (LTP3) (2011 - 2026
National Planning Policy Framework (2011)
Network Rail Route Utilisation Strategy for the Great Western Mainline (2010)
North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Beauty Management Plan 2009-2014 (2009)
One Swindon
Policing Demand and Accommodation Requirements Business Case, Wiltshire Police
Policing Plan for Wiltshire 2011 – 2014
Preliminary flood risk assessment (2012)
Regeneration of Deprived Wards in Swindon Report
Regional Spatial Strategy for the South West 2026
Renaissance of Central Swindon Report (2003)
Retail Floor space Threshold (2012)
Retail and leisure study update (2007)
River Basin and Catchment management Plan
Rural Facilities Survey (2008)
Shaping Your Community
Showmen’s’ Guilds’ Model Standard Package for Sites (2007)
South Marston Village Strategy (2007)
Statement of Consultation
Strategic flood risk assessment (2008)

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Surface water management plan (2012)
Sustainable Neighborhoods Study (2009)
Swindon (Borough) Integrated Strategic Framework for Health
Swindon (Borough) Planning for Health and Community
Swindon and Wiltshire waste local plan (2012???)
Swindon Biodiversity Action Plan
Swindon Borough Core Strategy – Issues & Options Paper (2007)
Swindon Borough Core Strategy – Preferred Options Paper (2008)
Swindon Borough Core Strategy – Proposed Submission Document (2009)
Swindon Borough Core Strategy Diversity Impact Assessment (2009)
Swindon Borough Core Strategy Habitats Regulations Assessment Report (2009)
Swindon Borough Core Strategy Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening Report (2008)
Swindon Borough Economic Development Vision and Framework
Swindon Borough economic strategy (2012)
Swindon Employment Land Review (2007)
Swindon Borough Housing Needs Assessment (2006)
Swindon Borough Local Plan 2011
Swindon Borough Local Transport Plan
Swindon Borough Open Space Audit and Assessment Review (2011)
Swindon Borough Parking Strategy
Swindon School Place Planning Update (2011)
Swindon Borough Site Allocations Development Plan Document
Swindon Borough Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (2009)
Strategy for Major Sports Facilities Provision 2009-2026
Swindon borough sustainability appraisal scoping report
Swindon Children and Young People's Plan 2008-11
Swindon climate change action plan (2006)
Swindon core strategy rural issues paper (2009)
Swindon Design Guide (2006)
Swindon District Heating Feasibility Study (2011)
Swindon Eastern Development Area Framework (2009)
Swindon Eastern Development Canal Preferred Route (Wilts & Berks Canal Trust – 2012)
Swindon Economic and Housing Projections
Swindon energy framework (2012)
Swindon Green Infrastructure Strategy (2009)
Swindon Green Infrastructure Strategy Revision (2011)
Swindon Housing Market Assessment (2012)
Swindon joint strategic needs assessment (2009)
Swindon Library Strategy (2011)
Swindon Local Investment Plan
Swindon Market Area Housing Strategy (2012)
Swindon municipal water management strategy (2007)
Swindon Playing Pitch Strategy (2007)
Swindon Primary Care Trust Integrated Strategic Framework (2008)
Swindon Retail and Leisure Update (2007)
Swindon Retail Capacity Update (2009)
Swindon Retail Study (2009)
Swindon School Place Planning Study (2009)

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Swindon School Place Planning Study Update (2011)
Swindon Small Scale Urban Extensions Study (2008)
Swindon Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2008)
Swindon Sub-Region Housing Market Assessment (2006)
Swindon Sustainable Community Strategy: A Shared Vision for Swindon 2008-2030
Swindon Sustainable Development Policies in doc studies (2009)
Swindon Transport Strategy (2009)
Swindon Urban Fringe Action Plan
Swindon Water Cycle Study (phase 1) and phase 2
Swindon Workspace Strategy (2009)
Taylor Review of Rural Economy and Affordable Housing : Living Working Countryside (2008)
Thames Water resource 5 year plan (2010-2015)
Thames Water Resource Management Plan (2010-2035)
The Community Strategic Action Plan for Wroughton 2007-2017", prepared by V4W (Vision for Wroughton Group)
The rights of Way Improvement Plan
The strategic plan for accident reduction
UK Sustainable Development Strategy – Securing the Future (2005)
West of Swindon Study Update (January 2009) and west of Swindon update report (2012)
Wheel Chair Accessible Housing in New Developments (2012)
Wiltshire and Berkshire canal restoration study (2007)
Wiltshire and Swindon Gypsy and Travellers Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) (2006)
Wiltshire and Swindon Waste Core Strategy
Wiltshire and Swindon Workspace Strategy (2005)
Wiltshire fire and community risk strategy (2009-2011 update)
Wiltshire policy authority policing plan and strategy (2010)

Appendix 4

Open Space Standards

The standards for open space support Policy EN3 of the Swindon Borough Local Plan – Pre Submission Draft. They are also detailed in the Open Space Audit and Assessment (2011) which assesses the quantity, quality and accessibility of all public open space in the Borough.

Quantity

For the purposes of assessing the overall quantity of open space provision the standard of 3.2 hectares per 1000 population will be used as set out below:

Category of Open Space	Definition	Requirement
Children and Teenager's Play Areas	All equipped children's play areas, skateboard parks, outdoor basketball goals and similar facilities.	0.3 Hectares (0.75 Acres/1000 population)
Outdoor Sports Facilities	Includes all outdoor sports facilities whether naturally or artificially surfaced e.g. playing pitches, bowling greens and tennis courts.	1.6 Hectares (4 Acres/1000 population) of which 1.2 Hectares (3 acres/1000 population) is playing pitches
General Recreational Areas	All areas of public open space which have a significant recreational function but do not fall in the above categories e.g. parks and gardens, amenity areas, accessible wildlife areas.	1 Hectare (2.47 Acres/1000 population) of which 0.5 Ha should be suitable for children's informal play
Allotments	An area containing allotment plots which the occupier for the purpose of producing fruit or vegetables for consumption by individuals and family wholly or mainly cultivates. Allotments are defined more precisely by the Allotments Act 1922.	0.3 Hectares (0.75 acres/1000 population)

Types of Open Space Provision

The Council consider that a far reaching network of connected and multi-functional green spaces will make a key contribution to the quality of life for both existing and future communities in Swindon, as highlighted and defined below:

Children and Teenager's Play Areas

Local Equipped Area for Play (LEAP) - A LEAP is an area of open space specifically designated and laid out with features including equipment for children who are beginning to go out and play independently close to where they live, usually within 5 minutes walking time.

Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play (NEAP) - A NEAP is an area of open space specifically designated, laid out and equipped mainly for older children but with play opportunities for younger children as well.

Swindon Local Landscaped Area for Play (LLAP) - A LLAP is an area of open space designed for play by children and young people. It provides flexibility to consult with local communities to reflect community needs and aspirations in design, incorporating design for natural play, biodiversity and access for all, whilst considering maintenance requirements as an integral part of the design.

Outdoor Sport Facilities

Outdoor sports facilities for adults and children with natural or artificial surfaces. Typically this includes playing pitches, bowling greens, athletics tracks and tennis courts.

Playing pitches are further defined as areas formally laid out and maintained for organised sports (generally football, rugby, cricket or hockey). This includes clearance zones around the playing area.

Local Open Space (LOS)

These spaces are located within housing areas to serve the informal recreational needs of the immediate community and the play requirements of children. Local open spaces will have equipped play areas for children aged 2-6 (LEAP) and 6-14 (NEAP) and may contain multi-use games areas. They may also provide seating, paths, site information and associated landscape.

Major Open Spaces (MOS)

These spaces are designated principally for passive recreation serving recreational needs and providing connectivity to surrounding areas. May vary in size, shape and degree of formality and may be used to preserve and enhance retained landscape features such as woodlands, lakes or watercourses. MOS may contain more formal provisions, pitches or play areas as secondary uses.

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Quality

Type of Open Space Provision	Quality Standards
Children's and Teenager's Play Areas	NPFA Six Acre Standard - Locally Equipped Area for Play and Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play Swindon Local Landscaped Area for Play (LLAP) - Fields in Trust (FiT) 2008
Outdoor Sports Facilities	Local standards based on Sport England guidance
General Recreational Areas	Local standard
Allotments	Local standard

Accessibility

Type of Open Space	Accessibility
Local Equipped Area for Play (LEAP)	250 metres (approx. 5 Minutes walking time)
Swindon Local Landscaped Area for Play (LLAP)	250 metres (approx. 5 Minutes walking time)
Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play (NEAP)	500 metres (approx. 15 Minutes walking time)
Outdoor Sports Facilities	600 metres for junior pitches (15 Minutes walking time) 20 Minute drive time for adult sports facilities.
Local Open Spaces	500 metres
Major Open Spaces 2 to 20 Hectares Greater than 20 Ha	2 Km 5 Km
Allotments	600 metres

Appendix 5: Green Infrastructure Typologies¹

The Green Infrastructure Typologies support Policy EN1 of the Swindon Borough Local Plan – Pre Submission Draft.

Green infrastructure sites	Example	Information source	Suggested consultees
Biodiversity sites – sites of national and local importance together with their associated species.	Coate Water, Sevenfields	Swindon Local Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Natural England notifications (available on line) Wiltshire and Swindon Biological Records Centre.	SBC Natural England Environment Agency Wiltshire Wildlife Trust Forestry Commission
Country parks and town parks	Town Gardens, Queens Park.	Swindon Central Area Action Plan (published 2009) Swindon Open Space Audit and Assessment.	SBC
Semi-natural greenspaces (including woodlands and water bodies)	Shaw Forest Park, Rivermead,	Swindon Open Space Audit and Assessment	SBC Wiltshire Wildlife Trust Environment Agency
Cemeteries	Radnor Street LNR		SBC
Areas of archaeological and heritage landscape importance.	Groundwell Ridge, Barbury Castle	Wiltshire Sites and Monuments Records (SMR/HER)	SBC
Trees and hedgerows (Where affected by development ²)			SBC
Green roofs	Toothill Primary School		SBC
<i>(Open spaces)</i>			
Outdoor sports facilities	Borough-wide (Could include school playing	Swindon Open Space Audit and Assessment	SBC

¹ This list includes the main green infrastructure typologies, some of which overlap and interrelate. However, the list is not exhaustive.

² This includes trees and hedgerows, (whether subject to Statutory Protection or not), that are on or adjacent to potential development sites and that could be influenced by development proposals.

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	fields)		
General recreational areas	Borough-wide	Swindon Open Space Audit and Assessment	SBC
Allotments		Swindon Open Space Audit and Assessment	SBC
Children's play areas	Borough-wide	Swindon Open Space Audit and Assessment	SBC
Green Infrastructure Linear Features	Example	Information source	Suggested consultees
Rights of way and other designated cycle/pedestrian routes including long distance trails.	Sustrans Route 45, Thames Path, Ridgeway	Rights of Way definitive maps. National Trail Management Plans. National Cycle network. (Sustrans)	SBC
Canal network	North Wilts Canal, Wilts and Berks Canal	Swindon Central Area Action Plan (published 2009)	SBC Wilts and Berks Canal Trust
Water courses and associated floodplains	River Ray, River Cole		SBC Environment Agency
Linear green routes	Richard Jeffries Parkway, River Ray Parkway.		SBC
Green Infrastructure Networks		Information source	Suggested consultees
Strategic, sub-regional, and local GI networks.		Swindon Green Infrastructure Strategy	SBC
Green spine		Swindon Central Area Action Plan (published 2009)	SBC
Green Infrastructure Setting		Information source	Suggested consultees
North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.		Swindon Borough Core Strategy North Wessex Downs AONB Management Plan	SBC Natural England
Landscape character		Green Infrastructure Supplementary Planning Document	SBC Natural England
Great Western			SBC

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Community Forest		Forest Plan	Community Forest
Cotswold Water Park		Cotswold Water Park Strategy Review and Implementation (Masterplan) Cotswold Water Biodiversity Action Plan 2007-2016	Cotswold Water Park Trust Wiltshire Council
National Trails: Thames and Ridgeway		National Trails Management Plans	National Trails

Appendix 6: Housing Trajectory

	2011/ 12	2012/ 13	2013/ 14	2014/ 15	2015/ 16	2016/ 17	2017/ 18	2018/ 19	2019/ 20	2020/ 21	2021/ 22	2022/ 23	2023/ 24	2024/ 25	2025/ 26	Total 2006-26
Swindon Urban (incl pdl)	590	500	500	500	400	350	200	200	200	200	200	200	150	150	160	4500
Northern Development Area	207	250	132													589
Wichelstowe	64	261	275	300	280	300	300	320	350	350	350	350	300	250	14	4064
Commonhead			50	100	125	125	125	125	130	70	40					890
Tadpole Farm			50	150	150	200	200	200	200	200	180	120	45			1695
East of the A419				150	250	600	700	750	800	800	800	800	800	800	750	8000
Kingsdown				50	150	200	200	200	200	200	200	150	100			1650
Total Completions at Swindon (incl in Wilts)	861	1011	1007	1250	1355	1775	1725	1795	1880	1820	1770	1620	1395	1200	924	21388
Rural SBC	28	30	30	30	50	50	75	75	42	30	30	30	30	30	30	590
Total Completions Swindon Borough	889	1041	1037	1280	1405	1825	1800	1870	1922	1850	1800	1650	1425	1230	954	21978

The Trajectory includes an allowance for 5% brought forward from the end of the plan period to the first 5-years in line with the National Planning Policy Framework

Appendix 7: Monitoring Indicators

Indicator
Proportion of development for town centre uses in town centre
Development of a university
Number and proportion of new dwelling completions reaching good, very good, average and poor ratings against the Building for Life criteria
Number and proportion of non-residential developments reaching very good, good, average and poor ratings against the Swindon Design Toolkit
Proportion of completed development achieving current adopted standards for sustainable construction
Amount of floorspace developed for employment by type and location
Amount of floorspace developed for employment on previously developed land
Area of land developed for employment
Employment land availability by type
Loss of employment land to other uses by quality of site
Business registrations and de-registrations
Employment by occupation
Annual dwelling completions
Dwellings completed at <30dph, 30-50dph and >50 dph by location (Borough/Central Area/Rural)
Number of new dwellings completed at a similar density to the surrounding area
Number and proportion of new build completions on housing sites scoring highly for the Environment and Community section of the Building for Life criteria
Dwelling completions by type and size (number of bedrooms)
Affordable dwelling completions as a proportion of all dwelling completions on qualifying sites
Proportion of dwelling completions within 30 minutes public transport time of facilities (GP, Primary School, Secondary School, Employment Area, Retail Area)
Proportion of the population (19-64 for males and 19-59 for females) that are qualified to at least level 3 or higher
GVA (relative to SW and UK)
Development of Design Codes/Supplementary Planning Document's for Growth Areas

Swindon Borough Local Plan – Pre-Submission Draft

Indicator
Change in areas of biodiversity importance including areas designated for their intrinsic environmental value
Change in area of open space
Renewable energy capacity installed (by type) (measured in kW)
Substantial loss of sites of archaeological importance including Scheduled Monuments
Proportion of conservation areas with an up to date appraisal
Per capita reduction in CO ₂ emissions in Local Authority area
Applications approved contrary to the advice of the environment agency on flood defence or water quality grounds
Number and proportion of new build completions on housing sites scoring highly for the Design and Construction section of the Building for Life criteria
Net change in community facilities (including health, fire, police, faith and other community facilities)
Net change in floorspace (internal and external) of sports centres
Change in area of open space
Applications approved against the advice of the police liaison officer
The proportion of fire incidents attended by Wiltshire FRS where the cause is accidental and where the fire is confined to the room of origin
Affordable housing completions as a proportion of all housing completions on qualifying sites
Net additional pitches (gypsy and traveller)
Proportion of dwelling completions within 30 minutes public transport time of facilities (GP, Primary School, Secondary School, Employment Area, Retail Area)
Percentage of bus stops which meet standards for access for disabled people
Obesity of children in year 6
Number and proportion of new build completions on housing sites scoring highly for the Streets, Parking and Pedestrianisation section of the Building for Life criteria
Proportion of the population (19-64 for males and 19-59 for females) that are qualified to at least level 3 or higher
The percentage of young people aged 16 to 18 not in education, training or employment
Achievement of children at Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4

Swindon Borough Local Plan – Pre-Submission Draft

Indicator
The number of schools where more than 30% of pupils are achieving less than their peers at Key Stage 4
Number of community plans
Total killed and seriously injured casualties (roads)
Total slight casualties (roads)
Children killed or seriously injured in road traffic accidents
Level of air quality
Local bus passenger journeys originating in the authority area
Bus services running on time
Access to services and facilities by public transport, walking and cycling
Working age people with access to employment by public transport (and other specified modes)
Average journey time per mile during the morning peak.
Per capita reduction in CO ₂ emissions in Local Authority area
Number and proportion of new build completions on housing sites scoring highly for the Streets, Parking and Pedestrianisation section of the Building for Life criteria
Number and proportion of new build completions on housing sites scoring highly for the Environment and Community section of the Building for Life criteria
Number and proportion of new build completions on housing sites scoring highly for the Character section of the Building for Life criteria

Appendix 8: Glossary of Terms

Affordable Housing: Social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Affordable housing should include provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision.

- **Social rented housing** is owned by local authorities and private registered providers (as defined in section 80 of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008), for which guideline target rents are determined through the national rent regime. It may also be owned by other persons and provided under equivalent rental arrangements to the above, as agreed with the local authority or with the Homes and Communities Agency.
- **Affordable rented housing** is let by local authorities or private registered providers of social housing to households who are eligible for social rented housing.
- **Affordable Rent** is subject to rent controls that require a rent of no more than 80% of the local market rent (including service charges, where applicable).
- **Intermediate housing** is homes for sale and rent provided at a cost above social rent, but below market levels subject to the criteria in the Affordable Housing definition above. These can include shared equity (shared ownership and equity loans), other low cost homes for sale and intermediate rent, but not affordable rented housing.

The National Planning Policy Framework states that homes that do not meet the above definition of affordable housing, such as “low cost market” housing, may not be considered as affordable housing for planning purposes.

Annual Monitoring Report: the annual assessment of the implementation of the Local Development Scheme and the extent to which policies in Local Development Documents are being successfully implemented.

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB): is a landscape whose distinctive character and natural beauty are so outstanding that it is in the nation's interest to safeguard them. Created by the legislation of the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act of 1949, AONBs represent 18% of the countryside in England and Wales.

B Class Uses: The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) specifies various classes of use for buildings and land. Within each class changes of use for another purpose within the same class do not require planning permission. The B use classes comprise.

- **B1** - Business includes offices, research and development premises and light industry. Light industry can be carried out in a residential area without adverse environmental effects from noise, vibration, smell, fumes, smoke, soot, ash,

dust or grit.

- **B2** - General Industry includes any industrial use not covered by B1.
- **B8** - Storage and Distribution covers warehousing for distribution. It does not cover retail warehousing.

BREEAM Standard: BREEAM measures the overall environmental impact of a development project on a scale of pass, good, very good, and excellent. It serves as both an assessment tool and an accreditation scheme. Building standards for offices, industrial developments and supermarkets are rated independently by trained assessors. For more detail refer to the draft Swindon Sustainable Building Design and Construction Draft Supplementary Planning Document.

Brownfield Development: The redevelopment of land that possesses at least one of the following five characteristics: previously developed land that is now empty; vacant buildings; derelict land and buildings; other previously developed land or buildings, currently in use, allocated for development in the adopted plan or having planning permission for housing; other previously developed land or buildings where it is known there is potential for redevelopment.

Swindon Central Area Action Plan: Provides a planning framework that will guide the future development of Central Swindon. It contains overarching strategic objectives for development in terms of high quality design, public realm, sustainability and transport and movement and also includes site-specific policies. All planning applications submitted to the Council within Central Swindon will be assessed against the policy framework contained within the Action Plan.

Community Cohesion: The concept of community cohesion was investigated by the Cattle Report in 2001, and is linked to other concepts such as inclusion and exclusion, social capital and differentiation, community and neighbourhood. An action guide published by the Local Government Association in 2004 identifies a cohesive community as one where:

- There is a common vision and a sense of belonging for all communities;
- The diversity of people's different backgrounds and circumstances is appreciated and positively valued;
- Those from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities; and
- Strong and positive relationships are being developed between people from different backgrounds and circumstances in the workplace, in schools, and within neighbourhoods.

How spatial planning can assist in achieving community cohesion is one of the challenges for the Core Strategy, and other Development Plan Documents, to resolve.

Community Strategy: Local authorities are required under the Local Government Act 2000 to prepare a Strategy with the aim of improving the social, environmental and economic well being of their areas.

County Wildlife Sites: are non-statutory designations used to identify high quality wildlife habitats in a county context. Together with statutory sites such as Sites of

Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), County Wildlife Sites form an important part of the wildlife resource in the wider countryside.

Development Management Policy: The framework that determines the process through which the Council decides whether a proposal for development should be granted planning permission. This takes into account the development plan and any other material considerations.

Development Plan Documents: those documents that form the Development Plan for the area, contained within its Local Development Framework, and are subject to independent examination (including a Local Plan, Site Specific Allocations, Action Area Plans and Development Control Policies).

District Heating Network: a system for distributing heat, which is generated in a local centralised location for residential and commercial heating requirements.

Diversity Impact Assessment (DIA): A thorough and systematic analysis of an existing or proposed policy. Its aim is to obtain a profile of how the policy affects different equalities groups - usually these are defined by areas of legislation: age, disability, gender, race, religion & belief and sexual orientation.

Front-loading: the principle of carrying out extensive public and stakeholder consultations from the beginning of the process of producing a Development Plan Document. This benefits from enabling people's visions to be incorporated into the document's vision, and elicits early views about the possible issues and strategies for the future. Most differences can be identified and addressed from the beginning, thereby helping to reduce the number of objections later in the process ('back-loading').

Green Infrastructure: The strategic network of accessible, multifunctional sites (including parks, woodland, informal open spaces, nature reserves and historic sites) as well as linkages (such as river corridors and floodplains, wildlife corridors and greenways). These contribute to people's well-being, and together comprise a coherent managed resource responsive to evolving conditions.

Green Roof: Green roofs are vegetated layers that sit on top of the conventional roof surfaces of a building. Intensive green roofs are composed of relatively deep substrates and can therefore support a wide range of plant types: trees and shrubs as well as perennials, grasses and annuals. Extensive green roofs are composed of lightweight layers of free-draining material that support low growing, tough drought-resistant vegetation.

Gross Value Added (GVA): this measures the contribution to the economy of each individual producer, industry or sector.

Gypsy and Travellers: Planning Circular 01/2006 (Planning for Gypsy and Caravan Sites) defines: "Persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family's dependants' educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently, but excluding members of an organised group of travelling show people or circus people travelling together as such"

Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA): **European Directive 92/43/EEC** (the Habitats Directive) requires that any plan or project, not directly connected with or

necessary to the management of a designated habitats site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, should be subject to an assessment of its implications for the site. This applies to DPDs and SPDs.

Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO): A house which is occupied by three or more unrelated persons, who do not form a single household. This definition is supported by Sections 254, 257 and 258 of the Housing Act 2004.

Independent Examination: The local planning authority must submit all Development Plan Documents for Independent Examination that is held in public by an Inspector from the Planning Inspectorate. The report produced by the Inspector is binding on the Council.

Inclusive Design: The use of design features to increase accessibility to buildings by all, regardless of age or disability. For example design features and navigational aids can help people with sensory impairment to easily move around with confidence, and housing can be made more accessible by including design features that enable independent living.

Intermediate Housing: See **Affordable Housing**

Lifetime Homes: A home that incorporates a range of criteria designed to enhance accessibility and allow easy adaptation, and is appropriate for, and accessible to, everyone, not just those with limited mobility.

Local Development Document: The collective term for Development Plan Documents, Supplementary Planning Documents and the Statement of Community Involvement.

Local Development Framework: The name for the portfolio of Local Development Documents, consisting of Development Plan Documents, Supplementary Planning Documents, a Statement of Community Involvement, the Local Development Scheme and Annual Monitoring Reports, which collectively will replace the Local Plan and provide the framework for delivering the spatial strategy for the Borough.

Local Development Scheme: The programme for preparing Local Development Documents.

Localism Act: A statute passed in 2011 which aims to devolve power from central government to local government and communities.

Local Nature Reserves (LNR): Are for both people and wildlife. They are places with wildlife or geological features that are of special interest locally. They offer people special opportunities to study or learn about nature or simply to enjoy it.

Local Strategic Partnership: The partnership of stakeholders (the Swindon Strategic Partnership) bringing together locally the public, private, voluntary and community sectors given responsibility for producing the Community Strategy within Swindon.

Local Transport Plan: 5-year strategy for the development of local, integrated transport, supported by a programme of transport improvements. It is used to bid to Government for funding transport improvements.

Major Development: For dwellings, a major development is one where the number of dwellings to be constructed is 10 or more. A site area of 0.5 hectares or more should be used as the definition of a major development when the number of dwellings to be built is not given in the application. In all other cases, a major development is one where the site area is 1 hectare or more, or where the floorspace to be constructed is 1000 square metres or more.

MWe: This is an abbreviation for Megawatt (electric) and is used as the unit of electrical power produced by a generator. In a thermal reactor this is about one-third of the thermal power available.

National Planning Policy Framework: A national planning policy document released in March 2012 which replaced previous national planning guidance contained in PPG's and PPS's

Natura 2000 Sites: In May 1992 European Union governments adopted legislation designed to protect the most seriously threatened habitats and species across Europe. This legislation is called the Habitats Directive and complements the Birds Directive adopted in 1979. At the heart of both these Directives is the creation of a network of sites called Natura 2000. The Birds Directive requires the establishment of Special Protection Areas (SPAs) for birds. The Habitats Directive similarly requires Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) to be designated for other species, and for habitats. Together, SPAs and SACs make up the Natura 2000 series.

A Neighbourhood Development Plan: Is a new planning tool to help empower communities to shape and manage development in their local areas. Communities will be able to develop planning policies that will become part of the planning framework for their area and grant planning permission for certain types of new development.

Neighbourhood Planning: Neighbourhood planning is allowing the people who know about and care for an area plan for it. It is led by the residential and business community, not the council, and is about building neighbourhoods – not stopping growth. Neighbourhood planning is optional but if adopted by the Council, neighbourhood plans and orders will have weight becoming part of the plan making framework for the area.

A Neighbourhood Development Order: Enables the community to grant planning permission for the development it wishes to see.

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004: is the primary legislation for the development plan process.

Planning Inspectorate: A body whose work includes national infrastructure planning under the Planning Act 2008 process as amended by the Localism Act 2011; processing planning and enforcement appeals; and holding examinations into local plans and community infrastructure levy charging schedules.

Primary Frontage: The part of the Town Centre that contains a high proportion of retail uses, including major national retailers.

Proposals Map: a map, illustrating the spatial extent of all the policies in Development Plan Documents.

Rapid Transit Network: The Rapid Transit Network is intended to provide a reliable, high frequency, high quality public transport system for Swindon. In the short term this will involve urban traffic management control and public transport priority to overcome issues relating to congestion and indirect and unreliable bus services. Longer-term a two tier public transport network will be developed which will provide high technology solutions on rapid transit corridors, supported by an increase in bus routes across the Borough.

Reg.25, Reg.26, Reg.28: Regulations in the Town and Country Planning (Local Development)(England) Regulations 2004, that prescribes how local authorities should undertake consultation on Local Development Documents at the Pre-Submission Stages (Issues and Options and Preferred Options) and Submission Stage.

Rural Exceptions Policy: Allows residential development adjoining the settlement boundary of a village (village envelope) or within villages with no settlement boundaries to be permitted as an exception to normal planning policy. It can provide a significant number of affordable homes for local people in rural areas.

Saved Policies: The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, and Planning Policy Statement 12: Local Spatial Planning (now withdrawn) allowed for a transition period between the old development plan system and the new Local Development Framework approach, to ensure there was no policy deficit. Adopted structure and local plans and unitary development plans retain development plan status and automatically become 'saved' policies for a period of three years from commencement of the Act (September 2004), or until replaced by RSS or LDF documents. For plans adopted since the commencement of the Act, the three-year period commences from the date they become adopted. During the three-year period local planning authorities should bring forward local development documents to replace saved policies in accordance with their Local Development Scheme (LDS). The Wiltshire & Swindon Structure Plan 2016 was adopted in April 2006 and the Swindon Borough Local Plan was adopted in July 2006, which are the dates from which the initial three-year period started in Swindon Borough.

Secondary Frontage: The part of the Town Centre that provides opportunities for cafes, professional services and independent retailers to flourish.

Site Allocations Development Plan Document: A document that identifies or "allocates" areas of land for specific types of development. This can include housing, employment, community facilities etc. The document also includes the definition of development boundaries or settlement limits for those places where some further growth may take place.

Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI): Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) give legal protection to the best sites for wildlife and geology in England. Natural England has responsibility for identifying and protecting the SSSIs in England under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended).

Social Rented Housing: See **Affordable Housing**

Soundness: The submitted Core Strategy will be subject to a Public Examination, which considers whether the Strategy is 'sound' - in other words founded on a robust and credible evidence base and the most appropriate

strategy when considered against the reasonable alternatives. For something to be sound it must also be deliverable, flexible and able to be monitored.

Spatial Vision: A statement that sets out the big picture of how an area, in this case Swindon Borough, will be developed over an extended period of time i.e. 20 years.

Statement of Community Involvement: Sets out the standards that the Council will achieve in involving local communities in the preparation of Local Development Documents and development control decisions.

Statement of Consultation: A statement that is put together to describe the involvement of the community in the preparation of the development brief.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA): The consideration of policies and proposals to assess their impact on the environment. The European 'SEA Directive' (2001/42/EC) requires a formal environmental assessment of Development Plans. This is to be undertaken as part of a 'Sustainability Appraisal'.

Strategic Green Corridors: are linear features of mostly open character, including riverside paths, footpaths, cycleways and bridleways, which act as wildlife corridors and attractive, safe off-road links between residential areas, open spaces, urban centres, leisure facilities and employment areas. They also give residents access to natural green space and the open countryside and provide opportunities for recreation. Green corridors increase in value if they are linked to form a network that extends within and beyond the Borough boundary.

Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA): The primary role of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment is to identify sites with potential for housing; so that a local planning authority can assess whether it can identify a five year housing land supply, as required by national policy. The identification of potential housing sites also informs the local plan process. The assessment includes consideration of environmental constraints, significant national planning policies and viability.

Strategic Housing Market Assessment: A Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) is a study of the housing market in a particular area and is used to inform local development plans and housing strategies.

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs): these provide supplementary information in respect of the policies in Development Plan Documents.

Sustainability Appraisal: a tool for appraising policies to ensure that they reflect sustainable development objectives (i.e. social, environmental and economic factors) and required to be undertaken for all Local Development Documents. To comply with Government policy, the Borough Council will produce a Sustainability Appraisal that incorporates a Strategic Environmental Assessment of its Local Development Documents.

Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report: The Scoping Report sets out the proposed scope of the 'Sustainability Appraisal' for each 'Development Plan Document'.

Sustainable Communities: These are seen as the residential and workplace surroundings in which people live and thrive and where there is a balance and

integration of the social, economic and environmental components that define a community area. These communities are likely to be safe and inclusive; well planned, built and run; and offering equality and opportunity for all. Sustainable communities are diverse and distinctive, reflecting their own local circumstances.

Sustainable Development: **UK's Sustainable Development Strategy – Securing the Future (2005)** defines the goal of sustainable development as, *“to enable all people throughout the world to satisfy their basic needs and enjoy a better quality of life, without compromising the quality of life of future generations”*. The UK has accepted five key principles of sustainable development to ensure that we live within environmental limits and achieve a just society, and we do so by means of sustainable economy, good governance, and sound science.

Sustainable Neighbourhoods Study: A study of urban settlements that are adapted to the local environmental characteristics and make an efficient use of resources, minimise their emissions and show an increase in quality of life.

Supported Housing: Usually consists of flats or shared housing where people with specific needs can live independently within the community, with support from the relevant services.

Swindon Strategic Partnership (SSP): A non-statutory, non-executive body bringing together members of the public, private, and voluntary sectors. The SSP is responsible for producing the Sustainable Community Strategy.

Swindon Transport Strategy: The Swindon Transport Strategy has been prepared by consultants WSP for Swindon Borough Council and the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA). It is intended to provide a comprehensive understanding of the transport interventions required to facilitate and support sustainable growth in Swindon over the next 20 years. The Transport Strategy has been used to inform the Core Strategy and will be used to inform the preparation of future Council policies and other planning documents, the Swindon Local Transport Plan and the delivery of transport schemes.

Travel to Work Areas: For those involved in labour market analysis and planning, it is useful to be able to use data for zones that are labour market areas. To meet this need, the zones are defined so that the bulk of their resident population also work within the same area. Defining labour market areas requires the analysis of commuting patterns, and the Office of National Statistics (ONS) has worked with Newcastle University to apply a complex allocation process to define a set of Travel to Work Areas (TTWAs).

Travellers: CLG document **Planning Policy for Traveller Sites** (March 2012) gives the definition as “Persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family’s or dependants’ educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily or permanently, but excluding members of an organised group of travelling showpeople or circus people travelling together as such”.

Travelling Showpeople: CLG document **Planning Policy for Traveller Sites** (March 2012) gives the definition as “Members of a group organised for the purposes of holding fairs, circuses or shows (whether or not travelling together as such). This includes such persons who on the grounds of their family’s or dependants’ more localised pattern of trading, educational or health needs or old age have ceased to

travel temporarily or permanently, but excludes Gypsies and Travellers as defined above”.

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