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# Plan for Stafford Borough Part 2: Main Modifications

## Sustainability Appraisal Addendum

Prepared by LUC  
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Planning & EIA  
Design  
Landscape Planning  
Landscape Management  
Ecology  
Mapping & Visualisation

LUC LONDON  
43 Chalton Street  
London  
NW1 1JD  
T +44 (0)20 7383 5784  
[london@landuse.co.uk](mailto:london@landuse.co.uk)

Offices also in:  
Bristol  
Glasgow  
Edinburgh



Land Use Consultants Ltd  
Registered in England  
Registered number: 2549296  
Registered Office:  
43 Chalton Street  
London NW1 1JD  
LUC uses 100% recycled paper

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## Introduction

- 1.1 This Sustainability Appraisal Addendum has been prepared by LUC on behalf of Stafford Borough Council as part of the integrated Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of the Plan for Stafford Borough Part 2.
- 1.2 This SA Addendum relates to the Main Modifications to the Plan for Stafford Borough Part 2 and builds on the findings of the earlier SA work that LUC has carried out on behalf of the Council, in particular the SA of the Plan for Stafford Borough: Part 2 Submission document (March 2016). It should therefore be read in conjunction with that document.
- 1.3 Stafford Borough Council and LUC have been taking an integrated approach to the SA and SEA of the Local Plan, in line with Government guidance. Throughout this document, the term 'SA' should therefore be taken to mean 'SA incorporating the requirements of the SEA Directive'.

## Previous SA work undertaken

- 1.4 Stafford Borough Council, and LUC working on behalf of the Council, have previously carried out several iterations of the SA process in relation to the Plan for Stafford Borough throughout its development. **Table 1** below lists the iterations of the Local Plan that have been produced and consulted on by the Council, as well as the accompanying SA work that was undertaken at each stage. The grey shaded rows in Table 1 relate to the Plan for Stafford Borough and the SA work was carried out by the Council, while the unshaded rows relate to Part 2 of the Plan for Stafford Borough and the SA work carried out by LUC.

**Table 1: Iterations of the Plan for Stafford Borough and accompanying SA work**

Date	Plan iteration	Accompanying SA work
October 2007	N/A	SA Scoping Report
January 2008	The Plan for Stafford Borough - Borough Wide Development Strategy	SA Commentary Volume 1
June 2008	Principles for Settlement Development	N/A
February 2009	Delivering the Plan for Stafford Borough - Issues and Options	SA Commentary Volume 2
September 2011	Draft Publication	SA Report
May 2012	Strategic Policy Choices	SA Report
January 2013	Publication (Pre-Submission)	Revised SA Report
April 2013	Planning Strategy Statement	Addendum SA Report
January 2014	Modifications Consultation	Modifications Addendum SA Report
June 2014	The adopted Plan for Stafford Borough	Sustainability Appraisal Adoption Statement
June 2015	The Plan for Stafford Borough: Part 2 Proposals document (Options Stage)	SA Report
December 2015	The Plan for Stafford Borough: Part 2 Publication document	SA Report
March 2016	The Plan for Stafford Borough: Part 2 Submission document	SA Report
September 2016	The Plan for Stafford Borough Part 2: Main Modifications	SA Addendum (current report)

- 1.5 The most recent full SA report for the Local Plan is therefore the March 2016 SA Report relating to the Publication version of the Local Plan. It was not considered necessary to produce a full SA Report at the Submission stage, as the changes made to the Local Plan since the Publication version were relatively minor and no new policies or site allocations had been added to the plan.
- 1.6 The March 2016 SA Report described in detail the approach that has been taken to the SA, including the various iterations of the SA report that have been produced and how the SA process has influenced the development of the Local Plan thus far.

## Current SA work

- 1.7 The Plan for Stafford Borough Part 2 was submitted to the Secretary of State for examination in April 2016 and hearing sessions were held during July and August 2016.
- 1.8 This SA Addendum has considered the implications of the changes that have been proposed to the Plan for Stafford Part 2 document following the public hearing sessions, to determine whether they affect the conclusions reached in the March 2016 SA Report.
- 1.9 A set of minor changes that have been made to the Plan for Stafford Part 2 Submission document are set out in the Schedule of Additional Modifications document prepared by the Council. The Inspector carrying out the Examination has also proposed a small number of Main Modifications in the document "P2-P13 Note MF3: PSB2 – Next steps in the Examination process", as follows:
- Delete the words "and beyond" from the end of paragraph 2.26 of the submitted Plan.
  - The identification on a plan of the land owned by the Ministry of Defence to the north-west of Sandon Road, Stafford, known as 'MOD Site 4' to be included as Ministry of Defence Protected Area.
  - The amendment of the Stone settlement boundary to exclude the land on the edge of Westbridge Park which is located to the east/south-east of the A520 (Stafford Road) and to the west/south-west of the Trent and Mersey Canal, currently occupied by a surface car park and other community uses, including a leisure centre and tennis courts.
- 1.10 The Additional Modifications comprise typographical errors, factual updates, points of clarification and other minor changes which individually, or in combination, are not deemed to materially affect the soundness of the Plan for Stafford Borough Part 2 document, whereas the Main Modifications include changes that are considered necessary to ensure the soundness of the Plan. Therefore, the Main Modifications need to be considered in terms of whether they will have any effect on the SA objectives and change the conclusions in the March 2016 SA Report.
- 1.11 The purpose of this SA Addendum is to consider the implications of the Main Modifications for the findings of the SA process to date. The work set out here draws on the SA findings reported on previously by LUC on behalf of Stafford Borough Council (in the March 2016 SA Report) and assesses only how the Main Modifications affect those conclusions. Consideration is also given to the cumulative effects of the Local Plan, as a whole (including the Main Modifications), on the SA objectives.

## SA method

- 1.12 The March 2016 SA Report which accompanied the Submission Plan for Stafford Borough Part 2 describes, in detail, the methodology that has been used throughout the SA process, with SA matrices and colour coded scores being used to present the SA findings for each policy. SA matrices for the Stafford Borough Part 2 policies and settlement boundaries were presented in Appendix 3 of that document.
- 1.13 **Figure 1** below shows a key for the colour coding that has been used throughout the SA work to date and in this document.

**Figure 1: Key to SA Scores**

++	The option is likely to have a <b>significant positive</b> impact on the SA objective(s).
+	The option is likely to have a <b>positive</b> impact on the SA objective(s).
0	The option is likely to have a <b>negligible or no impact</b> on the SA objective(s).
-	The option is likely to have a <b>negative</b> impact on the SA objective(s).
--	The option is likely to have a <b>significant negative</b> impact on the SA objective(s).
?	It is <b>uncertain</b> what effect the option will have on the SA objective(s), due to a lack of data.
+/-	The option is likely to have a <b>mixture of positive and negative impacts</b> on the SA objective(s).

- 1.14 A new table has been prepared to review the sustainability implications of the Main Modifications in relation to the Plan policies (presented in **Appendix 1**). The first two columns of the table summarise the changes that have been proposed to each policy, and in the final column the implications of each proposed change for the March 2016 SA findings are considered. A clear statement is made regarding whether any changes to the SA findings are expected as a result of each proposed Main Modification. Where changes have been identified these are shown in the table in **bold** text.
- 1.15 Finally, consideration was given to the cumulative effects of the Plan for Stafford Borough Part 2 as a whole, and whether the likely cumulative effects that were described in the March 2016 SA Report are affected by the Main Modifications now proposed.

## Summary of SA implications of the Main Modifications

- 1.16 The detailed table setting out the proposed Main Modifications and describing the implications of each for the SA findings can be found in **Appendix 1**, and the key findings are summarised below.

### Change to Local Plan period

- 1.17 The Local Plan is now proposed through the Main Modifications to only cover the period 2011-2031 and not the period “beyond” this. This means that the end date of the Local Plan period in relation to the settlement boundaries is clarified by removing “and beyond” from the end of paragraph 2.26. This change would apply to the relevance of the settlement boundaries which have been defined in the Plan for Stafford Borough Part 2. As such these boundaries would stay in place over the Plan period and no undue barrier would be in place if these boundaries would be required to be amended at the end of the Plan period.
- 1.18 This proposed modification is therefore unlikely to have any specific impacts on the SA objectives over the Plan period.

### Identification of land at Stafford as Ministry of Defence Protected Area

- 1.19 The Main Modifications propose to identify ‘MOD Site 4’ as a Ministry of Defence Protected Area through mapping on the appropriate inset map (previously P2-A2). This land is not referred to in a separate policy in the Plan and is only described in the supporting text of paragraph 2.38 of the Plan for Stafford Borough Part 2. As such it was not previously appraised separately in the SA process.
- 1.20 The supporting text at paragraph 2.38 refers to Policy Stafford 1 which states that the Plan supports further development of MOD land at Stafford. As such the safeguarding of this land for

this type of development will allow for appropriate military related development to support Policy Stafford 1. Therefore this modification will not affect the findings of the March 2016 SA.

### Changes to settlement boundary

- 1.21 The most significant change which is proposed through the Main Modifications, as part of the Examination process, is a change to the Stone settlement boundary through amendment of the inset map which supports Policy SB1. In relation to most of the SA objectives no change has been identified with regards the effect the revised settlement boundary will have. The previous matrix for SB1 Settlement Boundaries (Stone) has been updated to reflect this Main Modification in **Appendix 2** of this Addendum. **Table 2** below summarises the findings for SB1 Settlement Boundaries (Stone) and shows in **bold** text those SA objectives where a change to the likely effect has been identified.

**Table 2: Summary of changes to SA scores as a result of Stone settlement boundary change proposed through Main Modifications relating to Policy SB1**

SA objective	Social, Economic or Environmental objective	Likely effect identified in March 2016 SA Report	Likely effect taking into account Main Modifications
<b>1. Employment</b>	Econ	+	+/-
<b>2. Economic diversity</b>	Econ	+?	+?/-
<b>3. Vitality and viability</b>	Econ	+	+/-
4. Rural economy and communities	Econ; Social	+	+
5. Reduce vulnerability to climate change	Social; Econ; Env	0	0
6. Decent and affordable homes	Social	++?	++?
<b>7. Access for all</b>	Social	+	+/-
8. Prevent crime	Social	0	0
9. Noise and light pollution	Env	-?	-?
<b>10. Health, safety and well-being</b>	Social	+	+/-
11. Contributions to climate change	Env	+/-	+/-
12. Biodiversity	Env	+/-?	+/-?
13. Soil	Env	-	-
14. Water quality and management	Env	-?	-?
15. Landscape and historic character	Env	+/-?	+/-?
<b>16. Community identity</b>	Social	0	-
17. Tolerance, respect and engagement	Social	0	0
18. Engagement in community issues	Social	0	0
19. Strong, inclusive, community	Social	0	0

SA objective	Social, Economic or Environmental objective	Likely effect identified in March 2016 SA Report	Likely effect taking into account Main Modifications
20. Civic and neighbourhood values	Social	0	0

- 1.22 It can be seen from **Table 2** that for most SA objectives the likely effect has remained unchanged. However changes to the SA findings have been identified for six of the 20 SA objectives in relation to SA objectives 1: employment, 2: economic diversity, 3: vitality and viability; 7: access for all, 10: health, safety and well-being, and 16: community identity, although none of these changed effects are likely to be significant.
- 1.23 The changes identified are expected given that the Main Modifications propose that land by Westbridge Park would be removed from within the Stone settlement boundary. The Council has committed to the use of this land<sup>1</sup> for improved leisure provision as well as community facilities, which would be in part financed by a new retail use. A planning application for the new retail development which would be at this location is currently pending consideration by the Council. Based on the Main Modifications proposed the removal of this land from the settlement boundary would mean this provision may not be in line with the Spatial Principle 7 (SP7) of the Adopted Plan for Stafford Borough.
- 1.24 Additional minor negative effects have therefore been recorded for SA objectives 7, 10 and 16 given that the failure to take the opportunity to provide additional leisure and community facilities may have adverse impacts on access to improved local leisure and community facilities.
- 1.25 New negative effects have also been identified in relation to the economic SA objectives 1, 2 and 3. These effects are likely given that the proposed removal of the land by Westbridge Park from the settlement boundary would mean that the provision of additional or improved leisure and community facilities and retail uses, which might complement the nearby town centre and thus also improve its vitality and viability, may not be in line with the Adopted Plan for Stafford Borough. This approach may therefore result in reduced local employment opportunities along with reduced potential for local investment and economic diversity.
- 1.26 All additional negative effects identified as a result of changes to the settlement boundary at Stone are likely to be minor, and where positive effects alone have previously been identified (SA objectives 1, 2, 3, 7 and 10) the updated effect is now likely to be mixed minor positive and negative. These effects are likely considering that the amendment to the Stone settlement boundary affects only a small area of the land in relation to the rest of the Borough. However, it is recognised that the impact on delivering new retail and leisure provision within Stone itself could be significant.

### Cumulative Effects of the Plan

- 1.27 The March 2016 SA Report included a description of the cumulative effects of the Local Plan on the SA objectives as summarised below and this has now been updated to reflect the findings in relation to the Main Modifications. The most significant change which would result as part of the Main Modifications is the proposed revision to the Stone settlement boundary to remove an area of land at Westbridge Park. This amendment would make up quite a small part of the overall area of land which would be within a settlement boundary in the Borough and would be considered developable. Whilst this amendment to the Stone settlement boundary is a relatively small area of land, it does introduce some negative effects on the SA objectives 1, 2, 3, 7, 10 and 16. These effects have been identified due to the longer term implications of the settlement boundary change at Stone in terms of reduced inward investment, and reduced provision of retail and leisure for a major community within the Borough.
- 1.28 **Table 3** overleaf presents a summary of the SA scores for all of the policies and settlement boundaries in the Plan for Stafford Borough Part 2, including the changes to the Stone boundary which are proposed through the Main Modifications. The table has been updated to show the

<sup>1</sup> Stafford Borough Council (2016), Document (P2-P2) Council Position Statement – Westbridge Park, Stone



effects the Main Modifications would have on each of the SA objectives in the column which has been presented in **bold**.

- 1.29 For the Submission Plan for Stafford Borough Part 2, cumulative minor positive effects were expected in relation to Policies SB1, SB3 and RIE1 for the economic SA objectives given that these policies would allow for settlement boundaries which support the delivery of housing and economic development as well as recognised industrial estates (Policy RIE1) and identification of protected employment areas (Policy SB3). The effect in relation to the proposed revision to the settlement boundary at Stone has however introduced some negative effects on the economic SA objectives (1, 2 and 3). Therefore, taking into account the proposed Main Modification relating to Policy SB1 (Stone), the overall cumulative effect on the economic SA objectives 1, 2 and 3 is now considered to be mixed minor positive and negative.
- 1.30 Positive effects overall were also identified in the SA Report for the social SA objectives as the policies in the Submission Plan for Stafford Borough Part 2 would allow for the provision of affordable homes, and improved access to work, education, health and local services across all settlements. The SA objective of creating a sense of community in the Borough is the only social SA objective where the majority of effects from the policies and settlement boundaries were mixed. However the cumulative effect on the five main social SA objectives was still considered to be overall minor positive. The overall cumulative minor positive effect on the social objectives is not considered to have changed as a result of the Main Modifications, despite the amendment to the Stone settlement boundary introducing some minor negative effects on the SA objectives 7, 10 and 16.
- 1.31 The scale of development which the Plan for Stafford Borough Part 2 would allow for means that negative cumulative effects were identified in the March 2016 SA report for environmental SA objectives including those which related to soil resource, biodiversity and/or water quality. The Main Modifications have not changed the likely effects on the environmental SA objectives. The negative effect in relation to biodiversity was identified as part of an overall likely mixed cumulative effect, and similar mixed effects were identified for climate change, and landscape and historic and cultural character due to the initial impacts of development and, conversely, the ability to enhance the settlements through supporting existing facilities (and thereby reducing the need to travel) and creating new habitats and adhering to good design principles.

## Next Steps

- 1.32 The Main Modifications proposed in relation to the Plan for Stafford Borough Part 2 will be subject to a six week period of public consultation, and this SA Addendum will be published alongside the Main and Additional Modifications during that period. Following the consultation, the representations received will be considered by the Inspector when producing his final report regarding the soundness of the Local Plan.

LUC  
September 2016

**Table 3: Summary of Sustainability Appraisal scores for the policies and boundaries in the Plan for Stafford Borough Part 2 (including changed scores as result of Main Modifications)**

SA objectives	Social, Economic or Environmental objective	Policy SB1 Stafford	Policy SB1 Stone	Policy SB1 Eccleshall	Policy SB1 Gnosall	Policy SB1 Hixon	Policy SB1 Great Haywood	Policy SB1 Little Haywood / Colwich	Policy SB1 Haughton	Policy SB1 Weston	Policy SB1 Woodseaves	Policy SB1 Barlaston	Policy SB1 Tittensor	Policy SB1 Yarnfield	Policy SB2 Protected Social and Community	Policy SB3 Stafford and Stone protected	Policy RIE1 Recognised Industrial Estate
1. <b>Employment</b>	Econ	+	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+
2. <b>Economic diversity</b>	Econ	+	+?/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+?	+
3. <b>Vitality and viability</b>	Econ	+	+/-	+	+	+	+	+	+	0	+	+	+	+	++	+	+/-
4. Rural economy and communities	Econ Social	+	+	+	+	+	+	0	0	?	0	0	0	+	0	+	+
5. Reduce vulnerability to climate change	Social Econ Env	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
6. Decent and affordable homes	Social	++?	++?	++	++	++	++	+	+	?	+	+	+	++	0	0	0
7. <b>Access for all</b>	Social	+	+/-	+	+	+	+	+	+	0	+	+	+	+	++	+	+/-
8. Prevent crime	Social	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
9. Noise and light pollution	Env	-?	-?	-?	-?	-?	-?	-?	-?	0	-?	-?	-?	-?	0	0	0
10. <b>Health, safety and well-being</b>	Social	+?	+/-	+?	+?	+?	+?	+?	+?	0	+?	+?	+?	+?	++	0	0
11. Contributions to climate change	Env	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	0	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+	+	+/-
12. Biodiversity	Env	+/-?	+/-?	+/-?	+/-?	+/-?	+/-?	+/-?	+/-?	0	+/-?	+/-?	+	+	0	-	-?
13. Soil	Env	-	-	-	-	-?	-	-?	-?	+	-?	-?	+	+	0	-	-
14. Water quality and management	Env	-?	-?	-?	-?	-?	-?	-?	-?	0	-?	-?	-?	-?	0	0	0
15. Landscape and historic character	Env	+/-?	+/-?	+/-?	+/-?	+/-?	-?	-?	+/-	+	+/-?	+/-?	+/-?	+/-?	0	0	0
16. <b>Community identity</b>	Social	0	-	+/-?	+/-?	+/-?	+/-?	+/-?	+/-?	0	+/-?	+/-?	+/-?	+/-?	+	+	?

SA objectives	Social, Economic or Environmental objective	Policy SB1 Stafford	Policy SB1 Stone	Policy SB1 Eccleshall	Policy SB1 Gnosall	Policy SB1 Hixon	Policy SB1 Great Haywood	Policy SB1 Little Haywood / Colwich	Policy SB1 Haughton	Policy SB1 Weston	Policy SB1 Woodseaves	Policy SB1 Barlaston	Policy SB1 Tittensor	Policy SB1 Yarnfield	Policy SB2 Protected Social and Community	Policy SB3 Stafford and Stone protected	Policy RIE1 Recognised Industrial Estate
17. Tolerance, respect and engagement	Social	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
18. Engagement in community issues	Social	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
19. Strong, inclusive, community	Social	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0
20. Civic and neighbourhood values	Social	0	0	+	+	+	+	+	+	0	+	+	+	+	+	0	0

# Appendix 1

## Detailed assessment of Main Modifications and their implications for the earlier SA findings

Details of Main Modification proposed	Summary of proposed changes to Local Plan	Implications of changes for SA findings as set out in the March 2016 SA Report
Deletion of the words “and beyond” from the end of paragraph 2.26 of the submitted Plan.	The supporting text relating to settlement boundaries in the Plan would be amended. The settlement boundaries would apply until the end of the Plan period.	The Main Modification would focus the role of the settlement boundaries over the period in which the Plan for Stafford Borough would be in effect (2011-2031) meaning there would be no issue with amending these boundaries once the Plan period had ended if required. This amendment is not expected to have an effect on the provision of sustainable development within the settlement boundaries in Stafford Borough over the Plan period, or the SA effects previously identified.
Identification on a plan of the land owned by the Ministry of Defence to the north-west of Sandon Road, Stafford, known as ‘MOD Site 4’ as Ministry of Defence Protected Area, as defined on the plan in Document P2-A26, together with explanatory text.	Inclusion of land within the Plan for Stafford Borough Part 2 in relation to an area which is to be safeguarded as part of the Ministry of Defence Protected Area through detailing on the relevant inset map.	The Ministry of Defence (MOD) Protected Area was not appraised separately as part of the March 2016 SA Report as it was not detailed as a separate policy but instead related to the settlement boundary for Stafford, given that this protected land falls within the settlement boundary. The appraisal of Policy SB1 Settlement Boundaries (Stafford) has identified minor positive effects in relation to SA objective 1 (employment). The effect is unlikely to be affected by the additional land and change of the boundary MOD Protected Land which would clarify land which is to be safeguarded for future MOD development. This type of development is not expected to negatively affect employment opportunities locally.  Therefore, this change has resulted in no change to the findings of the March 2016 SA Report.
The amendment of the Stone settlement boundary to exclude the land on the edge of Westbridge Park which is located to the east/south-east of the A520 (Stafford Road) and to the west/south-west of the Trent and Mersey Canal, currently occupied by a surface car park and other community uses, including a	Change to the inset map which supports Policy SB1 Settlement Boundaries to remove the land in question from within the settlement boundary.	This change to the settlement boundary would remove an area of land which the Council <sup>2</sup> has committed to be used to allow for improved leisure facilities and community facilities as well as retail uses. As such, this change is <b>expected to result in additional minor negative effects in relation to SA objectives 1 (employment), 2 (economic diversity), 3 (vitality and viability), 7 (access for all),</b>

<sup>2</sup> Stafford Borough Council (2016), Document (P2-L32) Statement of Common Ground Plan for Stafford Borough Part 2 Stafford Boundary MOD Protected Area

Details of Main Modification proposed	Summary of proposed changes to Local Plan	Implications of changes for SA findings as set out in the March 2016 SA Report
leisure centre and tennis courts.		<p><b>10 (health, safety and well-being) and 16 (community identity);</b> it is noted that the overall effects for SA objectives 1, 2, 3, 7 and 10 are likely to be mixed whilst the overall effect on SA objective 16 is likely to be negative.</p> <p>These effects are likely given that removal of this area from within the settlement boundary through the Main Modifications may undermine policy support for the provision of these improved facilities. As such, opportunities to provide improved facilities, which may complement and enhance vitality and viability at the nearby town centre through Policy Stone 1, also allowing for improved employment opportunities and local economic diversity while helping to encourage healthier lifestyle choices and community engagement, may be lost.</p>

## Appendix 2

SA matrix for the Main Modification which result in a change to Stone settlement boundary and the findings of the March 2016 SA Report

## Policy SB1 (Stone settlement boundary)

**Table A.2 Appraisal matrix for Policy SB1 Stone**

SA Objectives	Decision-Making Criteria	SA Score	Justification
1 To create high, stable and equitable levels of employment	<p>Will it reduce unemployment levels?</p> <p>Will it provide job opportunities for those most in need of employment?</p> <p>Will it help to improve earnings?</p> <p>Will it increase access to employment opportunities in, or accessible to, rural areas?</p> <p>Will it lead to a net reduction in the number of people commuting to work outside the Borough?</p>	+/-	The identification of the settlement boundary does not itself create employment in Stone or the wider Borough, but it protects areas of existing employment land and allows for additional employment land at Stone Business Park, with a minor positive effect on this SA objective. The revised settlement boundary at Westbridge Park could potentially reduce job opportunities arising from new retail and leisure development given that (through the recommended Main Modification) policy support for improvement to or intensification of the existing leisure facility and new retail provision at this location may be undermined. A minor negative effect is also therefore expected on this SA objective, meaning an overall mixed effect is identified.
2 To ensure high and stable level of economic diversity and competitiveness that recognises social and environmental issues	<p>Will it promote growth in key sectors?</p> <p>Will it encourage inward investment?</p> <p>Will it encourage graduates to return and help to retain skilled employees in the area?</p> <p>Will it provide or contribute to the availability of a balanced portfolio of employment sites?</p>	+?/-	The identification of the settlement boundary does not itself create employment in Stone or the wider Borough, but it protects areas of existing employment land and allows for additional employment land at Stone Business Park. Although it is not possible to identify the type of employment which will take place on these sites and the associated job opportunities they will provide it is likely that this will have a minor positive effect on this SA objective. The revised settlement boundary at Westbridge Park would not promote growth within the settlement and would reduce inward investment arising from new retail and leisure development. This effect is likely given that the recommended Main Modification may undermine policy support for improvement to or intensification of the existing leisure facility and new retail provision at the Westbridge Park location. A minor negative effect is therefore also expected on this SA objective meaning an overall mixed effect is identified.
3 To sustain the vitality and viability of Stafford Borough's towns and villages, and their	<p>Will it make Stafford Borough more attractive to potential visitors and businesses?</p> <p>Will it support existing services</p>	+/-	Identification of the settlement boundary for Stone will provide a clear indication of where new development will be acceptable and the likely scale of growth anticipated for the town. This sends a positive message to potential visitors and businesses, and the inclusion of additional housing development, for which



**Table A.2 Appraisal matrix for Policy SB1 Stone**

SA Objectives	Decision-Making Criteria	SA Score	Justification
communities	and facilities?  Will it contribute to a quality built environment?		planning permission has been granted subject to s106 agreement, will help to support existing services and facilities.  The quality of the built environment will be protected by the application of Policy N1 Design in the Plan for Stafford Borough, which new housing development will need to comply with.  It is expected that the exclusion of land from within the settlement boundary at Westbridge Park may however undermine policy support for improvement to or intensification of the existing leisure facility at this location as well as the new retail provision, which is in close proximity to Stone Town Centre. As such a minor negative effect is also expected on this SA objective as the opportunity to attract new businesses and support existing facilities would be lost. Overall a mixed effect on this SA objective has therefore been identified.
4 To support the needs of the local rural economy and communities	Will it increase access to employment opportunities in, or accessible to rural areas?  Will it contribute to the provision of affordable housing meets identified local need?	+	Stone is accessible from the surrounding rural areas, and the inclusion of land within the settlement boundary for additional housing development and employment will contribute positively to this objective.  Policy C2 Affordable Housing in the Plan for Stafford Borough requires 30% or more of developments of 12 dwellings or more to be affordable housing. The identification of the settlement boundary defining areas where such development will be acceptable will contribute to affordable housing to meet the identified local need. The revised settlement boundary is unlikely to change this effect.
5 To reduce vulnerability to the effects of climate change such as the risk of flooding, on public wellbeing, the economy and the environment.	Will it reduce the proportion of development within the floodplain?  Will it minimise the risk of flooding from rivers and watercourses to people and property?  Will it result in development that is able to withstand the effects of climate change?	0	Identification of the settlement boundary for Stone will provide a clear indication of where new development will be acceptable. Whilst the River Trent passes through the centre of Stone and has an identified flood risk, this does not include areas within the settlement boundary. However, tributaries to the east and west are identified as within Flood zone 2 and 3 and lie within the settlement boundary. These areas of flood risk include established parts of the settlement and the Strategic Development Location to the west at Walton Hill. Planning permission has been granted for the development site at Walton Hill, and this will have been granted in line with Policies N1 Design and N2 Climate Change in the Plan for Stafford Borough. The removal of land by Westbridge Park is not expected to greatly affect the risk of flooding in the Borough. Most of this land is within flood zone 2. In addition the provision of leisure and retail uses, which the

**Table A.2 Appraisal matrix for Policy SB1 Stone**

SA Objectives	Decision-Making Criteria	SA Score	Justification
			<p>Council<sup>3</sup> has committed to at this location, are classified as 'less vulnerable' uses as per the PPG<sup>4</sup>.</p> <p>Policies in the Local Plan will, in addition, help to ensure that new housing development is protected from and does not worsen the potential for flooding. Policy N2 Climate Change of the Plan for Stafford Borough sets out the requirements for incorporating sustainable urban drainage and reducing contributions to climate change through new development including BREEAM requirements and Zero Carbon Standards.</p> <p>Although the settlement boundary includes land allocated for development in an area of flood risk which has potential for negative effects in relation to this SA objective, the planning permissions would have to be decided in line with the plan policies which would help to mitigate negative effects. Therefore no adverse effects are identified.</p>
<p>6 To ensure that everyone has the opportunity of a decent and affordable home</p>	<p>Will it contribute to the provision of affordable housing which meets identified local needs?</p> <p>Will it contribute to a mix of housing types?</p> <p>Will it reduce homelessness?</p> <p>Will it increase the range and affordability of housing for all social groups?</p> <p>Will it reduce the number of vacant properties?</p>	<p>++?</p>	<p>Identification of the settlement boundary for Stone will provide a clear indication of where new development will be acceptable. Inclusion of additional land for housing, including areas with existing planning permissions, will contribute to ensuring that everyone has the opportunity of a decent and affordable home.</p> <p>Policy C2 Affordable Housing in the Plan for Stafford Borough requires 30% or more of developments of 12 dwellings or more to be affordable housing. The identification of the settlement boundary defining areas where such development will be acceptable will contribute to affordable housing to meet the identified local need. Two sites with planning permission for 33 houses and 92 houses respectively will contribute to the provision of affordable housing in the area.</p> <p>The potential significant positive effect is uncertain because there may be uncertainty in the specific timing of delivering necessary infrastructure due to certain issues including current funding sources. The revised settlement boundary is unlikely to change this effect.</p>
<p>7 To improve opportunities for access for all to work,</p>	<p>Will it result in new developments being located in</p>	<p>+/-</p>	<p>As a larger town, Stone has a good level of public transport provision, and therefore the location of areas of new development within the settlement</p>

<sup>3</sup> Stafford Borough Council (2016), Document (P2-L32) Statement of Common Ground Plan for Stafford Borough Part 2 Stafford Boundary MOD Protected Area

<sup>4</sup> DCLG (2014), Flood Zone and Flood Risk Tables PPG (Reference ID: 7-066-20140306)

**Table A.2 Appraisal matrix for Policy SB1 Stone**

SA Objectives	Decision-Making Criteria	SA Score	Justification
education, health and local services	<p>areas served by public transport?</p> <p>Will it make access more affordable?</p> <p>Will it improve accessibility to key local services?</p> <p>Will it make access easier for those without access to a car?</p> <p>Will it protect existing key services and facilities?</p>		<p>boundary contributes positively to this objective.</p> <p>The change to the settlement boundary proposed through the Main Modifications would exclude the leisure centre by Westbridge Park and as such may undermine policy support for the provision of improved leisure and community facilities as the site would no longer be in line with Spatial Principle 7 of the Plan for Stafford Borough. Despite existing leisure and community facilities still being provided on this site, there would be an additional minor negative effect in terms of local residents' ability to access new enhanced health and leisure facilities. As such an overall mixed effect is therefore identified for this SA objective.</p>
8 To reduce and prevent crime and reduce fear of crime	<p>Will it reduce actual levels of crime?</p> <p>Will it reduce the fear of crime?</p> <p>Will it promote design that discourages crime?</p> <p>Will it reduce social disorder?</p>	0	<p>Identification of the settlement boundary for Stone will not have an effect on crime levels or the fear of crime. The revised settlement boundary is unlikely to change this effect.</p>
9 To reduce the impact of noise and light pollution	<p>Will it reduce direct pollution?</p> <p>Will it reduce indirect pollution (e.g. increased traffic)?</p>	-?	<p>The identification of the settlement boundary for Stone indicates where new housing and employment development will be acceptable. Such new development will have a negative effect on noise and potentially light pollution during construction. Once constructed, there is likely to be increased noise and light pollution through the activities of people in and around their homes and from the operations on the employment sites, and via house and street lighting.</p> <p>However, Policy N1 Design of Plan for Stafford Borough requires the design and layout of new development to take account of noise and light implications, therefore some potential effects may be mitigated therefore the overall effects are uncertain but likely to be negative. The revised settlement boundary is unlikely to change this effect.</p>
10 To improve health, safety	<p>Will it ensure that all people have</p>	+/-	<p>The identification of the settlement boundary in Stone will not directly improve</p>

**Table A.2 Appraisal matrix for Policy SB1 Stone**

SA Objectives	Decision-Making Criteria	SA Score	Justification
<p>and well-being across the whole community</p>	<p>access to public open space within a reasonable distance from where they live?</p> <p>Will it improve access to natural greenspace?</p> <p>Will it improve access to high quality health facilities?</p> <p>Will it encourage healthy lifestyles?</p>		<p>access to greenspace, or high quality health facilities. The revised settlement boundary does not include the Westbridge Park location where the Council<sup>5</sup> has indicated that improved leisure facilities could be provided. This improved provision of leisure facilities would be in close proximity to the town centre which is to the north west by Crown Street/Stafford Road. The amendment to the settlement boundary through the Main Modifications may undermine policy support for this improved provision. If this improved provision was unable to be delivered it may reduce access to leisure facilities in the Borough in the longer term. As such a minor negative effect is therefore expected on this SA objective.</p> <p>The development of new housing in line with Policy N4 The Natural Environment &amp; Green Infrastructure however requires all new development to be set within a well-designed and maintained attractive green setting, provide a variety of spaces to meet the needs of people and nature and provide safe opportunities for sustainable transport. This policy will ensure that the new housing development indicated to be acceptable by the identification of the settlement boundary for Stone will contribute to improving the health, safety and well-being of the community. As such an overall mixed effect is therefore identified for this SA objective.</p>
<p>11 To reduce societal contributions to climate change</p>	<p>Will it minimise greenhouse gas emissions?</p> <p>Will it reduce carbon dioxide emissions?</p> <p>Will it utilise existing infrastructure?</p> <p>Will it lead to reduced consumption of materials and resources?</p> <p>Will it reduce waste generation?</p> <p>Will it increase waste recovery</p>	<p>+/-</p>	<p>The potential for new housing and employment land to be delivered within the settlement boundary for Stone will inevitably result in the consumption of materials and resources, and production of waste and carbon dioxide emissions. Although Stone is the second largest centre is served by bus routes to Stafford and the other villages, development will contribute to increased car travel (and therefore greenhouse gas emissions) within the Borough, as new residents are likely to access some jobs and services outside of the town.</p> <p>However, existing policies within the Plan for Stafford Borough such as Policy N2 Climate Change and N1 Design, aim to minimise greenhouse gas emissions and set out the requirements for reducing contributions to climate change through new development. Measures include BREEAM requirements and Zero Carbon Standards, and incorporating sustainable construction and energy conservation techniques into the design. In addition, Policy T1 Transport seeks to achieve a</p>

<sup>5</sup> Stafford Borough Council (2016), Document (P2-P2) Council Position Statement – Westbridge Park, Stone

**Table A.2 Appraisal matrix for Policy SB1 Stone**

SA Objectives	Decision-Making Criteria	SA Score	Justification
	and recycling?  Will it lead to an increased proportion of energy needs being met from renewable sources?  Will it increase energy efficiency?  Will it make use of new and clean technologies?		sustainable transport system.  Overall, the identification of the settlement boundary for Stone could have a mixed effect on climate change. The revised settlement boundary is unlikely to change this effect.
12 To protect and enhance biodiversity	Will it lead to the protection of designated sites?  Will it lead to enhancement of designated sites?  Will it result in habitat creation at all scales/Will it conserve and enhance natural/ semi natural habitats?  Will it conserve and enhance nationally significant species and habitats?  Will it improve biodiversity within urban areas?  Will it enhance the wider ecological network and seek to minimise the fragmentation of nature corridors and networks?  Will it reduce indirect impacts on designated sites?	+/-?	The settlement boundary at Stone does not impact directly on any designated biodiversity sites. The sites which will be subject to housing development are greenfield sites, which will result in loss of the existing habitats in these locations. The housing site at Walton Hill has record of brown long eared bat, which is a BAP species.  However, Policy N4 The Natural Environment & Green Infrastructure provides for the Borough's natural environment to be protected, enhanced and improved with reference to both designated and non-designated habitats. Any new housing development will need to adhere to this policy, which should help to reduce potential negative effects and achieve some benefits for biodiversity; overall the effects are mixed and uncertain. The revised settlement boundary is unlikely to change this effect.
13 To protect and conserve	Will it result in the	-	The areas of new housing and employment land lie within the new settlement

**Table A.2 Appraisal matrix for Policy SB1 Stone**

SA Objectives	Decision-Making Criteria	SA Score	Justification
soil	<p>protection/retention of the Best and Most Versatile agricultural land (Grades 1-3a)?</p> <p>Will it minimise and seek to reclaim derelict and contaminated land?</p>		<p>boundary and are likely to result in the loss in areas of Best and Most Versatile agricultural land (Grades 1-3a). The information available<sup>6</sup> does not sub-divide Grade 3 into 3a and 3b (3b is not classed as Best and Most Versatile agricultural land); therefore, it is difficult to ascertain the proportion of Best and Most Versatile agricultural land that will be lost. The settlement boundary does include areas of Grade 2 land, and is likely that some land of this grade is being lost to development.</p> <p>Policy E2 Sustainable Rural Development of the Plan for Stafford Borough does seek to protect Best and Most Versatile agricultural land by encouraging the use of poorer quality land.</p> <p>The exclusion of the leisure centre site by Westbridge Park would remove an area of previously developed land which has been classified as urban land. Redevelopment at this location would be in line with the Spatial Principle 7 (SP7) of the Plan for Stafford Borough which supports maximised use of brownfield sites within the Borough's towns and villages to reduce the need for greenfield sites in the Borough. However, if it is no longer included within the settlement boundary it would be difficult to redevelop this site.</p>
14 To protect and enhance water quality of the Borough's rivers whilst maximising their carrying capacity through achieving sustainable water resource management	<p>Will it improve the quality of controlled waters?</p> <p>Will it increase the quality and quantity of the water environment?</p> <p>Will it reduce direct or indirect pollution of the water environment?</p> <p>Is there adequate foul drainage infrastructure?</p> <p>Will it protect floodplain capacity?</p>	-?	<p>The development of housing and employment land will inevitably result in the consumption of water during construction and once the houses are occupied and employment uses operational.</p> <p>There is also potential to affect water quality during construction through pollution and sediment run-off and through effluent discharge once the houses are occupied and businesses operational.</p> <p>However, policies within the Plan for Stafford Borough and other water protection measures implemented and monitored by the Environment Agency will mitigate such effects. Policies include: Policy N2 Climate Change which sets parameters for sustainable drainage to reduce possible impacts on water quality and safeguards groundwater resources and surface water bodies; N1 Design which seeks the inclusion of SuDs in new development; and N4 The Natural Environment &amp; Green Infrastructure which seeks the conservation and enhancement of water courses. These policies should help to reduce potential</p>

<sup>6</sup> Spatial data obtained from the Natural England public datasets: <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/category/5954148537204736>

**Table A.2 Appraisal matrix for Policy SB1 Stone**

SA Objectives	Decision-Making Criteria	SA Score	Justification
	Is there clear opportunity for future maintenance of Sustainable Drainage Systems?		negative effects for water quality, therefore the effects are uncertain. The revised settlement boundary is unlikely to change this effect.
15 To protect, enhance and, where necessary, restore designated landscape areas and town character, scenic beauty, local distinctiveness, historic and cultural character	<p>Will it protect and enhance sites features and areas of historical, archaeological and cultural value in both urban and rural areas?</p> <p>Will it improve the quality and character of landscapes and townscapes?</p> <p>Will it help to conserve historic buildings through sensitive adaptation and re-use?</p> <p>Will it lead to the retention and enhancement of heritage assets?</p> <p>Will it lead to reduced pressure on the cultural heritage (e.g. archaeology)?</p> <p>Will it contribute to a quality built environment?</p>	+/-?	<p>Stone Conservation Area and the Trent and Mersey Canal Conservation Area lie within the settlement boundary however no designated landscapes or cultural heritage features will be directly affected by the new settlement boundaries. The potential removal of land by Westbridge Park from within the settlement boundary (through the recommended Main Modification) may undermine policy support for improvement to or intensification of the existing leisure facility at this location and new retail provision. This could help to protect the setting of the Stone Conservation Area which is to the north west on the northern side of the Trent and Mersey Canal. The setting of several key listed buildings (including Grade II Listed former warehouse adjoin Trent and Mersey Canal as well as several further Grade II listed Buildings on Stafford Street) could also be protected by this amendment to the settlement boundary. This potential change to the settlement boundary would also help to maintain the openness of Westbridge Park itself (by limiting opportunities for its redevelopment), as such helping to protect local landscape and as well as the established character of the area.</p> <p>There is however still some potential for the provision of new housing development within the settlement boundary in general to affect the quality and character of landscapes and townscapes, historic assets and the built environment. Positive effects might also be achieved in addition to any negative effects through good design, and any new development would have to comply with Policy N1 Design, Policy N8 Landscape Character and N9 Historic Environment in the Plan for Stafford Borough.</p>
16 To create a sense of community identity and belonging	<p>Will it encourage engagement in community activities?</p> <p>Will it lead to a net reduction in the number of people commuting to work outside the Borough?</p>	-	<p>Identification of the settlement boundary for Stone will provide a clear indication of where new development will be acceptable. The boundary includes the Strategic Development Locations for housing and employment to the west of the town.</p> <p>The settlement boundary allows for increased local housing and employment land, providing local employment opportunities. However the overall balance between local employment and commuting outside of the Borough is likely to</p>

**Table A.2 Appraisal matrix for Policy SB1 Stone**

SA Objectives	Decision-Making Criteria	SA Score	Justification
			<p>reflect current trends and therefore it is unlikely to result in a net reduction in commuting outside of the Borough.</p> <p>The removal of the land at Westbridge Park from within the settlement boundary, which the Council<sup>7</sup> has committed for the provision of improved leisure facilities as well as community facilities and retail uses, would mean that additional community use may not be provided given that policy support for these improvements may be undermined. As such the opportunity to improve potential for local engagement in community activities may be lost and a minor negative effect is expected on this SA objective.</p>
17 To ensure tolerance, respect and engagement with people from different cultures, backgrounds and beliefs recognising their rights and responsibilities	Will it improve ethnic relations?	0	The identification of the settlement boundary for Stone will have no effect on this SA Objective. The revised settlement boundary is unlikely to change this effect.
18 To ensure that all individuals and groups in society have the opportunity to effectively engage in issues relating to their community	Will it increase the ability of people to influence decisions?	0	The identification of the settlement boundary for Stone will have no effect on this SA Objective. The revised settlement boundary is unlikely to change this effect.
19 To encourage a strong, inclusive, community and voluntary sector	Will it encourage increased voluntary levels?	0	The identification of the settlement boundary for Stone will have no effect on this SA Objective. The revised settlement boundary is unlikely to change this effect.
20 To engender a sense of civic and neighbourhood values, responsibility and pride	Will it encourage engagement in community activities?	0	The identification of the settlement boundary for Stone will have no effect on this SA Objective. The revised settlement boundary is unlikely to change this effect.

<sup>7</sup> Stafford Borough Council (2016), Document (P2-P2) Council Position Statement – Westbridge Park, Stone



