

# North York Moors Local Plan

## Our Approach to Plan-Making

The Sustainability Appraisal Report – Preferred Options

This document is the Sustainability Appraisal Report. Sustainability Appraisal aims to promote sustainable development through better integration of sustainability considerations in the preparation and adoption of plans. This document sets out the work carried out to test policies in the 'Preferred Options' version of the forthcoming North York Moors Local Plan 2016-35 against environmental, economic and social objectives. It explains how and why policies have been amended to make sure the new local plan helps deliver more sustainable forms of development.

**July 2018**



# Contents

1. A Short (Non-Technical) Summary.....	5
Why have we prepared this document?.....	5
What is sustainability appraisal?.....	5
What has happened so far? .....	5
What is in this document? .....	6
Summary of Sustainability Appraisal .....	7
What happens next? .....	7
2. About This Document.....	8
What is Sustainability Appraisal & Strategic Environmental Assessment?.....	8
Compliance with the SEA Directive / Regulations.....	8
Who carried out the Sustainability Appraisal?.....	9
Guidance.....	9
Consultation .....	10
3. Contents, Objectives of the Draft Plan and Links to Other Plans and Programmes. ....	11
An Outline of the Contents of the Draft Local Plan .....	11
Links to Other Strategies, Plans and Programmes and Sustainability Objectives .....	12
Summary of Key Social, Environmental and Economic Issues. ....	12
Environmental Issues .....	12
Social Issues.....	14
Economic Issues .....	15
Sustainability Issues.....	15
4. The Appraisal .....	17
5. Ensuring Consistency with the Vision and Objectives of the Local Plan .....	20
Commentary .....	21
6. Local Plan - Preferred Options .....	25
Main Strategic Options Considered .....	25
Assessing the Sustainability of Alternative and Preferred Options.....	26

Assessing the Cumulative Effects of Policies and the Plan .....	33
Proposed Mitigation Measures .....	39
Next Steps.....	39

**Appendices (Separate from the Main Report)**

Appendix 1 Summary of Requirements of SEA Directive

Appendix 2 – Review of Relevant Plans, Programmes and Objectives (Task A1)

Appendix 3 – Responses to Consultation on the Scoping Report.

Appendix 4 - Comparison of different Settlement Hierarchy Preferred Option and Options 1 to 3

Appendix 5 - Sustainability Appraisals for each Policy

Appendix 6 – Cumulative Effects of Preferred Options

Appendix 7 - Recommended Mitigation and Responses

Appendix 8 – The Monitoring Framework

# 1. A Short (Non-Technical) Summary

## Why have we prepared this document?

- 1.1 The North York Moors National Park Authority is preparing a new Local Plan. This plan will set out the framework of rules we will use to help decide planning applications. It will be a long term plan covering the period from 2016 to 2035.
- 1.2 The Local Plan sets out the overall spatial planning framework for the National Park. It contains strategic objectives for the future development of the Park and will include core policies to achieve the objectives, together with proposals for monitoring.
- 1.3 This is the second stage in the Sustainability Appraisal process that the Local Plan goes through. Because Sustainability appraisals are long and complicated documents this short, non- technical summary has been prepared.

## What is sustainability appraisal?

- 1.4 Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is a way of checking local plan policies and allocations against a series of economic, social and environmental criteria to see if they are capable of delivering the most sustainable forms of development. The appraisal also incorporates Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), the undertaking of which is required under the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004. Government guidance suggests that Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment can be carried out jointly and this is the approach the Authority has taken to appraising the Local Plan Preferred Options.

## What has happened so far?

- 1.5 The first stage, known as the 'Scoping Stage' was published in September 2016 and is available on the Authority's web site. The Scoping Report:
  - Reviewed other relevant policies, plans, programmes to establish whether their contents will need to inform the North York Moors National Park Local Plan;
  - Looked at what we know about the North York Moors National Park at the moment to see what issues need to be addressed. In sustainability appraisal terms this is known as 'baseline information'. Identified any particular issues and problems, using the information we have collected, as well as any difficulties encountered, including lack of information. Baseline information about the environmental, social and economic conditions in the Park which the Local Plan must address. These can be summarised as follows:
    - **Environmental** – the diverse and special landscape of the Park is valued highly by resident and visitors but is likely to be subject to a range of pressures as a consequence of global climate change.
    - **Social** – Net outward migration of younger people and restricted services in more remote parts of the Park has implications for the vitality and viability of rural communities.
    - **Economic** – Low unemployment rates mask the seasonal nature of employment related to tourism and low agricultural incomes. This coupled with exceptionally high house prices has resulted in a severe affordability problem which is contributing to the issues outlined above.

- Set out the objectives we will be using to carry out this sustainability appraisal and how the appraisal will be carried out;
- Set out how we will start to monitor our eventual plan to see if it is working.

1.6 In accordance with the statutory requirements the three Strategic Environmental Assessment bodies (Historic England, Environment Agency and Natural England) were asked for their views. Their responses are set out at **Appendix 3**.

### **What is in this document?**

1.7 The preparation and production of the SA has been led by officers from the National Park Authority.

1.8 This document:

1. Explains what sustainability appraisal is and about the preparation process (Section 2)
2. Carries out an appraisal of the draft 'Preferred Options' Local Plan, and starts by setting out the twelve **environmental, social and economic objectives** that will be used to appraise the draft plan (Chapter 4);
3. Assesses whether the separate objectives set out in the draft Local Plan perform well in sustainability terms by assessing **those objectives** against the objectives used by this sustainability appraisal (Chapter 5);
4. Moves on to carry out an appraisal of the main **spatial strategy** proposed in the plan (known as the settlement hierarchy) and looks at some **alternative options** on how a spatial strategy could be formulated and whether our 'preferred option' performed the best compared to others when assessed against the sustainability objectives (Chapter 6). **It concluded our preferred option for a spatial strategy was the most sustainable of those tested.**
5. The appraisal then moves on look at **individual policies**. The full appraisal tables are at **Appendix 5**. No site allocations were tested as the draft plan does not include any relating to new development (apart from a couple of small 'environmental enhancement sites' identified in draft Policy ENV14.)
6. Assessment of policies is handled in two different ways, depending on whether the authors or the draft plan considered that there were alternative options that needed to be generated and considered by testing through the appraisal framework. Article 5(1) of the UE SEA Directive requires that only *"reasonable alternatives should be taken into account the objectives and the geographical scope of the plan or programme, are identified, described and evaluated"* A grey box and the end of each policy in the draft plan explains the approach taken to each one:
  - For some policies such as Policy ENV3 on a strong sense of remoteness or Strategic Policy M on the approach to the housing strategy there were considered to be a number of choices to be made on the overall approach the policy could take. A range of options was therefore generated and considered within this sustainability appraisal. A summary of whether the preferred option included in the draft plan is the most sustainable when compare to alternative options is included at **Table 2 in Chapter 6**.
  - For other policies there is less choice and flexibility on what the policy needs to say. Officers took the view that on some policies (for example Strategic Policy H on Habitats, Wildlife, Biodiversity and Geodiversity where the clear sustainability imperative is to make sure those sites are protected) meant that there were no

realistic alternatives options that could be tested or that it would not be a good use of time and resources to generate and test alternatives for its own sake. Instead, the policy wording is tested against each sustainability objective and changes are recommended where it is felt that it would result in a more sustainable outcome. Suggested mitigation measures to improve policy outcomes are set at **Appendix 7**.

7. **'Cumulative effects'** were then considered. There are two sorts – how the policies interact with each other and the effect of the whole plan would have in sustainability terms when implemented in combination with other plans and programmes. This information is summarised in **Chapter 6 Table 3** and set out in more detail at **Appendix 6**.

### **Summary of Sustainability Appraisal**

- 1.9 Overall the policy appraisal found that the Local Plan would largely have positive impacts through application of the sixty four policies and associated environmental, social and economic sustainability objectives. No significant negative impacts were identified during the policy appraisal process. Where minor negative impacts were identified, in most cases the negative impacts were outweighed by the positive effects of the policy resulting in overall sustainable policies. Any minor negative impacts arising from the cumulative assessment can be mitigated through the application of policies within the plan.
- 1.10 Where alternative options were generated for policies and then tested against the preferred option set out in this plan all preferred option policies were the most sustainable, although for two there was uncertainty over impacts as it would depend on what development proposals were received and how the policy would be implemented. The preferred option spatial strategy option also performed the best against objectives when compared to other options.
- 1.11 **This report therefore concludes that the planning framework set out in the draft Preferred Options Local Plan represents the most sustainable option when tested against reasonable alternatives.**

### **What happens next?**

- 1.12 Any comments received will be incorporated in the next version of this document. Any other views will also be considered and incorporated as necessary.
- 1.13 All comments should be received by **5 p.m. on the 12<sup>th</sup> October 2018**.

## 2. About This Document

2.1 This document has been prepared to support work on the new North York Moors Local Plan. The Local Plan will guide new development across the National Park over the next twenty or so years, by identifying land for particular uses and setting out a suite of policies to help decide planning applications. Its ‘guiding light’ will be that it must deliver nationally agreed National Park purposes:

- ‘To conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Parks’ and
- ‘To promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the Parks by the public.’

2.2 In addition there is a further duty in pursuing these two purposes - *‘to seek to foster the economic and social wellbeing of local communities.’*

### What is Sustainability Appraisal & Strategic Environmental Assessment?

2.3 Sustainability Appraisal is a process of appraising the social, environmental and economic implications of all emerging strategies, policies and plans to ensure that decisions are made in accordance with the principle of sustainable development. In addition the National Park Authority in preparing its Local Plan must comply with the requirements of European Union Directive 2001/42/EC. This Directive requires a formal Strategic Environmental Assessment of all plans and programmes which are likely to have a significant effect on the environment.

2.4 Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment are required to be undertaken in conjunction with the preparation of Local Plans to ensure that the environmental, social and economic issues affecting the National Park are fully integrated into emerging policies and strategies prior to their formal adoption.

2.5 Sustainability Appraisal is what is known as an ‘iterative’ process, in other words it is reapplied at each stage of plan-making to make sure that our plans are heading in the right direction. Consequently we will produce a fresh version of the appraisal when consulting on options. When we finally adopt the plan we will also produce a sustainability statement setting out how we have used the appraisal to inform it.

### Compliance with the SEA Directive / Regulations

2.6 Government guidance on carrying out Sustainability Appraisals indicates that the report must show that the SEA Directive’s requirements have been met. This should be done by indicating where the information required by the Directive is provided in the report. **Appendix 1** summarises the Directive’s requirements and shows where these have been dealt with in the report.

2.7 The sustainability appraisal is a tool to test different approaches to guiding development we can take in the Local Plan and assesses various options against a set of criteria aimed at informing the most sustainable way forward. The Authority is required, under the terms of the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive<sup>1</sup>, to undertake an assessment of the environmental effects of a plan. A wider ‘Sustainability Appraisal’ covering non-environmental issues is also required through Government planning guidance<sup>2</sup>. Our

---

<sup>1</sup> European Union, Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Assessment of the Effects of Certain Plans and Programmes on the Environment, 2001.

<sup>2</sup> Department of Communities and Local Government, Online National Planning Policy Practice Guidance Paragraph: 005 Reference ID: 11-005-20140306, 2012.

appraisal process therefore considers the social and economic effects of the Local Plan in addition to environmental matters.

- 2.8 Assessment is also required under the Habitats Directive<sup>3</sup>. Habitats Regulations Assessment however follows different principles to Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment and therefore should be undertaken separately, although certain elements such as information gathering and developing options can be undertaken simultaneously. A separate Habitats Regulations Report has been published alongside the Sustainability Appraisal Report at the Preferred Options consultation stage.

### **Who carried out the Sustainability Appraisal?**

- 2.9 The Sustainability Appraisal was undertaken by the National Park Authority's Policy team in accordance with the regulations and guidance set out for the production of a Local Plan. Good practice in SEA / SA emphasises the value of integrating the assessment with the plan making process and the decision to undertake an in house approach to Sustainability Appraisal has enabled the National Park Authority to maintain control of the process ensuring that it is integral and not divorced from the plan making process. The Authority has also been able to develop distinct appraisal criteria that both conforms with and reflects the statutory purposes of the National Park Authority's work.
- 2.10 In addition carrying out an in-house approach has meant that policies have been written and have evolved in response to an ongoing testing procedure through the sustainability appraisal. An indirect benefit of the approach taken has also been the financial savings having not commissioned work out to external bodies.

### **Guidance**

- 2.11 This report has been drafted in accordance with guidance contained in
- The Planning Advisory Services 'Good Plan Making' Guidance available on their website;
  - Sustainability Appraisal of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Frameworks (ODPM, 2005);
  - A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (ODPM, 2005)
  - RTPI Strategic Environmental Assessment Practice Advice January 2018.
- 2.12 The following diagram, (taken from Planning Advisory Service advice on good plan-making) shows how sustainability appraisal and plan-making should ideally fit together. This document represents 'Stage B' of sustainability assessment within this diagram:

---

<sup>3</sup> European Union, the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora (Habitats Directive) (Directive 92/43/EEC), 1992.

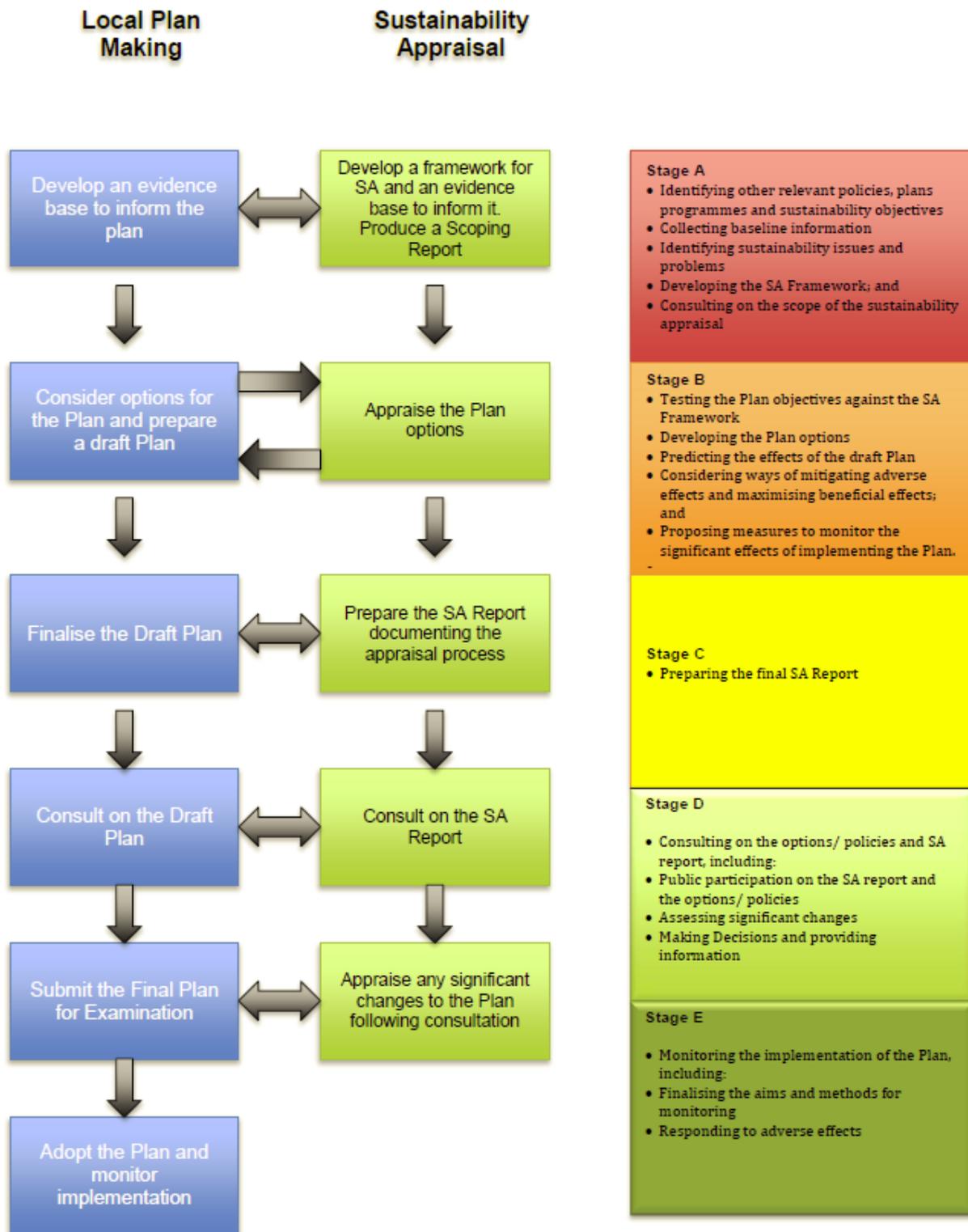


Figure 1 – The Sustainability Appraisal Process

## Consultation

- 2.13 Consultation was undertaken on the Scoping Report for 8 weeks during September/October 2016 with the three Statutory Consultees (Heritage England, the Environment Agency and Natural England) and other relevant organisations. Comments received and have been taken into account in finalising the report. Comments are set out at **Appendix 2**.

### 3. Contents, Objectives of the Draft Plan and Links to Other Plans and Programmes.

3.1 This section of the Sustainability Appraisal describes what's in the draft Plan, and shows how it relates to other plans and programmes. It is included as this is a requirement of the SEA directive (see Appendix 1).

#### An Outline of the Contents of the Draft Local Plan

3.2 The draft Local Plan sets out a suite of planning policies for the North York Moors National Park that will be used to help decide planning applications in the future. These policies are designed to help protect what's special about the National Park, whilst sensitively managing change in a way to support those who live, work and visit here. It is the key document that will influence the use and development of land in the National Park and is the starting point for the decision making role of the Authority as a local planning authority.

3.3 The plan is structured as follows:

- 1) **Part 1** - 'About This Plan' explains the background to the Plan, how long it runs for, the area it covers and how it relates to other areas.
- 2) **Part 2** - 'Portrait, Vision and Objectives' sets out the context for the Plan. It looks at what makes the North York Moors National Park so special and what needs protecting, and includes information on challenges facing the North York Moors which need to be addressed. It then sets out a vision for how we wish to see the National Park evolve before setting out the objectives this Plan aims to deliver.
- 3) **Part 3** - 'Strategic Approach' is the 'spatial' section of the Plan. This section includes some of the strategic policies we will use to direct and manage development across the National Park in the coming years. It includes the spatial strategy and settlement hierarchy, policies on the scale and distribution of new development, a policy on major development and policies to protect and enhance the environment and character of the North York Moors National Park.
- 4) **Parts 4 to 7** set out policies to manage development, and cover the same four main themes in the National Park Authority's Management Plan. These are *Environment, Understanding and Enjoyment, Business and Land Management* and *Communities*.

3.4 The Plan is written to help deliver the **statutory purposes** of National Park designation. These are **'to conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the National Park'** and **'to promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special qualities of the Park by the public'**. In addition, there is a **statutory duty on the National Park Authority** and within this help implement the Authority's duty *'to foster the economic and social well-being of local communities'*. Strategic Policy A articulates this approach the most, however all policies have been written to ensure adherence the statutory purposes and duty.

3.5 The Plan gives great weight in decision making to the **importance of landscape**.

3.6 The Plan divides the National Park's settlements into a **'settlement hierarchy'** (Strategic Policy B), which dictates the approach to the planning of new development within different areas. The tiers set out in the hierarchy are the Local Service Centre of Helmsley (which has its own Local Plan adopted in 2015), Larger Villages, Smaller Villages and then Open Countryside. A separate policy covers the community of Botton.

3.7 The **Environment Chapter** contains policies aimed at protecting the National Park's special qualities. As well as a policy protecting the landscape there are specific policies on

three of these special qualities – tranquillity, a strong feeling of remoteness and dark skies at night. A suite of policies then cover the historic and built environment. Of note, Policy ENV13 protects a series of ‘Visually Important Spaces’ within settlements which are identified to help protect the form and character of the National Park’s settlements.

- 3.8 The **Understanding and Enjoyment Chapter** contains a set of policies aimed at promoting sustainable tourism and recreation development within the National Park which are closely aligned with the second National Park purpose. It includes policies covering a range of different types of tourism development.
- 3.9 The **Business and Land Management Chapter** includes policies to encourage new commercial activity and help prevent the loss of employment and retail premises. This part of the plan also includes policies relating to agricultural development, tracks, advertising signs and communications infrastructure.
- 3.10 The **Communities Chapter** includes policies on protecting community spaces, transport, parking and rights of way. This section also includes policies on housing and householder development. This Plan does not identify sites for development other than on ‘environmental enhancement sites’ where the aim is to allow for some development where it would result in the removal of an unsightly area. Housing development is already allocated on sites at Helmsley within the adopted Helmsley Local Plan (2015). The housing strategy within this Plan allows for limited amounts of new homes on infill sites in Larger Villages where they are restricted to make sure that they are used as a permanent residence (known as ‘principal residence housing’), or on infill sites in Smaller Villages for ‘local needs housing’ which can only be occupied by someone with a strong local connection to the area. Affordable housing is then encouraged on ‘rural exceptions sites’ in or adjacent to settlements, aimed at providing 100% affordable housing for those in housing need, this is unless in Larger Villages it can be demonstrated that some principal residence housing (housing where the occupant is using it as a main home) is required to ensure delivery of a significant amount of affordable housing on the site.

### **Links to Other Strategies, Plans and Programmes and Sustainability Objectives**

- 3.11 In fulfilling the requirements of the SEA Directive it is necessary to identify the relationship of the Local Plan to other relevant plans and programmes. **Appendix 2** of this report provides a comprehensive listing of relevant plans and programmes so far identified although it remains under development and review, and will continue to evolve in light of the consultation feedback and as the SEA/SA process progresses.

### **Summary of Key Social, Environmental and Economic Issues.**

- 3.12 A commentary of the main social, environmental and economic issues facing the National Park was included in the Scoping Report for the Sustainability Appraisal. This is known as the ‘baseline information.’ The main issues can be summarised as follows:

#### **Environmental Issues**

- The landscape of the North York Moors is especially valued, and indeed the main reason for its designation as a National Park and significant natural resource available to everyone for recreation and relaxation. It is also vulnerable to change, both from natural process but also from changes to the built environment. We need to continue to ensure that the landscape is maintained and enhanced, in line with our statutory duties set out in the 1995 Environment Act. Character assessment work has been carried out in the past, however it will need updating and sensitivity analysis will need to be carried out on potential new development proposals;

- The special qualities of the National Park also extend way beyond landscape. We also need to continue to ensure tranquillity, including dark skies, can be maintained, or improved if possible. The North York Moors is an especially tranquil place, as measured through analysis carried out in 2007, however this data has not been updated;
- Water quality in the North York Moors National Park is incredibly important as it supports some very rare species. There have been some improvements in terms of the number of water bodies moving up from the poor to moderate quality categories; however the number in the high/good categories is declining. Water quality needs to be protected;
- Information on soil quality is limited. No grade 1 or 2 land (high quality for food/plant production) lies within the North York Moors and due to its upland nature the vast majority of the National Park is Grades 3 to 4. There are therefore no major sustainability issues in terms of its quality as a food production resource within the National Park itself. However, it remains a highly important resource as a carbon sink, meaning peat restoration projects and agri-environment schemes aimed at soil retention will help to benefit a wider population;
- Air quality in the Park is relatively good but is generally influenced by activities occurring outside of the National Park. We need to continue to ensure that air quality is maintained or improved;
- Climate change may bring particular challenges, including flooding of infrastructure (buildings, roads, footpaths) and habitats, drought, affecting flora and fauna and also productivity, changes to the coastline as a result of a combination of sea level rise, increased rainfall and increased storminess, increased risk of fire on the moorland, changes to conditions for biodiversity which may result in loss of some species and an increase or the introduction of other, potentially threatening, species; changes to native woodland, including tree species and ground flora (and economic implications in relation to timber production);
- Flood risk and minimising the impact of flooding. Environmental management in the upper catchments of a river can play a key role in water storage and minimising flood risk downstream as demonstrated through schemes such as 'Slowing the Flow' in Pickering.
- The National Park is a 'nature hotspot' and contains a wealth of both designated and non-designated habitats and many protected and non-protected species, much of the area is a Special Protection Area or Special Area for Conservation;
- The condition of our Sites of Special Scientific Interest has been improving over the past few years. There has also been a large increase in the amount of land managed in line with conservation objectives since 1992 although this has decreased slightly over the last year or two;
- The North York Moors has a high concentration of ancient woodland;
- There has been an increase in the number of moorland wader birds, however populations fluctuate;
- There are no issues around water supply in the North York Moors;
- The National Park has a very rich and diverse historic environment including, by far, the greatest number of Scheduled Monuments of any planning authority in Yorkshire.

However, the 2016 Heritage at Risk Register identified that 4 buildings and 46 of its Scheduled Monuments were at risk.

- There is a reliance on areas outside of the National Park for any aggregates used in the Park, reflecting the importance of National Park designation;
- A significant amount of potash reserves are being exploited or may be exploited;
- Waste is dealt with outside the National Park boundary. Recycling rates are going up;
- Traffic levels in the Park have fluctuated, although could be said to have increased slightly, over the past 10 to 15 years. A recent drop bucks this trend; we will not know if this will continue until monitoring starts again;
- Car ownership levels are above county level and national rates. The car is by far the most used mode of transport by those visiting the Park;
- 34.4% of our housing completions have been in the form of conversions of existing sites. This has fluctuated over the years but the trend largely follows the same trend as greenfield completions;
- The relatively limited number of development opportunities in the National Park may mean that proportions of development on previously-developed sites may vary over time, for example if a large site comes forward on a previously developed site this may skew any trend.

### **Social Issues**

- The population of the National Park is declining (in contrast to most other National Parks). The population has declined around 4% between 2001 and 2016, and within this trend the decline is particularly marked for the years since 2008;
- The population in the NYMNP area is 'older' than other areas - 25% of our population is aged under 30 compared with 37-38% regionally and nationally. 46% of our population is aged 60 or more compared with 23% across England and 30% within the North Yorkshire;
- The largest proportional population gains were from people aged 60 or more, conversely populations under 44 showed a marked decline;
- Around 30% of all households are one person households – this percentage has been rising since 2001. This figure is slightly below the national average;
- Compared to national and regional rates we have more households with no children;
- Despite population decline the number of households has increased – this is because households are getting smaller in size;
- There has been around a 7% increase in housing stock between 2001 and 2011, over this time there also around a 17% increase in second home ownership;
- 48% of households in the North York Moors own their house outright (with no mortgage), compared to around 30% nationally. This may largely reflect an older population;

- House prices remain high - in 2017 the average house price in the Park was £255,342. However, prices have remained stable since 2006;
- There has been a loss of community facilities in villages over many years and a particular decline in the number of villages with a post office;
- There has been an increase in the number of rights of way classed as easy to use since 2004.

### **Economic Issues**

- The best estimate we have is that there were around 12,500 employees employed in the North York Moors National Park at 2013;
- There is a very low unemployment rate, meaning there is virtually no available labour to fill any new jobs in the National Park;
- The most prevalent types of jobs are in retail and accommodation (supporting tourism) and agriculture;
- Tourism is incredibly important to the economy of the North York Moors. In 2016 7.93 million visitors brought £647 million of spending into the National Park, a figure that is rising over time. They also helped support around 10,923 full time equivalent jobs ;
- It has been estimated that around 65% of jobs in the National Park depend directly or indirectly on the quality of the environment in the National Park;
- The population of the National Park is better qualified than other areas; however there is a loss of younger qualified people from the North York Moors.

### **Sustainability Issues**

3.13 A summary of the key sustainability issues arising from Tasks A1 – A3 is set out below:

#### **Environmental**

- Ensuring that the natural environment and landscape is conserved and enhanced and that tranquillity, including dark skies is maintained or improved;
- Air, water and soil quality should be maintained and improved, particular where it is needed to support key species;
- There is a need to reduce the causes of climate change and to ensure measures are in place to adapt to its effects;
- Biodiversity assets need to be maintained and enhanced;
- Ensuring that the built and historic environment is conserved and enhanced;
- The need to travel by private car should be reduced;
- The most efficient use of land is required, including the optimum use of brownfield sites;

## **Social**

- People should be able to access services and facilities, including health, education and recreation facilities;
- Housing which is affordable and to meet local needs should be provided;

## **Economic**

- Measures should be in place to support the growth and diversity of the local economy;
- Tourism and recreation should be supported where they lead to the appreciation of the special qualities of the North York Moors National Park.

## 4. The Appraisal

- 4.1 The appraisal framework provides the template for describing, analysing and comparing sustainability implications of the Local Plan. Guidance suggests that the framework should consist of objectives, the achievement of which should be measurable using identified indicators. The framework has been informed by the review of plans and programmes and the identification of sustainability issues and problems which was undertaken as part of the Scoping Report (September 2017).
- 4.2 Sustainability objectives were initially established as part of the scoping process for the Sustainability Appraisal of the Core Strategy and Development Policies Development Plan Document, but amended slightly for clarification during the production of subsequent documents. They were also established for the sustainability appraisal for the North York Moors Management Plan. We have reviewed and amended these objectives to derive a consolidated and manageable list. In doing so we have also taken account advice offered by Natural England, the Environment Agency and Historic England in their response to the Scoping Report (see **Appendix 2**).
- 4.3 The sustainability objectives are set out below:

<b>Environmental Objectives</b>	E1	<p>To maintain and enhance the quality and character of the landscape and cultural heritage of the North York Moors, including the special qualities of remoteness and tranquillity.</p> <p><i>Prompt Questions:</i></p> <p><i>Will the National Park landscape and special qualities be protected and enhanced?</i></p> <p><i>Will landscape character improve?</i></p> <p><i>Will tranquillity improve or deteriorate?</i></p>
	E2	<p>To protect water, soil and air quality, and reduce pollution, and improve efficiency of water use.</p> <p><i>Prompt Questions:</i></p> <p><i>Will the policy/ option have an adverse impact on Groundwater Source Protection Zones or cause discharge into a river?</i></p> <p><i>Will best and most versatile Agricultural Land be protected?</i></p> <p><i>Would the policy option result in the re-use and clean-up of contaminated land?</i></p> <p><i>Would the option lead to the worsening of air quality?</i></p>
	E3	<p>To reduce the causes of climate change and ensure future development is resilient to climate change, including reducing the impact of flooding and avoiding flood risk.</p>

		<p><i>Prompt Questions:</i></p> <p><i>Will the option/policy increase the resilience of habitats to climate change?</i></p> <p><i>Will the policy option/policy increase resilience to climate change risks such as lower water availability, increased subsidence or heatwaves?</i></p> <p><i>Will the option/policy increase surface or fluvial flooding or will development be vulnerable to flooding?</i></p> <p><i>Will greenhouse gasses be reduced?</i></p>
	E4	<p>To maintain and enhance conditions for biodiversity and geodiversity and avoid irreversible losses or damage to designated nature conservation sites, protected species and geological assets.</p> <p><i>Prompt Questions:</i></p> <p><i>Will the option/policy protect and enhance internationally and locally designated biodiversity/geodiversity sites? (including SPAs, SACs, Ramsar Sites, SSSIs, SINCs, LNRs and RIGs)</i></p> <p><i>Will important habitats and species outside of protected sites be affected?</i></p> <p><i>Will the option/policy protect and enhance established tree cover or hedgerows which would be impossible to replace in the short to medium term?</i></p>
	E5	<p>To preserve and enhance all aspects of the historic environment and to provide opportunities for all residents to access and understand local cultural heritage.</p> <p><i>Prompt Questions:</i></p> <p><i>Will historic features of interest (Conservation areas, Listed building, SAM, Areas of Archaeological importance) be protected?</i></p> <p><i>Will non designated heritage assets be protected?</i></p> <p><i>Will historic character be enhanced?</i></p> <p><i>Will the option/policy lead to a greater understanding of the historic environment?</i></p>
	E6	<p>To re-use brownfield land and empty buildings bearing in mind their potential nature conservation and heritage value.</p> <p><i>Prompt Questions:</i></p> <p><i>Will the option/policy encourage the re use of brownfield</i></p>

		<p><i>sites?</i></p> <p><i>Will the option enhance heritage assets and protect important habitats?</i></p>
<b>Social Objectives</b>	S1	<p>To foster and maintain vibrant local communities and encourage a sense of community and belonging.</p> <p><i>Prompt Question:</i></p> <p><i>Will the option/policy protect and enhance facilities that are important to local communities?</i></p>
	S2	<p>To provide decent housing in accessible locations to meet the needs of local people, including the young, and to maximise opportunities for provision of affordable housing.</p> <p><i>Prompt Questions:</i></p> <p><i>Will affordable housing be supported by the option/policy?</i></p> <p><i>Will affordable housing increase in line with demand in accessible locations?</i></p>
	S3	<p>To protect and enhance access to community facilities, leisure and recreation opportunities and access to the countryside.</p> <p><i>Prompt Questions:</i></p> <p><i>Will the option/policy increase or decrease access to health/wellbeing and recreational facilities?</i></p> <p><i>Will the option/policy increase opportunities for access to the countryside?</i></p>
	S4	<p>To make sure new development is easily accessible to essential services, to help reduce the need to travel and minimise the environmental impact of transport.</p> <p><i>Prompt Questions:</i></p> <p><i>Will the option/policy result in shorter journeys to local services?</i></p> <p><i>Will the option/policy encourage development in locations where public transport is available?</i></p> <p><i>Will the policy encourage active travel such as walking/cycling on nearby PROW?</i></p> <p><i>Could the policy improve air quality by minimising the need to travel?</i></p>

<p><b>Economic Objectives</b></p>	<p>EC1</p>	<p>To strengthen and diversify the local economy by supporting a range of opportunities for employment and training particularly in sustainable locations.</p> <p><i>Prompt Question:</i></p> <p><i>Will the option/policy support local services and businesses?</i></p> <p><i>Will the option/policy create new jobs?</i></p> <p><i>Will the option/policy increase access to jobs?</i></p>
	<p>EC2</p>	<p>To support tourism and recreation industry by ensuring that development contributes to the local economy and provides opportunities for enjoying the Park's special qualities.</p> <p><i>Prompt Question:</i></p> <p><i>Will new tourism proposals be supported by the option/policy?</i></p> <p><i>Will the option/policy support the retention of existing tourism related businesses?</i></p> <p><i>Will the option/policy support tourism businesses that provide a greater understanding of the special qualities of the National Park?</i></p>

4.4 The draft Local Plan includes a separate and distinct set of objectives which are framed specifically around what that plan is aiming to achieve.

## 5. Ensuring Consistency with the Vision and Objectives of the Local Plan

5.1 A series of objectives have been developed for the Local Plan. The Vision for how the National Park will look and function at the end of the plan's life is shared with the Management Plan. The vision is for:

- A place managed with care and concern for future generations
- A place where the diversity and distinctiveness of the landscape, villages and buildings is cherished
- A place where biological and cultural diversity, and other special qualities are conserved and enhanced
- A place where the environment and way of life is respected and understood
- A place where communities are more self-sustaining and economic activity engenders environmental and recreational benefits
- A place that is special to people and that provides pleasure, inspiration and spiritual well-being; where calm and quality of life are celebrated

- A place where visitors are welcome and cultural and recreational opportunities and experiences are accessible
- A place that continues to adapt to change whilst National Park purposes continue to be furthered and pursued
- A place where natural resources are managed sustainably and environmental limits are recognised

5.2 The achievement of this Vision can be helped by the planning decisions the Authority makes and the Vision is translated into a series of 20 objectives which have been produced to help the development policies. To ensure these objectives are consistent with the principles of sustainable development they have been appraised against the sustainability objectives. Please refer to **Table 1** for details of this assessment.

### **Commentary**

5.3 The majority of the objectives are compatible or have no direct link. No objectives have been identified as having a significant or minor negative impact. Many of the objectives have a positive relationship with the principals of sustainable development when measured against the Sustainability Appraisal Framework. Some Local Plan objectives have been identified as having an uncertain impact and where this has occurred analysis is provided below;

#### **Local Plan Objective 5 – Safeguard and improve the sense of tranquillity and remoteness in the Park**

5.4 **Sustainability Objective E6 (uncertain)** – A slight uncertainty exists and the compatibility of these objectives is questionable as the location of brownfield land and empty buildings, which the objective encourages the reuse of may be in locations which are tranquil or remote. Detailed policy requirements should prevent the reuse of land or empty buildings in remote areas and preclude development which would have an adverse impact on tranquillity and this should limit any uncertain impact therefore ensuring compatibility with this Local Plan objective.

#### **Local Plan Objective 6 - Maintain and improve the darkness of night skies seen in the Park**

5.5 **Sustainability Objective E6 (uncertain)** - A slight uncertainty exists and the compatibility of these objectives is questionable as the re development of brownfield land and empty buildings in rural locations, which the objective encourages, may have an impact on the maintenance of the darkness of night skies. Detailed policy requirements in relation to Remote Areas and in relation to proposals that involve external lighting in the open countryside should prevent development that will have an adverse impact on this Local Plan objective.

5.6 **Sustainability Objective EC2 (uncertain)** – An uncertainty exists as the Sustainability Objective seeks to support the tourism and recreation industry ensuring that development contributes to the local economy and provides opportunities for enjoying the Park’s special qualities. Proposals for new and expanded tourism development in open countryside may detract from the dark night skies will need to be considered against detailed policy requirements in relation to external lighting. A balance between providing/improving facilities for visitors and providing opportunities for enjoying the Park’s special qualities and protecting the Park’s dark night skies will need to be assessed and reached when development proposals come forward in order to minimise the impact of this Local Plan Objective.

**Local Plan Objective 13 - Manage recreational pressures to avoid harm to the Park's special qualities**

- 5.7 **Sustainability Objective EC2 (uncertain)** - An uncertainty exists as the Sustainability Objective seeks to support the tourism and recreation industry ensuring that development contributes to the local economy and provides opportunities for enjoying the Park's special qualities. A balance between supporting tourism and recreation and managing recreational pressures will need to be assessed and reached when development proposals come forward in order to minimise the impact of this Local Plan Objective.

**Local Plan Objective 17 - Improve telecommunications and connectivity where compatible with National Park purposes**

- 5.8 **Sustainability Objective E1 (uncertain)** – Whilst there is a clear need to improve telecommunications and connectivity in the National Park for the benefit of the local economy and for the benefit of residents and visitors this must be balanced against the statutory duties of the National Park and the need to protect the special landscape. Detailed policy requirements should prevent the siting of communications infrastructure where there would be an unacceptable harmful landscape impact and this should ensure compatibility with this Local Plan Objective.

Sustainability Appraisal Objectives	National Park Statutory Purposes and Duty			The Environment							Understanding and Enjoyment			Business and Land Management				Communities		
	PO1	PO2	PO3	PO4	PO5	PO6	PO7	PO8	PO9	PO10	PO11	PO12	PO13	PO14	PO15	PO16	PO17	PO18	PO19	PO20
<b>E1 - To maintain and enhance the quality and character of the landscape and cultural heritage of the North York Moors, including the special qualities of remoteness and tranquillity.</b>			X							X								X	X	X
<b>E2 - To protect water, soil and air quality, and reduce pollution, and improve efficiency of water use.</b>	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
<b>E3 - To reduce the causes of climate change and ensure future development is resilient to climate change, including reducing the impact of flooding and avoiding flood risk.</b>		X	X	X	X	X	X				X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
<b>E4 - To maintain and enhance conditions for biodiversity and geodiversity and avoid irreversible losses or damage to designated nature conservation sites, protected species and geological assets.</b>		X	X	X							X	X		X		X	X	X	X	X
<b>E5 - To preserve and enhance all aspects of the historic environment and to provide opportunities for all residents to access and understand local cultural heritage.</b>			X		X	X		X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
<b>E6 - To re-use brownfield land and empty buildings bearing in mind their potential nature conservation and heritage value.</b>		X	X						X		X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
<b>S1 - To foster and maintain vibrant local communities and encourage a sense of community and belonging.</b>					X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X							
<b>S2 - To provide decent housing in accessible locations to meet the needs of local people, including the young, and to maximise opportunities for provision of affordable housing.</b>		X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	
<b>S3 - To protect and enhance access to community facilities, leisure and recreation opportunities and access to the countryside.</b>						X	X	X	X	X				X	X	X		X		X
<b>S4 - To make sure new development is easily accessible to essential services, to help reduce the need to travel and minimise the environmental impact of transport.</b>		X		X		X	X								X	X	X			X

<b>EC1 - To strengthen and diversify the local economy by supporting a range of opportunities for employment and training particularly in sustainable locations.</b>	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X			X	X							X
<b>EC2 - To support tourism and recreation industry by ensuring that development contributes to the local economy and provides opportunities for enjoying the Park's special qualities.</b>	X			X				X	X	X					X		X	X	X	X	X

**Key**

<b>Positive impacts (+)</b>	Consistent with meeting the objective, either by having no negative impact or by positively influencing change in accordance with the objective.
<b>Negative impact (-)</b>	Will hinder the achievement of this objective.
<b>Significant Negative Impact (--)</b>	Will significantly hinder the achievement of this objective
<b>Neutral or no Impact (0)</b>	Will have neither a positive nor a negative impact upon this objective.
<b>Uncertain impact (U)</b>	May hinder achievement of this objective, but may have no negative impact, or may have a positive impact. This will depend upon implementation.
<b>X No direct link (X)</b>	There is no direct link with the objective.

## 6. Local Plan - Preferred Options

### Main Strategic Options Considered

- 6.1 Housing is the main form of development that will influence the future growth of settlements in the National Park. It is the 'driver' for other types of development including employment development, community and other facilities and infrastructure such as roads and utilities equipment. The strategic options for future development in the Park have therefore been developed around housing and three main options were identified. These options were assessed against the Sustainability Objectives (**see Appendix 4 for the Comparison of the Settlement Hierarchy Options and Appendix 5 for the detailed appraisal tables for each option**) and the effects of each option on the objectives can be summarised as follows:

#### **Option 1 - Keep the existing set out in the 2008 Core Strategy and Development Policies Document hierarchy**

- 6.2 Continuing to use the existing settlement hierarchy spreads the impact of new development over a wide area and helps to support facilities and services. Directing new community and recreational opportunities to Helmsley and the 7 Service Villages may mean that access to facilities outside these areas may not be protected or enhanced and may affect the vitality of smaller communities. This option will help to support for community facilities and services in the larger settlements but the Preferred Option will enable this over a wider range of settlements.

#### **Option 2- Create a new hierarchy with Helmsley as the Local Service Centre, A single tier of 61 villages (based on 35 or more houses) and Open Countryside. (Current Thinking Consultation)**

- 6.3 This option with a more simple hierarchy with all villages in one tier (61 villages above the 35 address point threshold) spreads the impact of development over a wider area than option 1, 3 and the preferred option. This option does not support development in the larger communities and services but instead spreads new development over the Park. This is considered to be an unsustainable approach as allowing all types of development (housing, tourism, community, and employment) in all the 61 villages may not protect existing services in the more sustainable locations and may result in development in locations which will increase car journeys as there are few opportunities for public transport other than in the larger settlements and will have a more significant landscape impact in the more sensitive locations. In addition this option did not include a sustainability assessment requirement for affordable housing in the smaller settlements which is considered to be important in order to ensure that affordable housing schemes are of an appropriate scale in relation to the scale and form of the settlement and that schemes are provided in locations that would support existing services.

#### **Option 3 - Create a new hierarchy with Local Service Centre – Helmsley, Larger Villages – 9 larger villages with a primary school and a reasonable range of service, together with the five Esk Valley Group of villages making a total of 14 villages. Smaller Villages – the majority of villages with more limited or no services – 47 in total, open countryside.**

- 6.4 This option has similar impacts to the Preferred Option in that it distinguishes between villages according to size and facilities and spreads the impact of new development over a wider area. The impact of this option would depend on the intention of the development policies in terms of housing, community facilities, employment and tourism. A tiered approach where development is directed towards the larger settlements to support their

service role and permitting small scale development in the smaller villages on the basis of local needs and to support the vitality of the local community is however a more sustainable approach than Option 2.

### **Preferred Option – (Helmsley, Larger Villages, Smaller Villages, Botton and Open Countryside)**

- 6.5 This option with Helmsley, Larger and Smaller Villages in a hierarchy is considered to have the most positive impacts of all the hierarchy approaches and will enable appropriately scaled development to take place in the most sustainable locations helping to maintain services and communities in the larger settlements and will support more limited forms of growth in the smaller villages where there is a proven need and where it supports the vitality of the local community. The provision of open market housing in Helmsley, principal residence housing for small infill development in the Larger Villages, local needs housing for small infill sites in the Smaller Villages and affordable housing in all tiers (subject to a sustainability appraisal in the Smaller Villages) is considered to be in accordance with the overriding principles of the Local Plan which seeks to foster vibrant communities where current population levels are maintained, where young people have an opportunity to live and work, and where new development is supported by appropriate infrastructure including sustainable transport.

### **Assessing the Sustainability of Alternative and Preferred Options**

- 6.6 The statutory remit and ‘purposes’ of the National Park, informed by the guidance within both national planning policy statements, coupled with the very nature of what is a very rural area with dispersed, low density patterns of settlement, means that strategic ‘high level’ options for planning for the area are less diverse than for areas with a clear hierarchy of settlements. The nationally described method of calculating housing need and the Housing Delivery Test does not apply in National Parks and no land is allocated for housing, apart from land allocated in the Helmsley Local Plan and the housing elements of the Environmental Enhancement Sites.
- 6.7 The appraisal then moves on look at **individual policies**. The full appraisal tables are at **Appendix 5**. No site allocations were tested as the draft plan does not include any relating to new development (apart from a couple of small ‘environmental enhancement sites’, draft Policy ENV14). Assessment of policies is handled in two different ways, depending on whether the authors or the draft plan considered that there were alternative options that needed to be generated and considered by testing through the appraisal framework. Article 5(1) of the UE SEA Directive requires that only *“reasonable alternatives should be taken into account the objectives and the geographical scope of the plan or programme, are identified, described and evaluated”* A grey box and the end of each policy in the draft plan explains the approach taken to each one:
- For some policies such as Policy ENV3 on a strong sense of remoteness or Strategic Policy M on the approach to the housing strategy there were considered to be a number of choices to be made on the overall approach the policy could take. A range of options were therefore generated and considered within this sustainability appraisal. A summary of whether the preferred option included in the draft plan is the most sustainable when compare to alternative options is included at **Table 2 in Chapter 6**.
  - For other policies there is less choice and flexibility on what the policy needs to say. Officers took the view that on some policies (for example Strategic Policy H on Habitats, Wildlife, Biodiversity and Geodiversity where the clear sustainability imperative is to make sure those sites are protected) meant that there were no realistic alternatives options that could be tested or that it would not be a good use of time and resources to generate and test alternatives for its own sake. Instead, the

policy wording is tested against each sustainability objective and changes are recommended where it is felt that it would result in a more sustainable outcome. Suggested mitigation measures to improve policy outcomes are set at **Appendix 7**.

- 6.8 Each preferred option and alternative options, where alternatives have been identified, have been appraised against the Sustainability Objectives in order to identify potential impacts and to ensure that the preferred option is the most sustainable approach. As the sustainability process has been carried out in house it has been possible to incorporate measures where potential adverse impacts have been identified as part of the on-going Local Plan process and this has enabled the policies to be strengthened and re-worded to ensure that the preferred option policies are sustainable. Many of the mitigation measures relate to the detailed location and design of the development proposals and further guidance is provided in the supporting policy text and in Design Guides and Supplementary Planning Documents.

**Table 2** identifies the policies where alternative options have been assessed and the overall conclusions of the preferred option over and above the alternative options. **Appendix 5** contains the full appraisal tables for all the policies and alternative options where appropriate.

**Table 2** below identifies that there are uncertain impacts identified in relation to policy ENV13 and policy CO16. With regards to ENV13, which relates to the designation of Visually Important Spaces, the appraisal identifies that the preferred option will have possible uncertain impacts on sustainable development and the assessment recognises the conflicts between future housing/economic development versus the protection of the National Park environment which is rich in heritage assets. The priority in the National Park should be the protection of landscape character which is derived from the character of buildings and the spaces between them and a whilst the development of a site in a village where there are other facilities and services may be more sustainable than one outside the village or elsewhere in a smaller village the visual importance of the space may override the sustainability of the development of the site and as such this option has an uncertain impact. There may be circumstances however where there is a wider public benefit for the sustainable development of the space and policies must seek to mitigate the impact by including criteria on design, scale and siting to minimise negative effects. The appraisal identifies that CO16 (Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Accommodation) will have possible uncertain impacts on sustainability objectives. The assessment identifies that the housing needs of Gypsy, Roma and Travellers may not be met with the proposed restriction on numbers to no more than 2 units, and subject to other criteria. In order to mitigate the impact of this monitoring mechanisms should be in place with the respective local authorities who are responsible for needs assessments to ensure that needs are up to date.

<b>Table 2 - Overall conclusions of Sustainability Assessment where Alternative Options have been Assessed</b>		<b>Colour Code</b>
<b>Local Plan Policies</b>	<b>Strategic Policies</b>	
	<b>SPA</b>	The preferred option will have positive impacts on the sustainability objectives by upholding National Park Purposes and promoting sustainable development where it is consistent with the statutory purposes The preferred option states that the Sandford Principle will be applied where there is an irreconcilable conflict between the statutory purposes and greater weight will be attached to the first statutory purpose. A specific policy which refers to the statutory purposes of the National Park is considered to meet the sustainability objectives over and above the alternative options and afford greater protection to this National Park’s landscape and provide specific policies in relation to housing/local economy/communities/tourism/agriculture which reflect the special character of the National Park and its rural communities.
	<b>SPB</b>	This option has some uncertain impacts but overall this approach with larger and smaller villages in a hierarchy is considered to have the most positive impacts of all the hierarchy approaches and will enable appropriately scaled development to take place in the most sustainable locations helping to maintain services and communities in the larger settlements and will support more limited forms of growth in the smaller villages where there is a proven need.
	<b>SPD</b>	The preferred option is assumed to have an overall positive impact on the sustainability objectives by refusing major development except in exceptional circumstances and ensuring that if major development is permitted its impact on the National Park and its statutory purposes are minimised. A specific policy which refers to the statutory purposes of the National Park and its local economy is a more tailored solution which allows more specific considerations to be taken into account in determining major planning applications above and beyond the wording as set out in paragraph 116 of the NPPF and is considered overall to meet the SA objectives. The uncertain outcomes reflect the areas of conflict which arise in relation to proposals for major development in a protected landscape and in particular to the conflict between the potential economic benefits against the potential harm to the landscape.
	<b>The Environment</b>	
	<b>ENV2</b>	The preferred option to have a specific tranquillity policy will have positive impacts on the environment leading to greater attention and priority being paid to tranquillity throughout the Park. Negative impacts have been identified as the policy may result in proposals for additional leisure/recreational/tourism/recreation and agriculture proposals being resisted if there is an impact on tranquillity.
	<b>ENV3</b>	The preferred option to have a smaller area defined as Remote Areas will have positive impacts on the environment by protecting these areas from development unless it is essential for conservation/management purposes in order to maintain and enhance tranquillity and a sense of remoteness as this special quality of the National Park. This option may have negative impacts in terms of the local economy which may be outweighed by the maintenance of these special qualities and the benefits they bring to the economy. Alternative Option 2 which offers a wider area of defined area, including the more isolated farmsteads, may undermine the landscape quality of the defined remote areas.
	<b>ENV4</b>	The preferred option will have positive impacts by leading to greater attention and priority being paid to dark skies at night. The preferred option will prevent external lighting in the defined Remote Ares and will permit essential lighting in open countryside and in the listed settlements it will also enable specific standards for outdoor lighting to be met meaning that the impact of the preferred option has greater positive impacts.

<b>ENV13</b>	The preferred option will have positive/negative and uncertain impacts by ensuring that development proposals will only be permitted where they will not result in the loss of, or significantly harm its qualities or functions for which it was identified. The spaces have been specifically identified as ' Important' against a list of specific qualities and shown on maps to provide clarity for the public and for developers. The assessment has highlighted conflicts/uncertainties that may arise as such an approach may be regarded as inflexible and may prevent future local housing/economic development. The current approach may therefore be seen to be more flexible and more sustainable as it may allow more development as it is open to a case by case judgement. The conflicts identified between future housing/economic development versus the protection of the National Park environment which is rich in heritage assets are to be expected and the priority in the National Park should be the protection of landscape character which is derived from the character of buildings and the spaces between them	
<b>ENV14</b>	The preferred option will have positive and uncertain/negative impacts by enabling appropriate development proposals to take place on sites that without such a policy may continue to detract from the appearance of the National Park. Negative impacts can be mitigated against with appropriate conditions and by satisfying other ecology/biodiversity conditions.	
<b>Understanding and Enjoyment</b>		
<b>UE1</b>	The preferred option will have a number of positive impacts by allowing a greater and more diverse range of accommodation, in different locations of a greater number with specific reference to ecology protection. The preferred option also provides specific size limitations, requires limited ground connection and specifies that it should not be sited within a residential curtilage, ensuring that development has a small environmental footprint and seeks to ensure that there is no unacceptable harm in terms of noise and activity on the neighbourhood. The preferred option therefore provides specific ecological and amenity protection which is not afforded by the alternative options.	
<b>Business and Land Management</b>		
<b>BL1</b>	The preferred option will have positive and uncertain impacts by ensuring that employment and training development proposals will only be permitted in accordance with the settlement hierarchy and subject to other requirements relating to landscape, amenity and road network. The preferred option may have an uncertain impact in terms of the local economy as developments are not permitted adjacent to Helmsley and the Larger Villages this is to be balanced against the positive impact in terms of protecting the appearances of the edges of the larger settlements which are important from a visual landscape point of view.	
<b>BL4</b>	The preferred option and the alternative option have unknown impacts on a number of the sustainability objectives due to the fact that the locations for developments are unknown. The preferred option performs better however overall as it provides opportunities for tourism businesses to provide staff accommodation under specific circumstances for key staff which will help to sustain existing businesses and support the local economy.	
<b>Communities</b>		

	<b>CO2</b>	The preferred option will have positive and uncertain impacts by ensuring that development proposals will only be permitted where there is no detriment to highway safety, where the design and layout is appropriate to the needs of highway users and where the detailing is sensitive to character, built form and heritage. The additional clarity provided by the preferred option in relation to new roads and significant road widening schemes has additional positive impacts which will help to safeguard on the landscape character of the National Park. It should be noted that there are uncertain impacts to this as option may preclude major road improvements and this may impact on the local economy albeit that it will seek to protect the landscape for tourists to continue to enjoy.	
	<b>CO5</b>	The preferred option will overall have positive impacts by ensuring that the loss of existing Community Spaces is prevented and that it is only permitted where the space is no longer needed or if a suitable equivalent space is secured. The preferred option also shows the Community Spaces on a map/list gives greater clarity for developers and the public. The appraisal highlights that the existing CPI policy is aimed at protecting existing facilities/ community spaces rather than the approach taken in NPPF para 70 which encourages the <b>provision</b> of new or shared community spaces and also regards community spaces as part of an integrated approach to sustainable housing. The preferred option includes provision for new community space where there is a deficit and provides for replacement spaces if a space is to be lost. NPPF 70 also addresses wider community facilities such as shops and other services; these are not covered under this policy but are considered under other community facility policies.	
	<b>SPM</b>	There are a number of uncertain impacts as this is a strategic housing policy and there no clear links to a number of the objectives however the preferred option will have positive impacts by supporting vibrant communities in Helmsley and the larger villages and is aimed at meeting local housing needs and stopping the decline of the National Park population. A lesser number of new homes would fail to meet these objectives and a greater number of dwellings would have an uncertain impact on the quality and character of the landscape of the North York Moors, including the special qualities of remoteness and tranquillity.	
	<b>CO7</b>	There are no clear links to a number of the objectives and there are uncertain impacts as this is a policy relating to infill development in larger villages however the preferred option will have positive impacts by supporting vibrant communities to support the wider service function of larger villages by allowing principal residence dwellings. The preferred option may have small negative impact on the economy by not providing homes that are available/affordable to the local workforce as such homes may be more affordable to retired residents from outside the National Park. Retired residents will contribute to the local economy in terms of supporting local services and facilities and contributing to community groups and facilities.	
	<b>CO8</b>	There are no clear links to a number of the objectives and uncertain impacts as this is a policy relating to infill development however the preferred option will have positive impacts as there are likely to be fewer housing opportunities in the smaller villages and these should be used to meet the needs of local people when those arise. This will result in homes that are more affordable and result in a release of land when it is needed. A principal residence approach is more speculative in nature and will result in the development of land in locations which are less sustainable than the larger villages or Helmsley which meets an external demand.	
	<b>CO9</b>	As the types of development are as yet unknown it is not possible to make any conclusions on the impacts of some sustainability objectives. However, the option will have a positive impact on objectives for specific needs housing, education or training uses, employment and tourism which should have positive impact s on the local economy and have a positive impact on protecting the architectural or historic cultural heritage of the area through the conversion of rural buildings which are important in the landscape.	

	<b>CO11</b>	The impact of the preferred option on a number the sustainability objectives are unknown, however the option will have positive impacts on meeting specific local housing needs and ensuring that the scale and location of those developments are appropriate to their locations ensuring that local services and communities are supported by new affordable housing and where appropriate new principal residence dwellings.	
	<b>CO13</b>	As the types of conversion are as yet unknown it is not possible to make any conclusions on the impacts of some sustainability objectives. However the option will have a positive impact on objectives for new housing, education or training uses, employment and tourism which should have positive impacts on the local economy and have a positive impact on protecting the architectural or historic cultural heritage of the area through the conversion of rural buildings which are important in the landscape.	
	<b>CO14</b>	There are no clear links to a number of the objectives as this is a policy relating to occupancy conditions however the preferred option will have positive impacts by supporting vibrant communities in the larger settlements by allowing principal residence dwellings and by continuing to allow local needs dwellings with a more flexible occupancy criteria in the smaller settlements so that specific housing needs can be met.	
	<b>CO15</b>	The preferred option and the alternative option have unknown impacts on a number of the sustainability objectives due to the fact that the locations for developments are unknown. The preferred option performs better however overall as seeks to maintain the dwelling in its current location and seeks to restrict the size/volume of dwellings to the same as the existing dwelling these criteria will benefit the character of the landscape and ensure that dwellings are more affordable to local people therefore helping to retain dwellings for local people helping to maintain local communities.	
	<b>CO16</b>	The impacts of the preferred and the alternative option on the objectives are largely dependent on the location of the proposed development. The preferred option has a better impact on the quality and character of the landscape of the North York Moors, but may have a negative impact on the needs of the local Gypsy, Roma and Travellers as their housing needs may not be met if the number of units is restricted as proposed. This should be weighed against the possible harm caused to the National Park purposes if a greater number were to be permitted.	
	<b>CO18</b>	There are no specific links between the options on several of the sustainability appraisal objectives. Where there are links the preferred option demonstrates the most positive impacts.	
	<b>CO21</b>	The preferred option and the alternative option have unknown impacts on a number of the sustainability objectives due to the fact that the locations for developments are unknown. The preferred option performs better however overall as it provides a greater level of control over such development which will ensure that the sustainability objectives are met more readily.	

# Key

Positive impacts (+)	Consistent with meeting the objective, either by having no negative impact or by positively influencing change in accordance with the objective.
Minor Negative impact (-)	Will hinder the achievement of this objective.
Significant Negative Impact (--)	Will significantly hinder the achievement of this objective
Neutral or no Impact (0)	Will have neither a positive nor a negative impact upon this objective.
Uncertain impact (U)	May hinder achievement of this objective, but may have no negative impact, or may have a positive impact. This will depend upon implementation.
X No direct link (X)	There is no direct link with the objective.

## Assessing the Cumulative Effects of Policies and the Plan

- 6.9 It is important in sustainability appraisal to examine any potential ‘cumulative’ effects’. Cumulative effects are important because the plan itself may not have a significant effect, but when added to other actions its effects may be significant and require additional mitigation. Cumulative effects are considered in the following ways:
- Consideration of the combined effects of all the policies;
  - Consideration of how the Local Plan may combine with the effects of the Plans in the neighbouring districts.
- 6.10 **Appendix 6** contains the detailed cumulative outcomes of all the policies assessed against the Sustainability Objectives. **Table 3** below is a summary and contains the conclusions of the cumulative impacts for the Sustainability Objectives and identifies where the main adverse/uncertain effects could arise to enable these to be monitored and addressed.
- 6.11 Guidance from the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI) has been used to determine cumulative effects.

Table 3 - Assessment of Cumulative Effects of Core Strategy and Preferred Options				
Sustainability Objective		Cumulative Effects of Policies		Cumulative Effects + Other Plans and Projects
<b>E1 - To maintain and enhance the quality and character of the landscape and cultural heritage of the North York Moors, including the special qualities of remoteness and tranquillity.</b>		Overall policies should have a positive effect by steering development towards the larger settlements to reduce the landscape impact of new development on sensitive, tranquil and remote areas. Main negative impacts would arise from new development in areas outside the larger settlements. Policies seek to mitigate impact by including criteria on appropriate site selection and by providing detailed design advice to minimise impact on landscape character and special qualities. More detailed advice to be provided in updated Design Guides.		This policy is aimed specifically at the North York Moors landscape.  The Authority's 2016 Management Plan also has a policy on landscape (E1) and it is considered that the Local Plan will help deliver this policy by application of its own policies, specifically Strategic Policies A and G.
<b>E2 - To protect water, soil and air quality, and reduce pollution, and improve efficiency of water use.</b>		Overall policies seek to protect soil, air and water quality. In addition policies support sustainable forms of transport as well as supporting sustainable design and construction and encourage the use of renewable energy. These policies taken together will help reduce pollution and improve efficiency of water use and energy. Uncertain effects arise principally as the impacts on water/soil and air quality are dependent on where the sites are located and the scale of the development.		The impact of the Local Plan is limited to supporting the reduction of flood risk and pollution. No proposals in the plan will increase flood risk or significant pollution, including in neighbouring areas. Together with initiatives such as ‘Slowing the Flow’ in Pickering there is likely to be a cumulative reduction in flood risk – this is supported by Policy E44 of the Management Plan.  There are no Air Quality Management Areas within

**Table 3 - Assessment of Cumulative Effects of Core Strategy and Preferred Options**

Sustainability Objective		Cumulative Effects of Policies	Cumulative Effects + Other Plans and Projects
			<p>the National Park.</p> <p>Policy on environmental protection (Policy ENV7) will have a cumulative benefit when implemented with policies in the Management Plan such as E31 on sustainable use of soils. Policy ENV8 which requires 10% on site renewable energy generation will help deliver Management Plan policy</p>
<p><b>E3 - To reduce the causes of climate change and ensure future development is resilient to climate change, including reducing the impact of flooding and avoiding flood risk.</b></p>		<p>Overall policies should have a positive effect given emphasis on promoting small scale sustainable forms of development. The policies require that development meets the sequential approach in areas of flood risk (as set out in SFRA.) In addition SuDs drainage to be incorporated in larger scale developments. As E2 above policies support sustainable design and construction, sustainable transport and in combination the policies will help to reduce the causes of climate change and the impact of flooding and avoid flood risk. Uncertain effects arise principally as the impacts are dependent on the scale of the development and where the sites are located.</p>	<p>The Local Plan seeks to improve mitigation and adaptation to probable climate change associated with development in the National Park.</p> <p>Policy ENV8 which requires 10% on site renewable energy generation will help deliver Management Plan policy which will have a cumulative effect with policies in neighbouring plans.</p> <p>Together with initiatives such as 'Slowing the Flow' in Pickering there is likely to be a cumulative reduction in flood risk – this is supported by Policy E44 of the Management Plan.</p>
<p><b>E4 - To maintain and enhance conditions for biodiversity and geodiversity and avoid irreversible losses or damage to designated nature conservation sites, protected species and geological assets.</b></p>		<p>Overall policies should have a positive impact as it will seek to give great weight to biodiversity and geodiversity in decision making. The policies ensure that species and habitats are safeguarded and proposals are considered against a habitat and species hierarchy. Uncertain impacts arise as the scale and nature of developments are unknown and where appropriate policy wording or supporting text has been supplemented to take account of biodiversity and geological assets. Possible negative impact identified</p>	<p>Simultaneous application of the Local Plan with additional plans, in particular the Management Plan (which seeks to link wildlife corridor and mitigation measures being put in place to offset the biodiversity impacts that could have arisen from the Woodsmith Mine mean an in combination positive impact should be possible.</p>

**Table 3 - Assessment of Cumulative Effects of Core Strategy and Preferred Options**

Sustainability Objective		Cumulative Effects of Policies		Cumulative Effects + Other Plans and Projects
		for the redevelopment of 2 Environmental Enhancement sites and proposals must ensure that biodiversity on these sites is maintained and enhanced.		
<b>E5 - To preserve and enhance all aspects of the historic environment and to provide opportunities for all residents to access and understand local cultural heritage.</b>		Policies should have a positive impact on conserving and enhancing the historic environment, heritage assets and their settings as these features contribute to the cultural and historic character of the National Park. Uncertain impacts arise in relation to renewable energy where historic and archaeological assets should be respected and complement the landscape character with reference to the Authority's Landscape Character Assessment.		No direct cumulative effects are identified, however a combination of national and local plan policy on the conservation and enhancement of the built environment will benefit all residents including those living outside the National Park.
<b>E6 - To reuse brownfield land and empty buildings bearing in mind their potential nature conservation and heritage value.</b>		Overall policies should have positive effect through encouraging the reuse of brownfield land and empty buildings. The main uncertain impacts arise from the reuse of land and buildings in more remote locations outwith the settlements as this may have an adverse impact on landscape character and historic assets, including archaeology. Other policies in this Plan should ensure that isolated structures and land are not reused to the detriment of the landscape, tranquillity and biodiversity. Policies must ensure that remote locations are safeguarded.		No cumulative effects identified – localised policy with a positive effect. It is therefore it is considered to be a neutral impact.
<b>S1 - To foster and maintain vibrant local communities and encourage a sense of community and belonging.</b>		Overall policies to support local employment including tourism and farming and protect community facilities proportionate to the scale of the community they serve and all this should have positive effects on the Objective. There is a need to continue to monitor the availability of local facilities. VIS policy is identified as a minor negative; as the policy may prevent the redevelopment of an open space for a community/employment/housing use but overall Visually Important Spaces are considered to have a positive community benefit. A strong local need for a facility may outweigh the benefit of retaining an open space.		No direct cumulative effects are identified and therefore it is considered to be a neutral impact.
<b>S2 - To provide decent housing in accessible locations to meet</b>		Overall policies support modest small scale housing for principal residence in the larger villages, local needs housing in the smaller villages and		One of the National Parks biggest challenges is providing affordable housing.

**Table 3 - Assessment of Cumulative Effects of Core Strategy and Preferred Options**

Sustainability Objective		Cumulative Effects of Policies		Cumulative Effects + Other Plans and Projects
<p>the needs of local people, including the young, and to maximise opportunities for provision of affordable housing.</p>		<p>affordable housing schemes of an appropriate scale in and on the edge of villages where needs are identified. A minor negative has been identified in terms of the VIS policy as this may prevent the development of an open space for housing. A strong local need may outweigh the benefit of retaining the open space. ) A negative effect may arise if more than 2 units are required for Gypsy, Roma and Traveller accommodation. Monitoring of the needs assessments of the constituent Local Authorities will be required to assess the policy.</p>		<p>Current average house prices in the National Park are much higher than the average figure for North Yorkshire and England and Wales. Although the Local Plan will deliver new housing, the volume of housing proposed and the implementation of the proposed policies may not result in a significant increase in affordable housing. The Government's policy is that the National Parks are not suitable for unrestricted housing. This may have a cumulative effect as it means housing need has to be met elsewhere.</p> <p>However the policy allowing for some rural exceptions schemes for affordable housing may provide additional affordable housing that helps meet the needs of those living in the districts and boroughs over which the National Park lies.</p>
<p><b>S3 - To protect and enhance access to community facilities, leisure and recreation opportunities and access to the countryside.</b></p>		<p>Overall policies should have a positive effect supporting as S1 above. Minor negative effects have been identified in terms of the resistance of development proposals for community/recreation/leisure development if there is an adverse impact on tranquillity or if the development is in an identified Remote Area. Policies for tranquillity and Remote Areas to be monitored to assess impact on development that would enhance access to community facilities, leisure and recreation opportunities and access to the countryside.</p>		<p>A significant issue the National Park faces is the loss of services and facilities in rural areas. The Local Plan restricts any changes in land use unless it can be proven that there is an identified need. Additionally, the Local Plan supports the development of facilities where there is an identified need. As such, the cumulative effect will likely be neutral.</p>
<p><b>S4 - To make sure new development is easily accessible to</b></p>		<p>Policies should have a positive effect on objective by promoting and supporting sustainable forms of development and transport. Policies</p>		<p>As much of the National Park lacks access via sustainable transport, particularly in more</p>

**Table 3 - Assessment of Cumulative Effects of Core Strategy and Preferred Options**

<b>Sustainability Objective</b>		<b>Cumulative Effects of Policies</b>		<b>Cumulative Effects + Other Plans and Projects</b>
<p><b>essential services, to help reduce the need to travel and minimise the environmental impact of transport.</b></p>		<p>support the provision of housing and other developments in the more sustainable locations to reduce the need to travel. Minor negative effects could arise from new development outside of the larger/smaller settlements. (Policies must ensure that sustainability principles are addressed.) New car parks could have a minor negative impact, unless part of a co-ordinated approach to traffic management.</p>		<p>remote rural areas, it is unlikely that the Local Plan will significantly alleviate access issues and many rural areas will likely still heavily rely on private cars. This is in part due to the topography and landscape in more remote rural areas. A policy of restraint will mean that this puts additional pressure on services outside the National Park and for this reason (and the sparse settlement pattern across the National Park) the cumulative effect of the Plan may be negative against this particular objectives, However it is considered that the statutory purposes mean that bringing in large scale additional services is not sustainable in the round.</p>

**Table 3 - Assessment of Cumulative Effects of Core Strategy and Preferred Options**

<b>Sustainability Objective</b>		<b>Cumulative Effects of Policies</b>		<b>Cumulative Effects + Other Plans and Projects</b>
<p><b>EC1 - To strengthen and diversify the local economy by supporting a range of opportunities for employment and training particularly in sustainable locations.</b></p>		<p>Policies should have a positive effect through re-use and construction of buildings for employment and training in sustainable locations, supporting tourism and farm diversification and supporting telecommunications improvements. Minor negative effects have been identified as leisure/recreation/agricultural development may be resisted in locations which are likely to have an adverse impact on the landscape, tranquillity or if located in a defined Remote Area or a VIS. Monitoring of these policies will be required to assess any impact on the local economy. The principal residence housing may have minor negative impact on the economy by not providing homes that are available/affordable to the local workforce as such homes may be more affordable to retired residents from outside the National Park. Retired residents will contribute to the local economy in terms of supporting local services and facilities and contributing to community groups and facilities and this policy relates to the provision for a relatively small number of new houses in larger settlements.</p>		<p>Due to National Park status, there are significant limitations to diversifying the economy as developments (with the exception of some major development) will need to be of a scale and appearance that fits within the landscape/historical environment and does not significantly impact the designated sites within the National Park. There is unlikely to be significant diversification, however the Local Plan is likely to support strengthening of the existing economy.</p> <p>There is a cumulative effect with the expected 1000 jobs arising from the Woodsmith mine development, however this form of major development is exceptional, and policies are in place so that other major development should be located outside the National Park. This would however have an economic benefit to places elsewhere, hence this is considered a positive benefit.</p>
<p><b>EC2 - To support tourism and recreation industry by ensuring that development contributes to the local economy and provides opportunities for enjoying the Park's special qualities.</b></p>		<p>Policies should have a positive effect by permitting tourism development of an appropriate scale in sustainable locations. Minor negative effects have been identified as development may be resisted in locations which are likely to have an adverse impact on the landscape, tranquillity or if located in a defined Remote Area or a VIS. Car parks to support the tourist industry may conflict with the aim to protect the special environmental and landscape qualities of the National Park and policy must ensure landscape is protected. Major development could detract from the local tourism and</p>		<p>The plan should have a positive cumulative effect with other plans and programmes, the most notable of which is DEFRA's 8 point plan for the National Parks.</p>

Table 3 - Assessment of Cumulative Effects of Core Strategy and Preferred Options				
Sustainability Objective		Cumulative Effects of Policies		Cumulative Effects + Other Plans and Projects
		recreational industry as development could detract from the natural beauty of the landscape and its special qualities. Draft policy on Major Development should take account of landscape impact and impact on the local economy, including tourism.		

#### Key.

Positive impacts	Consistent with meeting the objective, either by having no negative impact or by positively influencing change in accordance with the objective.
Minor Negative impact (-)	Will hinder the achievement of this objective.
Uncertain impact	May hinder achievement of this objective, but may have no negative impact, or may have a positive impact. This will depend upon implementation.
Neutral Impact	Will have neither a positive nor a negative impact upon this objective.

- 6.12 Overall the appraisal found that the Local Plan would largely have positive impacts across the 64 policies. The impacts are shown above in **Table 3**. No significant negative impacts were identified during the policy appraisal process. Any minor negative impacts that have been identified are considered above.
- 6.13 In terms of the cumulative effects of the preferred options and other plans and projects effects are largely positive, however the general policy of development restraint in a National Park setting could lead to some uncertain/minor negative impacts, as housing needs, employment and services may end up being located outside the National Park.

### Proposed Mitigation Measures

- 6.14 As stated in section 2.9 above the sustainability process has been carried out in house it has therefore been possible to incorporate measures where potential adverse impacts have been identified as part of the on-going Local Plan process and this has enabled the policies to be strengthened and re worded to ensure that the preferred option policies are sustainable. The Tables in **Appendix 7** show the recommended measures to mitigate the adverse impacts on the Sustainability Objectives together with officer comments. The table shows any suggested mitigation for each policy with the outcome shown in red or green. The accepted mitigation is shown in green and in these cases the policy or the supporting wording has been amended accordingly. Where the mitigation has not been agreed the officer comments are set out in red and the policy remains unchanged. In addition to the mitigation/amendments as shown updated detailed design guidance is necessary to ensure that new development maintains and enhances the quality and character of the landscape and heritage assets and reflects the preferred options policies. Specific monitoring mechanisms will be required to measure the impact on Objectives S1, S2, S3 and EC1.

### Next Steps

- 6.15 Consultation will be undertaken on this Preferred Options Sustainability Appraisal Report for 11 weeks during August/September/October 2018 with the three Statutory Consultees (Heritage England, the Environment Agency and Natural England) and other relevant organisations. The draft appraisal will also be made available for comment from any third party.

**If you would like further information, please contact us:**

Planning Policy – [policy@northyorkmoors.org.uk](mailto:policy@northyorkmoors.org.uk)

Development Management – [planning@northyorkmoors.org.uk](mailto:planning@northyorkmoors.org.uk)



01439 772700

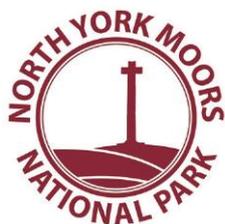


northyorkmoorsnationalpark



@northyorkmoors

The text of this document can be made in large print. Please contact the Planning Policy team using the contact information above.



**North York Moors National Park Authority**

The Old Vicarage, Bondgate, Helmsley, York YO62 5BP