

## 7.0 Recommendations and Monitoring

### Summary of Key Conclusions from the SA

7.1 The effects of the three scenarios for the delivery of additional growth under Policy CF3 have been drawn together under the four priorities for immediate action in relation to sustainable development that were identified in ‘Securing the Future’ (2005).

	Effect of Policy CF3 from SA (2007)	Additional Effect of Scenario 1	Additional Effect of Scenario 2	Additional Effect of Scenario 3
Sustainable Production & Consumption	-	-	-	-
Climate Change & Energy	-	--?	--?	--?
Natural Resource Protection and Environmental Enhancement	Ø(+)	-?	-?	--?
Sustainable Communities	-	+	+	++?

7.2 There are a number of key issues of relevance in respect of the three potential growth scenarios:-

1. Many of the effects will only be able to be assessed in full once sites are located within the local authority areas identified. Local authorities will be able to take account of local issues and sensitivities and the requirements of policy and standards to seek to minimise effects. Ensuring the growth does not adversely affect air quality will also need to be brought forward locally via local air quality management plans.
2. Some ongoing analysis is awaited to clarify areas at risk of flooding and also infrastructure requirements in relation to water supply/demand. No clear understanding of effects can therefore be made at this time other than to identify that flood risk will need to be taken into account in identifying sites and that new infrastructure to address water supply/demand/quality issues will be required as a result of the additional housing growth.
3. Significant local traffic issues and increased congestion is likely with all of the scenarios and investment is likely to be required in both road improvements and also in public transport infrastructure.
4. The effect of development on climate change remains a key issue and will require ongoing monitoring to identify whether recent falls in emissions will continue with increased housing growth.
5. Scenario 1 focuses development in the area of greatest economic growth in the south-east of the region which may widen the gap between this and other poorly performing areas in the region. Scenarios 2 and 3 distribute growth across the region which may narrow the gap but is likely to depend on the ability of the market and the availability of funding to deliver growth in areas performing poorly economically.
6. The limited scale of growth proposed in rural areas may have some limited positive effect in supporting closing services.
7. There may be positive and negative effects on the local natural and built environment through the additional housing growth. Including measures to protect key natural features and good design quality will assist in minimising effects.

8. The additional housing growth is very likely to positively address affordability issues to assist in the creation of sustainable communities.

### **Cumulative & Synergistic Effects**

- 7.3 The effect of seven key receptors on each other and arising from the Phase 2 Preferred Option was assessed in the SA (2007) and has been reassessed in the context of the scenarios for the additional housing growth. The seven key receptors including transport networks; climate change; air; water quality and supply; land use; ecosystems; and population.
- 7.4 No new key cumulative effects were identified as a result of the SA of the proposed scenarios albeit some of the impacts may be slightly more significant or occur sooner than previously identified.

### **Mitigation & Recommendations**

- 7.5 The SA (2007) identified the following mitigation and recommendations in relation to the effect of Policy CF3:-

*“Many of the environmental impacts which could arise from this level of housing growth can be mitigated by applying high standards of design and construction (i.e. through the sustainable communities and construction policies), in particular water use and wastewater discharge issues, CO2 emissions, local transport and congestion, impacts on local environmental and historic assets. Issues around the potential use of greenfield sites (and greenbelt) could be addressed by density policies (CF6) and by policies in the Quality of the Environment chapter which will be part of the Phase 3 revision. Recommendations are made elsewhere on how these environmental pressures and impacts can be reduced. While it does not seem that house price growth can be reduced across the region as a whole without a vast increase in the supply of housing (which would probably not be deliverable or desirable), housing affordability issues can be partly addressed through policy CF7, and recommendations are made on that policy.*

*However, the issues around urban renaissance are harder to address. Unless a greater proportion of the overall housing total is located in the major urban areas, then it seems likely that the region will experience ongoing out-migration from these areas and a decline in their housing markets. While in theory it makes sense to locate additional housing in the Settlements of Significant Development, many of these towns appear to have major constraints (e.g. transport, green belt, water infrastructure, possibly flood risk) and it will be necessary to deliver that infrastructure before or at the latest alongside the housing for these towns to develop as self-sustaining and sustainable settlements.”*

- 7.6 The most fundamental and key issue that is addressed by the scenarios for the delivery of additional growth is the delivery of the ‘vast increase’ in the supply of housing necessary to address housing affordability issues. The SA of the scenarios also identifies that many of the environmental effects that could arise from the housing growth are capable of mitigation through the application and enforcement of policies and standards.
- 7.7 The SA also identifies that many of the environmental effects that could arise from the housing growth are capable of mitigation through the application and enforcement of policies and standards. These include those within the WMRSS as well as other national, regional and local standards that seek to tackle issues such as air quality, congestion, water use and flood risk. Many of the effects are only capable of mitigating at a local level and it will be for local authorities through their LDF and planning processes to seek to ensure that individual proposals to deliver the additional housing growth meet the principles of sustainable development.
- 7.8 The SA also notes the conclusions of the SA (2007) that the issue of out-migration is likely to continue without measures in place to reinforce urban renaissance. It is also noted that the SA (2007) does not indicate of what such measures are comprised (e.g. schools, crime statistics, environment, quality of life) and the precise role of housing distribution within this.

7.9 Recommendation 2 in the SA (2007) is the only recommendation that relates specifically to Policy CF3 – the basis of this appraisal. Recommendation 2 states:-

*“Policy CF3 (level/distribution of new housing) should establish housing figures for the non MUA districts as a maxima”*

7.10 The recommendation was not ultimately taken forward into the Phase 2 Preferred Option and there are clear issues to be addressed in the light of the challenge to the housing market of delivering the high levels of growth identified in the proposed scenarios. As noted elsewhere in this SA, there is a potentially high likelihood that greenfield sites outside of the urban areas are brought forward first by developers; particularly in areas in high demand and in the current economic climate. This could be tackled through the application of the principles of recommendation 2 of the SA (2007) into Policy CF3 which is endorsed by this SA.

7.11 However, and in addition, a real commitment needs to be made to improving the more marginal sites in the urban areas (particularly those declining areas of the MUAs identified for growth within the scenarios) through the delivery and investment in additional and improved infrastructure including transportation improvements, improvements and new water and sewerage infrastructure and social, environmental, educational and cultural infrastructure.

7.12 A review of the more specific recommendations of the SA (2007) was carried out. The following are considered relevant and no evidence has been found to indicate that they should not be taken forward in the context of the SA of the housing scenarios:-

9. Policy CF4 (phasing) should take a more radical approach to phasing by ensuring that a much greater proportion of housing is delivered in the MUAs for the first 10 years of the strategy
10. Policy CF3 (level/distribution of new housing) should establish housing figures for the non MUA districts as a maxima
11. Implementation Plan must ensure that infrastructure is delivered in Settlements of Significant Development
12. Policy CF7 (affordable housing delivery) should require the provision of social and intermediate housing units identified by the Cambridge Centre for Housing and Planning Research
13. Policy SR1 (Climate Change) should establish a regional target on CO2 reductions
14. Policy CF6 (making efficient use of land) should establish a region wide minimum density rate to all developments over 10 units and an overall density target for the region
15. Policy SR2 should ensure developments should be sufficiently large so that other community resources can be delivered alongside housing more effectively, as opposed to smaller infill developments
16. Policy CF7 should identify minimum % targets for intermediate and social housing at housing market area levels should be set

7.13 The other recommendations are generally not relevant to this SA or the scope of the housing options study but there is no evidence to suggest that they do not remain relevant to the Phase 3 Preferred Option as a whole.

7.14 No new recommendations are considered to be necessary in the light of the effect arising.

## **Monitoring**

7.15 Section A8 of the SA (2007) provides advice on how the WMRA could monitor the significant effects of the implementation of the RSS and a number of potential types of both direct and indirect indicator are identified that could prove useful in understanding how the RSS is being implemented.

- 7.16 Section 8 of the SA of the Housing Options addresses monitoring and concludes that given the potentially wide-ranging effects of the housing options on the region that have been identified in the SA, it is likely that all of the indicators identified in the SA (2007) will remain of importance in monitoring the effects of additional housing growth; should a decision be taken to include the additional growth within the WMRSS. Therefore cross-reference to Section A8 of the SA (2007) is recommended.
- 7.17 Notwithstanding that conclusion, the table at Section 8 of the SA, lists the 34 SA (2007) indicators next to the relevant WMRSDf objective and identifies the 24 indicators that are of more relevance in considering the effects of specific options in the light of the likely effects that have been identified in Sections 6.0 and 7.0.