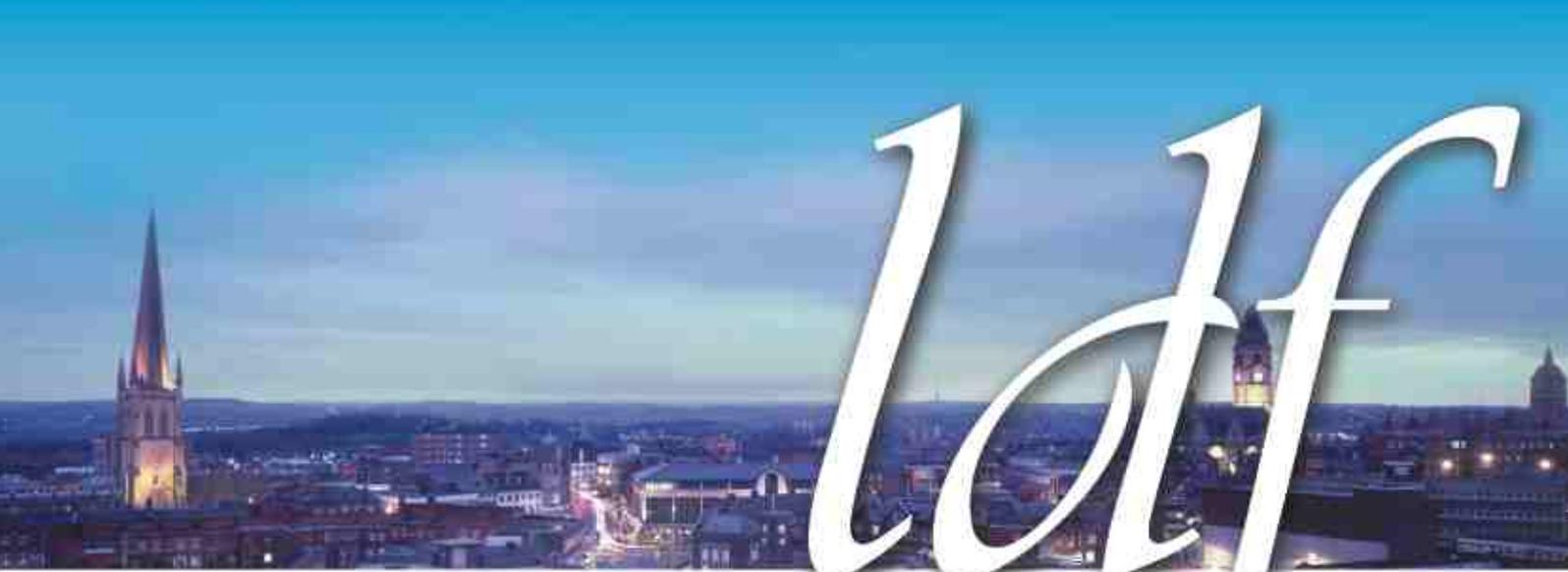


A NEW VISION FOR DEVELOPING CENTRAL WAKEFIELD

**Preferred Options
Report**

Sustainability
Appraisal Summary



WAF

Central Wakefield Area Action Plan

**Preferred Options
Report**
Sustainability
Appraisal *Summary*

Information

The Central Wakefield Area Action Plan Preferred Options Report and the accompanying Sustainability Report are available to view and download on the Council's web-site at: www.wakefield.gov.uk/ldf. Copies are also available to view at main libraries and Council offices and can be obtained free of charge from the above address or by ringing (01924) 306630. If you would like to talk to a planning officer working on the AAP about any aspect of this document please contact the Major Projects Team on (01924) 306763.

If you would like an extract or summary of this document on cassette, in large type, in Braille or any other format, please call the Major Projects Team on (01924) 306630.

دیکھو سنو

اگر آپ کو اس لیفلٹ کی کاپی آڈیو کیسٹ، بڑی
لکھائی، بریل یا کسی اور زبان میں اس کا ترجمہ
چاہیے تو ہمیں اس نمبر پر فون کریں:

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1 Background

- 1.0.1 The Local Development Framework (LDF) is the emerging development plan for Wakefield. LDFs are the new form of plan controlling the way in which land is used, introduced by the Government's planning reforms. The LDF, once adopted, will replace the adopted Wakefield District Unitary Development Plan 1st Alteration, and will guide new development in the District for the period up to 2021. This report relates to the Central Wakefield Area Action Plan Development Plan Document (DPD) which forms part of the LDF.
- 1.0.2 A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Sustainability Appraisal (SA) have been carried out on this DPD in order to meet the requirements of new planning legislation⁽¹⁾ and regulations⁽²⁾. The combined SEA and SA process is subsequently referred to as SA only. The main purpose of SA is to see whether implementation of the plan that is being assessed is likely to have any significant environmental, social or economic effects. If significant negative effects are identified, recommendations are made as to how these can be avoided, offset or reduced. Recommendations are also made on how to enhance beneficial effects. A programme to monitor significant effects is also required.
- 1.0.3 This document forms the Non-Technical Summary (NTS) of the SA Report and provides a summary, in non-technical language, of the principal findings of the SA. The SA has been undertaken on behalf of Wakefield Metropolitan District Council by Waterman Environmental and the Centre for Sustainability at TRL Ltd.

1.1 Area Action Plan Objectives

- 1.1.1 The objectives of the AAP set out what it is aiming to achieve in planning terms. The AAP objectives have been largely derived from the Community Strategy⁽³⁾, other national, regional and local strategies and programmes; and from consideration of the current economic, social and environmental status of Central Wakefield. The objectives that have emerged from these sources are:
1. To reduce through traffic and achieve equality of access to the benefit of all users of the centre by:
 - a. making the city centre more pedestrian friendly and traffic free;
 - b. promoting development without compromising the quality and accessibility of the public realm by all people;
 - c. ensuring that people moving around the City Centre are safe and feel secure from the threat of crime;
 - d. reducing the need/desire to travel by car;
 - e. encouraging a modal shift from cars to public transport, cycling and walking.

1 Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004)

2 Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations (2004).

3 'Fast Forward' (Wakefield District Partnership, March 2003)

2. To protect and enhance the historic built environment.
3. To protect and enhance the natural environment.
4. To promote high quality design and materials in new developments.
5. To meet the housing needs /requirements for Central Wakefield.
6. To encourage city centre living.
7. To regenerate the local economy by encouraging office and retail development within Central Wakefield.
8. To improve the range and quality of cultural and leisure opportunities in Central Wakefield.
9. To increase the attractiveness of Central Wakefield for residents, workers, tourists and visitors.
10. To promote a vibrant evening economy for a wide range of age and social groups.
11. To enhance the public realm.
12. To re-attract shoppers previously lost to other retail centres.

2 The Sustainability Appraisal Process

2.0.1 The SA process used in Wakefield is summarised in the figure below. The assessment to date, has comprised three stages as follows:

- Determining the key issues upon which the SA should focus and setting and agreeing sustainability objectives, a process known as 'Scoping';
- Appraisal of the Central Wakefield AAP issues and options, referred to as the 'Initial SA'; and
- Appraisal of the preferred options chosen, referred to as the 'SA'.

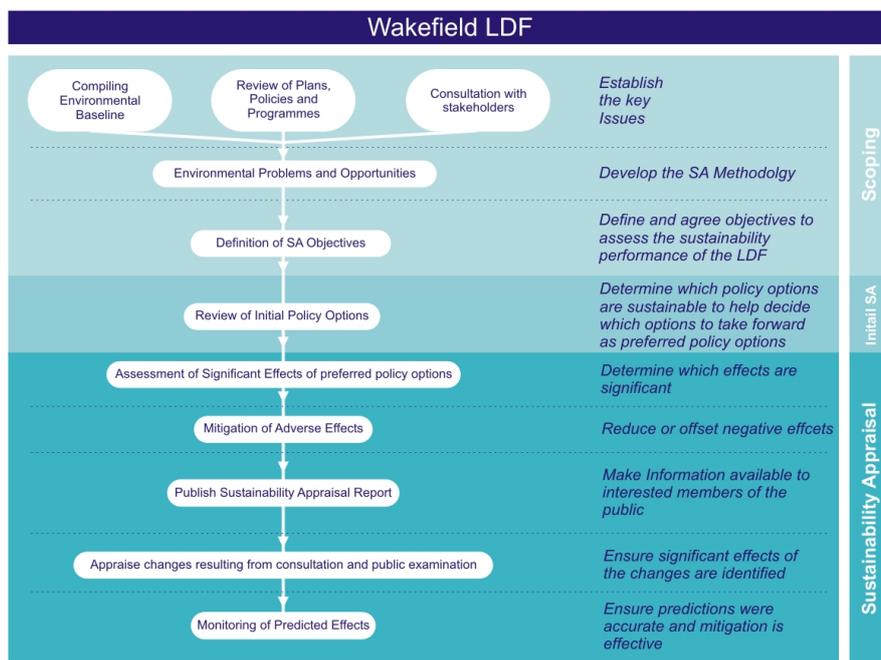


Figure 1 Summary of the SA Process

2.1 Scoping

2.1.1 The aim of the Scoping stage is to determine the key environmental, social and economic issues arising in the district and the framework for assessing the plans. The SEA Regulations require that the following topics are investigated in order to determine whether the introduction of the policies will have significant effects on these topic areas:

- Population
- Human Health
- Climatic Factors
- Material Assets
- Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna
- Cultural Heritage
- Soil
- Landscape

- Water
- Air
- And the inter-relationship between these factors.

2.1.2 In addition to these “SEA topics”, other social and economic factors are also taken into account. After documenting the sustainability characteristics of the area, and identifying any trends (i.e. is the situation getting better or worse?), other planning documents and policies were reviewed to see how these would influence the SA and the AAP. From the outputs of these two initial stages, the key environmental, social and economic issues and opportunities that relate to the area, and on which the assessment should focus, were established. These issues are described below.

Key Sustainability Issues

Economic Issues

- 2.1.3 The decline in the coal mining and manufacturing industries has provoked economic change. Central Wakefield’s economy has diversified, and the service sector has grown. This has been aided by the excellent communications links of Central Wakefield. Regeneration has attracted investment and has created new job opportunities, however a number of problems remain.
- 2.1.4 As a retail centre, Central Wakefield has good accessibility but has to compete for custom with Leeds and two out of centre shopping centres (White Rose and Meadowhall). The development of retail facilities at Marsh Way will help to counter this, but Wakefield also needs to market itself as a shopping centre where a variety of independent specialist retailers sit alongside the more well-known high street businesses.
- 2.1.5 Despite the low property rents for floorspace in Central Wakefield, further investments planned for Leeds, Sheffield, Barnsley and Doncaster could adversely impact on Wakefield and future investment in the centre.
- 2.1.6 There is a shortage of office accommodation, which has caused the out of centre office market to grow, especially over recent years. Increasing the office population within Central Wakefield would have a positive, regenerative effect and would create additional custom for retailers.
- 2.1.7 New development should facilitate the regeneration of the local economy by encouraging retail and office development. Attracting large regional, national and multi-national companies into Central Wakefield would significantly boost jobs and investment.
- 2.1.8 There is a lack of administration jobs outside of the few large public sector employers who are located in the area.
- 2.1.9 Unemployment levels in Central Wakefield are higher than in the District, with a large fluctuation in level between different localised areas.
- 2.1.10 Future development should provide employment opportunities appropriate to the local workforce and ensure that these are accessible.

Social Issues

- 2.1.11 The three wards that make up the bulk of Central Wakefield (Wakefield Central, Wakefield East and Wakefield North) all have areas which are within the top 8% of most deprived Super Output Areas (sub-ward level areas) in England. Future development in Central Wakefield will need to address this and should improve the attractiveness of residential areas whilst encouraging further residential development.
- 2.1.12 The high proportion of students living in the area means that the average level of qualifications is higher than the District average. This however masks the fact that some areas have low levels of educational attainment. Access to education should be improved, with on-the-job training where appropriate.
- 2.1.13 Central Wakefield suffers from high levels of crime in comparison to most of the other community safety areas within the District, although it is acknowledged that most offences are committed by offenders who live outside the area. New development should not contribute to this problem, but rather should seek to reduce crime through design measures wherever possible.
- 2.1.14 Audit Commission figures for 2003/4 indicate that in the District 56% of residents think that people being rowdy or drunk in public places is a very big or fairly big problem in their local area.
- 2.1.15 There is a vibrant evening economy within Central Wakefield. However the dominance of public houses and clubs around Westgate makes this area rowdy which adversely impacts on surrounding facilities and their users and discourages other people from using the area at night time. In order to increase its attractiveness to people and to boost the local economy, Central Wakefield will need to provide leisure facilities for a wide range of age and social groups.
- 2.1.16 Whilst levels of long-term limiting illness are lower than the District as a whole, they remain significantly higher than the National average. Health in Central Wakefield needs to be improved. Future development should promote good health.
- 2.1.17 At a district level Wakefield's average house price increased by 21% between June 2003 and June 2004, but still remains slightly lower than the Yorkshire and Humber average. This increase has contributed towards a major lack of affordable housing for sale. Affordable rented properties are also in demand, the waiting list for these having grown by 27% since 2000. The Housing Needs Statement identifies as a high priority, the need for affordable housing within the City Centre.

Environmental Issues

- 2.1.18 Central Wakefield has high-levels of traffic and consequently experiences traffic congestion. There is no outer bypass to the south and east of the city; and to the west and north of the city, the M1 and M62 effectively provide a bypass. The M1 also experiences congestion northbound from Junction 39 to the M62 in the morning peak in particular, with high volumes of medium to long-distance traffic. This contributes to Central Wakefield's traffic problems, since some traffic from the southern suburbs of the city that could use the M1 to avoid the city centre, routes through the city centre. For many people

access by car to a number of key destinations close to the city centre (such as Pinderfields hospital, and the private schools) involves routes that have to pass through Central Wakefield. Furthermore, developments near to the motorway junctions (such as Silkwood Park and Calder Park), are poorly served by public transport and have increased the number of car trips, including extra trips through the city centre.

- 2.1.19 There are issues with the provision of long-stay car parking, but these relate predominantly to private non residential parking associated with a relatively small number of large employers (such as the local authority and the police). There are also problems with public transport provision. Bus services suffer poor reliability and cross city centre links could be improved. There are limited facilities for buses in the city centre, with a number of bus only streets, but no bus lanes. High volumes of traffic make parts of Central Wakefield difficult for pedestrians and cyclists to negotiate. This problem is particularly severe around the roads that form the incomplete inner ring road, and the Westgate/Marygate/Bull Ring area.
- 2.1.20 Traffic problems have potential implications for the economy, health (through stress and through a reduction in air quality), and safety. The implementation of an Emerald Ring, whereby traffic would be re-directed around Central Wakefield rather than through it, has been suggested. It is important that future development in the city centre reduces the need for car travel, by improving access by sustainable transport modes, (bicycle, on foot and public transport).
- 2.1.21 Flood risk is an important issue for Central Wakefield as part of the AAP area is in a high risk zone. The Environment Agency has designed flood management into the recent Waterfront development and it has been recognised that any new development should not worsen the problem. Development on or adjacent to the floodplain should incorporate appropriate measures to reduce flood-risk. New development should utilise Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS).
- 2.1.22 There is a lack of statutory/ non-statutory ecological designated sites within Central Wakefield, both within the AAP area and immediately adjacent. Central Wakefield's ecological resource should be identified, with the most valuable spaces designated at an appropriate level. Consideration should also be given to the conservation management of these areas. The provision of open space in Central Wakefield is viewed as important, with Gehl Architects being enlisted and involved in the masterplanning process. If there is insufficient available greenspace and/ or where significant ecological value is found, consideration should be given to restoring some brownfield sites for nature conservation and/ or soft end use for amenity purposes. Enhancing areas close to communities and improving connectivity can improve accessibility (i.e green grids).
- 2.1.23 Exceedence of the annual mean nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) objective has resulted in the designation of an Air Quality Management Area which covers the entire Central Wakefield Area. Traffic is the main source of NO₂ in the city and it is important that development decisions do not contribute to a worsening of predicted exceedences.
- 2.1.24 Central Wakefield's cultural and built heritage is valued and should be protected and enhanced. There is one Scheduled Ancient Monument, Wakefield Bridge, and there are eight Conservation Areas within the AAP boundary. There are 80 groupings of Listed

Buildings. New development should incorporate high quality design and materials so as to protect the historic built environment and its setting and improve the attractiveness of Central Wakefield.

SA Objectives

2.1.25 Based on these key issues, fifteen SA Objectives were developed as shown below. These have been supplemented by sub-objectives which are more focused on the specific issues. The objectives and sub-objectives which comprise the SA Framework were agreed with environmental bodies and others and used as the basis for the appraisal.

- SA1** Good quality employment opportunities available to all;
- SA2** Conditions which enable business success, economic growth and investment;
- SA3** Education and training opportunities to build skills and capacities;
- SA4** Conditions and services to engender good health;
- SA5** Safety and security for people and property;
- SA6** Vibrant communities to participate in decision making;
- SA7** Create, enhance and provide accessibility to culture, leisure and recreation activities;
- SA8** Local needs met locally;
- SA9** Quality housing available to everyone;
- SA10** To provide a transport network which maximises access whilst minimising detrimental impacts;
- SA11** A quality built environment that protects and enhances its historic assets, and efficient land use patterns that make good use of derelict sites, minimise travel and promote balanced development;
- SA12** A bio-diverse and attractive natural environment;
- SA13** Minimal pollution levels;
- SA14** Minimal greenhouse gas emissions and a managed response to the effects of climate change; and
- SA15** Prudent and efficient use of energy and natural resources with minimal production of waste.

Testing the AAP Objectives

2.1.26 In order to ensure that the AAP objectives don't conflict with the SA objectives, they were tested against each other. Generally the SA and AAP objectives are compatible with one another and no significant conflicts were identified. However, in some cases there was some uncertainty over the compatibility and this mainly arose when there was some uncertainty as to how the AAP objectives would be translated into actions on the ground.

Consultations on the Scope

2.1.27 Consultations on the key issues and SA objectives were undertaken with the Countryside Agency, English Heritage, English Nature, and the Environment Agency to confirm that they were in agreement with the findings of the initial stages, and to provide an opportunity to suggest changes to the assessment. Consultation with these bodies is a legal requirement. However, in addition, a wider group of local stakeholders was also included in the consultation exercises so that input could be provided on the approach to assessing the social and economic factors covered by the assessment, as well as the more local environmental issues.

2.2 Initial Sustainability Appraisal

2.2.1 One of the requirements of SA is to consider alternative approaches to achieving the objectives of the plan, so that the effects of these alternatives can be assessed. The Issues and Options Report (published June 2005) for the Central Wakefield AAP proposed a number of options for achieving the plan's objectives.

2.2.2 These options were assessed against the agreed SA objectives. The purpose of this appraisal, known as an 'Initial Sustainability Appraisal', was to help to guide the Council on choosing preferred options.

2.2.3 The policy options available to plan makers in seeking to meet the objectives are heavily constrained by national and regional planning guidance, and the Initial Sustainability Appraisal found that, in most cases the proposed options that were the least sustainable were those that looked at the 'do nothing' option, these being the options that did not follow the new guidance.

Consultation

2.2.4 The 'Initial Sustainability Appraisal' report was sent out with the 'Issues & Options Report' for widespread consultation with interested parties including the public, in June and July 2005. This consultation generated a total of 632 separate comments from 48 different respondents and the results have been used, together with the Initial SA, to develop the options into preferred policies. These are now presented in the 'Preferred Options Report' which are accompanied by the 'Sustainability Appraisal Report'. Of the comments received only eight related to the Initial Sustainability Appraisal report itself.

2.3 Sustainability Appraisal

2.3.1 The preferred options chosen by the Council have been appraised against the agreed SA Objectives. The appraisal has focused on identifying the significant environmental, social, and economic effects which may result from the implementation of the options. The options were assessed for their likely impact against the 15 SA objectives, and the

findings of the assessment are summarised below in Figure NTS 2. For the purpose of this assessment, significant effects are defined as are those which have been identified as very sustainable (✓✓) or very unsustainable (✕✕) in the assessment.

✓✓	Very sustainable
✓	Sustainable
?	Uncertain
-	Neutral
✕	Unsustainable
✕✕	Very unsustainable

Policy (Abridged)	SA Objective (Abridged)														
	SA1. Employment	SA2. Economy	SA3. Education	SA4. Health	SA5. Security	SA6. Participation	SA7. Leisure	SA8. Local Needs	SA9. Housing	SA10. Transport	SA11. Land Use	SA12. Natural Environment	SA13. Pollution Levels	SA14. Climate Change	SA15. Natural Resources
CW1 Area of Plan	<	<	<	<	<	<	<	<	<	<	<	<	<	<	<
Transport															
CW2 Create Emerald Ring	?	✓	?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	?	✓	✓	✓	✓
CW3 Design of Emerald Ring	✓	✓	?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	?	✓	✓	✓	✓
CW4 Traffic in Emerald Ring	?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
CW5 Pedestrian and Cycle Routes	-	-	?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	✓	?	✓	✓	✓
CW6 Total Number of Car Parks	✓	?	-	?	?	?	?	?	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
CW7 Long Stay Car Parks	✓	✓	-	?	?	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	?	?	?	✓	✓
Protection and Enhancement of the Built Environment															
CW8 Archaeological Value	-	-	-	-	-	✓	✓	✓	-	-	✓	-	-	-	-
CW9 Conservation Areas	-	-	-	-	-	✓	✓	✓	-	-	✓	-	-	-	-
CW10 Listed Buildings	-	-	-	-	-	✓	✓	✓	-	-	✓	-	-	-	-
CW11 Views from Key Points	?	?	-	-	-	✓	✓	✓	-	-	✓	-	-	-	-
CW12 Visual Appraisal	?	?	-	-	-	✓	✓	✓	-	-	✓	-	-	-	-
CW13 Detracts from Vistas	?	?	-	-	-	✓	✓	✓	-	-	✓	-	-	-	-
CW14 Landmark Buildings	✓	✓	-	-	-	✓	?	✓	-	?	-	✓	✓	?	✓
CW15 Design in Vicinity of Emerald Ring	-	✓	-	✓	✓	✓	-	-	✓	-	✓	✓	-	-	-
CW16 Contribution to Public Realm	✓	✓	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	✓	✓	-	-	-
CW17 Financial Contribution	?	?	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	-	✓	✓	?	-	-
CW18 Public Realm Design Principles	✓	✓	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	✓	✓	-	-	-
CW19 Public Realm Design Matrix	✓	✓	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	✓	✓	?	-	-
CW20 Wildlife Habitat Network	-	-	-	✓	-	✓	✓	✓	-	-	?	✓	✓	?	-
Housing															
CW21 Jacobs Well/Stanley Lane Proposal	✓	-	?	?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Existing Employment Areas															
CW22 Employment Zones	✓	✓	✓	-	-	-	-	✓	?	✓	?	?	?	?	×
Offices															
CW23 Office Floor Space	✓	✓	✓	-	-	✓	-	✓	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
CW24 Existing Office Space	✓	✓	-	-	-	✓	?	✓	?	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	-
Retailing															
CW25 Retail Floor Space in Emerald Ring	✓	✓	-	-	-	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	?	-	✓	✓	-
CW26 Retail Policy Area	✓	✓	-	-	-	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	-	-	✓	✓	-
CW27 Shopping Frontages	✓	✓	-	-	-	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	-	-	-	-	-
CW28 Building Renovations for Retailing	✓	✓	✓	-	-	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	✓	-	✓	✓	-
CW29 Specialist Retail Areas	✓	✓	-	-	-	✓	✓	✓	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	-
Special Policy Areas															
CW30 a.) Trinity Walk	✓	✓	-	-	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	-	?	-	-
CW30 b.) Westgate/Burton Street	✓	✓	✓	-	-	✓	✓	✓	?	?	?	?	?	?	?
CW30 c.) The Waterfront	✓	✓	✓	-	-	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	?	✓	×	×	-
CW30 d.) Ings Road	✓	✓	-	-	-	✓	?	✓	?	?	-	✓	×	×	?
CW30 e.) Kirkgate	✓	✓	-	-	-	✓	?	✓	?	?	-	✓	?	?	-
CW30 f.) North West of City Centre	✓	✓	?	-	-	✓	?	✓	?	?	-	✓	?	-	-
Culture, Leisure, Tourism and the Evening Economy															
CW31 Safe and Secure Environment	✓	✓	?	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	-	-	-	-	-
Do Nothing Options Assessed at Issues and Options Stage															
T Transport	x	x	x	x	x	xx	xx	xx	-	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx	xx
UD Urban Design/Built Environment	✓	✓	-	-	x	?	✓	?	?	-	x	x	-	-	x
H Housing	x	x	?	-	x	x	x	xx	xx	x	xx	xx	?	x	x
EC Economy + Employment	xx	xx	xx	x	x	x	xx	?	x	?	x	x	x	xx	xx
CL Culture, Leisure, Tourism	x	-	-	x	xx	-	xx	xx	-	?	?	-	?	?	?

Figure 2 Summary of Preferred Options Assessment

Significant Positive Effects

2.3.2 As shown above, significant positive effects were identified for nine of the SA objectives. These include:

- Improved employment opportunities and conditions to encourage economic growth;
- Improvements to the public realm brought about through initiatives such as pedestrianisation and the introduction of design principles;
- Meeting local needs locally by improving the range of leisure and retail facilities within Central Wakefield, thereby reducing the need to travel elsewhere for these services;
- Encouraging sustainable modes of transport through the extension of cycle and pedestrian routes and improvements to public transport;
- Protecting and enhancing the cultural heritage assets and townscape of Central Wakefield through improving the public realm, preserving conservation areas and protecting key viewpoints;
- Protection of areas of greenspace through the designation of a site and improvements to the public realm, and;
- Making effective use of brownfield land within Central Wakefield, thereby reducing the pressure for edge of town sites.

Significant Negative Effects

2.3.3 The only significant negative effects identified during the assessment resulted from the level of proposed new development and redevelopment in areas of high flood risk as identified by the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment that was published in May 2005. This particularly relates to the following areas:

- Waterfront Special Policy Area; and
- Ings Road Special Policy Area.

2.3.4 Mitigation measures will need to be considered in order to reduce these impacts.

Significant Uncertainties

2.3.5 There are a number of cases where the effects of the preferred options are uncertain. The major uncertainties relate to:

- How area wide travel and traffic patterns will be affected by the proposed AAP measures;
- The broad nature of some of the AAP preferred options has made prediction of the significant effects difficult especially where the nature and level of the effects will be very much dependant on the type and scale of developments which are built.

Cumulative Effects

2.3.6 Cumulative effects are those effects that when added together become more significant even if on their own they do not appear to be significant. Cumulative effects can occur with other plans and policies as well as within the plan itself. The cumulative effects of the SA are generally positive and include:

- Improvements to the public realm;
- Protection and improvements to the townscape;
- Conditions which enable economic regeneration; and
- Conditions which provide the opportunity for a wider group of the population to utilise the city centre service and facilities.

2.3.7 However there is uncertainty as to how traffic and travel patterns will be influenced by the AAP, and the development in high risk flood areas will have an adverse cumulative effect on flood risk in the area. Mitigation measures will be needed to reduce the cumulative impacts.

Mitigation Measures

2.3.8 SA Guidance requires that measures should be considered to prevent, reduce or offset any significant negative effects that have been identified during the assessment process.

2.3.9 Mitigation measures and identification of issues requiring further consideration during the next stages of the AAP were identified. In many cases where significant negative effects and other less significant negative effects have been identified during the assessment process, the Development Control policies in the Core Strategy and Development Policies DPD will put forward the mitigation measures required to prevent or reduce the severity of this effect. However, a number of proposed mitigation measures, or areas recommended for additional consideration before publication of the final AAP, have also been included, such as:

- Traffic calming measures need to be considered to improve the safety of road users and pedestrians;
- Sensitive developments need to be sited away from air quality "hotspots" and areas of high noise levels;
- Low polluting developments need to be encouraged in the regenerated employment zones;
- The findings of the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and the requirements of PPG25/Draft PPS25 will need to be taken into account when determining the sites to be developed and the mitigation measures that will need to be incorporated, particularly when considering the location of vulnerable developments (e.g. residential institutions, hospitals and emergency services); and
- New developments should utilise Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) wherever possible.

3 How the Assessment has Influenced the Plan

3.0.1 The process of undertaking sustainability appraisal on the emerging policy options for the AAP is not a 'rubber stamping operation' that is carried out once the policies have been determined, but instead is an interactive process which informs the option development process. This has resulted in:

- Revisions to the AAP objectives as a result of the initial SA stages;
- Guiding the selection of preferred options and the development of new options; and
- Recommending mitigation measures to include within the preferred policies and planning documents.

3.0.2 Options that were shown to be unsustainable in the Initial Sustainability Appraisal Report have not been carried forward into the Preferred Options Reports.

4 Monitoring Proposals

4.0.1 Once the plans are implemented, their effects on the environment, society and economy are to be monitored to allow action to be taken to reduce and/or offset any significant effects. The monitoring programme will be finalised for inclusion in the SA Statement which will accompany the adopted plan. Where possible the monitoring will make use of existing arrangements, such as those reported in the WMDC LDF Annual Monitoring Report. The recommended monitoring includes:

- Air quality monitoring data;
- Transport modal splits;
- Achievement of Biodiversity Action Plan targets; and
- Number of new developments meeting BREEAM standards.

5 Next Steps

- 5.0.1 The publication of the Sustainability Report signifies the start of a consultation process, whereby key stakeholders and the public are given the opportunity to comment on the contents of both the Central Wakefield Area Action Plan Preferred Options Report and the Sustainability Appraisal Report.
- 5.0.2 The results of the consultation process will be used to guide the development of the AAP. Once the documents have been finalised, they will be submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination, accompanied by a final SA Report and 'Consultation Statement' which will explain how the sustainability appraisal and consultation process have influenced the final documents.

6 How Can I Get Involved?

6.0.1 Wakefield Metropolitan District Council is writing to:

- consultees identified in the Council's draft Statement of Community Involvement;
- all those who responded to the Issues & Options Consultation; and
- any one else who has asked to be kept informed about the preparation of the AAP

to let them know that the Central Wakefield Area Action Preferred Options Report and this accompanying Sustainability Report are available for comment. If you are aware of anyone else who may wish to be informed, let us know and we will write to them.

6.0.2 If you have comments on the Council's Preferred Options report or the Sustainability Appraisal, please:

- comment online at <http://consultation.limehouse.co.uk/index.do?identifier=wakefield>;
- or
- download a copy of the summary report and a comments form at www.wakefield.gov.uk/ldf; or
- fill in the enclosed comments form and return it to the address below; or
- e-mail your comments to majorprojects@wakefield.gov.uk

All comments should reach us by 5.00 p.m. on Thursday 22nd February 2007.

Send your comments to:

Wakefield Metropolitan District Council
Major Projects
Regeneration Services
PO Box 92
Newton Bar
Wakefield
WF1 1XS
Fax: (01924) 306411

If you wish to be kept informed of progress in preparing the AAP and be notified of future consultation stages tick the relevant box on the form or e-mail us with details and we will add your name and address to our mailing list.