Doncaster Local Plan

Sustainability Appraisal of Doncaster’s Growth Options

July 2015
NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

Introduction and background

This document has been prepared to help make informed decisions about how the borough should grow and develop in the future and test the emerging approach within the Doncaster Local Plan. It provides:

- an assessment of the suitability of different approaches to growth and development (including the advantages and disadvantages of each option); and
- a comparison of the emerging aims and objectives of the Local Plan and the objectives of sustainable development.

This assessment is known as “sustainability appraisal”. It is a tool designed to measure the performance of the Local Plan and ensure that the policies and proposals contained within it are aligned with relevant high level plans and programmes, reflect the needs and priorities of the borough and accord with sound planning principles such as social cohesion, good design, economic prosperity and mixed and balanced communities. This is about ensuring that the needs of the economy, society and the environment are balanced in a way that improves our quality of life and enjoyment of our surroundings, both now and for the generations to come.

An appraisal tool has been developed to assess and compare the emerging options of the Doncaster Local Plan. This identifies the potential effects of the options and the means of mitigating any significant effects.

Alongside this, we have prepared a report that outlines the scope and content of the appraisal process and the ways it will be used during the preparation of the Local Plan to inform its future direction. This has already been subject to consultation and should be read in conjunction with this report.

The approach used to appraise the plan fulfills the requirements of European and national legislation; this is explained in more detail in the scoping report.

Relationship between the Doncaster Local Plan and the sustainability appraisal process

The law requires us to appraise the potential effects of the Local Plan. In order to determine the scale and nature of these effects, we need to develop an understanding of the current situation and context.

This information is set out in the scoping report and has been used as a basis of identifying the main issues and challenges facing the borough. Much of this information has been derived from existing or emerging plans, strategies and programmes at the international, national, regional and local level.

You can download the scoping report which includes a summary of the key priorities and challenges from the consultation web page from our website at [www.doncaster.gov.uk/ldf](http://www.doncaster.gov.uk/ldf).

We want your views on how we can best enhance and promote our towns and countryside, protect our natural and man-made assets, improve local services and widen access to opportunities. The consultation looks at the issues facing the borough and the options for addressing them, in terms of how Doncaster should grow and develop over the next 15 years.

Appraisal of future growth options

This appraisal has informed the development of these options from the outset. It appraises and tests the suitability of these options against a set of criteria. The full results are set out in the appendix.

These options are based on the following.

**Option 1: the Core Strategy approach (business-as-usual).** This option maintains the current strategy contained within the Core Strategy (the business-as-usual scenario).

**Option 2: Doncaster main town focus.** This is based on higher levels of growth in the main urban area of Doncaster and main towns (e.g. Armthorpe, Mexborough and Thorne) with reductions in surrounding areas.
Option 3: Greater dispersal. This option distributes growth across a wider range of settlements such as smaller market towns and free-standing villages.

Option 4: New settlement or town. A much expanded or standalone settlement would provide the main focus of new housing outside of the main urban area.

Option 5: Low growth and environmental protection. This option is based on lower levels of growth than the current strategy and would avoid areas of green belt and flood risk and protected sites of historic or nature conservation interest.

Option 6: Total dispersal. This option is based on a complete dispersal of development and growth across all towns and villages.

Overall, options 1 and 2 performed best against the criteria because growth would be directed towards the main urban area, main towns and existing service centres which provide good access to infrastructure and services, such as public transport links.

A more dispersed strategy (option 3) would better help meet local housing needs and support local services. However, it can also dilute benefits associated with achieving a larger critical mass and possibly not maximise inward investment opportunities in and around the main urban area.

Options 4, 5 and 6 have been rejected because of their potential to restrict long term economic growth and prosperity and undermine efforts to regenerate and renew former mining communities. Such plans would not meet the aims and objectives of the Doncaster Local Plan and run counter to the principles of sustainable development.

Appraisal of the emerging aims and objectives

The aims and objectives of the emerging Doncaster Local Plan have been tested against the objectives of the sustainability appraisal to highlight both potential synergies and inconsistencies. The results confirm that they are mutually reinforcing and compatible.

Next stages

Following this consultation, we will prepare a full draft of the Local Plan. This will take into account the responses from the latest consultation and the findings of the sustainability appraisal (as well as any other new sources of evidence that emerge).

Once adopted, the Doncaster Local Plan will guide future planning decisions in the borough up to 2032.
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Introduction

1.1 Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council is in the process of preparing a new 15-year plan to guide growth and development across the borough. This is known as the Doncaster Local Plan.

1.2 Government regulations require that sustainability appraisal forms part of the process of preparing the new plan. Sustainability appraisal is a tool designed to predict, evaluate and monitor the performance of plans and programmes from the outset, including its emerging policies and proposals. The sustainability appraisal will sit alongside and inform the Doncaster Local Plan.

1.3 Doncaster’s Local Plan is still at an early stage of production and we want to know your views. This consultation (known as the issues and options stage) describes the borough as it is now and looks at the issues currently facing the borough. It sets out a vision for the place that Doncaster will be in 2032 and a series of aims and objectives to help us achieve this vision. It also puts forward a range of possible options on the future scale and distribution of growth across the borough.

1.4 This report has been published alongside the following documents.

- Issues and Options Paper.
- Vision, Aims and Objectives Paper.
- Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report.

Copies of these and other relevant consultation documents are available to view or download from our website at www.doncaster.gov.uk/ldf.

1.5 The purpose of this report is to assess and compare the relative suitability of these options in terms of their ability to meet the needs and priorities of the borough over the next 15 years and beyond. It looks at how these various scenarios might affect the local economy; the natural and built environment; the well-being of the local community; the provision of local services; patterns of movement; current investment activity and so on.

1.6 Your views on these options and the appraisal findings are now sought. Your responses to these options will directly help to develop the policies and proposals that will be included within the adopted Local Plan. No decisions have yet been made and you may have alternative suggestions.

1.7 We are not promoting any particular option at this stage. The purpose of the consultation is to stimulate debate and generate other ideas about growth and where it might be located.

Content of this report

1.8 This report has been prepared to help inform and influence the content and direction of the Doncaster Local Plan. An appraisal tool has been developed to test the performance of the Local Plan (including potential options and alternative scenarios). In doing so, it will ensure that the policies and proposals in the Local Plan are the most appropriate in the light of the alternatives.

1.9 The sustainability appraisal is not, in itself, a decision making tool but it will nonetheless influence future strategic choices on where new development and growth will take place across the borough.

1.10 An interdisciplinary team has been set up to assess the potential effects of the Doncaster Local Plan, including the suitability of emerging options. This investigation has involved two main tasks which are summarised below.

- A comparison of the draft aims and objectives of the Doncaster Local Plan against the objectives of the sustainability appraisal (see appendix 1).
- A detailed appraisal of the emerging options (see appendix 3).

1.11 Chapter 2 of this report provides the background to the development of the strategic options and the emerging vision, aims and objectives of the Doncaster Local Plan. It sets out the context in which the sustainability appraisal has been prepared.
SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL OF THE DONCASTER LOCAL PLAN: APPRAISAL OF DONCASTER’S GROWTH OPTIONS

1.12 Chapter 3 briefly describes and explains the methodology used to appraise and test the potential options and the emerging aims and objectives of the Local Plan. Further detail is provided in the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report.

1.13 Chapter 4 compares the various options against each other and summarises the results of the appraisal. Chapter 5 sets out conclusions and recommendations that will influence which options are chosen and sets out the reasons that alternatives have been rejected. The results of the appraisal will, in turn, inform the preferred growth option within the Doncaster Local Plan.

1.14 This report must also comply with relevant European legislation. Appendix 1 explains on how the sustainability appraisal of the Doncaster Local Plan fulfills the requirements of the Strategic Environment Assessment.

How to comment

1.15 If you would like to comment on the findings of this report, please send them via email to us at ldf@doncaster.gov.uk using the comment form that can be downloaded from the local plan webpage at www.doncaster.gov.uk/ldf. You can also comment separately on the Local Plan Issues and Options consultation papers via an online questionnaire also available on the Local Plan webpage.

Sustainability appraisal – purpose and requirements

1.16 Local authorities have a legal duty to appraise the effectiveness and performance of their development plans to help make informed choices about how their areas should grow and develop in the future. This process is known as “sustainability appraisal”.

1.17 Government guidance describes the sustainability appraisal process as “.....an opportunity to consider ways by which the plan can contribute to improvements in environmental, social and economic conditions, as well as a means of identifying and mitigating any potential adverse effects that the plan might otherwise have. By doing so, it can help make sure that the proposals in the plan are the most appropriate given the reasonable alternatives”.

1.18 The sustainability appraisal is carried out during the preparation of the plan to influence its content and ensure that decisions are made in accordance with the aims of sustainable development. A summary of the various roles and outputs of the sustainability appraisal are summarised below.

Box 1: Key roles of the sustainability appraisal

- Helps establish a sound evidence base
- Identifies the key issues, challenges and opportunities facing the borough
- Helps justify interventions (e.g. considers the future of the borough without the plan)
- Determines the significance of potential effects and ways to mitigate or offset them
- Considers alternative ways of implementing the plan to inform preferred choices

1.19 A more detailed guide on how the appraisal will be carried out during the preparation of the Doncaster Local Plan is set out in the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report¹. These reports should be read together in conjunction with the other consultation documents.

1.20 The sustainability appraisal must address the legal requirements of the EU Directive (2001/42/EC) known as the Strategic Environmental Assessment (or SEA) Directive. The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 give effect to this Directive and set out specific legal requirements for each stage of the sustainability appraisal process. Appendix 1 sets out how these requirements have been met in this report.

¹ The Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report sets out the context and role of the appraisal and how it will be carried out at each stage of the preparation process. It also identifies relevant environmental, economic and social issues facing the borough that the Local Plan should address and a set of evaluation criteria that will be used to appraise and monitor the effects of the Doncaster Local Plan (including alternative options).
CHAPTER 2: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL PROCESS AND THE PREPARATION OF THE DONCASTER LOCAL PLAN

Doncaster Local Plan

2.1 The Doncaster Local Plan will set out policies and proposals that will be used to guide decisions and investment across the borough, looking ahead to 2032. It will set out how and where the homes, jobs, community facilities, shops and infrastructure will be delivered and the type of places and environments we want to create. It will also set out policies on what will or will not be permitted.

2.2 Once adopted, it will replace the Core Strategy (which was adopted in 2012) and saved policies set out in the Unitary Development Plan (which was adopted in 1998).

2.3 The Doncaster Local Plan will be a single document covering the whole of Doncaster borough. Specifically, it will include:

- an overall vision (which sets out how Doncaster and the places within it will grow and develop in the future);
- a series of aims and objectives, focusing on key issues;
- a growth and regeneration strategy (which sets out where development will happen, when and by what means);
- sites and proposals where new housing, business space and infrastructure and services will be located;
- detailed policies which will be used to assess planning applications; and
- clear arrangements for managing and monitoring the delivery of the plan.

2.4 A detailed and comprehensive evidence base has been used to inform the preparation of the Doncaster Local Plan and the sustainability appraisal process. More information about this can be found on our website at www.doncaster.co.uk/ldf.

Context

2.5 Doncaster is growing and will continue to grow over the next 15 years. By 2032, Doncaster is expected to have more than 11,000 new residents and 20,000 more jobs.

2.6 While the forecasted population growth rate is consistent with Doncaster’s historical growth rates, these numbers still raise important questions about how and where Doncaster should grow and develop over the next 15 years and beyond, and the impact that growth will have on people’s quality of life. We are preparing a new plan to guide and shape this growth.

2.7 The new plan provides an opportunity to take a fresh approach to the urgent issues arising from climate change, resource depletion, land use and agricultural intensification, population and urban growth, lifestyle changes and economic diversification in response to changes in government policy, new institutional arrangements (e.g. devolution) and emerging growth and investment plans at the sub-regional level.

2.8 This consultation will allow genuine choices to be made about where new homes, jobs and services should be located and what sort of places we want to live and work in. Is there a pattern of growth that will help Doncaster become greener, safer, healthier and more prosperous? What investments are needed to help support those choices? What measures will be required to overcome or mitigate any adverse impacts arising from development? How and to what extent can the plan promote more sustainable patterns of development, travel movement and land use and help improve the quality of the local environment?

2.9 In answering these questions, the sustainability appraisal aims to provide a clear audit trail of how it has influenced and refined the policy choices in the Doncaster Local Plan.

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2 Doncaster’s jobs growth target has been derived from Sheffield City Region Integrated Infrastructure Plan Growth Plan (Ekosgen, 2014) which sits alongside the Sheffield City Region Growth Plan. Please note: the population growth rate (source: Department for Communities and Local Government) is a baseline figure and does not forecast growth from future policy interventions.
Assessment of alternatives

2.10 Local authorities need to consider a wide range of options when deciding where and how growth should happen and how services (e.g. infrastructure) should be provided. This is a mandatory requirement of European and national legislation.

2.11 There is no statutory definition of an “alternative”. Government guidance defines an alternative as a “different way of fulfilling the objectives of the plan or programme”. In the context of this consultation, it means an alternative pattern of growth that would help meet the goals and aspirations of the borough.

2.12 The overall aim of the appraisal process is to select the most suitable option/approach which best meets the objectives of the Local Plan and the priorities set out in other high level strategies and programmes.

CHAPTER 3: APPRAISAL METHODOLOGY

3.1 The Issues and Options Paper puts forward a range of options on the way that growth and development could be distributed across the borough to help achieve the aims and objectives of the Doncaster Local Plan. These summarised in paragraph 4.3 below.

3.2 Appendix C of this report outlines the relative advantages and disadvantages of each option. Each option is assessed against a set of evaluation criteria covering a range of topics such as economic diversification, flood risk, social cohesion, accessibility, health, design and safety, climate change, biodiversity and landscape. These have been developed in consultation with the Environment Agency, Historic England, Natural England and other stakeholders such as the NHS and Doncaster Chamber of Commerce.

3.3 A detailed explanation of how the evaluation criteria have been developed is set out in appendix 3 of the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report.

3.4 Although aligned with high-level strategies and programmes set out in European and national legislation, the evaluation criteria have been carefully tailored to reflect the social, economic and environmental issues facing the borough (as outlined in appendix A and appendix B of the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report) and are based on the topics covered in the SEA Directive.

3.5 Appendix 2 describes and evaluates the performance of each option (including the existing baseline scenario) against the evaluation criteria to show how closely it reflects the principles of sustainable development. It attempts to describe and evaluate the potential significance of these effects, taking account the duration, frequency and magnitude and reversibility of these effects, as far as possible. The potential for cumulative effects are also considered.

3.6 For each criterion, a set of question prompts have been developed to help tease out/highlight the potential significance of these effects.

3.7 In the appraisal matrix, each option is given a score on how it performs against each criterion, using a 7 point scoring system, as outlined below.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>+</td>
<td>Mainly positive effects</td>
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<tr>
<td>++</td>
<td>Significant positive effects</td>
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<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>Neutral effects</td>
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<tr>
<td>?</td>
<td>The effects are uncertain</td>
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<tr>
<td>+/-</td>
<td>A mix of both positive and negative effects</td>
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<tr>
<td>-</td>
<td>Mainly negative effects</td>
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<td>--</td>
<td>Significant negative effects</td>
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3.8 The system of appraisal used does not attempt to give any particular weighting to the assessment of the options. Its main purpose is to flag up possible significant social, economic and environmental effects and to recommend appropriate mitigation measures in order to prevent, reduce and as far as possible offset any adverse effects.

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3 Further detail on the scoring system is set out in the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report.
3.9 Every effort has been made to obtain up-to-date information and to accurately predict and evaluate the effects of the options set out in the issues and options consultation. However, this is inherently challenging given the high level nature of the Local Plan. Hence, we have made some assumptions regarding how these options will be implemented “on the ground”, although they are kept to a minimum. Assumptions adopted in the evaluation of impacts are reported in the relevant sections. However, these assumptions are often implicit, relying on expert professional judgment. In some instances, the effects are not known at this stage.

CHAPTER 4: APPRAISAL OF STRATEGIC GROWTH OPTIONS

4.1 This section outlines the results of the appraisal of Doncaster’s strategic growth options. Full results of the appraisal are presented within the matrices in appendix C.

4.2 This section sets out the conclusions on the sustainability performance of the various alternatives and makes recommendations on which approach (in terms of where growth should be distributed across the borough) should be carried forward in the light of the alternatives. It also provides a summary of the reasons that the alternative options have been rejected, taking into account wider planning considerations such as viability, national planning policy and infrastructure requirements. The results of the appraisal will help determine the scale and distribution of growth and development across the borough.

Strategic growth options

4.3 The strategic growth options set out below express possible choices on how the vision, aims and objectives of the Doncaster Local Plan can be achieved. These have emerged from the review of the current social, economic and environmental characteristics of the borough.

Option 1: the Core Strategy approach (business-as-usual): a distribution based on growth at the identified sub-regional centre (the main urban area of Doncaster), the other main towns (e.g. Mexborough and Thorne) and a number of settlements requiring regeneration (e.g. former mining communities) but limited growth elsewhere.

This option maintains the current strategy contained within the Core Strategy (the business-as-usual scenario).

Option 2: Doncaster main town focus: a distribution based on higher levels of housing growth in the main urban area with reductions in surrounding areas.

Option 3: Greater dispersal: a distribution based on a more dispersed pattern of growth throughout the borough with a much greater focus on smaller market towns and clusters of villages in the rural hinterland.

Option 4: New settlement or town: a distribution based on a new free-standing settlement or a major expansion of an existing settlement or group of settlements with around 5000 new homes alongside new schools, public transport and other infrastructure, which will be the main focus of new housing outside of the main urban area over the plan period and beyond.

Option 5: Low growth and environmental protection: a distribution based on lower levels of growth than the current baseline that will avoid protected sites (e.g. green belt and nature conservation interests) and flood risk areas.

Option 6: Total Dispersal: a market-driven distribution based on a complete dispersal of development and growth across all towns and villages.

4.4 The business-as-usual option (which is based on the adopted Core Strategy) outlines an ambitious strategy to improve the economic performance of towns and service centres, promote regeneration, tackle deprivation and protect the environment. Priority is given to re-using well located brownfield land within urban areas and conserving the built and natural heritage.

4.5 The other growth options (2-5) represent the alternatives to the current strategy and have been tested to ensure they are realistic and compatible with the emerging vision and aims of the Doncaster Local Plan.
4.6 Government guidance stipulates that options should be realistic, practicable, relevant and potentially deliverable\(^\text{4}\). Local planning authorities are not expected to evaluate options or alternatives that would be incompatible with national planning policy and legislation or generate them merely for the sake of assessment\(^\text{5}\). At this stage, some of the alternatives have been rejected as not being suitable or fully compatible with high level strategies and national guidance.

**Summary of the appraisal results**

4.7 Overall, options 1 and 2 performed most strongly across the range of sustainability criteria, with similar scores in most categories. Both options will direct growth towards those settlements (e.g. the main urban area of Doncaster and outlying towns such as Mexborough, Armthorpe, Hatfield/Stainforth and Thorne) which offer the highest level of services (e.g. education, leisure and retail) and infrastructure (e.g. public transport) and thus should limit the overall need to travel.

4.8 Concentrating new homes and jobs towards the most accessible locations will result in significant positive effects, particularly in relation to improved accessibility and reduced car use. The main urban area of Doncaster lies in the heart of the borough and offers a range of employment, shopping, public administration, leisure, health care and further and higher education facilities, commensurate with its status as one of the largest towns in England.

4.9 On balance, option 2 (Doncaster and main towns focus) would have slightly more long term benefits - mainly arising from the critical mass of focusing more development on the main urban areas and growth corridors along key transport routes (where investment and funding will be targeted in accordance with the priorities set out in the Sheffield City Region Growth Plan, Doncaster Housing Strategy and Doncaster Economic Growth Plan) - compared to spreading growth across a larger number of settlements (option 1). Greater urban concentration would promote more sustainable patterns of travel and balanced mixed-use communities. However, it is acknowledged that option 2 will require coordinated public intervention to bring forward sustainable development opportunities in existing urban areas and address market viability considerations, especially in association with the delivery of new infrastructure and services.

4.10 In contrast, option 3 (greater dispersal) would spread growth more widely across a broader range of settlements (including smaller towns and villages) to address future needs. This would help sustain rural services and support the regeneration of former mining communities, especially in the north of the borough. It also would provide more choice to developers in a more market responsive environment. Greater opportunities exist to improve the quality of housing and deliver affordable housing targets (most parts of the borough have a requirement) on sites where viability will be less of a constraint.

4.11 Whilst offering greater choice and flexibility in the land supply, it risks placing housing in less sustainable locations and in locations which reduce its ability to support regeneration within the main urban area or help sustain existing services in existing urban areas.

4.12 Despite being a metropolitan borough, Doncaster is predominately rural in nature and has a relatively dispersed pattern of settlements beyond the main urban area, where many communities grew up around pitheads (which have since closed). Consequently, people living in these areas are often reliant on motorised transport, or have to travel longer distances to access jobs and services, notably within the main urban area. Because of this, Doncaster is a relatively high carbon emitter compared to other metropolitan areas.

4.13 Reinforcing this dispersed pattern is likely to exacerbate existing problems such as traffic congestion, long-distance commuting, greenhouse gas emissions, pollution levels and flood risk. This approach would necessitate the release of more greenfield land on the edge of settlements. Consequently, option 3 achieves more negative than positive scores.

4.14 Due to the high level nature of the assessment, some uncertainty remains regarding the potential effects of the growth options on some of the sustainability objectives, in particular health, education, historic and cultural heritage and local distinctiveness. The scale and magnitude of the potential impact arising from these options will largely depend on the quality and location of new development (e.g. housing and employment) which is not known at this stage. In some cases, greater dispersal could change the role and function of settlements as service centres which may impact on their identity and sense of place.

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\(^\text{4}\) Planning Policy Practice Guidance (Department for Communities and Local Government).

\(^\text{5}\) Any growth option must be capable of being delivered during a realistic timescale (see paragraphs 152, 157, 173, 177 of the National Planning Policy Framework).
4.15 By their very nature, these options would have adverse impacts (albeit to varying degrees) on the environment such as biodiversity (i.e. from the displacement of wildlife), agriculture/soil quality, water resources and the character and appearance of the landscape, resulting from the loss of greenfield land and areas of amenity and landscape value (e.g. agriculture). In many cases, it will be possible to reduce, offset or avoid these adverse effects with appropriate mitigation. In addition, future economic and population growth will generate more waste, increase greenhouse gas emissions and increase the consumption of resources.

4.16 Although many of the potential effects (including cumulative, synergistic and long term effects) are uncertain or unknown at this stage, options 4, 5 and 6 are likely to give rise to a broader range of adverse impacts than the other options, some of which may not be capable of mitigation (for example, a policy of restricting growth would lead to a shortfall of housing, employment and open space provision in certain parts of the borough).

4.17 These options have been rejected because of their potential to restrict long term economic growth and prosperity and undermine efforts to regenerate and renew former mining communities.

Rejected options

4.18 Overall, options 4, 5 and 6 are deemed to be unreasonable, unachievable and unsuitable in terms of their ability to meet the vision and objectives of the Local Plan. These options also performed relatively poorly against the evaluation criteria, especially compared with the other options (1-3).

New settlement or town (option 4)

4.19 New towns or settlements are generally recognised as potential solutions to urban overcrowding and sprawl in the UK and other parts of Europe and beyond. NPPF states that: “The supply of new homes can sometimes be best achieved through planning for larger scale development such as new settlements....extensions to existing villages and towns that follow the principles of garden cities. Working with the support of their communities, local planning authorities should consider the whether such opportunities provide the best way of achieving sustainable development”.

4.20 This option proposes to concentrate a significant amount of new development in one location to create a new settlement. In order to ensure that the settlement would support a sustainable population, a range of services and facilities, as well as good infrastructure would form part of the new settlement.

4.21 In Doncaster, well-planned urban extensions and infill developments within existing larger settlements are more likely to achieve well-balanced sustainable communities and housing growth than a new, free-standing settlement within the open countryside where there will be a need to provide all or much of the necessary infrastructure and services and links to existing settlements in order to become self-sustaining and self-sufficient.

4.22 Potential cumulative effects arising from the delivery of a new town/settlement are very difficult to predict and assess against the baseline situation, especially in the absence of a specific location. However, there are some obvious issues that have been identified through the appraisal. On the one hand, a new settlement would relieve pressure on existing infrastructure/services, offer employment opportunities, deliver a range of affordable homes and protect the character of existing settlements. In essence, it would provide an opportunity to plan a vibrant and sustainable community from the outset. On the other hand, a new settlement would increase outward commuting, reinforce existing dispersed patterns, place significant pressure on the open countryside, biodiversity and infrastructure, even with mitigation. Additionally, there would need to be market interest to bring/deliver the level of services and facilities needed.

4.23 New settlements or towns generally take longer to get off the ground. In Doncaster, a new settlement would be dependent on significant amount of new housing coming forward in the short and medium term (built out rates would also extend well beyond the current plan period). Indeed, there are already a significant number of planning permissions which remain unimplemented in the borough, primarily within existing urban areas where existing services and infrastructure already exist and major employment opportunities are in the pipeline.

4.24 On this basis, a free-standing new settlement (or a major outward expansion of the built-up-area) is not considered to be a realistic sustainable alternative, at least in the short to medium term.
Low growth and environmental protection (option 5)

4.25 The lower growth scenario would steer development away from flood risk areas, areas of amenity and landscape value, biodiversity/geological sites, contaminated sites and other sensitive locations. It would potentially render development more viable, as it will be steered towards deliverable sites. This option does not, however, fit well with our long term growth aspirations (as outlined in the Borough Strategy and Doncaster Economic Growth Plan) and could potentially undermine Doncaster’s role as a key economic driver in the Sheffield city region.

4.26 This option would help reduce the pressure on existing services and the open countryside (including the green belt and nature conservation interests) but there would be less capital investment, fewer job opportunities and lower levels of economic growth and consumption.

4.27 As explained in the baseline review, some settlements are physically constrained due to the risk from surface water and river flooding and other physical constraints such as nature conservation interests and a lack of urban brownfield land opportunities. Under this option, the opportunities to allocate land will be much more limited.

4.29 In the light of the above, a low growth strategy (option 5) should be rejected as an alternative to the current strategy because:

- it would not be possible to meet objectively identified needs across the borough in a way that maximises economic prosperity and as part of a balanced approach to growth in an area (especially given the current baseline situation);
- it would do little to support the resilience, strength and competitiveness of the local economy;
- it would run counter to the vision and principles set out in the Sheffield City Region Growth Plan and Doncaster Economic Growth Plan, which seek to significantly increase the number of private sector jobs and new housing; and
- it would potentially widen the gap between rich and poor communities in terms of access to public services, decent, affordable homes, incomes etc.

Total dispersal (option 6)

4.30 This option would see the distribution of new housing and employment in all towns and villages in the borough, apportioned according to the existing population and service provision of each settlement.

4.31 However, a highly dispersed growth option is not considered to be a realistic or reasonable alternative to the current strategy, mainly because it would significantly conflict with the National Planning Policy Framework and relevant legislation (e.g. SEA Directive). This framework states that:

- new infrastructure needs to be viable (see paragraphs 31, 160 and 173 of the NPPF);
- existing infrastructure capacity in the borough is insufficient to accommodate the demand from new development in dispersed such as the increase in pupils in each community area (contrary to paragraphs 162 and 173 of the NPPF);
- infrastructure needs to be delivered in a realistic time frame (see paragraph 173 of the NPPF);
- land needs to be used efficiently and, where possible, should utilise sites of lower environmental quality (e.g. urban brownfield sites) in the first instance (see paragraph 17 of the NPPF); and
- investment should not be over-burdened by the combined requirements of planning policy expectations (see paragraph 21 of the NPPF).

4.32 In this instance, a total dispersal strategy would render development unviable and undeliverable because infrastructure costs would be so prohibitive. Paragraph 173 of the NPPF places the onus on local authorities, through their local plans, to demonstrate that development would be both viable and deliverable. This option would clearly necessitate very significant investment in new infrastructure (e.g. new/improved flood defences, utilities, roads and schools etc) and physical improvements (e.g. extensive landscape buffers) in most parts of the borough to accommodate the demand from the increase in households, workers and pupils in each community area (contrary to paragraphs 162 and 173 of the NPPF). In many cases, new development would require very long lead-in times before it could be delivered, especially in more remote locations.

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In Doncaster, the supply of housing is not meeting the current levels of need (as outlined in the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report). Despite lower than average house prices, the vast majority of new households are unable to afford market housing.
4.33 Allied to this, physical and environmental constraints (including extensive washland areas, mineral extraction sites, ancient woodlands and national and internationally important nature conservation sites, such as Thorne and Hatfield Moors) also limit further settlement expansion in many parts of the borough. On this basis, the Doncaster Local Plan would be effectively rendered unsound.


5.1 Government guidance states that the objectives of the local plan must be tested against the objectives of the sustainability appraisal to highlight both potential synergies and inconsistencies\(^7\). The degree of compatibility of the aims and objectives and the objectives has been tested using the framework set out in the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report and in appendix 2.

5.2 The aims and objectives of the emerging Doncaster Local Plan have been derived from the review of relevant plans and programmes and the key issues identified in the baseline review (see appendix 2 of the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report). These will help to implement the vision of the Doncaster Local Plan.

5.3 Appendix 2 of this report shows how far these aims and objectives are compatible with the objectives of the sustainability appraisal. The results confirm that the objectives are mutually reinforcing and compatible.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 This report has considered the potential environmental, social and economic and environmental effects of Doncaster’s growth options.

6.2 A series of evaluation criteria have been developed to assess the suitability and feasibility of these options. These criteria have been derived from the main themes from the baseline review and reflect the priorities from relevant plans and programmes. The key strengths and weaknesses of these options are set out in the appendix.

6.3 Some of the options have been rejected at this stage because they are at odds with the principles of sustainable development set out in the appraisal. The Borough Strategy sets out an ambitious vision for growth and none of the rejected options would deliver sufficient growth and regeneration to priority locations. As a result, the number of options has been reduced from six to three.

6.4 These options now form the basis of the consultation and your views are sought on these. The findings of this report will be taken into account in the preparation of the growth and regeneration strategy within the Doncaster Local Plan.

6.5 Overall, it is considered that the urban concentration approach (option 2) is the most sustainable of the strategic options in terms of distributing growth and development across the borough. This will ensure that the benefits from growth and infrastructure funding are not spread too thinly and that transformational projects (e.g. urban centre regeneration) are supported. Option 1 (the “business as usual” option) is also a potentially suitable and deliverable and performs well against the objectives, even though it may not offer the same economies of scale. A more urban-centred approach would addresses housing need in the locations where the greatest need arises and development would take place where a wider range of jobs, services and facilities are concentrated, including public transport. Journey lengths/levels of car use are likely to be lower, giving rise to fewer emissions.

6.6 Options 1, 2 and 3 will help reduce social exclusion, poverty and disadvantage because growth will be directed to areas that require regeneration and investment and have good access to jobs and services. However, a more dispersed pattern of growth (based on previous trends in permissions and completions) could also dilute benefits associated with achieving a larger critical mass of development and not maximise opportunities for high quality inward investment. It could also lead to higher levels of car use and longer journey lengths.

What happens next?

5.6 The next stage will involve assessing the effects of potential development sites (e.g. housing, employment and mineral sites) to help determine the most suitable and sustainable options. These have emerged from the Call for Sites consultation.

5.7 Following this consultation, we will prepare a full draft of the Local Plan. This will take into account the consultation responses and the findings of sustainability appraisal (as well as any other new sources of evidence that emerge).

5.8 The Local Plan will set out a preferred strategy and a series of policies to help implement it. These will be subject to further sustainability appraisal and public consultation as part of this process.
APPENDIX 1: LINKS BETWEEN THE SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL AND THE STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

The sustainability appraisal of the Doncaster Local Plan, in line with the requirements of relevant legislation and guidance, provides the following information. In this context, the sustainability appraisal is based on the two documents:

- Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report
- Sustainability Appraisal of Doncaster’s Strategic Growth Options (this report).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SEA Directive requirements</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Outline relationship of the plan to other relevant plans and programmes</td>
<td>Appendix 1 of the scoping report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Set out the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the evolution of the environment if the neighbourhood plan was not implemented</td>
<td>Appendix 2 of the scoping report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Set out the environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected by the plan.</td>
<td>Appendix 2 of the scoping report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Describe any existing environmental problems</td>
<td>Appendix 2 of the scoping report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify the environmental protection objectives established at international, community or national level</td>
<td>Appendix 1 of the scoping report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authorities with specific environmental responsibilities (article 6 (3)) to be consulted when deciding on the scope and level of detail of the information to be included in the environmental report</td>
<td>Chapter 1 of the scoping report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consider the ‘reasonable alternatives’, taking into account the objectives and geographical scope of the plan</td>
<td>Chapter 4 and appendix 3 of this report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outline the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with include a description of any difficulties encountered in comparing the required information.</td>
<td>This will be determined during the next stage of the process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Set out the likely significant effects of the plan on the environment.</td>
<td>Chapter 4 and appendix 3 of this report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Set out the measures envisaged to prevent, reduce or offset any significant adverse effects of the plan.</td>
<td>Appendices 2 and 3 of this report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member states shall monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of plans and programmes in order to identify, at an early stage, unforeseen adverse effects and be able to undertake appropriate remedial action (article 10).</td>
<td>Appendix 3 of the scoping report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide a description of the measures envisaged concerning monitoring in accordance with article 10.</td>
<td>Appendix 3 of the scoping report</td>
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The aims and objectives of the emerging Doncaster Local Plan will be tested at each stage of the process as they are refined. These flow from the spatial vision of the borough and the issues identified in the baseline review. The table below compares the aims and objectives against the updated objectives of the sustainability appraisal.

### Aim 1: Jobs and growth

Support the conditions and opportunities for attracting high quality inward investment and jobs including green and high-tech industries and other innovative sectors that will help grow and diversify Doncaster’s economy and support its role as a sub-regional centre

To achieve this aim, our objectives are to:

- promote Doncaster’s town centre as the borough’s main location for shopping, indoor leisure, culture and business and strengthen its role as a major sub-regional centre, and direct town centre uses towards existing centres;
- provide a choice of employment sites to meet the needs of existing and future businesses;
- secure the provision of necessary infrastructure such as water, gas, electricity and telecommunications (including improvements to existing services) to help promote business opportunities and reduce social exclusion;
- direct new development to emerging growth corridors around the airport, motorway junctions and town and district centres to promote clusters of economic activity (e.g. hi-tech and green industries) and investment and support the role of Doncaster as a logistics centre of national significance;
- secure and maintain a steady and constant supply of minerals (including sharp sand and gravel and limestone) to support the future needs of the borough; and
- diversify the rural economy in a way that protects the open countryside whilst supporting businesses and existing communities.

### Aim 2: Regeneration and community pride

Support regeneration in all our communities to tackle deprivation and promote civic pride

To achieve this aim, our objectives are to:

- encourage the re-use of sites and buildings, especially well located and underused brownfield land (e.g. redundant industrial and other derelict/unused urban land and empty properties) to help revitalise areas of low housing demand and stimulate growth;
- make sure that schools have sufficient capacity to accommodate new pupils from developments and enough places can be created to accommodate them, in the right locations; and
- secure training and local employment provision (including apprenticeships and services) in association with new development to enhance the vibrancy of communities.

### Aim 3: Quality of place

Make sure that our towns, suburbs, villages and countryside benefit from high quality development that reinforce distinctive and vibrant places and conserve the built and natural heritage

To achieve this aim, our objectives are to:

- protect, maintain and enhance the distinct character, identity and setting of settlements;
- create healthier and more vibrant neighbourhoods (including mix of uses and green spaces) that are walkable and well connected to existing communities, where infrastructure and services exist or are planned;
- support high quality infill in smaller villages and support the retention and provision of services meeting local needs;
- make sure that new development is safe and secure and achieves high standards of building design, open space and landscaping; and
- protect and enhance the borough’s heritage assets such as archaeological remains, historic buildings and areas.
Aim 4: Natural environment and countryside
Maintain and enhance the character and appearance of the countryside and the natural environment, including areas of landscape and biodiversity value

To achieve this aim, our objectives are to:

- protect and improve the appearance, character and role of the different landscapes in the borough, including minimising the loss of green belt land and open countryside;
- develop an integrated and multi-functional network of high quality green spaces and corridors (e.g. river valleys, wetlands and woodlands) to support wildlife, encourage physical activity and improve links to other parts of the city region and beyond;
- improve the amount, quality and accessibility of green space, especially where existing provision is deficient; and
- protect, maintain and enhance biodiversity networks, trees, hedgerows and geodiversity sites such as Thorne and Hatfield Moors, Potteric Carr and Sprotborough Gorge and important habitats from loss or damage through effective management, in partnership with other agencies.

Aim 5: Energy and climate change
Support the transition to a low carbon borough in a way that reduces emissions and energy use, combats the impacts of climate change and exploits its natural resources, such as energy, water and minerals

To achieve this aim, our objectives are to:

- maximise the generation and use of renewable energy from low carbon sources such as solar power, carbon capture and energy from waste (for example, through the creation of decentralised energy networks);
- direct new development away from areas at risk of flooding as far as possible (consistent with other objectives) and encourage flood resilient design;
- make sure that new development minimises energy demand and consumption, connects to renewable forms of energy, reduces surface water run-off, improves water quality and prevents waste; and
- put in place measures to make sure that new development is compatible with neighbouring land uses, removes contamination and does not give rise to unacceptable levels of air, water, noise and light pollution.

Aim 6: Transport and movement
Improve travel choice within the borough and to the wider city region and beyond to address congestion, improve journey times and improve access to services and jobs, especially by accessible public transport, cycling and walking links

To achieve this aim, our objectives are to:

- ensure that new development is in places where it will be accessible to everyone, preferably by walking, cycling and public transport;
- maintain and improve easy to use transport links (both internally and externally) between communities, jobs and services especially to neighbouring town and economic centres, airports (e.g. Doncaster Sheffield Airport), coastal ports and high speed rail stations;
- enhance the gateway approaches and key transport corridors leading into the town centre and other key areas with high quality public realm and buildings; and
- improve the sustainable movement of freight within and around Doncaster, making more use of water and rail.

Aim 7: Homes and communities
Increase the provision of new homes throughout the borough to meet future needs and create mixed and balanced communities, particularly in areas with access to existing services

To achieve this aim, our objectives are to:

- deliver a range of high quality homes of different styles, tenures and sizes (including individual groups such as gypsy and travellers, young families, professionals and old and vulnerable people) which people can afford;
- direct most new homes to the main urban area of Doncaster and to the borough’s other large towns; and
- provide more private sector family housing, sheltered accommodation, student housing and rural housing in response to the changing population structure and need to retain and attract a more skilled workforce.
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Maintain and increase Doncaster’s growth and prosperity and diversify its economic base</td>
<td>Maintain and strengthen economic growth • Create jobs / new businesses • Support existing businesses • Increase wealth • Attract investment and trade • Close the ‘output gap’ • Improve financial security • Provide a supply of available land for all business needs • Promote tourism • Support home working / e-commerce • Improve quality of life</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4, 6 and 7</td>
<td>Doncaster places the economy at the centre of its strategy and has ambitions plans to deliver significant growth and regeneration through its local plan. Aim 1 has particularly strong links to this objective. In essence it seeks to seek to foster conditions to ensure that the borough is able to attract high quality business investment (including higher sector jobs such as engineering and hi-tech green industries) to help broaden the workforce, boost skills and reduce the output gap between Doncaster and the rest of the region. Particular emphasis is placed on promoting innovation and economic clusters (around Doncaster and Sheffield Airport and M18 and A1(M) motorway corridors and the town centres) to support the role of Doncaster as a trading centre of national significance. In addition, aims 2, 3 and 6 and 7 will have a strong indirect positive impact on this objective, particularly in terms of: • attracting a more skilled workforce (e.g. providing housing aimed at students and professionals); • facilitating better transport links (both internally and externally) to ensure people have good access to jobs, including those from deprived communities; • promoting a more attractive environment and setting in which to encourage investment and attract new businesses; • making efficient use of existing resources and energy to reduce development costs and increase living standards; and • securing training and employment provision in association with large-scale development.</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Reinforce and support community identity and pride</td>
<td>Support community identity • Maintain and protect the physical identity and setting of existing settlements • Conserve and protect existing services and facilities (especially in more remote areas) • Promote greater community cohesion • Don’t make everywhere the same</td>
<td>1, 2, 3, 4, 6 and 10</td>
<td>Boosting civic pride and community identity is a key theme underpinning the aims and objectives of the Doncaster Local Plan. Although difficult to quantify, the aims and objectives will have indirect benefits on this objective. These include: • protecting and maintaining the distinct identity and physical setting of existing self-contained settlements beyond the main urban area, some of which are vulnerable to coalescence (which will help reinforce community identity and pride in place); • promoting more distinctive, safer and attractive settlements which have a unique sense of place; • supporting infill opportunities in existing small towns and villages in the rural hinterland to support the retention of local services; • enhancing the vitality and viability of existing town centres, especially the sub–regional centre of Doncaster; and • promoting tourism and cultural activities.</td>
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### SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL OF THE DONCASTER LOCAL PLAN: APPRAISAL OF DONCASTER’S GROWTH OPTIONS

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</table>
| 3  | Improve accessibility to places and services, both within and outside of the borough | Accessibility to places | • Ensure places can be accessed via public transport  
• Encourage a modal shift  
• Minimise travel to work distances  
• Has footpath access where possible  
• Has cycle paths where possible  
• Have adequate parking facilities  
• Has road access where possible | 1, 2, 3, 5 and 6 | A strong degree of compatibility exists between the aims and objectives of the emerging Local Plan and this objective, with a view to improving accessibility/connectivity across the borough and beyond. Aim 6 has particularly strong links to this objective, because it focusses on improving travel choices both in the borough, the wider city region and beyond. Below summarises the main outcomes of the aims and objectives that will contribute towards the achievement of this objective.  
• New development will be focussed in places which are accessible to jobs, services and shops, places of work and services.  
• Improvements will be made to improve the reliability and capacity of the existing network (including road, cycle, rail and telecommunications) to meet future business needs and reduce travel costs/distances.  
• Greenspaces and corridors such as waterways and river valleys will serve more than one function and will become safer and more accessible to encourage physical activity, support wildlife and improve links to other parts of the network;  
• Gateways and transport corridors leading to the town centre will be improved.  
• Measures will be implemented to facilitate strategic access via road, rail and public transport between communities, jobs and services both within and outside of the borough and minimise journey times.  
• Better use will be made of water and rail-based freight. |
| 4  | Ensure resources are available and efficiently used to sustain development and reduce waste and consumption | Energy resources | • Reduce the reliance on, and the consumption of, finite fossil fuels  
• Reduce greenhouse gas emissions  
• Reduce energy use and encourage the production and use of renewable energy | 4, 6 and 9 | Aim 5 of the Doncaster Local Plan has particularly strong links to this objective. It seeks to support the transition to a low carbon borough in a way that reduces energy and waste and exploits its existing resources. Below summarises the main outcomes of the aims and objectives that will contribute (directly or indirectly) towards the achievement of this objective.  
• Renewable energy generation and use will be encouraged and promoted within new developments such as solar power and carbon capture.  
• New development will minimise energy demand and water and waste consumption with links to sustainable drainage systems and low carbon energy networks.  
• Priority will be given to reusing vacant and underused buildings and existing infrastructure to make best use of existing resources (e.g. through the use of recycled aggregates). |
<p>| 5  | Provide affordable, good quality housing that is available to everyone, including vulnerable and disadvantaged groups | Affordability | • Provide housing (including affordable housing) that is available to everyone to address future needs | 1, 2, 3, 5 and 7 | The results confirm there is a strong positive correlation between aim 7 of the emerging plan and objective 5 of the sustainability appraisal; both place strong emphasis on ensuring that everyone has good access to high quality and affordable housing, including individual and vulnerable groups. These include gypsy and travellers, young families, professionals, old and vulnerable people and students. New housing will be directed towards the main urban area and main towns where there is good access to jobs and services and both rural (e.g. infill sites) and urban locations. In other words, it will ensure that new homes are provided to the right standards, in the right locations, at the |</p>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Availability</td>
<td>Increase the supply of housing Address areas of housing market failure</td>
<td>1,2,3,4,6 and 7</td>
<td>right time; ensuring a balance of housing types and tenures that people are able to access. This will include more private sector family housing, sheltered accommodation, student housing and rural housing. This objective (along with aim 7) strongly reflects the priorities of the Housing Strategy and Borough Strategy set out in the review of plans and programmes. The Borough Strategy wants to accelerate the pace of housing delivery and bring forward greener and more sustainable homes, particularly within areas of high development potential. Accelerating the provision of new housing will help achieve many of the other aims and objectives, especially aim 3 (quality of place), aim 5 (energy and climate change) and aim 2 (regeneration and community pride).</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Reduce social exclusion and disadvantage</td>
<td>Minimise disadvantage or discrimination Ensure that as many people as possible have good access to shops and services</td>
<td>1,2,3,4,6 and 7</td>
<td>A strong degree of compatibility exists between objective 2 of the sustainability appraisal and aims 2, 3 and 7 of the emerging plan. Some communities in Doncaster are socially excluded from opportunities (e.g. broadband) and places of work. Several key messages emerge from the aims and objectives that will specifically tackle deprivation and social exclusion in Doncaster. • All communities should benefit from growth and regeneration. • New development should meet the needs and demands of specific groups especially more vulnerable members of society such as the elderly, young people and gypsy and travellers. • Areas of low housing demand and dereliction will be revitalised and regenerated. • Employment and training provision will be secured in association with large-scale development to help increase economic activity and skill levels. • Growth will be targeted towards areas in need of regeneration and investment, such as town and district centres, former mining communities and areas of low housing demand. • New development will be directed toward places that are accessible to everyone, especially where existing infrastructure and service provision is already available or is planned. • A range and choice of employment sites will be provided in both rural and urban areas and deprived areas. • Sufficient capacity will be provided to meet the education and health needs of the population. • Neighbourhoods will be better connected to jobs, services and transport networks. • New growth will help boost civic pride and community identity.</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Make places that are safe, attractive, culturally interesting and distinctive to live, work and travel in</td>
<td>Deliver a high quality built environment Promote local distinctiveness Provide more greenspaces and trees Maintain and improve the character and setting of the townscape and landscape</td>
<td>3, 4 and 6</td>
<td>Strong positive links exist between the objective and the aims and objectives of the local plan in recognition of the need to create more vibrant, attractive, safe and distinctive places. In essence, aim 3 provides a spatial interpretation of how this objective will be achieved. Below summarises the main outcomes of the aims and objectives that will contribute (directly or indirectly) towards the achievement of this objective.</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Renew and reuse existing buildings, land and infrastructure</td>
<td>Safety and security: • Promote buildings and developments which are ‘secure by design’ • Address anti-social behaviour • Maximise the security of homes and workplaces • Reduce crime • Reduce fear of crime • Minimise risk to health and safety</td>
<td>2, 3, 5 and 6</td>
<td>More and better connected greenspaces which facilitate the movement of people and wildlife. Neighbourhoods will be safer, healthier and better connected to existing communities via walking, cycling and public transport with associated green infrastructure. New buildings and spaces will be designed to a high standard. The distinct character and setting of existing settlements will be preserved from inappropriate development. Infill development will be supported within rural areas to support the retention of jobs and services. Important landscapes and townscores (including the historic setting of towns and villages) will be protected and enhanced. Cultural, tourism and leisure attractions will be protected and promoted to give people the very best life opportunities.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Land and buildings: • Encourage the re-use of brownfield land, vacant sites and existing buildings • Avoid the unnecessary use of greenfield sites • Support renewal of old and/or poor areas of housing • Protect and enhance the amenity of the area • Remove unstable and contaminated land</td>
<td>Infrastructure: • Capacity of existing infrastructure to support new development • Quality of existing infrastructure provision</td>
<td>2, 3, 5 and 6</td>
<td>A strong degree of compatibility exists between the aims and objectives of the sustainability appraisal and aims and objectives of the emerging plan, in particular aims 2 and 5. Aim 2 seeks to ensure that new development will make best use is made of existing land and buildings. This will minimise the loss of agricultural land, protect the open countryside and help avoid areas vulnerable to flooding where possible. Significant priority will be placed on revitalising older housing areas and renewing and rebalancing existing stock in areas of low demand. Where possible, sustainable design measures will be implemented to improve the efficiency of the housing stock (see aims 5 and 3). In addition, aim 5 seeks to put in place measures to remove contamination and other physical constraints such as flood risk and unstable land and buildings in the interests of protecting and enhancing the amenity of the landscape. Aim 3 seeks to make sure that sufficient infrastructure is provided in the right locations to support existing business and new development which will also require improvements to the existing network.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Health: • Address health inequalities • Make it easier for people to pursue a healthy lifestyle • Promote access to healthcare • Reduce the fear of crime and anti-social behaviour</td>
<td>Well being: • Increase personal satisfaction • Improve quality of life • Enhance people’s ability to access opportunities • Encourage community participation</td>
<td>2, 3, 4, 5 and 6</td>
<td>The health of Doncaster’s residents is improving but it remains a pressing concern, with high rates of obesity and sickness compared to other areas. Although there is no specific aim relating to health and well-being, a number of the aims and objectives in the Local Plan will help promote and improve the health and well-being of the borough and support a reduction in health inequities between communities. This will be achieved in the following ways. New development will improve the quality of housing and housing conditions especially in areas of low demand to meet the needs of the borough including vulnerable groups such as the elderly and young people. New housing will be located within close proximity to jobs and services, thus reducing the need to travel. A series of walkable, low carbon neighbourhoods will be created to promote more healthy lifestyles and reconnect existing communities where existing services and infrastructure exist or are planned. Good quality agricultural land will be protected where possible from urban encroachment as a source of local food production. Safe walking and cycling routes will be protected and provided at key locations to promote physical activ-</td>
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| 10 | Provide education and training provision to build the skills and capacity of the population | Education  
- Improve educational attainment  
- Provide more/sufficient school places to address future need | 1,2,6 and 7 | Education and skills are paramount to the future well-being of the borough. Explicit recognition is given to the importance of providing a stronger and more diverse skills base (especially in high-end sectors such as green industries, rail engineering and aviation) and raising the quality of education and training provision to attract investment, encourage innovation and support the role of Doncaster as a major economic driver of the Sheffield city region within aims 1, 2 and 7 of the Doncaster Local Plan. |
| 11 | Manage and adapt to climate change | Flood risk  
- Avoid inappropriate development in flood risk areas  
- Manage flood risk on sites at risk of flooding | 2,3,4,5,6 and 7 | Climate change mitigation and adaptation is a key theme underpinning the aims and objectives of the Doncaster Local Plan. For instance, aim 5 (energy and climate change) covers flood risk, renewable energy, sustainable drainage, water supply, energy efficiency improvements and emission reductions within new development. Below summarises the main outcomes of the aims and objectives that will contribute (both directly and indirectly) towards the achievement of this objective. |
|    |                                   | Greenhouse gas emissions  
- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions  
- Improve/Increase Doncaster’s resilience to climate change  
- Support the delivery of renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure  
- Secure energy efficiency improvements | | |
|    |                                   | Water supply and drainage  
- Encourage sustainable drainage practices  
- Manage and protect our water supply | | |
| 12 | Protect, increase and enhance the natural environment, including the landscape, its underlying geology and wildlife habitat | Biodiversity (habitats and species)  
- Protect, maintain and improve sites of international, national and local importance  
- Create new areas of biodiversity value  
- Offset / compensate for the loss of | 4, 2 and 3 | On the whole, there is a strong positive correlation between the two sets of aims. The Local Plan includes a specific aim relating to the natural environment, including Doncaster’s landscape and open countryside. However, some conflicts may occur between aims 1 and 4 of the Local Plan and objective 12. Regardless of which option is chosen, new urban extensions will be required on the edge of existing settlements to accom- |
## SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL OF THE DONCASTER LOCAL PLAN: APPRAISAL OF DONCASTER’S GROWTH OPTIONS

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<td></td>
<td>Geodiversity</td>
<td>habitats and species as a result of development</td>
<td>Provide suitable mitigation and compensatory measures to offset or reduce the impact arising from development on biodiversity and geological interests and the amenity of the wider landscape.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Landscape</td>
<td>Maintain and enhancing landscape quality and character</td>
<td>Moderate the needs arising from growth and avoid significant physical constraints. This will inevitably lead to the loss of biodiversity and areas of landscape value. Developers will be expected to provide suitable mitigation and compensatory measures to offset or reduce the impact arising from development on biodiversity and geological interests and the amenity of the wider landscape.</td>
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</table>
| 13 | Protect, conserve and enhance the historic and cultural heritage | Protect, maintain and improve the character and appearance of conservation areas. Maintain and protect historic buildings, scheduled ancient monuments and their settings. Protect, maintain and improve national and local historic parks and gardens | 1, 3, 4, 5 and 6 | Under aim 3 there is a specific objective relating to Doncaster’s cultural and historic heritage. The broad thrust of the objective is to protect, maintain and improve the character and appearance of conservation areas, listed buildings and historic parks and gardens. Other important features of the historic environment include geodiversity sites (e.g. Don Gorge) and the moors. These will be protected under aim 4.

Aim 6 is also relevant because it seeks to promote access to tourist and cultural activities. New development affecting historic buildings will be expected to incorporate energy efficiency and water savings measures so long as it does not adversely harm the architectural and historic features of known importance. |
| 14 | Protect and enhance soil, air and water quality (watercourses and ground water) | Avoid the sterilisation of minerals. Restore, reclaim and remediate vacant and derelict land (e.g. contaminated sites). Encourage local food production | 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 | The Doncaster Local Plan sets out an approach to managing land, soil, air and water resources in the borough. Strong positive links exist between the aims and objectives and soil, air and water objective as summarised below.

- The best and most versatile agricultural land will be protected from development to protect local food-growing and prevent soil and water erosion.
- New development will be focused within urban areas in areas of lower environmental quality in preference to greenfield sites.
- New development must be designed to minimise exposure to air, water and soil pollution and incorporate appropriate mitigation measures according to sustainable design principles.
- Best use should be made of existing vacant and derelict buildings and spaces so as to safeguard or improve soil quality and bring land back into productive use.
- Water abstraction within the aquifers will be avoided to prevent pollution and avoid further depletion of ground water supplies. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SA objective</th>
<th>Sub-objective</th>
<th>How will the option contribute towards or achieve the objective</th>
<th>Nature and scale of the impact</th>
<th>Geographical area likely to be affected</th>
<th>Commentary / explanation including an appraisal of the value of the receptor that it will have an impact on and ways to mitigate significant adverse impacts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. Maintain and increase Doncaster’s prosperity and diversify its economic base | Maintain and strengthen economic growth | • Create jobs / new businesses  
• Support existing businesses  
• Increase wealth  
• Attract investment and trade  
• Close the ‘output gap’  
• Improve financial security  
• Provide a supply of available land for all business needs  
• Promote tourism  
• Support home working / e-commerce  
• Improve quality of life | Long  
Uncertain  
Permanent | City region and borough wide – cumulative effects will be spread over a wide area  
Potential for regionally wider benefits but more dispersed options will have a lesser impact | Option 1: the Core Strategy approach will support/reinforce the role of Doncaster as a major sub-regional centre and will help attract more investment and new businesses. New housing would be close to existing major employment locations (e.g. town centres) main services and facilities. High growth sectors will be specifically targeted at key locations such as the enterprise zone (airport), low carbon business park (DN7/Unity) and engineering and manufacturing (Lakeside). |
| Economic diversification | • Provide a skilled workforce.  
• Broaden sectoral mix  
• Less reliance on current high volume sectors  
• More workers in ‘higher value’ sectors  
• Promote rural diversification | Long  
Uncertain  
Permanent / temporary  
/Skills and need demands are dependent on soft interventions – impact is quite uncertain as the options do not directly address skills and diversification but concentrating growth around growth corridors will have more positive impact - requires a step change in economic productivity and skills | Local (e.g. growth at the airport and main urban area will support diversification in new sectors such as aviation and rail engineering) | Option 2: Doncaster and main towns focus would support more urban concentration and growth especially within existing economic corridors such as town and district centres. This will ensure the viability of these towns. Urban concentration would also encourage the reuse and further expansion of existing employment sites. |
|  |  |  |  | Option 3: Greater dispersal would facilitate employment opportunities in most areas (e.g. jobs and skills in deprived areas) but it has potential to discourage the development of some economic clusters in market driven areas and more central locations which tend to rely on public intervention. In addition, an unfettered, market driven approach will not necessarily support prosperity and balanced growth because it will not deliver sufficient new homes in urban areas which are needed to support existing communities and businesses. |
|  |  |  |  | Option 4: New settlement or town would provide new employment opportunities alongside new housing. New households would create a demand for additional services and premises. However, the infrastructure required to support this kind of development will be extensive and very costly to provide, especially compared to making the best use or increasing the capacity of existing infrastructure. In addition, it would be challenging to get housing and employment in the same location. Large-scale settlements tend to have long lead-in times. |
|  |  |  |  | Option 5: Low growth / environmental protection has the potential to inhibit economic growth and undermine the role of Doncaster as a significant sub-regional centre with fewer investment opportunities. Limiting economic growth could also lead to lower wages/salaries and high levels of unemployment and worklessness. |
|  |  |  |  | Option 6: Total dispersal would further undermine the role of the town centres and urban areas as foci of growth. Much of the development would be located away from the town centre (e.g. retail parks) and existing corridors in more remote locations although in some cases jobs will be closer to where people live. However, the economic benefits will be spread more thinly across the borough, leading to potential job shortages in some areas. Investment/infrastructure costs will be substantially higher than other options. |
### SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL OF THE DONCASTER LOCAL PLAN: APPRAISAL OF DONCASTER’S GROWTH OPTIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Support community identity and pride</strong></th>
<th><strong>Maintain and protect the physical identity and setting of existing settlements</strong></th>
<th><strong>Conserve and protect existing services and facilities (especially in more remote areas)</strong></th>
<th><strong>Promote greater community cohesion</strong></th>
<th><strong>Don’t make everywhere the same</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pride</strong></td>
<td><strong>Get people involved in local issues.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Foster positive perceptions of the area.</strong></td>
<td><strong>Make people proud of their own community and Doncaster</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Medium to long</strong></td>
<td><strong>Likely</strong></td>
<td><strong>Permanent / temporary</strong></td>
<td><strong>Increasing pride in place is a key priority of the Borough Strategy and Corporate Plan.</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Accessibility to places</strong></th>
<th><strong>Ensure places can be accessed via public transport.</strong></th>
<th><strong>Encourage a modal shift.</strong></th>
<th><strong>Minimise travel to work distances.</strong></th>
<th><strong>Has footpath access where possible.</strong></th>
<th><strong>Has cycle paths where possible.</strong></th>
<th><strong>Have adequate parking facilities.</strong></th>
<th><strong>Has road access where possible.</strong></th>
<th><strong>Facilitate links between urban and rural areas.</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Accessibility to services</strong></td>
<td><strong>Facilitate access to services and facilities such as health, education, open spaces and shops etc.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Medium to long</strong></td>
<td><strong>Likely</strong></td>
<td><strong>Temporary or permanent</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Local, sub-regional, regional, national and international links across the wider network (e.g. coastal ports)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Option 1: the Core Strategy approach</strong> would contribute positively to the achievement of this objective, along with many of its sub-objectives. It will facilitate shorter journeys and enable the use of existing well-established public transport, cycling and walking routes. Occupants of new development would benefit from good access to services, facilities and opportunities.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Option 2: Doncaster and main towns** focus has the potential to make a more significant and positive contribution to the vitality and viability of existing town centres and the role of Doncaster as a major sub-regional centre but less growth will be directed towards towns in the north and east of the borough (e.g. Askern, Edlington, Moorends and Carcroft/Skello) which require renewal and place-making initiatives to support their role as service centres.

**Option 3: Greater dispersal** – the effects will be similar to the other options, with both positive and negative scores. New development could reinforce the sense of place especially in rural areas. However, the effects will be less positive in more central locations, such as town centres.

**Option 4: New settlement or town** – the effects will be similar to the other options but are more uncertain at this stage. However, it is much less straightforward to create a “sense of place” and a “cohesive, well-balanced community” in a new, free-standing development compared to urban extension or infill sites within existing urban areas.

**Option 5: Low growth / environmental protection** - the effects will be similar to the other options but it will help maintain and safeguard the identity and physical setting of existing settlements and prevent them from merging. However, the effects will be less positive in more central locations such as the town centre.

**Option 6: Total dispersal** - the effects will be similar to the other options but it would lead to significant expansion of the rural fringe and reinforce the existing dispersed settlement pattern. The scope to expand existing settlements is more limited in rural areas.

**Option 1: the Core Strategy approach** has the potential to reinforce settlement identity and pride subject to maintaining the distinct identity of settlements and communities. New development also provides an opportunity to create more cohesive and balanced communities. However, urban extensions are required on the edge of existing settlements to accommodate future housing needs. As a result, the openness of the strategic gaps between the main urban area and outlying settlements would be significantly reduced. This in turn could undermine the physical setting and identity of these areas.

**Option 2: Doncaster and main towns** focus has the potential to make a more significant and positive contribution to the vitality and viability of existing town centres and the role of Doncaster as a major sub-regional centre but less growth will be directed towards towns in the north and east of the borough (e.g. Askern, Edlington, Moorends and Carcroft/Skello) which require renewal and place-making initiatives to support their role as service centres.

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**Option 4: New settlement or town** – the effects will be similar to the other options but are more uncertain at this stage. However, it is much less straightforward to create a “sense of place” and a “cohesive, well-balanced community” in a new, free-standing development compared to urban extension or infill sites within existing urban areas.

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**Option 1: the Core Strategy approach** would contribute positively to the achievement of this objective, along with many of its sub-objectives. It will facilitate shorter journeys and enable the use of existing well-established public transport, cycling and walking routes. Occupants of new development would benefit from good access to services, facilities and opportunities.

**Option 2: Doncaster and main towns** focus would also contribute positively to the achievement of this objective, along with many of its sub-objectives. This option presents opportunities to capitalise from the government’s decision to locate the national rail college in Doncaster and the proximity of the proposed HS2 rail interchange in Sheffield. High speed rail will significantly reduce travel times.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option 3: Greater dispersal</th>
<th>New development should be close to services</th>
<th>Facilitate the transport of freight by sustainable means</th>
<th>Minimise the need to travel</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

- New development should be close to services
- Facilitate the transport of freight by sustainable means
- Minimise the need to travel

between Doncaster, major cities, coastal ports and continental Europe.

The main urban area of Doncaster and the main service centres are highly accessible via a range of transport modes (e.g. public transport, walking and cycling). The vast majority of jobs and services in the borough are located in and around the main urban area. Greater urban concentration will reinforce the role of the centre as a public transport hub and the importance of existing service centres in the wider hinterland.

Road traffic in Doncaster is expected to increase significantly during the next plan period, particularly on the strategic transport network (see appendix B of the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report). Greater urban concentration could increase traffic flows along key arterial routes leading into the town centre and motorways where air quality is already deteriorating. Maximum use should be made of existing road and rail infrastructure and routes (including freight) to facilitate the movement of goods and services.

**Option 3: Greater dispersal** would generate higher vehicle movements into existing market towns and villages (e.g. Tickhill and Bawtry) and place greater reliance on the car and promote commuting over longer distances. Residents would also be more remote from existing shops and services. Less focus would be placed on more accessible locations such as town centres. Accommodating more growth within existing market towns and rural villages would place additional pressure on existing infrastructure in these areas and may necessitate the provision of new infrastructure. New development would also be directed to settlements which presently have a limited range of services, facilities and infrastructure.

**Option 4: New settlement or town** – the nature and scale of effects will depend on the precise siting and design of the new settlement. However, a new settlement would need to be located close to the main urban area and existing infrastructure (e.g. transport networks) to help offset car journeys and outward commuting. A new settlement would also require significant new infrastructure such as roads and utilities.

**Option 5: Low growth / environmental protection** will have both positive and negative impacts – not everyone will be able to access services. Less investment and growth will mean fewer reduce transport capacity in the short term but there will be fewer opportunities will increase transport costs and journey times.

+/-

+/-
### Sustainability Appraisal of Doncaster Local Plan: Appraisal of Doncaster’s Growth Options

#### 4. Ensure resources are available and efficiently used to sustain development and reduce waste and consumption

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resource Area</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
<th>Durability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Energy resources</strong></td>
<td>• Reduce the reliance on, and the consumption of, finite fossil fuels</td>
<td>Medium to</td>
<td>Permanent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Reduce greenhouse gas emissions</td>
<td>long</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Reduce energy use and encourage the production and use of renewable energy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Minerals and construction</strong></td>
<td>• Reduce primary mineral extraction</td>
<td>Medium to</td>
<td>Permanent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Increase the use of recycled and reclaimed aggregates</td>
<td>long</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Incorporate sustainable design and construction practices</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Efficient use of waste</strong></td>
<td>• Encourage reuse/recycling and minimise waste</td>
<td>Short, medium and long term</td>
<td>Likely</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 5. Provide affordable, good quality housing that is available to everyone, including vulnerable and disadvantaged groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Affordability</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
<th>Durability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Affordability</strong></td>
<td>• Provide housing (including affordable housing) that is available to everyone to address future needs</td>
<td>Medium to</td>
<td>Permanent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Land will need to be set aside on the edge of existing settlements to accommodate new housing as urban extensions.</td>
<td>long</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Option 6: Total dispersal

- Would result in unsustainable patterns of development and place greater reliance on cars / outward commuting. The local road network in rural areas may not have the capacity to accommodate the scale of development that would be directed to these areas. Some development site opportunities in rural settlements are quite isolated.
- Extensive new infrastructure (e.g. utilities, public transport and schools etc) would be required to deliver new homes in dispersed locations - but mitigation would be very expensive.
- Promoting scattered development in smaller villages will help avoid the demise of rural services and facilities.

#### Option 1: the Core Strategy approach

- Would encourage the greater utilisation of energy and mineral resources and a broader mix of uses that are more resource efficient than other settlement patterns (e.g. increased density and use of brownfield land). This in turn will result in less reliance on motorised modes of transport, lower energy consumption and better access to services in towns and villages. More dense concentrations can also present opportunities to secure the adequate and efficient provision of services such as water, electricity and telecommunications.

#### Option 2: Doncaster and main towns focus

- Same as above but higher urban concentration will lead to greater energy consumption savings and reduced car journeys.

#### Option 3: Greater dispersal

- Would spread resources more thinly in an undirected way and place significant pressure on existing infrastructure.

#### Option 4: New settlement or town

- Offers potential economies of scale (e.g. heat and power networks or other renewable energy technologies) and can achieve higher standards of design and sustainable construction but the approach is very time and resource intensive.

#### Option 5: Low growth / environmental protection

- Would use and consume fewer resources but less potential to use energy more efficiently and manage future demand.

#### Option 6: Total dispersal

- Would be more resource intensive and have a greater impact on energy consumption and resources in terms of increasing journey times, commuting and construction costs etc.

| Option 1: the Core Strategy approach | +/-- |
| Option 2: Doncaster and main towns focus | +/+/
<p>| Option 3: Greater dispersal | -- |
| Option 4: New settlement or town | +/- |
| Option 5: Low growth / environmental protection | +/- |
| Option 6: Total dispersal | -- |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality</th>
<th>Promote and encourage good quality design and sustainable homes</th>
<th>Medium to long</th>
<th>Likely</th>
<th>Permanent</th>
<th>Education, skills, youth employment and regeneration.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Option 3: Greater dispersal</strong> would direct growth to areas where land values and house prices are higher than average. Greater opportunities exist to improve the quality of housing and deliver affordable housing targets (most parts of the borough have a requirement). Whilst offering greater choice and flexibility in the land supply, it risks placing housing in locations which reduce its ability to support regeneration or help sustain existing services in existing urban areas. New infrastructure would be required to deliver new homes in dispersed locations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mix and range of homes</td>
<td>Ensure an appropriate mix of housing, tenures and types</td>
<td>Medium to long</td>
<td>Likely</td>
<td>Permanent</td>
<td><strong>Option 4: New settlement or town</strong> could deliver a large amount of the borough's housing requirement but this would restrict choice and flexibility within the borough.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability</td>
<td>Increase the supply of housing</td>
<td>Medium to long</td>
<td>Likely</td>
<td>Permanent</td>
<td><strong>Option 5: Low growth / environmental protection</strong> would limit the supply of housing (including affordable housing) in many areas and lead to a significant shortfall in terms of meeting forecast local housing needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social exclusion</td>
<td>Minimise disadvantage or discrimination</td>
<td>Medium to long</td>
<td>Likely</td>
<td>Temporary or permanent</td>
<td><strong>Option 6: Total dispersal</strong> will ensure that housing need is met in all areas. Whilst offering greater choice and flexibility, it risks placing housing in less sustainable locations and in locations which reduce its ability to support regeneration or help sustain existing services in existing urban areas (as per option 3). Greater opportunities exist to achieve high quality living and working environments and deliver affordable housing targets.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social disadvantage</td>
<td>Reduce concentrations of socio-economic disadvantage</td>
<td>Medium to long</td>
<td>Likely</td>
<td>Temporary or permanent</td>
<td><strong>Local Option 1: the Core Strategy approach</strong> will spread growth across the main urban area and a number of former mining communities such as Armthorpe, Stainforth, Hatfield and Rossington, which already have good transport links and access to shops and services. The most deprived areas in the borough are located in the main urban area and the outlying former mining towns. Focusing development in and around deprived areas provides opportunities to improve community services and facilities; reduce poverty; improve access to the job market and promote social inclusion. A targeted growth strategy will help regenerate and breathe new life into deprived areas and combat social exclusion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reduce the gap between affluent and deprived areas</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Option 2: Doncaster and main towns focus</strong> would direct more growth towards the urban centre and key economic corridors where a range of transport modes are available so the benefits would be potentially reach a wider cross-section of the population.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Option 3: Greater dispersal</strong> would direct more growth to former mining towns and villages where deprivation and social disadvantage levels are higher than average and more remote rural communities. On the other hand, many of these communities lack good access to existing services and facilities (e.g. schools, shops, leisure and recreation uses and telecommunications) and there will be less incentive to redevelop more challenging brownfield sites and housing renewal areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Option 4: New settlement or town</strong> could have a positive impact on regeneration depending on its location. Growth will be concentrated</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL OF THE DONCASTER LOCAL PLAN: APPRAISAL OF DONCASTER’S GROWTH OPTIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Option</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Medium to long term</th>
<th>Likely</th>
<th>Permanent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Option 1: the Core Strategy approach</td>
<td>would encourage the reuse of brownfield and redundant sites and promote housing renewal and growth within deprived areas in preference to unsustainable greenfield sites.</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Option 2: Doncaster and main towns focus</td>
<td>would prioritise urban brownfield sites over greenfield sites but large-scale greenfield urban extensions to Doncaster and the main towns will still be needed to accommodate future needs (especially where there is a specific need to avoid flood risk).</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Option 3: Greater dispersal</td>
<td>would promote housing growth within areas with less good infrastructure and could put significant pressure on land resources. More peripheral development will have a detrimental impact on visual amenity and open character of</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 7. Make places that are safe, attractive, culturally interesting and distinctive to live, work and travel in

**Attractive and distinctive places**
- Deliver a high quality built environment
- Promote local distinctiveness
- Provide more greenspaces and trees
- Maintain and improve the character and setting of the townscape and landscape

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Medium to long term</th>
<th>Likely</th>
<th>Permanent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This option is not directly applicable as will depend on the quality and location of new development. For example, a new settlement will require comprehensive planned approach to create a distinctive sense of place. Long term effects are uncertain but some indirect effects may occur in the short and medium term.</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 8. Renew and reuse existing buildings, land and infrastructure

**Land and buildings**
- Encourage the re-use of brownfield land, vacant sites and existing buildings
- Avoid the unnecessary use of greenfield sites
- Support renewal of old and/or poor areas of housing
- Protect and enhance the amenity of the area
- Remove unstable and contaminated land

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Medium to long term</th>
<th>Likely</th>
<th>Permanent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All options will result in the permanent loss of greenfield land, and some will mean the loss of green belt and open countryside. The use of greenfield sites has the potential to have a detrimental impact on the character and visual amenity of the landscape and</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 9. In one place to address borough wide needs.

**Option 5: Low growth / environmental protection** would do least to support areas of social disadvantage and reduce the inequality gap between rich and poor areas.

**Option 6: Total dispersal** would direct growth across all deprived areas, particularly towards areas of greatest need. Deprivation and social disadvantage is dispersed across both rural and urban areas in the borough. Doncaster is a very large borough and has over a dozen market and coalfield towns and villages and more than 50 smaller villages and hamlets which vary in size and character. However, growth would be dispersed across too many settlements and development sites may not be of sufficient size to accommodate sufficient open space and other infrastructure to meet the needs of individual places.

### 10. Safety and security

**Promote buildings and developments which are ‘secure by design’**
- Address anti-social behaviour
- Maximise the security of homes and workplaces
- Reduce crime
- Reduce fear of crime
- Minimise risk to health and safety

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Medium to long term</th>
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<th>Permanent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Safety and security</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 11. Land and buildings

**Encourage the re-use of brownfield land, vacant sites and existing buildings**
- Avoid the unnecessary use of greenfield sites
- Support renewal of old and/or poor areas of housing
- Protect and enhance the amenity of the area
- Remove unstable and contaminated land

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Medium to long term</th>
<th>Likely</th>
<th>Permanent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 12. Safety and security

**Promote buildings and developments which are ‘secure by design’**
- Address anti-social behaviour
- Maximise the security of homes and workplaces
- Reduce crime
- Reduce fear of crime
- Minimise risk to health and safety

<table>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Safety and security</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 13. Land and buildings

**Encourage the re-use of brownfield land, vacant sites and existing buildings**
- Avoid the unnecessary use of greenfield sites
- Support renewal of old and/or poor areas of housing
- Protect and enhance the amenity of the area
- Remove unstable and contaminated land

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<tr>
<th>Medium to long term</th>
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<th>Permanent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 14. Safety and security

**Promote buildings and developments which are ‘secure by design’**
- Address anti-social behaviour
- Maximise the security of homes and workplaces
- Reduce crime
- Reduce fear of crime
- Minimise risk to health and safety

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Medium to long term</th>
<th>Likely</th>
<th>Permanent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Safety and security</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 15. Land and buildings

**Encourage the re-use of brownfield land, vacant sites and existing buildings**
- Avoid the unnecessary use of greenfield sites
- Support renewal of old and/or poor areas of housing
- Protect and enhance the amenity of the area
- Remove unstable and contaminated land

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Permanent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Infrastructure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Capacity of existing infrastructure to support new development</td>
<td>Medium to long term</td>
<td>Likely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of existing infrastructure provision</td>
<td></td>
<td>Permanent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Green belt in particular is of landscape value and plays an important role in preventing urban sprawl and maintaining countryside character and openness. Large tracts of land are still derelict or vacant. Settlement edge allocations could take some pressure off infill sites and help preserve openness and character of the landscape. However, such allocations would need to ensure it would not unduly harm wouldn’t damage but would enhance as far as possible approaches to settlements/countryside amenity.

**Option 4: New settlement or town** would utilize a significant amount of greenfield land in the existing countryside.

**Option 5: Low growth / environmental protection** would have more positive impacts on resources and infrastructure but fewer opportunities to renew areas of poor housing. This option would also reduce the pressure to release greenfield land and help protect the open countryside.

**Option 6: Total dispersal** will have similar results to option 3 but will place an even more onerous burden on existing utilities, infrastructure and divert much needed investment from housing renewal and main urban areas. Insufficient infrastructure capacity is available to accommodate growth in all areas.

### Health

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<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Address health inequalities</td>
<td>Medium to long term</td>
<td>Likely</td>
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<tr>
<td>Make it easier for people to pursue a healthy lifestyle</td>
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<td>Permanent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Promote access to healthcare</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reduce the fear of crime and anti-social behaviour</td>
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The effects are largely uncertain as it will depend on the specific location of new development. Creating healthier places and lifestyles will depend on a number of locally influenced factors such as the proportion of open space within new development, availability of transport and planning permissions (e.g. hot food takeaways).

Health and well-being are critical local issues. The effects are largely uncertain as it will depend on the specific location of new development.

**Option 1: the Core Strategy approach**

**Option 2: Doncaster and main towns focus**

**Option 3: Greater dispersal**

**Option 4: New settlement or town**

**Option 5: Low growth / environmental protection**

**Option 6: Total dispersal**

### Well being

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increase personal satisfaction</td>
<td>Medium to long term</td>
<td>Likely</td>
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<tr>
<td>Improve quality of life</td>
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<td>Permanent</td>
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<td>Enhance people’s ability to access opportunities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Encourage community participation</td>
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While some of the options will have positive impacts, the overall picture is negative. Local, sub--regional, regional and national and global

**Option 1: the Core Strategy approach**

**Option 2: Doncaster and main towns focus**

**Option 3: Greater dispersal**

**Option 4: New settlement or town**

**Option 5: Low growth / environmental protection**

**Option 6: Total dispersal**

### Education

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improve educational attainment</td>
<td>Medium to long term</td>
<td>Likely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide more/sufficient school places to address future need</td>
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<td>Permanent</td>
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</table>

This criterion is not directly applicable. However, the provision of new school places will be determined at the detailed policy level, through the use of developer contributions.

Local and sub-regional

**Option 1: the Core Strategy approach**

**Option 2: Doncaster and main towns focus**

**Option 3: Greater dispersal**

**Option 4: New settlement or town**

**Option 5: Low growth / environmental protection**

**Option 6: Total dispersal**

### Skills and training

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improve qualifications and skills in young people</td>
<td>Medium to long term</td>
<td>Likely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide opportunities for adults to learn new skills</td>
<td></td>
<td>Permanent</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Option 1: the Core Strategy approach**

**Option 2: Doncaster and main towns focus**

**Option 3: Greater dispersal**

**Option 4: New settlement or town**

**Option 5: Low growth / environmental protection**

**Option 6: Total dispersal**

### Flood risk

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<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Timeframe</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Avoid inappropriate development in flood risk areas</td>
<td>Medium to long term</td>
<td>Likely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manage flood risk on sites at risk of flooding</td>
<td></td>
<td>Permanent</td>
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</table>

**Option 1: the Core Strategy approach** will focus new development on existing settlements which already have a good level of services and facilities and should limit the overall need to travel. Overall, it has potential to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in central and...
### Greenhouse gas emissions
- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions
- Improve/increase Doncaster's resilience to climate change
- Support the delivery of renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure
- Secure energy efficiency improvements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Medium to long term</th>
<th>Likely</th>
<th>Permanent</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>By virtue of its geography, Doncaster is particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. New development will need to mitigate flood risk in susceptible areas to avoid exacerbating elsewhere. The effects are uncertain as this will be dependent on design, materials, proximity to services etc to reduce car journeys but due to the scale of growth the cumulative impact is likely to be significant (even with mitigation). Land use planning will have a significant influence on climate change and greenhouse gas emissions.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Water supply and drainage
- Encourage sustainable drainage practices
- Manage and protect our water supply

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Medium to long term</th>
<th>Likely</th>
<th>Permanent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The effects are uncertain as this will be dependent on design, materials, proximity to services etc to reduce car journeys but due to the scale of growth the cumulative impact is likely to be significant (even with mitigation).</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Land use planning
- Denser locations. More compact forms of urban development tend to reduce consumption (per capita), increase shading and increase opportunities for low carbon energy and associated infrastructure. However, dispersed growth will also increase greenhouse gas emissions and resource consumption from rising car usage and congestion. Significant growth will also place considerable pressure on existing water and waste supplies.

New development will be directed to settlements constrained to varying degrees from medium to high flood risk from the main rivers, including parts of the main urban area and Hatfield-Stainforth. Thorne and Moorends are virtually completely constrained and complete avoidance is therefore not possible. Employment opportunities associated with the M18/M180 motorway corridor are also constrained by flood risk. Flooding can bring considerable disruption to homeowners and potential health effects, including potential risk to life, while flooding to employment sites also affects business continuity and impacts on the local and regional economy.

Many of the settlements are protected by existing defences and are otherwise sustainable locations for growth and regeneration. Proposed allocations in flood risk will need to:
- Satisfy a sequential approach taking account of wider sustainability considerations;
- Satisfy exceptions tests with mitigation and
- Manage residual risk without exacerbating flood risk elsewhere.

Mitigation may prove costly and will have to be considered alongside wider viability testing.

**Option 2: Doncaster and main towns focus** is slightly better placed to benefit from the deployment of low carbon energy such as district heating and solar photovoltaics (e.g. town centres). The compact urban form of the main urban area is well suited to the retrofitting of a range of energy technologies, with the potential to achieve significant economies of scale.

The greater reliance on the urban area for development would mean less opportunity to avoid flood risk than option 1. The impacts on Thorne and Moorends and on employment sites in the M18 motorway corridor would remain.

**Option 3: Greater dispersal** would increase greenhouse gas emissions and resource consumption and there will be fewer opportunities to invest in new infrastructure (e.g. district heating systems).

Greater dispersal will provide opportunities to avoid flood risk areas although any development in Thorne and Moorends, like options 1 and 2, will not be able to avoid this. Greater use of employment land in the north of the borough along any A1-A19 road link will be within a flood risk area. 
### SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL OF THE DONCASTER LOCAL PLAN: APPRAISAL OF DONCASTER’S GROWTH OPTIONS

#### Option 4: New settlement or town

- Offers the greatest potential to save energy, reduce consumption and mitigate the impacts of climate change. Although some element of self-containment may be achieved, new settlements and urban extensions will result in out-commuting, particularly in relation to residents travelling to workplaces and other facilities and services outside the settlement. Suitable locations are in short supply (due to the extent of flood risk and physical constraints but this option does provide the opportunity to avoid flood risk).

#### Option 5: Low growth / environmental protection

- Would have an impact on climate change but it will not be significant. Mitigation and adaptation measures will be required to offset the impacts arising from growth on climate change.

- This option may still require use of flood risk sites if there is greater use of urban infill and reducing travel is afforded priority together with avoiding urban extensions.

#### Option 6: Total dispersal

- Would further exacerbate the current baseline situation (Doncaster already has high carbon footprint due to car use and the dispersed pattern of settlements).

- Some of the growth in this option is likely to impact on flood risk areas unless development is unequally spread in the borough.

#### 12. Protect, increase and enhance the natural environment, including the landscape, its underlying geology and wildlife habitat

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Biodiversity (habitats and species)</th>
<th>Medium to long term</th>
<th>Likely</th>
<th>Permanent / irreversible / temporary (displacement)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Protect, maintain and improve sites of international, national and local importance</td>
<td>Medium to long term</td>
<td>Likely</td>
<td>Permanent / irreversible / temporary (displacement)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create new areas of biodiversity value</td>
<td>Medium to long term</td>
<td>Likely</td>
<td>Permanent / irreversible / temporary (displacement)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offset / compensate for the loss of habitats and species as a result of development</td>
<td>Medium to long term</td>
<td>Likely</td>
<td>Permanent / irreversible / temporary (displacement)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Option 1: the Core Strategy approach

- Would require large releases of greenfield land on the edge of existing settlements, leading to the loss and disruption of habitat and species. Greenfield development would also affect the setting of the landscape and existing settlements.

- Masterplanning and extensive buffers will be required to protect the landscape and townscape around existing settlements and facilitate the further development of the green network.

#### Option 2: Doncaster and main towns focus

- Is similar to option 1 in that it requires large-scale greenfield releases but the level of harm will depend on the extent of new greenery and compensatory measures within new development. Some brownfield sites within urban areas have been left vacant over a long period of time and have developed biodiversity interest in their own right from pioneer species which are beneficial to wildlife such as birds, butterflies and other inserts. As such, the overall impact of the option could potentially be negative.

#### Option 3: Greater dispersal

- Would also affect the integrity of habitats and species (as per options 1 and 2) but the scale and magnitude of impact could extend over a wider area. More greenfield land would be required to accommodate a dispersed pattern of growth on the edge of existing settlements.

#### Option 4: New settlement or town

- Would necessitate the release of vast tracks of greenfield land in the open countryside and require additional transport routes from existing urban areas. New development would permanently alter the character and appearance of the landscape.
### 3. Protect, conserve and enhance the historic and cultural heritage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Medium to long term</th>
<th>Likely</th>
<th>Permanent</th>
<th>Option 1: the Core Strategy approach</th>
<th>Option 2: Doncaster and main towns focus</th>
<th>Option 3: Greater dispersal</th>
<th>Option 4: New settlement or town</th>
<th>Option 5: Low growth / environmental protection</th>
<th>Option 6: Total dispersal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Historic places</td>
<td>Protect, maintain and improve the character and appearance of conservation areas</td>
<td>Short, medium to long term</td>
<td>Likely</td>
<td>Permanent</td>
<td>O/?</td>
<td>0/?</td>
<td>0/?</td>
<td>0/?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Maintain and protect historic buildings, scheduled ancient monuments and their settings</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Protect, maintain and improve national and local historic parks and gardens</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cultural heritage</td>
<td>Promote and increase tourism</td>
<td>Medium to long term</td>
<td>Likely</td>
<td>Permanent</td>
<td>O/?</td>
<td>0/?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Sensitive management of historic townscape</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Protect undesignated archaeological assets from damage or loss</td>
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### 4. Protect and enhance soil, air and water quality (watercourses and ground water)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Medium to long term</th>
<th>Likely</th>
<th>Permanent</th>
<th>Option 1: the Core Strategy approach</th>
<th>Option 2: Doncaster and main towns focus</th>
<th>Option 3: Greater dispersal</th>
<th>Option 4: New settlement or town</th>
<th>Option 5: Low growth / environmental protection</th>
<th>Option 6: Total dispersal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Land and soil</td>
<td>Avoid the sterilisation of minerals</td>
<td>Medium to long term</td>
<td>Likely</td>
<td>Permanent</td>
<td>O/?</td>
<td>0/?</td>
<td>0/?</td>
<td>0/?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Restore, reclaim and remediate vacant and derelict land (e.g. contaminated sites)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Encourage local food production</td>
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<tr>
<td>Water</td>
<td>Increase the quality and quantity of the water environment</td>
<td>Medium to long term</td>
<td>Likely</td>
<td>Permanent</td>
<td>O/?</td>
<td>0/?</td>
<td>0/?</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Reduce direct and indirect pollution on the water environment</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Reduce the potential risk to ecosystems (e.g. wetland and riparian habitats) and ecological receptors</td>
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<tr>
<td>Air</td>
<td>Reduce/minimise air pollution(e.g. increased traffic) and noise</td>
<td>Medium to long term</td>
<td>Likely</td>
<td>Permanent</td>
<td>O/?</td>
<td>0/?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maintain or improve air quality especially at motorway junction</td>
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<tr>
<td>Growth Option</td>
<td>Opportunities for exercise through cycling and walking.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Option 3: Greater dispersal</td>
<td>Result in the loss of more prime agricultural land.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Dispersing growth across settlements in the east of the borough within the vicinity of the Sherwood Sandstone aquifer may adversely affect both the quality and quantity of ground water (either from increased abstraction or increased pollution).</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Option 4: New settlement or town – the scale of impact will depend on location but will necessitate the release of greenfield land in open countryside.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Option 5: Low growth / environmental protection would use fewer resources and do more to protect Doncaster’s soil, water and air resources. It would also prevent the unnecessary sterilisation of mineral resources.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>New development would avoid areas vulnerable to flood risk and areas where air and light pollution might arise. More arable farmland and vegetation would be kept in productive use. However, less investment and growth could inhibit the ability of developers and businesses to let vacant space or redevelop/reclaim sites.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Option 6: Total dispersal would have significant adverse impacts on air, water and soil resources, especially in view of the current baseline situation. More land and vegetation would be taken out of productive use (e.g. cropping areas). Ground water resources would be further depleted.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Further encroachment into the countryside would diminish the quality of the soil and its ability to retain water during times of flood.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Noise, air and light pollution would deteriorate further from building and construction activities and the increase in traffic.</td>
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