

## 8. Sustainability Appraisal of the AAP

### 8.1 Preferred Options - Development of AAP Policies

Table 32 below summarises how the Preferred Options for the AAP were developed into relevant AAP Policies. The table also identifies the main effects anticipated, which the AAP Policies might need to address, where feasible.

One Option which was rejected at the Preferred Options stage is now the option being proposed in the publication plan. The Preferred Option for community facilities was to allocate for a community hub. However, no consultation responses were received during Preferred Option stage to support this and there is a significant question over the deliverability of such a use. Therefore the option being pursued in the Publication plan is to provide criteria for a community hub and suggest an ideal location rather than allocate a site and risk leaving making the site undeliverable for alternative uses.

All sites designated for protection or allocated for development in the AAP have been identified on the AAP Policies Map. The effects of all policies have been assessed in the SA.

**Table 32: Preferred Options – AAP Policies and Mitigation Requirements**

Preferred Options	Relevant AAP Policies	Predicted Effects – Requirements for Mitigation through the AAP
Town Centre Boundary Option 4 - Contracted and Expanded Boundary	AAP1: Walsall Town Centre Boundary	The proposed changes to the boundary will allow expansion of town centre uses in areas where there is more likely to be a market demand for them, and in areas where there is likely to be space for them, while excluding areas of industry and other land uses that are less appropriate in the a town centre. As the Town Centre is a highly accessible location it may also reduce the distance people need to travel to shop, to work or for leisure. There is potential for increased visitors to generate more traffic and congestion and related air quality problems, which would need to be addressed through improved access for pedestrians and cyclists and more effective management of road traffic through the Town Centre. There is also potential for new developments to be vulnerable to air pollution, flood risk and other climate change effects, depending on where development would take place.

Preferred Options	Relevant AAP Policies	Predicted Effects – Requirements for Mitigation through the AAP
PSA Option 3 - Contracted Boundary	AAPS1: Primary Shopping Area	Likely to have positive effects overall, by concentrating retail investment a stronger shopping environment is created which supports existing retail and planned retail through concentrating footfall and spending. This has an uncertain impact on the townscape as it may mean that buildings are redeveloped and also that some sites outside of the PSA remain undeveloped. This is likely to be positive overall however, as there are less vacant units in the centre of the town which has a knock on impact on development in the surrounding streets. The concentration of investment should also mean that outdated buildings in the PSA are replaced. The PSA is the most accessible location in the centre served by car parks and public transport, so by concentrating development here it ensures the centre remains accessible. BCCS Policy ENV8 and the AAP policy on air quality will ensure that any impacts from new development on air quality standards are addressed. The town centre characterisation study will ensure there is no adverse impact on the character of the centre.
Location of New Retail Option 1 - Park Street & St. Matthew's Quarter Only combined with Location of New Retail Option 5 - Identify Appropriately Located Sites for Convenience and Bulky Goods Retailing Outside the PSA	AAPS2: New Retail development, AAPINV1: Regeneration Strategy, AAPINV2: St Matthew's Quarter, AAPINV3: Walsall Gigaport and AAPINV5: Park Street Shopping Core	Likely to have positive effects overall, by concentrating retail investment a stronger shopping environment is created which supports existing retail and planned retail through concentrating footfall and spending. Providing new retail targets to the BCCS targets allows the plan to remain ambitious but also be more realistic about the amount of floor space to plan for which should have a more positive economic impact than unachievable targets which could mean the retail offer is spread out resulting in increased vacancies within the PSA. This has an uncertain impact on the townscape as it may mean that buildings are redeveloped and also that some sites outside of the PSA remain undeveloped. This is likely to be positive however, as there are less vacant units in the centre of the town which has a knock on impact on development in the surrounding streets. The concentration of investment should also mean that outdated buildings in the PSA are replaced. The sites identified in part ii) have been chosen as they have more potential for change that will have a positive impact on the character of Walsall without impacting negatively on buildings which have a strong character or a historic listing. The PSA is the most accessible location in the centre served by car parks and public transport, so by concentrating development here it ensures the centre remains accessible.

Preferred Options	Relevant AAP Policies	Predicted Effects – Requirements for Mitigation through the AAP
		<p>BCCS Policy ENV8 and the AAP policy on air quality will ensure that any impacts from new development on air quality standards are addressed. The town centre characterisation study will ensure there is no adverse impact on the character of the centre.</p>
<p>Walsall Market Option 1 – allocated at The Bridge/ Bradford Street</p>	<p>AAPS3: The New Walsall Market</p>	<p>Likely to have positive effects overall, by investing in the market at the most accessible location in the centre this should have positive impacts on the markets sustainability and the economy of the centre. Brining life into the centre of town should also support the surrounding uses and bring vitality to the centre. The market is a historic part of the centres character and ensuring its future should have a positive impact of the centres cultural heritage as well as overall townscape. The investment in public realm and the ability of the area to be used for community events and performances should also have an impact in encouraging more visitors and further investment in the surrounding areas.</p>
<p>Location of New Offices Option 1 – Gigaport allocated and Current Office Stock Option 1 - Encourage Investment in Current Office Stock.</p>	<p>AAPB1: Office Development and AAPINV3: Walsall Gigaport</p>	<p>Likely to have positive effects overall, Gigaport provides enough sites suitable for office development in an accessible and visible location. Through having a specific area to encourage office development it is hoped this will create a high quality businesses environment in the centre triggering further investment. The AAP identifies current office stock that may be outdated and in some case underused which would benefit from investment to make it more suitable for occupiers. Improved office stock could help attract new businesses into the centre which should have positive impact by supporting the economy and creating jobs. This will bring back into life vacant or underused buildings but it may take longer than conversion to other uses as the office market could take time to develop in Walsall so buildings may remain vacant for longer. There may be some increase in traffic along the Ring Road which already suffers from congestion and some increase in emissions in the area. Some developments may need to be set away from the road to reduce the impact of air quality on the scheme. BCCS Policy ENV8 and the AAP policy on air quality will ensure that any impacts from new development on air quality standards are addressed.</p>

Preferred Options	Relevant AAP Policies	Predicted Effects – Requirements for Mitigation through the AAP
Social Enterprise Option 2 include a policy in the AAP identifying a Social Enterprise Zone around the Goldmine Centre	AAPB2: Social Enterprise Zone	The current social enterprise will hopefully grow offering more opportunities for skills to help young people access work. Other social enterprises focussing on different needs will also be encouraged into area.
Industrial Uses Option 2 - Allow Incremental Change to Other Uses	AAPB3: Town Centre Employment Land (also all INV policies where employment land is included)	This policy identifies, allocates and safeguards land that could be released from employment to town centre uses because they are constrained and isolated, and surrounded by non-employment uses, making them less suitable for industry in the long term. However they currently provide a good source of local quality employment, and should only be released subject to Core Strategy Policy DEL2, and when it is clear it will no longer be required for industry. However it is also the case that should industry vacate these sites, there will be benefits in local amenity, given that most of these sites are surrounded by housing. It will also help to deliver the town centre uses needed to ensure the future of Walsall town centre. The town centre characterisation study will ensure there is no adverse impact on the character of the centre. BCCS Policy ENV8 and the AAP policy on air quality will ensure that any impacts from new development on air quality standards are addressed.
Leisure Facilities Option 2 - Retain and Invest in Gala Baths	AAPLE2: Sport and Cultural Facilities	This policy will have positive impacts by protecting and enhancing current sports facility in the centre it allows the community to access these facilities providing health and wellbeing benefits. Investing in these facilities should also encourage more visitors to the centre with potential for linked trips.
Cultural and Community Facilities Option 1 - Allocate Leather Museum Site	AAPLE2: Sport and Cultural Facilities	This policy will have positive impacts by providing the opportunity for a new consolidated Heritage Centre. This would bring the less accessible local history centre into the town centre and support the Walsall museum through relocating it as part of Walsall Leather Museum. This will create a larger visitor attraction in the centre which should encourage more users of the facilities and more visitors to the centre overall. The site is on the Ring Road so there may be some uncertain impact from air quality also the new facility may generate more traffic than the current facilities into one location. BCCS Policy ENV8 and the AAP policy on air quality will ensure that any impacts from new development on air quality standards are addressed.

Preferred Options	Relevant AAP Policies	Predicted Effects – Requirements for Mitigation through the AAP
<p>Cultural and Community Facilities Option 4 - Promote Existing Performance Venues combined with Cultural and Community Facilities Option 5 - No Provision for Performance Venues and Cultural and Community Facilities Option 6 - Provide Performance Venues in Mixed Use Schemes.</p>	<p>AAPPLE1: New leisure Developments and AAPLE2: Sport and Cultural Facilities</p>	<p>This policy will have positive impacts by protecting and enhancing current cultural and community facilities in the centre it allows the community to access these facilities providing health and wellbeing benefits. Investing in these facilities should also encourage more visitors to the centre with potential for linked trips. Many of these buildings positively contribute to the historic character of the centre and the overall townscape. Whilst no specific allocation has been made for new facilities a number of sites are identified in the AAP which could accommodate such facilities.</p>
<p>Cultural and Community Facilities Option 8 - No Provision for Outdoor Events</p>	<p>AAPPLE1: New leisure Developments, AAPLE2: Sport and Cultural Facilities and AAPS3 The New Walsall Market</p>	<p>This Option has been chosen as the Preferred Option because there is a need to allow flexibility over how public spaces in the Town Centre are used. There are already public spaces which could be used for public events and the proposed new Market has also been designed so that the stalls can be demounted allowing for The Bridge area to be used for public spaces. It is therefore proposed that the AAP should promote public events and the protection of public spaces where events could take place, but does not allocate any spaces for outdoor events.</p>
<p>Evening Economy Option 3 - Specific Locations for Development</p>	<p>AAPPLE1: New leisure Developments</p>	<p>Overall effects on the SA Objectives are uncertain. It is likely to have many of the benefits of Option 1 in terms of synergies from co-location of evening economy establishments with other complementary leisure uses. By identifying specific locations rather than wider "zones," depending on the choice of location, there is also less risk of adverse impacts on other land uses which are not complementary to the evening economy, such as housing.</p>
<p>Overnight Accommodation Option 3 - Specific Locations for Development</p>	<p>AAPPLE3: Hotel, Conference and Banqueting Provision</p>	<p>As there is currently no evidenced demand a number of suitable locations have been proposed that fit with the other policies and allocations in the plan. Such facilities are likely to have a positive impact by making the centre more attractive and providing needed facilities that support business and training in the centre. Policy ENV8 and the AAP policy on air quality will ensure that any impacts from new development on air quality standards are addressed.</p>

Preferred Options	Relevant AAP Policies	Predicted Effects – Requirements for Mitigation through the AAP
Canal Option 1 - Development Required to Enhance Canalside Environment	AAPLE4: Walsall Canal	Providing more specific guidance in the AAP would allow the Council more control over any further development surrounding the Canal, so it is more likely to be attractive, well designed, and accessible for all members of the community. The Canal is designated as a Conservation Area and providing guidance will also ensure that all new canalside development respects the character and appearance of the Conservation Area as well as enhancing the wider townscape, and contributing appropriately towards wider walking, cycling and environmental networks.
Location of Leisure Option 1 - Waterfront Allocated	AAPLE1: New leisure Developments and AAPINV4: Walsall Waterfront	Effects are likely to be positive overall, because the Waterfront area is near to the PSA and near to the railway station, so concentrating leisure uses in this area will complement the range of land uses already available in the vicinity, having positive effects on the vitality and viability of the Town Centre. It would also have wider benefits for visitors and local communities, as it would mean that new leisure developments would be developed in the most accessible location in Walsall, near to public transport hubs. Should also have a positive impact on the canal environment and encourage further investment in the area.
Housing Option 1 - New Housing Allocations combined with Housing Option 2 - Provide Housing through Mixed Use Schemes Only and Housing Option 3 (Providing Housing through LOTS & Other Vacant Floorspace)	AAPLV1: Residential Developments and AAPINV4: Walsall Waterfront	Provision of further housing in the Town Centre would help to improve its vitality and viability as well as providing homes in a highly accessible location where residents would have access to shops, jobs and a range of other amenities as well as to public transport networks. By allocating specific sites, it is possible to minimise harmful effects on occupiers from the surrounding environment, by avoiding sites at risk from flooding and sites exposed to noise or air pollution, and by requiring developers to provide a good standard of design and amenity. For parts of the policy where locations are not identified such as the use of upper floors the policy includes reference to the need to consider air pollution and all sites have been assessed against floodrisk.
Residential Environments Option 1 - Minimum Standards for Residential Environments	AAPLV1: Residential Developments	Requiring developers to provide safe and attractive residential environments is likely to attract more people to live in the Town Centre, and is also likely to enhance the townscape and attractiveness of the centre. However, such requirements can increase the costs of a residential development which could affect the viability of residential schemes.

Preferred Options	Relevant AAP Policies	Predicted Effects – Requirements for Mitigation through the AAP
<p>Education and Health Option 1 - Allocate Land for Expansion of Existing Education and Health Facilities and Education and Health Option 3 Protect and Promote Current Health Care Facilities</p>	<p>AAPLV: Education</p>	<p>Likely effects would be positive overall, as the Town Centre would benefit socially and economically from a strengthened health and education sector. Also safeguarding existing facilities provides potential for them to be improved and expanded if there is a need. However, there may be some issues around location, as health care facilities are "sensitive receptors" and if they are already exposed to air pollution sources, allowing expansion could increase exposure unless the effects are mitigated in some way. There may also be impacts on the highway network, depending on the scale of the proposal and its location, for example, whether it is likely to generate increased trips by car or is well related to public transport</p>
<p>Community Facilities Option 3 - The AAP does not allocate land for community facilities but provides criteria and identifies a priority site.</p>	<p>AAPLV4: Community Facilities</p>	<p>Effects on the SA Objectives would be uncertain, as by not allocating a site for a new community facility in the Town Centre, there is a risk that such a facility could be developed in a less central and less accessible location. Also, not allocating a site may make the delivery of a "community hub" less viable, because of competition from other "town centre" uses and without a site, it would be more difficult for the providers to secure funding. However the identification of a priority site and the use of criteria reduce the risk of a community facility being developed in an inaccessible location and still shows the Council is supportive of such a use at the site which should help with delivery.</p>
<p>Character Option 2 - Encourage Development in Places of Character</p>	<p>AAPLV5: Protecting and Enhancing Historic Character and Local Distinctiveness</p>	<p>Effects of this approach towards the conservation of heritage assets and townscape quality are likely to be very positive, as it would support well designed new buildings which reinforce existing character in a positive way, as well as developments that would retain and conserve existing buildings important for local character. While this could have similar effects to Option 1 in terms of discouraging development in certain areas because of the restrictions and added costs, the approach is more flexible, and would allow large scale new "town centre" developments to take place in appropriate locations, where they do not detract from local character.</p>

Preferred Options	Relevant AAP Policies	Predicted Effects – Requirements for Mitigation through the AAP
Conservation Option - Improve Interpretation of Historic Environment combined with Conservation Option 5 - Rely on Existing Policy	AAPLV5: Protecting and Enhancing Historic Character and Local Distinctiveness	The overall effects are likely to be positive, as heritage is often seen as being specialist, elitist and inaccessible to many people, so helping people to understand what is important about heritage assets in the Town Centre and why they should be protected could help with their protection. Using updated information with the current legislation should provide the tools needed to protect historic assets.
Protected Views Option 1 - Protect Locally Important Views	AAPLV6: Securing Good Design	The effects should be positive as Where views are protected, the policy would seek to prevent undue damage to the view, either by blocking or unacceptably imposing or by creating an intrusive element in the view's foreground or middle ground. This could, however, impact upon scheme viability.
Design Option 2 - Design Codes for the Town Centre combined with Design Option 3 - Design Standards for Buildings in Key Locations.	AAPLV6: Securing Good Design	High quality design across the town will result in an enhanced character, environment and image of the town centre. Requiring exemplar design may mean refusing applications which do not meet these standards. This could impact on the regeneration of the centre and the economy of Walsall overall. The impact is therefore uncertain.
Design Option 4 (Apply BCCS Renewable Energy Requirements Only)	AAPLV8: Environmental Infrastructure	Overall neutral impact. No further investment in renewable energy is made above the current levels required, this may mean the centre is less sustainable and there are more negative impacts on the environment. However further requirements in the centre could mean developments locate elsewhere meaning there is more car usage and a negative impact in terms of emissions. The policy therefore looks to support renewable energy without deterring investment.
Public Realm Option 1 (Identify Priority Areas for Improvement)	AAPLV7: Enhancing the Public Realm	Overall Very positive effects. The environment of particular areas well-used by the public is improved which would enhance the experience and image of the town centre. A high quality environment is also important in attracting further investment into the town centre. However such improvements can be costly. There would also be ongoing resource implications for the maintenance of these areas



Preferred Options	Relevant AAP Policies	Predicted Effects – Requirements for Mitigation through the AAP
Environmental Option 1 - Identify Assets Requiring Improvement and Environmental Option 3 - Set Requirements for New Developments to Deliver Environmental Infrastructure.	AAPLV8: Environmental Infrastructure	This would help to deliver green infrastructure in the centre which will have a positive impact in the environment and reduce emissions. A greener centre could attract further investment and mean that the community uses the centre more. This would create an improved environment, provide certainty to developers, but may deter some investors due to additional requirements
Urban Open Space Option 2 (Allocate Urban Open Space adjacent to Art Gallery)	AAPLV8: Environmental Infrastructure	This would help to deliver green infrastructure in the centre which will have a positive impact in the environment and reduce emissions. A greener centre could attract further investment and mean that the community uses the centre more. This would prevent the site being developed for a town centre use which may have more direct economic benefits.
Pedestrian Movement Option 1 - Further Requirements and Guidance on Pedestrian Movement	AAPT1: Pedestrian Movements, Access and Linkages	New development is well linked but this may place increased costs on developers. Locations where improvements to linkages are needed are identified helping to secure their delivery. This improves schemes vitality and also increases the attractiveness of visitors to the centre. Better connections may also mean people use public transport more making the centre more sustainable
Cycling Option 1 - Protection of Cycle Routes and Further Guidance on Enhancement	AAPT2: Cycling	The current cycle route is shown on the policies map and protected. Greenways are identified to improve links to open space and other areas including the hospital. New Greenways and other paths that need improving are identified. Many of these routes are used by pedestrians too so improvements will be for those access the centre on foot as well. This will help link the centre and encourage more sustainable transport which has environmental and health impacts. The protection of the canal footpaths for cycle routes also protects the canals historic environment and ensures it continues to provide a positive environment for communities and the wildlife.
Public Transport Option 3 -Expansion of Bradford Place	AAPT3: Public Transport	Creating extra capacity will improve passenger experience, safety and the reliability of services, but would have implications for neighbouring land uses.

Preferred Options	Relevant AAP Policies	Predicted Effects – Requirements for Mitigation through the AAP
Walsall Rail Station Option 1 - Expand Walsall Railway Station	AAPT3: Public Transport	By creating extra capacity it will mean Walsall is better linked and more attractive to visitors and investors. This will impact positively on the economic growth prospects of the Borough, enabling local rail services to be improved and increase the possibility of attracting national rail services. This could also reduce car usage with benefits to the environment and road congestion. The car park at station street would be lost and there may be some impact on the character of Station Street which does have some buildings of strong character, although improvements to the station may be the catalyst needed for improvements to Station Street overall. There may also be implications for the Saddler's Shopping Centre.
Road Network Option 4 - Identify Roads Requiring Investment	AAPT4: Road Improvement	The impact is uncertain - Improvements are identified which will help secure any funding available. By improving the road network more development could be attracted to the centre especially within the Gigaport area. The better moving the traffic is the less impact on air pollution there is along the corridor although there may be an increase in car emissions overall.
Car Parking Option 1 - Allocate Land for New "Super" Car Parks combined with Car Parking Option 2 - Rationalise Current Car Park Provision and Car Parking Option 4 - Standards for Off- Street Car Parking Charges.	AAPT5: Car Parking	A new multi-storey car park is considered to have a positive effect as it will support investment anticipated in the town centre, making it more attractive to a wider range of potential users. It will also improve the strategic highway network and customer safety. The impact of developing other car parks is uncertain as- whilst this may result in some under-utilised car parks being developed for other purposes, this will not assist the anticipated investment in the town centre and may deter some potential users. The standard changing would result in a more attractive car parking offer to customers and businesses. Controlling the price may result in a loss of competition which may mean some car parks chose to close. It also means that car parking that is for developments, also serves the Town Centre as a whole, and that linked trips are encouraged supporting the centre economy.
Approach Option 2 - Vision and Land Use Policies for "Big Three" and Park Street	AAPINV1: Regeneration Strategy	Focusing on specific uses should result in a stronger town centre, with developments only being delivered in the locations which are most appropriate. This would allow clarity on how the BCCS targets would be met. However refusing all alternative uses may mean that investment is not forthcoming and sites may remain undeveloped for longer.

Preferred Options	Relevant AAP Policies	Predicted Effects – Requirements for Mitigation through the AAP
Old Square Option 1 - No Land Use Change and Old Square Option 2 - Expand/ Redevelop with Larger Retail Units.	AAPINV2: St Matthew's Quarter	This will help to deliver the targets for retail floor space and protect the core of the town centre. It may mean that the units remain vacant for longer but a flexible approach is already applied to alternative uses within the centre will minimising this risk.
Shannon's Mill Option 1 - No Land Use Change to Front Site combined with Shannon's Mill Option 2 - Identify Rear Site as Mixed Use Development Opportunity and Shannon's Mill Option 3 - Identify Whole Site as Mixed Use Development Opportunity	AAPINV2: St Matthew's Quarter	This would allow for more flexibility and could result in the site coming forward faster. Some uses may support the surrounding retail uses such as leisure or residential. It could however result in a retail opportunity site being lost
Gigaport Option 1 - Identify as Walsall's Main Business/ Office Development Location and Gigaport Option 3 - Identify Land Adjacent to Littleton Street as Phase One	AAPINV3: Walsall Gigaport	Gigaport provides enough sites suitable for office development in an accessible and visible location. Through having a specific area to encourage office development it is hoped this will create a high quality businesses environment in the centre triggering further investment. There may be some increase in traffic along the Ring Road which already suffers from congestion and some increase in emissions in the area. Some developments may need to be set away from the road to reduce the impact of air quality on the scheme.
Waterfront North Option 1 - Allocate for Leisure Uses combined with Waterfront Lex Option 3 Allocate for Any Town Centre Uses/ Mixed Uses.	AAPIN4: Walsall Waterfront	Waterfront North would be promoted as the key opportunity for strategic leisure developments. The area is a good location for leisure facilities, in close proximity to the Art Gallery, with the potential for an enhanced canal side environment, and good public transport links. However dismissing other investment on this site may mean that some investment is not secured in the town centre.

Preferred Options	Relevant AAP Policies	Predicted Effects – Requirements for Mitigation through the AAP
Park Street Option 1 - Allocate Park Street Area as Walsall's Main Retail Development Location and Park Street Option 2 - Allocate Park Place and Saddlers' Centre as Walsall's Main Retail Development Location	AAPINV5: Park Street Shopping Core	Retail investment is focused on Park Street and the retail heart of the town is maintained. Some redevelopment of units may be required as without this it could be hard to attract investment, particularly from retailers requiring larger stores.
Secondary Sites Option 1 - Allocate Secondary Sites as Development Opportunities	AAPINV6: Secondary Development Sites	A number of sites which are development opportunities are identified as development opportunities. This could conflict with the priorities but the policy can mitigate against this by requirements proposals to complement the regeneration strategy in the AAP. Identifying the sites may help them come forward and attract further investment in the centre.
Flood Risk Management Option 2 - Site-by-Site Approach to Water Management	AAPINV7: Addressing Potential Site Constraints	A positive approach towards understanding the constraints and working with developers to overcome them will help with delivery this will also help reduce the impact of development on the environment.

Source: SA Report Appendix I and Revised AAP Options Appraisal - Completed Matrix (January 2016)

## 8.2 Appraisal of AAP – Method of Appraisal

The appraisal of the AAP was a High Level SA which was carried out in two stages: firstly the appraisal of the Draft Plan (Preferred Options) in July 2015, and secondly the updating of the appraisal to reflect changes to the Plan prior to publication, in January 2016. No further appraisal of the AAP was required, as no significant harmful effects were identified. The method of appraisal is summarised below.

### Appraisal of Draft Plan (Preferred Options) – July 2015

The first stage of the Appraisal of the AAP involving appraising the effects of each of the Draft AAP Policies (Preferred Options) published for public consultation in September 2015. The outcomes of this appraisal are set out in the – High Level Appraisal of AAP Preferred Options – Completed Matrix (January 2016) which is an updated version of the matrix published alongside the Draft AAP in September 2015.

## **Appraisal of Draft Plan (Preferred Options) – July 2015**

The second stage of appraisal involved reviewing and updating the appraisal carried out in 2015, to reflect significant changes to the SAD policies after the Preferred Options stage in January 2016. **Appendix K** summarises the outcome of the appraisal of each of the AAP Policies. The detailed outcomes of the appraisal are recorded in the High Level Appraisal of AAP Policies - Completed Matrix (January 2016).

### **Appraisal of AAP Policies - Methodology**

The methodology for appraisal of the AAP followed the same approach as the SAD (see Chapters 2 and 7). Both stages of the appraisal were carried out by Council officers, and as with the SAD, Council officers had to decide how best to appraise each policy, for example, whether to appraise the effects of the whole policy only, or whether to appraise the effects of specific parts of the policy separately. The approach chosen depended on the scope and content of the policy, and the range of issues or number/ type of sites it covered. However, unlike the SAD, the appraisal of the AAP did include appraisal of the policies for specific sites and locations, because the AAP policies are much more site-specific.

The final stage of the SA involved updating the appraisal of the Preferred Options to take into account changes to the AAP Policies prior to publication. Only minor changes have been made to the Draft AAP Policies published in 2015, to reflect updating of the evidence on constraints, and comments received during the consultation on the Draft Plan between September and November 2015.

The appraisal of AAP Policies has taken into account the potential effects of environmental and physical assets and constraints, and information obtained from other sources such as land availability assessments and the outcomes of the Deliverability and Viability Assessments commissioned from consultants. As with the SAD, the assessors took into account the effects of existing local plan policies which would apply to any new planning applications for development in the Town Centre. Such policies could therefore reasonably be expected to control many of the environmental, economic and social effects likely to arise as a result of the proposals identified in the AAP.

## **8.3 Appraisal of Plan – Results**

### **Overview of Appraisal Results**

Table 33 summarises the outcomes of the final appraisal of the AAP Policies completed in January 2016 prior to publication, the main effects identified in the appraisal, and the proposals for mitigation of the harmful effects identified through the AAP in combination with existing local plan policies, where feasible, or through other mechanisms where these are more appropriate or more likely to be effective. The paragraphs following summarise the types of effects identified in the appraisal, as required in Schedules 1 and 2 of the SEA Regulations, and how they have been addressed.

### **Short, Medium and Long-Term Effects**

The SA has considered the potential short, medium and long-term effects of the development proposed in the AAP on the SA Objectives. As is explained above (Chapter 4, Section 4.5), the AAP is a long-term strategy for Walsall Town Centre and covers the same period as the BCCS. The policies will therefore be in effect until 2026 or until they are replaced by a new local plan. The developments proposed in the plan will not be implemented all at the same time, but will be built progressively over the remainder of the plan period. The rate of progress on delivery of new developments identified in the AAP will be monitored through future AMRs.

The duration of effects is likely to vary according to the type of development that takes place in the Town Centre and the operations involved. For example, construction of new retail and leisure developments may be relatively short-term, depending on the size and scale of the development and the constraints, but once construction has been completed, the ongoing effects of the development, for example, from the generation of trips into the Town Centre, changes to pedestrian movements, contribution towards economic growth and job creation, or demand for infrastructure, are likely to be long-term.

## **Permanent and Temporary Effects**

The SA has considered the potential permanent and temporary effects of the development proposed in the AAP on the SA Objectives. For example, the effects from demolition, construction and land remediation processes (where required) are expected to be temporary, whereas the operational effects of developments once they are built will be mostly permanent and irreversible.

## **Positive Effects**

Most of the AAP policies are likely to have positive effects on many of the SA Objectives, as they support the BCCS spatial strategy, by providing a strategy for development and investment in Walsall Town Centre, which is identified in the BCCS as one of the four Strategic Centres in the Black Country. The plan therefore seeks to deliver the scale of ‘town centre’ development envisaged in the BCCS as far as possible to enhance and maintain its essential function as the Strategic Centre for Walsall. The Town Centre is a highly accessible location which has good public transport links to all parts of the borough as well as rail links to Birmingham and Cannock.

Examples of the positive effects identified include:

- Many of the AAP Policies have a significant impact in terms of SA Objective 6 Economy and Centres as they look to concentrate and attract investment in Walsall supporting businesses and providing jobs. For example the policies within the Place for Investment Chapter.
- As well as economic positive impacts, the AAP includes a number of policies which have significant positive impacts in terms of SA Objective 9 Landscape and Townscape. For example policies AAPLV5, AAPLV6 and AAPLV7 look to protect and enhance the historic environment of the centre whilst requiring good design and improvements to public realm.
- A number of the AAP Policies also have significant positive effects on SA Objective 12 Soil and Ground Conditions, as nearly all of the Town Centre is ‘brownfield’ land, which includes some sites affected by contamination and limestone mining, so the allocation of sites for development will result in sites being remediated.
- Naturally a number of the AAP transport policies have significant positive impacts on SA Objective 13 Transport and Accessibility as they look to make the town centre, which is already very accessible, even more accessible by sustainable modes of

transport through, for example, improvements to the Bus Station and improvements to pedestrian accessibility.

## **Negative Effects**

Although some potential negative effects have been identified in relation to specific proposals identified in the AAP policies, it is expected that these will be largely mitigated through application of existing local plan policies, and overall, the implementation of the AAP is expected to have very few negative effects on the SA Objectives.

Whilst no significant negative effects were identified the following potential negative effects have been identified:

- Policy AAPT3 part a) which allocated Bradford Place for expansion has a potential negative impact on SA objective 5 Cultural Heritage as the development will potentially result in the loss of some surrounding buildings of character. This should however, be mitigated in some parts by the overall improvements to the area through a better functioning bus station with improved public realm and linkages.
- Policy AAPT5 part a) which allocates for the delivery of a new multi-storey car park has been identified as having a potential negative impact on SA objective 1 Air Quality and SA Objective 3 Climate Change as it can be seen as promoting car usage and increasing the level of emissions. This will be mitigated against to some extent by other policies in the AAP which look to promote public transport and cycling. The policy also looks to promote recharging facilities for low emission vehicles. The council is also undertaking a consultation on an Air Quality SPD which looks to address air quality issues, especially as a result of transport emissions.
- Policy AAPINV3 which addresses car parking at Gigaport has been identified as having a potentially negative impact on SA objective 1 Air Quality and SA Objective 3 Climate Change as it can be seen as promoting car usage and increasing the level of emissions. The policy has also been identified as having a potential negative impact on SA objective 9 Landscape and Townscape as car parking is not necessarily the most positive use of land and can have a negative impact on an area's character. This should however be mitigated through the design process of the application and through the policies within the AAP which require a comprehensive approach to schemes, strong frontages and good design.



## **Secondary, Cumulative and Synergistic Effects**

For each policy the secondary cumulative and synergistic effects were considered and captured in the matrix. These were then summarised in the accompanying appendices. These have been considered in relation to the other policies, plans and proposals in order to ensure the appraisal captures the likely effects. The data from the baseline information was used to inform the appraisal along with expertise knowledge.

A number of secondary, cumulative and synergistic effects have been identified, of which the main ones are:

- The AAP includes policies that look to provide development opportunities for investment which will provide the conditions for improving the range of facilities and services available in the Town Centre, making it more attractive for residents and visitors (SA Objectives 4, 6, 7 and 8).
- Through strengthening the town centre it should result in a reduction in the distance people in Walsall need to travel to shop, to work or for leisure. This could also however lead to congestion and increased air pollution in the centre itself if not effectively managed (SA Objectives 1, 3, 4, 7, 8 and 13).
- Office investment could trigger further investment in retail, leisure and housing as more people work in the centre creating further demand (SA Objective 4 and 6).
- Social enterprises working in the centre to address the needs of the surrounding community could help address wider social and economic issues in the borough (SA Objectives 4, 6 and 7).
- There could be positive secondary effects on Walsall centres as the replacement of industrial units that are no longer required by industry are developed for centre uses that attract investment, delivering jobs and homes (SA objective 4). This could also have a positive secondary effect on the townscape of the centre as derelict industry buildings are either brought back into use or redeveloped (SA Objective 9).
- More housing in the centre may increase demand for services such as GPs (SA Objectives 4 and 7).
- Good design can also have a positive impact on energy consumption and climate change mitigation (SA Objectives 1, 2, 3, 9 and 11).

- Protecting and encouraging green infrastructure in the centre will have positive impacts on air quality, water quality, biodiversity and climate change (SA objectives 1, 2, 3, 8, 12 and 14).
- Supporting local renewable energy schemes in the centre will have positive impacts on air quality, water quality, biodiversity and climate change (SA objectives 1, 2, 3, 8, 12 and 14). It could reduce energy bills and have wider economic positive impacts (SA objectives 4 and 6).
- Improved public transport and cycle facilities could result in a reduction in car usage and a reduction in emissions; however the opposite is likely for improved car parking facilities (SA Objectives 1, 2, 3, 8 and 13).
- Improvements to how the ring road operates should help to encourage investment in the centre especially in sites along the ring road such as Gigaport (SA Objectives 6). Although improvements in the road network may result in some increase in car emissions the town centre is the most accessible location and it is therefore considered as the most sustainable approach to regeneration as development going elsewhere would only disperse traffic without having the wider economic benefits of creating a strong centre (SA Objectives 1, 2 and 13).

The key cumulative impact of the proposals of the AAP is with regard to congestion and air quality as the town centre attracts further development and investment more people will potentially visit the centre with consequences to climate change and health. This will be mitigated through improvements to public transport and the implementation of an air quality SPD. Also the more demand and investment there is in the centre the more potential there will be for schemes such as public transport.

### **Inter-Relationships between Effects**

The appraisal has considered the potential inter-relationships, where effects on more than one SA Objective have been identified, and where there is potential for inter-related effects this has been recorded in the SA Matrix. Examples of inter-related effects identified in the SA of the AAP Policies identified include:

- The development of retail and offices in the centre is inter-related to the delivery of housing in the rest of the borough. Without an adequate supply of housing the

centre will not have the population needed to support any growth or even to retain the current centre. However without an attractive centre Walsall may fail to attract or retain residents to the area. The retention and attraction of industry in the borough is also crucial as this provides the jobs which allow for communities to have spending power needed to support the economy of the centre (for more detail on this connection see Chapter 4 on baseline data). The SAD and AAP are therefore interlinked in terms of effects.

- The main inter-related effects would be between the potential increase in development and growth in the Town Centre, the **economy** and opportunities for **local communities**. The increase in job opportunities in the centre will also help to ensure there is a good level of consumer spending in Walsall which can support the retail and leisure uses. The focus of offices in the centre also means that there will be more workers in the centre who can support the retail and leisure uses. In addition the increase in leisure uses has been shown to support retail by encouraging people to visit the centre and spend more time both of which increase the retail expenditure needed to support and attract retail (SA Objectives 4 and 6).
- A more attractive town centre is likely to result in increased **transport** trips into the Town Centre which relates to **air pollution** and **climate change** (SA objectives 1, 3 and 8). BCCS Policy ENV8 will ensure that any impacts from new development on air quality standards are addressed. Also as the town centre is the most accessible place in Walsall, directing investment into the centre will mean that more people have **access to opportunities and facilities** (SA Objective 4, 6, 6 and 7). It could also mean that more people use public transport reducing the amount of car usage and therefore reducing levels of **air pollution** and the risk of **climate change**.
- There is a clear inter-relationship in the case of Consider for Release sites between the need to ensure that communities retain the **jobs** provided by firms who currently occupy this land (SA objective 4 and 6) and the **amenity** value to those same communities by housing infill in ex-industrial sites (SA objective 9). This is why the policy has strong safeguards to ensure that there have to be suitable alternative premises for the industry in question to relocate to.
- The allocation of land to allow for the growth of the College will help Walsall achieve higher levels of **educational attainment** and numbers of people in education (SA objectives 4, 7 and 8). Improved educational facilities should also help with providing a more skilled workforce helping to **reduce unemployment** and attract more business to the centre (SA objectives 6).

There are inter-relationships between effects on **biodiversity, landscape, climate change resilience**, and effects on **soil quality** and **water quality** (SA Objectives 2, 3, 9, 12 and 14), where development that could increase risks from pollution is proposed near to inland waterways and in areas at risk from surface water or fluvial flooding. However there will also be positive inter-related effects been the encouragement of green infrastructure in the centre on **biodiversity, landscape, climate change resilience**, and effects on **soil quality** and **water quality** (SA Objectives 2, 3, 9, 12 and 14). Also the focus of development on the canal can have inter-related effects with water quality and biodiversity as more development could have a negative effect but could also provide the mechanism for improvements to the canal which is why the AAP clearly expects any development to protect and enhance the natural environment.

- There is an inter-relationship between the amount of change in the centre and the impact on the **historic character** of the centre (SA Objectives 5 and 9). Significant changes could mean that the character is lost, however the policies within the plan supported by a characterisation study looks to protect areas of sensitivity. The amount of change can also have effects on attracting more **investment** and people into the centre as new buildings are of better design and more fit for purpose (SA Objective 6).
- The protection of health care facilities in the centre and the policies in the plan which look to encourage walking and cycling should help with the overall **health** levels in the borough (SA objective 8). This in turn can have economic benefits as less people are reliant of health services and the borough has a healthy working population (SA objective 4 and 6)

The key to the relationship between effects is the creation of demand. By attracting investment into the centre, there should be more visitors which in turn acts as a catalyst for further investment. Unfortunately this has some less positive effects such as the increase in traffic and air pollution but the plan provides sufficient mitigation to ensure that in balance the AAP has a positive impact overall.

## **Impacts on Relevant Standards, Regulations, Thresholds and Targets**

As part of the appraisal for each policy the impact on relevant standards, regulations, thresholds and targets were considered. The below provides an overview. More detail can be found the appendices and matrix

- The main way the AAP impacts on targets is through supporting the delivery of the targets set out the BCCS for retail and office floorspace (see Chapter 3: Review of existing plans and programmes for more details on the BCCS targets). The allocation of sites for these uses is considered as a main tool in supporting the delivery of these uses. The office and retail targets have been revised from those in the BCCS as the evidence to support the AAP has shown these to be undeliverable within the time period. The AAP has therefore has the very direct impact of allowing more realistic targets and timescales to be established for the centre.
- Any residential uses developed in the centre can help towards meeting the housing targets in the BCCS and meeting the housing needs of Walsall population in the future (see Chapter 4: Review of Baseline conditions for population data). This could help to reduce pressure of industrial land being released for housing or on green field land so will have a secondary impact on targets to protect these land uses.
- All Consider for Release sites can be released (subject to the relevant safeguards in DEL2 and IND4) and this will not adversely affect the minimum total target for Local Quality Land. Some of this stock will transfer from industry to housing or offices contributing to the targets (see Chapter 3: Review of existing plans and programmes for more details on the BCCS targets).
- The allocation of land to allow for the growth of the College will help Walsall achieve higher levels of educational attainment and numbers of people in education. This is potentially significant given the levels of educational attainment in the borough being lower than other areas (see Chapter 4: Review of Baseline conditions for education in the borough). Improved educational facilities should also help with providing a more skilled workforce reducing unemployment and attracting more businesses to the centre (see Chapter 4: Review of Baseline conditions for employment in the borough).
- The protection of health care facilities in the centre and the policies in the plan which look to encourage walking and cycling should help with the overall health levels in the borough. Walsall is known to have high levels of poor health and obesity so ensuing facilities are accessible and encouraging people to active can help to improve these health in Walsall (see Chapter 4: Review of Baseline conditions for employment in the borough).
- A more attractive town centre is likely to result in increased transport trips into the Town Centre which relates to air pollution and climate change targets (see chapter 3: Review of existing plans and programmes for more details on climate change

strategies and Chapter 4 for the baseline information on air quality). Whilst the attraction of more people into the centre and the increased use of public transport may result in more localised air pollution it is envisaged that this will be offset by the overall reduction in car dependency by focussing investment in the most accessible location.

- In developing the policy for Protecting and Enhancing the Historic Character and Local Distinctiveness (AAPLV4) the Council has had regard to the most up to date guidance and evidence bases available for the historic environment including the Heritage at Risk Register and National Heritage List for England and relevant conservation area appraisals and management plans. The implementation of the policy should help the Council to meet the regulations that act to protect the historic environment but also in targets to reducing the amount of heritage at risk. (See Chapter 4: Review of Baseline conditions on the historic character of the borough).
- The canal policy which looks to protect and enhance the natural environment of the canal is seen to support the targets within the Water Framework Directive.

## **Potential ‘Significant Effects’ - Proposals for Mitigation**

The SA of the AAP did not identify any potential harmful ‘significant effects,’ although it did identify potential for harmful effects in some cases. Where potential harmful effects have been identified which would not be addressed through application of existing national policy guidance and local plan policy in the BCCS or UDP, the effects have been mitigated through the relevant AAP Policies, where feasible, for example, in **AAP Policy AAPINV7** (see above). Table 33 below identifies the action taken for each AAP Policy, to address the potential effects identified in the SA.

## **Effects that need to be addressed through the Development Management process**

Whilst the SA of the AAP has shown that no significant effects can be predicted there are a number of effects which need to be addressed through the development management process. This is because it is not possible to overcome all negative effects or to be able to

predict all effects on the plan. These have been considered as part of the appraisal process and have been summarised below:

- Whilst the plan looks to direct retail investment into the heart of the centre it is not always possible if a proposal can demonstrate that there are no central sites. The impact of edge-of-centre retail schemes on the health of the centre can be mitigated to some extent through the design of schemes to ensure they are well integrated with the centre and through the use of conditions to control the range of goods sold.
- Flood risk will be mitigated against in part through major developments including sustainable drainage systems and the inclusion of floor resilient finishes to buildings in Flood zone 2 and 3 to limit the damage should flooding occur (see AAP Policy INV7)
- Where schemes are considered to have a potential negative impact on the natural environment and the water quality of the Canal they will be expected to protect and enhance the built and natural environment (see AAP Policy INV7 and AAPLE4) .
- The impact of air quality of individual proposals will be mitigated against through the siting and design of schemes (see AAP Policy INV7 and AAPLV1).
- The impact of individual schemes of the historic character of the town centre is not always possible to predict in full until a scheme comes forward and more is known about the scale and design (see AAP Policy LV5).

**Table 33: Appraisal of AAP Policies – Effects Identified and Proposed Mitigation**

AAP Policy	Overall SA Score	Summary of Effects	Proposed Mitigation
<b>2. Walsall Town Centre</b>			
Policy AAP1: Walsall Town Centre Boundary	+	Likely to have positive effects overall. The proposed changes to the boundary will allow expansion of "town centre" uses in areas where there is more likely to be a market demand for them, and in areas where there is likely to be space for them, while excluding areas of industry and other land uses that are less appropriate in the a town centre. This will also help create conditions for expanding the range of facilities and services available in the strategic centre, making it more attractive for residents and visitors, and therefore more competitive with other centres of a similar size and scale. As the Town Centre is a highly accessible location it may also reduce the distance people need to travel to shop, to work or for leisure.	There is potential for increased visitors to generate more traffic and congestion and related air quality problems, which would need to be addressed through improved access for pedestrians (Policy AAPT1) and cyclists (Policy AAPT2) along with improved public transport (AAPT3). There may also be a need for more effective management of road traffic through the Town Centre (Policy AAPT4). There is also potential for new developments to be vulnerable to air pollution, flood risk and other climate change effects, depending on where development would take place. BCCS Policy ENV8 and the AAP policy AAPI7 part b) on air quality will ensure that any impacts from new development on air quality standards are addressed. Part a) of Policy AAPI7 addresses flood risk in the town centre and there is reference throughout the site tables to this issue to ensure it is mitigated against where possible. The town centre characterisation study will ensure there is no adverse impact on the character of the centre along with the implementation of policy AAPLV5.



AAP Policy	Overall SA Score	Summary of Effects	Proposed Mitigation
<b>3. A Place for Shopping</b>			
Policy AAPS1: Primary Shopping Area	<b>++</b>	Likely to have very positive effects overall, by concentrating retail investment a stronger shopping environment is created which supports existing retail and planned retail through concentrating footfall and spending. The PSA is the most accessible location in the centre served by car parks and public transport, so by concentrating development here it ensures the centre remains accessible.	This has an uncertain impact on the townscape as it may mean that buildings are redeveloped and also that some sites outside of the PSA remain undeveloped. This is likely to be positive however, as there are less vacant units in the centre of the town which has a knock on impact on development in the surrounding streets. The concentration of investment should also mean that outdated buildings in the PSA are replaced. The Characterisation Study will also help to mitigate against this by protecting areas of character. BCCS Policy ENV8 and the AAP policy AAPI7 part b) on air quality will ensure that any impacts from new development on air quality standards are addressed. The policy also requires any retail development that cannot be accommodated in the centre to apply the sequential approach and be as well linked with the PSA as possible. Furthermore any new developments for town centre uses which generate a significant amount of visitors are also expected to improve links to PSA and to show they do not have a negative impact on the PSA in terms of investment and footfall ensuring that the heart of the centre is strong and that all large new developments in the centre are well linked and accessible.

AAP Policy	Overall SA Score	Summary of Effects	Proposed Mitigation
Policy AAPS2: New Retail Development	+	Likely to have positive effects overall, by concentrating retail investment a stronger shopping environment is created which supports existing retail and planned retail through concentrating footfall and spending. Providing new retail targets to the BCCS targets allows the plan to remain ambitious but also be more realistic about the amount of floor space to plan for which should have a more positive economic impact than unachievable targets which could mean the retail offer is spread out resulting in increased vacancies within the PSA. The PSA is the most accessible location in the centre served by car parks and public transport, so by concentrating development here it ensures the centre remains accessible.	This has an uncertain impact on the townscape as it may mean that buildings are redeveloped and also that some sites outside of the PSA remain undeveloped. This is likely to be positive however, as there are less vacant units in the centre of the town which has a knock on impact on development in the surrounding streets. The concentration of investment should also mean that outdated buildings in the PSA are replaced. The Characterisation Study will also help to mitigate against this by protecting areas of character. The sites identified in part ii) have been chosen as they have more potential for change that will have a positive impact on the character of Walsall without impacting negatively on buildings which have a strong character or a historic listing. BCCS Policy ENV8 and the AAP policy AAPI7 part b) on air quality will ensure that any impacts from new development on air quality standards are addressed.
Policy AAPS3: The New Walsall Market	+	Likely to have positive effects overall, by investing in the market at the most accessible location in the centre this should have positive impacts on the markets sustainability and the economy of the centre. Brining life into the centre of town should also support the surrounding uses and bring vitality to the centre. The market is a historic part of the centre’s character and ensuring its future should have a positive impact of the centres cultural heritage as well	None identified

AAP Policy	Overall SA Score	Summary of Effects	Proposed Mitigation
Policy AAPS3: The New Walsall Market (continued)	+		
<b>4. A Place for Business</b>			
Policy AAPB1: Office Development	0	Likely to have positive effects overall, Gigaport provides enough sites suitable for office development in an accessible and visible location. Through having a specific area to encourage office development it is hoped this will create a high quality businesses environment in the centre triggering further investment. The policy also allows for schemes to come forward in other areas where it is demonstrated there will be no impact on the delivery of Gigaport.	There may be some increase in traffic along the Ring Road which already suffers from congestion and some increase in emissions in the area. Policy AAPT4 looks to address this through proposed road improvements on the ring road. Some developments may need to be set away from the road to reduce the impact of air quality on the scheme. BCCS Policy ENV8 and the AAP policy AAP17 part b) on air quality will ensure that any impacts from new development on air quality standards are addressed. There is also mitigation through improved access for pedestrians (Policy AAPT1) and cyclists (Policy AAPT2) along with improved public transport (AAPT3). The impact on townscape is also unknown for those sites which come forward outside of Gigaport as new large new office blocks in none office areas could impact in the character of the centre. The Characterisation Study and the implementation of policy AAPLV5 should address this potential impact. The re-use of vacant buildings and floor and the development of sites within the centre is also seen to have a positive impact on the character of the centre overall.

AAP Policy	Overall SA Score	Summary of Effects	Proposed Mitigation
Policy AAPB2: Social Enterprise Zone	+	The current social enterprise will hopefully grow offering more opportunities for skills to help young people access work. Other social enterprises focussing on different needs will also be encouraged into area. The policy also allows for social enterprises to come forward in other locations that mean some of the impacts on townscape, traffic and air pollution are more uncertain.	BCCS Policy ENV8 and the AAP policy AAP17 part b) on air quality will ensure that any impacts from new development on air quality standards are addressed. There is also mitigation through improved access for pedestrians (Policy AAPT1) and cyclists (Policy AAPT2) along with improved public transport (AAPT3). The Characterisation Study and the implementation of policy AAPLV5 should address any potential impact on the character of the centre. The policy itself also promotes the re-use of buildings for social enterprises reducing further any impact on the centres character.
Policy AAPB3: Town Centre Employment Land	+	This policy identifies, allocates and safeguards land that could be released from employment to town centre uses because they are constrained and isolated, and surrounded by non-employment uses, making them less suitable for industry in the long term. However they currently provide a good source of local quality employment, and should only be released subject to Core Strategy Policy DEL2, and when it is clear it will no longer be required for industry. However it is also the case that should industry vacate these sites, there will be benefits in local amenity, given that most of these sites are surrounded by housing. It will also help to deliver the town centre uses needed to ensure the future of Walsall town centre.	BCCS Policy ENV8 and the AAP policy AAP17 part b) on air quality will ensure that any impacts from new development on air quality standards are addressed. The Characterisation Study and the implementation of policy AAPLV5 should address any potential impact on the character of the centre.

AAP Policy	Overall SA Score	Summary of Effects	Proposed Mitigation
<b>5. A Place for Leisure</b>			
Policy AAPLE1: New Leisure Development	+	Likely to have positive effects overall. The Waterfront area has traditionally been the area promoted as the key site for leisure investment in the town centre. Directing leisure uses here will provide an attractive area of leisure uses located together, improving viability of individual elements and creating an attractive area of public space. Should have a positive impact on the canal environment and encourage further investment in the area. The policy also allows for leisure uses in elsewhere to Waterfront where it can be demonstrated that there will be no adverse impact on delivering the Waterfront scheme. This provides opportunities for leisure development with jeopardising the cinema scheme resulting in an overall positive benefit. The impacts of leisure schemes in other locations on the townscape and traffic along with other site specific issues will not be known until a scheme comes forward.	BCCS Policy ENV8 and the AAP policy AAP17 part b) on air quality will ensure that any impacts from new development on air quality standards are addressed. There is also mitigation through improved access for pedestrians (Policy AAPT1) and cyclists (Policy AAPT2) along with improved public transport (AAPT3). The Characterisation Study and the implementation of policy AAPLV5 should address any potential impact on the character of the centre. The policy also includes a number of points on drive-through facilities to reduce the impact these have on the town centre in terms of promoting use by private car and not be accessible by pedestrians. The policy also looks to ensure leisure uses are safe and secure places reducing some of the potential negative impacts some leisure uses can have on the amenity of residents. This policy also connects to Policy AAPLE4 and AAPIN4 which look to protect the historic and natural environment of the canal mitigating against any potential negative impacts of leisure development at Waterfront.

AAP Policy	Overall SA Score	Summary of Effects	Proposed Mitigation
Policy AAPLE2: Sport and Cultural Facilities	+	<p>This policy will have positive impacts by protecting and enhancing current cultural and sports facilities in the centre it allows the community to access these facilities providing health and wellbeing benefits. Investing in these facilities should also encourage more visitors to the centre with potential for linked trips. Many of these buildings positively contribute to the historic character of the centre and the overall townscape. The policy will have positive impacts by providing the opportunity for a new consolidated Heritage Centre. This would bring the less accessible local history centre into the town centre and support the Walsall museum through relocating it as part of Walsall Leather Museum. This will create a larger visitor attraction in the centre which should encourage more users of the facilities and more visitors to the centre overall.</p>	<p>The site is on the Ring Road so there may be some uncertain impact from air quality also the new facility may generate more traffic than the current facilities into one location. BCCS Policy ENV8 and the AAP policy AAP17 part b) on air quality will ensure that any impacts from new development on air quality standards are addressed. Also Policy AAPT4 looks to address any road capacity issues through proposed road improvements on the ring road.</p>
Policy AAPLE3: Hotel, Conference and Banqueting Provision	+	<p>Likely to have positive effects overall. As there is currently no evidenced demand a number of suitable locations have been proposed which means some of the impacts are uncertain. However such facilities will support the office developments proposed and also the college.</p>	<p>Some of the sites is on the Ring Road so there may be some uncertain impact from air quality also the new facility may generate more traffic than the current facilities into one location. BCCS Policy ENV8 and the AAP policy AAP17 part b) on air quality will ensure that any impacts from new development on air quality standards are addressed. Also Policy AAPT4 looks to address any road capacity issues through proposed road improvements on the ring road.</p>

AAP Policy	Overall SA Score	Summary of Effects	Proposed Mitigation
Policy AAPLE3: Hotel, Conference and Banqueting Provision (continued)	+		The Characterisation Study and the implementation of policy AAPLV5 should address any potential impact on the character of the centre.
Policy AAPLE4: Walsall Canal	+	Likely to have positive effects overall. Increased canal side activities should have a positive impact overall as it creates a more desirable leisure attraction bringing further investment and visitors to the centre. There are also positive impacts on the on townscape and character of the centre as the canal provides a key feature in the centre. The improved pedestrian and cycle access along the canal will ensure it provides a key pedestrian and cycle link to and from the centre to residential areas and the Manor hospital. This has positive impacts on how people access the centre, the health of the community and how sustainable the centre is.	There are uncertain impacts on the biodiversity and water quality as increased activity may have some impact, however more activity should mean the environment is better maintained as part of surrounding developments and uses. The policy along with AAPINV4 and AAPINV7 look to protect the natural environment and water quality. There are uncertain impacts on the increased costs to developers but generally ensuring the canal remains a pleasant and functioning environment will have positive impacts overall as it attracts investment and people to the centre.

AAP Policy	Overall SA Score	Summary of Effects	Proposed Mitigation
<b>6. A Place for Living</b>			
AAPLV1: Residential Developments	<b>+</b>	Likely to be positive. Increasing housing in the town centre is generally positive to the viability and viability of the town centre as it increases users of town centre services, provided it is not located so as to jeopardise the centre's retail and commercial functions. Two sites are allocated for residential-only development. These are currently industrial sites in residential areas, so should the industry relocate and sites be converted to residential use this will have a positive impact on these sites and the surrounding housing. The policy also encourages residential use at upper floors and the conversion of existing buildings, both of which are positive to the vitality of the town centre. Setting standards for the environment of residential developments should have an overall positive effect on the quality of life of residents, including ensuring high quality, secure and accessible environments.	BCCS Policy ENV8 and the AAP policy AAP17 part b) on air quality will ensure that any impacts from new development on air quality standards are addressed
AAPLV2: Education	<b>+</b>	Likely to be positive. The policy encourages higher and further education facilities and ancillary accommodation across the town centre in suitable locations, and provides standards to ensure that any new educational development is high quality design, accessible and relates well to the rest of the town centre.	BCCS Policy ENV8 and the AAP policy AAP17 part b) on air quality will ensure that any impacts from new development on air quality standards are addressed. There is a Grade II listed building within the site which the policy justification states should be brought back into use reducing the impact of the allocation on the historic character of the centre.



AAP Policy	Overall SA Score	Summary of Effects	Proposed Mitigation
AAPLV3: Health Care Facilities	+	The policy supports new and existing healthcare facilities in the town centre and aims to stop such facilities from leaving the town centre. The centre is the most accessible location in the borough for such facilities. Manor hospital is an important healthcare facility that has recently undergone significant investment, its location in close proximity to the town centre should be emphasised and encouraged as the hospital is easily accessible by public transport. Uses which will further support the hospital are encouraged within the town centre.	BCCS Policy ENV8 and the AAP policy AAP17 part b) on air quality will ensure that any impacts from new development on air quality standards are addressed.
AAPLV4: Community Facilities	+	Likely to have positive effects overall. Protecting existing community facilities will stop the loss of any key facilities within the town centre. The centre is the most accessible location in the borough for such facilities. A single location for combined community facilities will benefit Walsall's residents by bringing together a number of facilities into a single, accessible hub.	BCCS Policy ENV8 and the AAP policy AAP17 part b) on air quality will ensure that any impacts from new development on air quality standards are addressed.

AAP Policy	Overall SA Score	Summary of Effects	Proposed Mitigation
AAPLV5: Protecting and Enhancing Historic Character and Local Distinctiveness	+	Generally positive as the policy proposes quality design of new buildings to strengthen the town centre's heritage and identity, which will have positive impacts on the townscape of the centre. Attractive buildings and environments will have positive impacts on the economy of the town centre. The policy sets criteria for the design of buildings which affect heritage assets, which will have a positive impact on ensuring high standards of design in sensitive locations.	The policy resists the harm or loss of buildings of historic interest which is positive to strengthening the historic character of the town centre. However it may be that such buildings are considered unviable for conversion and therefore they may become derelict which would be unattractive and therefore negative to the townscape of the town.
AAPLV6: Securing Good Design	++	Likely to have very positive effects. Setting standards for good design of new buildings should have positive effects on the townscape of the centre, as well as cultural heritage, accessibility, and climate change mitigation and energy consumption. Attractive buildings and environments will have positive impacts on the economy of the town centre.	It may be that such design criteria could increase costs of development, impacting on viability.
AAPLV7: Enhancing Public Realm	++	Likely to have very positive effects. Maintaining existing and improved environment and public realm of the town centre will ensure the continued positive impacts on the townscape and identity of the area, and is likely to increase the attractiveness of the town centre for both investment and users, thereby improving the economy of the town.	Discussions will need to be undertaken with developers to understand how this policy can be implemented without impacting on scheme viability.

AAP Policy	Overall SA Score	Summary of Effects	Proposed Mitigation
AAPLV8: Environmental Infrastructure	++	Likely to be very positive overall. Protecting the existing environmental infrastructure assets will have a number of positive impacts including on the townscape and landscape of the town centre, providing open space and access routes have positive impacts on accessibility and biodiversity. Setting standards for environmental infrastructure for new developments will have positive impacts on biodiversity, air quality and climate change. Furthermore if renewable energy schemes are delivered the effect is likely to be positive as it reduces waste, creates renewable energy, good reduce energy bills for communities and will have wider environmental impacts.	It is possible that such standards could increase the costs of a development and therefore impact on scheme viability.
<b>7. Transport, Movement and Accessibility</b>			
AAPT1: Pedestrian Movement, Access and Linkages	++	This policy is likely to have a very positive impact, by improving linkages throughout the centre there are more opportunities for linked trips and increased spending throughout the centre as people find it easier to navigate from one destination to another, this is especially the case for strengthen the Primary Shopping Area. The improvements across the Ring Road will also help the Gigaport proposals support other uses such as retail and leisure as office workers find it easier to access the entire centre.	There is some uncertain impact on cultural heritage as some improvements may result in more signage or changes to historic layouts of the centre. The town centre characterisation study will ensure there is no adverse impact on the character of the centre.

AAP Policy	Overall SA Score	Summary of Effects	Proposed Mitigation
AAPT1: Pedestrian Movement, Access and Linkages (continued)	++	It could also help make the centre more sustainable as people will find public transport easier to use as well as walking and cycling becoming a more desirable option. The policy specifically looks to ensure that new developments are accessible for those with limited mobility.	
AAPT2: Cycling	++	This is likely to have a positive impact, protecting the cycle routes ensures the centre remains cycle friendly promoting this healthy and sustainable mode of transport. Protecting the current cycle parking is also positive as it supports the use of the cycle routes and people commuting to work or to public transport hubs then travelling on to other areas for work.	There could be some cost of developers who are required to provide cycle parking but this will be minimal and have no impact on overall positive impact of an accessible centre.
AAPT3: Public Transport	++	The allocation of Bradford Place Interchange is likely to have a positive impact overall, the ability of the centre to cater for bus services that make Walsall town centre as accessible as possible is crucial to the centre viability. Many people access the centre by bus for work, shopping, leisure and to access other public transport hubs. The allocation of Station Street Car Park for the expansion of the train station to include rapid transit is likely to have a positive impact overall through connecting the strategic centres to each other and making Walsall as accessible as	There will be some impact on the businesses that will need to relocate for the expansion of Bradford Place but this should be short term and the Council will manage the process so the impact is as small as possible. This will be likely outweighed by the improved bus services which bring more footfall to the area in an improved environment. There will be some uncertain impact on the townscape as some buildings may need to be demolished. The improved public realm and attractiveness of the area should help to outweigh these negative impacts. There will also be some uncertain impact on the townscape around the station street area which could

AAP Policy	Overall SA Score	Summary of Effects	Proposed Mitigation
AAPT3: Public Transport (continued)	++	possible. Ensuring the centre is accessible reduces car dependency and emissions.	impact on the historic character of some of the buildings on the street. However given the run down nature of Station Street investment in the station is likely to attract further investment in the access to the station and properties/development opportunities on Station Street which will have a positive impact overall. Ensuring the centre has a good bus service is also good for the environment as it reduces car dependency, so whilst there may be some increase in air pollution within that area the overall decrease in emissions will have a positive impact. BCCS Policy ENV8 and the AAP policy AAPI7 part b) on air quality will ensure that any impacts from new development on air quality standards are addressed
AAPT4: Road Improvements	+	In balance this policy will have a positive impact, by identifying improvements to the road network this will help secure any funding available preventing the congestion and access issue to road network from deterring future investment and visitors from the centre. By improving the road network more development could be attracted to the centre especially within the Gigaport area. The better moving the traffic is the less impact on air pollution there is along the corridor although there may be an increase in car emissions overall resulting in the impact being unknown.	There may be some developer contributions sought for road improvements but these would be set at a level that will have no impact on schemes viability.

AAP Policy	Overall SA Score	Summary of Effects	Proposed Mitigation
AAPT5: Car Parking	+	Likely to have positive effects overall. This policy will enable car parks to support investment anticipated in the town centre, making it more attractive to a wider range of potential users therefore having an overall positive impact. It will also improve the strategic highway network and improve users' safety.	There will be some negative impacts as this may attract more people into the centre by car resulting in more emissions. These impacts are considered to be outweighed by the overall negative impact of investors and visitors being put off from Walsall because the centre does not have the right parking to meet customer needs. A reduction in investment and spending in the centre will have an impact on all elements of the centre including the overall economy of Walsall. This may mean there is increased car usage but as the centre is the most accessible location in the centre to meet the needs for the community for shopping, leisure and work improving access to the centre is considered the most sustainable approach. There are some uncertain impacts on the health of the communities from the possible reduction in air quality, however ensuring the centre is accessible including for those with mobility issues should have a positive impact of equalities as this ensure town centre services and facilities are accessible. BCCS Policy ENV8 and the AAP policy AAPI7 part b) on air quality will ensure that any impacts from new development on air quality standards are addressed. The Council is also currently consulting on a SPD with the aim of improving air quality. There is also an uncertain impact on the townscape as a new multi storey car park could change the character of an area and be a difficult development in integrate with the urban fabric.

AAP Policy	Overall SA Score	Summary of Effects	Proposed Mitigation
AAPT5: Car Parking (continued)	+		However the Characterisation Study has helped to shape the policies reducing the potential impact on the character of the centre. There is also some counter mitigation through improved access for pedestrians (Policy AAPT1) and cyclists (Policy AAPT2) along with improved public transport (AAPT3) which should help to balance out any increase in car usage.
<b>8. A Place for Investment</b>			
AAPINV1: Regeneration Strategy	++	Likely to have very positive effects overall. Resisting proposals that are not in accordance with the regeneration strategy in the AAP should have an overall positive impact as these proposals could be detrimental to the delivery of priority sites and uses such as the Primary Shopping Area for retail or the Gigaport for offices. The use of temporary permissions will have a positive impact as it allows development to come forward without having a long term impact on delivering the regeneration strategy. This provides a positive economic impact in the short term and in the long term. This means less sites remain undeveloped in the short term having a positive impact on the townscape of the centre. Requirements for developments to be comprehensive, address highway impacts and have consideration of the character of the area and be of high design will have positive impacts by ensuring that schemes make	It may mean that some sites remain vacant for longer but this will be outweighed by the knock on impacts of a successful regeneration strategy which will result in more investment overall. This possible delay in sites coming forward means there is an uncertain impact on the townscape. Some of the requirements may add additional costs to developers however this is likely to be limited and the improvement to the centre overall is likely to be a positive. There is also an uncertain impact on biodiversity and geodiversity from the greening of vacant sites as whilst this will have a short term benefit the ultimate development of such sites will mean this benefit is limited.

AAP Policy	Overall SA Score	Summary of Effects	Proposed Mitigation
AAPINV1: Regeneration Strategy (continued)	<b>++</b>	the best use of land and are high quality. It also looks to create a town centre that is accessible and attractive, encouraging further investment. Also requiring cleared or vacant sites to be managed and looked after, including possible greening of such sites, will have an overall positive impact as this provides environmental and visual improvements to the centre.	
AAPINV2: St. Matthew's Quarter	<b>+</b>	This policy will have a positive impact, St Matthew's has secured some delivery in the area already but further is needed to secure the future of the area as a retail destination and to secure the delivery of the planned investment. Proving larger retail units will attract further investment. Creating active retail frontages and allowing a flexible approach to other uses that support not prejudice the retail function will help to create a lively and attractive shopping destination. This will help to deliver the targets for retail floor space and protect the core of the town centre. Supports the regeneration strategy and provides opportunities for investment. The use of the Shannon's Mill site for Bulky goods or convenience retailing is likely to also have a positive impact overall as it will prevent the location of such uses further away from the PSA which will mean more linked trips and concentrated spending inside the Primary	Whilst this is likely to result in changes to the townscape much of this area will benefit from updating and the areas have been identified for the ability for change that will positively impact on the towns character. As the policy provides a degree of flexibility over uses many of the impacts are uncertain as there is no certainty over the proposed use and scale. The town centre characterisation study will ensure there is no adverse impact on the character of the centre.



AAP Policy	Overall SA Score	Summary of Effects	Proposed Mitigation
AAPINV2: St. Matthew's Quarter (continued)	+	Shopping Area. Such uses may generate more car trips and the related negative impacts however the closer the stores locate to the rest of the centre the more accessible they encouraging the use of public transport and reducing the need to travel. Finally the use of the Shannon's Mill site for other town centre use or a mix of centre uses will have a positive impact bringing investment and life into the area. Uses such as residential will mean there is more footfall in the area and increased natural surveillance making the area feel safer. Live/work units could connect well with the social enterprise area and provide a new form a living in the centre.	
AAPINV3: Walsall Gigaport	+	Allocating sites for office development will have a positive impact overall as it will attract investment and create jobs. It will also help diversify the economy of Walsall overall. Gigaport provides enough sites suitable for office development in an accessible and visible location. Through having a specific area to encourage office development it is hoped this will create a high quality businesses environment in the centre triggering further investment. This policy will have a positive impact as it looks to provide a desirable, accessible and high quality businesses environment that meets the needs	There are some uncertain impacts from the generation of car parking and the location of Gigaport on the road network. The centre is still the most accessible location and provides opportunities for more sustainable modes of transport which limits the negative impact of traffic increase. This is why there are allocations for improved linkages to encourage the use of public transport to the Gigaport. Some developments may need to be set away from the road or been designed in a way to reduce the impact of air quality on the scheme. Policy ENV8 and the AAP policy AAP17 part b) on air quality will ensure that any impacts from new development on air quality standards are addressed.

AAP Policy	Overall SA Score	Summary of Effects	Proposed Mitigation
AAPINV3: Walsall Gigaport (continued)	+	of workers and the community whilst attracting further investment. There are also policy requirements that look to improve linkages to public transport and encourage electric car use and cycle use which help to mitigate some of the impacts on the ring road location and increased traffic generating by more people accessing the area. There may be some additional costs to developers but this negative is outweighed by the positive impact of a more desirable location that attracts visitors and investors.	Whilst a retail store in the Gigaport location could have less negative impacts than an out-of-centre development it is one of lesser sequential sites and does not relate as positively with the Primary Shopping Area as some other sites identified, meaning it could draw some footfall away from the retail core especially if it has its own car parking that doesn't serve the centre as a whole. The economic impact is therefore uncertain. The proposal would therefore need to show that other benefits could be delivered that would reduce any negative impact on the centre such as the development of the car park and/or community hub. The location of a retail unit here could also generate more car trips and congestion on the busy ring road.
AAPINV4: Walsall Waterfront	+	Likely to be positive overall. The Waterfront area has traditionally been the area promoted as the key site for leisure investment in the town centre. Directing leisure uses here will provide an attractive area of leisure uses located together, improving viability of individual elements and creating an attractive area of public space. Should have a positive impact on the canal environment and encourage further investment in the area. As Lex has been allocated for a mix of uses it is not possible to say what all the impacts will be. Generally there is a positive impact from securing investment in a key site.	Lex site is located on the road network so some uses may need to be sited away from the road. The location does have the potential to create a high quality development. There is a need to ensure the development is accessible and that links along the canal are improved. Policy ENV8 and the AAP policy AAP17 part b) on air quality will ensure that any impacts from new development on air quality standards are addressed.

AAP Policy	Overall SA Score	Summary of Effects	Proposed Mitigation
AAPINV4: Walsall Waterfront (continued)	+	<p>The waterfront area has traditionally been the area</p> <p>The allocation of sites for residential within an already residential area will have positive impacts as it provides a high quality living environment. It also means that the former uses of industry have relocated away from housing. More housing in the centre helps supports the centre vitality and will increase demand for leisure uses. Centre living is sustainable and should help to reduce car trips as there is access to public transport.</p>	
AAPINV5: Park Street Shopping Core	++	<p>This policy will have a very positive effect by maximising the retail potential of the area and ensuring it provides a high quality shopping environment. This will help to attract further investment in retail and in other uses such as leisure and increase the number of visitors. The strength of the retail core determines how Walsall performs and competes with other centres for investment and spending. This approach will have a positive impact on the townscape as there are less vacant units and investment in the public realm. The use of upper floors also brings more life to buildings meaning they are better looked after. It also makes the best use of the land in the centre.</p>	<p>The uncertain impacts are around air quality and climate change as improvements to the shopping offer should result in more people visiting the centre. The town centre and especially the Park Street area are very accessible and are served by public transport hubs which should mean that the impact is less than the investment in shopping locating in a less accessible location which will generate more trips. Policy ENV8 and the AAP policy AAP17 part b) on air quality will ensure that any impacts from new development on air quality standards are addressed.</p>

AAP Policy	Overall SA Score	Summary of Effects	Proposed Mitigation
AAPINV6: Secondary Development Sites	++	<p>This policy will have a very positive impact as it should result in more sites being developed in the centre that support the priority sites identified and the regeneration strategy. Many of the sites identified as secondary development opportunities are Council car parks which are considered surplus or consider for release industrial land, meaning that the best use will be made of developed land in Walsall town centre bringing in into life for town centre uses. Requiring developers to consider sites for town centre uses before solely residential uses will have a positive impact overall as whilst it may mean that less houses are built the Site Allocation Document allocates for sufficient housing in other areas of the borough meaning that there will be no negative impact on communities, the policy also doesn't mean that no housing proposals will be acceptable or that they cannot come forward as part of mixed use meaning that new homes can be built in the centre. The policy is written this way to ensure the centre fulfils its role as a commercial role as the heart of Walsall for shopping, office and leisure in order to supports Walsall's economy, provide jobs and meet the needs of communities. This policy looks to protect the role of the centre and to make the best use of land</p>	<p>As these are secondary sites the uses and scale are less well known so there are some uncertain impacts in terms of traffic generation, air pollution, impact on cultural heritage. The town centre characterisation study will ensure there is no adverse impact on the character of the centre and the air quality policy will mitigate any negative impacts on development proposals. Policy ENV8 and the AAP policy AAP17 part b) on air quality will ensure that any impacts from new development on air quality standards are addressed.</p>

AAP Policy	Overall SA Score	Summary of Effects	Proposed Mitigation
AAPINV6: Secondary Development Sites (continued)	++	ensuring where possible town centre uses are delivered. This is considered to have a positive impact on communities and the economy.	
AAPINV7: Addressing Potential Site Constraints	++	The policy on flood risk, water quality and air quality operates in conjunction with UDP policies and incorporate the latest national guidance. The likely effects of the policy are very positive providing opportunities for improvements to biodiversity, townscape and landscape and mitigating against the effects of climate change, water and air pollution and managing the risk of flooding. The noise policy should reduce any conflict between uses such as residential and leisure, resulting in the best use of land in the centre. The land contamination part of the policy will have an overall positive impact as it looks to ensure that any ground contamination is remediated to an acceptable level. This will enable development to go ahead on sites where there is contamination and will have knock on impacts for the environment of the centre. This will also have positive impacts on the health of communities. The minerals policy is likely to have positive effect, because it would not prevent essential non-mineral development from taking place	There is some uncertain impacts on the economy of the centre because it may mean that the design costs more or that the site is not able to be fully developed as a result of having to be set back from the road due to air quality. This may also have some impact on the townscape. Although there are economic advantages to managing flood risk the effectiveness of the policy is influenced by viability and on the whole the benefits of operating the policy are considered to be neutral. There are also some uncertain impacts on the economy of the centre because the cost of remediation is a real barrier to developer viability. However development would not be able to come forward if contamination was not remediated and this would have a larger negative impact on the centre overall. The Council is committed to working with developers to overcome barriers to development.

Walsall Site Allocation Document (SAD) and Town Centre Action Plan (AAP)  
Sustainability Appraisal Report – Revised Report for Submission (October 2016)

AAP Policy	Overall SA Score	Summary of Effects	Proposed Mitigation
AAPINV7: Addressing Potential Site Constraints (continued)	<b>++</b>	where there would be no impact on winnable mineral resources, and where winnable minerals are present and it is feasible to extract them in advance of development, this may provide a source of aggregate minerals that can be used on-site or a source of other minerals that can be sold to help offset the cost of development.	

Source: SA Report Appendix K and High Level Appraisal of AAP Policies - Completed Matrix (January 2016)

## 8.4 Equality Impact Assessment – Appraisal Results

### Potential Positive Effects on Equality and Diversity

The SA has identified the following potential **positive** effects on equality and diversity arising from the AAP Policies:

- **AAP Policies AAPS1 – AAPS3 and AAPI5:** The Primary Shopping Area (PSA) focused around Park Street is the most accessible location in the centre served by car parks and public transport, so concentrating retail development including the Market in this area will ensure that key shopping facilities will continue to be accessible to as many Walsall residents as possible.
- **AAP Policies AAPB1 and AAPI3:** Identification of the Gigaport area as the primary location for office development and proposals to improve linkages to the rest of the Town Centre will help to create an office environment that is accessible to as many Walsall residents as possible.
- **AAP Policy AAPB2:** Proposal to create a Social Enterprise Zone around the Goldmine Centre should have an overall positive impact on equality and diversity, as these enterprises are often focussed around the needs of the local community.
- **AAP Policies APPLE1 – APPLE4 and AAPI4:** Focusing new leisure development around the Waterfront area, protecting and enhancing the canalside environment and current cultural and sports facilities such as the Gala Baths and the Leather Museum, and promoting the development of new hotel, conference and banqueting facilities in accessible locations is likely to have positive effects on equality and diversity as it will ensure that these facilities are accessible to as many Walsall residents as possible.
- **AAP Policies APPLV1 – APPLV8:** Identifying sites for housing development in the Town Centre, supporting the expansion of Walsall College, encouraging provision of new healthcare facilities in the Town Centre and promoting improvements to the Town Centre environment is likely to have positive effects on equality and diversity, as it will help provide new homes in areas where there is good access to facilities, and improve the amenity for existing and future residents, and for those who depend on the Town Centre for shopping, leisure and work.

- **AAP Policies AAPT1 – AAPT5:** Identifying priorities for transport improvements in the Town Centre, including improvements to pedestrian links, cycle routes, cycle parking facilities, public transport interchanges, roads, and car parking provision, will help to create a more accessible centre that will serve the community better and improve access to the Town Centre by a choice of transport modes, including public transport, walking and cycling. Improving parking provision for cars and mobility vehicles will also address the needs of people with mobility disabilities who rely on these means of transport to access the Town Centre.
- **AAP Policies APPLV1 – AAPLV8:** Identifying sites for housing development in the Town Centre, supporting the expansion of Walsall College, encouraging provision of new healthcare facilities in the Town Centre and promoting improvements to the Town Centre environment is likely to have positive effects on equality and diversity, as it will help provide new homes in areas where there is good access to facilities, and improve the amenity for existing and future residents, and for those who depend on the Town Centre for shopping, leisure and work.

## Potential Negative Effects on Equality and Diversity

The SA has not identified any certain **negative** effects on equality and diversity arising from the AAP Policies. However, uncertain effects which could be negative were identified in the appraisal of the following policies.

### Policy AAPLE1: New Leisure Development

Focusing new leisure development around the Waterfront area could have some negative effects on equality and diversity if ‘drive-through’ restaurant facilities are proposed which are inaccessible to pedestrians or those using public transport. The policy has sought to mitigate the effects of this by requiring new leisure developments in the Town Centre to be accessible to all, and to create a welcoming and safe environment for everyone.

### Policy AAPT5: Car Parking

There may be some individual members of the community who use the Town Centre car parks proposed for redevelopment to meet a specific need, for example, people who rely on cars or mobility vehicles to get around. However given that the car parks have been identified for redevelopment due to low levels of usage, any potential harmful effects from this are likely to be limited. The proposal within the same policy for a new multi storey car



park in a location that better serves the Town Centre as a whole will also help mitigate any potential harmful effects of redeveloping some of the existing car parks. There will be further opportunities to evaluate and mitigate the effects of the proposals at the planning application stage.

## **Likely Effects of AAP on Equality and Diversity - Conclusions**

The overall effects of the AAP on equality and diversity are likely to be very positive, as most of the policies and proposals are aimed at encouraging further investment in the Town Centre, including ‘town centre’ developments which are to be developed there in preference to in other less accessible locations. As the Town Centre is highly accessible to most parts of the borough by a choice of transport modes, including public transport, walking and cycling, people without access to a car are less likely to be excluded from any new jobs created in the Town Centre, or from accessing existing and planned shopping and leisure facilities in the Town Centre.

The only potential negative effects identified have been addressed in AAP Policies AAPLE1 and AAPT5 as far as possible. It is anticipated that any other potential harmful effects from new development can be mitigated through effective application of the AAP policies in combination with existing UDP and BCCS policies.

## **8.5 Health Impact Assessment – Appraisal Results**

### **Potential Positive Effects on Health and Wellbeing**

The SA has identified the following potential **positive** effects on health and wellbeing arising from the AAP Policies:

- **AAP Policies AAPS1 – AAPS3 and AAP15:** The Primary Shopping Area (PSA) focused around Park Street is the most accessible location in the centre, so concentrating retail development including the Market in this area will ensure that key shopping facilities will continue to be accessible to as many Walsall residents as possible. Application of these policies in combination with existing UDP and BCCS policies will also ensure that new development is integrated into the existing urban fabric and is well designed, and that there are adequate pedestrian linkages between peripheral

development and the Primary Shopping Area, thereby encouraging smarter and healthier means of travel between different parts of the Town Centre.

- **AAP Policies AAPB1 and AAPB3:** Identification of the Gigaport area as the primary location for office development and proposals to improve linkages to the rest of the Town Centre will help to create an office environment that is accessible to as many Walsall residents as possible by a choice of transport modes, including walking and cycling routes, and will create more opportunities for employment within the centre.
- **AAP Policy AAPB2:** Proposal to create a Social Enterprise Zone around the Goldmine Centre should have an overall positive impact on health and wellbeing, as these enterprises are often focussed around the needs of the local community.
- **AAP Policy AAPB3:** The operation of some industry on 'Consider for Release' sites in the Town Centre affects local air quality, and thus health, for nearby residents, so encouraging this industry to relocate to more suitable areas and vacate such sites so that they can be redeveloped with alternative and more appropriate land uses is likely to improve the health of nearby residents by reducing these effects.
- **AAP Policies APPLE1 and AAPB4:** Proposals to protect and enhance the canalside environment and current cultural and sports facilities such as the Gala Baths and the Leather Museum, is likely to have positive effects on health and wellbeing, as it will ensure that these facilities are accessible to as many Walsall residents as possible by a choice of transport modes including walking and cycling, and will also help to deliver new sports and leisure facilities that the Town Centre currently lacks. It may also increase activity around the canal and encourage its use for cycling and walking.
- **AAP Policies APPLV1 – APPLV8:** Identifying sites for housing development in the Town Centre, supporting the expansion of Walsall College, encouraging provision of new healthcare facilities in the Town Centre and promoting improvements to the Town Centre environment, including improvements to open space, is likely to have positive effects on health and wellbeing, as it will help provide new homes in areas where there is good access to facilities, improve the amenity for existing and future residents, and for those who depend on the Town Centre for shopping, leisure and work, and encourage the use of open spaces and canalside environments for walking and cycling. Proposals to improve links and accessibility to the Manor Hospital will improve access to healthcare facilities, and encouraging uses which support the hospital will also have positive impacts on the healthcare services provided.

- **AAP Policies AAPT1 – AAPT5:** Identifying priorities for transport improvements in the Town Centre, including improvements to pedestrian links, cycle routes, cycle parking facilities, public transport interchanges, roads, and car parking provision, will help to create a more accessible centre that will serve the community better and improve access to the Town Centre by a choice of transport modes, including public transport, walking and cycling, encouraging people to use healthier and less polluting ways to move around within the Town Centre.

## **Potential Negative Effects on Health and Wellbeing**

The SA has identified the following potential **negative** effects on health and wellbeing arising from the AAP Policies.

### **AAP Policies AAPB1: Office Development and AAPI3: Walsall Gigaport**

There is potential for new development along the Ring Road, including in the Gigaport area, to expose those who visit or work in the area to high levels of air pollution. However the AAP looks to mitigate against this through design and also through encouraging sustainable modes of transport into and around the centre.

### **Policy AAPLE1: New Leisure Development**

Focusing new leisure development around the Waterfront area could have some negative effects on health and wellbeing if 'drive-through' restaurant facilities are proposed which are inaccessible to pedestrians or those using public transport. The policy has sought to mitigate the effects of this by requiring new leisure developments in the Town Centre to be accessible to all, and to create a welcoming and safe environment for everyone.

## **Likely Effects of AAP on Health and Wellbeing - Conclusions**

The overall effects of the AAP on health and wellbeing are likely to be positive, as most of the policies and proposals are aimed at encouraging further investment in the Town Centre, including new sports and leisure developments and health care facilities, which are to be developed there in preference to in other less accessible locations, encouraging environmental improvements, and improving pedestrian and cycle linkages between different parts of the Town Centre, including links between open spaces and existing walking and cycle routes. This is likely to make it easier for people to access recreational

facilities and health care, and to encourage them to move around within the Town Centre on foot or by cycle rather than by less healthy and potentially polluting transport modes. It could also help to reduce pollution generated by road traffic emissions.

The only potential negative effects identified have been addressed in AAP Policies AAPB1, AAPLE1 and AAP13 as far as possible. It is anticipated that any other potential harmful effects from new development can be mitigated through effective application of the AAP policies in combination with existing UDP and BCCS policies.