

Shropshire Council

Shropshire Local Plan

Sustainable Growth - Flourishing Shropshire

Strategic Environmental Assessment Scoping Report

September 2026

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1. Introduction

Overview – The Next Shropshire Local Plan

- 1.1. Shropshire Council has begun early preparations for the next Shropshire Local Plan. It will establish the vision, measurable outcomes and spatial strategy for the sustainable development of Shropshire over the period to 2046. As Shropshire Council is also a Mineral and Waste Planning Authority, the next Shropshire Local Plan will also form the Mineral and Waste Plan for Shropshire.
- 1.2. The next Shropshire Local Plan will be progressed under the Government's new plan making process introduced through the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act 2023. This is characterised by a more efficient 30- month preparation and adoption process (with an additional mandatory minimum four-month scoping stage prior to its formal commencement which begins once the Council passes through 'Gateway 1').
- 1.3. Shropshire Council published its intention to commence preparation of the next Local Plan on 08th May 2026. The first stage consultation on the Local Plan scope has been undertaken with consultation running from 20th May 2026 – 15th July 2026.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

- 1.4. Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is a process designed to evaluate and communicate the potential environmental effects of a plan, alongside its reasonable alternatives. The purpose of SEA is to guide and shape the plan-making process, preventing or reducing adverse impacts and enhancing opportunities for positive outcomes. In doing so, SEA aims to strengthen a plan's overall contribution to sustainable development.
- 1.5. Sustainable development is about meeting the needs of our communities, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It helps to build a strong, responsive and competitive economy; supports strong, vibrant and healthy communities; and support efforts to mitigate/adapt to climate change and protects/enhances our natural, built and historic environment.

- 1.6. SEA is required under the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004¹ (SEA Regulations), which transcribed the European Directive 2001/42/EC (the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive) into UK law.
- 1.7. The stated objective of the SEA process is “to provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes with a view to promoting sustainable development”².
- 1.8. Government Guidance³ confirms that a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is expected to be required for Local Plans and that by ‘Gateway 1’ Local Authorities will be expected to have identified:
- a) *Relevant environmental protection objectives for your SEA at international, national or community level.*
 - b) *Other relevant plans or programmes baseline information against which to assess the environmental impact of the plan, including the environmental characteristics of the area likely to be significantly affected, existing environmental problems and key receptors.*

SEA Screening

- 1.9. Shropshire Council have carried out a screening process following guidance outlined in the Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive⁴ (which is equally applicable to the SEA Regulations) to establish from the outset whether there is a need to undertake SEA to inform the next Shropshire Local Plan. The SEA screening statement⁵ published May 2026 concluded that based on the likely ‘scope’ of the next Shropshire Local Plan it is Shropshire Councils opinion that an SEA will be required.

¹ Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2004/1633/contents>

² Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive

³ [Getting ready to prepare a new plan - GOV.UK](#)

⁴ SEA Practical Guide, MHCLG (then ODPM) (2005)

<https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5a78ec0740f0b62b22cbddd2/practicalguidesea.pdf>

⁵ [Shropshire Council SEA Screening Statement, May 2026](#)

SEA Scoping Process

1.10. Where it has been determined that an SEA is required the next step is to define the proposed 'scope' of the assessment. The 'Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive' (which is equally applicable to the SEA Regulations) summarises the stages in the SEA process and the 'tasks' required to be carried out within each stage. The SEA scoping is Stage A of the process and contains five 'tasks' as summarised below:

A1. **Identifying other relevant plans:** to establish how the plan or programme is affected by outside factors, programmes and environmental protection objectives to suggest ideas for how any constraints can be addressed, and to help identify SEA objectives.

A2. **Collecting baseline information:** to provide an evidence base for environmental problems, prediction of effects, and monitoring; and to help in the development of SEA objectives.

A3. **Identifying environmental problems:** to help focus the SEA and streamline the subsequent stages, including baseline information analysis, setting of the SEA objectives, prediction of effects and monitoring.

A4. **Developing SEA objectives:** to provide a means by which the environmental performance of the plan or programme and alternatives can be assessed.

A5. **Consulting on the scope of SEA:** to ensure that the SEA covers the likely significant environmental effects of the plan or programme.

1.11. Table 1.1 demonstrates how each of the tasks required in Stage A have been completed within this Scoping report.

Table 1.1 How Stage A Tasks are addressed within this scoping report		
Stage A Task	Purpose of Task	Location within the Scoping report
A1	Identify plans and programmes which may influence the Local Plan. All relevant international, national, regional and local level strategies, plans and programmes have been reviewed and considered.	Chapter 2 – Relevant Policies, Plans & Programmes and Appendix 1.
A2	Establish the environmental baseline data	Chapter 3 - SEA Baseline Data
A3	Identifying environmental problems	Chapter 3 & 4 - SEA Environmental Issues
A4	Developing SEA Objectives	Chapter 5 - SEA Objectives
A5	Consultation on SEA Scope	Chapter 6 - Next steps

1.12. Schedule 2 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 set out the themes that should be considered through the SEA process:

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| a) biodiversity; | h) air; |
| b) flora; | i) climatic factors; |
| c) fauna; | j) material assets; |
| d) population; | k) cultural heritage (including architectural and archaeological heritage); |
| e) human health; | l) landscape; and |
| f) soil; | m) the inter-relationship between these factors. |
| g) water; | |

1.13. For the purposes of this SEA scoping report biodiversity, flora and fauna have been combined into a single theme as have population and human health.

2. Relevant Policies, Plans & Programmes

- 2.1. The purpose of Task A1 within Stage A of the SEA process is to review relevant international, national, regional and local level strategies, plans and programmes.
- 2.2. This task is undertaken to establish the policy context within which the Local Plan is being prepared, consider how it may be affected by outside factors, identify programmes and environmental protection objectives that suggest ideas for how any constraints can be addressed, and to help identify SEA objectives.
- 2.3. The plans, policies and programmes reviewed as part of the Task A1 are detailed in Appendix 1. Relevant Policies, Plans & Programmes For each plan, policy or programme reviewed, key objectives have been identified and the implications for the Local Plan have been summarised. They are organised by the SEA themes identified in Schedule 2 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.
- 2.4. Through this review, it is apparent that the interlinked and mutually supportive economic, social and environmental principles are embedded within the strategies, plans and programmes relevant to Shropshire. Environmental strategies, plans and programmes seek to achieve nature recovery, whilst creating the conditions for flourishing rural and urban communities, sustainable economic growth, and greater long-term resilience. In this way, they contribute to achieving the principles of sustainable development.
- 2.5. This is effectively captured within paragraph 17 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which states:
"17. Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives in providing for the homes, commercial development, facilities and infrastructure which society needs. These objectives are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across all three):

a. An economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;

- b. A social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible community facilities, public service infrastructure and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural well-being; and*
- c. An environmental objective – to support efforts to mitigate and adapt to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy; and to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment, including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, and minimising waste and pollution.”*

3. SEA Baseline Data

Background

- 3.1. The purposes of Task A2 within Stage A of the SEA process are to establish the current circumstances within Shropshire, with respect to the themes set out in Schedule 2 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004. This baseline data helps to predict and monitor trends and identify environmental problems or opportunities. This evidence base will contribute towards defining the SEA objectives and scope of the SEA report.
- 3.2. The 'Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive' (which is equally applicable to the SEA Regulations) provides guidance on the types of data to be collected and advises the data/information collected should be:
 - a) Relevant and appropriate to the spatial scale of the plan.
 - b) Focused on the environmental character of the plan and be sufficient to identify the key environmental issues relevant to the plan area and aspects where the plan may have a significant effect.
 - c) Relevant to the SEA objectives and indicators.
- 3.3. For the purposes of this SEA scoping report, the data is presented under the relevant SEA themes. Due to their close interrelationship biodiversity, flora and fauna are grouped together for assessment, whilst population and human health have also been treated as a single theme. Where applicable the current Shropshire position has been compared with the baseline data collected in 2017 for the withdrawn Shropshire Local Plan SA scoping report. This enables trends and potential implications for the SEA report to be identified, to assist with setting the context and scope of the SEA.

Biodiversity, flora and fauna

3.4. Shropshire supports a rich and varied natural environment containing habitats and ecological assets of international, national and local importance. This section considers the position of Shropshire's biodiversity, flora and fauna including international, national and locally designated sites, protected and notable species and wider ecological networks of importance for Shropshire.

Table 3.1 SEA Theme: Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna			
Indicator	Shropshire Current Position (2026)	Trend	Source
Internationally designated sites (Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Ramsar sites).	6 SACs located wholly or partly within Shropshire: • River Clun; • The Stiperstones & The Hollies; • Fenn's, Whixall, Bettisfield, Cadney and Wem Mosses; • Brown Moss; • River Dee and Bala Lake (partial); and • West Midlands Mosses. No SPAs located wholly or partly within Shropshire. 2 Ramsar sites located wholly or partly within Shropshire: • Midlands Meres and Mosses – Phase 1 and 2).	No change.	Shropshire & Telford and Wrekin Local Nature Recovery Strategy, April 2026 Appendix 5 – Existing Nature Network (Areas of Particular Importance for Biodiversity)

Table 3.1 SEA Theme: Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna			
Indicator	Shropshire Current Position (2026)	Trend	Source
Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) - condition	111 SSSIs across Shropshire (includes Telford and Wrekin Area) covering a total area of 8,879.61ha. Natural England now assesses SSSI condition using a 'whole feature' assessment, monitoring the condition of designated habitats, species and geological features rather. Government targets seek to achieve 75% of SSSI features in favourable condition by 2042.	Method of monitoring updated (2023) to use Whole Feature Assessment approach rather than individual SSSI management units. As of July 2026, Natural England's Feature Condition Summary confirms: 47.06% of SSSI features are in favourable condition for Shropshire; 17.65% are unfavourable – recovering; 8.82% unfavourable with no change; 7.52% unfavourable – declining; 0.98% – partially destroyed and 17.97% - not recorded.	Natural England Designated Sites View Natural England – SSSI Condition and Assessments Guidance (2026); Environmental Targets (Biodiversity) (England) Regulations 2023. Natural England SSSI Feature Condition Summary, County: Shropshire

Table 3.1 SEA Theme: Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna			
Indicator	Shropshire Current Position (2026)	Trend	Source
National Nature Reserves (NNRs)	4 NNRs: • Stiperstones Landscape; • Fenns, Whixall and Bettisfield Mosses; • Wem Moss; • The Wyre Forest (partial).	Stiperstones NNR was substantially expanded and redesignated to Stiperstones Landscape NNR in August 2025 and now covers 1,562ha ⁶	Natural England - Shropshire's National Nature Reserves
Stiperstones Landscape NNR: Designated for its upland healthland, oak woodland and important geological features. Fenns, Whixall and Bettisfield Mosses NNR: Designated as one of the largest lowland raised bog systems in Britain, also forms part of the SAC. Wem Moss NNR: Designated for its raised bog habitat and component of Fenn's, Whixall, Bettisfield, Cadney and Wem Mosses SAC. The Wyre Forest (partial): Partially within South Shropshire and extends into Worcestershire – designated for its ancient woodland habitats.			

⁶ [Natural England Public Notice: Stiperstones Landscape NNR](#)

Table 3.1 SEA Theme: Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna			
Indicator	Shropshire Current Position (2026)	Trend	Source
Local Nature Reserves (LNRs)	33 Local Nature Reserves.	Broadly stable with incremental growth since 2017, reflecting continued recognition of the importance of protection of locally important sites for nature conservation.	Shropshire & Telford and Wrekin Local Nature Recovery Strategy, April 2026 Appendix 5 – Existing Nature Network (Areas of Particular Importance for Biodiversity)
Local Wildlife Sites and Local Geological Sites	692 Local Sites recorded across the county (these sites are non-statutory).	Broadly stable (numbers fluctuate with survey/review cycles).	Shropshire & Telford and Wrekin Local Nature Recovery Strategy, April 2026 Appendix 5 – Existing Nature Network (Areas of Particular Importance for Biodiversity)

Table 3.1 SEA Theme: Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna

Indicator	Shropshire Current Position (2026)	Trend	Source
Woodland	Shropshire contains around 1.6% of total UK woodland cover. Approximately 42% of woodland SSSI units in Shropshire are currently in favourable condition. Shropshire contains a large amount of broadleaved woodland (around 56% of Shropshire woodland). Around 20% of Shropshire's total woodland area is conifer. Shropshire also contains a number of small tree clusters (less than 0.5ha) in addition to individual trees in scrub, hedgerows and agricultural fields. Amongst these, there is wide variation of tree species and condition, however trees remain vital for carbon capture, providing habitat for native species and supporting connectivity to habitats.	In 2020 a Forestry commission report estimated 7% of England's native woodlands were in good ecological condition. Shropshire has an above average number of woodland SSSI units in favourable condition compared to England which is 34%. There is limited data regarding the ecological condition of broadleaf woodland. The 2020 Forestry commission report indicates many conifer plantations are ecologically poor due to uniform age and lack of native tree species, open spaces and deadwood.	Shropshire & Telford and Wrekin Local Nature Recovery Strategy, April 2026 – Appendix 3 – Habitat Condition Data Shropshire & Telford and Wrekin Local Nature Recovery Strategy – Appendix 4 – Land cover data

Table 3.1 SEA Theme: Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna

Indicator	Shropshire Current Position (2026)	Trend	Source
Ancient woodland	Ancient Woodland Inventory identifies 52,000 ancient woodland sites in England. Ancient woodland is an area that has been wooded continuously since at least 1600 AD. It includes ancient semi-natural woodland (ASNW), plantations on ancient woodland sites (PAWS), ancient wood pasture and parkland (AWPP) and infilled ancient wood pasture and parkland (IAWPP). 2.6% of Shropshire is covered by ancient semi-natural woodland (ASNW). 56% are plantations on ancient woodland sites (PAWS). These sites retain some of their ancient character and are a priority for restoration back to native woodland.	Shropshire's coverage of ASNW is slightly less than the rest of England where coverage is 2.8%. The coverage of ASNW may be underrepresented in current date due to the exclusion of smaller woodlands. Natural England is currently reviewing the ancient woodland inventory to include smaller sites between 0.25ha and 2ha. The clearance of ASNW impacts Shropshire more than other part of England, as it has significantly more PAWs compared to the national average in England of 39%.	Shropshire & Telford and Wrekin Local Nature Recovery Strategy, April 2026 Appendix 5 – Existing Nature Network (Areas of Particular Importance for Biodiversity)

Table 3.1 SEA Theme: Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna			
Indicator	Shropshire Current Position (2026)	Trend	Source
Priority Habitats (section 41 Habitats of Principal Importance)	Shropshire contains an extensive range of priority habitats originally identified as being the most threatened habitats requiring conservation action. The Priority Habitat Inventory for Shropshire includes deciduous woodland, lowland meadows, upland & lowland heathland, lowland raised bog, fens, marshes and species-rich grassland.	Prevention of habitat loss and fragmentation is a long-term challenge both in Shropshire and nationally. Habitat restoration and nature recovery initiatives have strengthened policy attempts to support improvements to habitat condition and connectivity.	Shropshire & Telford and Wrekin Local Nature Recovery Strategy – Appendix 4 – Land cover data
WFD (Water Framework Directive) ecological status – rivers & canals	The 25-Year Environment Plan⁷ sets a target to restore 75% of water bodies to good ecological status. Shropshire (including Telford and Wrekin) has more than 6300km of Rivers and Streams and 75km of canal. 6.42% of Rivers and Canals in Shropshire (including Telford and Wrekin) are in good ecological condition.	Broadly unchanged or slightly declining since 2017.	Shropshire & Telford and Wrekin Local Nature Recovery Strategy, April 2026 – Appendix 3 – Habitat Condition Data

⁷ [The 25-Year Environment Plan – Gov.uk](#)

Implications for the SEA/Key Environmental Issues:

- 3.5. Shropshire contains an extensive network of internationally, nationally, and locally designated sites which support significantly important habitats and ecological assets. Future development would need to avoid adverse impacts on the integrity and connectivity of these sites.
- 3.6. There are significant areas of lowland raised bogs, heathland, species rich grasslands, rivers, wetlands and ancient woodland, such habitats are often irreplaceable and vulnerable to habitat loss and fragmentation.
- 3.7. Less than half of monitored SSSI features are currently recorded as being in favourable condition, ongoing monitoring and need to protect and enhance ecological assets to support nature recovery.
- 3.8. Many of the rivers and canals in Shropshire do not currently achieve good ecological status, harming aquatic habitat and hindering recovery.
- 3.9. If not appropriately planned and mitigated for, new development can result in adverse pressures on biodiversity, flora and fauna, increased recreational pressures, hydrological changes and disturbance to protected species and habitats.
- 3.10. Opportunities for development should support habitat restoration, enhancement of ecological networks through the delivery of Local Natural Recovery Strategy objectives and Biodiversity Net Gain.

Population and human health

3.11. Shropshire is a predominately rural county with a dispersed settlement pattern. This theme seeks to build a broad profile of the characteristics of Shropshire's population focusing on demographic trends, household composition, deprivation levels, and health outcomes.

Table 3.2 SEA Theme: Population and Human Health			
Indicator	Shropshire Current Position (2026)	Trend	Source
Total Population	ONS mid-year 2024 estimate: 332,455.	Increase of approximately 2.74% since 2021 Census - 323,600 residents.	ONS Population Estimates for England and Wales: Mid 2024 Census 2021: Shropshire's profile
Population age profile	ONS mid-year 2024 estimates: Median age: 48.9 years. ONS mid-year 2024 estimates: People aged 0-15: 52,320(15.7%); People aged 16-64: 192,339(57.9%); and People aged 65 years and over: 87,796(26.4%).	Median age has experienced a slight increase since the 2021 Census where it was 48. 2021 Census: People aged 0-15: 48,000 (14.8%); People aged 16-64: 193,600 (59.8%); and People aged 65 years and over: 82,000 (25.3%). Median age is higher than the average for England (40 years).	ONS Population Estimates for England and Wales: Mid 2024 Census 2021: Shropshire's profile

Table 3.2 SEA Theme: Population and Human Health			
Indicator	Shropshire Current Position (2026)	Trend	Source
		Compared with England and Wales (18.9%), Shropshire has a higher proportion of people aged 65 years and over.	
Population density	2021 Census: population density in Shropshire was 1.01 persons per hectare(ha) (101 persons per square kilometre) compared to 4.34 per ha in England as a whole (434 per square kilometre).	Shropshire is sparsely populated and predominantly rural county.	Census 2021: Shropshire's profile
Households	2021 Census: 139,579 households in Shropshire. 2021 Census Shropshire household composition: 29.7% are 1-person households; 39.2% 2-person households; 14.5% 3-person households; and 16.7% 4 or more person households.	Number of households has risen 7.6% since 2011. 2021 Census England average household composition: 30.1% are 1-person households; 34% 2-person households; 16% 3-person households; and 19.9% 4 or more person households.	ONS – Area profile for Shropshire
Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)	English Indices of Deprivation published in October 2025 updating the 2019 index.	Due to changes in geographies and indicators caution is advised when comparing across years.	Indices of Multiple Deprivation 2025 – Shropshire Council summary

Table 3.2 SEA Theme: Population and Human Health			
Indicator	Shropshire Current Position (2026)	Trend	Source
	Shropshire is ranked 154 out of 296 lower-tier local authorities in England for deprivation (1 being the most deprived). 1% of the Shropshire population live in neighbourhoods ranked in the 10% most deprived nationally. 16.8% of the population live in neighbourhoods which are classified as income deprived (23% England average). Barriers to Housing and Services: Shropshire ranked 37th and is more deprived than 77% of English local authorities. Living Environment: Shropshire is ranked 75th and is more deprived than 69% of English local authorities, due to poor indoor housing conditions and lower energy performance. Crime: Shropshire is ranked 255th and is much less deprived than most English local authorities for crime.	However, the following observations are noted: Since 2019 there has been a slight increase in relative deprivation for Shropshire (Shropshire ranking 175 out of 317 in 2019). Overall, deprivation is relatively low compared to the national picture - Shropshire's average deprivation score is 17.6 compared to the England average of 21.6. Shropshire is more deprived in the barriers to services and the living environment, driven by geographical barriers and indoor housing conditions common to rural areas.	

Table 3.2 SEA Theme: Population and Human Health			
Indicator	Shropshire Current Position (2026)	Trend	Source
Life expectancy	Male Life expectancy at birth, 3-year range (2023-2025): 80.8 years. Female life expectancy at birth, 3-year range (2023-2025): 84.4 years.	England: Male Life expectancy at birth, 3-year range (2023-2025): 79.7 years. England: Female life expectancy at birth, 3-year range (2023-2025): 83.5 years. Men and women's life expectancy in Shropshire is marginally higher than the England average.	Department of Health & Social Care – Local Authority Health Profiles - Shropshire
Adult (18+ years) excess weight	According to 2023 data, 64% of Shropshire's adults are overweight (including obesity).	Shropshire's figures are broadly reflective of national (England) average: 64.6%.	Department of Health & Social Care – Local Authority Health Profiles - Shropshire
Adult physical activity	68.7% of Shropshire adults physically active.	Shropshire's figures are broadly reflective of national (England) average: 68%.	Department of Health & Social Care – Local Authority Health Profiles - Shropshire

Implications for the SEA/Key Environmental Issues:

- 3.12. Shropshire's population continues to grow and is projected to become increasingly older resulting in a demand for suitable housing to support opportunities for independent living, access to health and social care services and accessible infrastructure.
- 3.13. Despite low levels of overall deprivation, pockets of rural and hidden deprivation exist in rural areas and Shropshire is no exception, particular in relation to access to appropriate housing, employment, services and infrastructure including public transport.
- 3.14. Shropshire's large and rural geography presents constraints to housing, employment and services. The need to enhance and maintain appropriate access to suitable housing, healthcare, education, employment opportunities and community facilities is an ongoing challenge.
- 3.15. Human health outcomes in Shropshire are generally positive compared to the national average. Development should seek to promote health and wellbeing through access to active travel, open space and community facilities.
- 3.16. Development opportunities in Shropshire should seek to support sustainable rural communities, with access to suitable housing, employment and infrastructure.

Soil

3.17. Soil is an important environmental resource that holds a valuable function to supporting agricultural production, biodiversity, carbon storage, water regulation and landscape character.

Table 3.3 SEA Theme: Soil			
Indicator	Shropshire Current Position (2026)	Trend	Source
Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) and extent of Best and Most Versatile Land (BMV)	Shropshire contains a significant proportion of agricultural land, including areas of grade 1, 2 and 3a Best and Most Versatile land.	National policy has been strengthened to seek to protect higher quality agricultural land and minimise its loss.	Natural England, Agricultural Land Classification Maps
Farmland	In 2021 there was: • 257,821ha of farmland in Shropshire. • 3,686 farm holdings in Shropshire. Of this farmland: • 60% was grassland; • 27% was cereals; • 12% was arable; and • 1% was fruit.	The amount of farmland in Shropshire has decreased by around 5% since 2007. This is generally comparable to the decline in England (4%). The number of farm holdings has decreased by 33 (0.89%) since 2016.	Agriculture Industry in Shropshire Report (2021)

Table 3.3 SEA Theme: Soil			
Indicator	Shropshire Current Position (2026)	Trend	Source
Contaminated land	Shropshire Council's contaminated land public register, records sites determined as contaminated land and subsequently remediated. Currently there are 13 sites recorded on the register.	The relatively small number of sites on the public register is reflective of the rural nature of the county. Contamination is generally associated with historic industrial, mining and former waste sites and remains a constraint to development in some locations.	Shropshire Council Contaminated land public register
Geology and soil characteristics	Shropshire has a diverse geology representing most of the major geological periods. This has given rise to a wide variety of soil types including loams and clays, acidic, sandy and gravel all influence soil quality, water infiltration, agricultural quality, landscape character and habitat distribution.	The diverse geology underpins the characteristics and distribution of soils across Shropshire. Whilst the geological diversity would remain stable soil resources maybe affected by land use, climate change and development pressures.	Shropshire Landscape Typology Shropshire Council Contaminated land strategy, 2013 Natural England – National Character Area Profiles

Implications for the SEA/Key Environmental Issues:

- 3.18. Shropshire contains significant areas of agricultural land, including land likely to comprise of Best and Most Versatile agricultural land.
- 3.19. Pressure from development can result in the loss or fragmentation of agricultural land including loss of Best and Most Versatile agricultural land.
- 3.20. Shropshire contains a diverse geology and thus wide a range of soil characteristics are present across the county.
- 3.21. Soil is a finite and largely non-renewable resource which can be negatively affected by development, changes in land management and climate change.
- 3.22. Opportunities to reduced adverse impacts through development on previously developed land, remediation of contaminated sites, development directed away from Best and Most Versatile land.

Water

3.23. Shropshire contains an extensive network of rivers, streams, canals, lakes and groundwater resources including the River Severn and its tributaries. These water bodies form a vital part of Shropshire's natural environment and support ecological, recreational and economic functions.

Table 3.4 SEA Theme: Water			
Indicator	Shropshire Current Position (2026)	Trend	Source
Water Framework Directive (WFD) – River Basin Management Plan (RBMP)	The majority of Shropshire falls within the Severn River Basin District with a small part of the county in the north falling within the River Dee and Northwest River Basin District.	The water framework directive requires RBMP's to monitor the water environment and where necessary set out how it should be managed and improved. Ongoing pressures to the quality and quantity of the water environment include agriculture, wastewater discharges, urban runoff and historic contamination	Environment Agency – River Basin Management Plan

Table 3.4 SEA Theme: Water			
Indicator	Shropshire Current Position (2026)	Trend	Source
Surface water chemical status	The chemical status of water bodies (surface waters) in both River Basin Management Plans that cover parts of Shropshire are 100% failing*.	Nationally, surface water chemical status is poor with no assessed surface water bodies in England achieving good chemical status. *This is due to the changes to chemical classifications in 2019 where new assessments for 'ubiquitous, persistent, bioaccumulative and toxic substances' (uPBTs) were included alongside new standards and improved techniques and methods. If uPBTs are excluded the majority of surface water bodies achieve good chemical status.	Water Framework Directive Classifications data - Severn River Basin District Water Framework Directive Classifications data – North West River Basin District State of the water environment indicators B3, updated May 2025

Table 3.4 SEA Theme: Water			
Indicator	Shropshire Current Position (2026)	Trend	Source
Groundwater chemical status	The chemical status for groundwater bodies for the Severn River Basin District: 63% is good and 36% is poor. The chemical status for groundwater bodies for the North West River Basin District: 44% is good and 55% is poor. Pollution pressure from agriculture, development and water abstraction.	Improving and maintaining groundwater sources is a key objective of the River Basin Management Plans.	Water Framework Directive Classifications data - Severn River Basin District Water Framework Directive Classifications data - North West River Basin District
Groundwater quantitative status	The quantitative status for groundwater bodies for Severn River Basin District and the North West River Basin District: 72% is good and 27% is poor.	Most groundwater bodies in Shropshire currently achieving good quantitative status indicating groundwater resources generally at sustainable levels.	Classifications data - Severn River Basin District Classifications data - North West River Basin District
Flood risk – fluvial flooding	Areas alongside the River Severn, River Teme and their main tributaries are at risk of fluvial flooding falling within Flood zone 2 and 3 areas. Historic flood events have affected communities across Shropshire.	Climate change is predicted to increase peak river flows and the frequency and severity of fluvial flooding.	Shropshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA), October 2018

Table 3.4 SEA Theme: Water			
Indicator	Shropshire Current Position (2026)	Trend	Source
Flood risk and climate change	Climate change expected to increase flood risk across Shropshire. Environment Agency climate change allowances for the River Severn catchment indicate that peak river flows could increase by approximately 21% by the 2050s and approximately 40% by the 2080s under the Higher Central scenario.	Increasing flood risk predicted due to climate change.	Shropshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA), October 2018 Environment Agency – Peak River flow climate change allowances by management catchment
Areas of water stress	Shropshire’s water supply is primarily managed by Severn Trent. Other operators includes Dŵr Cymru (Welsh Water) and United Utilities. There are also a series of independent companies operating in small areas of the county. The Environment Agency carried out a report in 2021 to identify areas of water stress. Severn Trent water is determined to be in an area of serious water stress.	Future water demand may place significant pressure on available water resources and the environment. Severn Trent Water have produced a Water Resource Management Plan, 2024 to include measures such as use of metering and reducing leakage.	Environment Agency Water Stressed areas – 2021 Classification Water Resource Management Plan, Severn Trent Water. 2024

Implications for the SEA/Key Environmental Issues:

- 3.24. Water quality remains an ongoing issue with many surface water bodies failing chemical assessment.
- 3.25. Shropshire contains several groundwater bodies assessed under the Water Framework Directive. A significant proportion of groundwater bodies are at poor chemical status.
- 3.26. New development has the potential to adversely affect groundwater quality and quantity.
- 3.27. Development related run-off, agricultural runoff, wastewater treatment places pressure on quality of water environment.
- 3.28. Need to balance housing and employment growth with sustainable management of water resources. Opportunities to encourage water efficiency measures in design and sustainable development patterns.
- 3.29. Flood risk is expected to increase due to climate change, placing pressures on communities, water environments and infrastructure. Development to include climate resilient design and flood risk management.
- 3.30. Protection and enhancement of river catchments will be important in improving ecological and water quality outcomes.
- 3.31. Opportunities to encourage nature-based solutions, sustainable drainage systems and green infrastructure to improve water quality, assist with management of flood risk and support climate change adaptation.

Air

- 3.32. Atmospheric pollutants, including nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), particulate matter (PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}) and ammonia (NH₃), can have adverse effects on human health, ecological integrity and environmental quality.
- 3.33. Shropshire is a predominately rural county. Shropshire Councils Air Quality Annual status report notes there tends to be '*localised areas of poor air quality at key highway junctions including several significant heavy goods vehicle (HGV) transport routes, on the north/south A49 route, the cross-county M54 and A5 route to/from North Wales and Merseyside, and the A41 route to/from Chester and Birmingham. There are also several large quarries and other industrial sites that are permitted for emissions to air*'.
- 3.34. This section establishes the baseline conditions for air quality in Shropshire and identifies relevant trends to inform the assessment of the Local Plan's likely significant environmental effects.

Table 3.5 SEA Theme: Air			
Indicator	Shropshire Current Position (2026)	Trend	Source
Nitrogen Dioxide (NO ₂)	There are 2 Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) in Shropshire: Bridgnorth (declared in 2005) and Shrewsbury No3 (declared in 2006). In 2024, one monitoring location in Bridgnorth AQMA exceeded the annual mean objective of 40 µg/m³, recording 43.1 µg/m³. Four additional locations were within 10% of the objective.	Five-year monitoring trends indicate a general reduction in NO₂ concentrations across the county and within both AQMAs. The number of exceedances reduced from two locations in 2023 to one location in 2024. In 2024 the Council published Air Quality Action Plans for the 2 AQMAs, to improve air quality going forward.	Shropshire Council Air Quality Annual Status Report, 2025

Table 3.5 SEA Theme: Air			
Indicator	Shropshire Current Position (2026)	Trend	Source
Particulate Matter (PM ₁₀ & PM _{2.5})	Monitoring commenced in October 2024 at the Shrewsbury Underdale AURN station. Recorded PM₁₀ concentrations were below the annual mean objective of 40 µg/m³. Monitoring data capture was less than 25% for 2024 as the station was newly established. PM_{2.5} concentrations record at the same station were below the national interim target of 12 µg/m³ and the future 2040 target⁸ of 10 µg/m³. Defra modelling indicates the highest background PM_{2.5} concentration in Shropshire was approximately 7.0 µg/m³ in 2024.	Limited monitoring data is available to enable a robust comparison.	Shropshire Council Air Quality Annual Status Report, 2025

⁸ [The Environmental Targets \(Fine Particulate Matter\) \(England\) Regulations 2023](#)

Table 3.5 SEA Theme: Air			
Indicator	Shropshire Current Position (2026)	Trend	Source
Ammonia (NH ₃) on designated sites	Ammonia emissions are predominately associated with agricultural activity - in particular intensive livestock production, and manure management. Atmospheric nitrogen can adversely affect designated habitats and sensitive species through eutrophication.	Ammonia emissions have only marginally decreased in recent years. However, in parts of the UK, such as Shropshire, they are increasing again. Shropshire's internationally designated sites (SAC's and Ramsar sites) are all receiving levels of atmospheric nitrogen which exceeds their critical levels or loads.	HRA Evidence base from previously withdrawn Shropshire Local Plan

Implications for the SEA/Key Environmental Issues:

- 3.35. Air quality within Shropshire is generally good, there are localised air quality issues within Shrewsbury and Bridgnorth Air Quality Management Areas.
- 3.36. Road transport remains the main source of nitrogen dioxide emissions. New development has potential to increase traffic and associated emissions; sustainable transport infrastructure should be supported.
- 3.37. Shropshire's rural character and geography can contribute to reliance on the private car and provide a challenge in reducing transport related emissions.
- 3.38. Poor air quality can have significant adverse impacts on human health, particularly affecting vulnerable groups including older people, children's and those with underlying respiratory or cardiovascular health conditions.

- 3.39. Agricultural activities make a contribution to ammonia emissions and atmospheric nitrogen deposition can adverse impact the natural environment including sensitive habitats and designated sites.
- 3.40. New development should support active travel, improve accessibility to employment opportunities, communities' services and facilities to minimise the need to travel by private car.
- 3.41. New development should promote green infrastructure, habitat enhancement and promotion of healthy lifestyles as opportunities to contribute to improved air quality.

Climatic Factors

- 3.42. Shropshire Council declared a climate emergency in 2019 and set a strategy framework in December 2019 to reach net-zero corporate carbon performance by 2030.
- 3.43. The baseline information presented in this section provides an overview of existing conditions, trends and key issues relating to climate change within Shropshire and informs the assessment of potential environmental effects arising from implementation of the Local Plan.

Table 3.6 SEA Theme: Climatic Factors			
Indicator	Shropshire Current Position (2026)	Trend	Source
Greenhouse emissions	The DESNZ local authority inventory (2005–2023) shows a continued decrease of emissions to 2023. Transport is the largest sector share (32%) followed by domestic (22%), industry (15%), and agriculture (14%).	Continued decrease, transport remains the largest source of emissions.	Shropshire Climate Dashboard UK Local Authority regional greenhouse gas emissions statistics, 2005-2023
Renewable energy installations	In 2023, 10,492 renewable energy installations were recorded in Shropshire. 99% of those are photovoltaics the remainder is split between onshore wind and anaerobic digestion.	The general trend for the number of renewable energy installations is a year on year increase since 2014, when 4,770 installations were recorded.	Shropshire Council Climate Dashboard

Table 3.6 SEA Theme: Climatic Factors			
Indicator	Shropshire Current Position (2026)	Trend	Source
Renewable energy generation (MWh)	In 2023, 343,059MWh of energy generation in Shropshire. 62% was generated from photovoltaics, 33% was generated from anaerobic digestion, and the remainder was generated through onshore wind, plant biomass and hydro (less than 1% combined).	The general trend for energy generation is a year on year increase since 2014 when there was 82,417MWh of energy generation. The use of renewable sources of energy generation has increased since 2014 where 32% generated.	Shropshire Council Climate Dashboard
Electric vehicle (EV) infrastructure	As of October 2025, a total of 546 charge points were provided across Shropshire.	In Shropshire, the majority of the charge points are in urban areas and at destination sites such as supermarkets. Smaller settlements and rural areas are currently under-served. Shropshire Council intends to use LEVI funding to provide a further 550 charge points over the next 2-3 years.	Shropshire Council Cabinet Report – The Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Fund – Funding Opportunity, 11 March 2026

Implications for the SEA/Key Environmental Issues:

- 3.44. Climate change is expected to increase the frequency and severity of extreme weather events, including flooding, drought and heatwaves with impacts on communities, infrastructure, biodiversity and water resources.
- 3.45. Greenhouse gas emissions have reduced; further reductions are necessary to contribute towards the national net zero target.
- 3.46. Transport is the largest source of greenhouse gas emissions for Shropshire which is reflective of the reliance on private car due to the rural nature of the county.
- 3.47. Sustainable patterns of development should be encouraged to reduced reliance on car and support transition to low carbon economy.
- 3.48. Future development should seek to minimise emissions, renewable energy generation and energy-efficient design should be encouraged.
- 3.49. Future development needs to be resilient to climate change impacts, opportunities around green infrastructure provision and nature-based solutions.

Material Assets

3.50. Material Assets typically comprise of the physical infrastructure, resources and services, this can include minerals and waste infrastructure, housing stock, transport and utilities infrastructure. The baseline information in this section provides an overview of the availability, condition, capacity of these assets within Shropshire.

Table 3.7 SEA Theme: Material Assets			
Indicator	Shropshire Current Position (2026)	Trend	Source
Transport network	Over 5,100km of highway network. This includes: • 450km of A road; • 2,327km of B and C road; • 2,388km of unclassified road; and • 70km of cycleway.	The Road network in Shropshire is dominated by minor roads. Principal connections to the national strategic road are network via the M54, A5, A49, A458 and A483. The cycle network is relatively limited. Shropshire Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure plan provides a 10 year strategic framework to promote active travel, enhance route safety and cut carbon emissions.	Local Highways Maintenance Transparency report, Shropshire Council Shropshire Council Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan

Table 3.7 SEA Theme: Material Assets			
Indicator	Shropshire Current Position (2026)	Trend	Source
Total Housing stock	Shropshire's total housing stock was 153,393 in 2025.	Housing stock in 2017 around 141,538. The growth in housing stock reflects ongoing housing delivery across the county.	Shropshire Council, Local Housing Needs Assessment, Base date 31st March 2026 Dwelling stock data – MHCLG gov.uk
Dwellings completed per annum	1,169 dwellings were completed in 2024/25, including 420 affordable dwellings. Furthermore, 28 gypsy and traveller sites were permitted over the five-year period (2019/20 – 2023/24)	Housing growth is continuing across Shropshire. In 2024, Government introduced a new methodology for assessing local housing need and mandated its use. This new methodology has resulted in a significant increase to local housing need in Shropshire (from 1,070 dwellings per annum in (2024 calculation using the previous methodology) to 2,046 dwellings per annum (2026 using the current methodology).	Shropshire Council Five Year Housing Land Supply Statement, 2026 Shropshire Council Local Housing Need Assessment

Table 3.7 SEA Theme: Material Assets			
Indicator	Shropshire Current Position (2026)	Trend	Source
Previously developed (brownfield) land	Shropshire Council maintains a brownfield land register, updated at least annually. Currently, 187 sites are on the register, the majority of which are less than 1ha. In 2023/24, 29% of dwellings completed were on previously developed land. In 2024/25, 15.5% of dwellings completed were on previously developed land.	As a largely rural authority development opportunities on previously developed land are limited, leading to increased pressure on greenfield land.	Shropshire Council Brownfield Register Shropshire Council Authority Monitoring Report (AMR), 2024 Shropshire Council Five Year Housing Land Supply Statement, 2026
Employment land	Shropshire has a strategic employment land supply of 431ha (at 31st March 2024). 216ha of the land has been developed between 2006- 2024.	There has been an increase in strategic employment land supply since 2020 where the Authority Monitoring report indicated a strategic employment land supply 414ha. Adequate employment land remains available to support continued delivery across Shropshire.	Shropshire Council Authority Monitoring Report (AMR), 2024

Table 3.7 SEA Theme: Material Assets			
Indicator	Shropshire Current Position (2026)	Trend	Source
Minerals	The Local Aggregate Assessment (base date 01st January 2024) concludes both sand and gravel and crushed rock reserves remain above the minimum levels required by national policy and guidance. Reserves exist to maintain landbanks of at least 7 years for sand and gravel and at least 10 years for crushed rock.	Aggregate resources currently sufficient to meet forecast demand. There will be a need for continued monitoring to ensure an ongoing adequate supply of aggregate.	Local Aggregate Assessment, published August 2025
Waste	Total Waste collected in 2024/25 for Shropshire was 166,518 tonnes, the majority being household waste at 158,332 tonnes. Of the household waste, around 51% was sent for recycling in 2024/25. Shropshire has one landfill site, most of the landfill waste is sent for disposal in adjacent waste planning authorities (particularly Staffordshire and Telford and Wrekin).	The household recycle rate has declined slightly compared to the previous year (53% in 2023/24). However, Shropshire's household recycling rate remains above the England average of 43.8% for 2024/25. Longer term, there has been a general increase in the amount of household recycling (49% in 2014/15).	DEFRA – Local Authority Collected Waste Management, Annual results 2024/2025 Shropshire Council Authority Monitoring Report (AMR), 2024

Table 3.7 SEA Theme: Material Assets			
Indicator	Shropshire Current Position (2026)	Trend	Source
Digital infrastructure (broadband)	Fixed broadband coverage, January 2026: • 75% of residential properties with access to fixed full fibre broadband; and • 61% of commercial properties with access to fixed full fibre broadband.	Steady increase of access to fixed broadband coverage in Shropshire since September 2023 where 48% of residential properties had access and 38% of commercial properties had access. Fixed broadband coverage, England, January 2026: • 82% of residential properties with access to fixed full fibre broadband; and • 71% of commercial properties with access to fixed full fibre broadband.	Ofcom connected nations report, Spring 2026

Table 3.7 SEA Theme: Material Assets			
Indicator	Shropshire Current Position (2026)	Trend	Source
Digital infrastructure (mobile network)	Mobile network coverage of 4G network, January 2026: • 99% of properties (indoors) have mobile coverage from at least one Mobile network operators (MNO): • 79% of properties (indoors) have mobile coverage from all of the MNO. • 100% of properties (outdoors) have mobile coverage from at least one MNO. • 97% of properties (outdoors) have mobile coverage from all of the MNO.	Steady increase of access to 4G mobile network for properties (outdoors) in Shropshire since September 2023 where 67% had mobile coverage from at least one of the MNO. Figures are static for coverage from all of the MNO since September 2023 (79%). No change to coverage outdoors for mobile coverage from at least one MNO since 2023. Small increase for mobile coverage from all of the MNO since 2023 (92%).	Ofcom connected nations report, Spring 2026

Implications for the SEA/Key Environmental Issues:

- 3.51. The housing stock continues to grow to meet local housing needs and reflects ongoing housing delivery across the county.
- 3.52. New residential development will require supporting infrastructure and services and has potential to place pressure on existing infrastructure capacity, transport networks if not planned sustainably. Future development will need to balance housing provision with infrastructure capacity and efficient use of land.

- 3.53. There remains a strong supply of strategic employment land. New employment development increases demand on infrastructure, including transport network and utilities.
- 3.54. The opportunity to develop on previously developed land is relatively limited, placing greater pressure on greenfield sites to accommodate development.
- 3.55. Shropshire has an extensive road network, and it is recognised that the strategic road network via the M54, A5, A49, A458 and A483 are important assets. The rural nature of the county and dominance of minor roads creates a challenge for connectivity and active travel solutions. Cycle networks are relatively limited and other constraints exist to active travel - particularly outside of main settlements.
- 3.56. Aggregate reserves are currently sufficient to meet forecast demand for sand & gravel and crushed rock. As mineral resources are finite and geographically constrained there will be a continued need to monitor and appropriately safeguard them. Any future extraction may give rise to environmental effects, including impact on landscape, biodiversity, water, soil, transport and local amenity.
- 3.57. Household waste forms the majority of local authority collected waste. Reliance on waste disposal capacity outside of Shropshire particularly for landfill has potential for cross-boundary implications. Recycling rates are strong compared to the national average, but recent decline suggests potential challenges to increasing waste reduction.
- 3.58. New development would increase levels of waste generation placing additional demand on waste collection and waste processing infrastructure.
- 3.59. Digital infrastructure coverage has improved for both fixed full fibre broadband and mobile network data however Shropshire remains below the England average for both residential and commercial coverage. Broadband and mobile connectivity is important to supporting rural communities, employment and services, poor coverage can affect access to services, business resilience, remote working and social inclusion. Rural digital connectivity should continue to be monitored.
- 3.60. Future development should consider being directed towards locations where infrastructure capacity exists or can be provided.

Cultural Heritage (including architectural and archaeological heritage)

3.61. Shropshire has a rich and diverse cultural heritage which make an important contribution to the county's character and local distinctiveness. The cultural heritage for Shropshire includes designated and non-designated heritage assets, Scheduled Monuments, listed buildings, conservation areas, registered parks and gardens, archaeological sites and historic landscapes. The SEA baseline provides an evidence base on the extent, condition and significance of these assets.

Table 3.8 SEA Theme: Cultural Heritage (including architectural and archaeological heritage)			
Indicator	Shropshire Current Position (2026)	Trend	Source
Listed buildings (grades I, II* and II)	Approximately 6,892 listed buildings in Shropshire, around 20% of the West Midlands total listed buildings.	There has been a small increase in the number of listed buildings, in 2017 Shropshire had around 6,902 listed buildings. West Midlands has 34,586 listed buildings in 2026.	Shropshire Council Historic Environment – Listed Buildings Historic England Heritage Counts, 2017 Historic England Heritage Counts, July 2026
Scheduled monuments	499 scheduled monuments.	Slight increase compared to 2017 where there were 441 scheduled monuments.	
Conservation areas	128 conservation areas.	Some boundary changes and addition of 1 conservation area since 2017.	Shropshire Council Historic Environment – Conservation Areas

Table 3.8 SEA Theme: Cultural Heritage (including architectural and archaeological heritage)			
Indicator	Shropshire Current Position (2026)	Trend	Source
Heritage at risk – national register	88 Heritage assets on the National at-risk register: • 45 sites are scheduled monuments; and • 35 listed buildings.	Slight increase to the number of assets on the at-risk register compared to 2017 where it was 85. A significant proportion of the at risk sites are scheduled monuments (56.25%).	Historic England – Heritage at Risk Register
Registered parks and gardens	32 registered parks and gardens. This includes Grade I Hawkstone Park and Grade II* Attingham Park, Davenport House, Ludstone Hall, Millichope Park and Weston Park (partially within Staffordshire).	Shropshire contains around 2% of England’s registered parks and gardens.	Historic England - National Heritage list
Registered battlefields	1 registered battlefield (Battle of Shrewsbury 1403). The battlefield is a nationally important heritage asset of archaeological significance.	No change.	Historic England - National Heritage list

Table 3.8 SEA Theme: Cultural Heritage (including architectural and archaeological heritage)			
Indicator	Shropshire Current Position (2026)	Trend	Source
Historic environment record (HER)	Shropshire's HER is a continuously expanding database that holds information on over 41,000 archaeological sites, finds, features, historic buildings, structures and landscapes in the county. The HER provides evidence for understanding, conserving and managing the historic environment.	The HER continues to expand as a result of ongoing archaeological investigations, historic building surveys. Digitisation programmes and enhancement to record maintenance continues and assists to further improve understanding of Shropshire's historic environment resource.	Shropshire Historic Environment Record

Implications for the SEA/Key Environmental Issues:

- 3.62. Shropshire has a rich and diverse historic environment reflected in the high number of listed buildings, scheduled monuments, conservations areas and registered parks and gardens.
- 3.63. The number of heritage assets included on the Historic England at risk register has increased slightly since 2017, this would indicate the ongoing need to encourage the conversation and preservation of vulnerable heritage assets.
- 3.64. Shropshire's Historic Environment Record (HER) identifies a substantial and diverse archaeological and historic environment resource, much of which is non-designated.
- 3.65. Future development has the potential to affect both known and previously unidentified heritage assets, there is a need for appropriate assessment, conservation and enhancement measures.

- 3.66. The county's historic environment contributes to local distinctiveness and sense of place. Future developments risk pressure on local character and historic settlement patterns.
- 3.67. New development can have direct and indirect effects on heritage assets and their settings through pressure for physical alterations to visual impacts, changes of land use and impacts from increased traffic, noise and vibration as a result of development.
- 3.68. New development should be planned to safeguard, conserve and enhance Shropshire's heritage assets including their setting.
- 3.69. Opportunities to secure heritage led regeneration, improve the condition of the county's heritage assets should be explored.

Landscape

3.70. Shropshire's landscape makes a significant contribution to the environmental quality, biodiversity, heritage, sense of place, and the health and wellbeing of communities. Shropshire comprises of a diverse range of landscapes, from the Shropshire Hills National Landscape (formerly Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) to lowland agricultural landscapes, river valleys, heathlands, woodlands and historic countryside. The SEA baseline provides an evidence base on the extent, condition and significance of these assets.

Table 3.9 SEA Theme: Landscape			
Indicator	Shropshire Current Position (2026)	Trend	Source
National character areas	Shropshire is part of 6 national character areas identified by Natural England.	There are 159 national character areas in England. The areas are based on landscape patterns rather than administrative boundaries. The areas provide a broad national framework to understand landscape and environmental character and identify opportunities.	Natural England – National Character Area Profiles
Shropshire landscape character types and areas	Shropshire Landscape Character Assessment identifies 27 landscape character types which are subdivided into landscape character areas. The county has a diverse landscape and strong sense of place with locally distinctive characteristics, valued features and landscape sensitivities.	Landscape character can be affected by development pressures, infrastructure provision. On going need to conserve and enhance local distinctiveness and landscape character.	Shropshire's Landscape Character Assessment Shropshire Landscape Typology

Table 3.9 SEA Theme: Landscape			
Indicator	Shropshire Current Position (2026)	Trend	Source
Historic landscape characterisation	Shropshire's Historic Landscape Characterisation Study identifies the historic origins and evolution of the county's landscape including field and settlement patterns, woodland and other landscape features.	Gradual erosion of historic landscape character and locally distinctive features through pressures from development, infrastructure provision, changes in land management practices. Ongoing need to conserve, enhance, restore historic landscape pattern where appropriate.	Shropshire Historic Landscape Characterisation
Shropshire Hills National Landscape	The Shropshire Hills National Landscape covers approximately 23% of the county. The condition of some of the special qualities of the National Landscape is declining, and slow progress in addressing the most urgent issues. Key areas of pressures around fragmented habitats, increase in climate pressures – carbon emissions higher than national average, fall in water quality.	There has been a decline in condition since 2017 where the overall condition was described as stable. The Council prepares a Shropshire Hills National Landscape Management Plan to support the long term management of this asset.	State of the Shropshire Hills report, 2025 Shropshire Hills National Landscape Management Plan, 2025

Table 3.9 SEA Theme: Landscape			
Indicator	Shropshire Current Position (2026)	Trend	Source
Dark skies mapping	Shropshire is the 23 rd darkest area in England.	Large parts of Shropshire continue to contain relatively dark night skies, which is reflective of the county's predominantly rural character.	CPRE light pollution dark skies map

Implications for the SEA/Key Environmental Issues:

- 3.71. Shropshire has a diverse range of distinctive landscapes which contribute to a strong sense of place and local distinctiveness.
- 3.72. Landscape character may be affected by pressures from new development, land management changes and climate change.
- 3.73. There is an ongoing need to conserve and enhance landscape character and local distinctiveness.
- 3.74. Some landscapes maybe particularly sensitive to change, the Shropshire Hills National Landscape is a nationally important landscape requiring protection and enhancement.
- 3.75. Historic landscape character contributes to local distinctiveness, development pressures and changes to land management practices can erode these.
- 3.76. Dark skies are generally well preserved across much of Shropshire. New development could lead to an increase in light pollution, affecting landscape character, tranquillity and quality of the nighttime environment.

The inter-relationship between these factors

3.77. The SEA themes are closely interrelated and do not operate independently. Development pressures can also have cumulative effects across the SEA themes. Consideration of these inter-relationships is therefore important when assessing the likely significant effects of the local plan. The below considers each theme and summaries the key areas where there may be an inter-relationship:

Table 3.10 SEA Theme: Inter-relationship between these SEA Themes	
Theme	Key inter-relationships
Biodiversity, flora and fauna	Linked with water, soil and air quality, landscape character and climate change
Population and human health	Linked with air and water quality, landscape quality and climate change
Soil	Linked with water quality, biodiversity and climate change.
Water	Linked with soil, biodiversity and climate change.
Air	Linked with human health, biodiversity and climate change.
Climatic Factors	Influences all SEA themes through changing temperature, rainfall patterns and extreme weather events.
Material Assets	Development and infrastructure can impact biodiversity, soil quality, landscape, water resources and climate change.
Cultural Heritage	Linked to landscape character can be influenced by climate change.
Landscape	Influenced by land use, biodiversity, climate change, cultural heritage.

Implications for the SEA/Key Environmental Issues:

- 3.78. Climate change has potential to affect all SEA themes through increased risk of extreme weather events, flood risk and drought.
- 3.79. Development pressures and land use also have the potential to simultaneously affect multiple SEA themes.
- 3.80. Soil quality, water quality and biodiversity are closely interconnected deterioration of one resource may adversely affect the others.
- 3.81. Opportunities to improve multiple environmental benefits through promotion of sustainable development, delivery of nature recovery, use of sustainable drainage and climate change adaptation.

Future baseline data without an up-to-date local plan

- 3.82. The SEA regulations require consideration to be given to the likely evolution of the environment within Shropshire if a new local plan was not progressed and implemented. In the absence of an up-to-date local plan development would not be prevented from coming forward through the development management process and it would remain subject to national planning policy and other regulatory controls.
- 3.83. Development however would be more likely to be unplanned and speculative with less certainty regarding location, scale, timing and form of development. Without an up-to-date local plan, the pattern of growth across the County would be less coordinated and it could be more difficult to secure required infrastructure, a suitable range of homes and employment to support sustainable communities.
- 3.84. Opportunities to secure high quality development, biodiversity enhancements, nature recovery, climate change mitigation, improve links with sustainable transport, landscape enhancement and heritage conservation may be more limited.
- 3.85. Existing trends and environmental pressures identified within the baseline, including biodiversity loss, climate change impacts, pressure on natural resources and infrastructure capacity constraints could persist or worsen in some locations.

4. SEA Environmental Issues

Environmental Issues

- 4.1. The reviews of SEA Baseline Data and relevant policies, plans & programmes have identified a range of environmental characteristics, trends, opportunities and constraints in Shropshire relevant to each of the SEA themes.
- 4.2. **Table 4.1** below sets out a summary of the key issues derived from these reviews which will inform the SEA objectives and assessment framework that the SEA will need to consider when assessing the future local plan policies and site allocations.

Table 4.1 Summary of Key Environmental Issues	
SEA Theme	Summary of Key Environmental Issues Resulting from Baseline Data and Policies, Plans & Programmes Reviews
Biodiversity, flora and fauna	a) High number of international, national and local designated sites requiring protection. b) Habitat fragmentation. c) Number of SSSI features not currently in favourable condition. d) Poor ecological status of several rivers and watercourses. e) Need to deliver biodiversity enhancement and nature recovery. f) Climate change impacts on biodiversity. g) New development has potential for adverse effects and increased pressure on designated sites and protected species. h) Delivery of LNRS priorities and opportunity areas. i) Requirement to achieve Biodiversity Net Gain. j) Need to improve ecological connectivity and green infrastructure networks. k) Protection of irreplaceable habitats including ancient woodland and peat habitats.

Table 4.1 Summary of Key Environmental Issues	
SEA Theme	Summary of Key Environmental Issues Resulting from Baseline Data and Policies, Plans & Programmes Reviews
Population and Human Heath	a) Ageing population. b) Increasing demand for healthcare and social care services. c) Barriers to accessing services in rural area. d) Hidden rural deprivation and social exclusion. e) Availability of suitable housing. f) Need to promote and maintain sustainable communities. g) Need to promote active and healthy lifestyles. h) Need to protect and enhance open space, sport and recreation facilities. i) Need to improve active travel opportunities. j) Need to reduce health inequalities through place-making. k) Improve access to green and blue infrastructure.
Soil	a) Risk of loss of Best and Most Versatile agricultural land. b) Pressure from development lead to fragmentation of parcels of farm land. c) Soil a finite and largely non-renewable resource. d) Contamination risks predominantly linked to historic land uses, opportunities to remediate contaminated land and use of previously developed land. e) Protect soil carbon and wider soil functions. f) Safeguard peat soils. g) Prioritise suitable brownfield opportunities before greenfield development.

Table 4.1 Summary of Key Environmental Issues	
SEA Theme	Summary of Key Environmental Issues Resulting from Baseline Data and Policies, Plans & Programmes Reviews
Water	a) Surface and ground water quality remains under pressure across Shropshire. b) Agricultural runoff, wastewater discharge and development related pollution continues to affect the water environment. c) New development has potential to affect groundwater resources and water quality. d) Flood risk is expected to increase as a result of climate change. e) Development should be directed away from areas of highest flood risk. f) New development increase pressure on water resources and may increase pressure on water supply infrastructure. g) Efficient use of water resources will be important to support sustainable growth and climate resilience. h) Nature based solutions, sustainable drainage systems and green infrastructure to improve water quality, manage flood risk and support climate change adaptation. i) Prevent deterioration of WFD (Water Framework Directive) water bodies. j) Ensure sufficient wastewater treatment capacity. k) Align growth with water resource availability. l) Address cumulative impacts on river catchments.

Table 4.1 Summary of Key Environmental Issues	
SEA Theme	Summary of Key Environmental Issues Resulting from Baseline Data and Policies, Plans & Programmes Reviews
Air	a) Localised exceedance of NO₂ levels within existing AQMAs. b) Ammonia emissions largely from agricultural sources. c) Reliance on the private car in rural areas to access employment, services and facilities. d) Need to maintain and improve air quality while accommodating development. e) Nitrogen deposition impacting designated ecological sites and sensitive habitats. f) New development will increase traffic flow. g) Poor air quality impacts human health. h) Reduce PM_{2.5} exposure. i) Consider noise pollution alongside air quality. j) Avoid locating sensitive uses in areas of poor environmental quality.

Table 4.1 Summary of Key Environmental Issues	
SEA Theme	Summary of Key Environmental Issues Resulting from Baseline Data and Policies, Plans & Programmes Reviews
Climatic Factors	a) Reliance on private car, transport the largest source of greenhouse gas emissions. b) Further reduction of greenhouse emissions is required to contribute towards net zero targets. c) Increasing vulnerability to climate change impacts, including flooding, heatwaves and drought. d) Need to promote sustainable patterns of development to reduce the need to travel, promote active travel. e) Need to encourage energy efficient, low carbon development. f) Need to further increase renewable and low-carbon energy generation. g) Potential opportunities to explore use of nature-based solutions and green infrastructure to enhance climate resilience. h) Increase carbon sequestration through woodland, habitat and peatland restoration. i) Improve resilience of ecosystems and infrastructure to climate change. j) Support delivery of net-zero objectives.

Table 4.1 Summary of Key Environmental Issues	
SEA Theme	Summary of Key Environmental Issues Resulting from Baseline Data and Policies, Plans & Programmes Reviews
Material Assets	a) Housing and employment growth will increase demand for land, infrastructure and community services. b) New development will need to be supported by sufficient infrastructure capacity and ensure efficient use of land. c) Limited opportunity for growth on previously developed land is likely to increase pressure for new development on greenfield sites. d) Rural nature of Shropshire and dominance of minor road network could present challenges for connectivity and accessibility. e) Aggregate reserves currently sufficient to meet forecast demand, however mineral resources are finite, and ongoing safeguarding will be required. f) Future mineral extraction has potential to impact landscape, biodiversity, water resources, soils, transport networks and local amenity. g) Significant waste is generated in Shropshire, continuing need to ensure adequate waste management capacity and infrastructure. h) Digital connectivity has improved though below national average. Strong digital connectivity is important in contributing to support sustainable communities, business and access to services. i) Increased local housing need will place additional demands on infrastructure. j) Need to improve rural digital connectivity. k) Promote circular economy and resource efficiency. l) Maintain adequate waste management capacity and mineral safeguarding.

Table 4.1 Summary of Key Environmental Issues	
SEA Theme	Summary of Key Environmental Issues Resulting from Baseline Data and Policies, Plans & Programmes Reviews
Cultural Heritage	a) Shropshire has a large and diverse historic environment. b) Development has potential to have direct and indirect impacts on the significance and setting of heritage assets. c) Development has potential to impact archaeological remains. d) Need to protect, conserve and enhance heritage assets. e) Need for management of heritage assets at risk. f) Potential to secure heritage led regeneration where appropriate. g) Need to protect heritage settings and important views. h) Need to safeguard non-designated heritage assets and archaeology. i) Heritage assets at risk remain a concern.

Table 4.1 Summary of Key Environmental Issues	
SEA Theme	Summary of Key Environmental Issues Resulting from Baseline Data and Policies, Plans & Programmes Reviews
Landscape	a) Need to conserve and enhance landscape character and local distinctiveness. b) Development pressures may affect sensitive landscapes and visual amenity. c) Risk of erosion of historic landscape character and locally distinctive features. d) Need to protect and enhance the Shropshire Hills National Landscape. e) Fragmented habitats, water quality issues and climate change are affecting valued landscapes. f) Climate change may alter landscape character and landscape quality over time. g) Dark night skies are a valued environmental asset that may be vulnerable to increased light pollution. h) Need for development to reflect local character, settlement patterns and sense of place. i) Opportunities for landscape restoration, green infrastructure and nature recovery. j) Protect tranquillity and dark skies. k) Integrate green infrastructure and landscape recovery. l) Improve landscape resilience to climate change.

Table 4.1 Summary of Key Environmental Issues	
SEA Theme	Summary of Key Environmental Issues Resulting from Baseline Data and Policies, Plans & Programmes Reviews
Inter-relationship	a) SEA themes are closely linked and should not be considered in isolation, changes to one theme can affect others, for example soil quality can influence water quality and biodiversity. b) Climate change theme can affect all of the SEA themes. c) Development can have a combined impact on the SEA themes. d) Opportunities to promote sustainable development patterns, encourage new development to deliver multiple environmental benefits. e) Maximise multifunctional benefits from development. f) Promote nature-based solutions delivering biodiversity, climate, health and water benefits. g) Identify cumulative and synergistic effects across SEA themes.

5. SEA Objectives

- 5.1. Drawing on the review of other policies, plans and programmes (Section 2 and Appendix A), baseline information (Section 3) and key environmental issues (Sections 2, 3 and 4) the Council have developed 8 proposed SEA objectives to appraise the environmental effects of the strategy, policy and site options of the draft Shropshire Local Plan.
- 5.2. Using these SEA objectives, the SEA process will prevent or reduce adverse impacts and enhance opportunities for positive outcomes from the next Shropshire Local Plan. Crucially, it will also support the next Shropshire Local Plan to achieve a coordinated and planned approach to sustainable development, which is responsive to the characteristics of Shropshire as a large, diverse and predominantly rural area.
- 5.3. In doing so, the next Shropshire Local Plan will support urban and rural employment opportunities; provide the well-designed homes, community facilities, and social & green infrastructure that our communities need; and support the conservation and enhancement of our rich and diverse built, natural and historic environment, whilst planning for the mitigation and adaptation to our changing climate.
- 5.4. Each of SEA objectives 1-7 link to one or more of the environmental themes identified in Schedule 2 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004. Furthermore, recognising the inter-relationship between the key environmental issues in Shropshire, SEA objective 8 is based on the inter-relationship between the SEA themes – which is also identified as a consideration within Schedule 2 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.
- 5.5. Each SEA objective is supported by a series of questions, detailing the key considerations to be taken into account when assessing firstly the environmental effects of strategy & policy options and secondly when assessing the environmental effects of site options.
- 5.6. The distinction between the supporting questions for the assessment of the environmental effects of strategy & policy options and the supporting questions for the assessment of the environmental effects of site options is in recognition that strategy and policy options constitute principles that govern decision-making whilst site options

constitute specific areas of land with potential for development. In this way, these questions add detail to the broader SEA objective and aid in providing a rigorous and consistent evaluation.

5.7. Given the inter-relationship between SEA objectives, the supporting questions for both strategy & policy options and site options could be relevant to more than one SEA objective. Therefore, to avoid duplication of the supporting questions, each is included only once – linked to the SEA objective to which it is considered most relevant.

5.8. The 8 proposed SEA objectives and their supporting questions are detailed in Table 5.1:

Table 5.1 SEA Objectives				
SEA Objective		SEA Theme	Questions: Strategy or Policy Options	Questions: Sites Options
1	To protect, enhance and restore biodiversity and geodiversity to support nature recovery.	Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna	a. Will the strategy or policy conserve or enhance designated ecological sites and priority habitats? b. Will it improve habitat connectivity? c. Will it support delivery of the Shropshire Local Natural Recovery Strategy? d. Will it reduce recreational and development pressure on sensitive habitats?	a. Is the site wholly or partly a designated ecological site? b. Does it have the potential for an indirect impact on a designated biodiversity site? c. Does it contain a potential area of particular importance for biodiversity identified within the Shropshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy?

Table 5.1 SEA Objectives

SEA Objective		SEA Theme	Questions: Strategy or Policy Options	Questions: Sites Options
2	To promote sustainable and resilient communities by supporting physical and mental health, wellbeing and quality of life through provision of suitable housing, employment opportunities, and access to social infrastructure and high-quality environments.	Population and Human Heath	a. Will the strategy or policy meet identified housing needs including affordable, specialist housing and accommodation for gypsy and travellers? b. Will it deliver well designed development which supports quality of life, contributing to mental and physical health & wellbeing. c. Will it deliver development which meets current need and is adaptable so as to meet future needs? d. Will it ensure sufficient infrastructure capacity to support new development? Will it support town centre vitality?	a. Is the maximum connectivity score to education facilities, leisure facilities, health facilities, and shopping facilities within the upper (A-C) or central (D-F) ranges of the Local Authority Band connectivity score? b. Is the maximum connectivity score to residences within the upper (A-C) or central (D-F) ranges of the Local Authority Band connectivity score? c. Is the maximum connectivity score to employment within the upper (A-C) or central (D-F) ranges of the Local Authority Band connectivity score?

Table 5.1 SEA Objectives				
SEA Objective		SEA Theme	Questions: Strategy or Policy Options	Questions: Sites Options
3	To safeguard and ensure the sustainable and efficient use of natural resources including soils, best and most versatile agricultural land and minerals.	Soil and Material Assets	a. Will the strategy or policy minimise the loss of best and most versatile agricultural land? b. Will it minimise the loss of peaty soils? c. Will it promote effective use of land, including encouraging use of previously developed land? d. Will it safeguard and support sustainable use of minerals?	a. Is the site wholly or partly best and most versatile agricultural land? b. Does it contain peaty soils? c. Is it wholly or partly previously developed land? d. Is it wholly or partly within the mineral safeguarding area?
4	To minimise water, air, and noise pollution; maximise water efficiency; and safeguard against poor air quality.	Water and Air	a. Will the strategy or policy minimise impacts on Air Quality Management Areas? b. Will it support reductions in pollutant emissions? c. Will it safeguard aquifers? d. Will it support the role of source protection zones? e. Will it support sufficient water supply and infrastructure? f. Will it promote sustainable use of water?	a. Is the site wholly or partly within an Air Quality Management Area? b. Is it wholly or partly within an aquifer? c. Is it wholly or partly within a source protection zone?

Table 5.1 SEA Objectives

SEA Objective		SEA Theme	Questions: Strategy or Policy Options	Questions: Sites Options
5	To mitigate and adapt to the changing climate by minimising greenhouse gas emissions, supporting renewable and low-carbon energy, managing flood risk, maximising sustainable drainage and supporting flood and climate resilience.	Climatic Factors and Water	a. Will the strategy or policy promote climate-resilient design? b. Will it minimise the risk of flooding? c. Will it support renewable and low carbon energy generation? d. Will it support achievement of energy efficiency? e. Will it support reductions in greenhouse gas emissions?	a. Is the site wholly or partly within the river flood risk zones 2 or 3? b. Is it wholly or partly in the 1 in 30 or 1 in 100 surface water flood zone?
6	To protect, conserve and enhance Shropshire's historic environment and cultural heritage.	Cultural Heritage	a. Will the strategy or policy conserve designated and non-designated heritage assets? b. Will it protect archaeological resources? c. Will it promote, safeguard and enhance local distinctiveness and cultural heritage?	a. Is all or part of the site within or contain a designated heritage asset? b. Does it have the potential for direct or indirect impacts on a designated heritage asset?

Table 5.1 SEA Objectives				
SEA Objective		SEA Theme	Questions: Strategy or Policy Options	Questions: Sites Options
7	To protect, conserve and enhance landscape character, scenic quality and local distinctiveness.	Landscape	a. Will the strategy or policy affect the Shropshire Hills National Landscape? b. Will it positively respond to landscape character and sensitivity? c. Will it positively respond to visual sensitivity? d. Will it preserve or enhance local distinctiveness?	a. Is all or part of the site within the Shropshire Hills National Landscape? b. Is all or part in a very high or high landscape sensitivity parcel (for residential or employment development)? c. Is all or part in a very high or high visual sensitivity parcel (for residential or employment development)?

Table 5.1 SEA Objectives				
SEA Objective		SEA Theme	Questions: Strategy or Policy Options	Questions: Sites Options
8	To support sustainable and resilient communities by promoting sustainable development patterns, connectivity and use of sustainable and active modes of transport.	Inter-relationship between SEA Themes	a. Will the strategy or policy encourage sustainable patterns of development? b. Will it support the ability to achieve sustainable communities? c. Will it support connectivity to and promote opportunities to enhance services and facilities? d. Will it support access to and promote opportunities to use active and public modes of transport? e. Will it support connectivity to and promote opportunities to enhance the open space and green/blue infrastructure network?	a. Is the site associated with a community identified as a strategic/principal/key centre or primary/secondary/tertiary connected village or of a scale to constitute a potential strategic settlement? b. Is the overall maximum connectivity score within the upper (A-C) or central (D-F) ranges of the Local Authority Band connectivity score? c. Is it within 1,200m of a sports pitch*? d. Is it within 100m of a play area of 100m ² , 400m of a play area of 400m ² and 1,000m of a play area of 1,000m ² *?

**A 100m² play area is equivalent to the size of a Local Area of Play (LAP), a 400m² play area is equivalent to the size of a Locally Equipped Area of Play (LEAP), and a 1,000m² play area is equivalent to the size of a Neighbourhood Equipped Area of Play (NEAP). Distances and sizes are taken from the Fields In Trust Standards.*

5.9. Given that the environmental themes are inter-related it is considered that these 8 proposed SEA objectives are generally compatible.

5.10. A set of proposed SEA monitoring indicators, derived from the supporting questions for strategy & policy options and site options, has also been developed to support measuring progress towards the achievement of each objective.

5.11. The monitoring indicators for each proposed SEA objective are detailed in Table 5.2:

Table 5.2 SEA Monitoring			
SEA Objective		SEA Theme	Indicators to measure progress
1	To protect, enhance and restore biodiversity and geodiversity to support nature recovery.	Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna	Condition and status of SSSI's, SACs and Ramsar sites. Effects on ecological connectivity and habitat fragmentation. Condition and status of local wildlife sites. Proportion of habitat created/restored through biodiversity net gain. Proportion of habitat enhance or created within Local Nature Recovery Strategy opportunity areas. Local Nature Recovery Strategy monitoring – changes in tree cover, habitat creation.
2	To promote sustainable and resilient communities by supporting physical and mental health, wellbeing and quality of life through provision of suitable housing, employment opportunities, and access to social infrastructure and high-quality environments.	Population and Human Heath	Annual delivery of housing compared to local plan trajectory. Affordable housing completions, proportion of housing delivery. Gypsy and Traveller accommodation provided. Employment land developed. Developer contributions secured and amount spent on identified infrastructure priorities. Percentage of households with access to digital infrastructure (broadband and mobile data connections). Percentage of adults physically active. Percentage of adults overweight.

Table 5.2 SEA Monitoring			
SEA Objective		SEA Theme	Indicators to measure progress
3	To safeguard and ensure the sustainable and efficient use of natural resources including soils, best and most versatile agricultural land and minerals.	Soil and Material Assets	Proportion of development delivered on previously developed land. Annual mineral production. Percentage of waste recycled.
4	To minimise water, air, and noise pollution; maximise water efficiency; and safeguard against poor air quality.	Water and Air	Annual NO ₂ and PM ₂ /PM ₁₀ levels at monitoring locations. Number of AQMAs and monitoring data. Status of surface water (chemical and quantitative status). Status of ground water (chemical and quantitative). Average household water consumption (litres/person/day).
5	To mitigate and adapt to the changing climate by minimising greenhouse gas emissions, supporting renewable and low-carbon energy, managing flood risk, maximising sustainable drainage and supporting flood and climate resilience.	Climatic Factors and Water	Annual renewable energy installations. Proportion of energy generation from renewable and low-carbon sources. Greenhouse gas emissions. Number of planning permissions granted contrary to Environment Agency flood risk advice. Proportion of major developments incorporating SuDs.

Table 5.2 SEA Monitoring			
SEA Objective		SEA Theme	Indicators to measure progress
6	To protect, conserve and enhance Shropshire's historic environment and cultural heritage.	Cultural Heritage	Condition of designated heritage assets, including assets at risk.
7	To protect, conserve and enhance landscape character, scenic quality and local distinctiveness.	Landscape	State of the National Landscape report. New development permitted within Shropshire Hills National Landscape.
8	To support sustainable and resilient communities by promoting sustainable development patterns, connectivity and use of sustainable and active modes of transport.	Inter-relationship between SEA Themes	Overall distribution of growth against the spatial strategy and associated community hierarchy. Proportion of allocations delivering multiple benefits such as housing, infrastructure, active travel, and biodiversity enhancements. Number of active travel schemes completed. Proportion of new development within walking distance of key services and public transport.

Likely Significant Effects

- 5.12. The SEA Directive requires an assessment of "*the likely significant effects on the environment*" and these should include "*secondary, cumulative, synergistic, short, medium and long-term permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects*."
- 5.13. Schedule 1 of The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 sets out criteria for determining the likely significance of effects on the environment. These are:
- (a) The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects;
 - (b) The cumulative nature of the effects;
 - (c) The transboundary nature of the effects;
 - (d) The risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents);
 - (e) The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected);
 - (f) The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to—
 - (i) Special natural characteristics or cultural heritage;
 - (ii) Exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values; or
 - (iii) Intensive land-use; and
 - (g) The effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.
- 5.14. These criteria will be used when utilising the 8 proposed SEA objectives to assess the environmental effects of the strategy & policy options and site options of the next Shropshire Local Plan.
- 5.15. To ensure this is undertaken rigorously and consistently, and to provide transparency, when assessing each strategy & policy option and site option a rating will be assigned to each SEA objective, indicating the likely effect

on the environment – whether a likely significant adverse effect, likely minor adverse effect, likely neutral effect, likely minor positive effect or likely significant positive effect.

- 5.16. An overarching rating will also be assigned to each strategy & policy option and site option, based on the ratings applied to each SEA objective.
- 5.17. The numerical gap in the scoring between likely significant adverse / positive effects and likely minor adverse / positive effects is intentional so as to reduce the potential for likely minor adverse / positive effects outweighing likely significant adverse / positive effects – this reflects the requirement of Article 5 (1) of the SEA Directive to *"prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme"*.
- 5.18. Furthermore, in circumstances where strategy & policy options or site options are considered *likely to have significant effects on the environment*, to avoid this being 'masked' by likely environmental effects against wider SEA objectives, this will be specifically drawn out.
- 5.19. In this way, the SEA process will prevent or reduce adverse impacts and enhance opportunities for positive outcomes from the next Shropshire Local Plan. Crucially, it will also support the next Shropshire Local Plan to achieve a coordinated and planned approach to sustainable development, which is responsive to the characteristics of Shropshire as a large, diverse and predominantly rural area.
- 5.20. The ratings that will be used within this assessment and their meaning is detailed within Table 5.3:

Table 5.3 SEA Ratings			
Rating (significance of effect)		Meaning	
-5	Dark red	Significant adverse effect	Likely to result in significant adverse effect(s) (including secondary, cumulative or synergistic) against an SEA objective. The effect(s) may impact on the whole or on a large area of Shropshire, a large number of receptors, internationally or nationally protected assets, sites of local importance or on areas outside of the county. The predicted effect(s) would be of high magnitude and may be direct, permanent, irreversible, long-term and difficult to mitigate.
-1	Light red	Minor adverse effect	Likely to result in some less than significant adverse effect(s) (including secondary, cumulative or synergistic) against an SEA objective. The effect(s) may impact a small area of Shropshire or a small number of receptors. The predicted effect(s) would be indirect, temporary, reversible and infrequent. Supporting mitigation would be likely to be required.
0	Amber	Neutral	No likely significant positive or negative effect(s) (including secondary, cumulative or synergistic) against an SEA objective. Existing or future baseline trends likely to continue or where positive or negative effects occur are likely to balance out.
+1	Light green	Minor positive effect	Likely to deliver some positive effect(s) (including secondary, cumulative or synergistic) against an SEA objective, The effect(s) may impact on a small area of Shropshire or small number of receptors. The predicted effect(s) may be indirect, temporary, reversible and infrequent.

Table 5.3 SEA Ratings		
Rating (significance of effect)		Meaning
+5	Dark green	Significant positive effect Likely to deliver significant positive effect(s) (including secondary, cumulative or synergistic) against an SEA objective. The effect(s) may impact on the whole or a large area of Shropshire, a large number of receptors, internationally or nationally protected assets, sites of local importance or on areas outside of the county. The predicted effect(s) would be of high magnitude and may be direct, permanent, irreversible, long-term.
Rating (Timeframe of effect)*		Meaning
S	Short-term	Likely to last for 0-5 years
M	Medium-term	Likely to last for 6-10 years
L	Long-term	Likely to last beyond 10 years

**As site options constitute specific areas of land with potential for development their potential timeframe of effect is long-term.*

5.21. For the avoidance of doubt, consistent with Article 5 (1) of the SEA Directive, significant positive or significant adverse environmental effects will be classed as significant for the purposes of the SEA process. Where significant adverse environmental effects are recorded for preferred options, mitigation measures will be proposed in line with Annex 1 of the SEA Directive which requires "*measures to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme*".

Assessing Strategy & Policy Options

5.22. The results of the SEA of strategy & policy options will be recorded within a summary table. An example of this summary table is provided within Table 5.4:

Table 5.4 Proforma for SEA of Strategy & Policy Options				
SEA Objective, Supporting Question and Detailed Assessment Criteria	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term	Commentary
SEA Objective 1: To protect, enhance and restore biodiversity and geodiversity to support nature recovery.				
SEA Objective 2: To promote sustainable and resilient communities by supporting physical and mental health, wellbeing and quality of life through provision of suitable housing, employment opportunities, and access to social infrastructure and high-quality environments.				
SEA Objective 3: To safeguard and ensure the sustainable and efficient use of natural resources including soils, best and most versatile agricultural land and minerals.				
SEA Objective 4: To minimise water, air, and noise pollution; maximise water efficiency; and safeguard against poor air quality.				

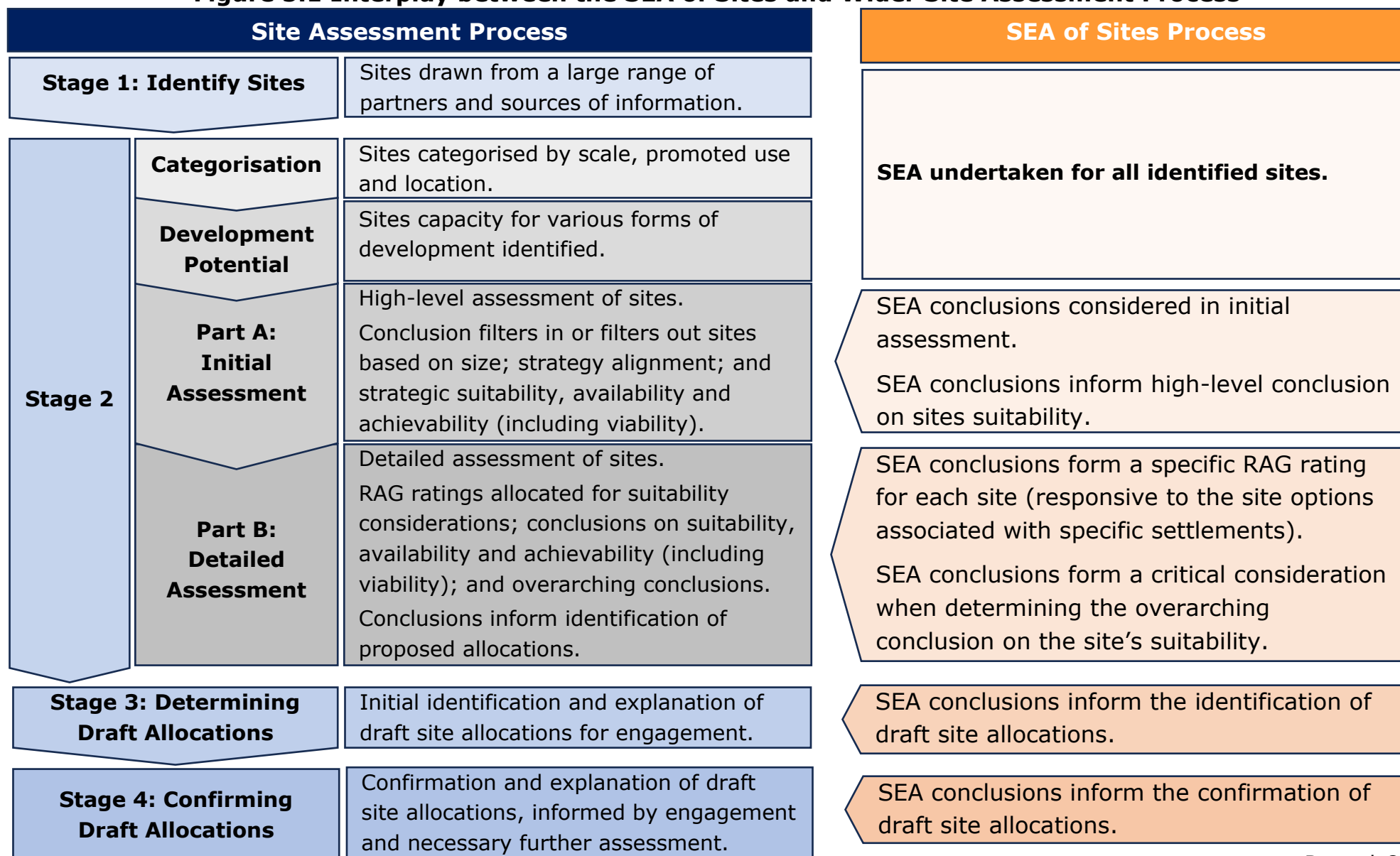
Table 5.4 Proforma for SEA of Strategy & Policy Options				
SEA Objective, Supporting Question and Detailed Assessment Criteria	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term	Commentary
SEA Objective 5: To mitigate and adapt to the changing climate by minimising greenhouse gas emissions, supporting renewable and low-carbon energy, managing flood risk, maximising sustainable drainage and supporting flood and climate resilience.				
SEA Objective 6: To protect, conserve and enhance Shropshire's historic environment and cultural heritage.				
SEA Objective 7: To protect, conserve and enhance landscape character, scenic quality and local distinctiveness.				
SEA Objective 8: To support sustainable and resilient communities by promoting sustainable development patterns, connectivity and use of sustainable and active modes of transport.				
Overall				
Likely significant adverse effects				
Likely significant positive effects				

Assessing Site Options

- 5.23. Site allocations consist of specific areas of land designated in a Local Plan for a particular form of development or land-use. The purpose of a site allocation is to ensure sufficient land is available in the right locations to achieve the spatial strategy of a Local Plan.
- 5.24. The next Shropshire Local Plan will include allocations for a range of land-uses, this is likely to include residential or residential-led mixed-use development, specialist housing for older people, gypsy and traveller pitches, employment or employment-led mixed-use development (including for waste management), and retail & leisure. It may also include allocations for mineral working, and renewable energy generation.
- 5.25. The requirement to undertake SEA to understand potential environmental effects and support the achievement of sustainable development applies to site options for allocations in the same way as it does to strategy and policy options.
- 5.26. The Council intends for the SEA of site options to inform the selection of site allocations – forming a critical component of the wider site assessment process. Specifically, as outlined within the Site Identification & Assessment Methodology:
- a) The conclusions of the SEA of site options will be integrated into the Stage 2 - Part A assessment of site allocations, informing high-level conclusions on the suitability of sites for development;
 - b) The conclusions of the SEA of site options will be integrated into the Stage 2 - Part B assessment of site allocations with a specific RAG rating assigned to each site based on the SEA conclusions (responsive to the site options associated with specific settlements). This will form a critical consideration when determining the overarching conclusion on the site's suitability.
 - c) The conclusions of the SEA of sites will inform the identification of draft site allocations in Stage 3 of the assessment; and
 - d) The conclusions of the SEA of sites will inform the confirmation of draft site allocations in Stage 4 of the assessment.

5.27. This interplay is detailed within the diagram below:

Figure 5.1 Interplay between the SEA of Sites and Wider Site Assessment Process



5.28. In this way, the SEA process will be incorporated into and form a critical component of the wider site assessment process undertaken to determine the suitability of sites for allocation and the identification and confirmation of draft site allocations.

5.29. To support the rigorous and consistent evaluation of the environmental effects of the site options of the next Shropshire Local Plan and support the determination of the likely significant effect rating for each site option against each SEA objective, specific criteria has been established, based on the supporting questions defined for each SEA objective. These criteria are detailed in Table 5.5:

Table 5.5 SEA of Site Options – Assessment Criteria					
No	Significantly Adverse (-5)	Adverse (-1)	Neutral (0)	Positive (+1)	Significantly Positive (+5)
SEA Objective 1: To protect, enhance and restore biodiversity and geodiversity to support nature recovery. SEA Theme: Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna <i>Question 1a: Is the site wholly or partly a designated ecological site?</i> <i>Question 1b: Does it have the potential for an indirect impact on a designated biodiversity site?</i>					
i	Site contains all or part of a Special Area of Conservation	Site within 2km* of a Special Area of Conservation	Unknown	Site not within 2km* of a Special Area of Conservation	N/A
ii	Site contains all or part of a Ramsar Site	Site within 2km* of a Ramsar Site	Unknown	Site not within 2km* of a Ramsar Site	N/A
iii	Site contains all or part of a National Nature Reserve	Site within 500m* of a National Nature Reserve	Unknown	Site not within 500m* of a National Nature Reserve	N/A
iv	Site contains all or part of a Site of Special Scientific Interest	Site within 2km* of a Site of Special Scientific Interest	Unknown	Site not within 2km* of a Site of Special Scientific Interest	N/A
v	Entirety of site contains a Local Nature Reserve	Part of site contains or is within 100m* of a Local Nature Reserve	Unknown	Site not within 100m* of a Local Nature Reserve	N/A
vi	Entirety of site contains Ancient Woodland	Part of site contains or is within 500m* of Ancient Woodland	Unknown	Site not within 500m* of Ancient Woodland	N/A

Table 5.5 SEA of Site Options – Assessment Criteria

No	Significantly Adverse (-5)	Adverse (-1)	Neutral (0)	Positive (+1)	Significantly Positive (+5)
vii	Entirety of site covered by veteran trees or trees subject to a preservation order	Part of site contains or is within 30m* of a veteran tree or tree subject to a preservation order	Unknown	Site not within 30m* of a veteran tree or tree subject to a preservation order	N/A
viii	Entirety of site contains a Local Wildlife Site or Regional Geological and Geomorphological Site	Part of site contains all or part of a Local Wildlife Site or Regional Geological and Geomorphological Site	Unknown	Site does not contain all or part of a Local Wildlife Site or Regional Geological and Geomorphological Site	N/A
SEA Objective 1: To protect, enhance and restore biodiversity and geodiversity to support nature recovery. SEA Theme: Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna Question 1c: Does it contain a potential area of particular importance for biodiversity identified within the Shropshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy?					
i	N/A	Site contains all or part of a potential area of particular importance for biodiversity	Unknown	Site does not contain a potential area of particular importance for biodiversity	N/A
SEA Objective 2: To promote sustainable and resilient communities by supporting physical and mental health, wellbeing and quality of life through provision of suitable housing, employment opportunities, and access to social infrastructure and high-quality environments. SEA Theme: Population and Human Health Question 2a: Is the maximum connectivity score to education facilities, leisure facilities, health facilities, and shopping facilities within the upper (A-C) or central (D-F) ranges of the Local Authority Band connectivity score?					
i	N/A	Site within lower ranges of Local Authority Bands (G-J) for connectivity to education facilities	Unknown	Site within central ranges of Local Authority Bands (D-F) for connectivity to education facilities	Site within upper ranges of Local Authority Bands (A-C) for connectivity to education facilities

Table 5.5 SEA of Site Options – Assessment Criteria

No	Significantly Adverse (-5)	Adverse (-1)	Neutral (0)	Positive (+1)	Significantly Positive (+5)
ii	N/A	Site within lower ranges of Local Authority Bands (G-J) for connectivity to leisure facilities	Unknown	Site within central ranges of Local Authority Bands (D-F) for connectivity to leisure facilities	Site within upper ranges of Local Authority Bands (A-C) for connectivity to leisure facilities
iii	N/A	Site within lower ranges of Local Authority Bands (G-J) for connectivity to health facilities	Unknown	Site within central ranges of Local Authority Bands (D-F) for connectivity to health facilities	Site within upper ranges of Local Authority Bands (A-C) for connectivity to health facilities
iv	N/A	Site within lower ranges of Local Authority Bands (G-J) for connectivity to shopping facilities	Unknown	Site within central ranges of Local Authority Bands (D-F) for connectivity to shopping facilities	Site within upper ranges of Local Authority Bands (A-C) for connectivity to shopping facilities
SEA Objective 2: To promote sustainable and resilient communities by supporting physical and mental health, wellbeing and quality of life through provision of suitable housing, employment opportunities, and access to social infrastructure and high-quality environments. SEA Theme: Population and Human Health <i>Question 2b: Is the maximum connectivity score to residences within the upper (A-C) or central (D-F) ranges of the Local Authority Band connectivity score?</i>					
i	N/A	Site within lower ranges of Local Authority Bands (G-J) for connectivity to residences	Unknown	Site within central ranges of Local Authority Bands (D-F) for connectivity to residences	Site within upper ranges of Local Authority Bands (A-C) for connectivity to residences

Table 5.5 SEA of Site Options – Assessment Criteria					
No	Significantly Adverse (-5)	Adverse (-1)	Neutral (0)	Positive (+1)	Significantly Positive (+5)
SEA Objective 2: To promote sustainable and resilient communities by supporting physical and mental health, wellbeing and quality of life through provision of suitable housing, employment opportunities, and access to social infrastructure and high-quality environments. SEA Theme: Population and Human Health <i>Question 2c: Is the maximum connectivity score to employment within the upper (A-C) or central (D-F) ranges of the Local Authority Band connectivity score?</i>					
i	N/A	Site within lower ranges of Local Authority Bands (G-J) for connectivity to employment	Unknown	Site within central ranges of Local Authority Bands (D-F) for connectivity to employment	Site within upper ranges of Local Authority Bands (A-C) for connectivity to employment
SEA Objective 3: To safeguard and ensure the sustainable and efficient use of natural resources including soils, best and most versatile agricultural land and minerals. SEA Theme: Soil and Material Assets <i>Question 3a: Is the site wholly or partly best and most versatile agricultural land?</i>					
i	N/A	Sites contains best & most versatile agricultural land (grades 1-3a**)	Unknown	Site does not contain best & most versatile agricultural land (grades 1-3a**)	N/A
SEA Objective 3: To safeguard and ensure the sustainable and efficient use of natural resources including soils, best and most versatile agricultural land and minerals. SEA Theme: Soil and Material Assets <i>Question 3b: Does it contain peaty soils?</i>					
i	Entirety of the site contains peaty soils	Part of site contains peaty soils	Unknown	Site does not contain peaty soils	N/A

Table 5.5 SEA of Site Options – Assessment Criteria					
No	Significantly Adverse (-5)	Adverse (-1)	Neutral (0)	Positive (+1)	Significantly Positive (+5)
SEA Objective 3: To safeguard and ensure the sustainable and efficient use of natural resources including soils, best and most versatile agricultural land and minerals. SEA Theme: Soil and Material Assets <i>Question 3c: Is it wholly or partly previously developed land?</i>					
i	N/A	No part of site constitutes previously developed land	Unknown	More than 50% of the site constitutes previously developed land	Entirety of site constitutes previously developed land
SEA Objective 3: To safeguard and ensure the sustainable and efficient use of natural resources including soils, best and most versatile agricultural land and minerals. SEA Theme: Soil and Material Assets <i>Question 3d: Is it wholly or partly within the mineral safeguarding area?</i>					
i	N/A	All or part of site located in a mineral safeguarding area	Unknown	Site not located in a mineral safeguarding area	N/A
SEA Objective 4: To minimise water, air, and noise pollution; maximise water efficiency; and safeguard against poor air quality. SEA Theme: Water and Air <i>Question 4a: Is the site wholly or partly within an Air Quality Management Area?</i>					
i	N/A	All or part of site located in an air quality management area	Unknown	No part of site located in an air quality management area	N/A
SEA Objective 4: To minimise water, air, and noise pollution; maximise water efficiency; and safeguard against poor air quality. SEA Theme: Water and Air <i>Question 4b: Is it wholly or partly within an aquifer?</i>					
i	N/A	All or part of site located in an aquifer	Unknown	No part of site located in an aquifer	N/A

Table 5.5 SEA of Site Options – Assessment Criteria					
No	Significantly Adverse (-5)	Adverse (-1)	Neutral (0)	Positive (+1)	Significantly Positive (+5)
SEA Objective 4: To minimise water, air, and noise pollution; maximise water efficiency; and safeguard against poor air quality. SEA Theme: Water and Air <i>Question 4c: Is it wholly or partly within a source protection zone?</i>					
i	Site located within a Zone 1 Source Protection Zone	All or part of site located in a Zone 2 or 3 Source Protection Zone	Unknown	No part of site located in a Source Protection Zone	N/A
SEA Objective 5: To mitigate and adapt to the changing climate by minimising greenhouse gas emissions, supporting renewable and low-carbon energy, managing flood risk, maximising sustainable drainage and supporting flood and climate resilience. SEA Theme: Climatic Factors and Water <i>Question 5a: Is the site wholly or partly within the river flood risk zones 2 or 3?</i>					
i	All of site located within river flood risk zones 2 or 3	Part of site located within river flood risk zones 2 or 3	Unknown	No part of site located in river flood risk zones 2 or 3	N/A
SEA Objective 5: To mitigate and adapt to the changing climate by minimising greenhouse gas emissions, supporting renewable and low-carbon energy, managing flood risk, maximising sustainable drainage and supporting flood and climate resilience. SEA Theme: Climatic Factors and Water <i>Question 5b: Is it wholly or partly in the 1 in 30 or 1 in 100 surface water flood zone?</i>					
i	All of site located within 1 in 30 or 1 in 100 surface water flood zones	Part of site located within 1 in 30 or 1 in 100 surface water flood zones	Unknown	No part of site located within 1 in 30 or 1 in 100 surface water flood zones	N/A

Table 5.5 SEA of Site Options – Assessment Criteria

No	Significantly Adverse (-5)	Adverse (-1)	Neutral (0)	Positive (+1)	Significantly Positive (+5)
SEA Objective 6: To protect, conserve and enhance Shropshire’s historic environment and cultural heritage. SEA Theme: Cultural Heritage <i>Question 6a: Is all or part of the site within or contain a designated heritage asset?</i> <i>Question 6b: Does it have the potential for direct or indirect impacts on a designated heritage asset?</i>					
i	N/A	Site within or is within 500m*** of a World Heritage Site or its buffer	Unknown	Site not within 500m*** of a World Heritage Site or its buffer	N/A
ii	Entirety of site contains a Scheduled Monument	Part of site contains or is within 500m*** of a Scheduled Monument	Unknown	Site not within 500m*** of a Scheduled Monument	N/A
iii	Entirety of site contains a Registered Battlefield	Part of site contains or is within 500m*** of a Registered Battlefield	Unknown	Site not within 500m*** of a Registered Battlefield	N/A
iv	Entirety of site contains a Registered Park or Garden	Part of site contains or is within 500m*** of a Registered Park or Garden	Unknown	Site not within 500m*** of a Registered Park or Garden	N/A
v	N/A	Site within or is within 500m*** of a Conservation Area	Unknown	Site not within 500m*** of a Conservation Area	N/A
vi	N/A	Site contains one or more listed buildings	Unknown	Site does not contain listed buildings	N/A
SEA Objective 7: To protect, conserve and enhance landscape character, scenic quality and local distinctiveness. SEA Theme: Landscape <i>Question 7a: Is all or part of the site within the Shropshire Hills National Landscape?</i>					
i	N/A	All or part of site within the Shropshire Hills National Landscape	Unknown	Site not within the Shropshire Hills National Landscape	N/A

Table 5.5 SEA of Site Options – Assessment Criteria					
No	Significantly Adverse (-5)	Adverse (-1)	Neutral (0)	Positive (+1)	Significantly Positive (+5)
SEA Objective 7: To protect, conserve and enhance landscape character, scenic quality and local distinctiveness. SEA Theme: Landscape <i>Question 7b. Is all or part in a very high or high landscape sensitivity parcel (for residential or employment development)?</i>					
i	N/A	All or part of site within a very high or high landscape sensitivity parcel for residential development	Unknown	Site not within a very high or high landscape sensitivity parcel for residential development	N/A
ii	N/A	All or part of site within a very high or high landscape sensitivity parcel for employment development	Unknown	Site not within a very high or high landscape sensitivity parcel for employment development	N/A
SEA Objective 7: To protect, conserve and enhance landscape character, scenic quality and local distinctiveness. SEA Theme: Landscape <i>Question 7c. Is all or part in a very high or high visual sensitivity parcel (for residential or employment development)?</i>					
i	N/A	All or part of site within a very high or high visual sensitivity parcel for residential development	Unknown	Site not within a very high or high visual sensitivity parcel for residential development	N/A
ii	N/A	All or part of site within a very high or high visual sensitivity parcel for employment development	Unknown	Site not within a very high or high visual sensitivity parcel for employment development	N/A

Table 5.5 SEA of Site Options – Assessment Criteria					
No	Significantly Adverse (-5)	Adverse (-1)	Neutral (0)	Positive (+1)	Significantly Positive (+5)
SEA Objective 8: To support sustainable and resilient communities by promoting sustainable development patterns, connectivity and use of sustainable and active modes of transport. SEA Theme: Inter-relationship between SEA Themes <i>Question 8a. Is the site associated with a community identified as a strategic/principal/key centre or primary/secondary/tertiary connected village or of a scale to constitute a potential strategic settlement?</i>					
i	N/A	Site not associated with a strategic/principal/key centre or primary/secondary/tertiary connected village and not of a scale to constitute a potential strategic settlement	Unknown	Site associated with a strategic/principal/key centre or primary/secondary/tertiary connected village or of a scale to constitute a potential strategic settlement	N/A
SEA Objective 8: To support sustainable and resilient communities by promoting sustainable development patterns, connectivity and use of sustainable and active modes of transport. SEA Theme: Inter-relationship between SEA Themes <i>Question 8b. Is the overall maximum connectivity score within the upper (A-C) or central (D-F) ranges of the Local Authority Band connectivity score?</i>					
i	N/A	Site within lower ranges of Local Authority Bands (G-J) for overall connectivity	Unknown	Site within central ranges of Local Authority Bands (D-F) for overall connectivity	Site within upper ranges of Local Authority Bands (A-C) for overall connectivity
SEA Objective 8: To support sustainable and resilient communities by promoting sustainable development patterns, connectivity and use of sustainable and active modes of transport. SEA Theme: Inter-relationship between SEA Themes <i>Question 8c. Is it within 1,200m of a sports pitch****?</i>					
i	N/A	Site not within 1,200m of a sports pitch	Unknown	Site within 1,200m of a sports pitch	N/A

Table 5.5 SEA of Site Options – Assessment Criteria					
No	Significantly Adverse (-5)	Adverse (-1)	Neutral (0)	Positive (+1)	Significantly Positive (+5)
SEA Objective 8: To support sustainable and resilient communities by promoting sustainable development patterns, connectivity and use of sustainable and active modes of transport. SEA Theme: Inter-relationship between SEA Themes <i>Question 8d. Is it within 100m of a play area of 100m², 400m of a play area of 400m² and 1,000m of a play area of 1,000m²****?</i>					
i	N/A	Site not within 100m of a play area of 100m ² , 400m of a play area of 400m ² and 1,000m of a play area of 1,000m ²	Unknown	Site within 100m of a play area of 100m ² , 400m of a play area of 400m ² or 1,000m of a play area of 1,000m ²	Site within 100m of a play area of 100m ² , 400m of a play area of 400m ² and 1,000m of a play area of 1,000m ²

**Distances align with those used in the wider site assessment process. They have been informed by Shropshire Council's Natural Environment Team, a period of targeted engagement with statutory environmental consultees, and a period of public consultation.*

***Available data does not distinguish between agricultural land quality grades 3a and 3b. As such, a precautionary approach is taken will all grade 3 agricultural land considered to have the potential to constitute best and most versatile agricultural land.*

**** Distances align with those used in the wider site assessment process. They have been informed by Shropshire Council's Historic Environment Team, a period of targeted engagement with statutory environmental consultees, and a period of public consultation.*

***** A 100m² play area is equivalent to the size of a Local Area of Play (LAP), a 400m² play area is equivalent to the size of a Locally Equipped Area of Play (LEAP), and a 1,000m² play area is equivalent to the size of a Neighbourhood Equipped Area of Play (NEAP). Distances and sizes are taken from the Fields In Trust Standards.*

As site options constitute specific areas of land with potential for development their potential timeframe of effect is long-term, this will be reflected within the assessment.

5.30. The results of the SEA of site options will be recorded within a summary table. An example of this summary table is provided within Table 5.6:

Table 5.6 Proforma for SEA of Site Options		
SEA Objective, Supporting Question and Detailed Assessment Criteria		Site Reference
SEA Objective 1: To protect, enhance and restore biodiversity and geodiversity to support nature recovery.		
1a/b(i)	Relationship to Special Areas of Conservation	Rating conclusion
1a/b(ii)	Relationship to Ramsar Sites	Rating conclusion
1a/b(iii)	Relationship to National Nature Reserves	Rating conclusion
1a/b(iv)	Relationship to Sites of Special Scientific Interest	Rating conclusion
1a/b(v)	Relationship to Local Nature Reserves	Rating conclusion
1a/b(vi)	Relationship to Ancient Woodland	Rating conclusion
1a/b(vii)	Relationship to veteran trees and trees subject to a preservation order	Rating conclusion
1a/b(viii)	Relationship to Local Wildlife Sites and Regional Geological and Geomorphological Sites	Rating conclusion
1c(i)	Relationship to potential areas of particular importance for biodiversity	Rating conclusion
SEA Objective 2: To promote sustainable and resilient communities by supporting physical and mental health, wellbeing and quality of life through provision of suitable housing, employment opportunities, and access to social infrastructure and high-quality environments.		
2a(i)	Connectivity to education facilities	Rating conclusion
2a(ii)	Connectivity to leisure facilities	Rating conclusion
2a(iii)	Connectivity to health facilities	Rating conclusion
2a(iv)	Connectivity to shopping facilities	Rating conclusion
2b(i)	Connectivity to residences	Rating conclusion
2c(i)	Connectivity to employment	Rating conclusion
SEA Objective 3: To safeguard and ensure the sustainable and efficient use of natural resources including soils, best and most versatile agricultural land and minerals.		
3a(i)	Agricultural land quality	Rating conclusion
3b(i)	Presence of peaty soils	Rating conclusion
3c(i)	Whether previously developed land	Rating conclusion
3d(i)	Relationship to mineral safeguarding areas	Rating conclusion
SEA Objective 4: To minimise water, air & noise pollution; maximise water efficiency; and safeguard against poor air quality.		
4a(i)	Relationship to air quality management areas	Rating conclusion
4b(i)	Relationship aquifers	Rating conclusion
4c(i)	Relationship Source Protection Zones	Rating conclusion

Table 5.6 Proforma for SEA of Site Options		
SEA Objective, Supporting Question and Detailed Assessment Criteria		Site Reference
SEA Objective 5: To mitigate & adapt to the changing climate by minimising greenhouse gas emissions, supporting renewable and low-carbon energy, managing flood risk, maximising sustainable drainage and supporting flood and climate resilience.		
5a(i)	Presence of river flood risk zones	Rating conclusion
5b(i)	Presence of surface water flood zones	Rating conclusion
SEA Objective 6: To protect, conserve and enhance Shropshire's historic environment and cultural heritage.		
6a/b(i)	Relationship to World Heritage Sites	Rating conclusion
6a/b(ii)	Relationship to Scheduled Monuments	Rating conclusion
6a/b(iii)	Relationship to Registered Battlefields	Rating conclusion
6a/b(iv)	Relationship to Registered Park or Gardens	Rating conclusion
6a/b(v)	Relationship to Conservation Areas	Rating conclusion
6a/b(vi)	Relationship to listed buildings	Rating conclusion
SEA Objective 7: To protect, conserve and enhance landscape character, scenic quality and local distinctiveness.		
7a(i)	Relationship to the Shropshire Hills National Landscape	Rating conclusion
7b(i)	Presence of very high or high landscape sensitivity for residential development	Rating conclusion
7b(ii)	Presence of very high or high landscape sensitivity for employment development	Rating conclusion
7c(i)	Presence of very high or high visual sensitivity for residential development	Rating conclusion
7c(ii)	Presence of very high or high visual sensitivity for employment development	Rating conclusion
SEA Objective 8: To support sustainable and resilient communities by promoting sustainable development patterns, connectivity and use of sustainable and active modes of transport.		
8a(i)	Relationship to strategic/principal/key centres or primary/secondary/tertiary connected villages and potential to constitute a potential strategic settlement	Rating conclusion
8b(i)	Overall connectivity	Rating conclusion
8c(i)	Relationship to sports pitches	Rating conclusion
8d(i)	Relationship to play areas	Rating conclusion
Overall		Rating conclusion
Likely significant adverse effects		Summarise
Likely significant positive effects		Summarise

6. Next steps

Scoping consultation

- 6.1. Task A5 in Stage A of the SEA Scoping Process requires Shropshire Council to consult the consultation bodies on the scope of the SEA report. The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 defines the consultation bodies as:
 - a) Historic England;
 - b) Natural England; and
 - c) Environment Agency.
- 6.2. Although when consulting on the SEA Scoping report the Council is only required to engage with these three statutory bodies, the Council has determined that it is appropriate to expand this to a wider public consultation, in the interests of continued openness and transparency through the plan-making process.
- 6.3. This approach provides our local communities, Town and Parish Councils, local businesses & organisations, landowners, land agents, development and all other interested stakeholders with the opportunity to review and comment on the methodology before it is finalised and applied.
- 6.4. As the SEA Scoping report details the proposed SEA framework and methodology to be used when assessing the environmental effects of strategy & policy options and site options (which will form part of the wider site assessment process) this wider public consultation will:
 - a) Support the robustness of the SEA framework and methodology.
 - b) Enhance the credibility and transparency of the SEA process and conclusions.
 - c) In the case of site options, support understanding and validity of the interplay with the site assessment process.

- 6.5. In this way, this wider public consultation will enhance the plan-making process associated with the next Shropshire Local Plan.
- 6.6. Regulation 12(6) of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 sets out the expected time for consulting the above bodies as a period of 5 weeks, beginning with the date on which the consultees receive the consultation request. These same timescales will be extended to all interested parties as part of the wider public consultation.
- 6.7. Comments are invited on all sections of this SEA Scoping report. In particular, it would be helpful if the following key questions could be addressed:
- a) Are there any other relevant policies, plans and programmes which should be reviewed as part of this SEA scoping report?
 - b) Are there any other sources or types of baseline data which should be assessed?
 - c) Do you agree with the identified SEA objectives?
 - d) Do you agree with the identification of supporting questions to add detailed to the wider SEA objectives and the decision to distinguish between those questions related to the assessment of the environmental effects of strategy & policy options and those questions related to the assessment of the environmental effects of site options?
 - e) Do you agree with the approach to identifying likely significant effects of strategy and policy options?
 - f) Do you agree with the approach to identifying likely significant effects of site options?
 - g) Any other comments on the scoping report.
- 6.8. All comments received regarding the SEA Scoping report will be reviewed and will inform the final version of the SEA Scoping report, which will be published once completed.

Appendix 1. Relevant Policies, Plans & Programmes

SEA/SA Theme	Level (International, National, Regional/Cross-Boundary or Local)	Name of Policy, Plan or Programme	Main Objectives	Implications for the Local Plan	Reference
Biodiversity, flora and fauna	International	Convention on Biological Diversity and Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework	Halt and reverse biodiversity loss, protect ecosystems, restore degraded habitats and support species recovery.	The Local Plan should support nature recovery, habitat restoration, ecological connectivity and measurable biodiversity enhancement.	Convention on Biological Diversity; LNRS policy context. [shropshire.gov.uk] , [next.shropshire.gov.uk]
Biodiversity, flora and fauna	International	Ramsar Convention on Wetlands	Promote the conservation and wise use of wetlands of international importance.	Policies and allocations should avoid adverse effects on Ramsar sites, wetland hydrology and supporting ecological networks.	Ramsar Convention; Shropshire SEA baseline identifies Ramsar interests associated with the Midlands Meres and Mosses.

SEA/SA Theme	Level (International, National, Regional/Cross-Boundary or Local)	Name of Policy, Plan or Programme	Main Objectives	Implications for the Local Plan	Reference
Biodiversity, flora and fauna	International	Bern Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats	Conserve wild flora, fauna and natural habitats, particularly threatened species and habitats.	The Local Plan should protect habitats and species and require appropriate avoidance, mitigation and enhancement through site allocation and development management policies.	Bern Convention.
Biodiversity, flora and fauna	International	Bonn Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species	Protect migratory species across their range and conserve habitats necessary for migration.	Policies should protect ecological corridors, river corridors, wetlands and habitats supporting migratory species.	Bonn Convention.

SEA/SA Theme	Level (International, National, Regional/Cross-Boundary or Local)	Name of Policy, Plan or Programme	Main Objectives	Implications for the Local Plan	Reference
Biodiversity, flora and fauna	National	Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, as amended	Protect habitats sites and species and require appropriate assessment where plans may affect protected habitats sites.	The Local Plan must be informed by Habitats Regulations Assessment and avoid adverse effects on site integrity.	Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.
Biodiversity, flora and fauna	National	Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended	Protect SSSIs, protected species and certain habitats.	Policies should safeguard designated sites, protected species and habitats from direct, indirect and cumulative harm.	Wildlife and Countryside Act.
Biodiversity, flora and fauna	National	Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, Section 40 Biodiversity Duty	Requires public authorities to have regard to conserving and enhancing biodiversity when exercising functions.	The Local Plan should demonstrate how policies and allocations contribute to biodiversity conservation and enhancement.	NERC Act 2006.

SEA/SA Theme	Level (International, National, Regional/Cross-Boundary or Local)	Name of Policy, Plan or Programme	Main Objectives	Implications for the Local Plan	Reference
Biodiversity, flora and fauna	National	Environment Act 2021	Establishes statutory environmental targets, mandatory Biodiversity Net Gain, Local Nature Recovery Strategies and strengthened biodiversity duties.	Policies and allocations should support BNG, LNRS priorities, ecological networks and wider environmental improvement.	Environment Act 2021.
Biodiversity, flora and fauna	National	Environmental Improvement Plan 2025	Sets national goals for restored nature, environmental quality, circular economy, climate resilience and access to nature.	The Local Plan should align with national nature recovery, biodiversity, water, air, climate and access to nature objectives.	Environmental Improvement Plan 2025. [gov.uk] , [gov.uk]

SEA/SA Theme	Level (International, National, Regional/Cross-Boundary or Local)	Name of Policy, Plan or Programme	Main Objectives	Implications for the Local Plan	Reference
Biodiversity, flora and fauna	National	National Planning Policy Framework, 2026	Promotes sustainable development, nature recovery, protection and enhancement of biodiversity, ecological networks, designated sites and irreplaceable habitats.	The Local Plan should provide strategic biodiversity policies, protect designated and irreplaceable habitats, support nature recovery, green infrastructure and ecological connectivity.	NPPF 2026: S1-S6 (Achieving Sustainable Development); HC1-HC8 (Healthy Communities); DP1-DP4 (Well-Designed Places). [assets.pub...ice.gov.uk]
Biodiversity, flora and fauna	National	Natural England Green Infrastructure Framework	Supports multifunctional green and blue infrastructure for nature, health, climate resilience and place quality.	The Local Plan should embed green infrastructure standards and ensure growth contributes to connected nature-rich places.	Natural England Green Infrastructure Framework. [gov.uk] , [Natural En...Guide 2023]

SEA/SA Theme	Level (International, National, Regional/Cross-Boundary or Local)	Name of Policy, Plan or Programme	Main Objectives	Implications for the Local Plan	Reference
Biodiversity, flora and fauna	Local	Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin Local Nature Recovery Strategy, 2026	Identifies priorities and opportunity areas for habitat creation, restoration, species recovery and wider nature recovery.	The Local Plan should align its spatial strategy, allocations, BNG approach and green infrastructure policies with LNRS priorities.	Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin LNRS. [shropshire.gov.uk] , [next.shropshire.gov.uk]
Population and human health	International	United Nations Sustainable Development Goals	Promote health, wellbeing, reduced inequalities, sustainable communities, climate action and responsible resource use.	The Local Plan should support inclusive, healthy, resilient and sustainable communities.	UN SDGs, relevant to SEA/SA objectives and sustainable development.

SEA/SA Theme	Level (International, National, Regional/Cross-Boundary or Local)	Name of Policy, Plan or Programme	Main Objectives	Implications for the Local Plan	Reference
Population and human health	National	National Planning Policy Framework, 2026	Supports healthy and safe communities, housing delivery, active travel, access to services, sport, recreation, community facilities and high-quality places.	The Local Plan should positively plan for housing, healthcare infrastructure, open space, sport and recreation provision, community facilities and healthy place-making.	NPPF 2026: HC1-HC8 (Healthy Communities); HO1-HO13 (Homes); TR1-TR8 (Sustainable Transport). [assets.pub...ice.gov.uk]
Population and human health	National	Planning Practice Guidance: Healthy and Safe Communities	Recognises that the built and natural environment, including green infrastructure, is a major determinant of health and wellbeing.	The Local Plan should integrate health, wellbeing, health infrastructure, active travel, green infrastructure and inclusive design.	PPG Healthy and Safe Communities. [gov.uk] , [gov.uk]

SEA/SA Theme	Level (International, National, Regional/Cross-Boundary or Local)	Name of Policy, Plan or Programme	Main Objectives	Implications for the Local Plan	Reference
Population and human health	National	National Design Guide	Sets out characteristics of well-designed places, including movement, nature, public spaces, homes and buildings, resources and lifespan.	The Local Plan should require well-designed, healthy, accessible and locally distinctive places.	National Design Guide. [gov.uk] , [assets.pub...ice.gov.uk]
Population and human health	National	Environmental Improvement Plan 2025	Recognises the role of nature, clean air, clean water, climate resilience and access to green space in supporting wellbeing.	The Local Plan should improve access to green and blue infrastructure and address environmental determinants of health.	Environmental Improvement Plan 2025. [gov.uk] , [gov.uk]

SEA/SA Theme	Level (International, National, Regional/Cross-Boundary or Local)	Name of Policy, Plan or Programme	Main Objectives	Implications for the Local Plan	Reference
Population and human health	National	Sport England Assessing Needs and Playing Pitch Strategy Guidance	Provides guidance for robust local evidence on sport and recreation facility needs.	The Local Plan should use up-to-date sport and recreation evidence to protect, enhance and provide facilities.	Sport England guidance. [sportengland.org]
Population and human health	Local	Shropshire Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Strategy	Provides a strategic framework for maintaining and improving playing pitch and outdoor sports provision up to 2038.	Policies and site allocations should protect existing facilities and secure provision or enhancement where growth generates need.	Shropshire PPOSS. [next.shrop...ire.gov.uk] , [next.shrop...ire.gov.uk]
Population and human health	Local	Shropshire Local Transport Plan and emerging Local Transport Plan 2027 to 2037	Sets the framework for highways, public transport, active travel, rural accessibility, freight, safety and climate resilience.	Growth should be located and designed to support accessibility, sustainable transport and reduced reliance on private vehicles.	Shropshire LTP and draft LTP 2027 to 2037. [next.shrop...ire.gov.uk] , [newsroom.s...ire.gov.uk] , [shropshire.gov.uk]

SEA/SA Theme	Level (International, National, Regional/Cross-Boundary or Local)	Name of Policy, Plan or Programme	Main Objectives	Implications for the Local Plan	Reference
Population and human health	Local	Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan	Supports safer, more attractive and connected walking and cycling routes.	The Local Plan should secure active travel links and locate growth where walking and cycling can be realistic choices.	Shropshire LCWIP.
Soil	National	National Planning Policy Framework, 2026	Promotes the effective use of land and recognises the economic and environmental value of best and most versatile agricultural land.	Site assessment should consider agricultural land quality, soil resources and effective land use when considering reasonable alternatives.	NPPF 2026: L1-L3 (Effective Use of Land). [assets.pub...ice.gov.uk]

SEA/SA Theme	Level (International, National, Regional/Cross-Boundary or Local)	Name of Policy, Plan or Programme	Main Objectives	Implications for the Local Plan	Reference
Soil	National	Natural England Guide to Assessing Development Proposals on Agricultural Land	Explains how LPAs and developers should consider agricultural land and soils, including BMV land and ALC evidence.	The Local Plan should use proportionate ALC evidence in site selection and require soil management where development affects agricultural land.	Natural England agricultural land guidance. [gov.uk] , [gov.uk]
Soil	National	Agricultural Land Classification of England and Wales Guidelines	Provides the approved system for grading the quality of agricultural land in England and Wales.	The Local Plan should use ALC data to inform spatial strategy and site assessment.	ALC Guidelines. [publicatio...and.org.uk]
Soil	National	Natural England Provisional Agricultural Land Classification Dataset	Provides mapped ALC information to support planning decisions and land quality assessment.	Should inform early site sieving, with detailed surveys required where necessary.	Natural England ALC dataset. [naturaleng...arcgis.com]

SEA/SA Theme	Level (International, National, Regional/Cross-Boundary or Local)	Name of Policy, Plan or Programme	Main Objectives	Implications for the Local Plan	Reference
Soil	National	Environmental Improvement Plan 2025	Includes goals relating to restored nature, water, resources, climate resilience and sustainable land management.	Policies should protect soil functions, including food production, biodiversity, carbon storage and water regulation.	Environmental Improvement Plan 2025. [gov.uk] , [assets.pub...ice.gov.uk]
Soil	National	Planning Practice Guidance: Natural Environment	Provides guidance on soils, agricultural land, biodiversity, green infrastructure and brownfield land of environmental value.	The Local Plan should consider soil and agricultural land evidence alongside biodiversity, landscape and sustainable land use objectives.	PPG Natural Environment.

SEA/SA Theme	Level (International, National, Regional/Cross-Boundary or Local)	Name of Policy, Plan or Programme	Main Objectives	Implications for the Local Plan	Reference
Soil	Local	Shropshire Brownfield Land Register	Identifies previously developed land opportunities within Shropshire.	The Local Plan should prioritise suitable and deliverable brownfield opportunities where consistent with environmental, heritage and design objectives.	Shropshire Brownfield Land Register.
Water	International	Water Framework Directive objectives, implemented through domestic water legislation and river basin planning	Provides a framework to prevent deterioration and improve the ecological and chemical status of water bodies.	The Local Plan should avoid deterioration of water bodies and support catchment improvements.	SEA water baseline and RBMP (River Basin Management Plan) context.

SEA/SA Theme	Level (International, National, Regional/Cross-Boundary or Local)	Name of Policy, Plan or Programme	Main Objectives	Implications for the Local Plan	Reference
Water	Regional/Cross-Boundary	Severn River Basin Management Plan, updated 2022	Protects and improves the water environment across the Severn River Basin District, including cross-border catchments.	Allocations and policies should align with river basin objectives and consider cumulative effects on water quality and quantity.	Severn RBMP 2022. [gov.uk] , [gov.uk]
Water	Regional/Cross-Boundary	River Severn Partnership	Seeks to make the Severn, Wye, Warwickshire Avon and Teme a resilient river network, reducing flood risk, securing water resources and improving natural assets.	The Local Plan should recognise strategic catchment-scale opportunities for flood resilience, water security and nature-based solutions.	River Severn Partnership. [riversever...hip.org.uk] , [riversever...hip.org.uk]

SEA/SA Theme	Level (International, National, Regional/Cross-Boundary or Local)	Name of Policy, Plan or Programme	Main Objectives	Implications for the Local Plan	Reference
Water	Regional/Cross-Boundary	Severn Valley Water Management Scheme	Develops a long-term approach to flood risk, water security, catchment resilience and nature-based solutions across the Upper Severn.	The Local Plan should align growth and infrastructure planning with long-term catchment water management and resilience objectives.	Severn Valley Water Management Scheme. [newsroom.s...ire.gov.uk]
Water	National	National Planning Policy Framework, 2026	Supports sustainable water management, water efficiency, wastewater infrastructure planning and flood risk management.	Growth should align with available water resources, wastewater treatment capacity and flood risk management objectives.	NPPF 2026: W1-W4 (Securing Clean Energy and Water); CC1-CC3 (Climate Change). [assets.pub...ice.gov.uk]

SEA/SA Theme	Level (International, National, Regional/Cross-Boundary or Local)	Name of Policy, Plan or Programme	Main Objectives	Implications for the Local Plan	Reference
Water	National	Flood and Water Management Act 2010	Establishes responsibilities for local flood risk management.	The Local Plan should direct development away from high flood risk and secure sustainable drainage and flood resilience.	Flood and Water Management Act; Shropshire flood risk evidence. [shropshire.gov.uk]
Water	National	National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England	Sets the national approach to managing flood and coastal erosion risk.	The Local Plan should apply the sequential approach, support flood resilience and encourage nature-based flood management.	National FCERM Strategy and Severn FRMP context. [assets.pub...ice.gov.uk]
Water	Local	Shropshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment	Provides robust assessment of flood risk from all sources and informs land use planning.	Site allocations should be informed by Level 1 and, where relevant, Level 2 SFRA evidence.	Shropshire flood risk and planning policy page. [shropshire.gov.uk] , [next.shrop...ire.gov.uk]

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Water	Local	Shrewsbury Level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment	Provides detailed flood risk evidence for Shrewsbury town centre and potential site allocations.	Shrewsbury-related allocations should reflect detailed risk, hazard and mitigation evidence.	Shrewsbury Level 2 SFRA. [shropshire.gov.uk]
Water	Local	Shropshire Water Cycle Study	Assesses the impact of future development on the water environment and water infrastructure.	The Local Plan should align growth with water supply, wastewater capacity, flood risk and SuDS recommendations.	Shropshire water cycle evidence. [shropshire.gov.uk]
Air	International	Göteborg Protocol	Reduces long-range transboundary air pollution through emission ceilings for key pollutants.	The Local Plan should reduce emissions through sustainable development patterns and transport choices.	Göteborg Protocol.

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Air	National	Air Quality Standards Regulations 2010	Establishes air quality standards for key pollutants.	Policies should avoid unacceptable air quality impacts and exposure of sensitive uses to poor air quality.	Air Quality Standards Regulations.
Air	National	National Emission Ceilings Regulations 2018	Implements national emission reduction commitments for key pollutants.	The Local Plan should support transport, land use and infrastructure choices that reduce emissions.	NEC Regulations, referenced through Gothenburg implementation.
Air	National	Clean Air Strategy 2019	Sets out actions to reduce emissions from transport, homes, industry and agriculture.	The Local Plan should reduce reliance on private cars, support active travel and address air quality impacts from development.	DEFRA Clean Air Strategy.

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Air	National	Air Quality Strategy: Framework for Local Authority Delivery, 2023	Provides the local authority framework for improving air quality and reducing health and biodiversity impacts.	Policies should support improvements in AQMAs and reduce exposure to PM2.5, NO2 and other pollutants.	Air Quality Strategy 2023.
Air	National	National Planning Policy Framework, 2026	Requires planning to prevent unacceptable pollution, improve air quality and support sustainable transport choices.	Site allocations should consider cumulative traffic impacts, air quality management areas and opportunities to reduce transport emissions.	NPPF 2026: HC1-HC8; TR1-TR8; DP1-DP4. [assets.pub...ice.gov.uk]

SEA/SA Theme	Level (International, National, Regional/Cross-Boundary or Local)	Name of Policy, Plan or Programme	Main Objectives	Implications for the Local Plan	Reference
Air	National	Noise Policy Statement for England	Promotes good health and quality of life through effective noise management.	The Local Plan should avoid locating noise-sensitive uses where unacceptable noise impacts are likely and require mitigation where needed.	Noise Policy Statement.
Air	Local	Shropshire Air Quality Annual Status Report and Air Quality Action Plans	Identifies local air quality conditions, including Shropshire's AQMAs at Bridgnorth and Shrewsbury No.3.	The Local Plan should avoid worsening AQMAs and support sustainable transport, active travel and reduced exposure.	Shropshire Air Quality Annual Status Report.

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Climate Factors	International	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change	Provides the global framework for climate change mitigation and adaptation.	The Local Plan should address climate change mitigation and adaptation through spatial strategy, infrastructure and design policies.	UNFCCC.
Climate Factors	International	Paris Agreement	Seeks to limit global temperature rise and strengthen climate resilience.	The Local Plan should contribute to emissions reduction and climate adaptation.	Paris Agreement.
Climate Factors	National	Climate Change Act 2008, as amended	Establishes legally binding carbon budgets and the UK net zero target.	Policies should support carbon reduction, low-carbon energy, sustainable transport and climate resilience.	Climate Change Act 2008.

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Climate Factors	National	UK Climate Change Risk Assessment 2022	Identifies priority climate risks, including risks to habitats, soils, crops, infrastructure, health and supply chains.	The Local Plan should be resilient to heat, flooding, drought, infrastructure disruption and ecological change.	UK CCRA 2022. [gov.uk] , [assets.pub...ice.gov.uk]
Climate Factors	National	Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener	Sets out policies and proposals for decarbonising the UK economy.	The Local Plan should support renewable energy, low-carbon buildings, decarbonised transport and efficient resource use.	Net Zero Strategy.
Climate Factors	National	National Planning Policy Framework, 2026	Supports the transition to net zero, climate adaptation, flood resilience, energy efficiency and renewable energy generation.	The Local Plan should include strategic climate policies, support renewable energy and ensure development remains resilient over its lifetime.	NPPF 2026: CC1-CC3 (Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change); W1-W4. [assets.pub...ice.gov.uk]

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Climate Factors	Regional/Cross-Boundary	Environment Agency Adaptation Pathways Programme, River Severn pilot	Supports adaptation planning for future flooding and coastal change, including the River Severn catchment.	The Local Plan should consider adaptive pathways and long-term flood and climate resilience in strategic planning.	Adaptation Pathways Programme. [engageenvi...menthq.com]
Climate Factors	Local	Shropshire Council Corporate Climate Strategy and Climate Action Plan	Sets local corporate climate objectives, including net-zero corporate emissions and climate resilience.	Policies should support low-carbon growth, renewable energy, sustainable transport, green infrastructure and carbon sequestration.	Shropshire climate strategy.

SEA/SA Theme	Level (International, National, Regional/Cross-Boundary or Local)	Name of Policy, Plan or Programme	Main Objectives	Implications for the Local Plan	Reference
Material Assets	National	National Planning Policy Framework, 2026	Provides policy for housing, employment, communications infrastructure, transport, minerals, waste and effective land use.	The Local Plan should integrate housing, employment, transport, communications, infrastructure, minerals and waste planning.	NPPF 2026: HO1-HO13; E1-E4; CO1-CO2; M1-M6; TR1-TR8; L1-L3. [assets.pub...ice.gov.uk]
Material Assets	National	National Planning Policy for Waste	Sets detailed waste planning policies and requires robust evidence on waste capacity and spatial distribution.	As waste planning authority, the Council should plan for sustainable waste management capacity and apply the waste hierarchy.	National Planning Policy for Waste. [gov.uk] , [gov.uk]
Material Assets	National	Waste Management Plan for England	Provides national context for sustainable and efficient waste management.	The Local Plan should support waste prevention, reuse, recycling, recovery and appropriate waste infrastructure.	National Planning Policy for Waste references the Waste Management Plan for England. [gov.uk] , [gov.uk]

SEA/SA Theme	Level (International, National, Regional/Cross-Boundary or Local)	Name of Policy, Plan or Programme	Main Objectives	Implications for the Local Plan	Reference
Material Assets	National	Environment Act 2021	Includes provisions relating to waste, resource efficiency, biodiversity, air, water and environmental governance.	Policies should promote circular economy principles, resource efficiency and sustainable construction.	Environment Act 2021 and EIP context. [gov.uk] , [assets.pub...ice.gov.uk]
Material Assets	National	National Design Guide	Includes resources, lifespan, movement, homes and buildings as components of well-designed places.	The Local Plan should require resource-efficient, adaptable and durable development.	National Design Guide. [gov.uk] , [assets.pub...ice.gov.uk]
Material Assets	Local	Shropshire Local Aggregate Assessment	Provides evidence on aggregate supply, landbanks and minerals planning.	The Local Plan should safeguard mineral resources and infrastructure and plan for a steady and adequate supply of aggregates.	Shropshire LAA.

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Material Assets	Local	Shropshire Local Transport Plan and emerging LTP 2027 to 2037	Sets the strategic framework for transport, highways, asset management, freight, safety, public transport and climate resilience.	Site allocations should be assessed against transport capacity, infrastructure needs and sustainable transport opportunities.	Shropshire LTP evidence. [next.shropshire.gov.uk] , [newsroom.shropshire.gov.uk] , [shropshire.gov.uk]
Material Assets	Local	Shropshire Brownfield Land Register	Identifies previously developed land opportunities.	The Local Plan should prioritise suitable brownfield sites where deliverable and consistent with wider sustainability objectives.	Shropshire Brownfield Register.

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Material Assets	Local	Ofcom Connected Nations data	Provides evidence on fixed broadband and mobile connectivity.	The Local Plan should support digital infrastructure improvements, particularly in rural areas and employment locations.	Ofcom Connected Nations.
Cultural Heritage (including architectural and archaeological heritage)	International	UNESCO Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage	Provides international framework for protecting cultural and natural heritage of outstanding universal value.	The Local Plan should protect heritage significance and settings, including where cross-boundary assets are relevant.	UNESCO Convention, PPG historic environment context. [gov.uk]
Cultural Heritage (including architectural and archaeological heritage)	National	Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990	Provides statutory protection for listed buildings, conservation areas and their settings.	The Local Plan should include a positive strategy for conservation and enhancement and ensure allocations avoid unjustified harm.	Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. [gov.uk]

SEA/SA Theme	Level (International, National, Regional/Cross-Boundary or Local)	Name of Policy, Plan or Programme	Main Objectives	Implications for the Local Plan	Reference
Cultural Heritage (including architectural and archaeological heritage)	National	Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979	Provides protection for scheduled monuments and archaeology of national importance.	Site assessment should identify potential effects on scheduled monuments, archaeology and setting.	Historic environment PPG. [gov.uk]
Cultural Heritage (including architectural and archaeological heritage)	National	National Planning Policy Framework, 2026	Requires conservation and enhancement of the historic environment through evidence-led plan-making and decision-making.	Policies and allocations should assess significance, setting, cumulative effects and opportunities for heritage enhancement.	NPPF 2026: DP1-DP4 (Well-Designed Places and Heritage Considerations). [assets.pub...ice.gov.uk]
Cultural Heritage (including architectural and archaeological heritage)	National	Planning Practice Guidance: Historic Environment	Provides guidance on conserving and enhancing the historic environment.	The Local Plan should use heritage evidence proportionately to inform strategy, policies and allocations.	PPG Historic Environment. [gov.uk]

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Cultural Heritage (including architectural and archaeological heritage)	National	Historic England Good Practice Advice: Historic Environment in Local Plans	Advises on robust historic environment evidence and positive local plan strategies.	The Council should use up-to-date heritage evidence and a transparent site allocation methodology.	Historic England GPA1. [historicen...and.org.uk] , [thegardenstrust.org]
Cultural Heritage (including architectural and archaeological heritage)	National	Historic England Advice: The Setting of Heritage Assets	Provides advice on assessing how setting contributes to significance and how change should be managed.	Site allocations should assess setting impacts, views, cumulative effects and mitigation requirements.	Historic England GPA3. [nsip-docum...ate.gov.uk]
Cultural Heritage (including architectural and archaeological heritage)	Local	Shropshire Historic Environment Record	Provides the primary local evidence base for archaeology, historic buildings, structures and historic landscapes.	The HER should inform site assessment, policy development, archaeological potential and mitigation.	Shropshire HER. [shropshire.gov.uk] , [shropshire.gov.uk] , [next.shrop...ire.gov.uk]

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Cultural Heritage (including architectural and archaeological heritage)	Local	Shropshire Supplementary Planning Documents and Heritage Guidance	Includes local SPDs, design guidance and heritage-specific guidance such as World Heritage Site and battlefield advice.	Existing local guidance should inform policy drafting until superseded by updated Local Plan policies or design codes.	Shropshire SPD page. [next.shrop...ire.gov.uk]
Landscape	International	European Landscape Convention	Recognises landscape as a key component of cultural, ecological, environmental and social wellbeing.	The Local Plan should protect, manage and plan for landscape change in a way that respects character and place.	European Landscape Convention, reflected in landscape sensitivity methodology. https://docs.planning.org.uk/20260409/32/TCKO2DTDHE300/8tll03y39s7qp9mg.pdf
Landscape	National	National Planning Policy Framework, 2026	Requires protection and enhancement of valued landscapes, countryside character and National Landscapes.	The Local Plan should use landscape evidence to inform spatial strategy, settlement boundaries and site allocations.	NPPF 2026: DP1-DP4; S1-S6. [assets.pub...ice.gov.uk]

SEA/SA Theme	Level (International, National, Regional/Cross-Boundary or Local)	Name of Policy, Plan or Programme	Main Objectives	Implications for the Local Plan	Reference
Landscape	National	Natural England Green Infrastructure Framework	Promotes green and blue infrastructure for nature, climate resilience, health and place-making.	Landscape policies should integrate green infrastructure, biodiversity, water management and access to nature.	Natural England Green Infrastructure Framework. [gov.uk] , [Natural En...Guide 2023]
Landscape	National	National Design Guide	Requires development to respond to context, identity, nature, public spaces and local character.	The Local Plan should require development to protect landscape character and strengthen local distinctiveness.	National Design Guide. [gov.uk] , [assets.pub...ice.gov.uk]
Landscape	Local	Shropshire Hills National Landscape Management Plan 2025 to 2030	Sets priorities for conserving and enhancing natural beauty, with themes including nature, climate, water, land, people and place.	The Local Plan should give great weight to conserving and enhancing the Shropshire Hills National Landscape and its special qualities.	Shropshire Hills National Landscape Management Plan. [shropshire...-nl.org.uk] , [shropshire.gov.uk]

SEA/SA Theme	Level (International, National, Regional/Cross-Boundary or Local)	Name of Policy, Plan or Programme	Main Objectives	Implications for the Local Plan	Reference
Landscape	Local	State of the Shropshire Hills Report 2025	Identifies condition, trends and pressures affecting the special qualities of the Shropshire Hills.	The Local Plan should respond to identified pressures such as habitat fragmentation, water quality, climate change and landscape condition.	State of the Shropshire Hills Report. [shropshire...-nl.org.uk]
Landscape	Local	Shropshire Landscape and Visual Sensitivity Assessment	Provides technical evidence to inform site selection and assess landscape and visual sensitivity around settlements.	Site allocations should be informed by landscape and visual sensitivity evidence and mitigation requirements.	Shropshire Landscape and Visual Sensitivity Assessment. [next.shrop...ire.gov.uk] , [gillespies.co.uk]

SEA/SA Theme	Level (International, National, Regional/Cross-Boundary or Local)	Name of Policy, Plan or Programme	Main Objectives	Implications for the Local Plan	Reference
Landscape	Local	Shropshire Historic Landscape Characterisation	Provides evidence on historic landscape character and sensitivity.	The Local Plan should consider historic landscape character alongside landscape, heritage and settlement setting evidence.	Shropshire historic environment and HLC context. [shropshire.gov.uk] , [researchfr...eworks.org]
The inter-relationship between these factors	International	Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive 2001/42/EC	Requires assessment of likely significant environmental effects, including cumulative, synergistic and interrelationships between factors.	The SEA should explicitly assess interactions between biodiversity, water, soil, climate, health, heritage, landscape and material assets.	SEA Directive and Practical Guide. [environmen....europa.eu] , [gov.uk]
The inter-relationship between these factors	National	Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004	Sets the UK SEA legal framework and Schedule 2 topics to be considered.	The Local Plan SEA should cover all required topics and their interrelationships, with mitigation and monitoring.	SEA Regulations 2004. [gov.uk]

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The inter-relationship between these factors	National	Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive, 2005	Sets out SEA stages, including plans/programme s review, baseline, environmental problems, SEA objectives and scoping consultation.	Appendix 1 should clearly inform SEA objectives, assessment questions, alternatives, mitigation and monitoring indicators.	SEA Practical Guide. [gov.uk] , [assets.pub...ice.gov.uk]
The inter-relationship between these factors	National	National Planning Policy Framework, 2026	Requires plans to be prepared positively, justified, effective and consistent with national policy, balancing social, economic and environmental objectives.	Policies should avoid siloed assessment and identify opportunities for multiple environmental, social and economic benefits.	NPPF 2026: S1-S6 (Achieving Sustainable Development) and all relevant thematic policy chapters. [assets.pub...ice.gov.uk]

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The inter-relationship between these factors	National	Environmental Improvement Plan 2025	Integrates goals for nature, air, water, waste, resources, climate, hazards, biosecurity and access to nature.	The Local Plan should identify opportunities for multifunctional policy outcomes and avoid unintended cross-theme harm.	Environmental Improvement Plan 2025. [gov.uk] , [assets.pub...ice.gov.uk]
The inter-relationship between these factors	Regional/Cross-Boundary	Severn River Basin Management Plan and River Severn Partnership	Integrate water quality, flood risk, climate resilience, biodiversity, economic resilience and cross-boundary catchment planning.	Shropshire's Local Plan should recognise catchment-wide cumulative effects and strategic opportunities for nature-based solutions.	Severn RBMP and River Severn Partnership. [gov.uk] , [riversever...hip.org.uk]
The inter-relationship between these factors	Local	Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin Local Nature Recovery Strategy	Links biodiversity recovery with water, climate resilience, access to nature, land management and community wellbeing.	Local Plan policies should use LNRS priorities to deliver multiple benefits across biodiversity, health, climate and water.	LNRS 2026. [shropshire.gov.uk] , [next.shrop...ire.gov.uk]

SEA/SA Theme	Level (International, National, Regional/Cross-Boundary or Local)	Name of Policy, Plan or Programme	Main Objectives	Implications for the Local Plan	Reference
The inter-relationship between these factors	Local	Shropshire Hills National Landscape Management Plan 2025 to 2030	Integrates nature, climate, water, land, people and place priorities for the National Landscape.	The Local Plan should integrate landscape protection with biodiversity, climate, access, land management and water objectives.	Shropshire Hills Management Plan. [shropshire...-nl.org.uk] , [shropshire.gov.uk]
Future baseline data	National	Gateway 1 for Local Plans: What You Need to Do	Requires authorities to demonstrate readiness before entering the 30-month plan preparation process, including progress on SEA.	The Council should maintain a clear evidence log showing SEA progress, baseline updates, evidence gaps and scoping consultation outcomes.	Gateway 1 guidance. [gov.uk]

SEA/SA Theme	Level (International, National, Regional/Cross-Boundary or Local)	Name of Policy, Plan or Programme	Main Objectives	Implications for the Local Plan	Reference
Future baseline data	National	Getting Ready to Prepare a New Plan	Identifies recommended progress before Gateway 1, including timetable, governance, engagement, anticipated plan content and SEA.	The SEA Appendix should show a proportionate and auditable approach to relevant plans, baseline data and evidence management.	Getting Ready guidance. [gov.uk]
Future baseline data	National	SEA Practical Guide, 2005	Advises that baseline evidence should be relevant to the plan, appropriate to scale and sufficient to identify key environmental issues.	The Council should update baseline data at key plan-making milestones and maintain clear links to SEA objectives and indicators.	SEA Practical Guide. [gov.uk] , [assets.pub...ice.gov.uk]

SEA/SA Theme	Level (International, National, Regional/Cross-Boundary or Local)	Name of Policy, Plan or Programme	Main Objectives	Implications for the Local Plan	Reference
Future baseline data	National	Environmental Improvement Plan Monitoring Plan 2025	Provides a structured monitoring and evaluation framework for EIP goals, actions and metrics.	The Local Plan monitoring framework should align, where relevant, with national EIP indicators for biodiversity, water, air, climate, waste and access to nature.	EIP Monitoring Plan 2025. [assets.pub...ice.gov.uk]
Future baseline data	National	UK Climate Change Risk Assessment 2022	Provides national evidence on priority climate risks, including habitats, soils, infrastructure, food systems and health.	The SEA baseline should be reviewed against climate risk evidence to ensure proposals remain resilient over the plan period to 2046.	UK CCRA 2022. [gov.uk] , [assets.pub...ice.gov.uk]

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Future baseline data	Local	Shropshire SEA Scoping Baseline Evidence	The draft scoping document identifies baseline evidence and gaps across biodiversity, population, soil, water, air, climate, material assets, heritage and landscape.	A baseline update schedule should be included, identifying data gaps, evidence owners, update frequency and implications for SEA objectives.	
Future baseline data	Local	Emerging Shropshire Local Transport Plan 2027 to 2037	Emerging local transport evidence will shape transport, accessibility, rural connectivity, active travel and climate resilience.	SEA and site assessment should be updated once the LTP evidence and consultation outcomes are available.	Emerging Shropshire LTP. [newsroom.s...ire.gov.uk] , [shropshire.gov.uk]

SEA/SA Theme	Level (International, National, Regional/Cross-Boundary or Local)	Name of Policy, Plan or Programme	Main Objectives	Implications for the Local Plan	Reference
Future baseline data	Local	Periodic local evidence updates, including SFRA, Water Cycle Study, LAA, air quality, HER, LNRS monitoring and brownfield register	Local environmental and infrastructure datasets are periodically updated and will be central to Local Plan evidence.	The Council should maintain an audit trail showing how updated evidence has informed SEA, policy drafting, site assessment and monitoring.	Shropshire evidence sources and supporting local evidence. [shropshire.gov.uk] , [shropshire.gov.uk]