

SHELAA Ref: 299/1210

SITE: Land at 15 Tower Street, Heathfield

SUSTAINABILITY OBJECTIVE		Effects				Site No: 299/1210	Name: Land at 15 Tower Street, Heathfield, TN21 8PB
		S	M	L	Overall	Commentary	
SO1	CLIMATE CHANGE MITIGATION					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The site comprises a residential dwelling and residential curtilage, agricultural land and deciduous woodland.</li> <li>The site is 1.15ha in size and proposed for residential development, although no details have been submitted by the applicant.</li> <li>The site is located on the eastern periphery of Heathfield, within the proposed development boundary.</li> <li>The nearest bus stop is 120m (less than a 5-minute walk) to the west of the site, at Downsview on Tower Street. There are several bus stops within close proximity of the site on Tower Street and the A265, offering services to Heathfield High Street (5-minutes) as well as further afield (Eastbourne, Tunbridge Wells, Uckfield and Polegate).</li> <li>There is good pedestrian connectivity to the bus stops via footpaths along Tower Street and the A265.</li> <li>The site complies with the overall spatial strategy for the district as it is within a sustainable settlement with access to sustainable modes of transport.</li> <li>There is no train station at Heathfield, the closest being in Uckfield approx. 8 miles west of the site. This is accessible via the bus service from Heathfield, with an hourly service and journey time of approx. 31-minutes.</li> <li>The site is within a 14-minute walk of Heathfield High Street via existing footpaths along Tower Street and the A265.</li> <li>Development will result in an increase in greenhouse gas emissions in both the construction and operation of any development and mitigation measures will need to be identified to minimise the impacts through sustainable methods of construction and design, energy efficiency and the use of renewable/low carbon energy.</li> <li>Any development will need to comply with the most up to date Building Regulations, as relevant to the development, and take account of the Future Homes and Building Standards.</li> <li>Other policies within the Local Plan will address matters of energy efficiency in new buildings, embodied carbon and sustainable design and construction and any development will need to be in compliance with the relevant policies.</li> </ul>	

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						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All development will result in an increase in greenhouse gas emissions and therefore a <b>minor negative</b> impact is expected overall. Mitigation measures will need to be identified to minimise the impact as far as possible.</li> </ul>	
SO2	CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The site lies within Flood Zone 1 as defined by the Environment Agency mapping and the Wealden Strategic Flood Risk Assessment.</li> <li>There is no risk of surface water flooding.</li> <li>The site is predominantly greenfield and development would introduce further impermeable surfaces, which could make the site vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, specifically surface water flood risk and overheating.</li> <li>Other policies within the Local Plan will address the provision of climate change adaptation measures such as green and blue infrastructure and any development will need to be in compliance with the relevant policies.</li> <li>The specific climate change adaptation measures for the site will need to be identified and the impact on this SA Objective is therefore <b>uncertain</b> at this stage over all timeframes.</li> </ul>	
SO3	FLOOD RISK					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The site lies within Flood Zone 1 as defined by the Environment Agency mapping and the Wealden Strategic Flood Risk Assessment.</li> <li>There is no risk of surface water flooding.</li> <li>The site is outside of an area of groundwater concern and therefore not at risk of groundwater flooding.</li> <li>The proposed development is therefore suitable for the flood risk zone identified and the site passes the sequential test.</li> <li>Mitigation measures will need to be provided for the site in terms of surface water runoff as development will introduce impermeable surfaces. Other policies within the Local Plan will cover the provision of SuDS and the management of flood risk from all sources, and any development of the site will need to comply with these policies.</li> <li>Given the site is not at risk of fluvial, surface water or groundwater flooding, the impact on this SA Objective is likely to be <b>major positive</b> over all timeframes as future residents and property would not be at risk.</li> </ul>	

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SO4	WATER RESOURCES & QUALITY					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wealden has been identified as an area of serious water stress.</li> <li>Development of this site will increase the demand for water consumption and wastewater treatment.</li> <li>The site is not within a groundwater source protection zone.</li> <li>There are no watercourses within the site or in close proximity. Therefore, potential for water pollution is minimal.</li> <li>Other policies within the Local Plan will address the protection of the water environment, water infrastructure and water efficiency and any development will need to be in compliance with the relevant policies.</li> <li>Development will also need to comply with the most up to date Building Regulations, as relevant, and the requirements of the Environment Act 2021.</li> <li>Effects on this SA Objective are currently <b>uncertain</b> and will be dependent on the implementation of any development proposal. It is likely that any impacts could be mitigated through good design and compliance with local plan policies, although it is acknowledged that in general an increase in population/development is likely to lead to increased pressure on water resources in the district</li> </ul>	
SO5	SOIL, LAND & MINERALS					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The site is partly agricultural land but not classified within the Agricultural Land Classification system (ALC)</li> <li>The site is not safeguarded for waste or minerals operations.</li> <li>The site is predominantly greenfield.</li> <li>There are no known issues with contamination of land.</li> <li>Development of the site is unlikely to result in land contamination. However, the disturbance of soil from development could lead to increased soil compaction as well as the release of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.</li> <li>Mitigation measures will need to be identified, which safeguard the soils health, particularly during construction.</li> <li>Other policies within the Local Plan will address matters of soil health and protection as well as biodiversity and land contamination, and any development will need to be in compliance with the relevant policies.</li> <li>Therefore, the impacts on this SA Objective are considered to be <b>uncertain</b> at this stage</li> </ul>	

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SO6	WASTE					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suitable mitigation measures will need to be identified to reduce the impact of waste as far as possible in both the construction and operation of any development.</li> <li>• Policies within the Local Plan will address matters of waste management and any development will need to be in compliance with the relevant policies.</li> <li>• The impact on this SA Objective is likely to be <b>minor negative</b> in both construction and operation of any development</li> </ul>	
SO7	POLLUTION					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The site lies within an area of the district considered to be somewhat 'darker' by CPRE's light pollution mapping, however its proximity to existing development means there is a degree of brightness as well.</li> <li>• There are no sources of noise pollution affecting the site.</li> <li>• There are currently no areas of the district where air pollution is in excess of national air quality targets and there are no Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) within the district. This does not mean that air pollution issues won't arise in future as a result of development, but Local Plan policies will provide mitigation.</li> <li>• It is expected that an increase in housing will result in a degree of increase in air pollution during the construction phase and also through the use of energy in any completed development. The increase in air pollution from construction is likely to be in the short to medium term.</li> <li>• The development of the site will result in an increase in traffic during construction, with a potential increase in air pollution, however any negative effects are likely to be in the short to medium term as well.</li> <li>• The site is within short walking distance of several bus stops offering regular services to Heathfield High Street and beyond (Uckfield, Eastbourne, Polegate, Tunbridge Wells) and these are accessible via existing footpaths along Tower Street and the A265.</li> <li>• This provides a viable alternative mode of transport for future residents to using their car, which could help reduce air pollution.</li> <li>• Other policies within the Local Plan will address matters of air, noise and light pollution and any development will need to be in compliance with the relevant policies.</li> </ul>	

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							<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>term as a result of increases in air pollution from construction. Given the sites proximity and pedestrian access to sustainable transport, <b>minor positive</b> effects are expected in relation to air pollution in the longer term.</li> </ul>
SO8	GREEN & BLUE INFRASTRUCTURE						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The site is not proposing any green or blue infrastructure.</li> <li>The site is covered by trees (some mature) and there is deciduous woodland in the southwest of the site. The ancient deciduous woodland within Heathfield Park lies adjacent to the southern boundary of the site, with TPOs running along this boundary.</li> <li>These features provide good wildlife corridors and stepping stones to the wider area to the south, Heathfield Park.</li> <li>These trees and hedgerows contribute to the site's green infrastructure network as well as the wider area. Any development would need to seek to retain, protect and enhance these features to maintain the green infrastructure network.</li> <li>Other policies within the Local Plan will address matters of the retention, protection and creation of green and blue infrastructure and a green and blue infrastructure network, and any development will need to be in compliance with the relevant policies.</li> <li>Due to the lack of any details about the proposed scheme and potential mitigation, and given the extensive coverage by trees and deciduous woodland, effects are considered <b>uncertain</b> at this time.</li> </ul>
SO9	BIODIVERSITY						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There are no designated sites within the site however Heathfield Park SSSI lies approx. 80m to the south-east of the site. However, development of the scale proposed is unlikely to impact the SSSI.</li> <li>Heathfield Park ancient woodland and Priority Habitat Deciduous woodland adjoins the sites southern boundary. A suitable and appropriate buffer along this boundary would be required to protect the woodland from the impacts of development on the site.</li> <li>An area of Priority Habitat Deciduous Woodland covers the south-western part of the site. A suitable and appropriate buffer along would be required to protect the woodland from the impacts of development on the site.</li> </ul>

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						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The site is wholly within the Pevensey, Rother and Cuckmere Watershed BOA and is therefore likely to have further biodiversity value in addition to the woodland. Development could adversely impact on the objectives of the BOA.</li> <li>Development would need to carefully consider the priorities and objectives of the BOA and ensure mitigation measures are implemented to avoid any harm and to enhance habitats where possible.</li> <li>The trees, hedgerows and woodland within the site and on the site boundaries contribute to the biodiversity of the site and provide connectivity to the wider area.</li> <li>Development of the site would need to seek to retain and enhance the existing hedgerows and trees on the boundaries as they are likely to have biodiversity value.</li> <li>Other policies within the Local Plan will address matters of the retention, protection and creation biodiversity, including the need to provide at least 20% BNG and any development will need to be in compliance with the relevant policies.</li> <li>Due to the potential harm from development on the BOA and woodland within the site, but acknowledging the potential for some degree of mitigation, <b>minor negative</b> effects are expected on this SA Objective.</li> </ul>	
SO10	LANDSCAPE & TOWNSCAPE					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The site lies wholly within the High Weald National Landscape (HWNL).</li> <li>The site is considered to have moderate to high sensitivity to development within the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment 2023 due to its location within a prominent position wholly within the HWNL.</li> <li>The site is however well enclosed by boundary vegetation and woodland (to the south) and there would likely be limited landscape impact from development, provided the boundary vegetation is retained and protected and additional structural planting would be needed to help reinforce the character and appearance of the HWNL.</li> <li>Development of the site would result in an impact on the HWNL as it would involve the loss of a piece of land within the designated landscape. However, it is acknowledged that the site is well enclosed within the landscape and that landscape mitigation is likely possible to lessen any negative effects. Therefore, <b>minor negative</b> effects are expected on this SA Objective without mitigation.</li> </ul>	

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SO11	HISTORIC & CULTURAL HERITAGE					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The site is not within a conservation area. However, the grade II listed Heathfield Park and Gardens adjoins the southern boundary.</li> <li>Any development would need to respect its location next to the listed park and garden of Heathfield Park and particularly to the ancient woodland at its boundary.</li> <li>Due to the lack of scheme details at this time, effects are considered <b>uncertain</b>.</li> </ul>	
SO12	DIGITAL INFRASTRUCTURE					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Due to Wealden's rural infrastructure the district broadband service lags behind national levels, with only 47% of all premises (residential and business) covered by at least one broadband operator for a fixed download speed.</li> <li>Other policies within the Local Plan will address matters of digital infrastructure provision and any development will need to be in compliance with the relevant policies.</li> <li>The impact on this SA Objective is currently <b>uncertain</b>.</li> </ul>	
SO13	SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL & ACCESSIBILITY					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The existing access onto Tower Street is occupied by no.15 Tower Street. Therefore, a new access across third-party land onto the A265 is required. This could either be through the new development directly north of the site or in conjunction with the SHELAA Site 260/1210 to the north-east.</li> <li>Alternatively, access could be achieved through the demolition of 15 Tower Street, which forms part of the site.</li> <li>The site is within a 5-minute walk of several bus stops offering regular and frequent services into Heathfield High Street (5-minute journey time), Uckfield (26-minute journey time) and Hailsham (31-minute journey time). Tunbridge Wells can also be reached by bus in approx. 50-mins.</li> <li>This provides sustainable modes of transport to services and facilities and will help reduce the need to travel by car, although some car travel will likely remain.</li> <li>The site is also within a 14-minute walk of Heathfield High Street via existing footpaths along Tower Street and the A265 and pedestrian access to the site could be achieved via the demolition of 15 Tower Street or through the new development directly north of the site or in conjunction with the SHELAA Site 260/1210 to the north-east.</li> <li>There is no dedicated cycle infrastructure, however.</li> <li>The site will have no impact on any PRoW.</li> </ul>	

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						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Given the sites proximity to very good public transport services and the short walking distance to the High Street services and facilities in Heathfield, but acknowledging the need to achieve pedestrian access into the site, <b>minor positive</b> effects are expected on this SA Objective</li> </ul>	
SO14	HOUSING					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The proposed development of this site for residential has the potential to contribute to the district's identified housing need and is within a sustainable settlement (Heathfield) in line with the Spatial Strategy.</li> <li>However, no details of the type of homes to be delivered (affordable homes, Lifetime Homes, tenure, self-build plots etc.) have been put forward as yet by the site promoter.</li> <li>Given the size of the site, development here would make a relatively significant contribution to the districts housing need in a sustainable location and therefore a <b>minor positive</b> effect is expected. This will be enhanced by the provision of affordable homes, accessible/adaptable homes and self-build and custom build plots if they are to come forward.</li> </ul>	
SO15	HEALTH & WELLBEING					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The nearest health services are at Heathfield Surgery in the High Street, approx. 0.7 miles from the site and a 14-minute walk or 5-minute bus journey.</li> <li>The High Weald Lewes Havens CCG has not identified any issues with GP surgery capacity within Heathfield. The development of this site may have some impact on GP capacity, but it is considered that this would be minimal.</li> <li>The Wealden Open Space Study 2022 concludes that there is a deficit in parks and gardens, amenity greenspace and play provision within Heathfield &amp; Waldron Parish and prioritises the enhancement of lower quality sites where possible, with any opportunities for new provision to focus on existing quantity shortfalls i.e. provide play equipment at sites and ensure the high quality of Heathfield Recreation Ground.</li> <li>The Wealden Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Assessment identifies that there is small shortfall in 3G pitch provision in the Heathfield and Rural South area and an overall insufficient supply of rugby pitches.</li> <li>The site is not a designated Local Green Space nor is it a formal or informal recreational or play space.</li> </ul>	



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						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The site is not proposing improvements to sport and recreation provision or to health service provision.</li> <li>Given the size of the site, there may be potential to achieve contributions towards health and wellbeing provision, but this is <b>uncertain</b> at this time.</li> </ul>	
SO16	QUALITY OF LIFE & PLACE					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The effect on this SA Objective will largely depend on the scheme brought forward and its implementation in line with relevant Local Plan policies.</li> <li>Other Local Plan policies will address matters of design, quality of life within the district as well as the district's Design Code and the development proposal will need to be in compliance with the relevant policies.</li> <li>Due to the lack of detail on the scheme design, the impact on this SA Objective is considered to be <b>uncertain</b> at this stage.</li> </ul>	
SO17	SOCIAL DEPRIVATION					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The development of the site could provide both market and affordable housing, and this is likely to address issues of deprivation, disadvantage and poverty.</li> <li>Much will depend on the implementation of any development scheme in accordance with relevant policies within the Local Plan.</li> <li>Due to the lack of detail on the provision of affordable housing, the impact on this SA Objective is considered to be <b>uncertain</b> at this stage.</li> </ul>	
SO18	ECONOMY & EMPLOYMENT					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The proposed development is for housing only and therefore jobs may be created in the short term in relation to construction, having a <b>minor positive</b> effect.</li> <li>However, as the site does not offer any employment provision, it is considered that the site would have <b>no significant</b> effect in the medium to longer term on this SA Objective.</li> </ul>	
SO19	TOWN & VILLAGE CENTRES					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The site is not proposing any retail floorspace.</li> <li>The site does not contain any existing retail floorspace so there is no loss.</li> <li>The site is close to services and facilities within Heathfield and has access to a frequent bus service to the High Street with short journey times. The site is also within a short walking distance of the High Street services and facilities.</li> </ul>	

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						<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Given that future residents of the site would be in close proximity and with sustainable access to the High Street in Heathfield (provided pedestrian connectivity into the site can be achieved), this will help support the vitality and viability of the services within Heathfield.</li> <li>Minor positive effects are expected on this SA Objective.</li> </ul>	
SO20	EDUCATION & SKILLS					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There may be the potential through local job creation during construction to improve skills and training in construction related apprenticeships.</li> <li>The nearest primary is Cross in Hand primary, approx. 1 mile west of the site and accessible on foot (22-minute walk) or by bus (13-minute journey with some walking). Heathfield Community College is approx. 0.9 miles to the south-east. There is a bus service to the college with a journey time of approx. 14-minutes.</li> <li>Information from East Sussex County Council, as the education provider for state schools, indicates local educational provision and capacity is currently adequate to meet the needs of new development in this area.</li> <li>The impact is likely to be minor positive in the short term in regard to skills and training in construction, however over the long term there should be no significant impact on this SA Objective given the proposed quantum of development.</li> </ul>	

**SUMMARY OF RESULTS:**

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SA EFFECTS	SO1 Climate Change Mitigation	SO2 Climate Change Adaptation	SO3 Flood Risk	SO4 Water resources/Quality	SO5 Soil, Land & Minerals	SO6 Waste	SO7 Pollution	SO8 Green & Blue Infrastructure	SO9 Biodiversity	SO10 Landscape & Townscape	SO11 Historic & Cultural Heritage	SO12 Digital Infrastructure	SO13 Travel & Accessibility	SO14 Housing	SO15 Health & Wellbeing	SO16 Quality of Life & Place	SO17 Social Deprivation	SO18 Economy & Employment	SO19 Town & Village Centres	SO20 Education & Skills
Major Positive																				
Minor Positive																				
Not Significant																				
Minor Negative																				
Major Negative																				
Uncertain																				

**COMMENTARY:**

Duration/Reversibility	Short term adverse impacts are likely during construction or before the mitigation measures are implemented
Mitigation Measures	<p>Further information is required for the issues identified as uncertain. No mitigation measures are proposed at present as there are no detailed plans for the site. Other policies within the Local Plan will cover mitigation measures and any development will need to comply with the relevant policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Climate change adaptation and mitigation</li> <li>• Biodiversity creation, protection and enhancement</li> <li>• Flood risk – including surface water flood risk / drainage.</li> <li>• Landscape and townscape</li> <li>• Health and wellbeing</li> <li>• Sustainable transport</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Infrastructure</li> </ul>
<b>Cumulative Effects</b>	<p>Heathfield is classed as a sustainable settlement in the Settlement Hierarchy and there are a number of potential sites put forward for development in and around the town. Should this site come forward for development, together with other land within the area, further work will need to be undertaken to understand the impact on the transport network (through a county-wide transport model) and other infrastructure such as education, health services and community facilities. However, it is acknowledged that development of this site, in combination with other sites, will result in pressures on infrastructure, built and natural.</p>
<b>Summary</b>	<p>The site is located on the edge of Heathfield, which is considered a ‘sustainable settlement’ according to the settlement hierarchy and has a proposed development boundary. The site lies within the proposed development boundary for Heathfield. The site does, therefore, conform with the overall spatial strategy for development within Wealden as a whole as it is within a sustainable settlement and has access to public transport and the services and facilities in Heathfield, provided pedestrian connectivity.</p> <p><b>Major positive effects: SO3 Flood Risk</b></p> <p>The site is in Flood Zone 1 and there is no risk of surface water flooding. Surface water run off can be suitably mitigated through SuDS provision. There is no risk of groundwater flooding. Therefore, the proposed development is suitable for the flood zone identified.</p> <p><b>Minor positive effects: SO7 Pollution; SO13 Travel &amp; Accessibility; SO14 Housing and SO19 Town &amp; Village Centre</b></p> <p>The development of the site for housing will contribute to the district’s housing need. However, details are lacking as to any affordable housing provision etc.</p> <p>The location of the site, together with mitigation, will ensure light pollution is avoided/mitigated. The sites’ location close to good public transport and a short walk to Heathfield High Street will help reduce air pollution by reducing car use from the site, provided suitable vehicular access can be achieved.</p> <p>The site is within a short walk of bus stops with regular services to Heathfield and other settlements (Uckfield, Hailsham, Polegate) and it is likely that pedestrian access to the site can be achieved either via Tower Street or via site already developed to north or Site 260/1210. Footpaths exist to the site along Tower Street and the A265, aiding pedestrian access to Heathfield and public transport.</p> <p>Given that future residents of the site would be in close proximity and with sustainable access to the High Street in Heathfield (provided pedestrian access to the site is achieved), this will help support the vitality and viability of the services within Heathfield.</p> <p><b>Major negative effects: None</b></p>

	<p><b>Minor negative effects: SO1 Climate Change Mitigation; SO6 Waste; SO9 Biodiversity and SO10 Landscape &amp; Townscape</b></p> <p>All development will result in an increase in greenhouse gas emissions and waste production, although the application of Local Plan policies should mitigate any negative impact.</p> <p>The site is wholly within the Pevensey, Rother and Cuckmere Watershed BOA and contains an area of Priority Habitat Deciduous Woodland and is therefore likely to have biodiversity value. Development could adversely impact on the objectives of the BOA and the woodland and whilst development will be required to provide at least 20% BNG it is not clear whether this could be accommodated on site or mitigate for the harm likely to be caused to the BOA.</p> <p>The site is wholly within the High Weald National Landscape and has moderate to high sensitivity to development as a result of this and due to its location within a prominent position. The site boundary vegetation will need to be retained and protected and additional structural planting would be needed to help reinforce the character and appearance of the High Weald National landscape. Development would however result in the loss of land within the High Weald National Landscape.</p> <p><b>No significant effect: SO18 Economy &amp; Employment and SO20 Education &amp; Skills</b></p> <p>The type of proposed development and the site's location means no significant effects on these SA Objectives.</p> <p><b>Uncertain:</b> for the remaining objectives, more information is required to determine the effects</p>
<p><b>Selected / Rejected for allocation</b></p>	<p>The site is taken forward for allocation for 10 (net dwellings). The recently completed development to the north may offer vehicular and pedestrian access to the site; however, this can also be achieved via Tower Street to the west through the demolition of a single dwelling. The site is in a sustainable location and is located in close proximity to the services and facilities in Heathfield along the A265.</p> <p>The site is relatively enclosed from the wider AONB landscape, therefore with careful design; the development of this site would have a limited impact on the wider area, although it is acknowledged that there would be a loss of land within the designated landscape. Any development would need to meet the requirements under paragraph 177 of the NPPF.</p>