

TITLE	Draft Central and Eastern Berkshire Joint Minerals and Waste Plan
FOR CONSIDERATION BY	The Executive on 26 July 2018
WARD	None Specific;
DIRECTOR	Director of Corporate Services – Graham Ebers Director of Locality and Customer Services – Josie Wragg
LEAD MEMBER	Executive Member for Business, Economic Development and Strategic Planning – Stuart Munro;

OUTCOME / BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY

The Draft Central and Eastern Berkshire Joint Minerals and Waste Local Plan will provide a robust strategy to ensure there is an adequate mineral supply and to ensure the sustainable management of waste. The Draft Plan consultation is the second formal stage of the process, following an Issues and Options consultation in 2017.

RECOMMENDATION

The Executive is asked to:

- 1) approve the Draft Central and Eastern Berkshire Joint Minerals and Waste Plan for public consultation;
- 2) authorise community involvement on the Draft Central and Eastern Berkshire Joint Minerals and Waste Plan and associated supporting documents to take place between August - October 2018;
- 3) authorise the Director of Corporate Services and Director of Locality and Customer Services, in consultation with the Executive Member for Environment and the Executive Member for Business and Economic Development and Strategic Planning to agree minor amendments necessary to the Draft Central and Eastern Berkshire Joint Minerals and Waste Plan and other supporting documents prior to consultation. (Any minor modifications would consist of non-material alterations such as rewording and correction of typing errors).

SUMMARY OF REPORT

This report seeks approval to commence a public consultation on the Draft Central and Eastern Berkshire Joint Minerals and Waste Plan and associated supporting documents. It is intended that consultation on the Draft Plan will be undertaken between August - October 2018. This consultation/community involvement will then feed into the preparation of a revised version of the draft local plan for eventual submission to the Secretary of State.

Wokingham Borough Council is preparing the Joint Central and Eastern Berkshire Minerals and Waste Plan with the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, Bracknell Forest Borough Council and Reading Borough Council. The Plan is being

produced in collaboration by Hampshire Services (part of Hampshire County Council). Draft consultation documents are attached, or are available on request. They are at an advanced stage of preparation, but will be subject to some further drafting/amendment prior to being made available as part of the consultation.

The Draft Central and Eastern Berkshire Joint Minerals and Waste Plan follows on from consultation on the Issues and Options stage of local plan preparation which was undertaken during summer 2017. Responses to that consultation along with various factors detailed below have been taken into account in drawing up the Draft Plan.

At this stage of the plan making process evidence is still being gathered and this consultation is an opportunity for local developers, landowners, residents and other interested parties to provide further information that may influence subsequent versions of the plan.

Due to the size of the Draft Plan it has not been included in the agenda. The document can be viewed on the Council's website or a copy obtained from Democratic Services.

Background

The unitary authorities in Berkshire each have responsibility for planning for the future production of minerals and for the management of waste disposal within their administrative area. Since minerals and waste is a strategic matter and is better planned for on a larger geography than an individual unitary authority, Bracknell Forest, Reading, the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (RBWM) and Wokingham Councils agreed to work together to prepare a Joint Minerals and Waste Plan. Upon adoption, the Joint Plan will supersede the Replacement Minerals Local Plan for Berkshire (Adopted in 1995 but subject to Alterations in 1997 and 2001) and the Waste Local Plan for Berkshire (1998).

Slough Borough Council is not part of this joint arrangement due to local complications linked to the potential expansion of Heathrow Airport, but will be closely engaged due to the functional links between the areas. West Berkshire Council is preparing a Minerals and Waste Local Plan for its borough.

The draft Plan covers the administrative area of the four Berkshire authorities and will guide minerals and waste decision-making in the Plan area up to 2036. The Councils currently rely on a Replacement Minerals Local Plan for Berkshire (Adopted in 1995 but subject to Alterations in 1997 and 2001) and the Waste Local Plan for Berkshire (1998). These were prepared and adopted by the former Berkshire County Council and are now out of date. Policies in the existing minerals and waste plans for Berkshire were designed to guide development until 2006. 'Saved' policies are still used, but their effectiveness is now very limited.

The preparation of the Joint Plan will need to accord with current planning policy and guidance on minerals and waste. These are contained within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the accompanying Planning Practice Guidance along with the Waste Management Plan for England which was published in December 2013, and the National Planning Policy for Waste which was published in October 2014.

The draft Plan provides the opportunity to develop a new spatial strategy for minerals and waste planning in Central and Eastern Berkshire. The draft Plan sets out the strategic direction for mineral extraction and waste management across the four authorities up to 2036. This includes proposing sites for allocation for sand and gravel extraction and for waste management. The draft Plan also includes policies to guide the determination of planning applications for minerals and waste uses.

A consultation on the 'Issues and Options' version of the Joint Plan was undertaken for 6 weeks in June – July 2017. The 'Issues and Options' Consultation was the first formal stage of engagement in the process to move to a fully up to date local plan. Responses have been analysed, alongside an assessment of local circumstances that together have narrowed down the options in identifying draft policies and proposed allocations. A summary report of the representations made at the Issues and Options stage is available on the Joint Minerals & Waste consultation website.¹

¹ www.hants.gov.uk/berksconsult

Analysis of Issues

Plan Proposals

Following the consultation on the Issues and Options stage, a Draft Joint Plan has been prepared. This takes account of the results of consultation at the consultation as well as information put forward in two separate “Call for Sites” exercises. Discussions have been held with a range of planning authorities and other organisations that may be affected by the strategies and policies in the Joint Plan under the requirements for Duty to Co-operate. This has ensured that effective cooperation has been undertaken where there are cross-boundary impacts. The results of these discussions have been taken account of in preparing the Draft Plan.

The Joint Plan builds upon the formerly adopted minerals and waste plans for the Berkshire area, and updates, improves and strengthens the policies to ensure that they are relevant in the period up to 2036. The Draft Joint Plan sets out background and context information relevant to planning for minerals and waste in the Central and Eastern Berkshire area. It sets out various evidence and analysis along with forecasting for future needs for minerals extraction and waste facilities in the plan area. It proposes a spatial vision and a spatial strategy that notes extensive cross boundary movement of minerals and waste materials. For minerals extraction, the spatial strategy is closely aligned with the availability of winnable resources within the plan area.

The Draft Joint Plan (previously referred to as ‘the Preferred Options’) is a key part in the preparation process. It identifies and sets out the following subjects for the period up to, and including, the year 2036:

- The long term Spatial Vision and Strategic Objectives for minerals and waste in Central and Eastern Berkshire;
- The delivery strategy for minerals and waste planning that identifies how the objectives will be achieved through development policies in the plan period;
- The Development Management (DM) policies that will be used when the Local Planning Authorities make decisions on planning applications; and
- How each policy will be implemented and monitored by the Central and Eastern Berkshire Authorities to ensure their effectiveness.

The vision of the plan seeks to ensure, working with other authorities and bodies, the maintenance of a steady and adequate supply of minerals, whilst maximising the contribution that minerals development can bring to local communities, the economy and the natural environment. The vision further intends that waste will be managed in a sustainable way, in accordance with the waste hierarchy. It seeks to ensure the delivery of the best environmental solution to waste management. The Draft Joint Plan will also ensure that the full extent of social, economic and environmental benefits of minerals and waste development are captured, contributing to and enhancing quality of life and living standards within the area, whilst minimising impacts on the natural environment.

The Draft Joint Plan sets out a range of policies for both minerals and waste planning. For minerals these include policies covering the spatial strategy, the safeguarding of mineral resources and minerals infrastructure, managing the supply of sand and gravel, and supporting the supply of chalk and clay and of recycled and secondary aggregates. Policy also provides support for aggregate wharves or rail depots. For waste planning the policies include an overall strategy policy, safeguarding policies for waste management facilities, the provision of additional waste infrastructure capacity and a

policy to control the re-working of landfill sites. The document also contains a series of development management policies which provide a framework for dealing with planning applications. These include policies on sustainable development, climate change, various environmental protection, restoration of workings, protecting public health, safety and amenity, water and flooding, transport, design and ancillary development.

Proposed Site Allocations

The Draft Joint Plan proposes the allocation of a number of strategic sites to enable the delivery of the vision, based on assessments of areas promoted through the 'Call for Sites' exercise.

At this stage of the plan making process evidence is still being gathered and this consultation is an opportunity for local developers, landowners, residents and other interested parties to provide further information that may influence subsequent versions of the plan.

Minerals Extraction

Locations for sand and gravel extraction are set out in policy M4 of the Draft Joint Plan. Minerals extraction can only take place in areas where geological surveys have determined minerals are located. The geology of central and eastern Berkshire shows that winnable mineral deposits are predominantly located in Wokingham Borough and RBWM. Some deposits are located in Reading and Bracknell Forest, but the extent of these deposits is much smaller, and are located in built up areas where extraction is not possible. The Draft Joint Plan proposes the extraction of remaining reserves at three sites in RBWM:

- Horton Brook Quarry, Horton
- Riding Court Farm, Datchet
- Sheephouse Farm, Maidenhead

In addition to extensions to existing works at:

- Poyle Quarry, Horton

Four additional sites are also proposed for sand and gravel extraction:

- Poyle Quarry, Horton
- Bridge Farm, Arborfield
- Water Oakley, Holyport
- Ham Island, Old Windsor

Bridge Farm, Arborfield

Policy 'M4 Locations for sand and gravel extraction' of the Draft Joint Plan proposes the allocation of Bridge Farm, Arborfield for the extraction of 3.6 million tonnes of sand and gravel. Extraction is proposed in phases across the 190Ha site over a number of years.

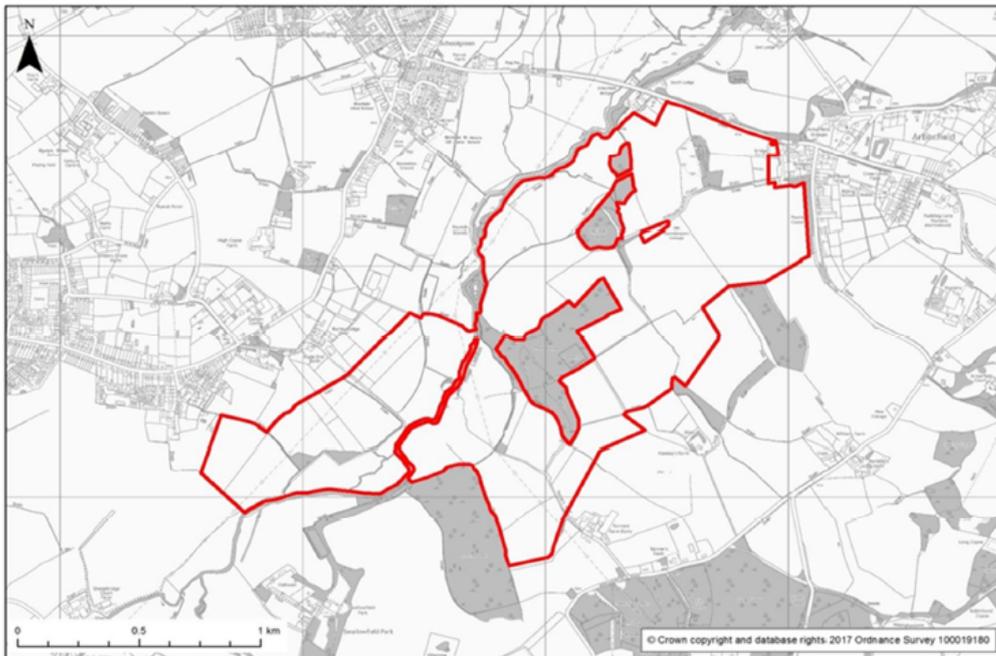
Bridge Farm is a proposed site allocation due to its good connectivity to the strategic road network, and can make a significant contribution to the supply of sand and gravel for use in the plan area over the long term. Minerals are widely used in house building, so the site will help to reduce HGV movements on the road network in the borough, as fewer minerals will need to be imported from other areas.

The 'Development Considerations' section of the Draft Joint Plan draws particular attention to the need to consider visual impacts, the adjacent Local Wildlife Site (LWS) and the need for a transport assessment. Once extraction has ended, the site will be restored to agriculture, lowland meadow and wetlands with enhanced public access. The site is currently subject to a planning application that proposes minerals extraction, where the detailed elements of the proposal are being considered by officers.²

The 'Minerals Proposals Study' background document states the site had previously been identified as a proposed site in the Joint Minerals and Waste Development Framework – Detailed Minerals and Waste Development Control Policies and Preferred Areas Development Plan Document (2008) for the extraction of sharp sand and gravel. This document formed part of the evidence base to support the Berkshire Minerals and Waste Core Strategy, which was withdrawn in 2010.³

No further new sites are proposed for mineral extraction in Wokingham Borough. Appropriate locations for new sites for minerals extraction will be determined through planning applications and consideration of the relevant development management policies.

Bridge Farm, Arborfield



Waste Management

The draft Plan seeks to provide and/or facilitate sustainable management of waste for the plan areas. However, the existing movements of waste to treatment facilities outside of central and eastern Berkshire means continual working with waste planning authorities outside the plan area is required. The Smallmead Waste Management Centre in Reading and Longshot Lane, Bracknell provide facilities for residents of

² Application Number 170433.

³ The Plan was being prepared by the Joint Strategic Planning Unit (JSPU) that was responsible for the production of minerals and waste development documents for the 6 unitary authorities of Berkshire at the time.

Wokingham, Reading and Bracknell Forest as part of the Re3 contract, which is currently contracted to 2032.

Sites for additional waste management infrastructure are set out in policy D4 of the Draft Joint Plan. Waste management sites can be located on different types of land depending on the type of facilities and the proposed activity. Six sites are proposed for allocation for waste management:

- Planners Farm, Brock Hill
- Horton Brook Quarry, Horton
- The Compound, Pinkney's Green, Maidenhead
- Berkyn Manor Farm, Horton
- Star Works, Knowl Hill
- Datchet Quarry/Riding Court Farm, Datchet.

This does not mean that planning permission will automatically be granted for these sites but that the locations provide sustainable development subject to development considerations being addressed. However, these sites are not sufficient to meet the future waste requirements of Central and Eastern Berkshire up to the end of the plan period, and it is therefore expected that further new sites will come forward through market led delivery. The Draft Joint Plan has also identified a number of industrial estates in Reading, Bracknell Forest and Wokingham boroughs that would be potentially suitable for waste uses. These are not named in the policy or supporting text but are discussed in more detail in the Background Document, "Waste: Proposal Study."

Star Works, Knowl Hill

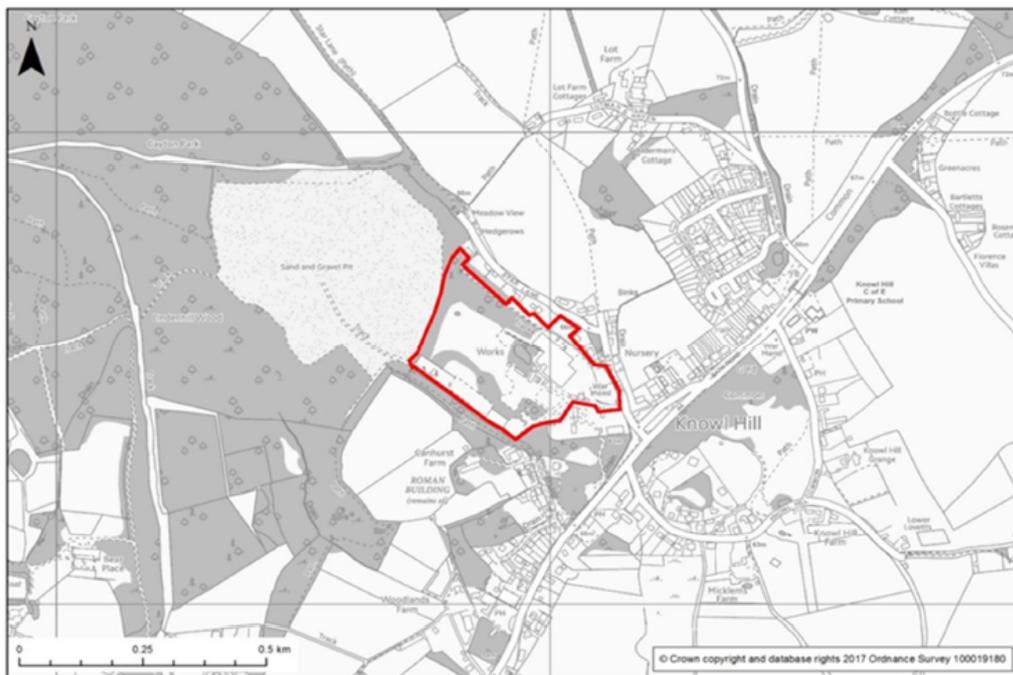
Policy 'W4 Locations and sites for waste management' of the Draft Joint Plan proposes the allocation of Star Works, Knowl Hill⁴ for the continued use of waste collection and treatment, with potential recovery operations and an increase in capacity of up to 100,00 tonnes per annum. The proposed allocation does not include further landfill operation. The 5.22Ha site is in existing use as a waste collection and treatment facility with adjacent landfill operations that are due to be completed by 2020/21. The Draft Joint Plan draws particular attention to the need to consider the adjacent ancient woodland, reinforcement of site boundaries, and the need for a transport assessment.

Star Works is a proposed site allocation as it is considered to have good connectivity to the road network, is an operational waste site and there are no overriding environmental constraints for a suitable waste use or expansion if further mitigation is implemented. The site was also previously allocated as Preferred Area 12 (Star Works) within the Waste Local Plan for Berkshire (1998).

No further sites are proposed for waste management in Wokingham Borough.

⁴ The site is located in Wokingham Borough, but is on the administrative border with RBWM

Star Works, Knowl Hill



Governance

The governance for the preparation of the Joint Plan is headed by a Joint Board with representation from each of the authorities made up of portfolio holders and one additional representative. The Board acts as an advisory body for the preparation of the plan. The Board met on 1st February 2018 to consider the Draft Joint Plan, and received a presentation on its contents, in addition to providing comments on the strategy and the proposed strategic sites.

Supporting Evidence and Consultation

The Draft Central and Eastern Berkshire Joint Minerals and Waste Plan, and various associated documents, are now being finalised for approval by each of the authorities. The other joint authorities will consider the Draft Joint Plan in committees which will meet during June and July 2018. Subject to approval by all 4 joint authorities, it is intended to formally consult on the Draft Joint Plan and various associated documents between August - October 2018.

The Draft Joint Plan refers to a number of separate studies detailed in the 'List of background papers' section. All documentation will be available to view and download from the Joint Plan consultation website⁵. Draft versions of these documents are available to Councillors on request. Finalised versions will be made available via the Council's website as part of the consultation.

Consultation will be undertaken jointly by Hampshire Services with the four local authorities. The consultation seeks responses from all interested parties on the content of the plan, including the proposed strategic, policies and site allocations.

The consultation exercise is being designed to meet the policies and practice set in the Statement of Community Involvement adopted by each of the local authorities.

⁵ www.hants.gov.uk/berksconsult

Consultation will be undertaken with a wide range of parties, including those on the Council's Local Plan consultation database, during August and September 2018. The consultation will involve sending emails/ letters to individuals, organisations, councillors, and internal officers along with public exhibitions that are currently being planned, where officers will be available to answer questions. Advertising and details will be placed on the WBC website. The results of the consultation will be reported in a Consultation Summary Report, produced following the close of the consultation.

Representations made in response to the Draft Joint Plan consultation document, SA/SEA report and other relevant documentation will be given due consideration in the preparation of the next stage document, the pre-submission draft plan, for which approval is programmed to be sought at the end of 2018/in the early part of 2019.

Approval for the Draft Joint Plan, and for other documents that will inform the plan, is sought from Executive. As work on these documents is on-going, delegated authority is sought for the final versions to be agreed by the Interim Director of Environment and Director of Corporate Services in consultation with the Executive Member for Business and Economic Development and Strategic Planning. Executive is also requested to authorise the undertaking of the community involvement described in this report.

Other Options Considered

There is no realistic alternative option that could be considered for taking the Joint Plan forward to adoption. The only other option now available is not to progress the plan any further. This is not recommended.

Timetable

The timetable for the preparation of the Joint Plan was originally agreed by Executive in July 2016, when the Local Development Scheme (LDS) was produced. Since then, Hampshire Services has prepared the initial evidence base in order to produce the Issues and Options consultation document. Two 'Call for Sites' consultations have taken place which invited landowners, developers, members of the public and any other organisations to promote sites for minerals or waste development.

Risk Management

The main risk is whether the Joint Plan is ultimately found to be 'legally compliant' and 'sound' by a Planning Inspector who will conduct an independent public examination.

Legal Compliance

In producing the Joint Plan, each local authority and Hampshire Services has to assess whether the document was compatible with the legal requirements associated with plans of the authority. This included the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2012; the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004; the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010; the Human Rights Act; compliance with Directives of the European Commission and subsequent UK Regulations and ensuring that no segment of the Borough's community was likely to be unfairly penalised.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

The Council faces severe financial challenges over the coming years as a result of the austerity measures implemented by the Government and subsequent reductions to public sector funding. It is estimated that Wokingham Borough Council will be required to make budget reductions in excess of £20m over the next three years and all Executive decisions should be made in this context.

	How much will it Cost/ (Save)	Is there sufficient funding – if not quantify the Shortfall	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	£61k	Yes – there is £300k in the budget, which will cover the cost of the Joint Plan. N.B. some of this will be beyond the 3 year period. Costings for the examination are estimated and are subject to change.	Revenue
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	£61k		
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	£61k		

Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision

The table above sets out the project costs associated with producing the Draft Joint Plan.

This is a multi-year project and therefore the costs will be spread across a number of financial years, the exact timing of which will be subject to external influences such as the Planning Inspectorate's availability for the Public Examination. The profile of the budget may vary according to other factors but can be covered by existing agreed budget, based on estimated costs for the examination process

Stakeholder Considerations and Consultation

This is a joint plan which covers the local authorities of Wokingham Borough, Reading Borough, Bracknell Forest Borough and the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, and therefore the plan has strategic implications. The plan principally focuses on minerals and waste matters but this will also need to consider impact on other topic areas, i.e. highways; biodiversity; cleaner and greener. As such, other services are involved in the production of the Joint Plan and supporting information. It is also important to consider linkages to the Local Plan Update (LPU) that is currently underway. Public consultation with residents, businesses, landowners and other interested parties will take place as set out in the report.

Resourcing and Timeline for Next Steps

Hampshire Services have sufficient resources in place to progress the draft joint Plan to the next stage, called the Pre-submission Draft Joint Plan. This next consultation is anticipated to take place in early 2019. The timing will to an extent be dependent on the number of representations received during the consultation on the Draft Joint Plan, and the issues raised.

Timeline for Review and Evaluation

Once the public consultation has ended all representations submitted will be analysed in order to determine whether any changes to the Draft Joint Plan are required, which may

include further evidence gathering. This will take place prior to the publication of the Pre-submission Draft Joint Plan, anticipated in early 2019.

List of Background Papers

- *Minerals Background Study*: updated since its original publication as part of the Issues and Options consultation undertaken during summer 2017;
- *Waste Background Study*: updated since its original publication as part of the issues and Options consultation undertaken during summer 2017;
- *Interim Strategic Environmental Assessment Report*: This incorporates the Sustainability Appraisal and sets out the assessment of how policies and sites ensure that the Joint Plan will not have any significant impacts on the Central & Eastern Berkshire environment, communities and economy.
- *Habitats Regulation Screening Report*: sets out the assessment of potential impacts of the policies and sites on European designated habitats.
- *Safeguarding Study*: This considers the safeguarding of mineral resources and associated infrastructure, including that associated with waste management;
- *Duty to Cooperate Statement*: sets out the key strategic issues that have been identified how the Joint Authorities have worked with other councils, public bodies and other organisations to address these issues and maximise the effectiveness of the Joint Plan.
- *Strategic Transport Assessment (STA)*: documents key transport evidence and sustainability issues;
- *Strategic Landscape and Visual Assessment*: overview of the likely impact on visual and landscape character of each of the proposed site allocations in the Draft Joint Plan;
- *Restoration Study*: sets out the provision of effective, deliverable measures for appropriate restoration, aftercare and after-use;
- *Waste: Proposal Study*: details how new and enhanced waste management infrastructure will be provided in suitable locations across the plan area;
- *Minerals: Proposal Study*: considers viable proposals for Sharp Sand and Gravel extraction and Minerals infrastructure;
- *Consultation Strategy* – sets out how communities and key stakeholders will be consulted during the plan-making process;
- *Equalities Impact Assessment* – sets out how the Joint Plan will be assessed during preparation stages to ensure it is not having an impact of particular sectors of Central & Eastern Berkshire’s communities;
- *Strategic Flood Risk Assessment* – sets out the flood risks associated with the Plan area and the findings of assessments of the proposed site allocations.
- National Planning Policy Framework (2012) - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--3>
- National Planning Practice Guidance - <http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/>
- Waste Management Plan for England - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/waste-management-plan-for-england>
- National Planning Policy for Waste - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-for-waste>

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