



## Histon & Impington Neighbourhood Plan

# Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening Determination Statement

October 2018

## Executive Summary

This statement sets out the reasons for the determination that the draft Histon & Impington Neighbourhood Plan is unlikely to result in significant environmental effects and therefore does not require a Strategic Environmental Assessment. In addition this statement determines that the making of the Histon & Impington Neighbourhood Plan is not likely to have a significant effect on a European site.

This determination statement is intended to demonstrate that the Histon & Impington Neighbourhood Plan is compatible with certain European Union obligations as required by the basic conditions, namely:

- Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 June 2001 on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment; and
- Article 6(3) and (4) of the EU Habitats Directive and with Regulation 61 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended).

Histon & Impington Parish Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council will publish this determination statement in accordance with the regulatory requirements.

# Determination Statement

This statement has been produced to ensure the Neighbourhood Plan will, when examined, comply with the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) in particular Regulation 32 and Regulation 15(1)e(ii) of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) (Amendment) Regulations 2015.

A neighbourhood plan is required to meet a number of basic conditions (which are set out in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990), one of which being it must not breach and must be otherwise compatible with EU and Human Rights obligations. This requires neighbourhood plans to fully consider the requirements of the SEA regulations<sup>1</sup> which transpose the EU's SEA Directive<sup>2</sup> into law and which requires those making plans that could impact on the environment to consider whether they are likely to have a significant effect or not.

Regulation 32 in the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) sets out an additional basic condition to those set out in primary legislation. Regulation 32 states: *"The making of the neighbourhood plan is not likely to have a significant effect on a European site (as defined in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (d)) or a European offshore marine site (as defined in the Offshore Marine Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 2007 (e) ) (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects).*

A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening Opinion was prepared by Place Services on behalf of South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC) for the Histon & Impington Neighbourhood Plan.(See Appendix 1).

SCDC has consulted the statutory consultees (Historic England/Natural England/Environment Agency) on the Screening Report prepared by Essex Place Services and asked for their views on whether an SEA is required.

Consultation responses were received from the three statutory consultees. Their conclusions are summarised below, and their detailed comments are included in Appendix 2.

- **Historic England**: The Screening Report concludes that the Histon and Impington Neighbourhood Plan will not have any significant effects on the historic environment. Historic England note that the Plan does not itself propose to allocate any sites for development. On the basis of the information supplied, and in the context of the criteria set out in Schedule 1 of the Environmental Assessment Regulations [Annex II of 'SEA' Directive], Historic England concurs with the Council that the preparation of a Strategic Environmental Assessment is not required. (October 2018)
- **Natural England**: On the basis of the material supplied to Natural England with the consultation, that , in so far as their strategic environmental interests are concerned ( including but not limited to statutory designated sites, landscapes and protected species, geology and soils) are concerned, that there are unlikely to be significant environmental effected from the proposed plan. (October 2018)
- **Environment Agency**: Due to resource pressures they were unable to provide a comprehensive bespoke advice on pre application enquiries, screening and scoping

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<sup>1</sup> Known fully as The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.

<sup>2</sup> Known fully as Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 June 2001 on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment.

opinions. They did however comment on flood risk and contamination and these comments can be read in Appendix 2. (October 2018)

The SEA screening assessment considered that the Neighbourhood Plan would not have a significant effect on the environment in so far as the Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared for town and country planning purposes and sets a framework for future development consent. The policies of the Neighbourhood Plan can be considered to determine the use of small areas at local level commensurate with their status in determining local planning applications. The potential for significant effects can be ruled out in consideration of the Plan's content, with suitable protection objectives and no site allocations included.

The assessment concluded that the Neighbourhood Plan was not likely to have significant environmental effects and consequently that a strategic environmental assessment was not required.

The HRA screening indicated that the Histon & Impington Neighbourhood Plan is not predicted to have likely significant effects on any European site, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects.

Based on the screening opinion and having considered the consultation responses from the statutory environmental bodies, Histon & Impington Parish Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council determine that the Histon & Impington Neighbourhood Plan is unlikely to result in significant environmental effects and therefore does not require a strategic environmental assessment. The Councils also determine that the Neighbourhood Plan is not likely to result in significant effects on any European site.

## Appendix 1: Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening for Histon & Impington Neighbourhood Plan

As part of the process of making a Neighbourhood Plan, Histon & Impington Parish Council has requested a screening opinion to see whether a Strategic Environmental Assessment is required. Such a requirement can be screened out if it is felt, based on the information available, that the Neighbourhood Plan would not have a likely significant environmental affect.

A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening Opinion was prepared by Place Services on behalf of South Cambridgeshire District Council for the Histon & Impington Neighbourhood Plan.



# Histon & Impington Neighbourhood Plan

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) & Habitat Regulations  
Assessment (HRA) Screening Report – October 2018





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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. The Purpose of this Report

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This screening report is an assessment of whether or not the contents of the Histon & Impington Neighbourhood Plan require a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in accordance with the European Directive 2001/42/ EC and associated Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations. A SEA is required if the Neighbourhood Development Plan is deemed to have a likely significant effect on the environment.

This report will also screen to determine whether the Neighbourhood Development Plan requires a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) in accordance with Article 6(3) and (4) of the EU Habitats Directive and with Regulation 61 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended). A HRA is required when it is deemed that likely adverse significant effects may occur on protected European Sites (Natura 2000 sites) as a result of the implementation of a plan/project.

## 1.2. The Histon & Impington Neighbourhood Plan (2018-2031)

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The Neighbourhood Plan will set out planning policies for the Histon & Impington Neighbourhood Plan area. Once formally adopted, a Neighbourhood Plan carries the same legal weight as Local Development Plans adopted up by the Local Planning Authority (LPA), in this case South Cambridgeshire District Council.

The Neighbourhood Plan states that the primary purpose of a Neighbourhood Plan is related to the use and development of land within the Parish and its role in determining planning applications within the Plan Area. The purpose of the Neighbourhood Plan is to:

- Set out a framework to guide community members, the local authority and developers on how the community wishes to manage and control future development in the Plan Area;
- Record the heritage, community and environmental (including Green Spaces) assets that the community wishes to preserve;
- To set out a vision for the future of the community; and to
- Establish an action plan that provides the community with a plan to improve facilities, services and the environment in accordance with the community's vision for sustainable growth in the Plan Area.

The Plan's Vision is as follows:

*Histon & Impington is and will continue to be a cohesive, single community with a special character next to but separate from Cambridge. It is and will be sustainable, resilient and inclusive.*

*It embraces many village characteristics, a green, parish church (in fact it's got two), village pubs, considerable green space (both formal and informal), but at the same time it's home to a business park and an industrial site which are major employers, there's a popular high street and its population is approaching 10 thousand. It is important that this balance be maintained.*



*The community will be 'sustainable'. There will be sufficient school places for all who want them and a GP practice which meet the needs of all residents. Although many residents will commute, to Cambridge, London and elsewhere, there will be safe and convenient walking, cycling and public transport options. Many will work from home and there will be an ecosystem to support them.*

*It is bounded on the south by the A14 and on all other sides by green belt. This green belt will be protected with only minimal development when there will be an associated contribution to community facilities. There will be no large scale housing developments.*

*Histon & Impington will be 'resilient'. As far as it can it will look after itself. It will support the police by minimising opportunities for crime, it will provide its young people with opportunities outside of school, and it will encourage its residents to lead fit and healthy lifestyles and will support them when they become less able.*

*It will be a diverse, inclusive and tolerant community. It will ensure that there is housing available for those with lower incomes who are in no way any less important than those who can afford the high housing prices which currently characterise the community. It will welcome all new residents and others who may visit the villages to shop, for education or any other purpose.*

*Histon & Impington will be a community which recognises its heritage and remains rooted in it but at the same time understands the advantages that technology can bring and leverages this to enable it to deliver the many and disparate elements of this vision.*

Additionally, a number of 'priorities' are devised for the Plan. These are:

- Special Character - To protect the essential character of the Community
- Vibrant Community - To ensure the village's community infrastructure (clubs and societies, open spaces and events) develops and adapts to their emerging and changing demographic.
- Housing for all - To ensure a sufficient supply of sustainable and high quality housing (including affordable homes and small and larger units which address changing demographic demand) within the villages.
- Safe and Secure - To support the community in continuing to make the villages safe, secure, supportive and welcoming for all.
- Successful Economy - To encourage the growth and success of the retail, leisure and other commercial businesses of the villages.

### 1.3. The South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework / Local Plan

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The adopted South Cambridgeshire Local Development Framework includes a number of Development Plan Documents (DPD) and Area Action Plans. Sustainability Appraisal / Strategic Environmental Assessment have been carried out for each of these documents as well as a Habitat Regulation Assessment. A link can be found on the following pages on our website to these key documents:



- Core Strategy DPD
- Development Control Policies DPD
- Site Specific Policies DPD

The Council submitted in March 2014 the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan for independent examination. Post examination, the Local Plan Inspectors sought a number of modifications to the Plan.

Public consultation on Main Modifications to the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan and Cambridge Local Plan (and associated Sustainability Appraisal of the Main Modifications) ended at 5pm on Friday 16 February 2018. The representations (in full) received have been submitted to the Inspectors undertaking the examination.

The Inspectors considered all the comments received and have decided that the Local Plan is 'sound', subject to a number of further modifications being made. Following receipt of the Inspectors' Report the Examinations of both Local Plans have now concluded. The South Cambridgeshire Local Plan will be presented to a Cabinet meeting on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> September 2018 before a final decision on adoption is made at a Council meeting on Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> September 2018.

### 1.3.1. Content regarding the Neighbourhood Plan area within the Local Plan

The Local Plan identifies Histon & Impington as a 'Rural Centre' within Policy S/8. Rural Centres are the largest, most sustainable villages of the district. They have good access to a secondary school (either within the village or accessible by good public transport), employment opportunities, a variety of services and facilities and have good public transport services to Cambridge or a market town.

*Policy S/8 adds that, 'development and redevelopment without any limit on individual scheme size will be permitted within the development frameworks of Rural Centres, as defined on the Policies Map, provided that adequate services, facilities and infrastructure are available or can be made available as a result of the development.'*

Policy E/8: Mixed-Use Development in Histon & Impington Station Area involves the allocation of commercial uses, community uses and residential development. The aspiration is to make better use of vacant and underused land to provide a wider mix of uses to attract more use of the area at different times of the day, including outside of the peak hours. These uses could include small (artisan) workshops, small scale retail and destination shops (e.g. for craft made items, specialist foods) as well as food outlets including café / restaurants. The new uses should complement facilities offered elsewhere in the village and should not detract from or undermine them. The Policy states that a Supplementary Planning Document may be produced to support the application of the policy.



## 2. Legislative Background

### 2.1. Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

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Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 June 2001 on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment states that,

*‘Environmental assessment is an important tool for integrating environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of certain plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment.*

*(10) All plans and programmes which are prepared for a number of sectors and which set a framework for future development consent of projects listed in Annexes I and II to Council Directive 85/337/EEC of 27 June 1985 on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment(7), and all plans and programmes which have been determined to require assessment pursuant to Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild flora and fauna(8), are likely to have significant effects on the environment, and should as a rule be made subject to systematic environmental assessment. When they determine the use of small areas at local level or are minor modifications to the above plans or programmes, they should be assessed only where Member States determine that they are likely to have significant effects on the environment.*

*(11) Other plans and programmes which set the framework for future development consent of projects may not have significant effects on the environment in a I cases and should be assessed only where Member States determine that they are likely to have such effects.’*

The Histon & Impington Neighbourhood Plan may influence frameworks for future development, or become used ancillary to those plans and programmes that do set such a framework, and as such it has been determined that the principle of the Neighbourhood Plan should be screened for the necessary application of the SEA Directive.

The Report from the Commission to The Council, The European Parliament, The European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions states, on the application and effectiveness of the Directive on Strategic Environmental Assessment (Directive 2001/42/EC), that

*‘the following P&P, and modifications to them, are covered when prepared and/or adopted by an authority[2] and required pursuant to legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions:*

- P&P prepared for certain sectors and which set the framework for future development consent in respect of projects under the Environmental Impact Assessment-EIA-Directive.*
- P&P requiring an assessment under the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC).*
- P&P setting the framework for development consent in respect of projects (not limited to those listed in the EIA Directive; see above) and determined by "screening" as being likely to have significant environmental effects.’*

This report represents this screening process in regard to the content and influence of the Histon & Impington Neighbourhood Plan.



## 2.2. Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)

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Under the provisions of the EU Habitats Directive and translated into English law by the Habitats Regulations (*The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) Regulations 2017*), a competent authority must carry out an assessment of whether a plan or project will significantly affect the integrity of any European Site, in terms of impacting the site's conservation objectives.

HRA is the screening assessment of the impacts of a land use proposal against the conservation objectives of European sites. Specifically, it is to ascertain whether or not a proposal (either alone or in combination with other proposals) would potentially damage the internationally designated features of that site. European sites are also known as Natura 2000 sites.

This HRA Screening Report has been undertaken in order to support the Histon & Impington Neighbourhood Development Plan which is being produced by Histon & Impington Parish Council in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.

The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, state that submitted Plans need to be accompanied by a statement explaining how the proposed Plan meets the 'basic conditions' set out in Schedule 4B of the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act. These basic conditions include a requirement to demonstrate how the Plan is compatible with EU obligations, which includes the need to undertake a HRA.



### 3. SEA Screening

#### 3.1. When is SEA Required?

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Planning Practice Guidance – Strategic environmental assessment requirements for neighbourhood plans (Paragraph: 026 Reference ID: 11-026-20140306) states that,

*'In some limited circumstances, where a neighbourhood plan is likely to have significant environmental effects, it may require a strategic environmental assessment. Draft neighbourhood plan proposals should be assessed to determine whether the plan is likely to have significant environmental effects. This process is commonly referred to as a "screening" assessment and the requirements are set out in regulation 9 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.*

*If likely significant environmental effects are identified, an environmental report must be prepared in accordance with paragraphs (2) and (3) of regulation 12 of those Regulations.*

*One of the basic conditions that will be tested by the independent examiner is whether the making of the neighbourhood plan is compatible with European Union obligations (including under the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive).*

*To decide whether a draft neighbourhood plan might have significant environmental effects, it must be assessed (screened) at an early stage of the plan's preparation according to the requirements set out in regulation 9 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004. These include a requirement to consult the environmental assessment consultation bodies.*

*Each consultation body will be able to advise on particular topics relevant to its specific area of expertise and responsibility, and the specific information that it holds.*

*Where it is determined that the plan is unlikely to have significant environmental effects (and, accordingly, does not require an environmental assessment), a statement of reasons for the determination should be prepared. A copy of the statement must be submitted with the neighbourhood plan proposal and made available to the independent examiner.'*

Articles 2 and 3 of the SEA Directive set out the circumstances in which an SEA is required. Table 1 sets out the assessment of whether the principle of the Histon & Impington Neighbourhood Plan will require a full SEA.

Table 1: Exploring whether the Principle of the Plan would warrant SEA

Q	Criteria	Response	Outcome	Commentary
1	Is the Plan subject to preparation and/or adoption by a national, regional or local authority OR prepared by an authority for adoption through legislative procedure by Parliament or Government	Yes	Go to question 2	The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared for adoption through legislative procedure.
2	Is the Plan required by legislative, regulatory or <u>administrative provision</u>  Typical characteristics of "administrative provisions" are that they are publicly available, prepared in a formal way, probably involving consultation with interested parties. The administrative provision must have sufficient formality such that it counts as a "provision" and it must also use language that plainly requires rather than just encourages a Plan to be prepared.	Yes	Go to question 3	The Neighbourhood Plan would be considered as falling within the category of an 'administrative provision'.
3	Is the Plan prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism, town and country planning or land use AND does it set a framework for future development consent of projects in Annexes I and II to the EIA Directive?	Yes to both criteria	Go to question 5	The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared for town and country planning and sets a framework for future development consent
		No to either criteria	Go to question 4	
4	Will the Plan, in view of its likely effect on sites, require an assessment under Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive?	Yes	Go to question 5	N/A
		No	Go to question 6	
5	Does the Plan determine the use of small areas at local level, OR is it a minor modification of a Plan likely to require assessment under the Habitats Directive?	Yes to either criteria	Go to question 8	The policies of the Neighbourhood Plan can be considered to determine the use of small areas at local level commensurate with their status in determining local planning applications.
		No to both criteria	Go to question 7	

Q	Criteria	Response	Outcome	Commentary
6	Does the Plan set the framework for future development consent of projects (not just projects in the Annexes of the EIA Directive)?	Yes	Go to question 8	N/A
		No	DOES NOT REQUIRE SEA	
7	Is the Plans sole purpose to serve national defence or civil emergency, OR is it a financial or budget Plan, OR is it co-financed by structural funds or EAGGF programmes 2000 to 2006/7	Yes to any criteria	DOES NOT REQUIRE SEA	N/A
		No to all criteria	REQUIRES SEA	
8	Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment?	Yes	REQUIRES SEA	Likely significant effects are explored in more detail elsewhere in this Screening Report.
		No	DOES NOT REQUIRE SEA	

The following section looks at the criteria for assessing the effects of the Neighbourhood Development Plan and the identified effects of the Neighbourhood Plan in line with the criteria. Crucially, it will determine whether there are any likely significant effects on the environment.

### 3.2. Criteria for Assessing the Effects of the Neighbourhood Development Plan

Criteria for determining the likely significant effects on the environment, referred to in Article 3(5) of Directive 2001/42/EC are set out below.

#### Annex II of SEA Directive 2001/42/EC – Significant Effects

1. The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular, to

- the degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources,
- the degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy,
- the relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development,
- environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme,
- the relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (e.g. plans and programmes linked to waste-management or water protection).

2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to

- the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects,
- the cumulative nature of the effects,
- the transboundary nature of the effects,
- the risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents),
- the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected),
- the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:
  - \* special natural characteristics or cultural heritage,
  - \* exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values,
  - \* intensive land-use,
  - \* the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.

### 3.3. Likely Significant Effects on the Environment resulting from the Neighbourhood Development Plan

The following assessment will consider the likelihood of the Neighbourhood Development Plan (at the time of writing) to have significant effects on the environment.

**Table 2: Assessment of Likely Significant Effects on the Environment**

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)	Likelihood and summary of significant effects
<p>The degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources.</p>	<p>The Plan sets out relevant policies which will be used to determine proposals for development within the Neighbourhood Plan Area once adopted. The Plan includes a policy (HIM17 STATION) that expresses support for an allocation within the Local Plan under Policy E/8. The Local Plan allocates the site for mixed-use development (a Parish Council led proposal), with subsequent policy criteria, and the Neighbourhood Plan expands on these criteria stating that additional requirements should be met. To this extent the Neighbourhood Plan does set a framework for the project, however does not allocate resources.</p> <p>Although not an allocation within the Neighbourhood Plan that would require the assessment of reasonable alternatives as per the SEA Directive, such sites are included and assessed within the Sustainability Appraisal of the Local Plan, albeit on a wider scale across the South Cambridgeshire administrative area. As the Local Plan examination has recently ended, with the Plan having been found 'sound' subject to modifications unrelated to Policy E/8.</p>
<p>The degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans or programmes including those in a hierarchy.</p>	<p>The Neighbourhood Plan provides policies for the Plan area, relevant to a local level only. The policies are in general conformity to that of the emerging South Cambridgeshire Local Plan. The Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate land for development purposes within the Plan area; however supports a single allocation within the Local Plan in Policy HIM17 and offers additional policy considerations. The Neighbourhood Plan, when/if 'made', will have weight in all planning decisions within the Plan area however due to the status of the Local plan at the time of writing (having been found sound at examination subject to further modifications) would not have a large degree of weight in influencing other plans and programmes.</p>
<p>The relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development.</p>	<p>Neighbourhood Plans are required to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The Neighbourhood Plan policies seek to ensure environmental considerations are taken into account. The Plan includes two policies related (directly / indirectly) to ensuring environmental considerations will be integrated into any forthcoming development within the Plan area:</p>



### Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)

### Likelihood and summary of significant effects

- HIM13 Important Natural Habitats
- HIM01 High Quality Design – Residential Development

There is no Policy within the Neighbourhood Plan that seeks to integrate environmental improvements or enhancements as a result of new development, and similarly no overriding protection-based policies applicable to new development. The Plan seeks the protection of existing assets, rather than offer a guide for new development proposals. It should be acknowledged however that such an approach can be seen as effective and suitable in a Plan area that includes Greenbelt land surrounding existing development boundaries. The focus is therefore on brownfield land in the first instance and redevelopment opportunities.

The emerging Local Plan's Examination led to a proposed modification to Local Plan Policy S/7: Development Frameworks which states that, '*outside development frameworks, only allocations within Neighbourhood Plans that have come into force... will be permitted.*' No allocations for development purposes are included within the Neighbourhood Plan; however the principle of development within the Neighbourhood Plan boundary (outside of the Greenbelt) is supported by the Local Planning Authority.

Environmental problems relevant to the plan.

The Neighbourhood Plan reflects a small area and the Plan's policy content seeks to address environmental issues. The policy content of the adopted LDF and the Local Plan will additionally apply to any proposals within the Neighbourhood Plan area. These policies have been subject to Sustainability Appraisal within the context of the LDF and Local Plan. The Plan and this Screening Report identify the following potential (direct / indirect) environmental problems or sources of potential problems relevant to the Neighbourhood Plan area:

- The entirety of land surrounding the existing built-up area of Histon & Impington is designated Greenbelt land.
- A number of Priority Habitats (from the Priority Habitat Inventory<sup>1</sup>) are scattered throughout the Plan area, with many adjacent to the existing settlement boundary. These include Broadleaved Woodland, Deciduous Woodland and Traditional Orchard. Young Trees Woodland is also present within the Greenbelt.
- A relatively large area to the north west of the built up area of Histon & Impington is within a High Spatial Priority Area for Woodland Flood Risk.
- The Plan area contains a Scheduled Monument (a mediaeval moated site 140m south west of Histon Manor). This Scheduled Monument includes an island that remains

<sup>1</sup> a spatial dataset that describes the geographic extent and location of Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006) Section 41 habitats of principal importance.

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)	Likelihood and summary of significant effects
<p>The relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (e.g. plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection).</p>	<p>largely undisturbed and will retain buried evidence for structures and other features relating to the period of occupation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are 38 Listed Buildings within the Plan area the majority of these are within the Histon Conservation Area,</li> <li>• Of these Listed Buildings, three are Grade I listed ( Parish Church of St Andrew, Village College, and Church of St Andrew) and two are Grade II* listed (The Olde House, and Impington Mill).</li> <li>• A SSSI (Histon Road SSSI) lies outside but in close proximity to the settlement boundary to the south (south of the A14). The Plan area is within various Impact Risk Zones of the SSSI, the closest of these to the SSSI within the boundary requires consultation with Natural England for residential development of 100 units or more / any residential development of 50 or more houses outside existing settlements/urban areas.</li> <li>• Closer to the centre of the built up area of Histon, large infrastructure such as warehousing / industry where total net additional gross internal floorspace following development is 1,000m<sup>2</sup> or more would require consultation with Natural England due to being within a Histon Road SSSI Impact Risk Zone.</li> <li>• The Plan area includes an AQMA at its southern most point associated with the A14 (AQMA 503 - area along the A14 between Bar Hill and Milton).</li> <li>• There is also noise quality implications associated with the A14 to the south within the Plan area. This includes areas of land within average noise levels of 55-65 dB in the day (Lden) and 50-54.9 at night (Lnight).</li> <li>• Large areas of Flood Risk Zones 3 and 2 exist within the Plan area centrally within the development boundary of Histon, associated with a tributary of the Old West River (itself a tributary of the Ely Ouse).</li> <li>• Grade 2 and 3 Agricultural Land surrounds the built up area. This corresponds to 'very good' and 'good to moderate' soil quality respectively.</li> </ul> <p>The content of the Neighbourhood Plan is not in conflict with those relevant planning documents within the wider district and county area related to waste management or water protection.</p>

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)	Likelihood and summary of significant effects
The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects on the following factors:	The following impacts have been identified within this Screening Assessment:
- Biodiversity	<p>The Plan area is outside the Impact Risk Zone of any SSSIs and no land is allocated for development within the Plan. As a result, there cannot be considered to be likely significant effects on nationally designated sites within the Plan area.</p> <p>Policy HIM13 seeks to protect and enhance natural habitats in the Plan area, however it is uncertain how these relate to the numerous Priority Habitats in and around the settlement boundary. Nevertheless, the Plan identifies areas primarily for protection purposes and it should be acknowledged that adopted Local Plan policies on biodiversity also apply. The HRA Screening element of this Report also screens out any negative effects at the Plan level and in-combination with other plans and projects. Therefore, the potential for negative effects on biodiversity can be ruled out at this stage.</p>
- Population	<p>It is considered that there would be no effects on population resulting from the Neighbourhood Plan due to the small scale of the Plan area and the fact that the Plan does not allocate sites for development purposes.</p>
- Human health	<p>There are no highlighted significant effects of the Neighbourhood Plan regarding human health that would warrant a strategic assessment through SEA. The Plan includes policies for the protection of green and open spaces that contribute to healthy lifestyles.</p>
- Fauna	<p>The impacts of the Neighbourhood Plan on fauna are not considered significant at the plan level. It is possible that any number of developments that could be forthcoming within the Plan Area could have negative impacts on protected species, however these cannot be considered strategically significant to the extent that Strategic Environmental Assessment would be warranted. Such issues are more appropriate to be considered on a case-by-case 'project level' basis at the development management stage and in accordance with relevant development management policies contained within the LPA's adopted LDF and emerging (sound) Local Plan.</p>
- Flora	<p>Areas of Priority Habitat woodland exist within the Plan Area, however these are not likely to be lost or otherwise harmed through their protection (where relevant) in Policy HIM13 and the fact that no development is allocated within the Plan. There will be no likely significant effects on flora as a result.</p>

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)	Likelihood and summary of significant effects
- Soil	<p>The Plan area contains Grade 2 (very good) Agricultural Land (ALC) / soil quality which represents the best and most versatile agricultural land within the wider District. The Plan is however within the Greenbelt, and no such land is allocated for development purposes within the Neighbourhood Plan. There will therefore be no negative implications surrounding soil quality.</p>
- Water	<p>The Neighbourhood Plan area is within High Priority area for Surface Water Nitrate Issues, however no element of the Plan could be considered to exacerbate these water quality issues.</p> <p>Source Protection Zones (SPZs) respond to sources such as wells, boreholes and springs used for public drinking water supply. These zones show the risk of contamination from any activities that might cause pollution in the area. The Plan area is not within any Source Protection Zone and as such the Neighbourhood Plan will not have any related effect. Furthermore it cannot be considered that the Plan would cause any related negative water quality effects related to the potential pollution of ground water (e.g. give rise to hazardous substances such as pesticides, oils, petrol and diesel, solvents, arsenic, mercury or chromium VI; or non-hazardous substances such as ammonia or nitrates). Pollution control policies at the LPA level also apply within the Neighbourhood Plan area to ensure that no negative effects on water quality would be experienced within Histon &amp; Impington.</p>
- Air	<p>An AQMA is located partly within the Plan area to the south associated with the A14, with negative existing air quality implications as a result. Despite this, no land in this area is designated for development purposes within the Plan. The Plan's justification for the protection of a number of natural habitats in the Plan area within Policy HIM13 states that, 'particularly, in the southern part of the plan area, these areas also function as important buffer zones between the A14 and residential areas, thereby being very important for purpose of maintaining air quality and mitigating noise, dust and vibration impact from busy strategic roads.' This goes some way in protecting air quality in the Plan area.</p> <p>Additionally, restrictions on the suitability of development on land surrounding the A14 exist at the LPA level and nationally due to its location within the Greenbelt, indicating that air quality issues would not be unreasonably exacerbated by any future growth within the specific area of the AQMA. Furthermore, policy related to air quality exists within the emerging Local Plan that has recently been found sound at examination.</p>
- Climatic factors	<p>The Neighbourhood Plan area contains significant areas of Flood Risk Zones 3 and 2. The Plan does not include any allocations for development purposes. No policies exist within the Plan that address</p>

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)	Likelihood and summary of significant effects
	<p>flood risk issues, although it should be acknowledged that existing adopted and emerging Local Plan policies regarding flood risk apply in the Plan area. There will be no impacts resulting from the scope and content of the Neighbourhood Plan.</p>
<p>- Material assets</p>	<p>The Plan area contains land designated as within a Minerals Safeguarding Area (MSA) within the County Council's adopted Minerals Local Plan (Proposals Map C) (2011) between the A14 and the southern edge of the settlement boundary and within the Greenbelt. The Plan does not include any policies that conflict with the MSA or include any site allocations.</p> <p>Regarding other material assets, the content of the Neighbourhood Plan is not considered to have any significant effects due to the extent / size of the Neighbourhood Area. Such issues are more appropriate to be considered on a case-by-case basis at the development management stage and in accordance with relevant development management policies contained within the LPA's adopted LDF and emerging (sound) Local Plan.</p>
<p>- Cultural heritage</p>	<p>The Plan area contains a Scheduled Monument and 38 Listed Buildings including three that are Grade I listed and two that are Grade II* listed. The Plan area also includes a Conservation Area. The Plan does not include any site allocations that could have any negative effect on these assets. Support is given for a redevelopment area at the Station within Policy HIM17 and this is an extension of Policy E/8 of the emerging Local Plan which has recently been found sound at examination (subject to modifications), with no proposed modifications relevant to this Policy.</p> <p>Policy HIM02 seeks that proposals should seek to preserve or enhance the significance of the heritage assets. It also introduces an 'Interesting Buildings' list, buildings on which have been identified as non-designated heritage assets. Although this Policy could be elaborated on in terms of the wider settings of assets, Policy exists at the LPA level which additionally applies in the Plan area. No effects are therefore highlighted on cultural heritage.</p>
<p>- Landscape</p>	<p>The Neighbourhood Plan area contains areas of Greenbelt surrounding the existing settlement boundary. The Plan does not allocate land for development or seek any settlement boundary amendments. As a result, there have not been any significant strategic landscape effects that would warrant the requirement for the application of the SEA Directive and the formulation of a SEA Environmental Report.</p>
<p>The cumulative nature of the effects.</p>	<p>In line with the above considerations that explore the possible individual effects of the Plan's content, no significant cumulative effects are considered to be likely to warrant the requirement for the</p>

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)	Likelihood and summary of significant effects
	application of the SEA Directive and the formulation of a SEA Environmental Report.
The trans boundary nature of the effects.	The emerging South Cambridgeshire Local Plan, which has recently been found sound at examination subject to modifications, and the suite of development plan documents adopted at the district level, can be seen to support the protection and improvement of conditions relevant to those sustainability factors listed within the SEA Directive. The Neighbourhood Plan is not in conflict with these wider thematic policies. The HRA Screening element of this Report, which explores in-combination effects with other relevant plans and programmes, also identifies no in-combination effects regarding Habitats (Natura 2000) Sites.
The risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents).	There is limited risk to human health or the environment as a result of the Neighbourhood Plan. This is in consideration of the above screening requirements related to sustainability themes. The Neighbourhood Plan is primarily focused on housing, and is unlikely to give rise to any accidents that can be considered to have a significant risk to human health or the environment.
The magnitude spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected).	No development allocations are identified within the Plan area as a result of the Plan, and no other effects are identified within this Screening Report.
The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- special natural characteristics or cultural heritage</li> <li>- exceeded environmental quality standards</li> <li>- intensive land use</li> </ul>	As highlighted above in the screening of the Plan per sustainability theme, the Neighbourhood Plan has been assessed as having no potential for significant effects that would warrant further assessment through SEA.
The effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, community or international protection status.	As highlighted above in the screening of the Plan per sustainability theme, the Neighbourhood Plan has been assessed as not having any significant effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, community or international protection status.



## 4. HRA Screening

### 4.1. Habitat Regulations Assessment of Development Plans

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This section forms a plan level Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) as required by Regulation 63 of The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) Regulations 2017.

Under the provisions of the EU Habitats Directive and translated into English law by the Habitats Regulations (The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) Regulations 2017), a competent authority must carry out an assessment of whether a plan or project will significantly affect the integrity of any European Site, in terms of impacting the site's conservation objectives.

HRA is the screening assessment of the impacts of a land use proposal against the conservation objectives of European (Habitats) sites. Specifically, it is to ascertain whether or not a proposal (either alone or in combination with other proposals) would potentially damage the internationally designated features of that site. European (Habitats) sites are also known as Natura 2000 sites.

In line with the recent Court judgement (CJEU People Over Wind v Coillte Teoranta C-323/17), mitigation measures cannot be taken into account when carrying out a screening assessment to decide whether a plan or project is likely to result in significant effects on a Habitats site. As the Neighbourhood Plan does not require any mitigation for policies and does not allocate any sites for development, HRA screening concluded that it is possible to rule out likely significant effects related to development, without the need for further assessment.

This Report has been undertaken in order to support the Histon & Impington Neighbourhood Plan which is being produced by Histon & Impington Parish Council in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. The area covered by the Plan is shown in Appendix 1.

The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, state that submitted Plans need to be accompanied by a statement explaining how the proposed Plan meets the 'basic conditions' set out in Schedule 4B of the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act. These basic conditions include a requirement to demonstrate how the Plan is compatible with EU obligations, which includes the need to undertake a HRA.

This section of this Report aims to:

- Identify the Habitats sites within 20km of Histon & Impington.
- Summarise the reasons for designation and Conservation Objectives for each site to be considered in this assessment.
- Screen the Histon & Impington Neighbourhood Plan for its potential to impact upon a Habitats site.
- Assess the potential for in combination effects from other projects and plans in the area.
- Identify if there are any outstanding issues that need further investigation.



## 4.2. Habitats (Natura 2000) Sites

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Natura 2000 is the centrepiece of EU nature and biodiversity policy. It is an EU wide network of nature protection areas. The aim of the network is to assure the long-term survival of Europe's most valuable and threatened species and habitats.

The sites are designated under the European Union (EU) Birds Directive (Council Directive 79/409/EEC on the Conservation of Wild Birds) and the EU Habitats Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora).

The Birds Directive requires the establishment of Special Protection Areas (SPAs) for birds. The Habitats Directive similarly requires Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) to be designated for other species, and for habitats. Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar sites) are also considered as part of the Natura 2000 network. This is because all SPAs and SACs are comprised of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and all Ramsar sites in England are SSSIs. Together, SPAs, SACs and Ramsar Sites are considered as Habitats Sites in England (NPPF, 2018).

### 4.2.1. Explanation of SPAs, SACs and Ramsar Sites

#### **Special Protection Areas (SPAs)**

SPAs are areas which have been identified as being of international importance for the breeding, feeding, wintering or the migration of rare and vulnerable species of birds found within EU countries. Example: Ouse Washes is internationally important for wintering waterfowl. *Legislation: EU Birds Directive.*

#### **Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)**

SACs are areas designated to protect habitat types that are in danger of disappearance, have a small natural range, or are highly characteristic of the region; and to protect species that are endangered, vulnerable, rare, or endemic. Example: woodland habitat of Eversden and Wimpole Woods for the population of Barbastelle bats. *Legislation: EU Habitats Directive.*

#### **Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar Sites)**

Ramsar Sites are designated to protect the biological and physical features of wetlands, especially for waterfowl habitats. For example, Wicken Fen is an outstanding remnant of East Anglian peat fens and supports one species of British Red Data Book plant fen violet *Viola persicifolia* which survives at only two other sites in Britain. Ramsar sites often overlap with SACs and SPAs and UK planning policy determines that they should be accorded the same importance when developments are proposed. *Legislation: Ramsar Convention (1971) – Wetlands of International Importance.*

### 4.2.2. Habitats Sites to be considered

There are nine Habitats sites (6 SSSIs) which lie within 20 km of Histon & Impington parish. These were identified by South Cambs Local Plan Sustainability Appraisal (SA) scoping report and are shown on the map in Appendix 2. The parish is buffered by 5km (with respect to Fenland SAC, Ouse Washes SAC, SPA and Ramsar site, Chippenham Fen SAC and Ramsar site, Wicken Fen SAC and Ramsar site and Portsholme SAC) and 10km (with respect to Eversden and Wimpole Woods SAC) as these distances are those identified on MAGIC website ([www.magic.gov.uk](http://www.magic.gov.uk)) as

Impact Risk Zones for consultation with Natural England. Devils Dyke SAC has an IRZ of 2km and Histon & Impington parish is not within this distance.

The types of development proposed by the Histon & Impington Neighbourhood Development Plan do not trigger consultation with Natural England regarding potential impacts on any of these statutory sites.

**Table 3: Habitats Sites within 20km of the development to be considered in this assessment**

SPA	SAC	Ramsar
Ouse Washes SPA	Ouse Washes SAC	Ouse Washes Ramsar
	Eversden and Wimpole Woods SAC	Wicken Fen Ramsar
	Fenland SAC	Chippenham Fen Ramsar
	Devil's Dyke SAC	
	Portholme SAC	

After consideration of the South Cambs District Council Core Strategy SA Scoping (Appendix 11 HRA screening) (June 2012), it was concluded that no SSSIs with European designations shown in Table 3 need to be assessed further for 'likely significant effects' from this draft Neighbourhood Development Plan. There are therefore no Habitats Sites within scope of this HRA screening.

### 4.3. Method and Approach

An assessment of a Neighbourhood Plan under the Habitats Regulations can be split into 2 stages:

First stage – HRA Screening	The process, which identifies the likely impacts upon a Habitats Site, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans, and considers whether these impacts are likely to be significant.
Second stage – Assessment of alternative solutions	The process which examines alternative ways of achieving the objectives of the project or plan that avoid likely significant effects on the interest features of a Habitats site.

It is not possible for a Neighbourhood Development Plan to proceed if compensatory measures are required as it will have to be amended. A Neighbourhood Development Plan cannot progress if there is a likely significant effect.

The 2 stages and their outcomes are described in more detail in the following table. This document relates only to Stage 1 of the HRA process.

**Table 4: Stages of the Habitats Regulations Assessment process**

Stage	Tasks	Outcome
Stage 1 - HRA Screening	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Description of the policies or projects</li> <li>• Identification of potential effects on a Habitats site</li> <li>• Assessing the effects on a Habitats site</li> </ul>	<p>Where effects are unlikely, prepare a 'finding of no significant effect' report.</p> <p>Where effects judged likely, or lack of information to prove otherwise, go to Stage 2.</p>
Stage 2 - Assessment of alternative solutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If impacts considered to affect qualifying features, identify alternative options.</li> <li>• If no alternatives available, define and evaluate mitigation measures</li> </ul>	If effects remain after avoidance and mitigation measures have been secured, the Plan cannot be approved.

#### 4.3.1. Stage 1: HRA Screening

The screening stage identifies if any significant effects are likely because any policies or projects will have an impact on a Habitats Site. Table 3.2 identifies the different categories assigned to each policy in the plan: Category A identifies those policies or projects that are considered to have No Negative Effect. Category B identifies those policies or projects that will have No Likely Significant Effect. Category C identifies those policies or projects that might have Likely Significant Effect upon a Habitats Site either alone or in combination with other plans or projects. Section 4 considers each policy or projects and the results of the screening exercise recorded.

**Table 5: Screening categorisation**

<b>Category A : No negative effect</b>
Policies or projects that will not be likely to have any negative effect on a Habitats site.
<b>Category B : No Likely Significant Effect</b>
Policies or projects that could have an effect but would not be likely to have a <i>significant</i> negative effect on a Habitats site alone or in combination. This conclusion could only be reached if the effects, even in combination and taking the precautionary principle into account, are considered trivial.
<b>Category C Likely Significant Effect</b>
Policies or projects which are predicted to have a likely significant effect on a Habitats Site either alone or in combination with other plans and projects.

#### 4.3.2. Stage 2: Assessment of alternative solutions

This part of the assessment process examines alternative ways of achieving the objectives of the



policy or project that avoids a likely significant effect on the interest features of a Habitats site.

#### 4.3.3. Potential impacts of Histon & Impington Neighbourhood Development Plan on Habitats sites

There is a wide range of impacts and these can be summarised as -

- Land take by developments;
- Impact on protected species found within but which travel outside the protected sites may be relevant where development could result in effects on qualifying interest species within the Habitats site, for example through the loss of feeding grounds for an identified species.
- Increased disturbance, for example from recreational use resulting from new housing development and / or improved access due to transport infrastructure projects;
- Changes in water availability, or water quality as a result of development and increased demands for water treatment, and changes in groundwater regimes due to increased impermeable areas;
- Changes in atmospheric pollution levels due to increased traffic, waste management facilities etc. Pollution discharges from developments such as industrial Developments, quarries and waste management facilities.

In line with the SA Scoping Report for South Cambridgeshire's Local Plan, each policy will be assessed against the criteria in the table below

**Table 6: Assessment of potential impacts**

Nature of potential impact	How the Histon & Impington Neighbourhood Development Plan (alone or in combination with other plans and projects) could affect a Habitats site?	Why these effects are not considered significant?
Land take by development	Histon & Impington parish is outside the boundaries of the Habitats Sites within scope of this HRA.	N/A
Impact on protected species outside the protected sites	Development in Histon & Impington parish is not likely to impact on habitats for any of the populations of species protected by Habitats Sites within 20km eg spined loach, great crested newts in Wicken Fen Ramsar site and Fenland SAC.	Histon & Impington parish lies outside of the zones of influence for all the Habitats Sites within scope.

Nature of potential impact	How the Histon & Impington Neighbourhood Development Plan (alone or in combination with other plans and projects) could affect a Habitats site?	Why these effects are not considered significant?
	<p>Barbastelle bats, a qualifying feature of Eversden and Wimpole Woods SAC, require minimal disturbance within 2 km of their roost. They can forage up to 20km from their roosts but more typically venture around 6-8km. Development in Histon &amp; Impington parish could potentially impact on foraging habitat for Barbastelle bats but the Plan lies outside the 10km IRZ for this SAC and no land is allocated for development.</p>	<p>The main area of importance for Barbastelle bats is shown on Map 1 in the Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Document adopted by South Cambridgeshire District Council in July 2009. This area reflects the landscape and habitat of known value to bats, and also where survey effort has been deployed up to 2009.</p>
Recreational pressure and disturbance	<p>There is public access to both Eversden and Wimpole Woods SAC and Ouse Washes SPA.</p>	<p>Histon &amp; Impington parish is more than 10km from Eversden and Wimpole Woods SAC and more than 5km to Ouse Washes, so beyond the distance that Natural England consider, in the absence of evidence, that visitors are likely to travel to these sites for recreation.</p> <p>There is a network of public rights of way in the Washes. The RSPB manage a nature reserve at Welches Dam where there is a visitor centre and a number of bird hides.</p> <p>Both sites are carefully managed by the landowners to avoid impacts from recreational pressure and disturbance</p>
Water quantity and quality	<p>Water quality is a major issue of concern for Ouse Washes &amp; it regularly fails to meet total Phosphorus target of 0.1mg/l. During the winter and increasingly during the spring and summer months as well, the inner river takes flood-water from the Great Ouse, and therefore has an important flood defence function. Issues of concern relate to water quantity, water quality, salinity, turbidity and sediment.</p>	<p>Histon &amp; Impington Parish lies outside the 5km zone of influence for Ouse Washes SAC, SPA &amp; Ramsar.</p> <p>The Environment Agency Review of consents concluded in 2012 that water resources consents do not adversely affect the integrity of the European site, with respect to SPA features.</p>
Changes in pollution levels	<p>As Histon &amp; Impington is outside the IRZs of the SSSIs within scope of this HRA, it is considered that there is no pathway for development to result in</p>	<p>N/A</p>

Nature of potential impact	How the Histon & Impington Neighbourhood Development Plan (alone or in combination with other plans and projects) could affect a Habitats site?	Why these effects are not considered significant?
pollution impacts.		

#### 4.4. Results from HRA Screening of Draft Neighbourhood Development Plan Policies

Each of the policies in the Histon & Impington draft Neighbourhood Development Plan were screened to identify whether they would have any impact on a Habitats Site.

**Table 4: Assessment of potential impacts**

Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites?	Recommendations
Policy HIM01 High Quality Design – Residential Development	<p>All residential development proposals shall contribute positively to the quality and character of Histon and Impington:</p> <p>For proposals which result in modifications /extensions to existing dwellings this means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sensitive treatment of boundaries to avoid over development and adverse impact on street scene character;</li> <li>• proposed extensions should not dominate the original building and context other than in exceptional cases where the existing building is of poor quality or little architectural interest in which case it would be appropriate to consider a contemporary design that adds quality and interest to the original building;</li> <li>• where deep plan forms are created through extensions, designers are encouraged to seek innovative and creative solutions to providing natural light and ventilation; and</li> <li>• choice of high quality materials which reflect the existing building or, where appropriate, the context of the wider local area.</li> </ul> <p>For proposals which result in the development of new housing estates this means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• demonstrate, with a submitted Building for</li> </ul>	No, Category A	No specific recommendations

Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites?	Recommendations
	<p>Life 12 assessment, that the proposed development will contribute to achieving sustainable development;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• adopt estate design and layout strategies which priorities walking and cycling and create permeable, connected, safe communities with links to amenities in the community and to other estates and residential areas;</li> <li>• designing in active facades where front doors and habitable rooms overlook the street;</li> <li>• careful consideration of car parking so that it does not dominate the street scene;</li> <li>• creative use of landscaping and planting that enhances the public realm, creates biodiversity and increases amenity;</li> <li>• where appropriate and practical to do so use public art to help reinforce a sense of place and community;</li> <li>• schemes are encouraged to incorporate, where practical to do so, appropriate energy generation technology (solar PV, solar thermal, heat pumps, wind power etc.) to be energy neutral; and</li> <li>• schemes are encouraged to enable the implementation of smart energy technologies to improve energy efficiencies within the home and be innovative in setting standards of design and technology used.</li> </ul> <p>For newly built single dwellings or small plot developments this means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the proposals should be in scale with its neighbours;</li> <li>• where existing design context is of high design quality, the proposals should seek to be in keeping with it;</li> <li>• where the existing design context is poor, a new proposal provides an opportunity to strengthen quality and provide a precedent for future development;</li> <li>• new and innovative housing construction models are encouraged;</li> </ul> <p>All proposals are expected to:</p>		



Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites?	Recommendations
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• be informed by design guidance set out in the Histon and Impington Design Guide, the South Cambridgeshire District Council's Householder Design Guide and any documents which supersede these;</li> <li>• respond to the needs of residents to manage their waste, access their cycles, park their cars and report their utility usage; and</li> <li>• provide super high speed (as a minimum) broadband connections</li> </ul>		
Policy HIM02 Interesting Buildings	<p>The buildings on the Interesting Buildings list shown below have been identified as non-designated heritage assets.</p> <p>Proposals should seek to preserve or enhance the significance of the heritage assets.</p> <p>Where proposals have any effect on a non-designated heritage asset, a balanced judgement will be applied having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.</p>	No, Category A	No specific recommendations
Policy HIM03 Size, Scale and Location of New Housing	<p>New residential development will, in principle, be supported if It is located within the built-up area.</p> <p>In the event that proposals outside the existing development framework are accepted in principle when assessed against Local Plan and national policies, the Neighbourhood Plan specifies the following requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• entry to the estate is no further than 800m, by a safe and direct walking and cycling route, from one of the two community centres*; and</li> <li>• the proposal clearly relates to the existing pattern of development in Histon and Impington</li> </ul> <p>For all proposals, an appropriate level of infrastructure (necessary to meet the needs of the development), including education provision and capacity at GP services must be available or provided to serve the proposed development.</p> <p>Developments of more than 50 units are considered by the community to be out of</p>	No, Category A	No specific recommendations

Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites?	Recommendations
	<p>character with the existing built form and are not supported.</p> <p>*See map in Section 2 showing the 2 community centres.</p>		
<p>Policy HIM04 The Windmill</p>	<p>Development proposals will not be supported if they would cause further loss of wind to Impington Mill at Cambridge Road.</p> <p>Planning applications relating to new structures in the zone shown on the map below shall be accompanied by an assessment that measures impact on wind loss to the mill. The Molenbiotoop method should be used in the assessment.</p> <p>Trees within the policy area</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• should not be covered by tree preservation orders, or where existing orders are in place, trimming of the height should always be permitted.</li> <li>• no "shelter belts" or other concentrated planting of trees will be permitted.</li> </ul>	<p>No, Category A</p>	<p>No specific recommendations</p>
<p>Policy HIM05 Parking Provision</p>	<p>The Neighbourhood Plan supports the indicative car parking standards and the minimum cycle parking standards set out in Policy T1/3 and Figure 12 of the Local Plan subject to the additional requirements being met:</p> <p>Car Parking</p> <p>On restricted streets (identified below) all parking provision (including for visitors, customers and any business vehicles) must be provided within the curtilage.</p> <p>Non-restricted streets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Curtilage parking must be provided wherever possible</li> <li>- Limited visitor/customer parking on street may be acceptable</li> </ul> <p>Parking should take into account the needs of the disabled, and business provision should include the necessary parking provision for blue badge holders.</p> <p>Visitor parking - residential properties. Provision for parking for visitors should be</p>	<p>No, Category A</p>	<p>No specific recommendations</p>

Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites?	Recommendations
	<p>made.</p> <p>Dimensions:</p> <p>Garage - minimum size 6m x 3m; preferred width for doors 2.35m, minimum acceptable 2.25m. To allow garage doors to be opened and closed garages must be preceded by a driveway at least 6.0m long if the driveway is to be counted as a parking space.</p> <p>Parking spaces - cars, minimum size 5m x 2.5m; vans, minimum size 7.5m x 3.5m (Mercedes Sprinter up to 7.345m; Ford Transit up to 6.4m)</p> <p>Blue badge parking space, off street - minimum size 5m x 2.5m plus additional 1.2m width</p> <p>Cycle Parking</p> <p>Minimum cycle parking standards are set out in the Figure below. Requirements shown in red text are those that are in addition to the standards provided in Figure 12 of the Local Plan.</p> <p>Safe and secure cycle parking will be provided for visitors/customers and employees.</p> <p>Specifically, cycle parking should be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conveniently sited - All residential cycle parking should be sited in a manner that encourages the use of a cycle as first choice for short trips.</li> <li>• Accessible and easy to use - The facilities provided should be easy to use by all members of the community at all life stages, ideally without the need to lift or drag the cycle to park it.</li> <li>• Safe and Secure - Cycle parking should always be secure and give cyclists the confidence that their cycle will still be there when they return. The location should help users feel personally secure with good lighting and natural surveillance.</li> <li>• Covered, fit for purpose and attractive</li> </ul> <p>The space between cycle stands and the positioning of stands must allow for ease of use and access and not put cyclist in conflict</p>		

Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites?	Recommendations
<p>Policy HIM06 Commercial Core</p> <p>The area shown in the map below is</p>	<p>with either pedestrians or vehicles. Cycle racks or stands should conform to the design and dimensions provided in the City Council Best Practise guide. Notable points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sheffield or Rounded A stands should be used.</li> </ul> <p>Stands should be 1000mm apart.</p> <p>The area shown in the map below is designated as the Histon and Impington commercial core. Proposals within the Histon and Impington commercial core (as defined), that diversify and enhance the range of local shops, services and community facilities and create jobs strengthening the vitality and viability of the village centre are supported, subject to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provision of bicycle parking and allocated car parking in line with Policy HIM05;</li> <li>• where applicable, utilising opportunities to improve the organisation of car parking (for example by increasing accessibility to off street parking spaces whilst also protecting the interests of local businesses);</li> <li>• maintaining ease and efficient access for large delivery vehicles as appropriate; and</li> <li>• where applicable, maximising opportunities to connect parking spaces through joint working with individual property owners</li> </ul> <p>New housing development that replaces rather than supplements the existing retail accommodation shall not be supported. New residential uses, in particular 1 or 2 bedroom, dwellings above ground floor shall be supported.</p> <p>Proposals which lead to the loss of main town centre uses at ground floor level or that lead to a loss of car parking associated with main town centre uses will not be supported.</p>	<p>No, Category A</p>	<p>No specific recommendations</p>
<p>Policy HIM07 The Tesco Site</p>	<p>The site shown on the map below is identified as a development opportunity site where the following would be supported:</p> <p>Retail-led redevelopment incorporating other main town centre uses. Residential uses, in</p>	<p>No, Category A</p>	<p>No specific recommendations</p>

Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites?	Recommendations
	<p>particular 1 and 2 bedroom flats are considered appropriate on this site above ground floor level.</p> <p>Any redevelopment should also:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seek to improve the organisation and layout of customer car parking on site;</li> <li>• Enable easy access for large delivery vehicles;</li> <li>• Retain the current level of commercial space</li> <li>• Provide a safe and attractive pedestrian route to and from the brook</li> </ul> <p>Development of housing on the site that reduces the current commercial space shall not be supported.</p>		
<p>Policy HIM08 The Jam Factory</p> <p>Land shown on the map below is safeguarded</p>	<p>Land shown on the map below is safeguarded for employment use.</p> <p>Development proposals will be supported where they maintain or increase the level of employment and where residential amenity in the adjacent residential areas is maintained. A key consideration in any proposal is the biodiversity value of the wildlife-rich scrub in the western part of the site contributes which is ecologically linked with the adjacent site to the west.</p> <p>Where applicable opportunities will be sought to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve direct and safe access for pedestrians to and from the High Street and the Guided Bus stop and for cyclists to and from the Guideway;</li> <li>• Improve cycle parking provision and car parking provision in line with standards set out in Policy HINP 05</li> <li>• Include 'greenways' open to allow members of the public to walk through from Chivers Way to the Community Orchard on Manor Field and to the High Street.</li> </ul> <p>A green separation between the site and Home Close shall be retained.</p> <p>Subject to residential uses not prejudicing the primary employment use of this site, small</p>	No, Category A	No specific recommendations

Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites?	Recommendations
	<p>scale residential development will be supported on this site:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• where the proposed homes are suitable for independent living and built to the accessible and adaptable dwellings (M4(2) standard);</li> <li>• will meet an identified housing need in the area (e.g. suitable for older people seeking to downsize into or affordable housing units meeting the needs of those with a local connection);</li> <li>• and subject to residential amenity of existing and future occupiers of homes not being adversely affected by neighbouring employment uses.</li> </ul>		
Policy HINP09 Vision Park	<p>Land shown on the map below is safeguarded for employment use.</p> <p>Development proposals to improve or increase business accommodation will be supported where they maintain or increase the current level of employment on the site.</p> <p>Where applicable opportunities will be sought to improve direct and safe access for pedestrians to and from the High Street and the Guided Bus stop and for cyclists to and from the Guideway.</p>	No, Category A	No specific recommendations
Policy HIM10 Bypass Farm  The land shown on the map below	<p>The land shown on the map below is safeguarded for community recreational use.</p> <p>Development will be limited to the provision of formal recreation facilities including a sports hall where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The build footprint will be no more than 800 sq. m (2% of the total site area)</li> <li>• Car parking provision will provide for approximately 120 spaces and cover no more than 4% of the total site area</li> <li>• There is a similar quantity of covered cycle provision (120 spaces)</li> <li>• Safe and direct off-road pedestrian/cyclist access is provided</li> </ul>	No, Category A	No specific recommendations
HIM11 Local Green Space	The following green spaces, which are also shown on the map below, are designated Local Green Spaces as defined in the National	No, Category A	No specific recommendations

Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Sites?	Recommendations
	<p>Planning Policy Framework and shall be protected accordingly.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Infant School Field on New Road</li> <li>2. Homefield Park</li> <li>3. Histon Village Green</li> <li>4. Cemetery</li> <li>5. Crossing Keeper's Copse</li> <li>6. Doctor's Close</li> <li>7. Clay Close Lane Pocket Park</li> <li>8. Doctor's Close</li> <li>9. South Road Playground</li> <li>10. Peace Memorial</li> <li>11. St. Audrey's Close Community Centre Green</li> <li>12. Greenleas</li> <li>13. Manor Park Field</li> <li>14. Girton Wood</li> <li>15. Buxhall Farm</li> <li>16. Rowley's Field and Croft Close Set-aside</li> <li>17. Cawcutt's Lake and Fields around busway</li> </ol>		
HIM12 Valued Community Space	<p>The following spaces are designated as Valued Community Spaces. Development will not be permitted within or adjacent to these areas if it would have an adverse impact on the character, amenity, tranquillity or function of the village.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Equipped Play area next to village green (also a PVAA under the Local Plan)</li> <li>2. Histon and Impington Junior School playing fields (also a PVAA under the Local Plan)</li> <li>3. Impington Coppice (also a PVAA under the Local Plan)</li> <li>4. School Hill Garden</li> <li>5. Recreation Ground</li> <li>6. Impington Village College Playing Fields</li> </ol>	No, Category A	No specific recommendations
HIM13 Important	The areas shown on Map X and listed below provide important natural habitats in the plan	No, Category A	No specific recommendations

Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites?	Recommendations
Natural Habitats in Histon and Impington	<p>area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impington Coppice (also a proposed Valued Community Space in this plan)</li> <li>• Crossing Keeper's Copse (also a proposed Local Green Space)</li> <li>• Manor Field (also a proposed LGS in this plan)</li> <li>• Girton Wood (also a proposed LGS in this plan)</li> <li>• Buxhall Farm including the permissive path and green infrastructure corridor off the B1049 and around Buxhall Farm fields (also a proposed LGS in this plan)</li> <li>• Rowley's Field to Gun's Lane</li> <li>• Felsted Fields</li> <li>• Cawcuts Lake and Fields around busway</li> </ul>		
HIM14 Walking and Cycling routes	<p>The current amenity and biodiversity value which these spaces provided shall be maintained or enhanced.</p> <p>New developments will be expected to incorporate, where applicable, easy and safe walking and cycling routes or linkages so as to maximise opportunities for convenient non-vehicular access to one of the two village centres and/or other parts of the Community (for example by linking in with footpath network show in Map X).</p> <p>Cul-de-sacs will not be supported unless walking and cycling linkages are designed in so as to ensure good connectivity.</p> <p>Developments proposals which result in difficult pedestrian access to and from the village centres will not be supported.</p> <p>Where applicable, opportunities will be sought for new or improved and cycling routes in line with the walking and cycling route strategy shown on Map X</p>	No, Category A	No specific recommendations
Policy HIM15 The Infant School Site	<p>Land shown on the map below is safeguarded for community use.</p> <p>Development proposals will be supported</p>	No, Category A	No specific recommendations

Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites?	Recommendations
	<p>where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• principal use of the site for community facilities is maintained</li> <li>• parking provision for cycles and cars meets Policy HINP05 standards</li> <li>• it is accessible for the community mini-bus</li> </ul> <p>The provision of health facilities on this site would be particularly welcomed.</p>		
HIM16 Housing Mix and Meeting Local Needs	<p>The development of new housing estates will be supported if they include a mix of houses in size and type which reflects the existing and projected needs of different components of the community.</p> <p>The housing mix should also provide choice and variety so as to allow for mixed and vibrant communities during the week and weekends. Specific regard should be given to the need for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 and 2 bedroom starter homes;</li> <li>• 2 and 3 bedroom homes for younger families;</li> <li>• Dwellings suitable for older and/or less able residents and life time occupation including homes suitable for independent living and built to the accessible and adaptable dwellings (M4(2) standard; and</li> <li>• Affordable housing</li> </ul>	No, Category A	No specific recommendations
Policy HIM17 STATION	<p>Developments which offer self-build opportunities are encouraged.</p>	No, Category A	No specific recommendations
	<p>The Neighbourhood Plan supports Policy E/8 in the Local Plan which allocates the site shown on the map below, for mixed use development in the Histon and Impington station area.</p> <p>Development on that site must accord with Local Plan Policy E/8 and the following additional requirements should also be met:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The former station building should be retained and reused as appropriate for commercial or a community use.</li> </ol>		

Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites?	Recommendations
	<p>2. A through footpath/cycleway to allow access to Vision Park should be provided</p> <p>3. Ensuring existing provision of village shops and services (providing key amenity value in this part of the village) are maintained or enhanced.</p>		

#### 4.4.1. Recommendations

There are no specific recommendations to deliver for the policies in this draft Neighbourhood Development Plan as they have all been assigned to Category A. There is therefore no need to amend the policy text as they are not predicted to have a Likely Significant Effect on any Habitats site.

The In-combination effects from other plans and projects are considered in in Section.

#### 4.5. Other Plans and Projects – In-combination Effects

There are two relevant Plan level HRAs that have been carried out by South Cambs DC or other organisations and none have been found to have a likely significant effects on the Habitats sites within scope of this assessment.

The Water Cycle Strategy (WCS) for Major Growth Sites in and Around Cambridge is not in itself a relevant plan or project under the Habitats Regulations, but was prepared to support the delivery of the existing development strategy. Whilst it does not provide as assessment of new proposals for the Local Plan, its findings are relevant to support the assessment of the new plan. It focused on issues related to the water supply, surface drainage and wastewater sewerage associated with potential development sites, and also concluded no significant effects, and that protected sites could be screened out of further assessment.

In the context of this HRA, the relevant other plans to be considered are listed below in combination with Histon & Impington Neighbourhood Plan HRA.

**Table 5: Other plans or projects considered for in combination effects**

Statutory Body	Title of HRA or Project	Findings of HRA or Project	Potential for in combination effects
South Cambridgeshire District Council	Habitat Regulations Assessment: Chapter 20 of South Cambs Local	“The DPDs that form part of the Local Development	It is considered that in combination likely significant effects are



Statutory Body	Title of HRA or Project	Findings of HRA or Project	Potential for in combination effects
	Plan SA Scoping Report (June 2012) and including the Draft Final Sustainability Report (2014) and Sustainability Appraisal Addendum (2015)	Framework (LDF) for the district were all subject to an HRA screening and found to have no likely significant impact on a Natura site or a Ramsar site.”	not predicted.
Cambridge Southern Fringe Area Action Plan	Cambridge Southern Fringe Area Action Plan HRA (May2007)	“This AAP was subject to an HRA and found not to impact on a Natura site or a Ramsar site.”	It is considered that in combination likely significant effects are not predicted.

## References

- Histon & Impington civil parish Neighbourhood Development Plan 2017-2031 Pre-submission Draft Plan v4.1, Histon & Impington Parish Council (February 2018)
- South Cambs District Council South Cambridgeshire Local Plan: Proposed Submission (March 2014)
- South Cambs District Council Core Strategy, Development Control Policies and Site Specific Policies Development Plan Documents (DPD) HRA screening
- South Cambs District Council Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Document (adopted July 2009)
- South Cambs District Council Cambridge Southern Fringe Area Action Plan HRA (May2007)
- Natural England Conservation objectives for European Sites: East of England Website: <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/category/6581547796791296#content>



## 5. Conclusions

### 5.1. Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

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The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared for town and country planning purposes and sets a framework for future development consent. The policies of the Neighbourhood Plan can be considered to determine the use of small areas at local level commensurate with their status in determining local planning applications. The potential for significant effects can be ruled out in consideration of the Plan's content, with suitable protection objectives and no site allocations included.

The Histon & Impington Neighbourhood Development Plan can therefore be **screened out** for its requirement of Strategic Environmental Assessment in line with the requirements of Directive 2001/42/EC.

### 5.2. Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)

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Subject to Natural England's review, this HRA screening report indicates that the Histon & Impington draft Neighbourhood Development Plan is not predicted to have likely significant effects on any Habitats site, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects. The requirement for the Plan to undertake further assessment under the Habitats Regulations 2017 is therefore **screened out**.

## Appendix 1

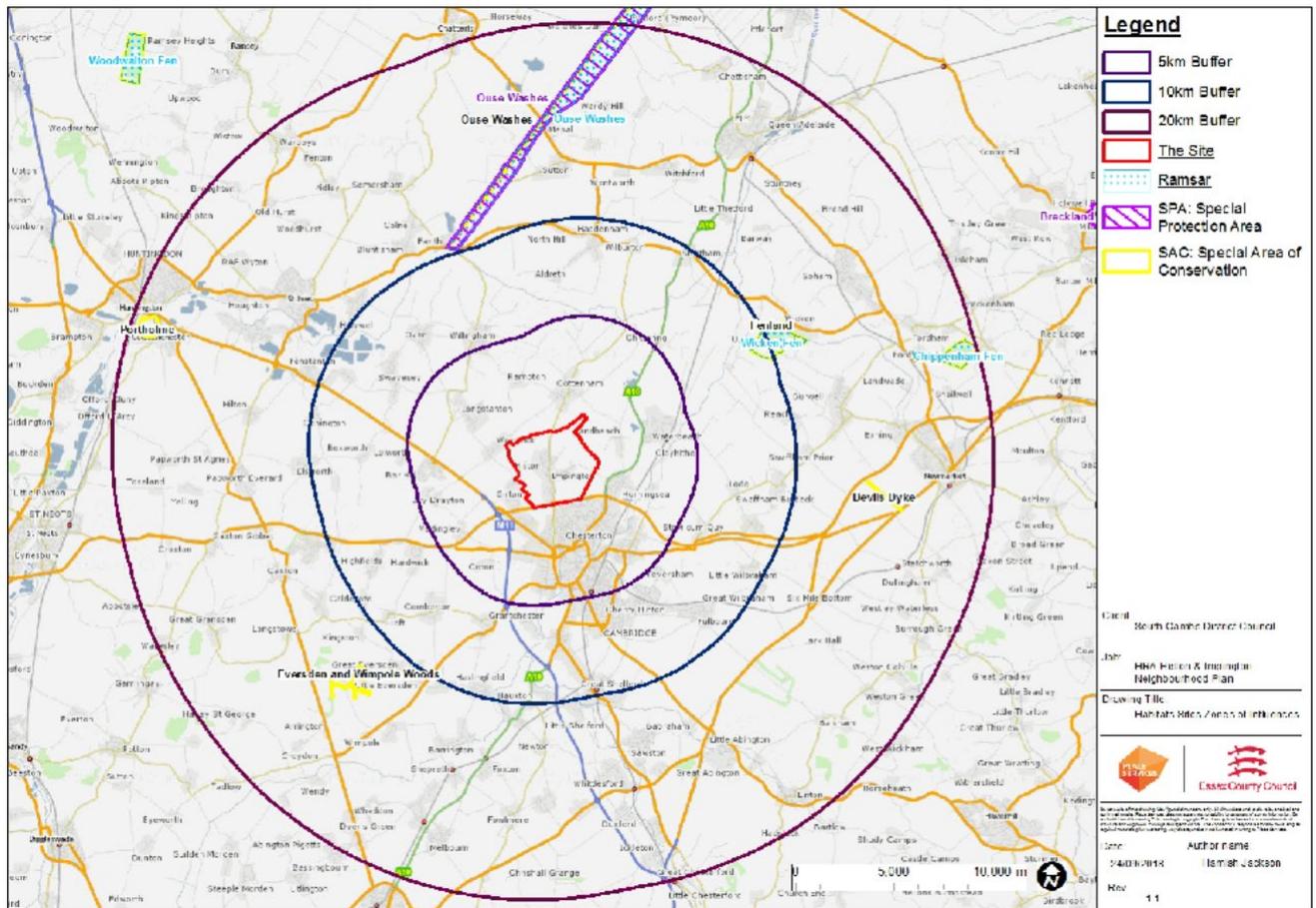
The Histon & Impington Neighbourhood Plan area



Source: South Cambridgeshire District Council, 2015

## Appendix 2

### Histon & Impington NP Area and Locations of the Habitats sites within 5km, 10km and 20 km



Source: Place Services, 2018



## Place Services

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October 2018



Essex County Council

## Appendix 2: Consultation Responses from the Statutory Environmental Bodies

### Historic England

**22 October 2018**

Thank you for your email of 2nd October 2018 regarding the above consultation. As the Government's adviser on the historic environment Historic England is keen to ensure that the protection of the historic environment is fully taken into account at all stages and levels of the local planning process. Therefore we welcome this opportunity to review the Screening Report for this plan. For the purposes of this consultation, Historic England will confine its advice to the question, "Is it (the Histon and Impington Neighbourhood Plan) likely to have a significant effect on the historic environment?". Our comments are based on the information supplied with the Screening Opinion.

The Screening Report concludes that the Histon and Impington Neighbourhood Plan will not have any significant effects on the historic environment. We note that it does not itself propose to allocate any sites for development. On the basis of the information supplied, and in the context of the criteria set out in Schedule 1 of the Environmental Assessment Regulations [Annex II of 'SEA' Directive], Historic England concurs with the Council that the preparation of a Strategic Environmental Assessment is not required.

The views of the other two statutory consultation bodies should be taken into account before the overall decision on the need for an SEA is made.

I should be pleased if you can send a copy of the determination as required by REG 11 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.

We should like to stress that this opinion is based on the information provided by you with your correspondence dated 2nd October 2018. To avoid any doubt, this does not reflect our obligation to provide further advice on later stages of the SA/SEA process and, potentially, object to specific proposals which may subsequently arise (either as a result of this consultation or in later versions of the plan/guidance) where we consider that, despite the SA/SEA, these would have an adverse effect upon the environment.

Historic England strongly advises that the conservation and archaeological staff of the relevant local authorities are closely involved throughout the preparation of the plan and its assessment. They are best placed to advise on; local historic environment issues and priorities, including access to data held in the Historic Environment Record (HER), how the allocation, policy or proposal can be tailored to minimise potential adverse impacts on the historic environment; the nature and design of any required mitigation measures; and opportunities for securing wider benefits for the future conservation and management of heritage assets.

**Yours sincerely,**  
**Edward James**  
**Historic Places Advisor, East of England**

Natural England

**12 October 2018**

Thank you for your consultation on the above dated 2 October 2018.

Natural England is a non-departmental public body. Our statutory purpose is to ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced, and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development.

Based on the small scale and nature of development promoted through the draft Pre-submission Neighbourhood Plan Natural England supports the conclusions of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulations (HRA) Screening Report (March 2018).

### **Screening Request: Strategic Environmental Assessment**

It is our advice, on the basis of the material supplied with the consultation, that, in so far as our strategic environmental interests are concerned (including but not limited to statutory designated sites, landscapes and protected species, geology and soils) are concerned, that there are unlikely to be significant environmental effects from the proposed plan.

### **Neighbourhood Plan**

Guidance on the assessment of Neighbourhood Plans in light of the SEA Directive is contained within the National Planning Practice Guidance.. The guidance highlights three triggers that may require the production of an SEA, for instance where:

- a neighbourhood plan allocates sites for development
- the neighbourhood area contains sensitive natural or heritage assets that may be affected by the proposals in the plan
- the neighbourhood plan may have significant environmental effects that have not already been considered and dealt with through a sustainability appraisal of the Local Plan.

We have checked our records and based on the information provided, we can confirm that in our view the proposals contained within the plan will not have significant effects on sensitive sites that Natural England has a statutory duty to protect.

We are not aware of significant populations of protected species which are likely to be affected by the policies / proposals within the plan. It remains the case, however, that the responsible authority should provide information supporting this screening decision, sufficient to assess whether protected species are likely to be affected.

Notwithstanding this advice, Natural England does not routinely maintain locally specific data on all potential environmental assets. As a result the responsible authority should raise environmental issues that we have not identified on local or national biodiversity action plan species and/or habitats, local wildlife sites or local landscape character, with its own ecological and/or landscape advisers, local record centre, recording society or wildlife body on the local landscape and biodiversity receptors that may be affected by this plan, before determining whether an SA/SEA is necessary.

Please note that Natural England reserves the right to provide further comments on the environmental assessment of the plan beyond this SEA/SA screening stage, should the responsible authority seek our views on the scoping or environmental report stages. This includes any third party appeal against any screening decision you may make.

For any queries relating to the specific advice in this letter or for any new consultations, please send your correspondences to [consultations@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:consultations@naturalengland.org.uk).

We really value your feedback to help us improve the service we offer.

Yours faithfully

Miss Rachel Bowden  
Consultations Team

Environment Agency

**10 October 2018**

Thank you for your consultation.

**Screening & Scoping Opinions.**

Due to resource pressures we are no longer able to provide you with comprehensive bespoke advice on pre application enquiries, screening and scoping opinions.

Notwithstanding the above I attach a copy of the Agency's 'Planning Application Guidance' (PAG) document and indicative floodplan, for the applicants assistance.

*The above officer level comments are made without prejudice and as such the Environment Agency reserves the right to make further comments and recommendations on any potential applications that may be brought forward.*

Please note:- All future planning related correspondence should be sent to:  
[planning.brampton@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:planning.brampton@environment-agency.gov.uk)

Yours faithfully

**Mr. T.G. Waddams**  
**Planning Liaison**