

Swannington Neighbourhood Plan
Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) &
Habitat Regulations Assessment
Screening Report
(September 2021)

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 A Neighbourhood Plan for Swannington in North West Leicestershire has been prepared by Swannington Parish Council (the Qualifying Body). The Swannington Neighbourhood Plan (June 2021) (hereafter known as 'the Neighbourhood Plan') is a version of the plan upon which the Qualifying Body intends to undertake pre-submission consultation (in accordance with Regulation 14 of The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012).
- 1.2 This screening report is an assessment of whether or not the contents of the 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 2004.
- 1.3 This report will also screen to determine whether the Neighbourhood 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. The only such area within North West Leicestershire is the River Mease which is designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC). At its closest point, the Neighbourhood Plan Area is approximately 4km from the River Mease SAC. All of the Neighbourhood Plan Area is under 15km from the SAC; a distance which it is generally recognised as being a 'rule of thumb' whereby the possibility of the plan/project impacting upon the SAC should be considered.
- 1.4 The purpose of the Neighbourhood Plan is to provide a set of statutory planning policies to guide development within Swannington over the life of the plan. The Plan sets out the community's vision of how the area will look by 2031. The Neighbourhood Plan also provides support for improved facilities to serve the community and seeks to protect and enhance important elements of the local environment.
- 1.5 The legislative background set out in the following Section outlines the regulations that require the need for this screening exercise. Section 3 provides a screening assessment of both the likely significant environmental effects of the Neighbourhood Plan and the need for SEA. Section 4 provides a screening assessment of both the likely significant effects of the implementation of the Neighbourhood Plan and the need for a Habitats Regulation Assessment. A summary of findings and conclusions for both screening processes can be found in Section 5.

2. Legislative Background

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

- 2.1. The basis for Strategic Environmental Assessments and Sustainability Appraisal legislation is European Directive 2001/42/EC and was transposed into English law by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, or SEA Regulations. Detailed Guidance of these regulations can be found in the Government publication 'A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive' (ODPM 2005).
- 2.2. The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 required Local Authorities to produce Sustainability Appraisals (SA) for all local development documents to meet the requirement of the EU Directive on SEA. It is considered best practice to incorporate requirements of the SEA Directive into an SA as discussed within the NPPF at paragraph 165. However, the 2008 Planning Act amended the requirement

to undertake a Sustainability Appraisal for only development plan documents (DPD's) but did not remove the requirement to produce a Strategic Environmental Assessment. As a Neighbourhood Plan is not a development plan document it therefore does not legally require a Sustainability Appraisal. Where appropriate, however, an SEA still needs to be undertaken in line with the SEA regulations. The purpose of this report is to determine if SEA is required for the Swannington Neighbourhood Plan.

- 2.3. The District Council is required to consult three statutory consultation bodies designated within the regulations; Historic England, Natural England and the Environment Agency on whether a SEA is required. The consultation bodies' responses can be found at **Appendix 2**.

Habitat Regulation Assessment (HRA)

- 2.4. It is required by article 6 (3) of the EU Habitats Directive and by regulation 61 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended) that an appropriate assessment is carried out with regard to the Conservation Objectives of the European Sites and with reference to other plans and projects to identify if any significant effect is likely for any European Site.
- 2.5. To fulfil the legal requirements to identify if likely significant effects will occur with the implementation of the BNP upon European Sites (Natura 2000 sites) a screening assessment has been undertaken and is set out in Section 4 of this report.
- 2.6. The legislation requires where there is a "risk" of a significant effect on a European Site, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects then there will be requirement for the plan to progress from HRA screening to an Appropriate Assessment. This is known as the precautionary principle.

Description of the Plan or Programme

- 2.7. The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared by the Swannington Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Committee (NPAC) on behalf of the Qualifying Body (Swannington Parish Council).
- 2.8. The policies relate to the Neighbourhood Area and prioritise the protection and enhancement of the environment and character of Swannington. To meet local housing need, it is proposed that a site of approximately 0.48 ha is allocated for a minimum of 8 dwellings. Other policies provide support for small-scale windfall housing sites, employment development and new and improved community facilities.

3. SEA Screening

Criteria for Assessing the Effects of the Swannington Neighbourhood Plan

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

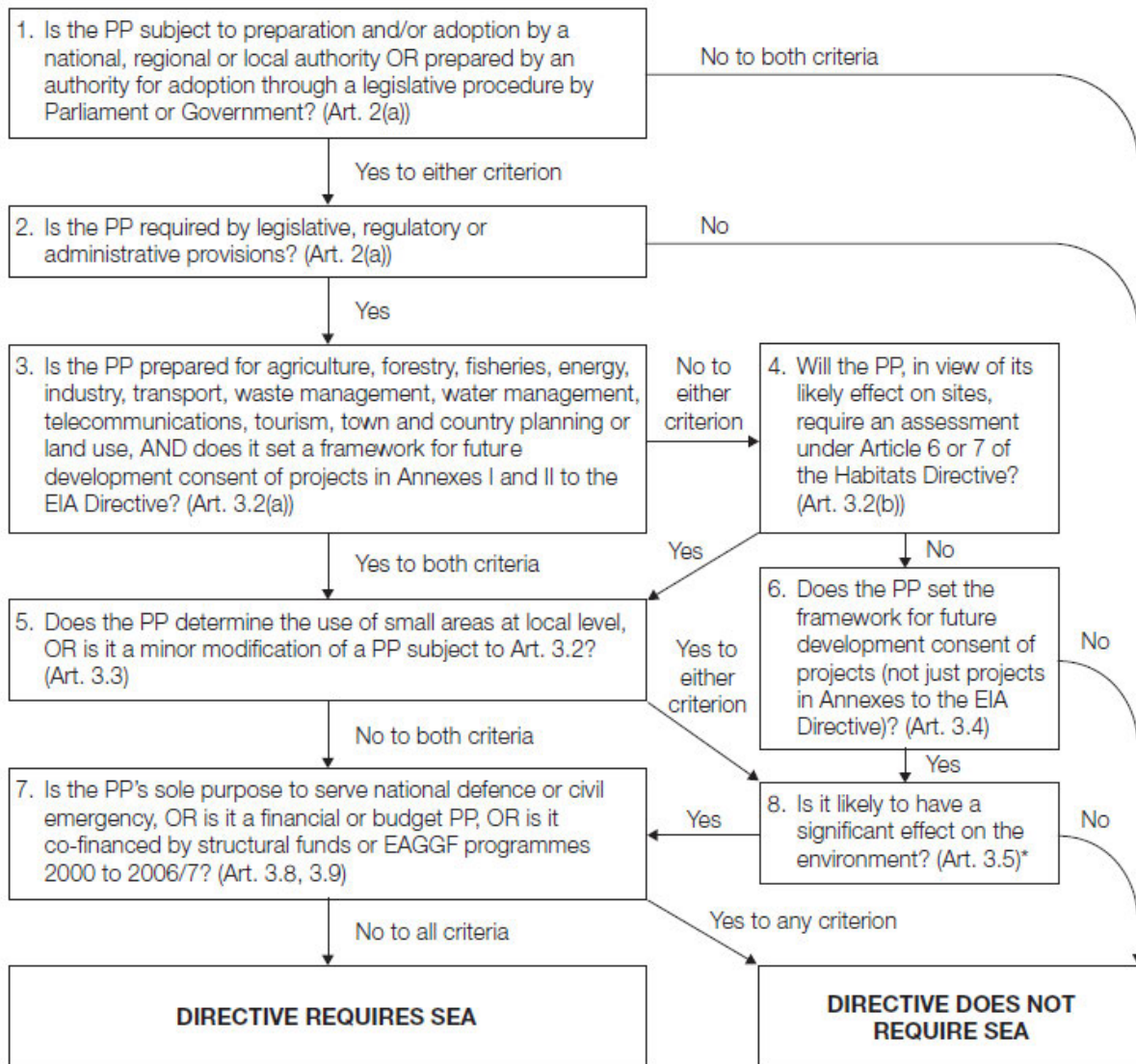
Source: Annex II of SEA Directive
2001/42/EC

Assessment

- 3.2. Neighbourhood Plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan, in this case the adopted North West Leicestershire Local Plan (as amended by the Partial Review, March 2021). The Local Plan itself has been the subject of both a Sustainability Appraisal and a Habitats Regulations Assessment.
- 3.3. Guidance regarding SEA's written by the Department of the Environment produces a diagram to the process for screening a planning document to ascertain whether a full SEA is required, as depicted in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1. Application of the SEA Directive to plans and programmes (PPs)

This diagram is intended as a guide to the criteria for application of the Directive to plans and programmes (PPs). It has no legal status.



*The Directive requires Member States to determine whether plans or programmes in this category are likely to have significant environmental effects. These determinations may be made on a case by case basis and/or by specifying types of plan or programme.

- 3.4. The process in Figure 1 has been undertaken and the findings can be viewed in Table 1. Table 1 shows the assessment of whether the Neighbourhood Plan will require a full SEA. The questions in Table 1 are drawn from the diagram above which sets out how the SEA Directive should be applied.

Table 1: Establishing the Need for SEA

Stage	Yes/No	Reason
1. Is the PP (plan or programme) subject to preparation and/or adoption by a national, regional or local authority OR prepared by an authority for adoption through a legislative procedure by Parliament or Government? (Art. 2(a))	Yes	This Neighbourhood Plan is prepared by Swannington Parish Council (as the Qualifying Body) under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Localism Act 2011. Once the plan is 'made' subject to examination and having received 50%+ or more 'yes' votes through a referendum it will be 'made' by North West Leicestershire District Council (NWLDC) and become part of the Statutory Development Plan for the area.
2. Is the PP required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions? (Art. 2(a))	No	Communities have a right to produce a neighbourhood plan but are not required by legislative, regulatory or administrative purposes to produce a neighbourhood plan. However, once 'made' the Neighbourhood Plan would form part of the statutory development plan and will be used when making decisions on planning applications within the Neighbourhood Area. Therefore it is considered necessary to answer the following questions to determine if an SEA is required.
3. Is the PP 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? (Art 3.2(a))	Yes	The Neighbourhood Plan is prepared for town and country planning and land use. The plan sets out a framework for future development in the Swannington Neighbourhood Area. Once 'made' the Neighbourhood Plan would form part of the statutory development plan and will be used when making decisions on planning applications which may include development which may fall under Annex I and II of the EIA Directive.
4. Will the PP, in view of its likely effect on sites, require an assessment for future development under Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive? (Art. 3.2 (b))	No	The Neighbourhood Plan could potentially have an impact on internationally designated wildlife sites covered by the Habitats Regulations. See screening assessment for HRA in Section 4 of this report which concludes that the Neighbourhood Plan would not affect such sites and so an HRA is not required.

5. Does the PP Determine the use of small areas at local level, OR is it a minor modification of a PP subject to Art. 3.2? (Art.3.3)	Yes	There are a number of policies which could potentially determine the use of small areas of land at a local level: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy H1 (Land at St Georges Hill) • Policy H2 (Settlement Boundary) • Policy H6 (Windfall Sites) • Policy CF2 (New or Improved Community Facilities) • Policy CF3 (Primary School) • Policy E2 (Support for New Employment Opportunities) • Policy E3 (Working from home) • Policy E5 (Tourism)
6. Does the PP set the framework for future development consent of projects (not just projects in annexes to the EIA Directive)? (Art 3.4)	Yes	Once 'made', the Neighbourhood Plan forms part of the statutory development plan and will be used to determine planning applications within the Neighbourhood Plan Area. Therefore, the Neighbourhood Plan will set the framework for future developments.
7. Is the PP's sole purpose to serve the national defence or civil emergency, OR is it a financial or budget PP, OR is it co-financed by structural funds or EAGGF programmes 2000 to 2006/7? (Art 3.8, 3.9)	No	The Neighbourhood Plan does not deal with any of these categories of plan.
8. Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment? (Art. 3.5)	Uncertain	The Neighbourhood Plan could potentially have an effect on the environment. However, whether this is significant depends on the proposals within the Neighbourhood Plan. A detailed assessment of the potential for significant environmental effects is outlined in Table 2 (below).

3.5. The assessment of criteria 5, 6 and 8 above indicate that the Neighbourhood Plan may have a significant effect on the environment and an SEA may be required.

3.6. The criteria for undertaking such an assessment are drawn from Article 3(5) of the SEA Directive as set out at paragraph 3.1 of this report. The following assessment considers the likelihood of the Neighbourhood Plan (as published at the date of this report) to have significant effects on the environment.

Table 2: Assessment of the likelihood of significant effects on the environment

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)	Likely to have significant environmental effects	Summary of Significant effects
The characteristics of the plans having regard to:		
<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>No</p>	<p>Once 'made', the Neighbourhood Plan (along with national policies and those contained in other parts of the development plan) will provide a framework against which to determine proposals for development within the neighbourhood area.</p> <p>There are several policies which could potentially determine the use of small areas of land at a local level, the most notable is a proposed housing allocation at St Georges Hill:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy H1 (Land at St Georges Hill) • Policy H2 (Settlement Boundary) • Policy H6 (Windfall Sites) • Policy CF2 (New or Improved Community Facilities) • Policy CF3 (Primary School) • Policy E2 (Support for New Employment Opportunities) • Policy E3 (Working from home) • Policy E5 (Tourism) <p>Policy H1 allocates land at St Georges Hill (approximately 0.48ha) for a minimum of 8 dwellings. The proposed allocation results from the Neighbourhood Plan Advisory Committee's (NPAC) request to NWLDC to provide an indicative housing figure for the NP area (as directed by the National Planning Policy Framework). A range of options were provided by NWLDC officers, demonstrating in all circumstances that there was a justified need for additional housing in the NP Area. The NPAC then assessed sites from the NWLDC Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA).</p> <p>The site is currently outside of the Limits to Development as defined by the adopted Local Plan, meaning there is a degree of conflict between the Local and Neighbourhood Plans. However, there is justification for new housing in Swannington and the amount of growth proposed is based on evidence as well as being proportionate to the existing settlement. There are limited options to meet this need within the existing Limits.</p>

		<p>The overall amount of development proposed is small scale and the proposed site adjoins existing built development to the south, the west and partially to the east.</p> <p>Policy H2 identifies a new settlement boundary, amended to incorporate the Policy H1 housing allocation. The policy also potentially allows for some development in the countryside, although this will be “carefully controlled in line with local and national strategic policies.” The degree of conflict between the Local and Neighbourhood Plans is considered to be justified and the Neighbourhood Plan upholds the general principle of the Limits to Development / countryside as defined by Policies S2 and S3 of the adopted Local Plan.</p> <p>Policy H6 sets out criteria which will need to be met in order for windfall development (infill and redevelopment sites) to be supported.</p> <p>Policy CF2 supports the provision of new or improved community facilities, subject to certain criteria.</p> <p>Policy CF3 actively supports the expansion of the existing primary school subject to certain criteria relating to highways, amenity/visual impact and scale of development/loss of open space.</p> <p>Policy E2 supports new employment opportunities subject to certain criteria. This could result in new development in the countryside although it is specified that this is of a size and scale not adversely affecting the character, infrastructure and environment of the village/NP Area. The Local Plan, which has been subject to SEA and Habitats Regulation Assessment supports employment development in the countryside, in accordance with the provision of Policy Ec2.</p> <p>Policy E3 supports new free-standing buildings to enable working from home provided they are “small scale” and subject to highways, amenity, emissions and design considerations.</p> <p>Policy E5 supports facilities that enhance and promote tourism subject to certain criteria. In its current form the policy would allow tourism development in the countryside where it adjoins Swannington. The Local Plan, which has been subject to SEA and Habitats Regulations Assessment, supports tourism development in the countryside, where it can be justified in accordance with Policy Ec13.</p>
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		It should be noted that when the Pre-Submission Draft goes out to formal consultation, NWLDC officers will provide comments on some of the above policies. These comments will be focused on the wording rather than the general spirit of the policies, with the aim of ensuring greater consistency with the Local Plan.
The degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans or programmes including those in a hierarchy.	No	The Neighbourhood Plan is the lowest tier in the planning hierarchy and must conform to plans in the upper tiers, rather than influence them. The Neighbourhood Plan must be in generally conformity with the adopted North West Leicestershire Local Plan, have regard to national policies and not breach/be compatible with European Directives.
The relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development.	No	The Neighbourhood Plan includes policies which provide protection to the character of the area, both natural and historic. These include policies which designate Local Green Space (ENV1), seek to protect important open space (ENV2) and sites of natural environment significance (ENV3), protect and enhance biodiversity (ENV4) and protect sites and features of historic environment significance (ENV5).
Environmental problems relevant to the plan.	No	The Neighbourhood Plan incorporates a raft of policies seeking to protect the natural and historic environment. The proposed housing allocation is small in scale and is not anticipated to exacerbate any existing environmental problems.
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).	No	The Neighbourhood Plan is a land-use plan and sets the framework for future development consents within the Neighbourhood Plan Area through a range of policies. The Neighbourhood Plan is not directly relevant to the implementation of community legislation and does not allocate potentially polluting development.
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.	No	The Neighbourhood Plan would result in the permanent loss of a greenfield site for housing development. However, this is small-scale, to meet an identified need and is a type of development compatible with the surrounding environment.
The cumulative nature of the effects.	No	The policies included within the Neighbourhood Plan are unlikely to result in likely significant effects given the nature of policies proposed (including a small-scale housing allocation) and their conformity

		with existing policy provisions included in the adopted Local Plan.
The trans boundary nature of the effects.	No	It is likely that most effects arising from the Neighbourhood Plan will be limited to the plan area given the scope and localised nature of the plan.
The risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents).	No	There is limited risk to human health or the environment as a result of the Neighbourhood Plan.
The magnitude spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected).	No	It is likely that most effects arising from the Neighbourhood Plan will be limited to the plan area given the scope and localised nature of the plan.
The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - special natural characteristics or cultural heritage, - exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values, - intensive land-use. 	No	<p>There are eight Listed Buildings in the Neighbourhood Plan Area. The Neighbourhood Plan also identifies a number of non-designated heritage assets, one of which (MLE24658 Nos 2-18 St George's Hill) is adjacent to the proposed housing allocation site. However, NWLDC officers expect that the Plan, the proposed housing allocation site in particular, can be delivered without having significant adverse effects on cultural heritage assets.</p> <p>There are numerous Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) within the Plan Area, including land adjoining the proposed housing allocation site (Swannington Common Grassland 8 is a Candidate LWS identified for its Mesotrophic grassland). The Neighbourhood Plan identifies several sites which have been identified for their local environmental significance (including the LWS's) and Policy ENV3 seeks to protect them from harm.</p> <p>There are no Air Quality Management Areas within the Neighbourhood Plan Area.</p> <p>The Neighbourhood Plan Area drains into the Long Whatton Brook (a tributary of the River Soar). In 2019 the overall water body was assessed as being in moderate condition. The Area does not drain into the River Mease SAC.</p>
The effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, community or international protection status.	No	There are no national or local landscape designations within the plan area.

Screening Outcome

- 3.7. Having regard to the assessment above it is considered that the Neighbourhood Plan is unlikely to have a significant environmental effect and accordingly will not require a Strategic Environmental Assessment. The Neighbourhood Plan has to be in general conformity with the adopted Local Plan which has been through SEA. There is a small degree of conflict since the Neighbourhood Plan proposes to allocate a site for housing which is currently defined as countryside in the adopted Local Plan. However, the Neighbourhood Plan upholds the general principle of the Limits to Development / countryside as defined by Policies S2 and S3 of the adopted Local Plan. Furthermore, the housing allocation is not on environmentally sensitive land, is of a small scale and is proportionate to the existing settlement. It is also appropriate given the adjacent built development which joins the site to the south, the west and partially to the east.

4. HRA Screening

- 4.1. The Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) refers to the assessment required for any plan or project to assess the potential impacts against the conservation objectives of Natura 2000 wildlife sites. The assessment must determine whether the plans would adversely affect, or are likely to affect, the integrity of a site(s) in terms of its nature conservation objectives. Where negative effects are identified other options should be examined to avoid any potential damaging effects.
- 4.2. Under Criteria 4 of Figure 1 and Table 1 it was indicated that the Neighbourhood Plan may potentially have an impact upon internationally designated sites and as such a further assessment is required.
- 4.3. The HRA process is generally divided into three stages. The initial stage of the HRA process is called the screening stage and determines if there are any likely significant effects or risk of significant effects possible as a result of the implementation of the plan. If there are significant effects the plan will need to undertake an Appropriate Assessment. The screening process should provide a description of the plan and an identification of the Natura 2000 sites which may be affected by the plan and assess the significance of any possible effects on the identified sites.
- 4.4. This Section of the report provides a “screening” assessment for the Neighbourhood Plan by considering the potential impacts on European Sites within 15km of the Neighbourhood Plan Area. There is one European site within this threshold; the River Mease Special Area of Conservation (as illustrated at **Appendix 1**). The following screening assessment will determine if the Neighbourhood Plan has any likely significant effects to determine whether the subsequent stages will be required. Much of the background information used is that taken from the Habitats Regulations Assessment undertaken for the adopted Local Plan.

Relevant Natura 2000 sites

- 4.5. The SAC is approximately 4.2km from the south-western boundary of the Neighbourhood Plan Area, whilst the River Mease catchment (and the area within which any development might potentially impact upon the River Mease) is around 500m at its closest point (see **Appendix 1**). The Plan Area drains to the Long Whatton Brook which is a tributary of the River Soar. Despite its proximity, there is no direct connection between the Neighbourhood Plan Area and the River Mease SAC.

4.6. There are several European sites within a 45km radius of Swannington. These sites are listed below for purpose of clarification.

- Cannock Chase SAC (estimated 38 km at its closest point)
- West Midland Mosses SAC
- Midlands Meres and Mosses Ramsar
- Pasturefields Salt Marsh SAC
- Ensor's Pool SAC
- Rutland Water SPA/Ramsar

4.7. In terms of the Cannock Chase SAC the site is currently subject to an agreed strategic approach implemented through a 'SAC Partnership' involving a coordinated approach across six local planning authorities. The Evidence base shows that development within 15km of the SAC boundary may have a significant impact on the site. Interim guidance, agreed with Natural England, identifies a 15km zone of influence. The agreed approach states that:

"All development that results in a net increase in dwellings within 15km of Cannock Chase SAC is likely to have an adverse impact upon the SAC and therefore suitable mitigation, proportionate to the significance of the effect, will be required in line with ongoing work by partner authorities to develop a Mitigation and Implementation strategy SPD..."

Development proposals more than 15km from Cannock Chase SAC may be required to demonstrate that they will have no adverse effect on the integrity of the SAC."

4.8. There are no direct connections between the Neighbourhood Plan Area and any of the areas considered above. In the absence of any such links and the distance from Swannington there are no conceivable impact mechanisms through which the Neighbourhood Plan might present any credible risk of any adverse effects upon the integrity of these sites.

4.9. The adopted Local Plan has been the subject of a Habitats Regulations Assessment which concluded that *the Local Plan will have no likely significant effects, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects, upon any European sites. An appropriate assessment is not required.*

5. Conclusions and recommendations of the Screening Assessments

5.1. This report contains the detail of the assessment of whether the Swannington Neighbourhood Plan needs to be subject to a Strategic Environmental Assessment as required by the SEA Directive and Appropriate Assessment as required by the Habitats Directive.

5.2. The assessment of both of these requirements has been undertaken on the version of the Neighbourhood Plan which the Qualifying Body intends to submit. If there should be subsequent significant changes to the plan, there may be the need for a further screening exercise to be undertaken on any modified version of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

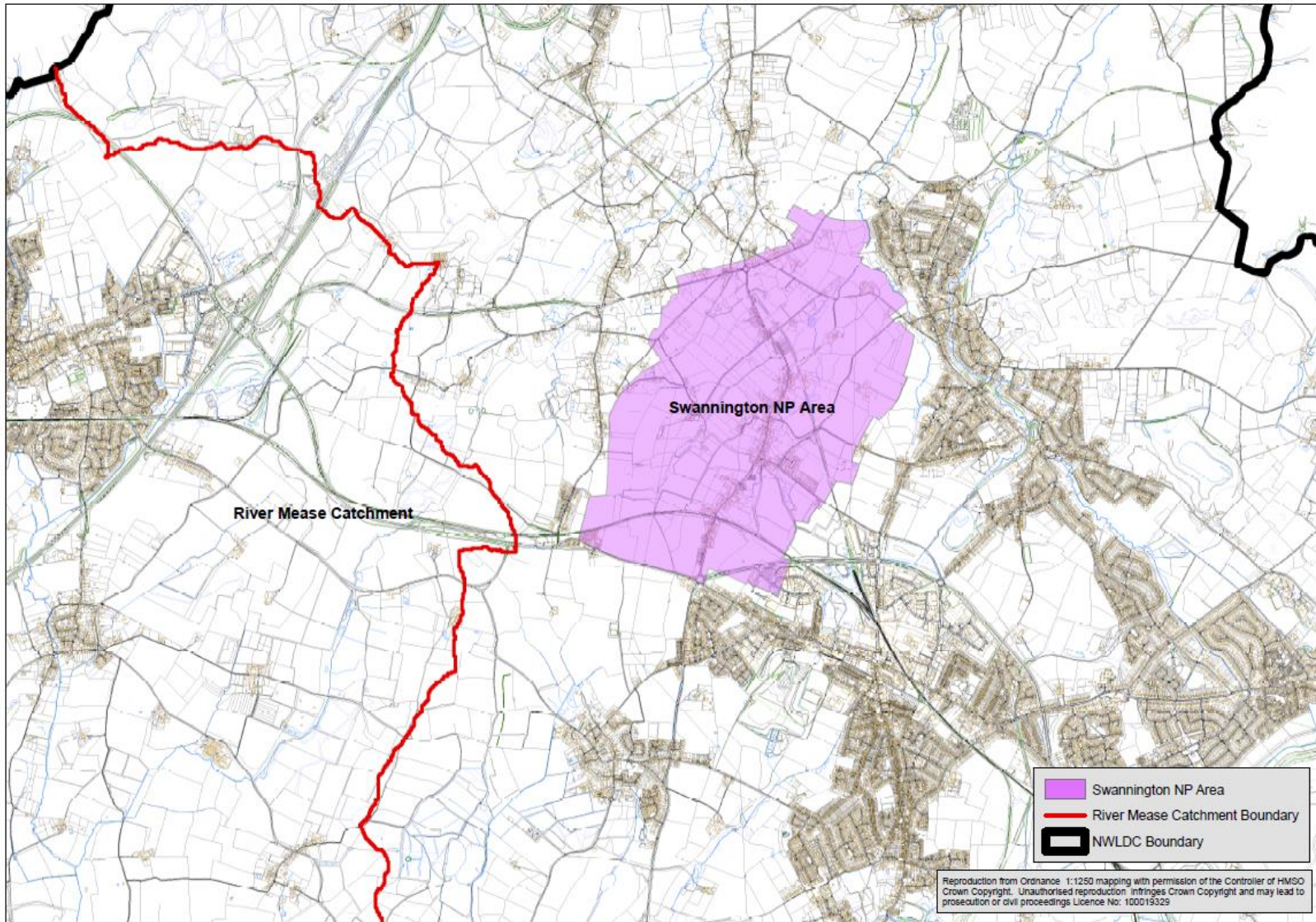
5.3. In relation to the requirement for the Neighbourhood Plan to be subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment, the assessment detailed in Section 3 of this report

concludes that the plan in its current form is unlikely to have significant environmental effects and therefore a SEA will not be required.

Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)

- 5.4. In relation to the requirement for the Neighbourhood Plan to be subject to Habitat Regulations Assessment, the assessment detailed at Section 4 of this report concludes that there are unlikely to be any significant effects upon the River Mease SAC or any other Natura 2000 sites and so as such a full HRA is not required.

APPENDIX 1 – MAP SHOWING BOUNDARY OF NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN AREA IN RELATION TO RIVER MEASE CATCHMENT



APPENDIX 2
STATUTORY CONSULTEE RESPONSES

EXTERNAL: FW: SEA/HRA Screening request for Swannington Neighbourhood Plan (North West Leicestershire)



To JOANNE ALTHORPE

Reply Reply All Forward

Mon 16/08/2021 11:24

You replied to this message on 16/08/2021 15:30.
Click here to download pictures. To help protect your privacy, Outlook prevented automatic download of some pictures in this message.

Hello Jo,

Thank you for giving the Environment Agency the opportunity to comment on the **SEA/HRA** Screening request.

Having reviewed the submitted information we concur with the view that an SEA need not been undertaken. We shall defer to Natural England regarding the need for a HRA.

Regards
Nick

Nick Wakefield

Planning Specialist, Sustainable Places Team

Environment Agency | Trentside Offices, Scarrington Road, West Bridgford, Nottingham NG2 5BR



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Ms Joanne Althorpe
North West Leicestershire District Council
Council Offices
Whitwick Road
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████████████████████
Our ref: PL00753222

28 July 2021

Dear Ms Althorpe

SWANNINGTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN - SEA SCREENING REQUEST

Thank you for your consultation of 27 July 2021 and the request for a Screening Opinion in respect of the Swannington Neighbourhood Plan.

For the purposes of consultations on SEA Screening Opinions, Historic England confines its advice to the question, "Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment?" in respect of our area of concern, cultural heritage. Our comments are based on the information supplied with the screening request.

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 is of the view that the preparation of a Strategic Environmental Assessment is not likely to be required.

The views of the other statutory consultation bodies should be taken into account before the overall decision on the need for a SEA is made. If a decision is made to undertake a SEA, please note that Historic England has published guidance on Sustainability Appraisal / Strategic Environmental Assessment and the Historic Environment that is relevant to both local and neighbourhood planning and available at:

<<https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/sustainability-appraisal-and-strategic-environmental-assessment-advice-note-8/>>

Should it be concluded that, overall, a SEA will be required for the Plan, Historic England would be pleased to discuss the scope of the assessment in relation to the historic environment in due course.

I hope that this information is of use to you at this time. Should you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.



THE AXIS 10 HOLLIDAY STREET BIRMINGHAM B1 1TF

Telephone 0121 625 6888
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Historic England

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

Clive Fletcher
Principal Adviser, Historic Places

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Historic England is subject to both the Freedom of Information Act (2000) and Environmental Information Regulations (2004). Any Information held by the organisation can be requested for release under this legislation.

Date: 31 August 2021
Our ref: 361540
Your ref: None



Joanne Althorpe
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BY EMAIL ONLY

Dear Joanne

Planning consultation: Swannington Neighbourhood Plan - SEA/HRA Screening request

Thank you for your consultation on the above dated 27 July 2021 which was received by Natural England on 28 July 2021

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.

Natural England welcomes the Screening Report which assesses the requirement for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) for the Swannington Neighbourhood Plan.

We can confirm that it is considered unlikely that any significant environmental effects will result from the implementation of the Swannington Neighbourhood Plan.

Natural England also agrees with the report's conclusions that Swannington Neighbourhood Plan would not be likely to result in a significant effect on any European Site either alone or in combination and therefore no further assessment work under the Habitats Regulations would be required.

We would be happy to comment further should the need arise but if in the meantime you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact us.

For any queries relating to the specific advice in this letter only please contact Sandra Close on 020 8026 0676. For any new consultations, or to provide further information on this consultation please send your correspondences to consultations@naturalengland.org.uk.

We would be happy to comment further should the need arise but if in the meantime you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact us.

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Yours sincerely

SANDRA CLOSE

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Planning Adviser

East Midlands Team