

This screening report is an assessment of whether Blyth Neighbourhood Plan requires a Strategic Environmental Assessment or a Habitats Regulations Assessment

Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening

20th January 2020



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1. Introduction

The Purpose of this Report

- 1.1 This screening report is an assessment of whether the Blyth Neighbourhood Plan requires 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 Plan is likely to have a significant effect on the environment.
- 1.2 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 63 of the [Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017](#). A HRA is required when it is deemed that likely adverse significant effects may occur on protected Habitats (Natura 2000) sites, as a result of the implementation of a plan or project.

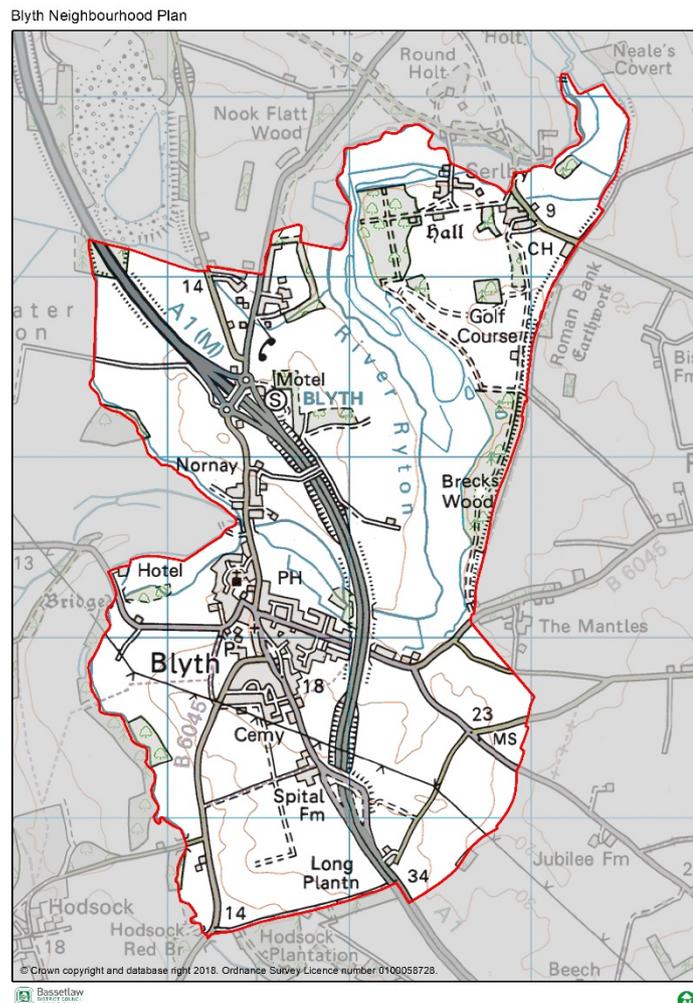
2. The Blyth Neighbourhood Plan

Name of Qualifying Body and Local Planning Authority

- 2.1 The qualifying body preparing the Blyth Neighbourhood Plan is Blyth Parish Council. The Local Planning Authority is Bassetlaw District Council.

Location and spatial extent of the Blyth Neighbourhood Plan

- 2.2 The Blyth Neighbourhood Plan covers the Blyth Neighbourhood Area, comprising the full extent of the civil parish of Blyth in Nottinghamshire.



- 2.3 Blyth is a rural civil parish located in the north western portion of Bassetlaw District, itself the northernmost district in Nottinghamshire. The Parish has an area of approximately 827 hectares, and a resident population of 1,233 people (2011 Census). Blyth is the primary settlement in the parish, whilst to the north are the smaller settlements of Nornay and North Blyth. At the northern extent of the parish is Serlby Hall. The market town of Worksop lies 9 km to the south west of Blyth village, and the market town of Retford 9 km to the south east.
- 2.4 The parish is strategically located at the intersection of a range of important local, regional and national routes. This includes the A1 trunk road and the A1(M) Doncaster Bypass, the

A614 towards Bawtry, the A634 to Maltby and Retford, and the B6045 to Worksop and Mattersey.

- 2.5 The Plan area has a number of important local facilities and services such as a health centre, a primary school, village hall, post office, retail outlets, and a number of public houses.

Timeframe of the Blyth Neighbourhood Plan

- 2.6 To 2035.

Main aims of the Blyth Neighbourhood Plan

- 2.7 The vision of the Blyth Neighbourhood Plan is as follows:

'Blyth will remain a sustainable community and its unique historic and rural character will be protected. Important open spaces, community facilities and a suitable mix of housing will be provided and accessible within a safe environment by 2035

The vision is, in turn, supported by six objectives:

Objective 1 - To support appropriate development and initiatives that contribute to the continued sustainability of Blyth as a place to live and work.

Objective 2 - To identify and protect the unique features and historic buildings that contribute to the character of the village.

Objective 3 - To ensure that open spaces and other green infrastructure valued by the local community are identified and protected.

Objective 4 - To ensure that important community facilities that contribute to the continued sustainability of Blyth are provided and are accessible.

Objective 5 - To deliver a mix of high quality and well-designed housing types and tenures as required by the current and future population of Blyth.

Objective 6 - To provide a safe and pleasant environment for all residents and visitors to the area.

Relationship with the Bassetlaw Local Plan

- 2.8 Only a draft neighbourhood plan that meets each of a set of basic conditions can be put to a referendum and be made. One of these basic conditions requires the making of the neighbourhood plan to be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area.

- 2.9 For the purposes of the Blyth Neighbourhood Plan, the relevant part of the Local Plan (formerly Local Development Framework) is the Bassetlaw Core Strategy and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (DPD).

- 2.10 The Core Strategy and Development Management Policies DPD was adopted in December 2011. It sets out a vision for change in Bassetlaw to 2028, along with the place-specific policy approaches to be taken in order to achieve this vision. A small number of more detailed development management policies on key issues that will need to be addressed when delivering new development, are also included.
- 2.11 Blyth is identified as a Rural Service Centre - a settlement that offers a range of services and facilities, and access to public transport, making it a suitable location for limited rural growth. A parallel process of Sustainability Appraisal (SA) was undertaken alongside the plan-making process for the Core Strategy and Development Management Policies DPD.
- 2.12 Given the importance of having an up-to-date local plan, Bassetlaw District Council is currently in the process of preparing the [Bassetlaw Local Plan](#) which will include strategic policies for the period 2018 to 2035. Consultation on the Draft Bassetlaw Local Plan commenced on 14 January 2019 and ended on 10 March 2019 in accordance with Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) 2012. A further Regulation 18 consultation is due to commence in early 2020. Upon adoption, the Bassetlaw Local Plan will replace the 2011 Core Strategy and Development Management Policies DPD. A [Sustainability Appraisal Report](#) has been prepared as part of the integrated SA and SEA of the Draft Bassetlaw Local Plan. [Habitats Regulations Assessment screening](#) of the Draft Bassetlaw Local Plan has also been undertaken.

Does the Blyth Parish Neighbourhood Plan propose allocations?

- 2.13 A neighbourhood plan can allocate sites for development, including housing. Where they do contain policies relevant to housing supply, these policies should take account of latest and up-to-date evidence of housing need.
- 2.14 The strategic policies of the Draft Bassetlaw Local Plan have been informed by an up-to-date local housing need assessment, conducted using the standard method in national planning guidance. Rural settlements will accommodate a minimum of 1,777 new dwellings and deliver the necessary associated infrastructure from 2018 to 2035. This will be delivered through existing planning permissions and sites allocated through the Neighbourhood Plan process and Local Plan site allocation process. Where neighbourhood plan groups choose to take forward a neighbourhood plan, the Draft Local Plan sets out the housing requirement to be met.
- 2.15 In January 2019 Bassetlaw District Council issued a housing requirement figure for Blyth Neighbourhood Area, for the period 2018 – 2035. The minimum housing requirement is 55 dwellings, representing a 10% increase in the number of dwellings in the parish as at August 2018. Growth is capped at 106 dwellings, representing 20% of the existing number of dwellings in the three settlements combined.
- 2.16 The Draft Blyth Neighbourhood Plan allocates 3 specific housing sites for development with a cumulative site capacity of up to 58 dwellings (Policies 6 – 8), with the potential for additional infill sites to come forward up to the 20% cap as windfall development (Policy 5).

3. Legislative Background

- 3.1 A neighbourhood plan or order must be compatible with European Union obligations, as incorporated into UK law, in order to be legally compliant. This assessment concerns two European Union directives:

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

- 3.2 The Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive is a European Union requirement that seeks to provide a high level of protection of the environment by integrating environmental considerations into the process of preparing certain plans and programmes.
- 3.3 The aim of the Directive is “to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes with a view to promoting sustainable development, by ensuring that, in accordance with this Directive, an environmental assessment is carried out of certain plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment.”

Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)

- 3.4 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 2012), 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 assessment of the impacts of a land use proposal against the conservation objectives of Habitats (Natura 2000) 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.

Recent Case Law

- 3.5 The ‘People over Wind, Peter Sweetman v Coillte Teoranta’ (12 April 2018) judgement ruled that Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive should be interpreted as meaning that mitigation measures should be assessed as part of an Appropriate Assessment, and should not be taken into account at the screening stage. The precise wording of the ruling is as follows:

Article 6(3)must be interpreted as meaning that, in order to determine whether it is necessary to carry out, subsequently, an appropriate assessment of the implications, for a site concerned, of a plan or project, it is not appropriate, at the screening stage, to take account of measures intended to avoid or reduce the harmful effects of the plan or project on that site.

- 3.6 In light of the above, the HRA screening stage has not relied upon avoidance or mitigation measures to draw conclusions as to whether the Neighbourhood Plan would result in likely significant effects.
- 3.7 The ‘Holohan v An Bord Pleanala’ (9 Nov 2018) CJEU judgement states:

Article 6(3) of Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora must be interpreted as meaning that an ‘appropriate assessment’ must, on the one hand, catalogue the entirety of habitat types and species for which a site is protected, and, on the other, identify and examine both the implications of the proposed project for the species present on that site, and for which that site has not

been listed, and the implications for habitat types and species to be found outside the boundaries of that site, provided that those implications are liable to affect the conservation objectives of the site.

Article 6(3) of Directive 92/43 must be interpreted as meaning that the competent authority is permitted to grant to a plan or project consent which leaves the developer free to determine subsequently certain parameters relating to the construction phase, such as the location of the construction compound and haul routes, only if that authority is certain that the development consent granted establishes conditions that are strict enough to guarantee that those parameters will not adversely affect the integrity of the site.

Article 6(3) of Directive 92/43 must be interpreted as meaning that, where the competent authority rejects the findings in a scientific expert opinion recommending that additional information be obtained, the 'appropriate assessment' must include an explicit and detailed statement of reasons capable of dispelling all reasonable scientific doubt concerning the effects of the work envisaged on the site concerned.

4. SEA Screening

When is SEA Required?

4.1 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).

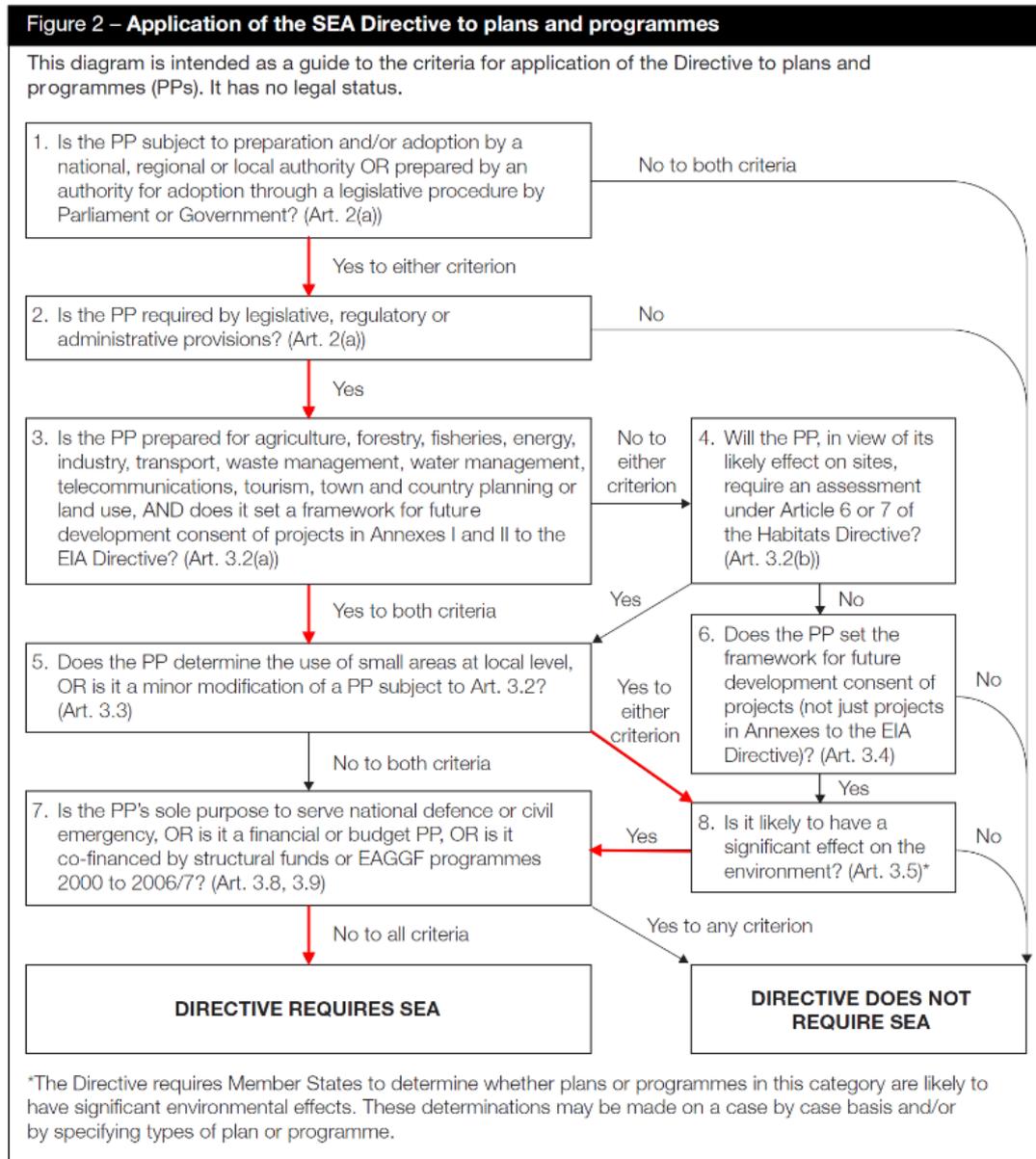
To decide whether a draft neighbourhood plan might have significant environmental effects, it must be assessed (screened) at an early stage of the plan’s preparation according to the requirements set out in regulation 9 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004. These include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

Assessment

- 4.2 This diagram shows the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive's field of application in the form of a diagram. The original diagram is from 'A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Objective'. The red arrows indicate the process route for the Blyth Neighbourhood Plan SEA Screening Assessment.



- 4.3 The table below shows the assessment of whether the Blyth Neighbourhood Plan will require a full SEA. The questions below are drawn from the diagram above which sets out how the SEA Directive should be applied.

| Stage | Yes/No | Reason |
|---|--------|--|
| 1. Is the Neighbourhood Plan subject to preparation and/or adoption by a national, regional or local authority OR prepared by an authority for adoption through a | Yes | The preparation of and adoption of the Blyth Neighbourhood Plan is allowed under The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Localism Act 2011. The Blyth |

| Stage | Yes/No | Reason |
|--|------------|--|
| legislative procedure by Parliament or Government? (Art. 2(a)) | | Neighbourhood Plan will be prepared by Blyth Parish Council (as the 'relevant body') and will be 'made' by Bassetlaw Council as the local authority. |
| 2. Is the Neighbourhood Plan required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions? (Art. 2(a)) | Yes | Whilst the Blyth Neighbourhood Plan is not a requirement and is optional under the provisions of The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Localism Act 2011, it will if 'made', form part of the Development Plan for the District. It is therefore important that the screening process considers whether it is likely to have significant environmental effects and hence whether SEA is required under the Directive. |
| 3. Is the Neighbourhood 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 (see Appendix 4) to the EIA Directive? (Art 3.2(a)) | Yes | The Blyth Neighbourhood Plan covers a range of land use issues and allocations. Although the Blyth Neighbourhood Plan is a non-strategic scale document, focused solely upon the Parish of Blyth, it can set the framework for future development consent of some of the projects in Annexes I and II to the EIA Directive (see Appendix 4 for list). |
| 5. Does the Neighbourhood Plan 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 | Determination of small sites at local level only. |
| 8. Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment? (Art. 3.5) | No | Appendix 1 presents the environmental effects which have the potential to arise as a result of the Blyth Neighbourhood Plan. |

5. HRA Screening

The requirement to undertake HRA

- 5.1 The requirement to undertake HRA of development plans was confirmed by the amendments to the Habitats Regulations published for England and Wales in July 2007 and

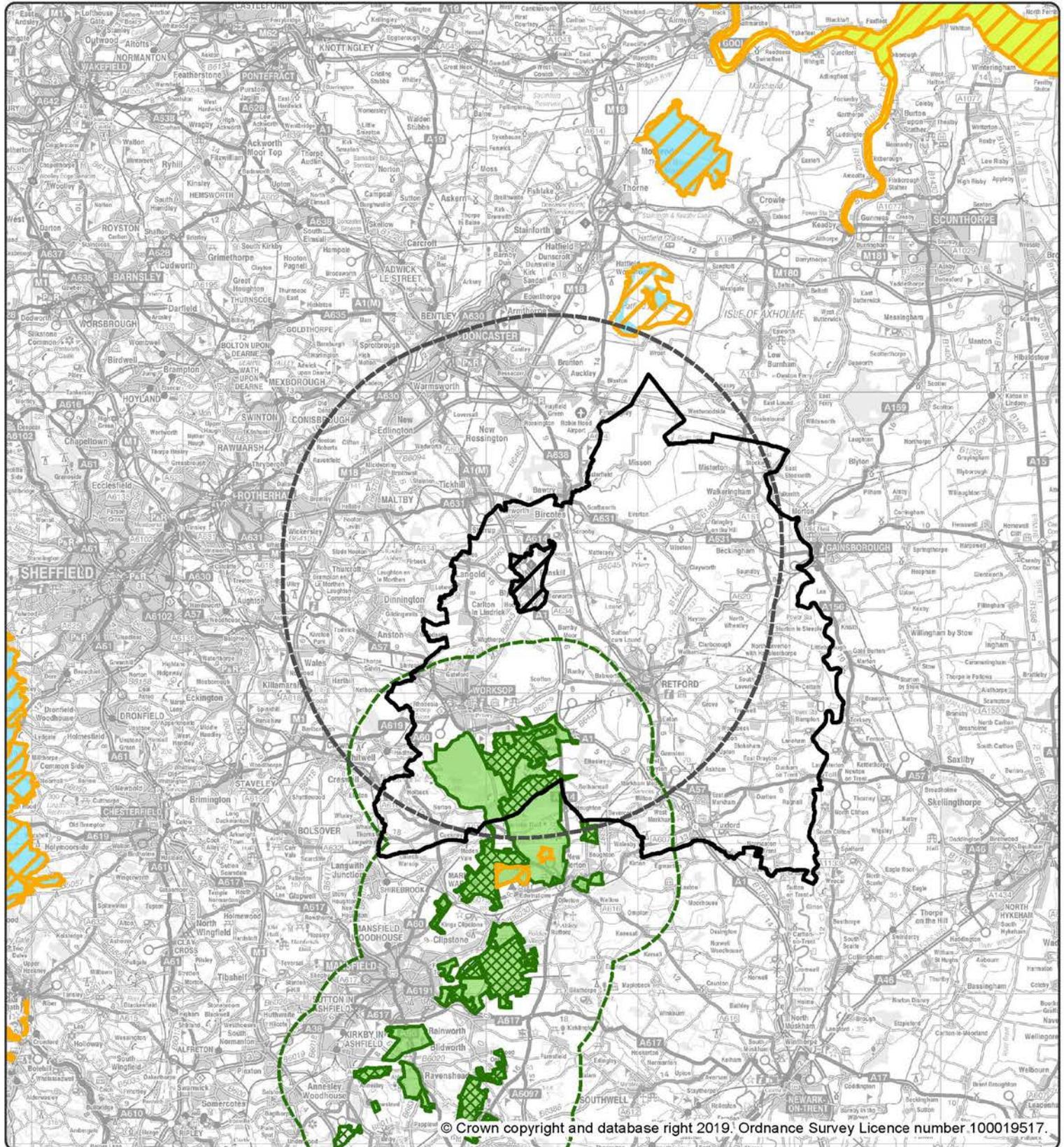
updated in 2010 and again in 2012. These updates were consolidated into the [Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017](#).

- 5.2 The HRA refers to the assessment of the potential effects of a development plan on one or more European Sites, including Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs):
- SPAs are classified under the European Council Directive “on the conservation of wild birds” (79/409/EEC; ‘Birds Directive’) for the protection of wild birds and their habitats (including particularly rare and vulnerable species listed in Annex 1 of the Birds Directive, and migratory species);
 - SACs are designated under the Habitats Directive and target particular habitats (Annex 1) and/or species (Annex II) identified as being of European importance.
- 5.3 The [National Planning Policy Framework](#) (paragraph 176) also expects potential SPAs (pSPAs), possible SACs (pSACs) and Ramsar sites to be included within the assessment.
- Ramsar sites support internationally important wetland habitats and are listed under the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat (Ramsar Convention, 1971).
- 5.4 Candidate SACs (cSACs) and Sites of Community Importance (SCIs), which are sites that have been adopted by the European Commission but not yet formally designated by the government, should also be considered.
- 5.5 For ease of reference during HRA, these designations are collectively referred to as European sites, despite Ramsar designations being at the wider, international level.

Identification of European sites which may be affected by the Neighbourhood Plan

- 5.6 In order to initiate the search of European sites that could potentially be affected by a neighbourhood plan, it is established practice in HRAs to consider European sites within the area covered by the plan, and other sites that may be affected beyond this area.
- 5.7 Bassetlaw District Council has adopted a methodology that uses a 15km area of search to identify European sites that may be affected by plans and projects within Bassetlaw, therefore this distance has been applied in this HRA.
- 5.8 Although there are no European Sites within Bassetlaw District, four sites have been identified that lie within 15km of the District boundary:
- [Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC](#)
 - [Hatfield Moor SAC](#)
 - [Thorne Moor SAC](#)
 - [Thorne and Hatfield Moors SPA](#)

Bassetlaw District Council



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-  Bassetlaw Boundary
-  15km from Blyth Boundary
-  Special Area of Conservation
-  Ramsar
-  Special Protection Area
-  Sherwood Forest Important Bird Area*
-  Indicative core area of breeding of Nightjar and Woodlark
-  Indicative prospective potential Special Protection Area (ppSPA)
-  Sherwood Forest Important Bird Area 5km buffer



Source: Natural England, NWT

* IBA boundary from 2010 is shown. IBAs outside of Sherwood Forest are not shown on this map as they have not been considered in the Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) Screening.

1:350,000

5.9 Of these, Hatfield Moor SAC and Thorne and Hatfield Moors SPA lie within 15km of the Blyth Neighbourhood Area boundary.

5.10 European sites outside the 15km zone may need to be considered in exceptional circumstances and therefore each plan subject to HRA should consider whether there are any pathways by which effects could occur on more distant European sites:

Humber Estuary SAC, SPA and Ramsar

5.11 The Humber Estuary SAC, SPA and Ramsar lies north of Blyth Neighbourhood Area and has hydrological connectivity via the River Ryton, River Idle and River Trent. However, the SAC, SPA and Ramsar are all beyond the 15km buffer in which effects are likely. In addition, the River Trent is a main river with several large settlements along it. Therefore, the Neighbourhood Plan is unlikely to result in significant effects upon the Humber Estuary SAC, SPA and Ramsar and they have not been considered further in this HRA.

Sherwood Forest indicative prospective potential SPA (ppSPA)

5.12 Although not formally a pSPA, Natural England has advised that there is a possibility of a Sherwood Forest pSPA being designated in the future on account of supporting populations of breeding nightjar and woodlark. In a [note to Local Planning Authorities dated March 2014](#), Natural England advocates a precautionary approach to any plans or projects which could affect such a site. No formal assessments of the boundary of any future SPA have been made; therefore, it is not possible to definitively identify whether individual sites would fall inside or outside any possible future designated area. However, the Natural England note encloses a map which highlights the areas of greatest ornithological interest for breeding nightjar and woodlark. The Blyth Neighbourhood Area boundary lies within 15km from these areas.

5.13 The locations of the European sites are shown on the map on the previous page.

Ecological attributes of the European sites

5.14 The attributes that contribute to and define the integrity of the two European sites considered in this HRA have been described in Appendix 2. Such attributes were identified using the Conservation Objectives for each site, Standard Data Forms for SACs and SPAs, as well as Natural England's Site Improvement Plans (SIPs). This information is used to inform the assessment of how the potential impacts of the Neighbourhood Plan may affect the integrity of each site.

Assessment of 'likely significant effects' of the Neighbourhood Plan

5.15 As required under Regulation 105 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (the 'Habitats Regulations'), an assessment has been undertaken of the 'likely significant effects' of the Blyth Neighbourhood Plan. A risk-based approach involving the application of the precautionary principle has been adopted in the assessment, such that a conclusion of 'no significant effect' has only been reached where it is considered very unlikely, based on current knowledge and the information available, that a proposal in the Neighbourhood Plan would have a significant effect on the integrity of a European site.

5.16 A screening matrix has been prepared (Appendix 3), which considers the potential for likely significant effects resulting from each policy in the Draft Blyth Neighbourhood Plan. A

‘traffic light’ approach has been used in the screening matrix to record the likely effects of the policies and site allocations on European sites and their qualifying habitats and species, using the colour categories shown below.

| | |
|-------|--|
| Red | There are likely to be significant effects (Appropriate Assessment required). |
| Amber | There may be significant effects, but this is currently uncertain (Appropriate Assessment required). |
| Green | There are unlikely to be significant effects (Appropriate Assessment not required). |

Interpretation of ‘likely significant effect’

- 5.17 Relevant case law helps to interpret when effects should be considered as a likely significant effect, when carrying out HRA of a land use plan.
- 5.18 In the Waddenzee case, the European Court of Justice ruled on the interpretation of Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive (translated into Reg. 105 in the Habitats Regulations), including that:
- An effect should be considered ‘likely’, “if it cannot be excluded, on the basis of objective information, that it will have a significant effect on the site” (para 44);
 - An effect should be considered ‘significant’, “if it undermines the conservation objectives” (para 48); and
 - Where a plan or project has an effect on a site “but is not likely to undermine its conservation objectives, it cannot be considered likely to have a significant effect on the site concerned” (para 47).
- 5.19 A relevant opinion delivered to the Court of Justice of the European Union commented that:
- The requirement that an effect in question be ‘significant’ exists in order to lay down a de minimis threshold. Plans or projects that have no appreciable effect on the site are thereby excluded. If all plans or projects capable of having any effect whatsoever on the site were to be caught by Article 6(3), activities on or near the site would risk being impossible by reason of legislative overkill.*
- 5.20 This opinion (the ‘Sweetman’ case) therefore allows for the authorisation of plans and projects whose possible effects, alone or in combination, can be considered ‘trivial’ or de minimis; referring to such cases as those “that have no appreciable effect on the site”. In practice such effects could be screened out as having no likely significant effect; they would be ‘insignificant’.

Assessment

- 5.21 A detailed Screening matrix is presented in Appendix 3, and the findings are described below in relation to each type of potential impact that the Local Plan could give rise to.

Physical damage/loss of habitat

- 5.22 Any development resulting from the Neighbourhood Plan will be located within Blyth Neighbourhood Area. Loss of habitat from within the boundaries of a European site can be ruled out as there are no European sites within the Neighbourhood Area.

5.23 Loss of habitat from outside the boundaries of a European site could still result in likely significant effects if that habitat supports qualifying species from within the European sites, for example habitat that is used for foraging by birds. In particular, Hatfield and Thorne SPA is sensitive to impacts of damage or loss of off-site habitat due to its qualifying feature being nightjar, a mobile bird species which will forage within off-site habitats. However, the European sites lying beyond the boundary of Blyth Neighbourhood Area have no notable ecological connectivity to it, with intervening infrastructure, and are of a distance that it would not be expected for birds to be dependent on the habitat within the allocations. Furthermore, the area of land potentially to be lost to residential development is only 7.5 hectares in total.

5.24 On the basis of the above, likely significant effects on all European sites can be screened out in relation to physical damage or loss of off-site habitat.

Non-physical disturbance (noise, vibration and light)

5.25 Noise and vibration effects, e.g. during the construction of new housing or employment development, are most likely to disturb bird species and are thus a key consideration with respect to European sites where birds are the qualifying features, although such effects may also impact upon some mammals and fish species. Artificial lighting at night (e.g. from street lamps, flood lighting and security lights) is most likely to affect bat populations and other nocturnal animals, and therefore have an adverse effect on the integrity of European sites where bats or nocturnal animals are a qualifying feature.

5.26 It has been assumed that the effects of noise, vibration and light pollution are most likely to cause an adverse effect if development takes place within 500m of a European site with qualifying features sensitive to these disturbances, or known off-site breeding, foraging or roosting areas.

5.27 The European sites lie outside of the Blyth Neighbourhood Area boundary and are all well over 500m from new development allocations, therefore likely significant effects as a result of non-physical disturbance are not expected to occur.

Air pollution

5.28 Air pollution is most likely to affect European sites where plant, soil and water habitats are the qualifying features, but some qualifying animal species may also be affected, either directly or indirectly, by any deterioration in habitat as a result of air pollution. Deposition of pollutants to the ground and vegetation can alter the characteristics of the soil, affecting the pH and nitrogen availability that can then affect plant health, productivity and species composition.

5.29 In terms of vehicle traffic, nitrogen oxides (NO_x, i.e. NO and NO₂) are considered to be the key pollutants. Subsequent deposition of nitrogen compounds may lead to both soil and freshwater acidification, and eutrophication of soils and water.

5.30 Based on the [Highways Agency Design Manual for Road and Bridges \(DMRB\) Volume 11, Section 3, Part 1](#) (which was produced to provide advice regarding the design, assessment and operation of trunk roads (including motorways)), it is assumed that air pollution from roads is unlikely to be significant beyond 200m from the road itself.

5.31 Based on the DMRB guidance, affected roads which should be assessed are those where:

- Daily traffic flows will change by 1,000 AADT (Annual Average Daily Traffic) or more; or
 - Heavy duty vehicle (HDV) flows will change by 200 AADT or more; or
 - Daily average speed will change by 10 km/hr or more; or
 - Peak hour speed will change by 20 km/hr or more; or
 - Road alignment will change by 5 m or more.
- 5.32 It has been assumed that only those roads forming part of the primary road network (motorways and primary 'A' roads) are likely to experience any significant increases in vehicle traffic as a result of development (i.e. greater than 1,000 AADT). As such, where a site is within 200m of only minor roads, no significant effect from traffic-related air pollution is considered to be the likely outcome.
- 5.33 All European sites lie outside of the Blyth Neighbourhood Area boundary and are located over 200m from the primary road network. They have therefore been screened out in relation to air pollution.

Impacts of recreation

- 5.34 Recreational activities can result in likely significant effects on European sites as a result of erosion, trampling and nutrient enrichment of habitats, and disturbance of species resulting in a compromised ability to breed or survive. Where Local Plan policies are likely to result in an increase in the local population, or where an increase in visitor numbers to the European site is considered likely, there may be potential for associated recreational impacts.
- 5.35 A well-established approach to avoiding recreational pressures has been developed as part of planning decisions which involve the Thames Basin Heaths SPA (TBH SPA). The TBH SPA, located in southern England, is designated for ground nesting heathland birds including nightjar. The TBH Delivery Framework – which is endorsed by Natural England, and which was scrutinised for robustness and appropriateness by the Technical Assessor of the South East Plan – suggests that at distances between 400m and 5 km, residential housing is likely to result in significant effects associated with recreation and other urban edge effects such as cat predation. Beyond this distance, the Assessor recommended that larger developments (above 50 dwellings) between 5 and 7 km from the SPA be assessed and may be required to provide appropriate mitigation.
- 5.36 Beyond 7km the effect of recreational pressures on a heathland and woodland site are likely to be minimal. And this distance is reduced to 5km for smaller developments of below 50 dwellings.
- 5.37 The Sherwood Forest ppSPA is 8 km from the nearest proposed residential development site in the Blyth Neighbourhood Plan (Policy 8), and the other European sites are more distant, meaning that they do not need further consideration.

Cat predation

- 5.38 Cat predation due to an increase in residential populations and cat ownership can result in likely significant effects on European sites where ground nesting bird species are the qualifying features. Nightjar are ground nesting species, and therefore these birds and their nests are vulnerable to predation by domestic cats.
- 5.39 As described above, the increased risk of cat predation associated with residential schemes in relation to the TBH SPA resulted in the adoption of a 400m development exclusion zone,

together with pressure associated with recreational access. NE specifies that at distances of less than 400m avoidance measures are likely to be ineffective at reducing the risks associated with predation.

- 5.40 The European sites assessed in this screening are significantly beyond 400m from the Blyth Neighbourhood Area boundary and therefore do not need further consideration.

Water quantity and quality

- 5.41 An increase in demand for water abstraction and treatment resulting from the growth proposed in the Blyth Neighbourhood Plan could result in changes in hydrology at European sites, specifically a decrease in water quality or changes to water levels. Depending on the qualifying features and particular vulnerabilities of the European sites, this could lead to likely significant effects on the sites qualifying features.
- 5.42 All of the European sites included within this HRA are outside the Blyth Neighbourhood Area. They are not hydrologically connected to the Neighbourhood Area and can therefore be screened out given the lack of impact pathways.
- 5.43 Likely significant effects associated with changes in water quality and quantity can be screened out in relation to all European sites included in this HRA.

Identification of other plans and projects which may have 'incombination' effects

- 5.44 Regulation 105 of the Amended Habitats Regulations 2017 requires an Appropriate Assessment where "a land use plan is likely to have a significant effect on a European site (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) and is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site". Therefore, it is necessary to consider whether there may be significant effects from the Blyth Neighbourhood Plan in combination with other plans or projects.
- 5.45 The first stage in identifying 'in-combination' effects involves identifying which other plans and projects in addition to the Blyth Neighbourhood Plan may affect the European sites that were the focus of this assessment. There are a large number of potentially relevant plans and projects which could be considered; therefore, the review focused on planned spatial growth within Bassetlaw District.
- 5.46 The Habitats Regulations Assessment of the draft Bassetlaw Local Plan (January 2019) concluded that the Local Plan does not result in likely significant effects upon Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC, Hatfield Moor SAC, Thorne Moor SAC and Thorne and Hatfield Moors SPA either alone or in combination. The scale of development planned by the Blyth Neighbourhood Plan is in conformity with the draft Bassetlaw Local Plan.

6. Conclusions

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

- 6.1 The Blyth 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 determine the use of small areas at local level commensurate with their status in determining local planning applications.
- 6.2 The potential for significant effects on the natural and historic environment are **not likely to be significant** and the application of specific thematic policies could minimise or prevent any possible negative impacts. The content of the Blyth Neighbourhood Plan is therefore **screened out** for the requirement for a Strategic Environmental Assessment in line with Directive 2001/42/EC.

Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)

- 6.3 Subject to Natural England's review, this HRA Screening report indicates that the Blyth Neighbourhood Plan is **not predicted to have any likely significant effects** on any European site, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects, and can therefore be **screened out** from further assessment.

Consultation

- 1.1 The environmental consultation bodies (Historic England, Natural England and the Environment Agency) have been consulted during the preparation of this Screening Assessment. Their responses are summarised below:
- Historic England – On the basis of the information supplied and in the context of the criteria set out in Schedule 1 of the Environmental Assessment Regulations, Historic England is of the view that the preparation of a SEA is not likely to be required.
 - Environment Agency – Concurs with the conclusions of the screening report; significant environmental impacts are unlikely.
 - Natural England – Agrees that the Blyth Neighbourhood Plan is screened-out and that a full SEA is not required, and that a HRA is not required, as the proposals are unlikely to have any significant effect upon European designated sites either alone or in combination.
- 1.2 A full copy of the responses received are attached as Appendix 5.

Overall

- 1.3 Following consideration of the anticipated scope of the Blyth Neighbourhood Plan, the relevant environmental issues locally, and following consultation with Historic England, the Environment Agency, and Natural England, it is concluded that the potential for significant effects to arise as a result of the Plan is unlikely. Consequently, it is considered that a formal SEA is not required.
- 1.4 It is also concluded that the Blyth Neighbourhood Plan would not be likely to have significant effects on European sites either alone or in-combination with any other plan or project and, therefore, Appropriate Assessment (Stage 2 of the Habitat Regulation Assessment process) is not required.

- 1.5 Please note this determination is based upon the Submission Blyth Neighbourhood Plan, dated July 2019). The Council reserves the right, pending future iterations of the Blyth Neighbourhood Plan, to undertake further screening determinations as required.

Appendix 1: Assessment of potential environmental effects

The following table presents the environmental effects which have the potential to arise because of the Blyth Neighbourhood Plan. This is accompanied by a commentary on whether these effects are likely to be significant. The environmental effects have been grouped by the SEA 'topics' suggested by Annex I(f) of the SEA Directive.

| SEA Topic | Likely effect? Y/N | Description of effect | Effect likely to be significant in the context of SEA? |
|---|-----------------------|--|---|
| Biodiversity, flora and fauna (Including biodiversity habitats and species, biodiversity sites, areas of geological interest) | Y | Without mitigation and enhancement measures, the Blyth Neighbourhood Plan has the potential to lead to effects on biodiversity, including through loss of habitat, disturbance, effects on ecological connections and indirect effects such as from impacts on water quality and quantity. Policies 6-8 of the neighbourhood Plan concern the residential development of 3 sites for a total of up to 58 dwellings. This followed a site assessment process where sites were scored against criterion using a traffic light system, with green indicating no conflicts, amber indicating some or minor issues (that can be overcome) and red indicating direct conflict. Whilst there are five Local Wildlife Sites in the Neighbourhood Area, and two areas of Ancient Woodland, these are not intersected by the proposed sites, are some distance from them, and have limited public | No Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) or Special Protection Areas (SPAs) are present within the Neighbourhood Area. The Neighbourhood Plan policies are not predicted to have a likely significant effect on the SAC or SPA, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects. Therefore, effects are unlikely to be significant in the context of the SEA Directive. |

| SEA Topic | Likely effect? Y/N | Description of effect | Effect likely to be significant in the context of SEA? |
|--|-----------------------|--|---|
| | | <p>access. There are no Sites or Special Scientific Interest. None of the allocated sites, individually or collectively, were within a SSSI Impact Risk Zone requiring consultation with Natural England for the scale of development proposed. Stipulations about protection of green infrastructure within the allocated sites are included where applicable. The potential for windfall residential development in the neighbourhood area is recognised, but this is managed by Policy 5, particularly in respect to scale. Neighbourhood Plan Policies 12 and 13 aim to protect local green spaces and other green infrastructure in the neighbourhood area.</p> | |
| <p>Population (Including residents' quality of life, accessibility to services and facilities, deprivation and similar)</p> | <p>Y</p> | <p>The Blyth Neighbourhood Plan has the potential to deliver a range of benefits for the quality of life of residents and for accessibility to services, facilities and opportunities.</p> <p>The 2011 Census recorded 549 households and a population of 1,233. A large percentage of residents of the neighbourhood area are over the age of 30, and 25.7% are aged 60 and over.</p> <p>Neighbourhood Plan Policies 5 – 8 aim to deliver future housing development</p> | <p>Whilst the Neighbourhood Plan has the potential to deliver significant benefits for residents of Blyth Parish, these are not significant in the context of the SEA Directive.</p> |

| SEA Topic | Likely effect? Y/N | Description of effect | Effect likely to be significant in the context of SEA? |
|--|-----------------------|---|--|
| | | across a range of sites in the area, aimed at providing for local and wider needs. Policy 9 seeks to encourage the development of small-scale economic uses, with the potential for job creation. Policy 10 seeks to safeguard a range of local amenities in the neighbourhood area. | |
| Human Health (Incorporating residents' health and wellbeing) | Y | The Blyth Neighbourhood Plan has the potential to have a range of benefits for residents' health and wellbeing through promoting healthier lifestyles and supporting accessibility to services and facilities. Policies include those that support the protection of local green spaces (Policy 12) and the protection of community services and facilities (Policy 10). | Whilst the Neighbourhood Plan has the potential to deliver significant health and wellbeing benefits for residents of Blyth Parish, these are not significant in the context of the SEA Directive. Likely effects from noise quality are also not significant . |
| Soil (Including agricultural land, soil erosion, soil quality) | Y | The Neighbourhood Area's soilscape is characterised by a mixture of sandlands and peaty and clayey alluvial deposits to the north of Blyth village (Idle Lowlands landscape character zone) and well-drained sandy soils to the south of Blyth village (Sherwood landscape character zone). The Neighbourhood Area is predominantly Agricultural Land Grade 3 with areas of Grade 4 along the valley of the River Ryton. | Due to the relatively limited area of land likely to be developed through the Blyth Neighbourhood Plan, effects on the soils resource are unlikely to be significant . |

| SEA Topic | Likely effect? Y/N | Description of effect | Effect likely to be significant in the context of SEA? |
|--|-----------------------|---|--|
| | | Policies 6-8 of the neighbourhood Plan concern the residential development of 3 sites for a total of up to 58 dwellings. None of the allocated housing sites involve the loss of Grade 1 or 2 agricultural land but it is uncertain whether they will be sited on land classified as the Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land as recent, detailed agricultural land classification has not taken place. Nonetheless, the total area of the proposed housing sites is some 7.5 hectares. Policy 1 seeks to encourage that development is directed towards the most sustainable locations in the neighbourhood area. | |
| Water (Including water quality and availability) | Y | The Blyth Neighbourhood Plan has the potential to lead to a very small-scale increase in water demand in the Neighbourhood Area through supporting the delivery of 3 sites for a total of 58 dwellings. | Potential effects on water availability will be limited by the relatively small-scale of proposals likely to be facilitated by the Blyth Neighbourhood Plan. Effects unlikely to be significant . |
| Air (Including air quality) | Y | Bassetlaw District Council currently has no Air Quality Management Areas. Neighbourhood Plan Policy 9 encourages the sustainable and sensitive development of businesses in the plan area. Policies 6-8 concern the residential development of 3 sites for a total of 58 | No existing air quality issues exist and there are no Air Quality Management Areas within the Neighbourhood Area. Any effects on air quality are not significant in the context of the SEA Directive. |

| SEA Topic | Likely effect? Y/N | Description of effect | Effect likely to be significant in the context of SEA? |
|---|-----------------------|---|--|
| | | <p>dwelling. These policies would not be expected to cause a significant increase in traffic in the area and therefore air pollution.</p> | |
| <p>Climatic Factors (Including relating to climate change mitigation (limiting greenhouse gas emissions) and adaptation (adapting to the anticipated effects of climate change, including flood risk))</p> | Y | <p>In terms of climate change mitigation, the Blyth Neighbourhood Plan actively seeks to locate new housing development within or adjoining the existing settlements, where the majority of the local services and facilities are located. This will help limit potential increases in greenhouse gas emissions from an increase in the built footprint of the Neighbourhood Area. Policies 6 - 8 concern the residential development of 3 sites for a total of 58 dwellings. One of the proposed allocated housing sites (Policy 7) includes land within flood zones 2 and 3. However this has been factored into the policy, with dwelling numbers reduced and the need for a Flood Risk Assessment stipulated.</p> | <p>Due to the small scale, local scope of the Blyth Neighbourhood Plan, the nature and magnitude of effects directly arising as a result of the Blyth Neighbourhood Plan are unlikely to be significant in the context of the SEA Directive.</p> |
| <p>Material Assets (Including minerals resources, waste considerations)</p> | Y | <p>The Blyth Neighbourhood Plan may lead to small increases in the Neighbourhood Area's waste management requirements through supporting the delivery of new housing. No mineral sites or resources are likely to be affected as a result of the Blyth Neighbourhood Plan.</p> | <p>Potential increases in waste as a direct result of the Blyth Neighbourhood Plan will be managed through statutory requirements regarding waste management. Due to their limited magnitude, effects are unlikely to be significant in the context of the SEA Directive.</p> |

| SEA Topic | Likely effect? Y/N | Description of effect | Effect likely to be significant in the context of SEA? |
|--|-----------------------|---|--|
| <p>Cultural Heritage (Including historic environment, cultural heritage, historic settings)</p> | <p>Y</p> | <p>Development undertaken in accordance with the policies of the Blyth Neighbourhood Plan has the potential to have effects on the fabric and setting of historic environment assets. These include designated and non-designated heritage assets.</p> <p>Neighbourhood Plan Policy 2 requires development to demonstrate a high design quality that will contribute to the character of the village. Particular reference is made to the Blyth Neighbourhood Profile Report (2019). Neighbourhood Plan Policy 9 encourages the sustainable and sensitive development of employment sites in the plan area.</p> <p>Policies 6 - 8 concern the residential development of 3 sites for a total of 58 dwellings. This followed a site assessment process where sites were scored against criterion using a traffic light system, with green indicating no conflicts, amber indicating some or minor issues (that can be overcome) and red indicating direct conflict. Site NP05 (Policy 6) is adjacent to a listed building, whilst BDC03 (Policy 8) is adjacent to two listed structures, a non-designated heritage asset, an unregistered park and</p> | <p>Designated Heritage Assets: there are no World Heritage Sites or Historic Parks and Gardens in the Neighbourhood Area. A large part of Blyth village is covered by the Blyth Conservation Area. There are three Scheduled Ancient Monuments, namely Blyth Priory (list entry 1006392), Blyth School (list entry 1006402), and Blyth New Bridge (list entry 1006399). There are 54 buildings and structures in Blyth Parish listed by Historic England for their special architectural or historic interest. They include the Blyth Priory Church of Saint Mary and Saint Martin, Blyth New Bridge, and Selby Hall, all Grade I listed. The remaining 51 buildings and structures are designated as Grade II listings. There are also a number of non-designated heritage assets which need to be considered. This includes the grounds of the former Blyth Hall, and the grounds of Serlby Hall, both identified as Unregistered Parks and Gardens.</p> <p>No designated heritage sites are directly affected by the Neighbourhood Plan's proposals. However, in the context of the SEA Screening Directive, two of the proposed residential development allocations are of note. Site NP05 (Land east of Bawtry Road (at Lynwood)) is adjacent to the grade II listed High House and High House Barn, but Bassetlaw District Council's Conservation team expressed no objection in principle, subject to details, when consulted on this proposal. These considerations have been incorporated explicitly into Policy 6.</p> <p>Site BDC03 (Land to the east of Spital Road) is partly within an area of archaeological interest, and contributes to the</p> |

| SEA Topic | Likely effect? Y/N | Description of effect | Effect likely to be significant in the context of SEA? |
|---|-----------------------|--|--|
| | | garden, and a potential area of archaeological interest. | <p>setting of several nearby heritage assets. That said, Bassetlaw District Council’s Conservation team considered that any potential impacts associated with developing the site could be mitigated through a sensitive approach to the boundaries, layout, and design of a scheme. All of these considerations are stipulated within Policy 8.</p> <p>The Blyth Neighbourhood Plan seeks to ensure that all new development would reflect the distinctive character of Blyth, including local character and distinctiveness. The likelihood of significant effects on the listed buildings present in the parish is also likely to be limited by the Blyth Neighbourhood Plan’s focus on the protection of its historic character and local heritage assets. There is also the statutory protection of designated heritage assets that will run alongside any neighbourhood plan policy.</p> <p>In consideration of the points above, effects are unlikely to be significant in the context of the SEA Directive.</p> |
| Landscape (Including landscape and townscape quality) | Y | The policies in the Blyth Neighbourhood Plan have the potential to impact upon the landscape character of the neighbourhood area. Neighbourhood Plan Policy 2 requires new development to contribute to the distinctive character of the area. Policies 6 - 8 concern the residential development of 3 sites for a total of 58 dwellings. This followed a site | In terms of landscape quality, no ‘sensitive areas’ as defined by the NPPG are present in the Neighbourhood Area. Furthermore, the likelihood of significant effects on the integrity of the landscape and townscape are likely to be limited by the Blyth Neighbourhood Plan’s focus on protecting its landscape and heritage assets and the guidance set out in its supporting Neighbourhood Profile Report. |

| SEA Topic | Likely effect? Y/N | Description of effect | Effect likely to be significant in the context of SEA? |
|-----------|-----------------------|--|---|
| | | <p>assessment process where sites were scored against criterion using a traffic light system, with green indicating no conflicts, amber indicating some or minor issues (that can be overcome) and red indicating direct conflict.</p> <p>Neighbourhood Plan Policy 11 seeks to define and protect important views, whilst Policies 12 and 13 seek to protect local green spaces and other green infrastructure.</p> <p>The Bassetlaw Landscape Character Assessment provides a study of the District in terms of landscape condition and sensitivity, identifying policy zones (based on recommended landscape actions). Policy zones where landscape needs to be conserved are the most sensitive to the potential impacts of new development, whereas areas that are less distinct are least sensitive and may benefit from appropriately designed schemes that could introduce new or enhanced landscape character features. In Blyth there are two policy zones, each with sub-typologies: Idle Lowlands policy zones 05 (reinforce), 10 (conserve and reinforce), and 11 (create); and Sherwood policy zones 37 (create), 38</p> | <p>The residential site allocations detailed in policies 6 – 8 conform with the landscape character policy zones that they are located within, focusing development within the existing settlements, seeking to preserve existing trees and hedgerows, and respecting the local vernacular, particularly in respect to style and scale.</p> <p>Overall, the Blyth Neighbourhood Plan’s focus on protecting and enhancing the landscape/townscape of the neighbourhood area and protecting key features of importance for the historic environment will deliver positive effects on landscape and townscape quality and facilitate enhancements.</p> <p>Therefore, potential effects on landscape character and townscape quality are unlikely to be significant in the context of the SEA Directive.</p> |

| SEA Topic | Likely effect? Y/N | Description of effect | Effect likely to be significant in the context of SEA? |
|-----------|-----------------------|--|--|
| | | (conserve and reinforce), 39 (conserve), and 40 (conserve and create). | |

Appendix 2: Ecological attributes of the European sites

| Hatfield Moor Special Area of Conservation | |
|--|---|
| Description | |
| Hatfield Moors, which covers an area of 1363.55 hectares, is a remnant of an extensive lowland raised bog which once occupied the Humberhead levels. Hatfield is unique in having developed directly upon nutrient deficient gravels without an initial reed-swamp phase. Much of the bog has been cut for peat yet a restricted representative flora and fauna persists within a mosaic of mire and dry heath habitats beneath birch scrub. The mire communities are dominated by cottongrasses <i>Eriophorum vaginatum</i> and <i>E. angustifolium</i> , cross-leaved heath <i>Erica tetralix</i> and bogmosses <i>Sphagnum spp.</i> , but include locally rare species such as cranberry <i>Vaccinium oxycoccus</i> , bog myrtle <i>Myrica gale</i> and bog rosemary <i>Andromeda polifolia</i> . | |
| Area | 1359.45ha |
| Qualifying Features | |
| H7120 | Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration |
| Site status* | 92.23% in unfavourable (recovering) condition 6.50% in unfavourable (no change) condition 1.27% in favourable condition |
| Special Area of Conservation objectives | |
| Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring: The extent and distribution of qualifying natural habitats The structure and function (including typical species) of the qualifying natural habitat, and The supporting processes on which the qualifying natural habitat rely. | |
| Site Improvement Plan: pressures, threats and related development | |
| The main pressures and threats to this site include drainage, inappropriate scrub control, impacts of atmospheric nitrogen deposition, public access/disturbance, peat extraction and invasive species. Additionally, planning permission is a problem in that wind farms have been erected or are planned in the wider area surrounding the SAC, yet investigation is needed to better understand the cumulative impact of existing and planned wind farm and other local developments on the nightjar population. | |
| *Site status is an assessment by Natural England of the status of the SSSIs within the SAC | |

| Thorne and Hatfield Moors Special Protection Area | |
|---|--|
| Description | |
| <p>Covering an approximate area of 2449.2 hectares, Thorne and Hatfield Moors SPA is an extensive lowland raised mire system adjacent to the Humber estuary on the north-east coast of England and is the largest remaining lowland peatland in England. Despite a long history of extensive peat extraction since the late nineteenth century, the site retains substantial areas of Sphagnum bog, which has been changed by succession to wet scrub woodland dominated by Birch <i>Betula sp.</i>, sallows and Alder <i>Alnus glutinosa</i>. Where the peat surface has been removed, subsequent restoration of active bog has depended upon shallow flooding to allow Sphagnum and other bog plants to re-colonise. The mire communities are dominated by Hare's-tail <i>Eriophorum vaginatum</i> and Common Cottongrass <i>E. augustifolium</i>, Cross-leaved Heath <i>Erica tetralix</i>, Soft-rush <i>Juncus effuses</i> and <i>Sphagnum</i> mosses, and include a variety of scarcer bog plants such as Bog-rosemary <i>Andromeda polifolia</i> and Cranberry <i>Vaccinium oxycoccos</i>. Drier heath is dominated by Heather <i>Calluna vulgaris</i>, Bracken <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> and Purple Moorgrass <i>Molinia caerulea</i>. Birch <i>Betula sp.</i> scrub, some of it dense, occurs throughout both moors. The diverse mosaic of habitats contribute greatly to the ornithological interest, which comprises breeding species, notably <i>Caprimulgus europaeus</i>.</p> | |
| Area | 2449.2ha |
| Qualifying Features | |
| A224 | Caprimulgus europaeus; European nightjar (Breeding) |
| Site status* | <p>Hatfield Moor:</p> <p>92.23% in unfavourable (recovering) condition</p> <p>6.50% in unfavourable (no change) condition</p> <p>1.27% in favourable condition</p> |
| Special Area of Conservation objectives | |
| <p>Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the aims of the Wild Birds Directive, by maintaining or restoring:</p> <p>The extent and distribution of the habitats of the qualifying features</p> <p>The structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying features</p> <p>The supporting processes on which the habitats of the qualifying features rely</p> <p>The population of each of the qualifying features, and,</p> <p>The distribution of the qualifying features within the site.</p> | |
| Site Improvement Plan: pressures, threats and related development | |
| <p>The main pressures and threats to this site include drainage, inappropriate scrub control, impacts of atmospheric nitrogen deposition, public access/disturbance, peat extraction and invasive species. Additionally, planning permission is a problem in that wind farms have been erected or are planned in the wider area surrounding the SAC, yet investigation is needed to better understand the cumulative impact of existing and planned wind farm and other local developments on the nightjar population.</p> | |
| *Site status is an assessment by Natural England of the status of the SSSIs within the SAC | |

Sherwood Forest prospective potential Special Protection Area (ppSPA)

Description

As the Sherwood Forest prospective potential SPA (ppSPA) is not currently designated as a European Site, there is no Standard Data form or SIP for it. However, the Sherwood Forest Important Bird Area is being used as a proxy for the purposes of this assessment, and the indicative core areas for breeding for nightjar and woodlark as identified by Natural England, are likely to be the most sensitive areas. The Sherwood Forest IBA covers 7,320 ha and consists of several geographic sites stretching from south of Worksop to north of Nottingham. Once part of the 10,000 acre Royal Forest of Sherwood, the woodland is dominated by native oaks and other native trees such as silver birch, rowan, holly and hawthorn. It has been continuously forested since the end of the Ice Age. Approximately 424.75ha of the Sherwood Forest ppSPA is also a designated National Nature Reserve (NNR). The reserve contains more than a thousand ancient oaks most of which are known to be more than 500 years old. Sherwood Forest has the highest concentration of ancient trees in Europe and provides habitat for very rare invertebrates, particularly beetles, flies and spiders, many of which rely on the decaying and ageing timber of the veteran trees. Budby South Forest, in the northern half of the site, is dominated by link heather and supports a diverse range of insects and ground nesting birds such as woodlark, nightjar and tree pipit. In 2004, it was estimated that there were approximately 63 male European Nightjar (females unknown) within in the IBA and approximately 25 breeding pairs of Woodlark.

Qualifying Features

The primary reasons for potential designation of this site are that the population of *Caprimulgus europaeus*; European nightjar represents 1.88% of the total UK breeding population and the population of *Lullula arborea*; Woodlark, is 2.51% of the total UK breeding population.

| | |
|--------------|---|
| Site status* | The condition of the site was not assessed in the most recent IBA monitoring assessment. However, the IBA factsheet states that the mixed woodland habitat is in 'very unfavourable' condition, but the conditions of the nightjar and woodlark populations are favourable. |
|--------------|---|

Prospective potential Special Protection Area objectives

As this area does not relate to an existing designated site, no conservation objectives have been established for it. However, it is anticipated that, were the site to be designated, any conservation objectives would reflect those for other SPAs, as follows:
 Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the aims of the Wild Birds Directive, by maintaining or restoring:
 The extent and distribution of the habitats of the qualifying features
 The structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying features
 The supporting processes on which the habitats of the qualifying features rely
 The population of each of the qualifying features, and,
 The distribution of the qualifying features within the site.

Site Improvement Plan: pressures, threats and related development

The main current threats to the site include logging and wood harvesting, climate change, changes in land use for energy production, housing and economic development, tourism and recreation and air pollution. War, civil unrest and military exercises are identified as a past threat, which is unlikely to return. These threats have been rated low to very high, depending on the proportion of the area and/or population they are likely to affect and the severity of the threat. Recreational activities are identified as being the highest level of threat, followed by logging and wood harvesting and residential and commercial development. The IBA factsheet also identifies 'other threat' as being a high threat, but no details are given.

*Site status is an assessment by Natural England of the status of the SSSIs within the SAC

Appendix 3: HRA Screening Matrix

The screening matrix below shows which types of impacts on European sites could potentially result from each of the policies and sites allocated in the Blyth Neighbourhood Plan. Where a site is not expected to have a particular type of impact, the relevant cell is shaded **green**. Where a site could potentially have a certain type of impact, this is shown in **orange**. The final column sets out the screening conclusions.

| Policy | Likely activities (operation) to result as a consequence of the proposal | Likely effects if proposal implemented | European site(s) potentially affected | Could the proposal have likely significant effects on European sites? |
|-------------------------------------|---|--|--|--|
| Policy 1: Sustainable Development | Residential development Economic development Increase in vehicle traffic Increase in recreation pressure | Physical loss and damage Air pollution Disturbance from recreation | Hatfield Moor Special Area of Conservation (SAC) Thorne and Hatfield Moors Special Protection Area (SPA) Sherwood Forest prospective potential Special Protection Area (ppSPA) | Physical loss and damage is not possible as the European sites do not lie within the Neighbourhood Area. The SAC and SPA are more than 10km away, and the ppSPA at least 8km away, all with intervening infrastructure. It would not be expected for birds to be dependent on the habitat within the Blyth area. This policy alone would not be expected to cause a significant increase in traffic and air pollution in the area, and should help to deliver development in the most sustainable locations. |
| Policy 2: Housing Design and Layout | None – this policy sets out principles to influence the design and layout of residential developments - it | n/a | n/a | No |

| Policy | Likely activities (operation) to result as a consequence of the proposal | Likely effects if proposal implemented | European site(s) potentially affected | Could the proposal have likely significant effects on European sites? |
|---|--|---|--|---|
| | will not itself result in new development. | | | |
| Policy 3: Housing Affordability | None – this policy is intended to influence the allocation of affordable housing in the neighbourhood area – it will not itself result in new development. | n/a | n/a | No |
| Policy 4: Pre-application Community Consultation. | None – this policy details principles that should be applied when submitting a planning application – it will not itself result in new development. | n/a | n/a | No |
| Policy 5: Windfall Sites | Residential development Increase in vehicle traffic | Physical loss and damage Air pollution | Hatfield Moor Special Area of Conservation (SAC) Thorne and Hatfield Moors Special Protection Area (SPA) Sherwood Forest prospective potential Special Protection Area (ppSPA) | Physical loss and damage is not possible as the European sites do not lie within the Neighbourhood Area. The SAC and SPA are more than 10km away, and the ppSPA at least 8km away, all with intervening infrastructure. It would not be expected for birds to be dependent on the habitat within the Blyth area. This policy alone would not be expected to cause a significant increase in traffic |

| Policy | Likely activities (operation) to result as a consequence of the proposal | Likely effects if proposal implemented | European site(s) potentially affected | Could the proposal have likely significant effects on European sites? |
|---|--|---|--|--|
| | | | | and air pollution in the area, and should help to deliver development in the most sustainable locations. |
| Policy 6: NP05: Land East of Bawtry Road (at Lynwood) | Residential development Increase in vehicle traffic | Physical loss and damage Air pollution | Hatfield Moor Special Area of Conservation (SAC) Thorne and Hatfield Moors Special Protection Area (SPA) Sherwood Forest prospective potential Special Protection Area (ppSPA) | Physical loss and damage is not possible as the European sites do not lie within the Neighbourhood Area. The SAC and SPA are more than 10km away, and the ppSPA at least 8km away, all with intervening infrastructure. It would not be expected for birds to be dependent on the habitat within the Blyth area. This policy alone would not be expected to cause a significant increase in traffic and air pollution in the area, and should help to deliver development in the most sustainable locations. |
| Policy 7: BDC02: Land to the north of Retford Road | Residential development Increase in vehicle traffic | Physical loss and damage Air pollution | Hatfield Moor Special Area of Conservation (SAC) Thorne and Hatfield Moors Special Protection Area (SPA) | Physical loss and damage is not possible as the European sites do not lie within the Neighbourhood Area. The SAC and SPA are more than 10km away, and the ppSPA at least 8km |

| Policy | Likely activities (operation) to result as a consequence of the proposal | Likely effects if proposal implemented | European site(s) potentially affected | Could the proposal have likely significant effects on European sites? |
|--|--|---|--|---|
| | | | Sherwood Forest prospective potential Special Protection Area (ppSPA) | away, all with intervening infrastructure. It would not be expected for birds to be dependent on the habitat within the Blyth area. This policy alone would not be expected to cause a significant increase in traffic and air pollution in the area, and should help to deliver development in the most sustainable locations. |
| Policy 8: BDC03: Land to the east of Spital Road | Residential development Increase in vehicle traffic | Physical loss and damage Air pollution | Hatfield Moor Special Area of Conservation (SAC) Thorne and Hatfield Moors Special Protection Area (SPA) Sherwood Forest prospective potential Special Protection Area (ppSPA) | Physical loss and damage is not possible as the European sites do not lie within the Neighbourhood Area. The SAC and SPA are more than 10km away, and the ppSPA at least 8km away, all with intervening infrastructure. It would not be expected for birds to be dependent on the habitat within the Blyth area. This policy alone would not be expected to cause a significant increase in traffic and air pollution in the area, and should help to deliver |

| Policy | Likely activities (operation) to result as a consequence of the proposal | Likely effects if proposal implemented | European site(s) potentially affected | Could the proposal have likely significant effects on European sites? |
|---------------------------------|--|---|--|--|
| | | | | development in the most sustainable locations. |
| Policy 9: Employment | Employment development Increase in vehicle traffic | Physical loss and damage Air pollution | Hatfield Moor Special Area of Conservation (SAC) Thorne and Hatfield Moors Special Protection Area (SPA) Sherwood Forest prospective potential Special Protection Area (ppSPA) | Physical loss and damage is not possible as the European sites do not lie within the Neighbourhood Area. The SAC and SPA are more than 10km away, and the ppSPA at least 8km away, all with intervening infrastructure. It would not be expected for birds to be dependent on the habitat within the Blyth area. This policy alone would not be expected to cause a significant increase in traffic and air pollution in the area, and should help to deliver development in the most sustainable locations. |
| Policy 10: Community Facilities | Development of community facilities Increase in vehicle traffic | Physical loss and damage Air pollution | Hatfield Moor Special Area of Conservation (SAC) Thorne and Hatfield Moors Special Protection Area (SPA) Sherwood Forest prospective potential | No |

| Policy | Likely activities (operation) to result as a consequence of the proposal | Likely effects if proposal implemented | European site(s) potentially affected | Could the proposal have likely significant effects on European sites? |
|---------------------------------|--|--|---------------------------------------|---|
| | | | Special Protection Area (ppSPA) | |
| Policy 11: Important Views | None – this policy aims to safeguard important views from inappropriate development – it will not itself result in development or an increase in traffic or visitor numbers. | n/a | n/a | No |
| Policy 12: Local Green Space | None – this policy requires new development to protect Local Green Spaces, it will not itself result in development or an increase traffic or visitor numbers. | n/a | n/a | No |
| Policy 13: Green Infrastructure | None – this policy sets out principles to protect and enhance green infrastructure in the neighbourhood area - it will not itself result in new development. | n/a | n/a | No |

Appendix 4: Annex I and Annex II Projects, EIA Directive

Annex I Projects, EIA Directive

All projects listed in Annex I are considered as having significant effects on the environment and require an Environmental Impact Assessment. The listed projects are summarised as follows:

1. Crude oil refineries, coal or shale gasification liquefaction installations
2. Thermal power stations, nuclear power stations, other nuclear reactors etc
3. Installations for the processing, reprocessing, final disposal or storage of irradiated nuclear fuel, or the production or enrichment of nuclear fuel
4. Integrated works for the initial smelting of cast-iron and steel, and the production of non-ferrous crude metals from ore
5. Installations for the extraction, processing and transforming of asbestos
6. Integrated chemical installations for the industrial scale manufacture of basic organic and inorganic fertilisers, plant health products and biocides, pharmaceuticals, and explosives
7. Construction of long-distance railway lines. Airports with a basic runway length run of 2,100 metres or more. Construction of motorways and express roads. New roads of four or more lanes and roads which have been improved so as to convert two lanes or fewer to four lanes or more, where such road would be 10 kilometres or more in continuous length
8. Inland waterways and ports for inland-waterway traffic, trading ports and piers
9. Waste disposal installations for the incineration or chemical treatment of hazardous waste
10. Waste disposal installations for the incineration or chemical treatment of non-hazardous waste
11. Groundwater abstraction or artificial groundwater recharge schemes
12. Water transfer schemes between river basins
13. Waste water treatment plants
14. Commercial extraction of petroleum and natural gas
15. Dams and water storage installations
16. Gas, oil or chemical pipelines and pipelines used for the transport of carbon dioxide for geological storage

Annex II Projects, EIA Directive

For the projects listed in Annex II the national authorities have to decide whether an Environmental Impact Assessment is needed. The projects listed in Annex II are in general those not included in Annex I but also other types such as urban development projects and flood-relief works. The listed projects are summarised as follows:

1. Agriculture, silviculture and aquaculture
 - a. Projects for the restructuring of rural land holdings;
 - b. Projects for the use of uncultivated land or semi-natural areas for intensive agricultural purposes;
 - c. Water management projects for agriculture, including irrigation and land drainage projects;
 - d. Initial afforestation and deforestation for the purposes of conversion to another type of land use;
 - e. Intensive livestock installations (projects not included in Annex I);
 - f. Intensive fish farming;
 - g. Reclamation of land from the sea.
2. Extractive Industry
 - a. Quarries, open-cast mining and peat extraction (projects not included in Annex I);
 - b. Underground mining;
 - c. Extraction of minerals by marine or fluvial dredging;
 - d. Deep drillings, in particular: (i) geothermal drilling; (ii) drilling for the storage of nuclear waste material; (iii) drilling for water supplies; with the exception of drillings for investigating the stability of the soil;
 - e. Surface industrial installations for the extraction of coal, petroleum, natural gas and ores, as well as bituminous shale.
3. Energy industry
 - a. Industrial installations for the production of electricity, steam and hot water (projects not included in Annex I);
 - b. Industrial installations for carrying gas, steam and hot water; transmission of electrical energy by overhead cables (projects not included in Annex I);
 - c. Surface storage of natural gas;
 - d. Underground storage of combustible gases;
 - e. Surface storage of fossil fuels;
 - f. Industrial briquetting of coal and lignite;
 - g. Installations for the processing and storage of radioactive waste (unless included in Annex I);
 - h. Installations for hydroelectric energy production;
 - i. Installations for the harnessing of power for energy production (wind farms) and
 - j. Installations for the capture of CO₂ streams for the purposes of geological storage, pursuant to Directive 2009/31/EC, from installations not covered by Annex I to this Directive.
4. Production and processing of metals
 - a. Installations for the production of pig iron or steel (primary or secondary fusion) including continuous casting;
 - b. Installations for the processing of ferrous metals: (i) hot-rolling mills; (ii) smitheries with hammers; (iii) application of protective fused metal coats;
 - c. Ferrous metal foundries;

- d. Installations for the smelting, including the alloyage, of non-ferrous metals, excluding precious metals, including recovered products (refining, foundry casting, etc.);
 - e. Installations for surface treatment of metals and plastic materials using an electrolytic or chemical process;
 - f. Manufacture and assembly of motor vehicles and manufacture of motor-vehicle engines;
 - g. Shipyards;
 - h. Installations for the construction and repair of aircraft;
 - i. Manufacture of railway equipment;
 - j. Swaging by explosives;
 - k. Installations for the roasting and sintering of metallic ores.
5. Mineral industry
- a. (a) Coke ovens (dry coal distillation);
 - b. (b) Installations for the manufacture of cement;
 - c. Installations for the production of asbestos and the manufacture of asbestos products (projects not included in Annex I); See under corresponding Annex I project category, Annex I (5) above;
 - d. Installations for the manufacture of glass including glass fibre;
 - e. Installations for smelting mineral substances including the production of mineral fibres;
 - f. Manufacture of ceramic products by burning, in particular roofing tiles, bricks, refractory bricks, tiles, stoneware or porcelain.
6. Chemical industry (Projects not included in Annex I)
- a. Treatment of intermediate products and production of chemicals;
 - b. Production of pesticides and pharmaceutical products, paint and varnishes, elastomers and peroxides;
 - c. Storage facilities for petroleum, petrochemical and chemical products
7. Food industry
- a. Manufacture of vegetable and animal oils and fats;
 - b. Packing and canning of animal and vegetable products;
 - c. Manufacture of dairy products;
 - d. Brewing and malting;
 - e. Confectionery and syrup manufacture;
 - f. Installations for the slaughter of animals;
 - g. Industrial starch manufacturing installations;
 - h. Fish-meal and fish-oil factories;
 - i. Sugar factories.
8. Textile, leather, wood and paper industries
- a. Industrial plants for the production of paper and board (projects not included in Annex I);
 - b. Plants for the pre-treatment (operations such as washing, bleaching, mercerisation) or dyeing of fibres or textiles;
 - c. Plants for the tanning of hides and skins;
 - d. Cellulose-processing and production installations. Annex II
9. Rubber Industry Manufacture and treatment of elastomer-based products
10. Infrastructure projects
- a. Industrial estate development projects
 - b. Urban development projects, including the construction of shopping centres and car parks.
 - c. Construction of railways and intermodal transshipment facilities, and of intermodal terminals (projects not included in Annex I);

- d. Construction of airfields (projects not included in Annex I) This project category could be interpreted as including heliports;
 - e. Construction of roads, harbours, and port installations, including fishing harbours (projects not included in Annex I);
 - f. Inland waterway construction not included in Annex I, canalisation and flood relief works;
 - g. Dams and other installations designed to hold water or store it on a long-term basis (projects not included in Annex I);
 - h. Tramways, elevated and underground railways, suspended lines or similar lines of a particular type, used exclusively or mainly for passenger transport;
 - i. Oil and gas pipeline installations and pipelines for the transport of CO₂ streams for the purposes of geological storage (projects not included in Annex I); Annex II (10)(f) Annex II (10)(h) 53;
 - j. Installations of long-distance aqueducts;
 - k. Coastal work to combat erosion and maritime works capable of altering the coast through the construction, for example, of dykes, moles, jetties and other sea defence works, excluding the maintenance and reconstruction of such works;
 - l. Groundwater abstraction and artificial groundwater recharge schemes not included in Annex I;
 - m. Works for the transfer of water resources between river basins not included in Annex I.
11. Other projects
- a. Permanent racing and test tracks for motorised vehicles;
 - b. Installations for the disposal of waste (projects not included in Annex I);
 - c. Wastewater treatment plants (projects not included in Annex I);
 - d. Sludge-deposition sites; The treatment and disposal of sludge could be interpreted as being covered by this project category.
 - e. Storage of scrap iron, including scrap vehicles;
 - f. Test benches for engines, turbines or reactors;
 - g. Installations for the manufacture of artificial mineral fibres; (h) Installations for the recovery or destruction of explosive substances; (i) Knackers' yards.
12. Tourism and leisure
- a. Ski runs, ski lifts and cable cars and associated developments;
 - b. Marinas;
 - c. Holiday villages and hotel complexes outside urban areas and associated developments;
 - d. Permanent campsites and caravan sites;
- 13.
- a. Any change or extension of projects listed in Annex I or Annex II, already authorised, executed or in the process of being executed, which may have significant adverse effects on the environment;
 - b. Projects in Annex I, undertaken exclusively or mainly for the development and testing of new methods or products and not used for more than two years.

Appendix 5: Consultation Responses



Mr Will Wilson
Bassetlaw District Council
Queen's Buildings
Potter Street
Worksop
S80 2AH

Direct Dial: 0121 625 6870

Our ref: PL00655647

7 January 2020

Dear Mr Wilson

BLYTH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN - SEA SCREENING REQUEST

Thank you for your consultation of 18/12/2019 and the request for a Screening Opinion in respect of the Blyth 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
HistoricEngland.org.uk





Historic England

Yours sincerely,

Clive Fletcher
Principal Adviser, Historic Places
clive.fletcher@HistoricEngland.org.uk



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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.

From: [Millbank, Rob](#)
To: [Will Wilson](#)
Subject: RE: Blyth Neighbourhood Plan: Draft SEA / HRA Screening
Date: 20 January 2020 15:44:51

Hi Will,

I've had a look at the draft report and I can confirm that we are in agreement with the conclusions, i.e. that significant environmental impacts are unlikely.

Kind regards,

Rob

Rob Millbank

Planning Specialist, Sustainable Places Team

Environment Agency | Trentside Office, Scarrington Road, Nottingham NG2 5FA

rob.millbank@environment-agency.gov.uk

External: 020 3025 5036 | 07500 761448

From: Will Wilson [mailto:Will.Wilson@bassetlaw.gov.uk]
Sent: 16 December 2019 16:33
To: Will Wilson <Will.Wilson@bassetlaw.gov.uk>
Subject: Blyth Neighbourhood Plan: Draft SEA / HRA Screening

Dear Consultee,

Blyth Parish Council are in the process of producing a neighbourhood plan for the parish. To support this work, Bassetlaw District Council has undertaken the required Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening.

It is noted that this assessment has been undertaken later than would ordinarily be the case. The Blyth Neighbourhood Plan is currently being examined, and the lack of an SEA / HRA Screening has been raised as an issue by the examiner. As a consequence, the examination has been paused whilst this issue is addressed. Please find attached a copy of the Draft SEA / HRA Screening Report, alongside the Submission Neighbourhood Plan.

In order to comply with the statutory requirements, the screening report is provided in draft format to the environmental bodies (Historic England, the Environment Agency and Natural England) for their opinion. We have concluded that the plan can be screened-out for both a full SEA and HRA, but would be grateful of your opinion, by Monday 20th January 2020 (i.e. five weeks from today).

Thank you for your assistance.

Kind regards,

Will

Will Wilson PhD AssocRTPI

Date: 16 January 2020
Our ref: 303811
Your ref: None



Will Wilson
<mailto:Will.Wilson@bassetlaw.gov.uk>

Hornbeam House
Crewe Business Park
Electra Way
Crewe
Cheshire
CW1 6GJ

T 0300 060 3900

BY EMAIL ONLY

Dear Dr Wilson

Planning consultation: Draft SEA/HRA screening for the Blyth Neighbourhood Plan

Thank you for your consultation on the above dated 16 December 2019 which was received by Natural England on 18 December 2019

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 draft screening report which assesses the requirement for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) for the Blyth Neighbourhood Plan.

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

Natural England also agrees with the report's conclusions that the Blyth 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.

Yours sincerely

SANDRA CLOSE

Planning Adviser
East Midlands Team