

Strategic Environmental Assessment & Habitat Regulations Assessment Screening

Sutton cum Lound Neighbourhood
Plan (Review)

14 August 2020

Introduction

- 1.1 This document contains the Screening Statements for the Sutton-cum-Lound Neighbourhood Plan (the Plan) with regards to whether a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and/or Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) are required to be undertaken. Also included in this document is an assessment of the allocation sites proposed in the Plan with regards to Impact Risk Zones for Sites of Special Scientific Interest.
- 1.2 Regulation 15 of the 2012 Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations sets out the information that must accompany a Neighbourhood Plan when submitted to the local planning authority. In February 2015 amendments to the Neighbourhood Plan Regulations came into force; this is known as the Neighbourhood Planning (General) (Amendment) Regulations 2015. Regulation 2(4) of these amendments adds additions to the list of documents that a qualifying body must submit to a local planning authority with a Neighbourhood Plan. The additional document which must be submitted is either an environmental report prepared in accordance with the relevant regulations or, if the outcome concludes that an SEA or HRA is not necessary, a statement that sets out how environmental issues have been taken into account and considered during the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 1.3 The National Planning Policy Framework (para 167) advises that assessments should be proportionate, and should not repeat policy assessment that has already taken place. In view of this, only a high level screening assessment of the Plan has been undertaken the HRA, and this assessment should be read in conjunction with the relevant reports produced for Bassetlaw District Councils Local Development Framework¹. A conclusion of the assessment is provided in this document as well information on what the required next steps are in the HRA process.
- 1.4 As the responsible authority under relevant regulations, that are described below, Bassetlaw District Council have undertaken the Screening Assessment contained in this document working with the Parish Council for the Plan area and the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.

Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 1.5 The requirement for a SEA to be undertaken on development plans and programmes that may have a significant environmental effect is outlined in European Union Directive 2001/42/EC. The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (the 2004 Regulations) state that this is determined by a screening process, utilising a specified set of criteria which is outlined in Schedule 1 of the Regulations. The results of this process must be set out in an SEA Screening Statement, which must be publicly available.
- 1.6 The objective of undertaking an SEA is “to provide for a high level of protection of the environment and 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.”²

¹ [Bassetlaw District Council Local Development Framework](#)

² SEA Directive, Article 1

Habitat Regulations Assessment

- 1.7 European protected sites (the ‘Natura 2000 Network’) are of exceptional importance for the conservation of important species and natural habitats within the European Union. The network of European protected sites comprises Special Protection Areas (SPAs) designated under the Birds Directive (79/409/EEC), Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) designated under the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) and Ramsar sites designated under the Ramsar Convention 1975. Government guidance advises that potential SPAs (pSPA), candidate SACs (cSAC) and potential Ramsar (pRamsar) sites are also included in HRA’s.
- 1.8 As a land use plan, an assessment of the Sutton-cum-Lound Neighbourhood Plan may be required under the Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) Regulations 2012 (the Habitat Regulations) and Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive in order to determine whether the Plan may result in a significant effect on identified sites.
- 1.9 As with the SEA, a screening process is used to establish whether any elements of the Draft Plan may have a significant effect on these sites. Regulation 32 of the Regulations 2015 further reemphasises the importance of carrying out this assessment by stating that one of the basic conditions that must be met before the Plan may be ‘made’ is that *“the making of the neighbourhood plan is not likely to have a significant effect on a European site (as defined in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2012) or a European offshore marine site (as defined in the Offshore Marine Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 2007 (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects)”*.³

Summary of Findings

- 1.10 Following the undertaking of the Screening Assessments it has been shown that the Plan in its current form will not have any significant negative effects on the environment or any identified European sites. It is considered therefore that a full environmental assessment and habitat regulations assessment is not necessary.
- 1.11 This determination has been reached by assessing the contents of the Draft Plan against criteria provided in Schedule 1 of the 2004 Regulations and with regard to Regulation 32 of the 2015 Neighbourhood Planning Regulations & the Habitat Regulations.

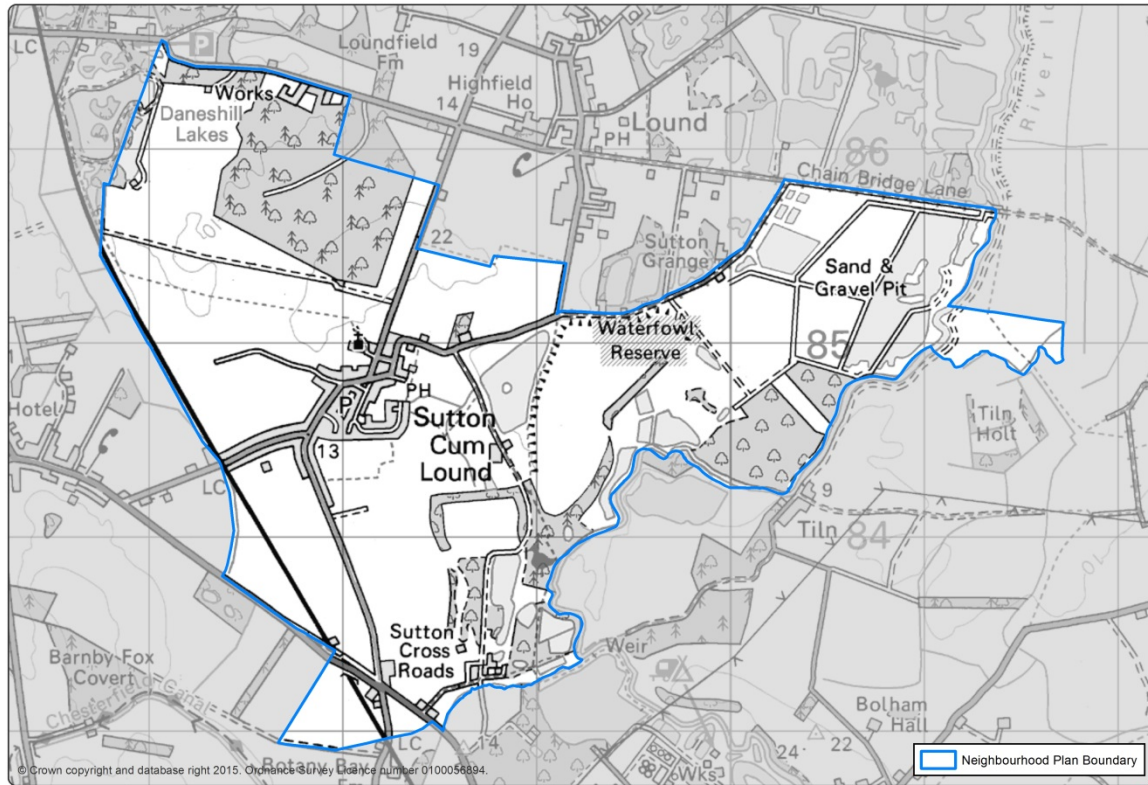
³ Planning Guidance - Reference ID: 41-079-20140306

2 The Sutton-cum-Lound Neighbourhood Plan

- 2.1 The Plan is being produced by Sutton-cum-Lound Parish Council with the aid of local residents; it plans for the future development and growth of the area up to the year 2031. The NP covers the designated neighbourhood area as seen on **Figure 1** below.

Figure 1: Neighbourhood Plan Area

Sutton cum Lound



Plan Overview

- 2.2 The main priorities of the Plan are expressed throughout the document, most clearly in its Vision and Objectives; these will be delivered in turn by the eight Development Management Policies contained in the Plan. The Vision and Objectives of the Plan, as well as the Policies can be found below.

Vision

Sutton cum Lound Parish will continue to be a safe and friendly community in which to live. New development will be located so that it blends in with the existing village and the houses will be of a size and tenure to suit the needs of people of all ages. This will contribute to the vitality and viability of the village, helping to support local facilities whilst reflecting the village's rural character.

Objectives

Community Objective 1: To bring forward carefully selected housing sites to meet the future needs of the community.

Community Objective 2: To ensure that all development integrates with the existing settlement pattern.

Community Objective 3: To ensure that development reflects the enhances the rural local character of the village in relation to the heritage, topography and views.

Community Objective 4: To seek solutions to the problems of speeding and road safety in the Parish and to ensure that these problems are not made worse by future housing growth.

Community Objective 5: To protect, enhance and, where possible, extend the walking, cycling routes and public open spaces in the Parish.

Community Objective 6: To encourage sufficient housing growth to sustain the range of facilities in the village like the village hall, school and pub.

Community Objective 7: To ensure the Parish Council is consulted early in the planning application process (at pre-application stage) via the mechanisms outlined in this Neighbourhood Development Plan.

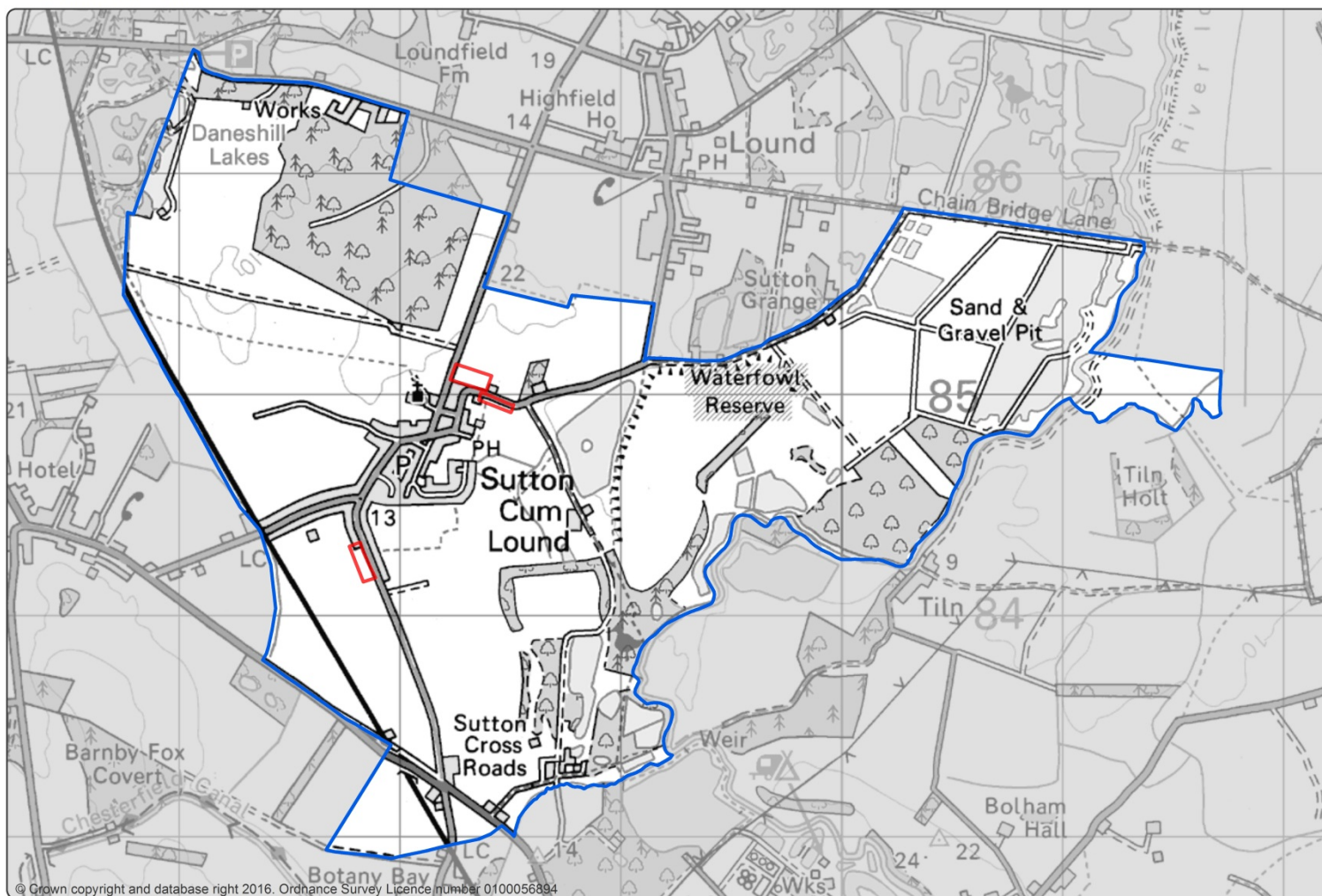
Development Management Policies

Neighbourhood Plan Policy	Intent
NP 1: Design of Residential Development	This Policy works to ensure new residential development brought forward in the Plan area is of a high quality design, in keeping with local character. This is through encouraging integrated designs and use of local materials and styles.
NP 2: A Mix of Housing Types	This Policy works to ensure that housing developments brought forward across the Plan area provide housing types needed in the local area.
NP 3: Land East of Mattersey Road	These Policies allocate sites adjoining the settlement of Sutton-cum-Lound for residential development, subject to a number of criteria relating to; design, layout, landscaping and access.
NP 4: Land south of Lound Low Road	
NP 5: Land west of Sutton Lane	
NP 6: Infill Development in Sutton cum Lound Village	This Policy deals specifically with infill developments in the village. Offering support for proposals subject to the meeting of criteria related to; design, reflecting local character and sustainability.
NP 7: Enhancing facilities in the village	This Policy supports proposals for new community facilities within the Plan area and for the expansion of existing facilities. The Policy also includes support for proposals that will deliver allotments in the Plan area.
NP 8: Improving Green Infrastructure	This Policy provides support for proposals that relate to improving green infrastructure across the Plan area. The Policy also states the consideration that must be given to protecting and enhancing green infrastructure when considering proposals for housing development.

2.3 **Figure 2** on the following page identifies the Site Allocations made in the Neighbourhood Plan for reference.

Figure 2: Site Allocations in Sutton-cum-Lound Neighbourhood Plan

Sutton cum Lound



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3 SEA Screening – Assessment

- 3.1 The table below includes the assessment of the Draft Sutton-cum-Lound Neighbourhood Plan, including its Objectives and Development Management Policies against the criteria included in Schedule 1 of the 2004 Regulations. The Neighbourhood Plan is being assessed as a whole against the criteria listed below to allow for the consideration of its effects on the environment.

SEA Assessment

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)	Significant effect likely?	Comment
1a 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.	NO	<p>The Sutton-cum-Lound Neighbourhood Plan (the Plan) will set out a spatial vision for the designated Neighbourhood Plan area and provides a framework for proposals for development in the area. This framework will be delivered by development management policies contained within the Plan. The framework will have some impacts on the environment, noticeably the support of development proposals however it is deemed that these impacts will not be significant due to their small, localised nature.</p> <p>The Plan is considered to be in general conformity with Bassetlaw District Councils Core Strategy 2011. It is also considered to be in general conformity with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).</p> <p>Several projects are included in the Plan (see Appendix A) that do not directly influence development and land use. These do have regard to the Plan area but it is deemed they will not have any significant effects on the environment. A number of these in fact involve the future protection and enhancement of environmental assets in the Plan area.</p>
1b The degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy.	NO	<p>The Plan, where possible, will respond to rather than influence other plans and programmes. A Neighbourhood Plan can only provide policies to apply within the designated area it covers and provide policies to help officers at Bassetlaw District Council determine planning applications along with Bassetlaw District Councils Core Strategy DPD. None of the policies contained in the Plan have a direct impact on other plans in the neighbouring areas.</p>

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)	Significant effect likely?	Comment
		The Plan will have minimal influence on the development proposed in Bassetlaw District Councils Core Strategy as this Plan is already adopted and in use. The Plan will have some influence on the emerging New Local Plan for Bassetlaw but the environmental effects of this influence are again considered to be minimal.
1c The relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development.	NO	<p>The Plan sets out and promotes sustainable development within the NP area through balancing environmental, social and economic needs. The Plan's Vision & Objectives as well as Section 11 of the Plan, in conjunction with the development management Policies, work to ensure that all development proposals brought forward in the area will take this balance into account. The development supported in Policies 3, 4 & 5 are also viewed as key to ensuring the long term sustainability of the area, as well as the protection of key environmental and cultural assets in Policies 7 & 8.</p> <p>Due to the inclusion of these elements it is considered that the Plan integrates all environmental considerations associated with the development supported in the Plan and there effects on the environment are therefore not significant.</p>
1d Environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme.	NO	<p>The majority of effects the Plan will have on the environment will be positive. This is due mainly to Policy 8 that works to protect and enhance environmental assets and green infrastructure in the Plan area.</p> <p>The additional housing land that is supported by the Plan is likely to have some effects on the local environment, notably the 3 allocations sites on greenfield land. However existing national and local Planning Policy and the planning application process will ensure these effects are not significant, as well as criteria within Policies 3, 4 & 5 of the Plan and the Plan's support for sustainable development in general.</p>
1e The relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (for example, plans and programmes)	NO	The Plan will be in compliance with Bassetlaw's Local Development Framework which has taken into account the existing European and National legislative framework for environmental protection and it will therefore have a positive effect on compliance with regards to relevant legislation and programmes. It is deemed that

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)	Significant effect likely?	Comment
linked to waste management or water protection).		no proposals within the Plan will compromise this position.
2a The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects.	NO	<p>It is deemed highly unlikely that there will be any irreversible damaging environmental impacts associated with the Plan. The policies within the Plan seek to ensure new development is sustainably built and promotes the enhancement and protection of environmental assets.</p> <p>The timescales of the Plan is intended to be until 2031.</p> <p>Should any unforeseen significant effects on the environment arise as a result of the Plan, the intention to monitor the Plan and to also amend/update the Plan every 5 years will allow these effects to be addressed and reversed (see <i>Monitoring & Review</i>)</p>
2b The cumulative nature of the effects.	NO	It is considered that the Policies contained in the Plan cumulatively will have minimal negative effects on the environment and will in fact have moderate to significant positive effects. It is considered that all effects will be at a local level.
2c The transboundary nature of the effects.	NO	Effects will be local with no expected impacts on neighbouring areas.
2d The risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents).	NO	No obvious risks have been identified as the Plans overall aim is ensure the continued sustainability of the Plan area.
2e The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected).	NO	<p>The Plan area relates to an area of approximately 789 hectares. The resident population of the NP area is 673 (Census 2011).</p> <p>The whole neighbourhood area will be affected by the Plan because the Policies within the Plan focus only on the Plan area. It is deemed the Plan as a whole will have a positive impact upon local residents through the protection and enhancement of local environmental assets and through the delivery of identified Projects (see <i>Appendix A</i>).</p>
2f The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to: (i) special natural characteristics or cultural heritage;	NO	<p>The Plan is deemed unlikely to have an adverse effect on the areas natural characteristics and cultural heritage. Policies 1 & 8 of the Plan work to actively protect and enhance these.</p> <p>Two Local Wildlife Sites and one SSSI site are present in the Plan area. The effects on these of the Plan are however not considered significant.</p>

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)	Significant effect likely?	Comment
(ii) exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values; or (iii) intensive land-use.		The Plan does not exceed environmental quality standards or limit values and does not provide specific policies in relation to intensive land uses.
2g The effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.	NO	It is considered that the Plan will not adversely affect areas of landscape which have recognised community, national or international protection.

4 HRA Screening – Assessment

- 4.1 For the HRA “screening” assessment the Neighbourhood Plan area was checked to see if any Special Protection Areas (SPA), Special Areas of Conservation sites (SAC), or Ramsar sites were located within its area, as well as those considered as potential sites (pSPA, cSAC & pRamsar). The assessment also checked to see if any of these internationally important sites were located within a 15km radius from the Neighbourhood Plan area.

Birklands & Bilhaugh SAC

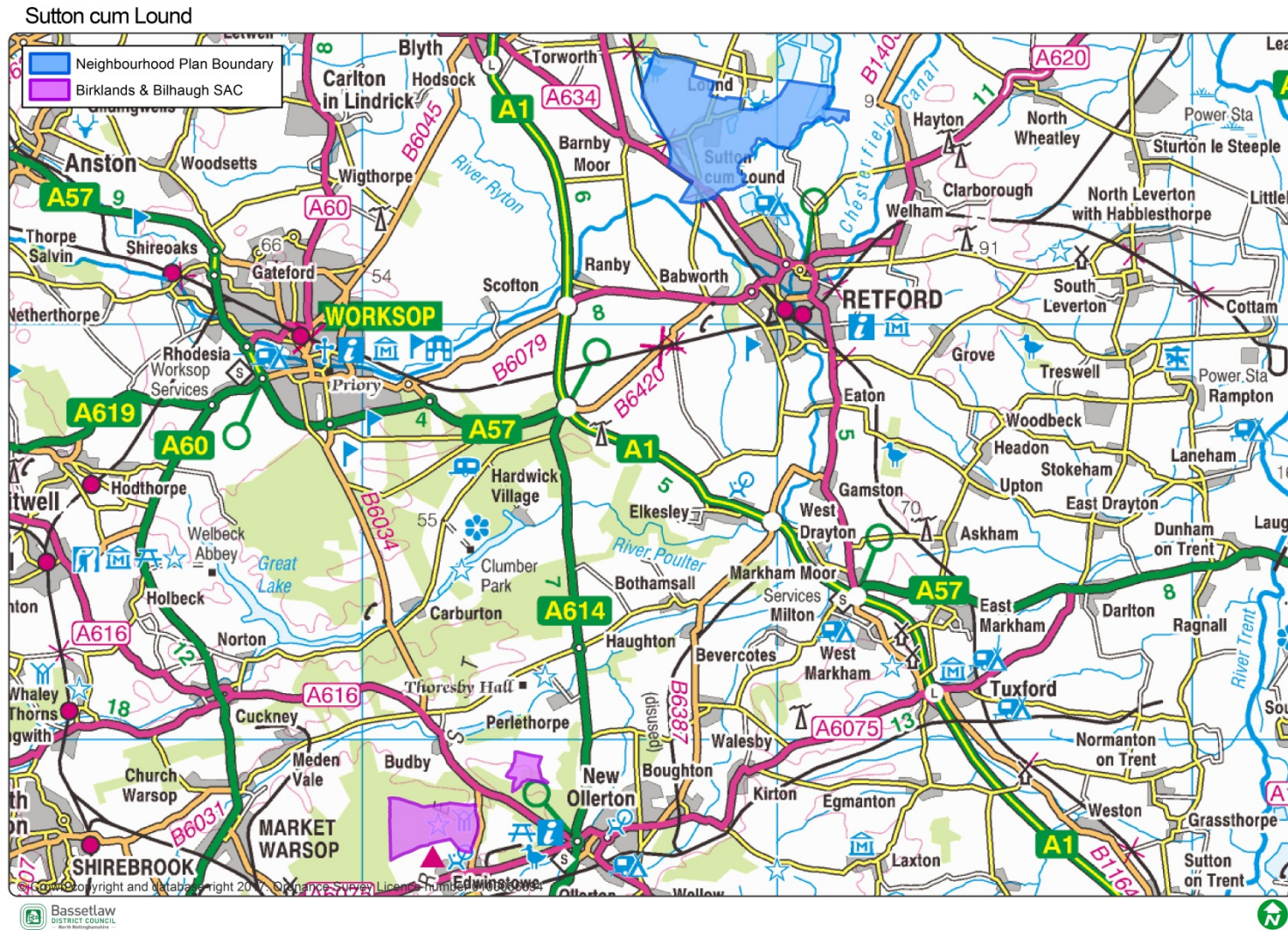
- 4.2 No designated sites were found within the Neighbourhood area; however the Birklands & Bilhaugh SAC is located approximately 14km to the south-west of the border of the Plan area, as shown on **Figure 4** on the following page.
- 4.3 This site covers 270.5 hectares, information on its characteristics and designation justification can be viewed using the following [web link](#), as well as the information below.

“Annex I habitats that are a primary reason for selection of this site - 9190 Old acidophilous oak woods with Quercus robur on sandy plains

Birklands and Bilhaugh is the most northerly site selected for old acidophilous oak woods and is notable for its rich invertebrate fauna, particularly spiders, and for a diverse fungal assemblage, including Grifoa sulphurea and Fistulina hepatica. Both native oak species, Quercus petraea and Quercus robur, are present, with a mixture of age-classes, so there is good potential for maintaining the structure and function of the woodland system and a continuity of dead-wood habitats.”

- 4.4 The Screening Assessment on page 14 has considered the main possible sources of effects on the SAC arising from the Plan, possible pathways to the European site and the effects on possible sensitive receptors in the site. The assessment considers the impacts of the Policies in the Plan directly on the SAC as these are land use Policies which mostly are expected to have some direct or indirect impact on the local environment.

Figure 4: Birklands & Bilhaugh SAC



Policy of the Sutton cum Lound Neighbourhood Plan	Significant effect likely?	Comment
NP 1: Design of Residential Development	NO	This Policy does not allocate land for development; it focuses on controlling the design of new housing when it is brought forward within the Plan area and will not be applied in isolation. It is therefore considered this Policy will have no significant effect on the Birklands & Bilhaugh SAC.
NP 2: A Mix of Housing Types	NO	This Policy does not directly allocate land for development but works to ensure that residential proposals brought forward will provide housing types to meet the local needs of the area and will not be applied in isolation. It is therefore considered this Policy will have no significant effect on the Birklands & Bilhaugh SAC.
NP 3: Land East of Mattersey Road	NO	<p>This Policy includes a site allocation of land at the northern edge of the village for residential development. The identified site is approximately 15km from the Birklands & Bilhaugh SAC.</p> <p>This increase in the population of the Plan area will result in increased road traffic and most significantly levels of recreational activity in the Plan area and surrounding areas. With regards to pathways, it is considered that the residential nature and small scale of the development supported in this Policy, including the distance of the site to the SAC will result in no significant effects occurring.</p> <p>Consequently, it is considered that this Policy will have no significant effects on the Birklands & Bilhaugh SAC.</p>
NP 4: Land south of Lound Low Road	NO	<p>This Policy includes a site allocation of land at the north-eastern edge of the village for residential development. The identified site is approximately 14.5km from the Birklands & Bilhaugh SAC.</p> <p>This increase in the population of the Plan area will result in increased road traffic and most significantly levels of recreational activity in the Plan area and surrounding areas. With regards to pathways, it is considered that the residential nature and small scale of the development supported in this Policy, including the distance of the site to the SAC will result in no significant effects occurring.</p> <p>Consequently, it is considered that this Policy will have no significant effects on the Birklands & Bilhaugh SAC .</p>

Policy of the Sutton cum Lound Neighbourhood Plan	Significant effect likely?	Comment
NP 5: Land west of Sutton Lane	NO	<p>This Policy includes a site allocation of land at the southern edge of the village for residential development. The identified site is approximately 15km from the Birklands & Bilhaugh SAC.</p> <p>This increase in the population of the Plan area will result in increased road traffic and most significantly levels of recreational activity in the Plan area and surrounding areas. With regards to pathways, it is considered that the residential nature and small scale of the development supported in this Policy, including the distance of the site to the SAC will result in no significant effects occurring.</p> <p>Consequently, it is considered that this Policy will have no significant effects on the Birklands & Bilhaugh SAC.</p>
NP 6: Infill Development in Sutton cum Lound Village	NO	<p>This Policy does not allocate land for development; it works to ensure infill sites brought forward in the village are sympathetically designed and does not impact the setting of local heritage assets. It is therefore considered this Policy will have no significant effect on the Birklands & Bilhaugh SAC.</p>
NP 7: Enhancing facilities in the village	NO	<p>This Policy does not directly allocate land for development but supports proposals that provide community facilities meeting the needs of local people. It is therefore considered this Policy will have no significant effect on the Birklands & Bilhaugh SAC.</p>
NP 8: Improving Green Infrastructure	NO	<p>This Policy does not allocate land for development and encourages development proposals to ensure they protect and where possible enhance and improve access to the green infrastructure and natural environment of the Plan area. It is considered it will have no effect on the SAC.</p>

5 In combination effects

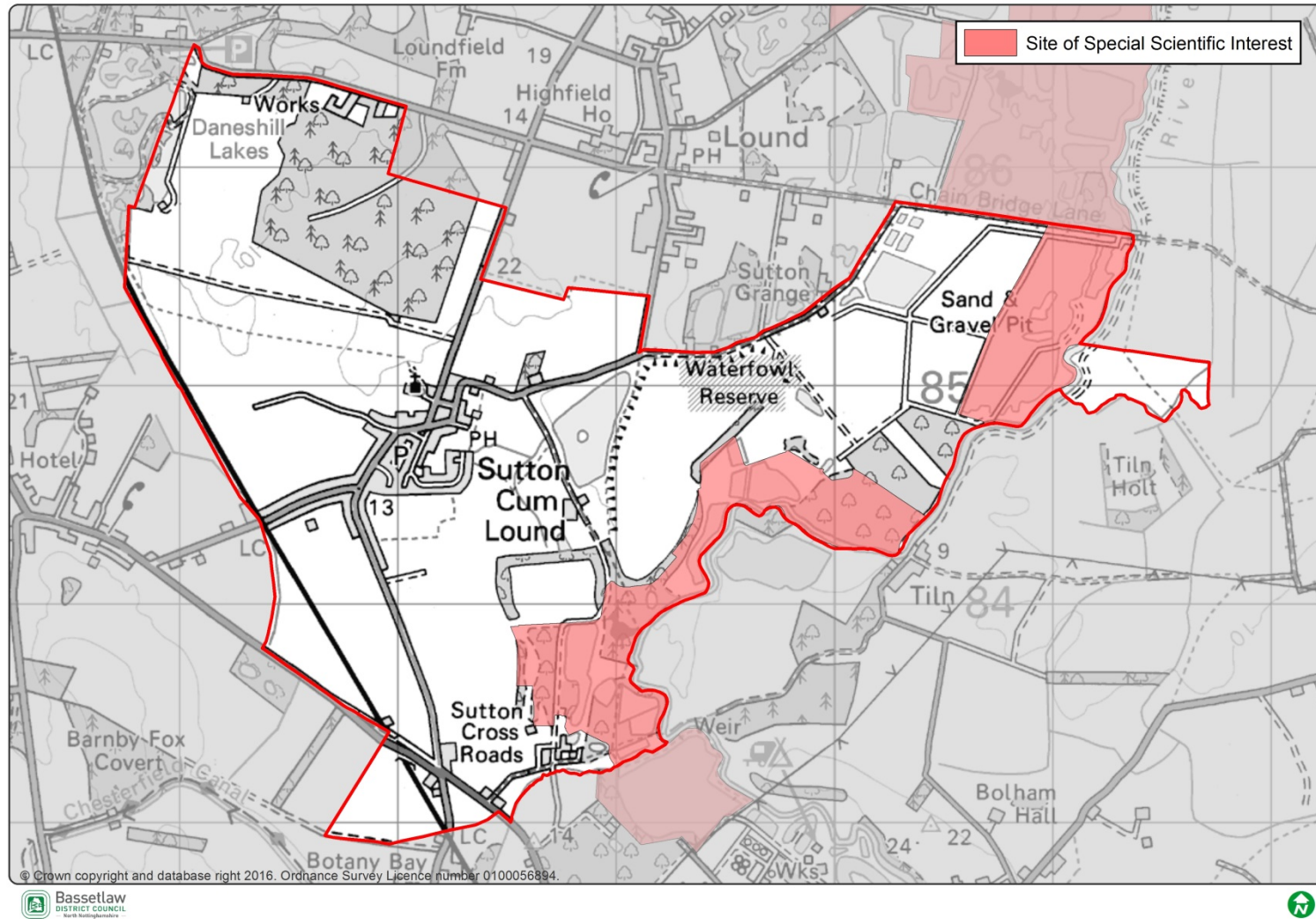
- 5.1 Existing plans and proposals must be considered when assessing new plans or programmes for likely significant effects as they may create ‘in combination’ effects. As the Sutton-cum-Lound Neighbourhood Plan is proposing to allocate several sites for development across the Plan area, the combination effects of this development along with any development outlined in Bassetlaw District Council’s Local Development Framework must be considered. However the Site Allocations Document was withdrawn in December 2014 by BDC therefore any development to take place in the area will be that defined within the Neighbourhood Plan. Therefore there is no in combination effects as a result of this allocated development.
- 5.2 The Neighbourhood Plan is also required to be in general conformity with existing strategic policies in Bassetlaw District Councils Development Plan which has been assessed at a higher level to determine effects on the identified SAC, it is concluded that no significant in-combination likely effects will occur due to the Neighbourhood Plans implementation.
- 5.3 The individual Policies of the Plan have been assessed above and it is deemed that individually they will not result in any significant effects on the Birklands & Bilhaugh SAC. With regards to the Plan as a whole, it is also determined that no significant effects are likely to occur due to the Plan’s implementation.
- 5.4 As set out in Section 7 of this document, it is concluded as a result of the above, that the Plan will not lead to a significant effect on the integrity of the Birklands & Bilhaugh SAC and therefore does not require a full HRA to be undertaken.

6 Impact Risk Zones for Sites of Special Scientific Interest

- 6.1 Sites of special scientific interest (SSSIs) conserve and protect the best of our wildlife, geological and physiographical heritage for the benefit of present and future generations, under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.
- 6.2 Impact Risk Zones (IRZs) are a GIS tool developed by Natural England to make a rapid initial assessment of the potential risks to SSSIs posed by development proposals. They define zones around each SSSI which reflect the particular sensitivities of the features for which it is notified and indicate the types of development proposal which could potentially have adverse impacts.
- 6.3 There is one large identified and designated site of national value in terms of its biodiversity value in the Plan area; this is the 'Sutton & Lound Gravel Pits'. The site is separated into one part covering the north-east of the Plan area and one covering the south-western border. These are identified in **Figure 6** on the following page.
- 6.4 The sites allocated within Policies of the Plan have been assessed to determine if they fall within any IRZs for the SSSI within the Plan area, following this, it is possible to determine whether a proposed development is likely to affect a SSSI using criteria provided.
- 6.5 It is identified that all three of the allocated sites in the Neighbourhood Plan fall within the IRZ for the Sutton & Lound Gravel Pits. Two of these sites, "*Land south of Lound Low Road*" and "*Land west of Sutton Lane*" (as named in the Draft Plan) have the potential to impact on the SSSI under 'Rural Residential' - *Any residential development of 10 or more houses outside existing settlements/urban areas*. Both of these sites may deliver less than the stated figure however regardless of total numbers it is deemed that the impact of developing these sites will not negatively impact the SSSI. Natural England are invited to comment on this position.

Figure 6: SSSI in Plan Area

Sutton cum Lound



7 Conclusions

Consultation

- 7.1 A draft version of this document was the subject of statutory consultation with the Environment Agency, Historic England, and Natural England, commencing on 18 March 2020. The consultation window was kept open for significantly longer than the statutory five weeks, in reflection of the impacts of Coronavirus and the associated lockdown. A response was received from Natural England (see **Appendix A**), but did not include an opinion on the conclusions reached. Responses were not received from the other two consultees, in spite of reminders being sent. Consequently, it was decided in August 2020 to issue the final report, carrying-forward the contents and conclusions detailed in the draft report.

SEA Screening

- 7.2 It is concluded that the Sutton cum Lound Neighbourhood Plan will not have significant environmental effects in relation to any of the criteria set out in Schedule 1 of the SEA Regulations, and therefore **does not need to be subject to a full SEA**.

HRA Screening

- 7.3 The HRA Screening Assessment concludes that no significant effects are likely to occur with regards to the integrity of the Birklands & Bilhaugh SAC, due to the implementation of the Plan. As such the Plan **does not require a full HRA to be undertaken**.
- 7.4 The main reason for these conclusions are:
- The development that is supported in the Plan is deemed to be of a scale and nature and located on sites that will not result in any significant effects on the Birklands & Bilhaugh SAC.