

Strategic Environmental Assessment
and Habitats Regulations Assessment
Screening Report:
Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan
August 2022

Maps:

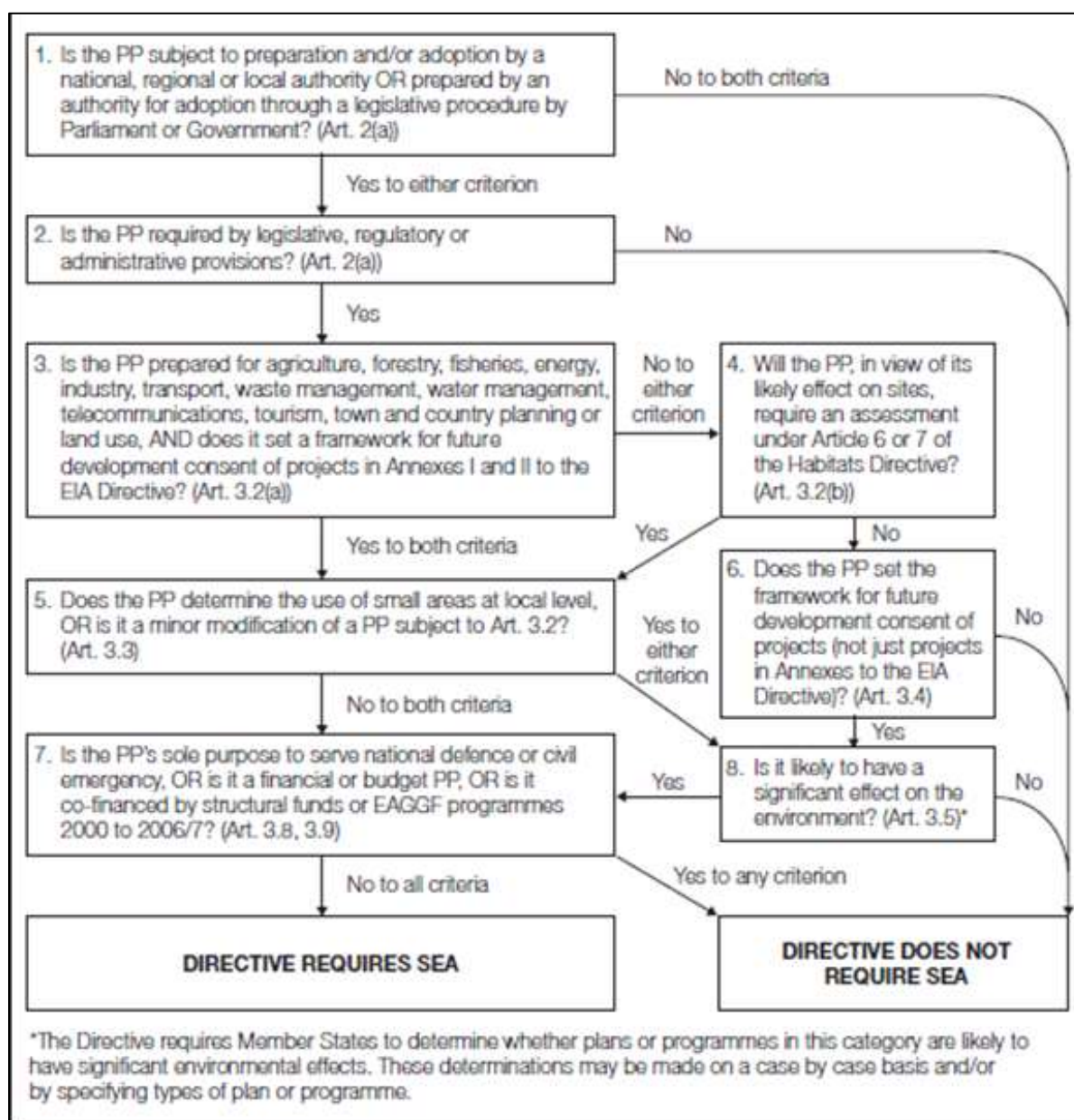
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Ordnance Survey HDC 100022322

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This screening report is designed to establish whether or not a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is required for the Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan in accordance with the European Directive 2001/42/EC and associated Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004¹. It is also intended to determine whether a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) is required in accordance with Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive and regulation 62 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). To meet the basic conditions the Neighbourhood Plan must be prepared in a manner which is compatible with European Union obligations (under retained EU law).
- 1.2. The purpose of SEA is to secure a high level of protection for the environment and to integrate environmental considerations into the preparation of plans to promote sustainable development. To establish whether a SEA is required a screening assessment is undertaken which considers the proposals in the Neighbourhood Plan against a series of criteria set out in the SEA Directive. Figure 1 overleaf sets out the screening process and how the Neighbourhood Plan is assessed against the criteria.
- 1.3. Where the Neighbourhood Plan could have significant environmental effects it may require a SEA where for example:
- The Neighbourhood Plan allocates a higher level of development than is already identified in the development plan
 - Where the neighbourhood area contains sensitive natural or heritage assets that may be affected by the proposals in the plan
 - The Neighbourhood Plan may have significant effects that have not already been considered through a sustainability appraisal of the Local Plan
 - Where the cumulative impact of the policies and proposals when assessed together may give rise to a likely significant environmental effect.

¹ The existing body of environmental regulation is retained under EU law.

Figure 1: Application of criteria of the SEA Directive to plans and programmes



- 1.4. The formal criteria for assessing the likely significance of effects are set out in Schedule 1 of the Regulations and are shown in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2: Criteria for determining likely significance of effects on the environment from Schedule 1 of the Regulations

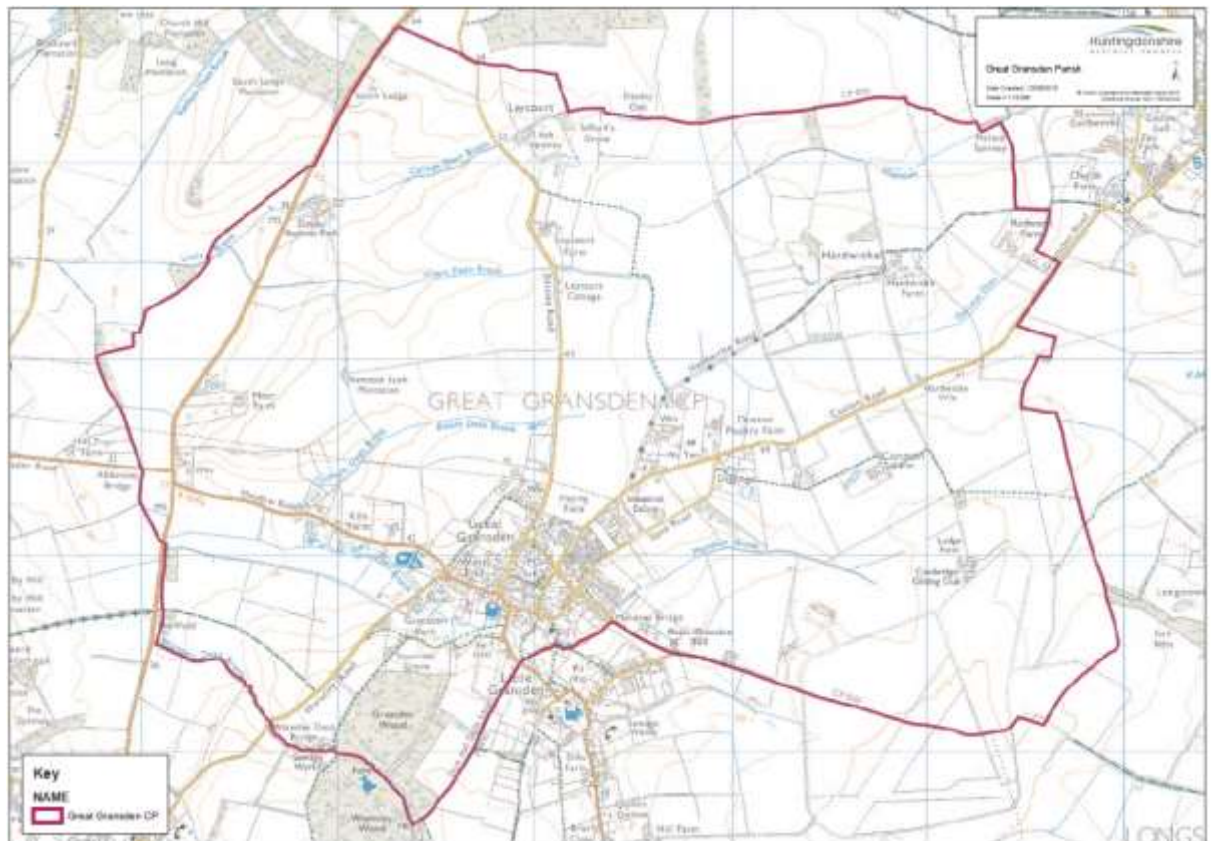
1. The characteristics of neighbourhood plans, having regard, in particular, to
 - the degree to which the plan sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources,
 - the degree to which the plan influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy,
 - the relevance of the plan for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development,
 - environmental problems relevant to the plan,
 - the relevance of the plan for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (e.g. plans and programmes linked to waste-management or waste protection).
2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to
 - the probability , duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects,
 - the cumulative nature of the effects,
 - the trans boundary nature of the effects,
 - the risks to human health of the environment (e.g. due to accidents),
 - the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected),
 - the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:
 - special natural characteristics or cultural heritage,
 - exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values,
 - intensive land-use,
 - the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.

- 1.5. A Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) may also be required under Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) to accompany the Neighbourhood Plan where the policies and proposals of the plan may give rise to significant effects on internationally designated wildlife sites. These are defined as any site of wildlife interest designated as a Special Protection Area under the Birds Directive (79/409/EEC) or as a Special Area of Conservation designated under the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC). In addition sites designated under the Ramsar Convention (Iran 1971 as amended 1992) are also considered. Generally, sites within 15kms of the Neighbourhood Plan boundary should be included within a HRA.
- 1.6. The process to establish whether a HRA is necessary starts with a screening exercise to determine whether any internationally designated sites might be exposed to likely significant effects as a result of implementation of the Neighbourhood Plan and therefore whether further stages of the HRA process are required.

2. Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan

- 2.1. The Great Gransden Neighbourhood Area was designated on 30 July 2018 covering the whole of the parish area. Great Gransden Parish Council, as the qualifying body for the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan has delegated the responsibility for its production to the Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan Group. A map of the designated neighbourhood area is shown below.

Figure 3: Great Gransden Neighbourhood Area



- 2.2. The parish of Great Gransden is located in the south of the district. The ONS mid-year 2020 population estimate was 957.
- 2.3. The principal purpose of the Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan is set out in paragraph 1.1 on page 5 as being ‘to set a framework for future development in the Plan Area’. Page 28 sets out the vision for the neighbourhood plan: ‘Great Gransden will continue to thrive as a vibrant rural village, with a diverse population and a highly engaged community. The village will develop in a sustainable, evolutionary manner, such that the parish’s rural nature and character are maintained and enhanced’.
- 2.4. It contains policies relating to:
- Built up area (Development Boundary)

- Affordable housing and rural exception sites
- Local Character and Design (including a design guide)
- Landscape character and views
- Heritage
- Biodiversity and the natural environment
- Green space, open space and Public Rights of Ways
- Traffic and transport including walking and cycling
- Community facilities and infrastructure (including a Community Action Plan)
- Education (pre-school and primary)

- 2.5. It does not make any site-specific allocations and nor does the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036 as Great Gransden is classified as a small settlement.
- 2.6. The neighbourhood plan identifies a 'Development boundary' on pages 37 and 38 which follows the built-up area around Great Gransden.
- 2.7. The Neighbourhood Plan includes a Design Guide (pages 32-35) for the Parish derived from the Character Assessment of Great Gransden written to support the neighbourhood plan.
- 2.8. The Neighbourhood Plan also identifies local green spaces and other valued green spaces. The Plan also seeks enhancement and where appropriate improved access to the countryside via public rights of way and permissive rights of way.
- 2.9. The Objectives are identified on pages 28-31 of the Plan; and are grouped into 7 categories associated with their relevant policies:

Objective	Policy reference and description
Spatial Strategy	
<p>Objective 1 - The Great Gransden NP will include policies which facilitate the delivery of the housing requirement figure provided to it by the district</p> <p>Objective 2 - New growth will be focused on providing deliverable and sustainable developments in the parish, supported by necessary infrastructure</p>	<p>Policy G1 – A Settlement Strategy for Great Gransden. This policy defines a development boundary within which the principle of development is accepted (subject to other constraints) and outside of which development is resisted.</p> <p>The policy requires all schemes to maintain residential amenity and for essential infrastructure to be in place.</p> <p>Policy G2 – Affordable Housing on Rural Exception Sites. One of the exceptions allowed for under Policy G1 is the delivery of rural exception sites (affordable housing for people with a connection to Great Gransden) on the edge of the development boundary. Policy G2 sets out criteria for such proposals.</p>

A Rural and Historic Village	
<p>Objective 3 - New development must be of a high quality and sensitive to the key characteristics of Great Gransden taking cues from existing designs.</p>	<p>Policy G3 – Local Character and Design. This policy seeks to ensure that all new development contributes in a positive way to the existing built environment and is sensitive to the rural setting of the village. The policy is informed by the Great Gransden Design Guide which is set out in Section 6 of the full draft plan.</p>
<p>Objective 4 - New developments will protect and enhance the landscape character and important views</p> <p>Objective 5 - The Conservation Area and its essential character will be conserved or enhanced.</p>	<p>Policy G4 – Development, Landscape Character and Important Views. This policy requires all proposals to protect or enhance existing landscape character. The policy also requires valued views of significant buildings and valued landscapes to be protected.</p> <p>Policy G5 – Conserving and enhancing Great Gransden’s Conservation Area. A policy which applies specifically to development proposals which would impact the historic core of the village.</p>
Natural environment	
<p>Objective 6 - Existing areas of important semi-natural habitats within the parish and the biodiversity that they support will be effectively protected.</p> <p>Objective 7 - The biodiversity value of existing areas of semi-natural habitats should be enhanced and lost habitats restored where possible.</p> <p>Objective 8 - Protection and habitat enhancement will be targeted to areas which increase their connectivity across the landscape and thus their viability and long-term sustainability.</p>	<p>Policy G6 – Protecting and enhancing biodiversity in the parish including at Gransden Woods.</p> <p>This policy requires proposals to protect and enhance the biodiversity assets in the parish including Gransden Woods. It also signposts the reader as to how development proposals can deliver biodiversity net gain in our parish.</p> <p>See also Community Action Plan</p>
Open Space	
<p>Objective 9 - Maintain and protect key areas of green space within the village and elsewhere in the parish where these are valued by the community for their amenity and recreational value and/or rural landscape value.</p> <p>Objective 10 - Increase the quality and quantity of accessible open space within the parish, to enable local people to experience a wider enjoyment of the Gransden countryside and the associated recreational and health benefits.</p> <p>Objective 11 - Improve access to the countryside whilst fully respecting the rights of private landowners and legitimate uses of the land.</p>	<p>Policy G7 Local Green Spaces. This policy gives strong protection to four open spaces in the plan area.</p> <p>Policy G8 – Development and Open Space Requirements. This policy sets out the priorities for open space improvements and provision in the parish.</p> <p>See also Community Action Plan</p> <p>Policy G9 – Public Rights of Way Network. The policy draws attention to the existing network of public rights of way, protects the network, and requires future proposals to either link with the network or look at creating new links.</p> <p>See also Community Action Plan</p>

Transport and Road Safety Improvements	
<p>Objective 12 - A prioritised programme of improvements will be implemented, to enhance road safety for all road users, particularly pedestrians and cyclists.</p> <p>Objective 13 - Cycleways, footpaths and pavements on key routes around the village, and to and from the village will be established and upgraded.</p> <p>Objective 14 - New development will allow for safe movement of vehicles and non-motorised users in and around the village.</p>	<p>Community Action Plan</p> <p>See also:</p> <p>Policy G10 – A walkable village and reducing village car use. This policy requires all development proposals to be provided with adequate infrastructure to enable occupants to walk and cycle along safe and direct routes into the village centre.</p> <p>Policy G11 – Roads and new development. A policy setting standards when new roads are proposed in the parish.</p> <p>Policy G12 – Great Gransden Infrastructure Priorities. This policy highlights the priorities for financial contributions to direct new and improved infrastructure, where it can be locally determined</p>
Community facilities and infrastructure	
<p>Objective 15 - New development will be supported by improvements in village infrastructure</p> <p>Objective 16 - CIL spending by GGPC will reflect local priorities as expressed through the GGNP and through ongoing liaison with the community following adoption of the plan.</p> <p>Objective 17 - Community-led projects will be identified to move towards net zero carbon.</p>	<p>Policy G12 – Great Gransden Infrastructure Priorities. This policy highlights the priorities for financial contributions to direct new and improved infrastructure, where it can be locally determined</p> <p>See also Community Action Plans</p> <p>Community led project Community Action Plan</p>
Primary Schooling Health and Education	
<p>Objective 18 - The village primary school will maintain its very high standards of education and its strong community ethos through any period of housing growth. It will be well-resourced and financially secure.</p> <p>Objective 19 - Residents in the village will have easy access to good educational opportunities for all age groups – pre-school through to adult learning.</p>	<p>Policy G13 – Barnabas Oley Primary School and parish pre-school provision. This policy supports development proposals which will help to sustain or enhance pre-school or primary school infrastructure in the parish. The policy supports in principle development needed to expand school facilities provided there are no adverse impacts on road safety, congestion or the appearance of the conservation area.</p> <p>See also the Community Action Plan</p>
<p>Objective 20 - Health provision in the village will be restored and expanded</p>	

3. SEA Screening Assessment

3.1. Table 1 below shows the assessment of whether the Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan will require a full SEA.

Table 1: Assessment of requirement for SEA

Stage	Question Path	Yes/ No	Assessment
1. Is the Plan subject to preparation and/or adoption by a national, regional or local authority OR prepared by an authority for adoption through a legislative procedure by Parliament or Government? (Article 2(a))	If 'No' to both SEA is not required If 'Yes' to either go to Question 2	Yes	Great Gransden Parish Council is the qualifying body preparing the Neighbourhood Plan under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Localism Act 2011. Subject to successful examination and referendum it will be 'made' by Huntingdonshire District Council.
2. Is the Plan required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions? (Article 2(a))	If 'No' SEA is not required If 'Yes' go to Question 3	Yes	Preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan is optional; there is no absolute legislative, regulatory or administrative requirement to do so. However, once 'made' the Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan would form part of the statutory development plan and be used in determining planning applications, so it is considered necessary to answer the remaining questions to determine further if an SEA is required.
3. Is the Plan prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism, town and country planning or land use, AND does it set a framework for future development consent of projects in Annexes I and II to	If 'No' to either go to Question 4 If 'Yes' to both go to Question 5	Yes No	The Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan is prepared to set out a framework for town and country planning and the future development of a number of land uses within the parishes, although it does not anticipate managing development of the scale and nature envisaged by Annex I and Annex II.

the EIA Directive? (Article 3.2(a))			
4. Will the Plan, in view of its likely effect on sites, require an assessment under Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive? (Article 3.2(b))	If 'No' go to Question 6 If 'Yes' go to Question 5	No	See screening assessment for HRA in Section 4.
5. Does the Plan determine the use of small areas at local level, OR is it a minor modification of a PP subject to Article 3.2? (Article 3.3)	If 'No' to both go to Question 7 If 'Yes' to either go to Question 8	N/A	
6. Does the Plan set the framework for future development consent of projects (not just projects in Annexes to the EIA Directive)? (Article 3.4)	If 'No' SEA is not required If 'Yes' go to Question 8	Yes	The Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan contains policies against which planning applications within the neighbourhood area will be considered.
7. Is the Plan's sole purpose to serve national defence or civil emergency, OR is it a financial or budget plan or programme, OR is it co-financed by structural funds or EAGGF programmes 2000 to 2006/7? (Article 3.8, 3.9)	If 'No' to all SEA is required If 'Yes' to any SEA is not required	N/A	
8. Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment? (Article 3.5)*	If 'No' SEA is not required If 'Yes' go to Question 7	No	No development is allocated. However, there is potential for development arising from the objectives and policies within the plan.

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

- 3.2. Under criterion 8 of Table 1 it is necessary to undertake an assessment of the likelihood of the Neighbourhood Plan having a significant effect on the environment based on the criteria set out in Figure 2 (preceding). Table 2 below sets out this assessment.

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

Significant effect criteria	Assessment
The characteristics of the plan, having regard to:	
The degree to which the plan sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources	<p>The Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate any sites for development in the parish, nor does the Huntingdonshire Local Plan.</p> <p>While not allocating any sites, the Neighbourhood Plan supports minor scale residential properties within the identified built up area of Great Gransden, supports rural exception sites, supports improved public rights of way, has identified local green spaces and has identified a list of community infrastructure priorities and community actions.</p>
The degree to which the Plan influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy.	The Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan does reflect and support the strategic policies of the Local Plan to 2036. It should not significantly influence other plans and programmes but may have a limited degree of influence over adjoining neighbourhood plans if they come forward.
The relevance of the Plan for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development.	The Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan is expected to protect and enhance the natural environment and contribute to the achievement of sustainable development within the neighbourhood area. Its policies will have a positive impact on local environmental assets and places valued by local people. The likelihood of significant negative effects on the environment is therefore, minimised.
Environmental problems relevant to the Plan.	There is some risk of fluvial flooding around Great Gransden attributed to its location near to a network of local drains and brooks, namely Gransden Brook. No development is allocated in these affected areas.
The relevance of the Plan for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (for example, plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection).	The considerations of such plans and European legislation were taken into account in the production of the Huntingdonshire Local Plan.
Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to:	
The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects.	Policies within the Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan facilitate new development, so some environmental change will occur.

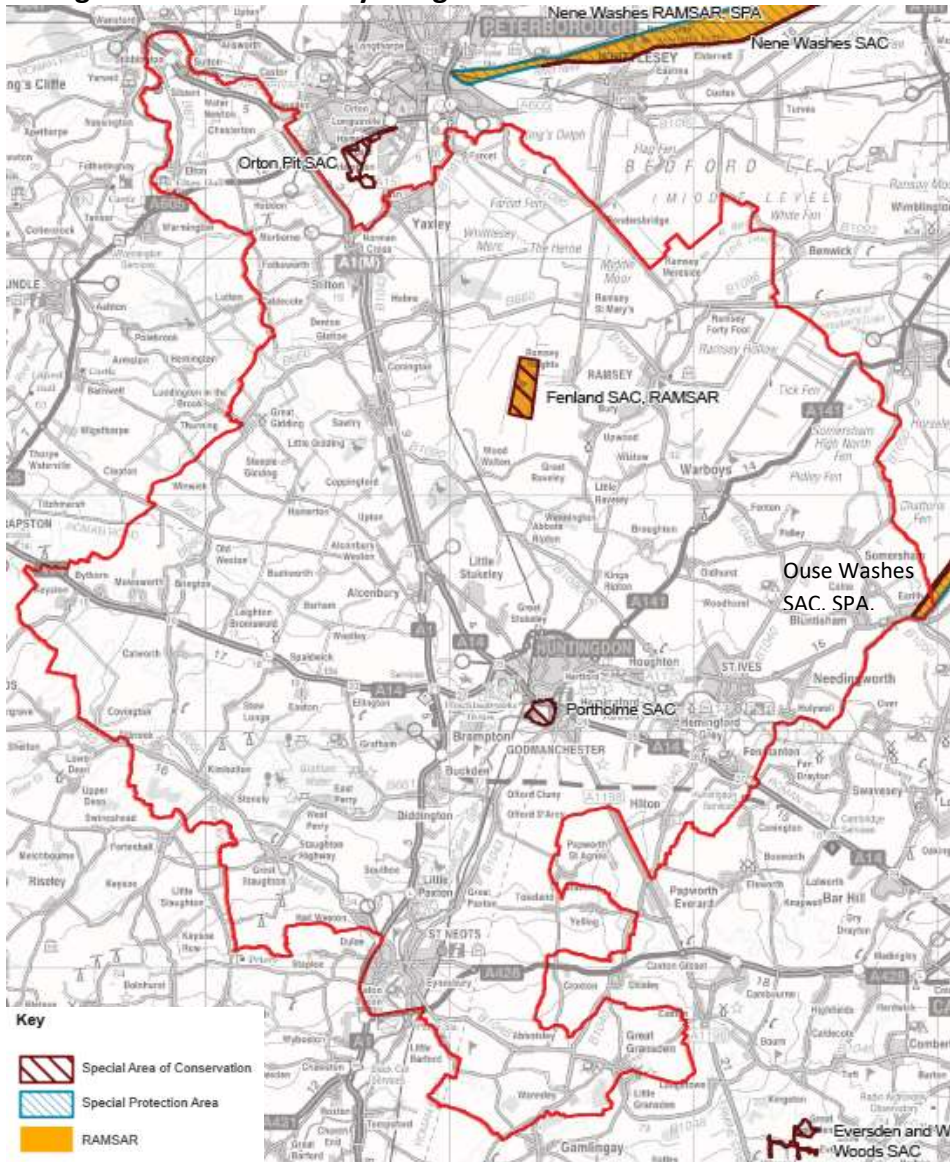
	However, the objectives and policies are generally intended to ensure new development meets local needs and is sustainable. The frequency of effects is expected to be low. The duration and reversibility of effects arising from built development are long term and poor.
The cumulative nature of the effects of the Plan.	The cumulative effects of the policies and proposals of the Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan are unlikely to be significant on the local environment, many elements are intended to help protect it.
The trans-boundary nature of the effects of the Plan.	The plan identifies an aspiration for enhanced public rights of way within the village and connecting to adjoining communities and wildlife sites which may impact upon adjoining neighbourhood plans if they come forward.
The risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents)	<p>Improved cycleway and walking connectivity may offer opportunities to improve human health arising from the policies or proposals of the Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>The protection and enhancement of nature sites within the neighbourhood plan area in addition to improved rights of way to these will improve human health and the natural environment as well as support the local economy.</p>
The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected) by the Plan.	The Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan has a resident population of 957 in the ONS mid-year 2020 population estimate.
<p>The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected by the Plan due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special natural characteristics or cultural heritage • Exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values • Intensive land use • The effects of the Plan on areas or landscapes which have recognised national, community or international protection status. 	<p>Great Gransden has a conservation area, with 60 listed buildings and some sites of archaeological significance. The Neighbourhood Plan has several design, conservation and landscape policies intended to shape development so that they reflect local character and design and preserve important landscape views.</p> <p>Within the neighbourhood area there is a Cambridgeshire Wildlife Site (Crimpledean Paddock) and a Site of Special Scientific Interest and area of ancient woodland (Gransden Wood). The Plan supports biodiversity net gain and the establishment or enhancement of access to the countryside for residents to enjoy.</p>

	The Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan is intended to enhance the natural and cultural assets of the area and provide greater opportunities for people to enjoy them.
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HRA Screening Assessment

- 3.3. Internationally designated wildlife sites are accorded the highest level of protection under European legislation. The purpose of the screening assessment is to ascertain whether there is potential for implementation of the Neighbourhood Plan to have significant effect on any such site.
- 3.4. Figure 3 below shows the internationally designated sites within a 15km radius of the neighbourhood area boundary.

Figure 2: Internationally designated wildlife sites



- 3.5. The Portholme Special Area of Conservation and Eversden and Wimpole Woods Special Area of Conservation (is outside of the district) are located within 15kms of the Great Gransden neighbourhood area.
- 3.6. **Portholme SAC** is within Huntingdonshire District, close to the town of Huntingdon. It is designated as SAC for its lowland hay meadows. It is the largest surviving traditionally-managed meadow in the UK, with 91ha of alluvial flood meadow (7% of the total UK resource). There has been a long history of favourable management and very little of the site has suffered from agricultural improvement, and so it demonstrates good conservation of structure and function. It supports a small population of fritillary *Fritillaria meleagris*. Portholme SAC occupies a similar area to Portholme Site of Special Scientific Interest.
- 3.7. **Eversden and Wimpole Wood SAC** comprises a mixture of ancient coppice woodland (Eversden Wood) and high forest woods likely to be of more recent origin (Wimpole Woods). A colony of barbastelle *Barbastella barbastellus* is associated with the trees in Wimpole Woods. These trees are used as a summer maternity roost where the female bats gather to give birth and rear their young. Most of the roost sites are within tree crevices. The bats also use the site as a foraging area. Some of the woodland is also used as a flight path when bats forage outside the site.
- 3.8. The criteria for determining if an individual policy, or a combination of policies, would have a likely significant effect, and require assessment, are based on the characteristics of the relevant European site and the objectives set by Natural England. The main factors to consider are:
- Development on or adjacent to the European site destroying part or all of the site, or changing the ecological functioning of the site (e.g. disrupting water flows or migration routes)
 - Increased public recreation, causing disturbance to birds, damage to vegetation, increased littering / flytipping or leading to management compromises (e.g. grazing being restricted).
 - Reduction in water levels or flow, from increased water demand in the District requiring greater water abstraction
 - Reduction of water quality, from increased discharges of sewage and surface water drainage, or from pollution incidents, either during, or after, construction
- 3.9. The implications of the policies and proposals of the Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan have been assessed against each of the internationally designated sites within 15kms to establish the likelihood of a significant effect on the features which justified their designation. The outcomes are set out in Tables 3 and 4 below.

Table 3: Likely significant effects on Portholme

Site name	Portholme SAC
Distance to neighbourhood area	12km
Reasons for designation	Lowland hay meadow
Vulnerability ²	This alluvial flood meadow has had a long history of favourable management and demonstrates good conservation of structure and function. Traditionally the site is cut for hay followed by aftermath grazing in late summer and autumn. Part of the site is subject to a Countryside Stewardship agreement aimed at maintaining the alluvial flood meadow. The Environment Agency has produced a Water Level Management plan
Impact as a result of the plan	The neighbourhood plan area is located south of Portholme SAC beyond the A14 and A428. Scale of growth envisaged is unlikely to result in significant air or water quality impacts or any other impacts on the SAC.
Significance of risk	Insignificant
Cumulative impacts with other plans	Impacts from the Local Plan to 2036 have been assessed separately and appropriate changes or mitigation put in place.

Table 4: Likely significant effects on Eversden and Wimpole Wood

Site name	Eversden and Wimpole Wood SAC
Distance to neighbourhood area	6km
Reasons for designation	The site comprises a mixture of ancient coppice woodland (Eversden Wood) and high forest woods likely to be of more recent origin (Wimpole Woods).
Vulnerability	A colony of barbastelle <i>Barbastella barbastellus</i> is associated with the trees in Wimpole Woods. These trees are used as a summer maternity roost where the female bats gather to give birth and rear their young. Most of the roost sites are within tree crevices. The bats also use the site as a foraging area. Some of the woodland is also used as a flight path when bats forage outside the site.
Impact as a result of the plan	The neighbourhood plan area is located north of Eversden and Wimpole Wood SAC, west of the A1198 and north of B1046. Scale of growth envisaged is unlikely to result in significant air or water quality impacts or any other impacts on the SAC.
Significance of risk	Insignificant
Cumulative impacts with other plans	Impacts from the Local Plan to 2036 have been assessed separately and appropriate changes or mitigation put in place.

² Data summarised from the Joint Nature Conservation Committee Natura 2000 data forms

4. Conclusions

- 4.1. This report contains the assessments of the need for the Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan to be subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment as required by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 and Habitats Regulation Assessment as required by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended).
- 4.2. A draft screening report with an assessment of both of these was completed in January 2022 based on an assessment on the policies and proposals set out in an advanced draft of the Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan dated 3 December 2021 and within the strategic framework established in the Huntingdonshire Local Plan to 2036. The draft report concluded that a Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulations Assessment are not required. Consultation with statutory bodies was carried out with their responses in Appendix 1.
- 4.3. This was finalised once a preview dated 10 August 2022 of the submission Neighbourhood Plan was received. This pre-submission version of the Neighbourhood Plan found no significant amendments to the Plan to change the outcome of this assessment.
- 4.4. In relation to the requirement for Strategic Environmental Assessment to be undertaken, the assessment set out in section 3 concludes that as the Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan will not have significant effects on the environment. Therefore, an assessment is not required.
- 4.5. In relation to the requirement for Habitats Regulations Assessment to be undertaken, the assessment set out in section 4 concludes that as the Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan will not have an adverse effect on the integrity of any internationally designated sites either on its own or in combination with any other plans. Therefore, an assessment is not required.

Appendix 1: Consultation Responses

Responses to the consultation agreed with the conclusions of the screening report. The responses from the three statutory bodies of Natural England, Historic England and the Environment Agency are included below.

Environment Agency

From: Anglian Central, Planning_Liaison <planning.brampton@environment-agency.gov.uk>

Sent: 04 March 2022 11:31

To: Jeremy Miller <Jeremy.Miller@huntingdonshire.gov.uk>

Cc: Diane Taylor <gransdenpc@hotmail.co.uk>

Subject: RE: Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan Screening Report - Reminder

Dear Jeremy

Thank you for consulting the Environment Agency on the Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan Screening opinion for SEA-HRA and Pre-submission version 21022. We are a statutory consultee in the planning process providing advice to Local Authorities and developers on pre-application enquiries, planning applications, appeals and strategic plans. We aim to reduce flood risk, while protecting and enhancing the water environment.

We have had to focus our detailed engagement on those areas where the environmental risks are greatest. Based on the fact that your Plan does not seek to allocate housing/development sites and the environmental constraints within the area, we have no concerns and no detailed comments to make in relation to the Plan.

Further information sources:

- Together with Natural England, English Heritage and Forestry Commission we have published joint advice on neighbourhood planning which sets out sources of environmental information and ideas on incorporating the environment into plans. This is available at: <https://neighbourhoodplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/Environment-Toolkit-20181220.pdf>
- Below is a link to our developer's guidance entitled 'Building a better environment' this sets out our role in development and how we can help: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/289894/LIT_2745_c8ed3d.pdf
- Attached is a copy of our local Planning Guidance document which contains basic information and links to the type of environmental issues we expect to be considered as part of development proposals.

Regards

Dawn Porter

CC Diane Taylor

Locum Clerk, Gt Gransden Parish Council

Historic England

From: James, Edward <Edward.James@HistoricEngland.org.uk>
Sent: 15 March 2022 16:39
To: Jeremy Miller <Jeremy.Miller@huntingdonshire.gov.uk>
Cc: Robinson, Joanne <Joanne.Robinson@HistoricEngland.org.uk>
Subject: RE: Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan Screening Report

Dear Jeremy,

Thank you for inviting Historic England to comment on this consultation, and thank you for your flexibility in permitting an extension owing to my absence. I have now had a chance to review the Screening Report for Great Gransden neighbourhood plan and can offer the following response.

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

The Screening Report indicates that the Council considers that the plan will not have any significant effects on the historic environment. We note that the plan does not propose to allocate any sites for development, owing to Great Gransden's status as a small settlement.

On the basis of the information supplied, and in the context of the criteria set out in Schedule 1 of the Environmental Assessment Regulations [Annex II of 'SEA' Directive], Historic England concurs with the Council that the preparation of a Strategic Environmental Assessment is not required.

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

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

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

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

Please do contact me, either via email or the number below, if you have any queries.

Kind regards,

Edward

Edward James
Historic Places Adviser - East of England
Historic England

Natural England

Date: 24 February 2022
Our ref: 382615
Your ref: Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan

Jeremy Miller
Huntingdonshire District Council
jeremy.miller@huntingdonshire.gov.uk



Hornbeam House
Crewe Business Park
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T 0300 060 3900

BY EMAIL ONLY

Dear Mr Miller,

Great Gransden Neighbourhood Plan Screening Report

Thank you for your consultation on the above dated 01 February 2022 which was received by Natural England on 01 February 2022.

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.

Screening Request: Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulations Assessment

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

Neighbourhood Plan

Guidance on the assessment of Neighbourhood Plans, in light of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (as amended), is contained within the [National Planning Practice Guidance](#). The guidance highlights three triggers that may require the production of an SEA, for instance where:

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

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

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

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

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

For any new consultations, or to provide further information on this consultation please send your correspondences to consultations@naturalengland.org.uk.

Yours sincerely,

Ben Jones
Consultations Team