



Hinckley & Bosworth
Borough Council

Markfield Neighbourhood Plan
Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Report
August 2020

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 In order for Neighbourhood Plans to proceed to referendum, they must meet the Basic Conditions set out in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 Act, which was inserted by the Localism Act 2011. The Borough Council needs to be satisfied that the Basic Conditions have been met. The Neighbourhood Plan must:
 - have regard to national policy
 - have special regard to listed buildings (where relevant)
 - have special regard to conservation areas (where relevant)
 - contribute to sustainable development
 - be in general conformity with strategic policies in the Local Plan
 - not breach EU obligations
- 1.2 Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council (HBBC) has prepared this Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) screening report to determine whether the emerging Markfield Neighbourhood Plan (MNP) is likely to have significant environmental effects and an SEA is required to inform the preparation of the plan, in accordance with European Directive 2001/42/EC (the SEA Directive) which was transposed into UK law by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (the SEA Regulations). This informs whether the MNP will not breach EU obligations and satisfy the respective Basic Condition, required to inform the preparation of the MNP. This screening report also determines whether the plan is likely to have an adverse impact upon internationally designated wildlife sites, as required by the European Habitats Directive, and whether it requires a Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA).
- 1.3 Regulation 15 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) requires that a Neighbourhood Plan being submitted to the Local Planning Authority must include either an environmental report (complying with the SEA Regulations) or, in the case where it has been deemed an environmental assessment under the SEA Regulations is not required, a statement of reasons for this determination.

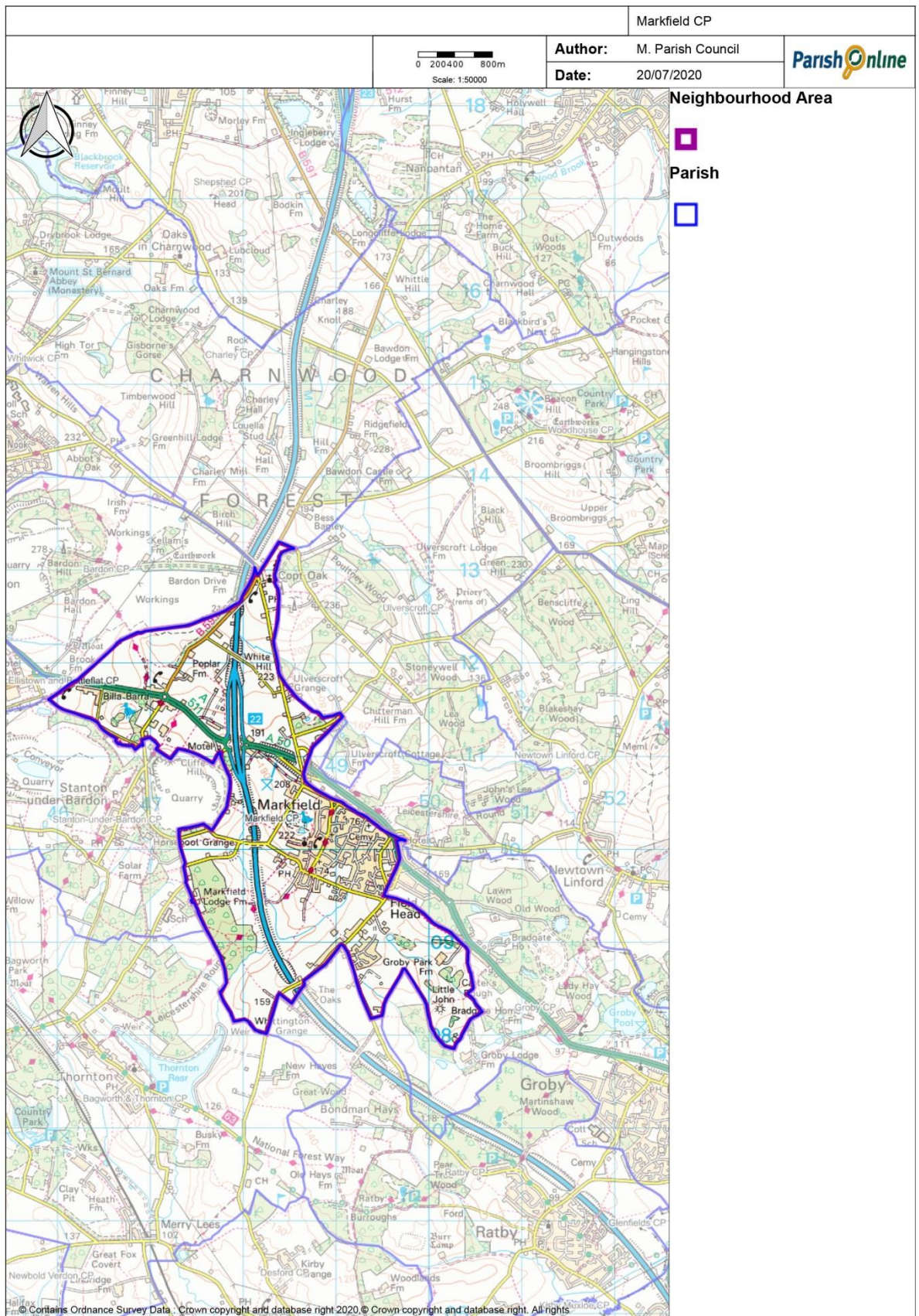
2. Legislative Background

- 2.1 As the responsible authority, HBBC is required to determine whether an SEA is required in accordance with European Directive 2001/42/EC (the SEA Directive) which was transposed into UK law by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (the SEA Regulations).
- 2.2 This Screening Report sets out the Council's determination under Regulation 9(1) of the SEA Regulations on whether or not SEA is required for the Markfield Neighbourhood Plan. The Borough Council must consult with the three statutory bodies (Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England) and take their views into account before issuing a final determination. This is based on a two-step approach, the first of which is to assess the plan against the flowchart as set out in government guidance 'A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive. The flow chart is shown in Figure 9 below.
- 2.3 The screening requirements set out in Regulation 9 and Schedule 1 of the SEA Regulations include two sets of characteristics for determining the likely significance of effects on the environment. These relate to: i) the characteristics of the Markfield Neighbourhood Plan and ii) the characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected by the Markfield Neighbourhood Plan. In making a determination, HBBC will take into account the criteria specified in Schedule I of the Regulations.
- 2.4 Schedule 2 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 makes provision in relation to the Habitats Directive. The Directive requires that any plan or project, likely to have a significant effect on a European site, must be subject to an appropriate assessment. To achieve this, paragraph 1 prescribes a basic condition that the making of a neighbourhood plan is not likely to have a significant effect on a European site.
- 2.5 Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) screening is a requirement of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. HRA considers the potential adverse impacts of plans and projects on designated Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), classified Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and listed Ramsar sites – collectively known as the Natura 2000 network.
- 2.6 This screening report has been prepared on against the draft of the Markfield Neighbourhood Plan sent to the Borough Council on 23rd June 2020.

3. Summary of the Markfield Neighbourhood Plan

- 3.1 The Markfield Parish Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared by the Markfield Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group on behalf of Markfield Parish Council which is the 'qualifying body'. The Neighbourhood Plan area is defined by the Markfield Parish Council boundary, as shown in Figure 1. The Markfield neighbourhood area was designated by HBBC on the 11th May 2017.
- 3.2 Markfield parish lies within the north-east of the borough, 8km north-west of Leicester. It borders both the Charnwood Borough Council area and the North West Leicestershire District Council area. It adjoins the parishes of Groby, Ratby, Stanton under Bardon and Thornton (Hinckley & Bosworth), Newtown Linford, Ulverscroft (Charnwood BC) and Bardon, Ellistown and Charley (North West Leicestershire DC). There were an estimated 4500 residents in the Parish at the time of the 2011 Census with just under 1600 in the main settlement of the parish, the village of Markfield.
- 3.3 The draft of the Markfield Neighbourhood Plan (MNP) that is the subject of this screening report was sent to the Borough Council on 23rd June 2020.

Figure 1: Markfield Neighbourhood Plan Area



Details of Neighbourhood Plan
Markfield Neighbourhood Plan
Vision
The Markfield Parish Neighbourhood Plan aims to ensure our Parish remains an attractive and desirable place to live meeting the needs of all, ensuring the community enjoys a good quality of life and feels valued and connected to each other. We aim to enhance and protect heritage assets, wildlife and the landscape in the environment where homes, businesses and facilities meet the needs of a contemporary rural community.
Aims and Objectives
The Vision Statement is comprised of five broad statements:
<p>Environment & Heritage To protect and enhance the wildlife, environment and heritage assets. Recognising the need to plan for need to plan for climate change and ensuring public open spaces are accessible to all and of a good quality.</p> <p>Facilities & Services To maintain, enhance and where required expand the existing provision of facilities and services and ensure appropriate new provision is made for any future developments both within the Parish and in the surrounding areas.</p> <p>Housing To ensure that opportunities for residential development in the Parish are managed to provide the types and styles of housing that are needed, considering design, energy efficiency, climate change and the need to meet the requirements of all requirements of all residents.</p> <p>Business & Employment To continue to support the local economy, sustaining existing businesses and providing for opportunities for business diversification and new businesses to become established on suitable sites in the Parish.</p> <p>Traffic & Transport To maintain and enhance sustainable transport links within, to and from within, the Parish. To support moves to reduce vehicle speeds and manage parking in residential areas along with transport generated noise and pollution and increase the opportunities for safe walking and cycling.</p>

Draft Markfield Neighbourhood Plan Policies

3.4 The draft MNP presently comprises of 23 policies and broad policy principles relating to traffic and transport, reflecting the structure of the statements that underpin the vision above. A list of the policies and the policy themes addressed by the policies set out in Annex I of the SEA Directive is presented in the table below.

Policy Ref	Policy Theme(s)¹
Policy M1: Countryside	Biodiversity, flora and fauna (Including biodiversity habitats and species, biodiversity sites, areas of geological interest)

¹ Do the policies address the themes set out Annex I of the SEA Directive

Policy Ref	Policy Theme(s) ¹
	Landscape (Including landscape and townscape quality)
Policy M2: Landscape Character	Landscape (Including landscape and townscape quality)
Policy M3: National Forest	Landscape (Including landscape and townscape quality)
Policy M4: Green Infrastructure	Biodiversity, flora and fauna (Including biodiversity habitats and species, biodiversity sites, areas of geological interest) Landscape (Including landscape and townscape quality)
Policy M5: Ecology and Biodiversity	Biodiversity, flora and fauna (Including biodiversity habitats and species, biodiversity sites, areas of geological interest)
Policy M6: Local Green Spaces	Human Health (Incorporating residents' health and wellbeing)
Policy M7: Renewable Energy	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)) Landscape (Including landscape and townscape quality) Cultural Heritage (Including historic environment, cultural heritage, historic settings)
Policy M8: Electric Vehicle Chargepoints	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))
Policy M9: Non-Designated Heritage Assets	Cultural Heritage (Including historic environment, cultural heritage, historic settings)
Policy M10: Design	Landscape (Including landscape and townscape quality) Biodiversity, flora and fauna (Including biodiversity habitats and species, biodiversity sites, areas of geological interest) Human Health (Incorporating residents' health and wellbeing)
Policy M11: Community Services and Facilities	Human Health (Incorporating residents' health and wellbeing) Population (Including residents' quality of life, accessibility to services and facilities, deprivation and similar)
Policy M12: Markfield Institute of Higher Education	Population (Including residents' quality of life, accessibility to services and facilities, deprivation and similar)
Policy M13: Local and Neighbourhood Centres	Human Health (Incorporating residents' health and wellbeing) Population (Including residents' quality of life, accessibility to services and facilities, deprivation and similar)
Policy M14: Infrastructure	Human Health (Incorporating residents' health and wellbeing) Population (Including residents' quality of life, accessibility to services and facilities, deprivation and similar)

Policy Ref	Policy Theme(s)¹
Policy M15: Housing Provision	Population (Including residents' quality of life, accessibility to services and facilities, deprivation and similar)
Policy M16: Land south of London Road	Population (Including residents' quality of life, accessibility to services and facilities, deprivation and similar) Biodiversity, flora and fauna (Including biodiversity habitats and species, biodiversity sites, areas of geological interest) Landscape (Including landscape and townscape quality) Water (Including water quality and availability)
Policy M17: Infill Housing Development	Population (Including residents' quality of life, accessibility to services and facilities, deprivation and similar)
Policy M18: Housing Mix	Population (Including residents' quality of life, accessibility to services and facilities, deprivation and similar)
Policy M19: Markfield Court Retirement Village and Woodrowe House	Population (Including residents' quality of life, accessibility to services and facilities, deprivation and similar) Human Health (Incorporating residents' health and wellbeing)
Policy M20: Affordable Housing	Population (Including residents' quality of life, accessibility to services and facilities, deprivation and similar)
Policy M21: Markfield Industrial Estate	Population (Including residents' quality of life, accessibility to services and facilities, deprivation and similar)
Policy M22: Brownfield Land	Population (Including residents' quality of life, accessibility to services and facilities, deprivation and similar)
Policy M23: Business Conversion of Rural Buildings	Population (Including residents' quality of life, accessibility to services and facilities, deprivation and similar) Biodiversity, flora and fauna (Including biodiversity habitats and species, biodiversity sites, areas of geological interest) Landscape (Including landscape and townscape quality)
Traffic and Transport (section 9 – Policies)	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) Air (Including air quality) Population (Including residents' quality of life, accessibility to services and facilities, deprivation and similar) Human Health (Incorporating residents' health and wellbeing)

Proposed Site Allocations

- 3.5 The Markfield Parish Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group has determined a housing requirement figure, taking account of relevant policies, the existing and emerging spatial strategy of the Borough Council's Local Plan and characteristics of the neighbourhood area. A proposed housing requirement has been informed on the basis of the existing population of the parish from the 2011 Census of 4.2% of the borough's

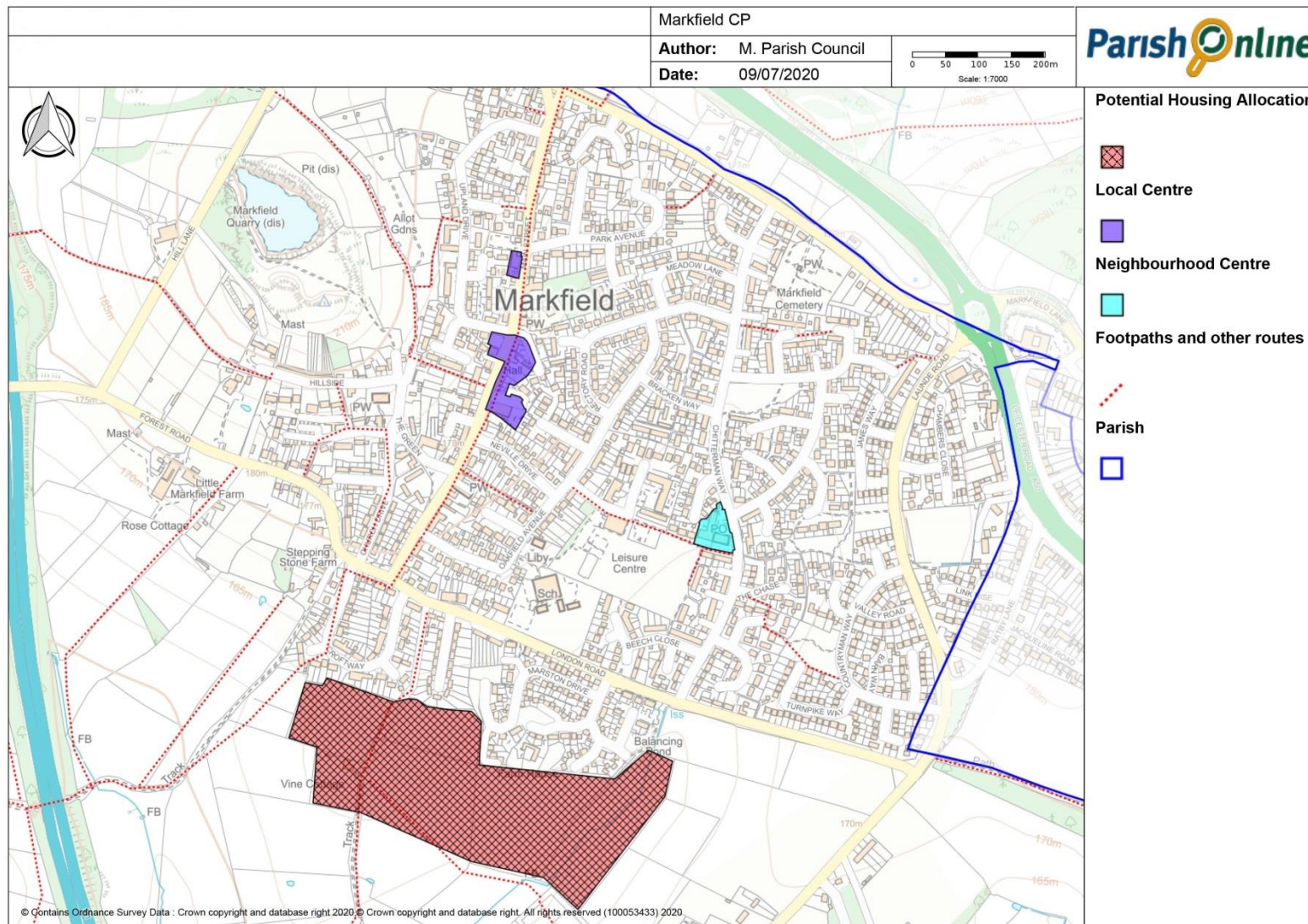
population. This percentage has been applied to the current estimated number of dwellings in the borough required over the emerging plan period of 2016-2036 (9,100 dwellings). The plan proposes to make provision for a total of 382 dwellings over the plan period. Taking into account completions to date since 2016, the residual requirement being planned for and allocated in the MNP is (a minimum) of 241 dwellings.

- 3.6 No further new proposals are proposed in the MNP. The plan does however seek to safeguard existing employment land, whilst supporting new proposals or development that allows the expansion of business, within the extent of the allocated employment land and settlement boundary. The emerging plan also seeks to safeguard existing healthcare and educational facilities within the neighbourhood area, and supports development proposals that relate to the existing land use within the extent of their current boundaries.

Policy M16: Land south of London Road

- 3.7 To meet the residual requirement of 241 dwellings, the MNP seeks to allocate a single site, 'Land south of London Road', allocated through Policy M16. The allocation is presented in Figure 2.
- 3.8 Policy M16 sets out a range of criteria against which planning application(s) on the site should be assessed and opportunities to be delivered from developing the site including:
- Providing for an appropriate mix of housing types, sizes and tenures informed by the latest information on need (addressed by Policy M18)
 - Retention of identified hedgerows and trees
 - Woodland planting to the southern and western boundaries, primarily to provide further screening between the development and village and the M1
 - Provision of allotments within the site
 - Maintain and improve connectivity of existing public rights of way
 - Incorporate sustainable drainage system within the scheme

Figure 2: Proposed Housing Allocation (Land south of Markfield Road)



Source: Draft Markfield Neighbourhood Plan (23rd June 2020)

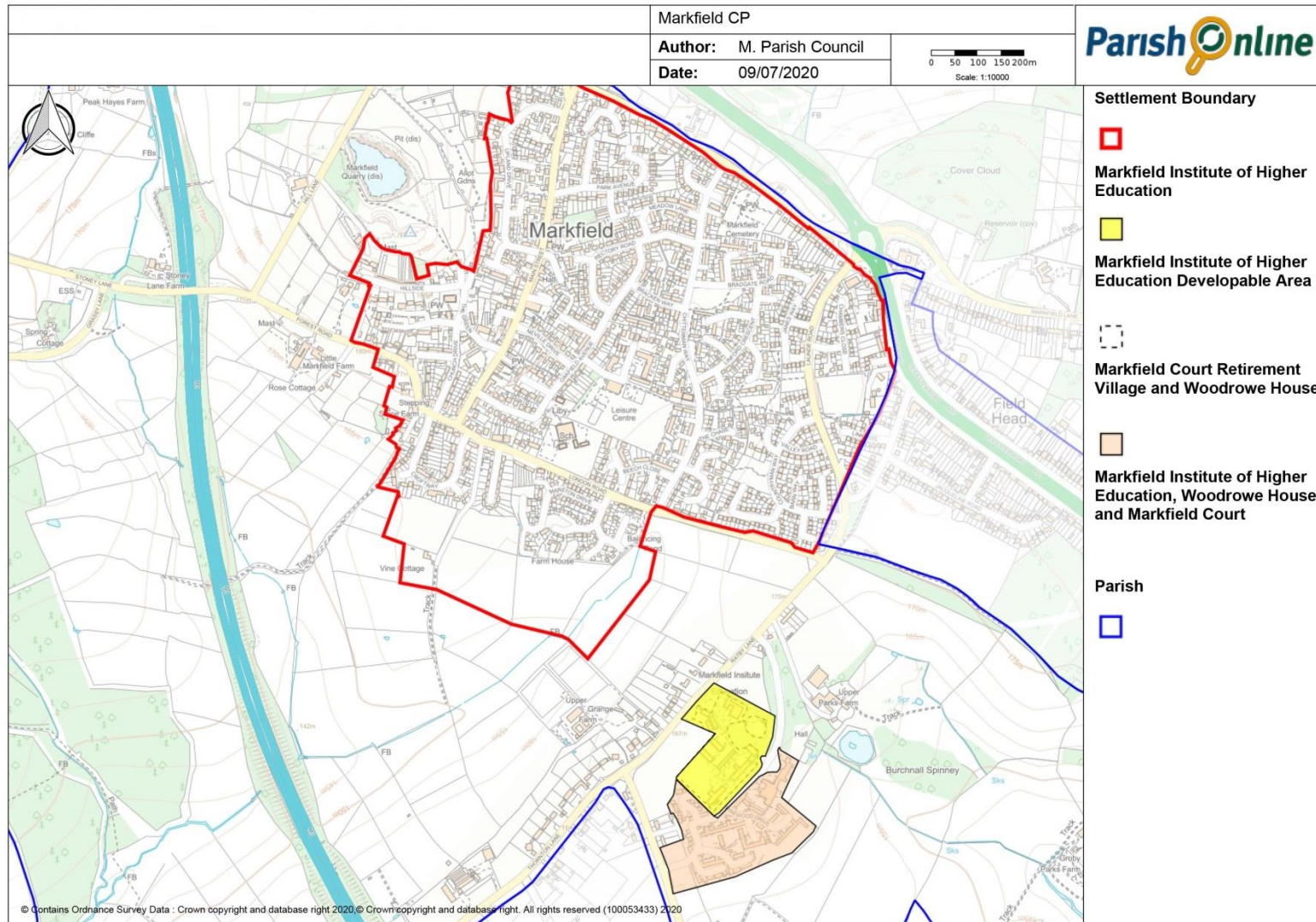
Policy M12: Markfield Institute of Higher Education

- 3.9 The Markfield Institute of Higher Education is an existing facility including a mosque, conference centre, library and on-site residential facilities. Policy M12 supports development proposals that contribute towards the enhancement of the facility and maintain its current use. The policy states development should not exceed the existing boundary and includes criteria including:
- The layout, scale and appearance of new buildings should reflect the existing
 - No additional access is to be provided to the site for vehicles, cycles and pedestrians
 - Delivery of a landscape scheme and management plan that seeks to retain and enhance trees and hedgerows along the boundary of the site, including gain in biodiversity.

Policy M19: Markfield Court Retirement Village and Woodrowe House

- 3.10 Policy M19 supports proposals for new accommodation and improved facilities at the existing Markfield Court Retirement Village and Woodrowe House specialist healthcare facility subject to a range of criteria including:
- Limiting the extent of the built area as shown on the accompanying policies map
 - The layout, scale and appearance of new buildings should reflect the existing development
 - Safeguard the amenity of existing residents from noise and disturbance
 - No new access is to be provided
 - Delivery of a landscaping scheme which seeks an improvement in biodiversity and the retention and enhancement of the trees and hedgerows along the boundaries of the site.

Figure 3: Proposed Markfield Institute of Higher Education & Markfield Court Retirement Village and Woodrowe House Allocations

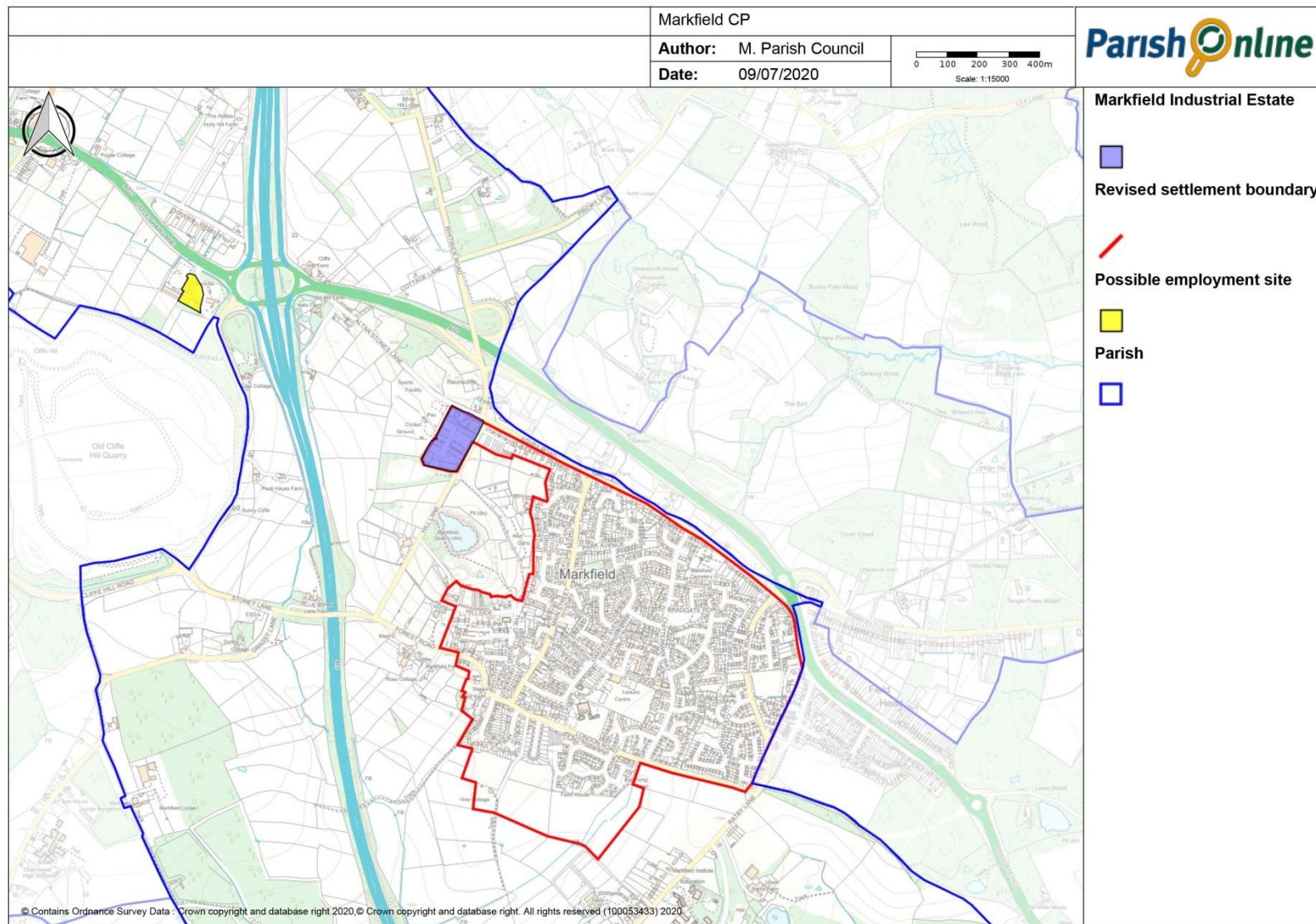


Source: Draft Markfield Neighbourhood Plan (23rd June 2020)

Policy M21: Markfield Industrial Estate

- 3.11 Policy M21 safeguards the existing Markfield Industrial Estate for employment development and supports the expansion of existing businesses and new employment development within the existing boundary of the site.

Figure 4: Markfield Industrial Estate



Source: Draft Markfield Neighbourhood Plan (23rd June 2020):

4. Environmental Assets² in proximity to the Neighbourhood Plan Area

4.1 This section summarises the range of environmental assets within and in proximity of the Markfield Neighbourhood Plan area. The information has been compiled from evidence base documents prepared by the Borough Council and nationally available data, including Natural England's Multi-Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) website and information presented in the draft Markfield Neighbourhood Plan.

Natura 2000 sites

4.2 No Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) or Special Protection Areas (SPAs) are present within the neighbourhood area or within 10km of the neighbourhood area, with the nearest being the River Mease SAC located over 10km to the north-west of the neighbourhood area.

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)

4.3 None located within the Parish Boundary.

4.4 The following are located within 5km of the Parish Boundary:

- Bardon Hill
- Bardon Hill Quarry
- Beacon Hill
- Benscliffe Wood
- Botcheston Bog
- Bradgate Park & Cropston Reservoir
- Cliffe Hill Quarry
- Groby Pool & Woods
- Sheet Hedges Wood, Ulverscroft Valley
- Hangingstone and Out Woods
- Charnwood Lodge (NNR) 1800m
- Holly Rock Fields
- Roecliffe Manor Lawns
- Sheet Hedges Wood,
- Swithland Wood & The Brand
- Ulverscroft Valley

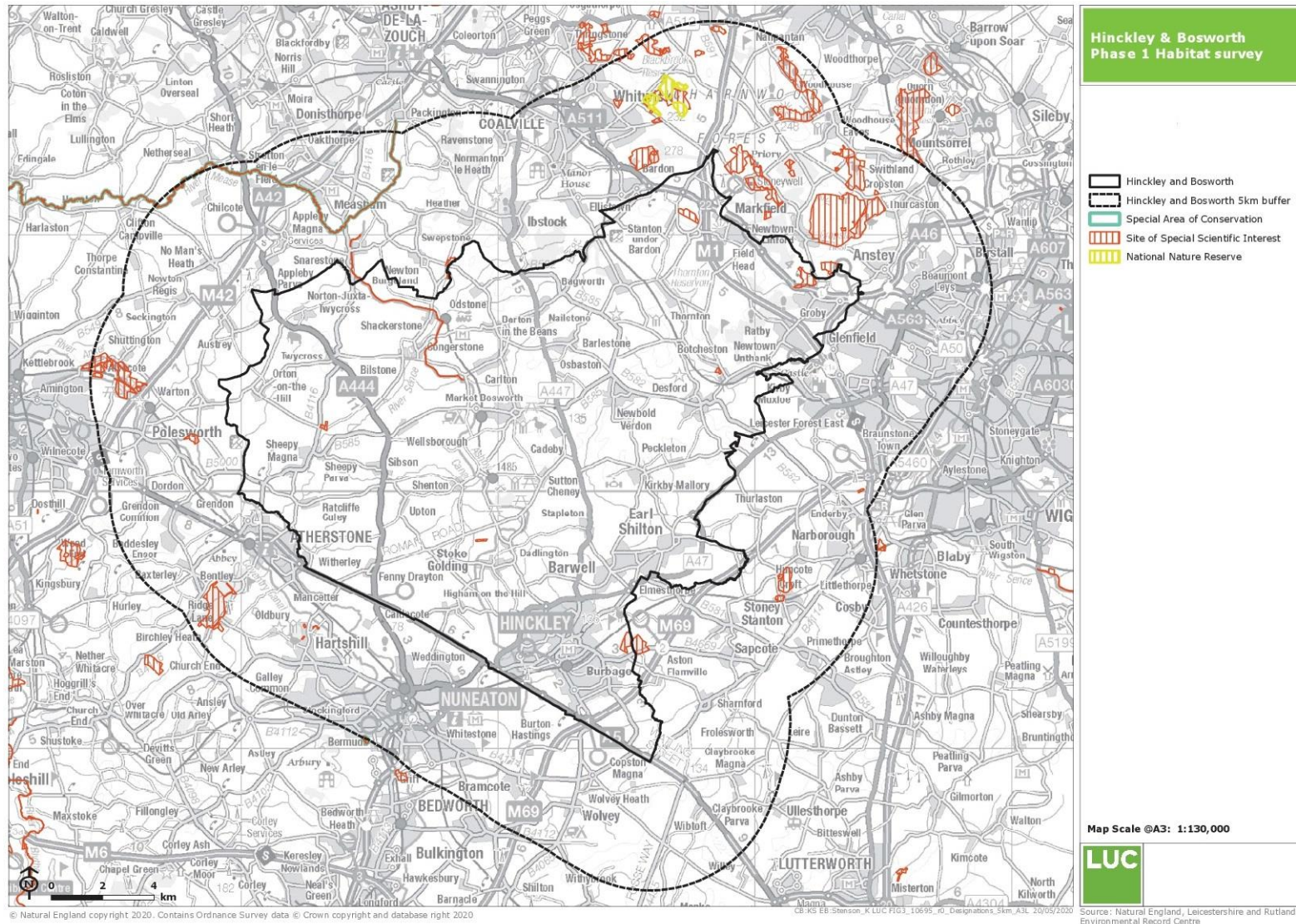
4.5 The SSSI that has the potential to be impacted by proposals within the neighbourhood plan area is Cliffe Hill Quarry which is situated adjacent to the western boundary. The SSSI is designated for its geological features, this 37.9ha site in the north east displays contact between many rock types.

² 'Sensitive Areas' and 'Other Designations' as listed in the 'Screening Neighbourhood Plans for Strategic Environmental Assessment' – Locality

- 4.6 SSSI Impact Risk Zones define zones around each SSSI which reflect the particular sensitivities of the features and indicate the types of development proposals which could potentially have adverse impacts on the site. The IRZs also cover the interest features and sensitivities of European sites, which are underpinned by the SSSI designation and “Compensation Sites”, which have been secured as compensation for impacts on European/Ramsar sites³. The neighbourhood area falls within a number of IRZs, the significance of which are discussed in the screening assessment below.
- 4.7 Figure 5 shows the International and National designations for nature conservation within 5km of the Hinckley and Bosworth borough boundary. Figure 6 shows the international, national and local designations for nature conservation in proximity of sites submitted to the Borough Council for consideration in the Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) subject to assessment in the Borough Council’s Extended Phase Habitats Study. The proposed housing allocation under Policy 16 lies within the boundary of site 62, discussed further in the screening assessment in Table 2.

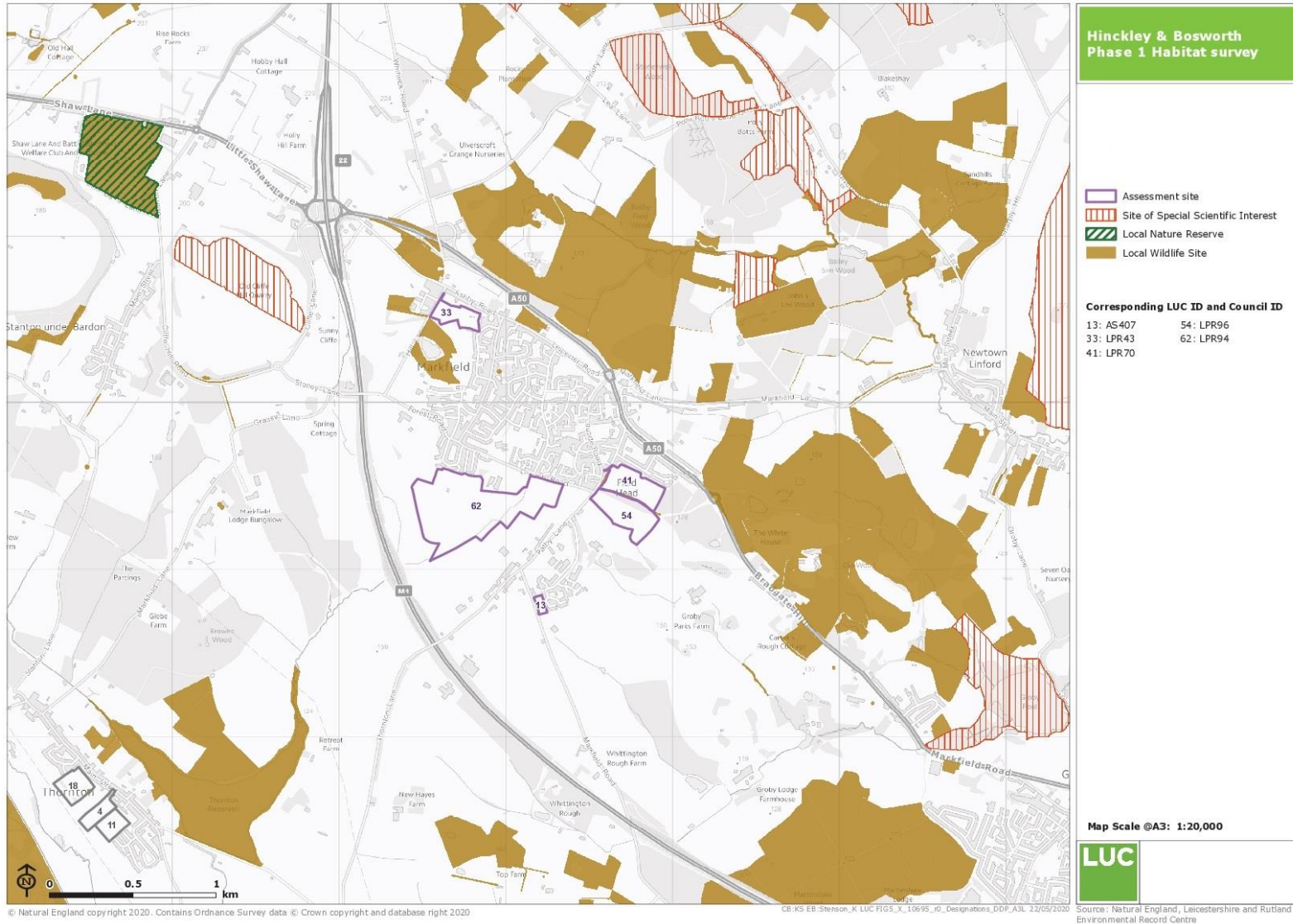
³ Natural England’s Impact Risk Zones for Sites of Special Scientific Interest (June 2019)

Figure 5: International and National Designated for Nature Conservation within 5km of the Borough Boundary



Source: HBBC Phase 1 Habitat Study of Proposed Allocation Sites (LUC, May 2020)

Figure 6: Statutory and Non-statutory designations for Nature Conservation with SHELAA Assessment sites



Source: HBBC Phase 1 Habitat Study of Proposed Allocation Sites (LUC, May 2020)

National Parks

4.8 None located within the neighbourhood area or within 5km of the neighbourhood area.

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

4.9 None located within the neighbourhood area or within 5km of the neighbourhood area.

World Heritage Sites

4.10 None located within the neighbourhood area or within 5km of the neighbourhood area.

Scheduled Monuments

4.11 None located within the neighbourhood area. The nearest scheduled monument is the moated site east of Kellam's Farm approximately 600m north within the adjacent parish of Bardon. The monument at Bardon survives in good condition and is a rare example in Leicestershire of an oval moat. The raised island has high potential for the survival of archaeological remains and a buried ancient land surface.

Other Key Environment Assets

Listed Buildings

4.12 The following six Listed Buildings are located in the Markfield Neighbourhood Area, five of which are located within the settlement of Markfield (shown in Figure 7) and one at Copt Oak:

- Little Markfield Farmhouse and attached farm buildings, Forest Road, Grade II
- Gates on east side of the churchyard of the Church of St Michael, The Green, Grade II
- The Old Rectory, The Nook, Grade II
- Church of St Michael, The Green, Grade II*
- Stepping Stone Farmhouse, Forest Road, Grade II
- Church of St Peter, Whitwick Road, Copt Oak, Grade II

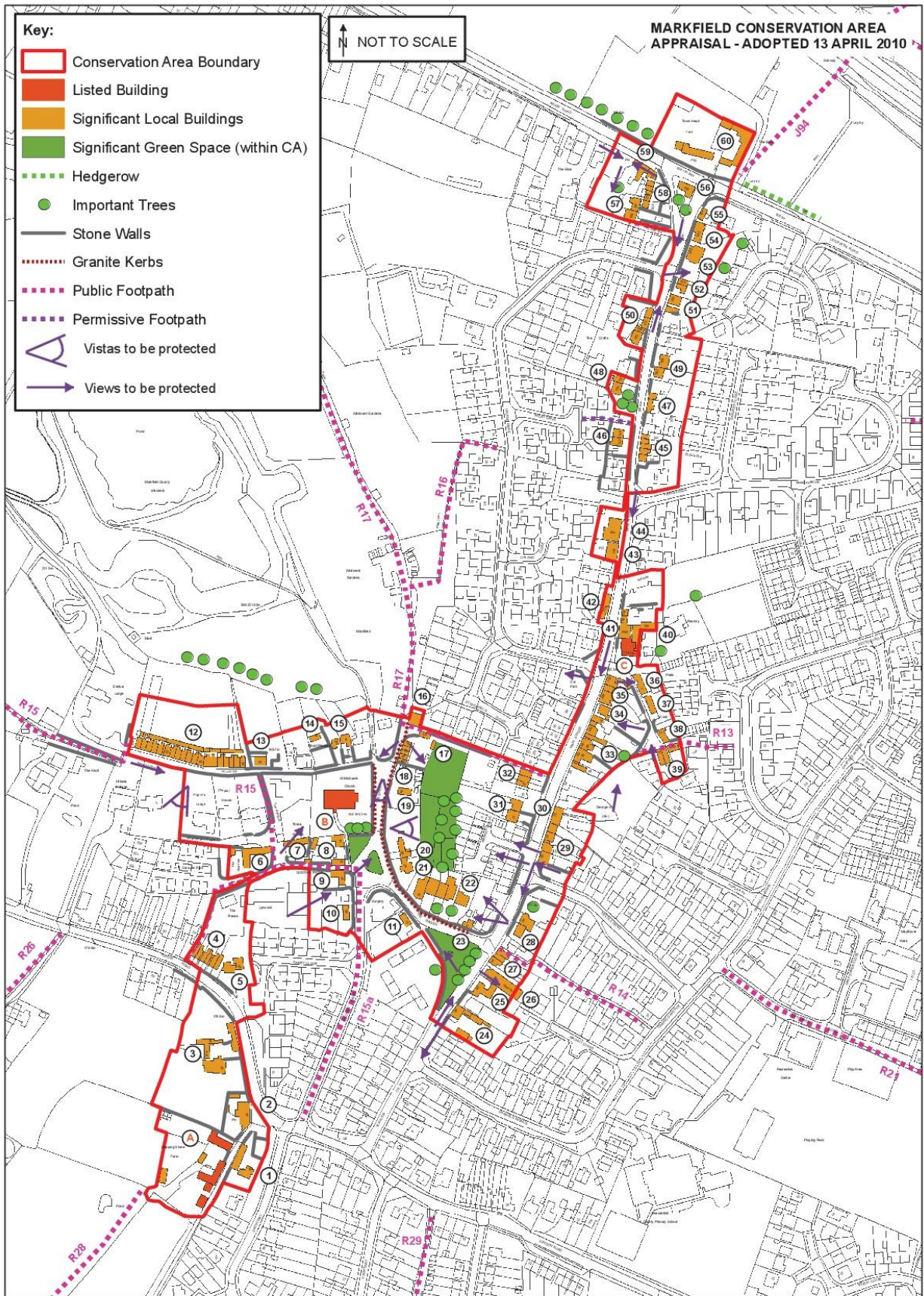
Historic Parks & Gardens

4.13 None located within the Markfield Neighbourhood Plan Area. The nearest Registered Park and Garden is Bradgate Park 4km east of the area boundary.

Conservation Area

4.14 The Markfield Conservation Area, designated by the council in January 1979, is the historic core of the settlement which includes three of the listed buildings (The Church of St Michael, The Old Rectory and Stepping Stone Farmhouse) and a number of unlisted buildings that are of specific architectural or historic merit. A review of the Markfield Conservation Area was completed in February 2010. The Markfield Conservation Area appraisal map is provided in Figure 7.

Figure 7: Markfield Conservation Area Appraisal



This map is based upon Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. Crown copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes crown copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. Hindley & Bowthorpe Borough Council UA100018489 Published 2010

Source: Markfield Conservation Area Appraisal (2010)

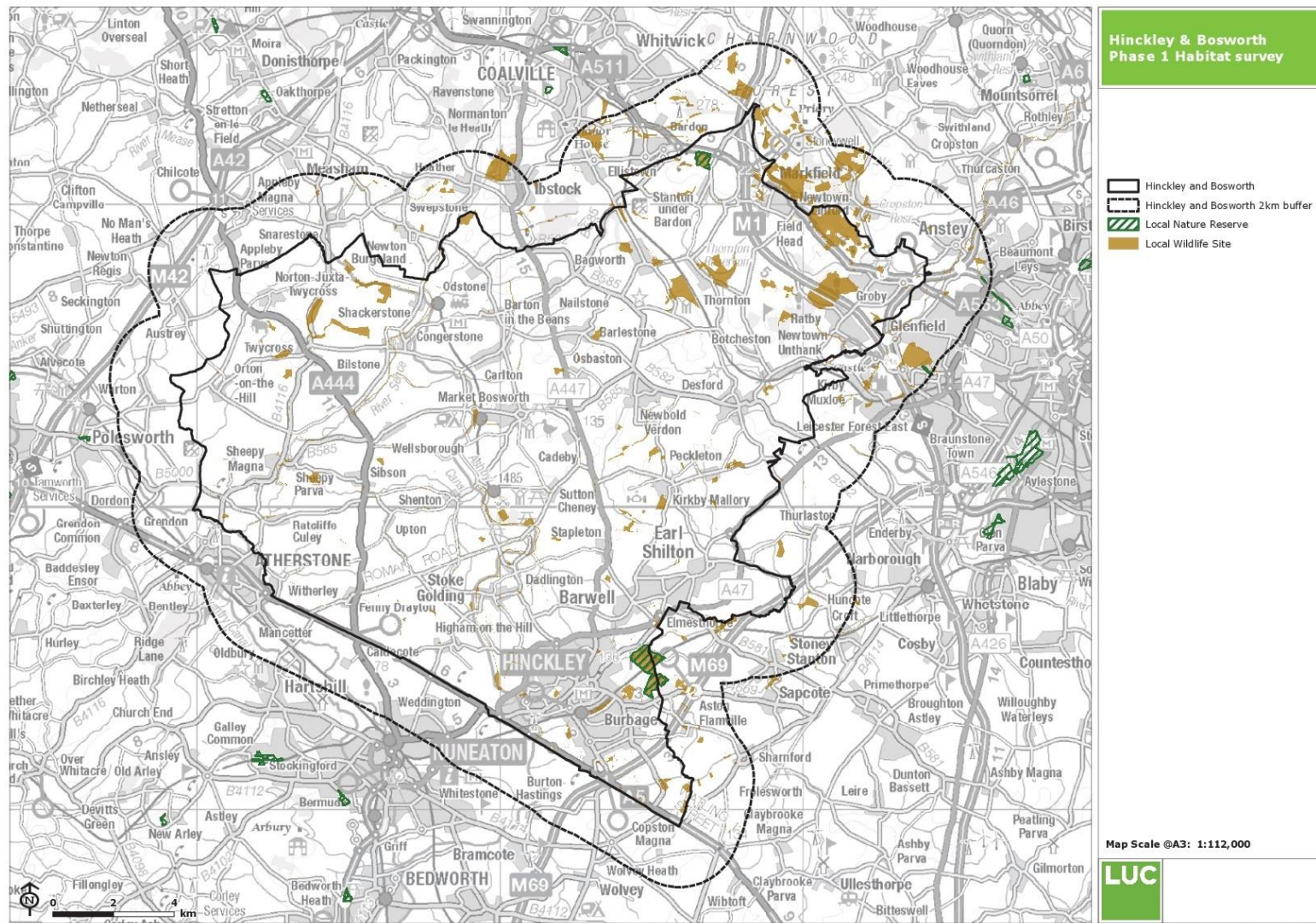
Local Nature Reserve

4.15 Billa Barra Hill Nature Reserve is located within the north west of the neighbourhood area. The site is also a designated local wildlife site and Regionally important Geological Site, shown on Figures 6 and 8.

Local Wildlife Sites

4.16 A number of LWS are situated within and in proximity of the Markfield Neighbourhood Area, as shown on Figures 6 and 8.

Figure 8: Local and Non Statutory Sites Designated for Nature Conservation within 2km of the Borough boundary



Source: HBBC Extended Phase Habitat Study (LUC, May 2020)

Flood Risk

4.17 The Borough Council's Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) concluded there is no fluvial flood risk posed to the settlement of Markfield. Regarding surface water flooding, the study concludes that flooding surface water flow paths follow the topography from high ground to lower ground in the south. In the 30-year event, there is only one overland surface water flow route in the settlement, flowing south on Chitterman Way before draining into an unnamed watercourse south of London Road. In the 100-year event, the existing overland flow route observed in the 30-year event is more accentuated and has additional flow routes joining it from Linford Crescent, London Road and properties between Launde Road.

Water Quality

4.18 The Level 1 SFRA considers the potential implications on development of Groundwater Source Protection Zones within or in proximity of the borough, the purpose of which are to protect areas of groundwater used for drinking water. The Groundwater SPZ requires attenuated storage. The study identifies that a majority of Hinckley and Bosworth borough is outside of a Source Protection Zone. There is a small area of rural land to the north west of the borough which is within Zone 3 (total catchment). The only other Source Protection Zone near the study area is to the north of Bardon to the north of the Borough and neighbourhood area, although this is not within the boundary. The SFRA concludes that it will be dependent on the nature of the proposed development and the location of the development site with regards to SPZs, restrictions may be in place on the types of SuDS used within appropriate areas. For example, infiltration SuDS are generally accepted within Zone 3, whereas in Zones 1 (Inner Protection Zone) or 2 (Outer Protection Zone), the Environment Agency will need to be consulted and infiltration SuDS may only be accepted if the correct treatments and permits are put in place. Any restrictions imposed on the discharge of the site generated runoff by the Environment Agency will be determined on a site by site basis using a risk-based approach.

Air Quality Management Area

4.19 There are no Air Quality Management Areas in the borough. The draft MNP has identified an AQMA adjoining the neighbourhood plan boundary alongside the M1 at Copt Oak as declared by North West Leicestershire District Council⁴

Soil Quality

4.20 The MAGIC Map data shows that the neighbourhood area is comprised of grade 3 agricultural land. At present there is no data available distinguishing whether the land is grade 3a which comprises Best and Most Versatile agricultural land.

Non-statutory Landscape Designations

4.21 The Markfield Neighbourhood Area is situated within the National Forest and Charnwood Forest Regional Park. The National Forest is an initiative which seeks to increase woodland cover over the designated area for a range of benefits including

⁴ North West Leicestershire District Council Air Quality Management Area Order 2009 (No.1)

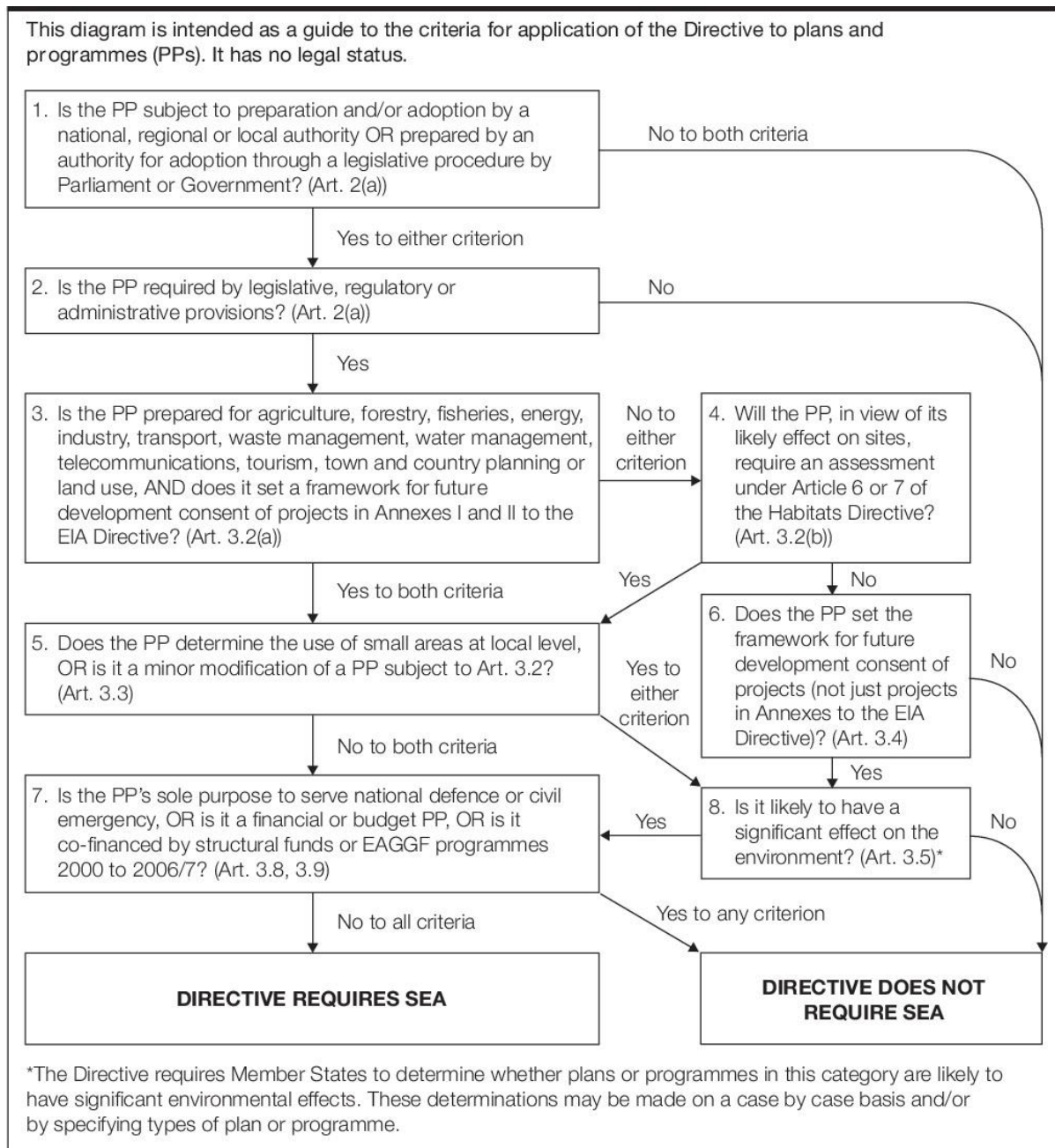
reducing carbon dioxide, increasing and enhancing biodiversity, increasing recreation and tourism opportunities and rural employment.

- 4.22 The Charnwood Forest is a distinctive landscape providing an asset of ecological, historic, recreation and economic value. The overall aim for the Charnwood Forest is to maintain and enhance its value through enhancing the woodland and habitat provision and increasing the green infrastructure within and adjoining the surrounding areas, increasing the recreation and tourism opportunities.

5. Assessment of the likely significant effects on the environment

5.1 Figure 9⁵ below illustrates the process for screening a planning document to ascertain whether a full SEA is required. The questions and assessment Table 1 are drawn from the diagram to help determine whether or not the SEA directive applies to the Markfield Neighbourhood Plan.

Figure 9: Application of the SEA Directive to Plan and programmes



⁵ Extracted from 'A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Directive' (ODPM, 2005)

Table 1: SEA Screening Process

Stage	Yes/ No	Reason
1. Is the PP subject to preparation and/or adoption by a national, regional or local authority OR prepared by an authority for adoption through a legislative procedure by Parliament or Government? (Art. 2(a))	Yes	The NDP is being prepared under the Localism Act 2011 and if 'made' it will become part of the statutory development plan. See Q2.
2. Is the PP required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions? (Art. 2(a))	Yes	The NDP is being prepared under the Localism Act 2011 and in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. However, there is no requirement to produce a Neighbourhood Plan; it is an optional plan. Once made it will become part of the statutory development plan. Therefore, it should continue to be screened. See Q3.
3. Is the PP prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism, town and country planning or land use, AND does it set a framework for future development consent of projects in Annexes I and II (see Appendix 2) to the EIA Directive? (Art 3.2(a))	Yes	The NDP is being prepared for town and country planning and land use. Annex II of the EIA Directive only refers to '(b) Urban development projects, including the construction of shopping centres and car parks' and does not specify residential development which the MNP seeks to allocate. The Directive has been transposed into UK law through the 'Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (the EIA Regulations). Schedule 2 of the EIA Regulations specifies 'urban development projects' to include development of more than 150 dwellings. The proposed housing allocation is for a minimum of 240 dwellings and therefore is above this threshold See Q5.
4. Will the PP, in view of its likely effect on sites, require an assessment for future development under Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive? (Art. 3.2 (b))	NA	
5. Does the PP determine the use of small areas at local level, OR is it a minor modification of a PP	Yes	If 'made' the MNP will form part of the statutory development and be used to assess planning applications within the parish of Markfield. Neighbourhood

Stage	Yes/ No	Reason
subject to Art. 3.2? (Art. 3.3)		plans and the proposals within them are non-strategic documents intended to address matters relating to the local area. See Q8.
6. Does the PP set the framework for future development consent of projects (not just projects in annexes to the EIA Directive)? (Art 3.4)	N/A	
7. Is the PP sole purpose to serve the national defence or civil emergency, OR is it a financial or budget PP, OR is it co- financed by structural funds or EAFF programmes 2000 to 2006/7? (Art 3.8, 3.9)	N/A	
8. Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment? (Art. 3.5)	No	It is concluded that the MNP is not likely to have significant environmental effects on the environment and an SEA is not required for the Markfield Neighbourhood Plan. Please see the screening assessment in Table 2 for more information.

5.2 To decide whether the Plan might have significant environmental effects (stage 8), the Neighbourhood Plan should be assessed against the criteria set out in Schedule 1 of the SEA Regulations. The Screening Assessment of the Markfield Neighbourhood Plan is provided in Table 2.

Table 2: Screening Assessment of the Markfield Neighbourhood Plan

SEA Directive Criteria	Likely significant environmental effect? Yes/No	Justification
1. The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular, to:		
(a) 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>If 'made' the MNP will form part of the statutory development plan to be used in the determination of planning applications within the parish of Markfield. The MNP sets out a vision and five broad statements to shape future development within the parish of Markfield which address matters relating to the natural and historic environment; the safeguarding and provision community facilities and services; housing to sustain the local population; supporting existing and new local businesses; traffic safety and sustainable modes of transport. A number of planning policies have been formulated to help deliver the vision, relating to each of these statements and provide the local framework against which all development proposals will be assessed.</p> <p>The MNP will need to be prepared having regard to the NPPF and in general conformity with the strategic policies in the Hinckley & Bosworth Local Plan. The Neighbourhood Plan is unlikely to influence other plans or programmes.</p> <p>The single site allocation at Land to the south of London Road is intended to meet a future housing need proportionate to the parish's population. It sets out a range of criteria which seek to provide social and environmental benefit and mitigation to support its delivery.</p> <p>The plan seeks to safeguard and improve social, healthcare and educational facilities at Markfield Court Retirement Village, Woodrowe House and the Markfield Institute for Education. The plan also safeguards and supports development and employment opportunities at Markfield Industrial Estate within the existing settlement boundary.</p>
(b) The degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those	No	The MNP will need to be prepared be in general conformity with the strategic policies in the Hinckley & Bosworth Local Plan and have regard to the NPPF. The Neighbourhood Plan is unlikely to influence other plans or programmes.

SEA Directive Criteria	Likely significant environmental effect? Yes/No	Justification
1. The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular, to:		
in a hierarchy.		
(c) The relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations, in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development.	No	<p>One of the Basic Conditions which need to be met by the MNP is that it contributes towards the delivery of sustainable development. Policies and proposals need to be prepared having regard to national policy which, as referred to in Chapter 3 of the draft plan, is underpinned by the three overarching objectives of sustainable development (social, economic and environmental). These are reflected in the vision and its supporting statements referred to under 1a above. The plan should also be prepared in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan. For Markfield, proposals should have regard to Policies 7 (Key Rural Centres) and 8 (Key Rural Centres Relating to Leicester) of the Core Strategy which provide the overarching development framework for Key Rural Centres and Markfield.</p> <p>The Markfield Neighbourhood Plan takes a positive approach to sustainable development setting out local considerations for shaping, directing and delivering sustainable development across the parish and in the settlement of Markfield having regard to local issues. As referred to above, the plan proposes a broad range of policies which seek to address matters relating to the natural and historic environment, climate change, housing delivery, transport, employment and local infrastructure. The MNP notably includes a range of policies relating to the protection of environmental assets and, where applicable, seeks enhancements to these assets from development proposals.</p>
(d) Environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme.	No	<p>The MNP identifies a number of environmental assets within and in proximity of the neighbourhood area, set out in section 4. The housing site allocation policy (M16) seeks a number measures to protect the existing hedgerows and trees and encourage biodiversity gain on the site. The Borough Council's recently published Habitats Study (2020) has assessed a larger site which encompasses the proposed site allocation. The assessment concludes that the western portion of this site, and a large area beyond, is an historic LWS for semi-improved grassland but as a result of current land use, was mapped in 2019 as improved grassland. The study sets out a</p>

SEA Directive Criteria	Likely significant environmental effect? Yes/No	Justification
1. The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular, to:		
		<p>number of recommendations to be addressed through a planning application, including detailed survey to determine which, if any parts of the site continue to meet the LWS criteria and where habitat restoration would best be directed as part of an appropriate mitigation and package of biodiversity net gain. Further consideration of the potential effects of the plan on environmental assets are discussed under 2(f) below.</p> <p>The Level 1 SFRA assessed the river catchments within the Borough to determine which catchments are at the highest risk from the cumulative impact of development and made recommendations based on the results. One of the recommendations as part of the cumulative impact assessment was for the Rothley Brook catchment, which drains towards neighbouring Leicester City and Charnwood Borough, was to undertake “...more detailed drainage strategy work as part of a Level 2 SFRA or detailed local area Strategic Drainage Study to consider further how the cumulative effects of potential peak rates and volumes of water from development sites would impact on peak flows, duration of flooding and timing of flood peaks on receiving watercourses”. The neighbourhood plan area lies within the Rothley Brook Catchment. The Level 2 SFRA looks at the effect of proposed development sites in the Rothley Brook catchment downstream of Hinckley and Bosworth Borough, and gives a strategic indication of the storage measures that could be implemented at the sites to ensure flood risk isn’t increased downstream.</p> <p>A larger area encompassing the proposed site allocation ‘Land south of London Road’ (SHELAA Ref: LPR94) was subject to a Level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment. The level 2 SFRA concluded that due to the site being located upstream of Thornton Reservoir, this would likely attenuate any increased flows from the sites receiving watercourses before discharging downstream towards the Rothley Brook. As there are no properties along the watercourse between the site and Thornton Reservoir, it is not thought that additional volumes above the 100-year plus applicable climate change allowance would need to be stored on site, as flows</p>

SEA Directive Criteria	Likely significant environmental effect? Yes/No	Justification
1. The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular, to:		
		<p>and volumes are likely to be also attenuated in the reservoir. The receiving watercourse along the eastern boundary of the proposed MNP site allocation passes under the M1 downstream of the site, however the motorway is elevated well above the watercourse, and so flows are unlikely to need constraining as the M1 is unlikely to flood from these watercourses. The accompanying site summary concludes that fluvial flood risk to the site is associated with the watercourse as it crosses through the site and along the southern boundary with Flood Zones 3b, 3a and 2 largely confined to the channel and its immediate surroundings, with the widest extents at the source of the watercourse in the north-eastern part of the site. Policy M16 of the draft MNP seeks the appropriate use of SuDS. Policy DM7 (Preventing Pollution and Flooding) also provides the policy framework against which development proposals will be assessed.</p> <p>Consideration of the potential effects of the plan on air quality are discussed under 2(b) below.</p>
(e) The relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of community legislation on the environment (e.g. plans and programmes linked to waste-management or water protection).	No	The MNP needs to be prepared in general conformity with the strategic policies of the HBBC Local Plan and have regard to the NPPF and relevant legislation.

2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to:		
(a) The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects.		<p>The proposed allocation seeks to deliver residential development of at least 240 dwellings over the plan period to 2036, which is considered to be proportionate to the existing population and contribute towards the need for residential development across the borough. The settlement of Markfield is a Key Rural Centre (KRC) in the settlement hierarchy which provide localised services to support residents living within Markfield and in other nearby rural villages and hamlets. A sustainable level of population growth within KRCs is expected over the plan period to sustain existing services and facilities.</p> <p>The effects of housing development that occurs during the plan period are likely to be permanent and any effects associated specifically with construction are likely to be temporary. The MNP sets out a range of policies which seek to mitigate the impact of the proposed allocation and broader policies which mitigate against other proposals that may come forward over the plan period and which seek environmental gain, where possible.</p>
(b) The cumulative nature of the effects.	No	<p>As referred to under point (a) above, the MNP seeks to allocate land for a residential development considered to be proportionate to the existing population and the role of Markfield as a KRC. The MNP also supports improvements to existing residential, healthcare and educational facilities and other infrastructure improvements to sustain and improve facilities and services to support the existing and proposed relatively small growth in the population. The MNP also safeguards existing employment land and supports new development within the settlement boundary. The proposals within the MNP are necessary to ensure the settlement of Markfield is able to adapt the needs of its residents in its role as a KRC.</p> <p>The delivery of new residential development will lead to increase in vehicle movements. Whilst the MNP raises concern over air and noise quality from traffic due to the proximity of the M1, A511 and A50 the increase in vehicle numbers are unlikely to be significant, particularly when dispersed onto the strategic highway network. Furthermore, the plan proposes a number of policies which seek to address the potential cumulative effects from vehicle movements, including supporting improvements to existing cycleways and footpaths and identifying opportunities for green infrastructure provision, including increased woodland planting in line with the</p>

2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to:		
		<p>National Forest Strategy.</p> <p>The potential cumulative effects relating to flood risk are discussed under 1(d) above.</p>
(c) The transboundary nature of the effects.	No	The delivery of new residential development will lead to increase in vehicle movements. Whilst the MNP raises concern over air and noise quality from traffic due to the proximity of the M1, A511 and A50 the increase in vehicle numbers is unlikely to be significant.
(d) The risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents).	No	<p>There are no potential risks to human health or the environment as a direct result of the policies and proposals presented within the emerging MNP in the Markfield Neighbourhood Plan area.</p> <p>As referred to above, the MNP identifies concerns regarding air and noise quality from traffic due to the proximity of the M1, A511 and A50 and measures which could contributing towards mitigation these issues. The MNP also identifies localised issues with regards to traffic safety, including the issue of on-street parking and the safety of pedestrians and cyclists. The MNP includes policies which seek to address these, to the extent that a neighbourhood plan as a land use plan can influence, to ensure that new proposals address the concerns over traffic safety.</p>
(e) The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected).	No	<p>The Markfield Neighbourhood Plan provides the land use planning framework for the parish of Markfield. As referred under point (a) above, the Markfield Neighbourhood Plan proposes a single site allocation to accommodate at least 240 dwellings over the plan period to 2036. The minimum number of dwellings proposed is considered to be proportionate to the existing population and broadly contribute towards the need for residential development across the borough and the level of growth that would be expected in a KRC. The proposed allocation forms an extension to the south of the existing settlement of Markfield.</p> <p>The plan only proposes the safeguarding and supports improvements to the Markfield Court Retirement Village and Woodrowe House healthcare facility and Markfield Institute of Higher Education within the existing site boundaries.</p>

2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to:		
		Significant effects due to the geographic size of the area and population size are not considered likely.
(f)	No	<p>Biodiversity & Geological Assets</p> <p>As noted above, a number of SSSIs are located within 5km of the neighbourhood plan boundary. Due to its proximity to the parish, the only SSSI to potentially be impacted by proposals within the neighbourhood plan area is Cliffe Hill Quarry, situated adjacent to the western boundary.</p> <p>The Borough Council's recently published Habitats Study (2020) assessed the proposed site allocation, albeit the allocation forms a smaller area of the site that was subject to the extended Phase 1 survey. The study did not identify any potential adverse effects in relation to the Cliffe Hill Quarry or other nearby SSSIs with the site being located over 1km from the proposed allocation, located west of the M1. The proposed allocation site lies within two SSSI Impact Risk Zones, however rural residential and rural non-residential development does not fall within the categories that would identify development may have the potential to impact on the respective SSSIs and would require consultation with Natural England. Considering the potential cumulative impacts under (1d) above, which are not considered likely to be significant and lack of pathway for effects arising from development of the site, it is concluded that there are not likely to be significant effects of the MNP on SSSIs within proximity of the neighbourhood plan area.</p> <p>Billa Barra Hill Local Nature Reserve is situated north-west of the neighbourhood area and is also a designated LWS and RIGS. A number of other LWS are located within the parish, located west and north of Markfield. Similarly to the considerations of proximity of proposals in the MNP to SSSIs, the LNR is located beyond the M1, west of Cliffe Hill Quarry SSSI and south of the A511. The proposed site allocation is unlikely to result in significant adverse effects on the LNR. Policy M5 (Ecology and Biodiversity) states development should not harm the Local Nature Reserve and the LWS located within the neighbourhood area. The nearest LWS located to the proposed housing allocation is approximately 600 north west to the nearest</p>
(i)	the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to special natural characteristics or cultural heritage.	
(ii)	(ii) the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values.	
(iii)	(iii) the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to intensive land use.	

2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to:		
		<p>boundary. Similarly, considering the distance between the site and the LWS, the intervening land uses and the policies associated with the protection and enhancement of existing features, the effects on LWS within the and in proximity of the neighbourhood area are unlikely to be significant.</p> <p>Cultural Heritage</p> <p>The nearest scheduled monument is the moated site east of Kellam's Farm approximately 600m north within the adjacent parish of Bardon from the boundary of the neighbourhood area. The monument is located over 3.7km from the proposed housing allocation. The plan and proposals within it are unlikely to result in significant adverse effects on this asset.</p> <p>The Markfield Conservation Area is located within the settlement of Markfield. Five of the six Listed Buildings (listed in section 4) are also located within the settlement with one other located in Copt Oak.</p> <p>The boundary of the Markfield Conservation Area is defined from where Main Street intersects with Forest Road from the west and London Road from the south-east, encompassing the western side of Markfield, and north along Main Street. Considering the listed buildings present in the parish, the proposed allocation is unlikely to affect the setting of these features of cultural heritage importance, due to the siting of the proposed allocation in relation to these assets. The draft MNP does not propose new development within or adjacent to the Conservation Area.</p> <p>The MNP identifies a number of other buildings and sites in the parish that make a positive contribution providing local character because of their heritage value. Policy M9 (Non-Designated Heritage Assets) of the draft MNP designates a number of proposed non-designated heritage assets and criteria to safeguard against potential harm of these assets.</p> <p>The policies and proposals in the draft MNP will also be supplemented by the policies in the HBBC Local Plan which address matters relating to designated assets identified within the borough.</p>

2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to:		
		It is considered there are unlikely to be significant effect in the context of this criterion of the SEA Directive.
(g) The effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.	No	<p>There are no 'sensitive area' landscape designations within 10km of the Markfield neighbourhood area. The area lies within the Charnwood Forest Regional Park and the National Forest. The area outside of the settlement boundary of Markfield and the hamlet of Copt Oak, the area is designated as Countryside in the Borough Council's Local Plan under Policy DM4.</p> <p>The MNP has been informed by the Charnwood Forest Landscape Character Assessment. Draft Policy M2 (Landscape Character) of the MNP is concerned with ensuring development is located and designed in a way that is sensitive to its landscape setting. The proposed site allocation for residential development lies within and adjacent to two Charnwood Regional Park character areas and forms an extension the settlement of Markfield to the south. The site allocation policy M16 includes a range of provisions relating to landscaping including woodland planting and the retention and improvement of existing hedgerows seeking.</p> <p>The MNP has had regard to the National Forest Strategy and includes a policy which requires proposals to incorporate landscape features informed by the respective guidance. The provision of such a policy is likely to ensure proposals contribute towards the delivery of the National Forest Strategy.</p> <p>The policies of the MNP will need to be prepared in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan, including Policy 21 (National Forest) and Policy 22 (Charnwood Forest) of the Core Strategy and DM4 (Safeguarding the Countryside and Settlement Separation).</p> <p>It is concluded that the MNP is unlikely to result in significant adverse effects on landscape designations.</p>

6. Conclusion

Consultation

- 6.1 This screening report was sent to Natural England, Historic England and the Environment Agency for a five week consultation period from the 21st July to the 26th August for their opinion in respect of this determination. The responses are shown in full in Appendix 1 and in summary below:
- **Environment Agency** – did not disagree with the conclusion of the report that an SEA does not need to be undertaken.
 - **Natural England** - confirmed that it is considered unlikely that any significant environmental effects will result from the implementation of the Neighbourhood Plan. Natural England also agreed with the report's conclusions that Markfield 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.
 - **Historic England** – no response received.

Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 6.2 A screening assessment has been undertaken by applying the criteria from the SEA Directive and Schedule 1 of the SEA Regulations to determine whether or not the Markfield Neighbourhood Plan is likely to have significant environmental effects when assessed against the criteria listed in the SEA Regulations.
- 6.3 The MNP sets out a vision and detailed planning policies to shape development in the parish up to 2036. The plan proposes to allocate a single site for at least 240 dwellings to be delivered over the plan period and supports the delivery of new development within the settlement boundary of Markfield and the boundaries of existing healthcare and educational facilities.
- 6.4 This screening report has considered the potential direct and cumulative effects of the emerging plan on assets of environmental and historic importance. The proposed housing allocation is unlikely to result in significant adverse effects due to its proximity to these assets and the intervening land uses and lack of pathway for effects arising from development of the site. The site has also been recently subject to assessment in the Borough Council's Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment which do not identify significant issues with a site larger than the proposed site allocation. Furthermore, the emerging plan also proposes a broad range of policies which seek to safeguard existing assets of environmental and historic importance and, where possible, seek their enhancement. The policies will need to have regard to national policy and prepared in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Hinckley & Bosworth Local Plan.

- 6.5 Considering the assessment above and the consultation responses received from Natural England, the Environment Agency and Historic England; Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council has determined that the Markfield Neighbourhood Plan is not likely to result in significant environmental effects and accordingly does not require a Strategic Environmental Assessment.

Habitats Regulations Assessment

- 6.6 This screening report has also considered the proximity and potential effects on European sites to determine whether the Markfield Neighbourhood Plan will require a Habitats Regulation Assessment. As referred to above, there are no sites of European sites within 10km of the neighbourhood area and it has been concluded that the proposals within the emerging MNP are unlikely to result in significant adverse effects on such sites. The Borough Council has also considered the conclusions of its Habitats Regulation Assessment screening report⁶ which informed the preparation of the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD, published in 2016 and the consultation response received from Natural England. The 2014 screening report concluded that it was not considered necessary to undertake a Habitats Regulations Assessment of the plan, which included an allocation south of Markfield, of which the proposed site allocation would be an adjacent extension to the south of the settlement.

⁶ Screening the Need for an Appropriate Assessment of Hinckley and Bosworth Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document (2014)

Appendix 1 – SEA Screening Consultation Responses

Date: 23 July 2020
Our ref: 322938
Your ref: None



Chris Colbourn
Senior Planning Officer
Planning Policy

Chris.Colbourn@hinckley-bosworth.gov.uk

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

T 0300 060 3900

BY EMAIL ONLY

Dear Mr Colbourn

Planning consultation: Markfield Neighbourhood Plan - SEA Screening Opinion - Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council

Thank you for your consultation on the above document dated 21 July 2020 which was received by Natural England on 22 July 2020

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 has considered '*Markfield Neighbourhood Plan Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Report*' (July 2020).

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

Natural England would like to advise you that we formed part of a partnership that has produced a planning toolkit aimed at supporting neighbourhood planning groups developing neighbourhood plans which shape development and land use change in their community. The guide includes: opportunities to enhance the environment and how this can be achieved in plan-making; important issues to consider, including legislative requirements; where to find out more; good practice and real life examples and a checklist to use when developing a Neighbourhood Plan. The '*Neighbourhood Planning for the Environment*' toolkit is available [here](#).

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

**Planning Adviser
Area Delivery Team
East Midlands Area**

Annex - Generic advice on natural environment impacts and opportunities

Biodiversity duty

Your planning authority has a duty to have regard to conserving biodiversity as part of their decision making. Conserving biodiversity can also include restoration or enhancement to a population or habitat. Further information is available here.

Protected Species

Natural England has produced standing advice¹ to help planning authorities understand the impact of particular developments on protected species.

Local sites and priority habitats and species

The impacts of proposed development on any local wildlife or geodiversity sites should be considered, in line with paragraphs 171 and 174 of the NPPF and any relevant development plan policy. There may also be opportunities to enhance local sites and improve their connectivity. Natural England does not hold locally specific information on local sites and recommends further information is obtained from appropriate bodies such as the local records centre, wildlife trust, geo-conservation groups or recording societies.

Priority habitats and Species are of particular importance for nature conservation and included in the England Biodiversity List published under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006. Most priority habitats will be mapped either as Sites of Special Scientific Interest, on the Magic website or as Local Wildlife Sites. The list of priority habitats and species can be found here². Natural England does not routinely hold species data, such data should be collected when impacts on priority habitats or species are considered likely. Consideration should also be given to the potential environmental value of brownfield sites, often found in urban areas and former industrial land, further information including links to the open mosaic habitats inventory can be found here.

Ancient woodland, ancient and veteran trees

the impacts of proposed development on ancient woodland and ancient and veteran trees should be considered in line with paragraph 175 of the NPPF. Natural England maintains the Ancient Woodland Inventory which can help identify ancient woodland. Natural England and the Forestry Commission have produced standing advice for planning authorities in relation to ancient woodland and ancient and veteran trees. It should be taken into account by planning authorities when determining relevant planning applications

Landscape

Paragraph 170 of the NPPF highlights the need to protect and enhance valued landscapes through the planning system. Proposed developments may present opportunities to protect and enhance locally valued landscapes. You may want to consider whether any local landscape features or characteristics (such as ponds, woodland or dry stone walls) could be incorporated into any proposed development in order to respect and enhance local landscape character and distinctiveness, in line with any local landscape character assessments. Where the impacts of development are likely to be significant, a Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment should be provided with the proposal to inform decision making. We refer you to the Landscape Institute Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment for further guidance.

Access and Recreation

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/protected-species-and-sites-how-to-review-planning-proposals>

² <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140711133551/http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/conservation/biodiversity/protectandmanage/habsandspeciesimportance.aspx>

Natural England encourages any proposal to incorporate measures to help improve people's access to the natural environment. Measures such as reinstating existing footpaths together with the creation of new footpaths and bridleways should be considered. Links to other green networks and, where appropriate, urban fringe areas should also be explored to help promote the creation of wider green infrastructure. Relevant aspects of local authority green infrastructure strategies should be delivered where appropriate.

Environmental enhancement

Development provides opportunities to secure net gains for biodiversity and wider environmental gains, as outlined in the NPPF (paragraphs 8, 72, 102, 118, 170, 171, 174 and 175). The application of the mitigation hierarchy as set out in paragraph 175 of the NPPF is a useful tool. It advises to firstly consider what existing environmental features on and around the site can be retained or enhanced or what new features could be incorporated into the development proposal. Where onsite measures are not possible, off site measures can be considered. Opportunities for enhancement might include:

- Providing a new footpath through the new development to link into existing rights of way.
- Restoring a neglected hedgerow.
- Creating a new pond as an attractive feature on the site.
- Planting trees characteristic to the local area to make a positive contribution to the local landscape.
- Using native plants in landscaping schemes for better nectar and seed sources for bees and birds.
- Incorporating swift boxes or bat boxes into the design of new buildings.
- Designing lighting to encourage wildlife.
- Adding a green roof to new buildings.

Proposed development can also contribute to the wider environment and help implement elements of any Landscape, Green Infrastructure or Biodiversity Strategy in place in your area. For example:

- Links to existing greenspace and/or opportunities to enhance and improve access.
- Identifying opportunities for new greenspace and managing existing (and new) public spaces to be more wildlife friendly (e.g. by sowing wild flower strips)
- Planting additional street trees.
- Identifying any improvements to the existing public right of way network or using the opportunity of new development to extend the network to create missing links.

Restoring neglected environmental features (e.g. coppicing a prominent hedge that is in poor condition or clearing away an eyesore).

Chris Colbourn

From: Wakefield, Nick <nick.wakefield@environment-agency.gov.uk>
Sent: 21 August 2020 17:57
To: Chris Colbourn
Subject: FW: Markfield Neighbourhood Plan: SEA Screening Opinion Request
Attachments: Markfield NP SEA Screening Report July20.pdf

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Hello Chris,

Thank you for giving the Environment Agency (EA) the opportunity to comment on the attached SEA Screening Report for the Markfield NP.

From the perspective of the remit of the EA we do not disagree with the conclusion of the report that an SEA does not need to be undertaken. However, we note that there are a number of SSSI's within relatively close proximity of the NP area and we therefore advise that you seek the views of Natural England on the conclusions of the report.

Regards
Nick

Nick Wakefield

Planning Specialist, Sustainable Places Team

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

☎ 020302 53354

nick.wakefield 



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From: Chris Colbourn [mailto:Chris.Colbourn@hinckley-bosworth.gov.uk]
Sent: 21 July 2020 12:31
To: Wakefield, Nick
Subject: Markfield Neighbourhood Plan: SEA Screening Opinion Request

Dear Nick,

The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, Regulation 9 Screening Determination: Markfield Neighbourhood Plan

European Union Directive 2001/42/EC requires a Strategic Environmental Assessment to be undertaken for certain types of plans and programmes that would likely have significant environmental effects. The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (the regulations) require that this is determined by a screening process, which should use a specified set of criteria (set out in schedule 1 of the regulations). The results of this process must be set out in an SEA Screening Determination Statement, which must be publicly available.

In accordance with Regulation 9 of the SEA Regulations 2004, Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council as the determining authority, consider that an environmental assessment of the emerging Markfield Neighbourhood Plan is not required as it is unlikely to have significant environmental effects. The Council has also concluded that a full Habitats Regulations Appropriate Assessment is not required. In making these determinations, the Borough Council has had regard to the Screening Report attached to this email. This assessment is in advance of the requirements to consult the statutory consultees of The Environment Agency, Natural England and English Heritage. This letter is a formal request for an opinion on this matter.

Attached to this correspondence is the screening report, including draft screening opinion of the need to carry out a Strategic Environmental Assessment for the draft Markfield Neighbourhood Plan and is made in accordance with the Regulations.

Please note that due to the file size of the draft Markfield Neighbourhood Plan you will also receive a 'Go Anywhere' link in a separate email to this correspondence from which you can download the plan.

We would appreciate your opinion in response to the screening report by **Wednesday 26th August 2020**. If no response has been received by this date it will be assumed that the draft screening opinion is correct and a Strategic Environmental Assessment is not required.

Please could you send your response to Chris.Colbourn@hinckley-bosworth.gov.uk

Kind regards,

Chris Colbourn
Senior Planning Officer
Planning Policy

Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council
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