

Wetherley Neighbourhood Plan

Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Statement

November 2020

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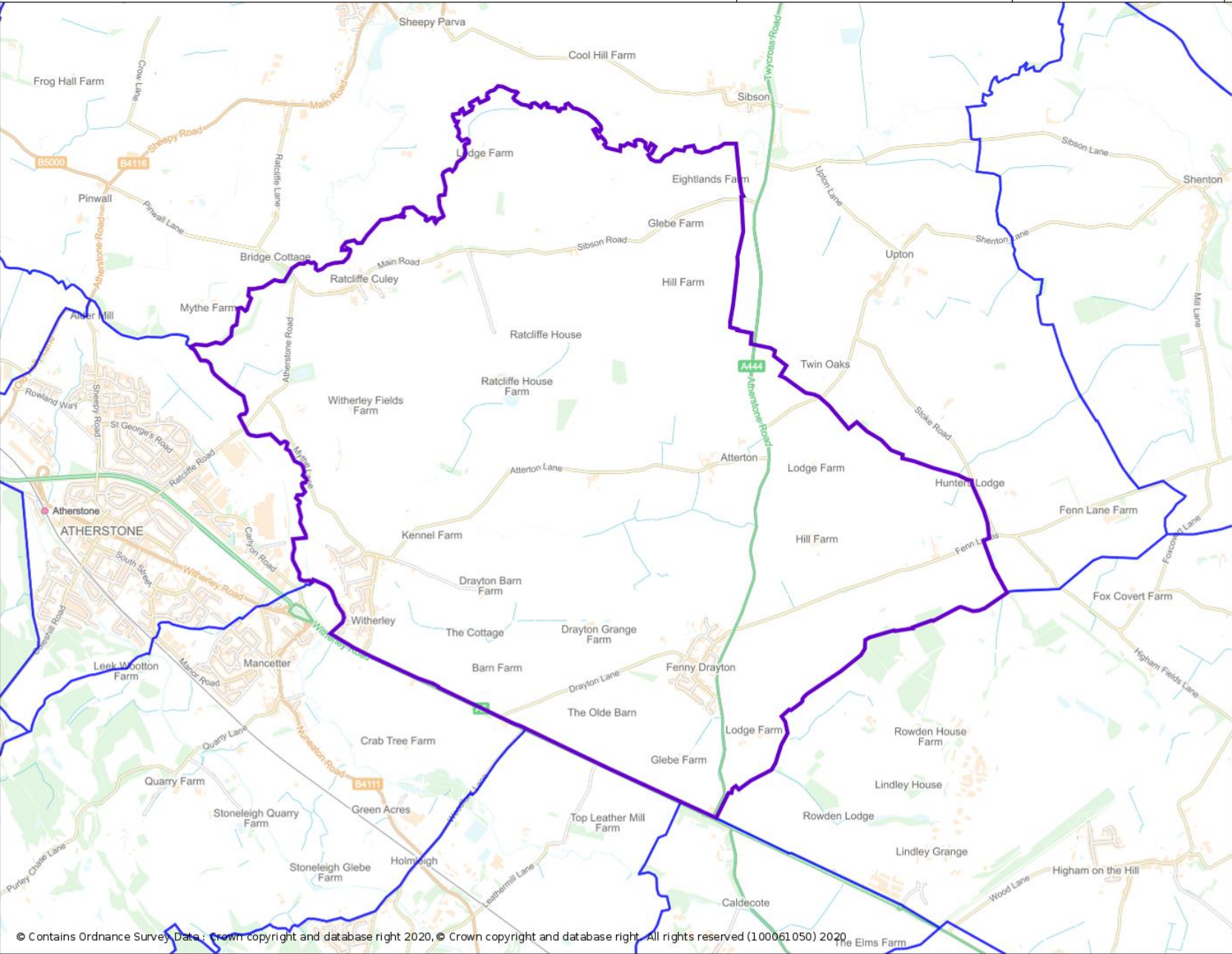


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1. Introduction

- 1.1 Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council has commissioned Planit-X Town and Country Planning Services to prepare this Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Statement of the Wetherley Neighbourhood Plan (Draft Pre-Submission, March 2020).
- 1.2 The purpose of the Screening Statement is to set out a screening opinion in relation to whether a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) process is required to accompany the development of the Wetherley Neighbourhood Plan. The Screening Statement has been the subject of consultation with the statutory consultation bodies for SEA (Historic England, the Environment Agency and Natural England) for their opinion.
- 1.3 SEA is a systematic process undertaken to evaluate the likely significant environmental effects of plans. The requirement for SEA in England was introduced in 2004 through the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulation 2004 ('The SEA Regulations'), which transposed the European SEA Directive (2001/42/EC).
- 1.4 One of the 'Basic Conditions' that a neighbourhood plan is tested against is whether the making of the neighbourhood plan is compatible with European Union obligations, including obligations under the SEA Directive. Neighbourhood plans only require SEA where they are likely to lead to significant environmental effects. To decide whether a proposed neighbourhood plan is likely to have significant environmental effects, it should be screened against the criteria set out in Annex 2 of the SEA Directive. Where it is determined that the neighbourhood plan is unlikely to have significant environmental effects (and, accordingly, does not require SEA), a statement of reasons for this determination should be prepared and published for consultation with the statutory consultation bodies (Natural England, the Environment Agency and Historic England). Where a neighbourhood plan is likely to have a significant effect on the environment a SEA process must be carried out.
- 1.5 This Screening Statement therefore provides a screening opinion as to whether the Wetherley Neighbourhood Plan is likely to lead to significant environment effects, and as such requires a SEA process.



Neighbourhood Area

Parish




2. Details of the Neighbourhood Plan

Title of the plan:

- 2.1 Witherley Neighbourhood Plan.

Name of Qualifying Body and Local Planning Authority:

- 2.2 The qualifying body preparing the Witherley Neighbourhood Plan is Witherley Parish Council. The Local Planning Authority is Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council.

Witherley Parish Neighbourhood Plan contact point:

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Location and spatial extent of the Witherley Neighbourhood Plan:

- 2.3 The Witherley Neighbourhood Plan covers the Witherley Neighbourhood Area, comprising the parish of Witherley in Leicestershire, situated in the far west of Leicestershire. (Page 2).
- 2.4 To the west, the River Anker forms the Parish, Borough and County boundary with North Warwickshire and the small industrial and market town of Atherstone. The A5 defines the southern parish boundary.
- 2.5 The Parish has an overwhelmingly rural landscape with an economy based historically on agriculture. Housing is focussed on four settlements: Atterton, Fenny Drayton, Ratcliffe Culey and Witherley. All four settlements currently have good separation distances between them and each with good visual links to the wider countryside.
- 2.6 At the time of the 2011 Census, Witherley was home to 1,373 residents living in 616 households. Home ownership levels are considered high and there is a predominance of large detached and high value housing.

- 2.7 Atterton is the smallest settlement with a total of 14 dwellings including four traditional farmsteads. Ratcliffe Culey has 53 dwellings as well as a pub and part-time post office.
- 2.8 Fenny Drayton is the second largest settlement with a total of 246 dwellings. Pre-20th century Fenny Drayton consisted of a collection of small farms and rural cottages. A number of farms still surround the village, and cottages remain within the settlement. The 14th century All Saints Grade II* listed Church doubles as the only community facility.
- 2.9 Witherley is the largest settlement with 309 dwellings. Village facilities include a primary school, public houses, playing field and football club, parish rooms and church.

Timeframe of the Witherley Neighbourhood Plan:

- 2.10 To 2036.

Main aims of the Witherley Neighbourhood Plan:

- 2.11 The vision of the Witherley Neighbourhood Plan for 2036 is as follows:

Witherley Parish, valuing its past and its rural identity but planning for the future.

In developing a shared vision, we shall have maintained and enhanced the rural character of Witherley Parish, its heritage, green spaces and vistas. We shall have responded to the needs of its residents by providing a high-quality living and working environment, and ensured that any development is appropriate, sympathetic, and better by innovative design.

To achieve this vision, the Neighbourhood Plan will:

- *Ensure that development takes place in the most sustainable locations;*
- *Encourage the right types of development that meets local needs;*
- *Protect important community facilities that are special to the local community;*
- *Promote good and innovative design;*
- *Facilitate appropriate employment opportunities;*
- *Enable the community to have good access to the surrounding countryside and greenspaces;*
- *Safeguard open spaces that are important to the community and/or wildlife, and highlight environmental features that must be protected where development does take place;*
- *Improve pedestrian and cycle connections within the Plan area and into the surrounding areas.*

Relationship with the Local Plan:

- 2.12 The Witherley Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared in the context of the Hinckley and Bosworth Local Plan. For the purposes of the Witherley Neighbourhood Plan, the relevant parts of the Local Plan 2006-2026 (formerly LDF) are the Core Strategy Development Plan Document (DPD) and the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD.
- 2.13 The Hinckley and Bosworth Core Strategy was adopted in December 2009 and is the Strategic Part 1 Local Plan. It provides the vision and spatial strategy for the borough and identifies development requirements for its main urban areas. Witherley is identified as a 'Rural Village' and such villages will be the focus of limited development with the aim of ensuring existing services are supported and supporting community cohesion. Local plan policy supports housing development within settlement boundaries that provides a mix of house types and tenures, local needs development, homeworking and small scale employment uses within settlement boundaries.
- 2.14 Fenny Drayton and Ratcliffe Culey are identified as "Rural Hamlets" and development in these locations will be limited to infill housing development, local choice schemes and the conversion of agricultural buildings to employment uses.
- 2.15 The Core Strategy does not identify a housing requirement for any of the other settlements within the Parish.
- 2.16 The Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD was adopted in 2016 and identifies sites for uses such as housing, employment, retail, open space and community facilities that will deliver the aims, vision and objectives of the Core Strategy. It also contains development management policies which will be used to assess planning applications over the plan period. This document does not identify a housing allocation for the Parish.
- 2.17 A parallel process of Sustainability Appraisal (SA) was undertaken alongside the plan-making process for the Core Strategy and the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD.
- 2.18 However, given the importance of having an up-to-date local plan, the Council is currently in the process of reviewing its local plan documents, including the Core Strategy and the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD. This Local Plan review included a consultation undertaken in early 2018 and the Housing section of this consultation was supported by a Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA) to assess future housing needs for the period 2011 -2036.

- 2.19 This process has not led to a housing requirement for the Parish. Although it is appreciated that the conclusive level of housing need will only be established once the Local Plan review is at an advanced stage and a review of the Neighbourhood Plan may be necessary.

Will the Witherley Parish Neighbourhood Plan propose allocations? And if so, will these be over and above those likely to be included in the Local Plan?

- 2.20 Notwithstanding there being no Local Plan housing requirement for the Parish, it is suggested that evidence, including Local Housing Needs Survey and community consultation, identifies there is a gap in provision. The Neighbourhood Plan therefore sets out to address the lack of housing delivery and in particular, increasing the affordable housing supply.
- 2.21 The Neighbourhood Plan makes provision for a total of around 25 new dwellings in Witherley Parish up to 2036 (Policy H1) in the form of two residential site allocations, one in Witherley for around 15 dwellings and one in Fenny Drayton for around 10 dwellings. Any further additional housing will be met through Policy H2: Settlement Boundaries.

What are the key environmental assets (including 'sensitive areas') near the Witherley Neighbourhood Area?

'Sensitive areas'

- 2.22 A key determinant of whether effects are likely to be significant is the sensitivity of the asset affected. In this context, the more environmentally sensitive a location, the more likely it is that potential environmental effects from a plan will be significant.
- 2.23 National Planning Practice Guidance provides guidance on this topic through providing a list of sites and areas which should be deemed as 'sensitive areas' for the purposes of environmental assessment. These comprise:
- Natura 2000 sites;
 - Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI);
 - National Parks;
 - Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty;
 - World Heritage Sites; and
 - Scheduled Monuments.

- 2.24 In the context of the categories of 'sensitive areas' described by the Planning Practice Guidance, the following sites and areas exist within or near the Neighbourhood Area.

Natura 2000 sites

Within the Neighbourhood Area:

- 2.25 No Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) or Special Protection Areas (SPAs) are present within the Neighbourhood Area.

Within 10km of the Neighbourhood Area

- 2.26 Ensor's Pool Special Area of Conservation is located approximately 5.3km to the south of the Neighbourhood Area boundary. This lowland site in Central England represents and qualifies as a SAC as it holds a large population of white-clawed crayfish in standing water. This waterbody is isolated from river systems and is a good example of a 'refuge' site.
- 2.27 The River Mease Special Area of Conservation is located approximately 9km to the north of the Neighbourhood Area boundary. The River Mease and the lower part of Gilwiskaw Brook are designated as a SAC. They were designated because the River Mease represents one of the best examples of an unspoilt meandering lowland river which supports characteristic habitats and species and supports populations of spined loach and bullhead, two notable species of native freshwater fish that have a restricted distribution in England. The rivers also support populations of white-clawed crayfish, otter and a range of river plants such as water crow-foot.
- 2.28 All SCA's are also notified as SSSI's, being sites that are of specific biological or geological features.
- ##### Beyond 10km of the Neighbourhood Area
- 2.29 Rutland Water Special Protection Area is located approximately 51km to the east of the Neighbourhood Area

SSSIs

Within the Neighbourhood Area

- 2.30 No Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) are present within the Neighbourhood Area.

Within 5km of Neighbourhood Area

Sheepy Fields

- 2.31 Sheepy Fields comprise two hay meadows developed on soils derived from post-glacial river terrace deposits. It contains some of the best remaining examples of neutral grassland in Leicestershire. It is representative of hay meadow plant communities developed on neutral soils in the East Midlands.

2.32 Condition: Favourable condition

2.33 1.4km to the north of the Neighbourhood Area.

Boons Quarry

2.34 This is a classic site which displays deeply-weathered Precambrian Caldecote Volcanic Formation overlain uncomfortably by the conglomerates and sandstones of the lowest unit (Park Hill Member) of the late Precambrian to early Cambrian Hartshill Formation. The site comprises one unit.

2.35 Condition: Favourable with a low threat risk.

2.36 1.9km to the south of the Neighbourhood Area.

Woodlands Quarry

2.37 This disused quarry exposes a sequence of rocks laid down beneath the sea some 570 million years ago, during late Precambrian to early Cambrian times, and is of international significance because of the early Cambrian fossils which are found here. The site comprises one unit.

2.38 Condition: Favourable with a high risk of threat.

2.39 2.0km to the south of the Neighbourhood Area.

Kendall's Meadow

2.40 A traditionally managed hay meadow with a diversity and richness of plant life unmatched in the south west of the County, an area otherwise sparse in interest. It is probably the best representative of this grassland community type in the central East Midlands. More than a dozen grass species have been found on this meadow which lies partly on alluvium and partly on boulder clay.

2.41 Condition: Favourable with a low risk of threat.

2.42 2.0km to the east of the Neighbourhood Area.

Illing's Trenches

2.43 This important and classic site exposes a section through the Abbey Shales of the Cambrian period. There is a rich and abundant assemblage of fossils. The sequence of rocks seen at Illing's Trenches is the most precisely-dated series of rocks, known from the middle part of the middle part of the Middle Cambrian anywhere in Britain, and is also a key palaeontological site. The site comprises one unit.

2.44 Condition: Favourable.

2.45 2.4km to the south of the Neighbourhood Area.

Bentley Park Wood

2.46 This site is a large and important ancient woodland in north Warwickshire. It comprises Bentley Park Wood, sectors of the adjacent Monks Park Wood and a small detached area outwith the main wood known as the Birchleys. Bentley Park Wood lies mainly on Carboniferous sandstones, a substantial portion of which is overlain by boulder clay. In Monks Park Wood there are also areas of marl, sandstones and shales of the Coal Measures as well as earlier Cambrian shales with igneous intrusions. The majority of the wood lies on light, strongly acidic soils and is dominated by sessile oak. The site comprises two units.

2.47 Condition: Favourable.

2.48 2.8km to the south west of the Neighbourhood Area.

National Parks

Within the Neighbourhood Area

2.49 None.

Near the Neighbourhood Area

2.50 None- the closest National Park is the Peak District National Park (located approximately 52km from the Parish).

Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Within the Neighbourhood Area

2.51 None.

Near the Neighbourhood Area

2.52 None- the closest AONB is the Cannock Chase AONB (located 28km from the Parish).

World Heritage Sites

Within the Neighbourhood Area

2.53 None.

Near the Neighbourhood Area

2.54 None- the closest site is the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site (located approximately 35km to the north of the Parish).

Scheduled Monuments

Within the Neighbourhood Area

Moat and fishponds at Ratcliffe Culey

2.55 The monument at Ratcliffe Culey comprises a moated site and fishponds grouped around the church on the south side of the village, 1.5km north-east of Atherstone. Both the fishponds and moat survive in good condition

and the moat island has considerable potential for preserving evidence of the original manor house.

Manduessedum Roman villa and settlement with associated industrial complex

- 2.56 The monument includes the buried and earthwork remains of a Roman villa, settlement and industrial complex at Manduessedum. It is particularly important because of the survival of a large number of Roman features within the landscape. These include a villa, a defended settlement, an industrial complex, a number of Roman roads, a port or ferry settlement, early field systems and human burials. Although an element of this monument is located within Witherley Parish, the majority is located within the adjacent parish of Mancetter.

Bowl barrow at Fenny Drayton

- 2.57 The barrow at Fenny Drayton survives well and is one of the few barrows in Leicestershire which still exists as an earthwork. The barrow is roughly round measuring 25m in diameter at the base and about 2.5m high with a flat top measuring 8m across. A bowl barrow is a funerary monument.

Near the Neighbourhood Area

Roman Camp

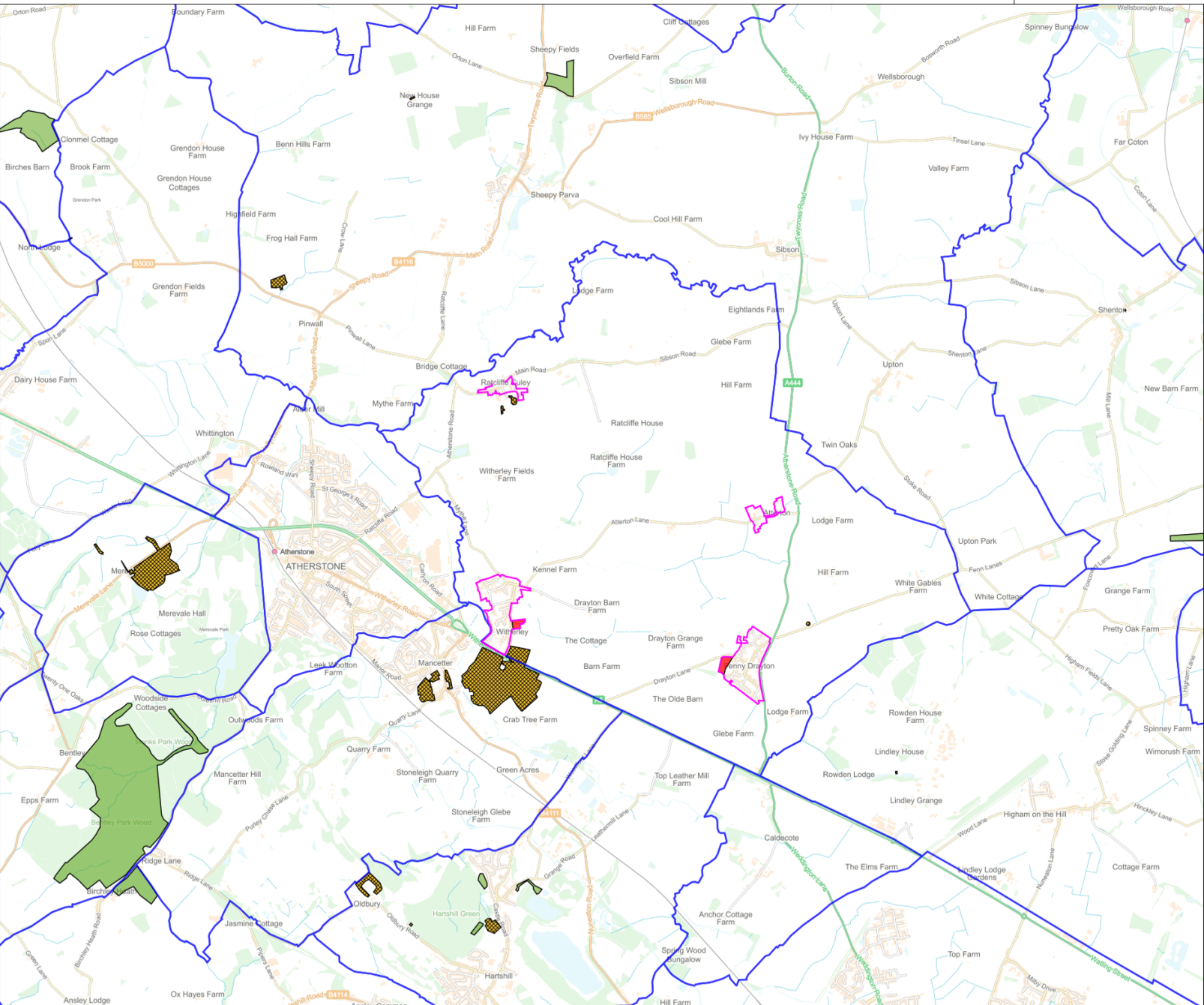
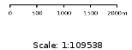
- 2.58 Part of a series of vexillation fortresses surrounding Mancetter Farm. This monument, which falls into three areas, includes parts of a succession of Roman vexillation fortresses and other camps on different alignments situated on slightly raised ground on the western valley side of the River Anker. The fortresses and camps survive as entirely buried structures, layers and deposits covering a total area of at least 9ha.
- 2.59 Distance from Neighbourhood Area – 445m from the parish boundary
- Remains of Chapel in Lindley Park*
- 2.60 Distance from the Neighbourhood Area – 960m from the parish boundary

Sensitive Areas

Witherley CP

Author:

Date: 03/09/2020



Settlement Border

Housing Allocation

Parish

Scheduled Monuments

World Heritage Sites

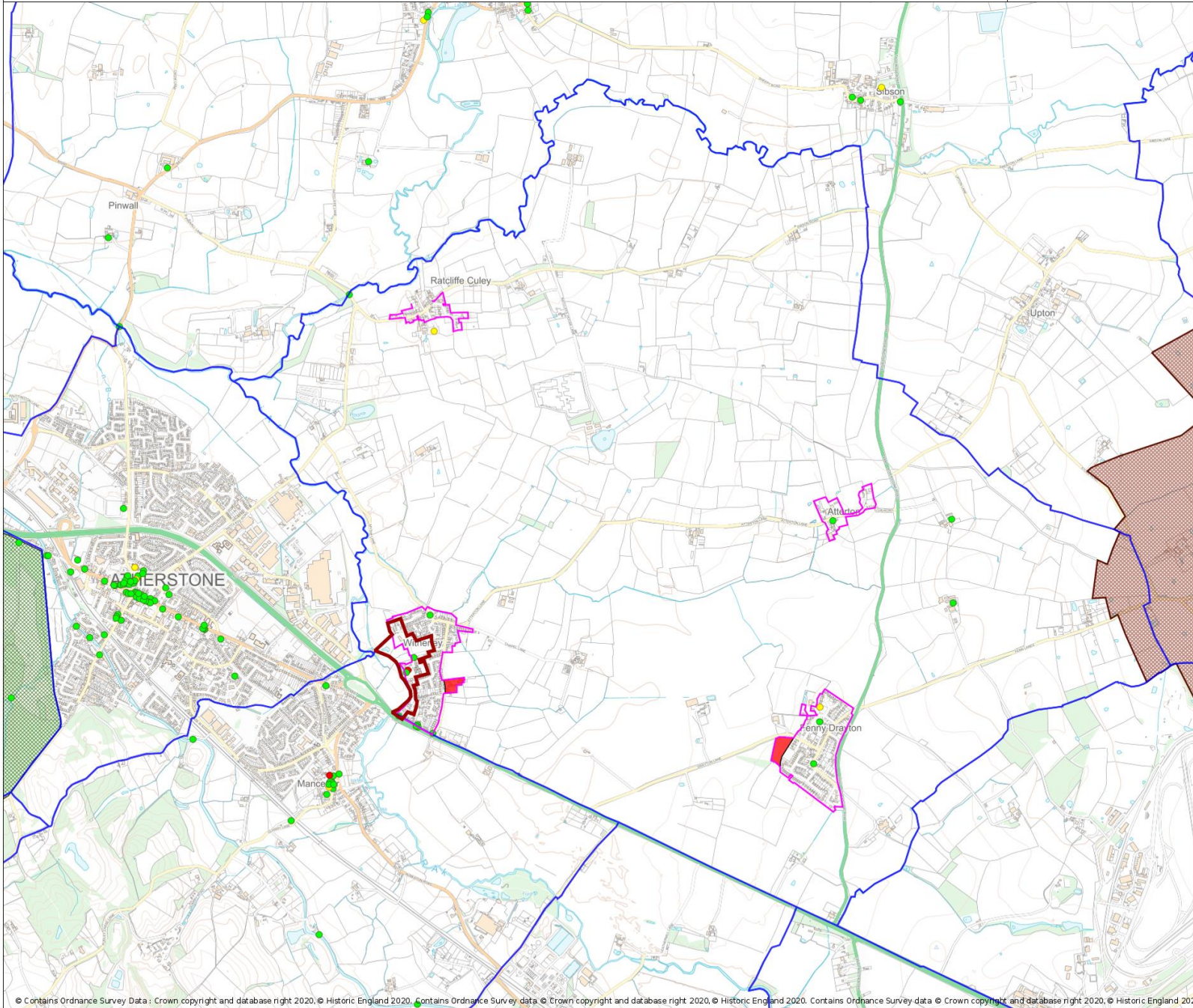
Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

National Parks

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)

Special Areas of Conservation (SAC)

Special Protection Areas



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Moated site north west of Pinwall

- 2.61 The moated grange site at Pinwall survives well and has important connections with Merevale Abbey in Warwickshire. It is considered that the moat island contains the foundations of monastic grange buildings.

- 2.62 Distance from Neighbourhood Area – 1.7km from the parish boundary

Barn at Newhouse Grange

- 2.63 Distance from Neighbourhood Area – 2.2km from the parish boundary

Hartshill Castle

- 2.64 The monument is situated within the village of Hartshill between the Green and the parish church of the Holy Trinity and west of Castle Road. It includes the standing and buried remains of Hartshill Castle, the site of a post-medieval house constructed within an earlier enclosure castle and parts of an associated water management system.

- 2.65 Distance from Neighbourhood Area – 2.4km from the parish boundary

Oldbury Camp Univallate Hill Fort

- 2.66 Oldbury Camp represents the only known example of a slight univallate hillfort in this part of Warwickshire. The monument is situated to the north east of Oldbury Grange and includes the earthworks and buried remains of part of Oldbury Camp, a univallate hillfort. The hillfort utilises a prominent ridge which rises to the west of the village of Hartshill and occupies an area of some 2.8ha.

- 2.67 Distance from Neighbourhood Area – 2.5km from the parish boundary

Hlaew and medieval farmstead immediately south west of Park House

- 2.68 The monument at Stoke Golding represents a well preserved example of a complete manorial site with a house platform, associated fishponds, and closes, located within a defined enclosure. The Anglo-Saxon burial mound in the northern part of the site is a rare example of this type of monument in this area.

- 2.69 Distance from Neighbourhood Area – 2.5km from the parish boundary.

Merevale Abbey, a Cistercian monastery, associated water control features and industrial remains

- 2.70 Merevale Abbey is a well documented example of a Cistercian monastery founded in the mid 12th century. Antiquarian excavation and a more recent archaeological watching brief have provided evidence for the quality of the surviving remains of the church and the conventual buildings, though a great deal remains to be discovered. The site not only retains several visible fragments of major monastic buildings but also earthwork and buried remains which illustrate the development of the monastery and will preserve rich evidence for the changing lifestyle of the monks.

2.71 Distance from Neighbourhood Area – 2.7k from the parish boundary.

The Benedictine priory and precinct of St Mary, Nuneaton

2.72 St Mary's Priory, Nuneaton was one of only four Benedictine nunneries in England identified as belonging to the important Abbey of Fontevrault. The preservation of the ground plan indicates that this was a high status institution supporting a sizeable religious population in the medieval period. It is also one of the few surviving nunneries with a church and outer precinct complex which is preserved in a fully urban context.

2.73 Distance from Neighbourhood Area – 3.6km from the parish boundary.

Moated site and fishponds NNW of St James' Church

2.74 The moat and fishponds at Twycross survive well. The earthworks are well defined and the monument is of high archaeological potential due both to the lack of disturbance and to waterlogging in part of the moat and one of the ponds providing conditions favourable to the preservation of organic remains.

2.75 Distance from Neighbourhood Area – 4km from the parish boundary.

Ambion deserted medieval village

2.76 The monument is located on Ambion Hill and the ground which slopes down to woodland on the south side. It is adjacent to the site of the battle of Bosworth and includes earthwork remains of the site of a deserted medieval village.

2.77 Distance from Neighbourhood Area – 4.8km from the parish boundary.

Other key environmental assets

2.78 Other designated environmental assets located within the Neighbourhood Area (i.e. those which are not defined as 'sensitive areas' as defined by the Planning Practice Guidance) include as follows:

Historic Park and Gardens

2.79 There are no Historic Parks or Gardens in Witherley Parish. The closest is Merevale Hall, a Grade II* Historic Park and Garden, 1.6km west of the Neighbourhood Area.

Battle of Bosworth (Field) 1485

2.80 The western edge of the Battle of Bosworth (Field) 1485 registered battlefield site is located within the most eastern part of Neighbourhood Area. It is registered due to its historical importance, topographic integrity, archaeological potential, and technological significance.

Conservation Areas

- 2.81 Witherley Conservation Area is present within the Neighbourhood Area. It was designated by the Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council in October 1993 and reflects the historic core of the village. It extends mainly along the River Anker and is of particular visual merit with many fine vernacular buildings. However, some of these buildings have been compromised by modern uncharacteristic development.
- 2.82 The village of Witherley is located in the shallow valley of the River Anker and the surrounding countryside is comparatively flat. It is well provided with trees, particularly in the conservation area itself. Most distance views of the villages are screened by trees with only the church spire visible due to the flat terrain.

Listed buildings

- 2.83 There are fourteen buildings and structures in Witherley Parish listed by Historic England for their special architectural or historic interest.
- 2.84 The Grade II* Listed Church of All Saints is located in Ratcliffe Culey. In Atterton there are two Listed Buildings, the Grade II Hall Farm House and the Grade II Lodge Farmhouse.
- 2.85 The Grade II* Church of St Michael and the Grade II the Firs and Grade II George Fox Monument are situated in Fenny Drayton.
- 2.86 There a total of 8 Listed Buildings in Witherley including the Grade I Listed St Peters Church and the Grade II Listed Blue Lion Pub.

3. Legislative Background

- 3.1 The basis for Strategic Environmental Assessments and Sustainability Appraisal legislation is European Directive 2001/42/EC which was transposed into English law by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, or SEA Regulations. Detailed Guidance of these regulations can be found in the Government publication 'A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive' (ODPM 2005).
- 3.2 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 or a European offshore marine site. Paragraphs 2 to 5 of the Schedule amend the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 so as to apply its provisions to neighbourhood development orders and neighbourhood plans. In particular, paragraph 4 inserts new regulation 78A which provides that a neighbourhood development order may not grant planning permission for development which is likely to have a significant effect on a European site or a European offshore marine site.
- 3.3 Schedule 3 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 makes provision in relation to the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Directive. The Directive requires that EIA development must be subject to a development consent process. To enable this, Schedule 3 prescribes a basic condition that applies where development which is the subject of a proposal for a neighbourhood development order is of a type caught by the EIA Directive, and applies the relevant provisions of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011(3) ("the EIA Regulations") with appropriate modifications (regulation 33 and paragraphs 1 to 4 and 6 of Schedule 3). Paragraphs 5 and 7 to 13 of Schedule 3 correct errors in the EIA Regulations.
- 3.4 It may be appropriate, and in some cases a requirement, that the statutory environmental bodies of Historic England, the Environment Agency and Natural England be consulted, for example, a draft neighbourhood plan proposal must be assessed to determine whether it is likely to have significant environmental effects.
- 3.5 There is no legal requirement for a neighbourhood plan to have a sustainability appraisal as set out in section 19 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. However, a qualifying body must

demonstrate how its plan or order will contribute to achieving sustainable development.

- 3.6 This report focuses on screening for SEA and the criteria for establishing whether a full assessment is needed considering the Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment undertaken for the Hinckley and Bosworth Core Strategy 2006-2026 in 2010 and the Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment for the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies 2006-2026 in 2014 and 2016.

4. Criteria for Assessing the Effects of Neighbourhood Plans (the 'plan')

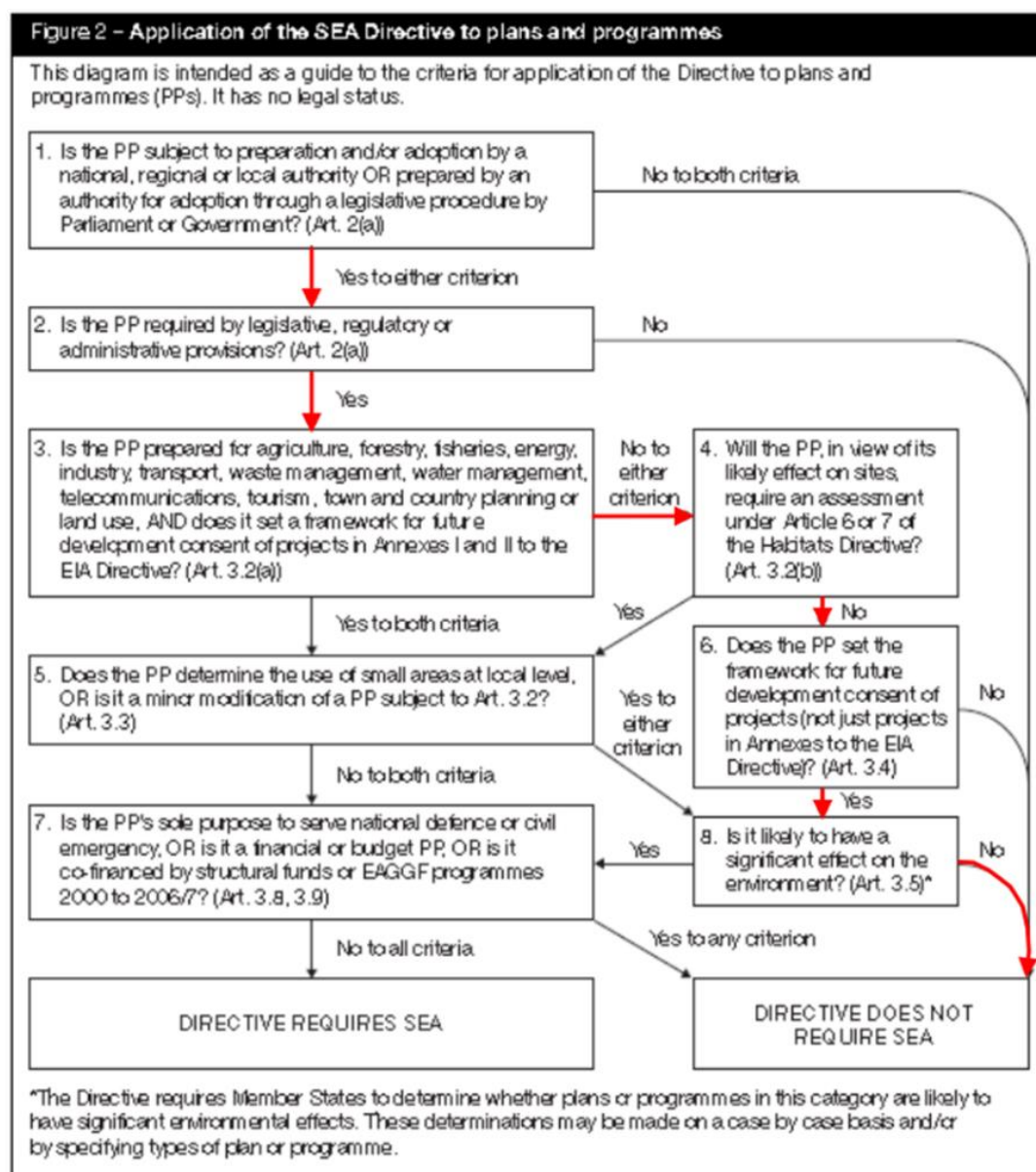
4.1 Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects referred to in Article 3(5) of Directive 2001/42/EC are set out below:

1. The characteristics of neighbourhood plans ("plan"), 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 water protection).
2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to - the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects, - the cumulative nature of the effects, - the trans boundary nature of the effects, - the risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents), - the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected), - the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to: - special natural characteristics or cultural heritage, - exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values, - intensive land-use, - the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.

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

5. Assessment

- 5.1 This diagram shows the Directive's field of application in the form of a diagram. The original diagram is from 'A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Objective'. The red arrows indicate the process route for the Witherley Neighbourhood Plan SEA Screening Assessment.
- 5.2 The table below shows the assessment of whether the Witherley Neighbourhood Plan will require a full SEA. The questions below are drawn from the diagram above which sets out how the SEA Directive should be applied.



| Stage | Yes/No | Reason |
|--|------------|--|
| 1. Is the Neighbourhood Plan subject to preparation and/or adoption by a national, regional or local authority OR prepared by an authority for adoption through a legislative procedure by Parliament or Government? (Art. 2(a)) | Yes | The preparation of and adoption of the Witherley Neighbourhood Plan is allowed under The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Localism Act 2011. The Witherley Neighbourhood Plan will be prepared by Witherley Parish Council (as the 'relevant body') and will be 'made' by Hinckley and Bosworth Council as the local authority. The preparation of neighbourhood plans is subject to the following regulations: The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 and The Neighbourhood Planning (referendums) Regulations 2012. |
| 2. Is the Neighbourhood Plan required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions? (Art. 2(a)) | Yes | Whilst the Witherley Neighbourhood Plan is not a requirement and is optional under the provisions of The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Localism Act 2011, it will if 'made', form part of the Development Plan for the Parish. It is therefore important that the screening process considers whether it is likely to have significant environmental effects and hence whether SEA is required under the Directive. |
| 3. Is the Neighbourhood Plan prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism, town and country planning or land use, AND does it set a framework for future development consent of projects in Annexes I and II (see Appendix 2) to the EIA Directive? (Art 3.2(a)) | No | Whilst the Witherley Neighbourhood Plan covers a range of land use issues and allocations, it does not set the framework for future development consent of projects in Annexes I and II to the EIA Directive (see Appendix 2 for list). Instead, the Witherley Neighbourhood Plan is a non-strategic scale document, focused solely upon the Parish of Witherley. |

| Stage | Yes/No | Reason |
|---|-----------|--|
| 4. Will the Neighbourhood Plan, in view of its likely effect on sites, require an assessment for future development under Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive? (Art. 3.2 (b)) | No | <p>The Witherley Neighbourhood Plan is unlikely to have a substantial effect on the Natura 2000 network of protected sites.</p> <p>The two nearest SACs are Ensors Pool to the south of the Parish and the River Mease Catchment to the north of the Parish. The Ensors Pool are located 5.3km away from Witherley Neighbourhood Area and the River Mease Catchment is 9km from the Neighbourhood Area.</p> <p>The Hinckley and Bosworth Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report 2017 confirms there is no physical connection between the Borough and The Ensor's Pool SAC. From this we consider that activities within the Borough – and indeed the Witherley Neighbourhood Area – would not have implications for this site.</p> <p>Part of the River Mease (not the part defined as a European site (SAC)) passes through the Borough coming in from Snarestone over the border of Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council, flowing shortly after towards Sweptstone. In addition, three tributaries of the river flow down towards and through Norton juxta Twycross, ending to the east, west and north of Norton juxta Twycross. As a result, given the physical connection to the River Mease SAC, provided by its flow through the Borough and via these tributaries, it might be conceivable that some areas of the Borough could have an impact on this site despite the actual designation being outside the Borough.</p> <p>However, no part of the River Mease or its tributaries as described above flow through the Witherley Neighbourhood Area. The tributaries</p> |

| Stage | Yes/No | Reason |
|--|------------|---|
| | | as described above are located over 6km kilometres away from the closest part of the Wetherley Neighbourhood Area boundary. In view of this as well as considering the scope of proposals within the draft Wetherley Neighbourhood Plan, the Borough Council considers that further stages in the HRA process are not required (including further screening, or Appropriate Assessment) and that the Wetherley Neighbourhood Plan is not considered to have any impact on the Natura 2000 network of protected sites. |
| 5. Does the Neighbourhood Plan determine the use of small areas at local level, OR is it a minor modification of a PP subject to Art. 3.2? (Art. 3.3) | Yes | Determination of small sites at local level only. |
| 6. Does the Neighbourhood Plan set the framework for future development consent of projects (not just projects in annexes to the EIA Directive)? (Art 3.4) | Yes | The Wetherley Neighbourhood Plan is to be used for determining future planning applications |
| 7. Is the Neighbourhood Plan's sole purpose to serve the national defence or civil emergency, OR is it a financial or budget PP, OR is it co-financed by structural funds or EAFR programmes 2000 to 2006/7? (Art 3.8, 3.9) | No | No further comments |
| 8. Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment? (Art. 3.5) | No | Appendix 1 presents the environmental effects which have the potential to arise as a result of the Wetherley Neighbourhood Plan. |

6. Summary of screening determination

- 6.1 This determination has considered whether the Witherley Neighbourhood Plan is likely to lead to significant environmental effects as defined by Directive 2001/42/EC, the 'SEA Directive' and the transposing regulations. In particular, the review has considered several sensitive areas located in the vicinity of the Neighbourhood Area and the potential environmental effects on these areas that may arise as a result of the Witherley Neighbourhood Plan.
- 6.2 Environmental effects have the potential to take place as a result of the Witherley Neighbourhood Plan, including in relation to the majority of the SEA 'topics'. This SEA screening opinion provides the necessary analysis relating to the potential for negative effects on the nearby SAC, SSSIs, Scheduled Monuments, Conservation Area, Battlefield and Listed Buildings. With respect to these designations it is considered that these are unlikely to be significant in the context of the SEA Directive. The significance of potential effects will be limited by key aims of the Witherley Neighbourhood Plan and these are in turn reflected by the policy approaches proposed by the latest version of the plan.
- 6.3 It is therefore recommended that the Witherley Neighbourhood Plan should not be subject to a full SEA.

Habitats Regulation Assessment

- 6.4 It is the opinion of Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council that a full Habitats Regulations Appropriate Assessment of the current Witherley Neighbourhood Plan is not required, as it is unlikely to have a significant effect on any designated sites.

Conclusion

- 6.5 **This screening opinion has been prepared to fulfil the statutory SEA requirements, as set out in the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.**
- 6.6 **The environmental consultation bodies Historic England, Natural England and the Environment Agency have been consulted during the preparation of this Screening Assessment. Their responses are summarised below:**
- **Historic England – Advice is confined to the question, “Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment?” in respect of our area of concern, cultural heritage. Our comments are based on the information supplied with the screening request. Historic England is of the view that the preparation of a Strategic**

Environmental Assessment is not likely to be required. The views of the other statutory consultation bodies should be taken into account before the overall decision on the need for a SEA is made.

- **Natural England – 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. Can confirm that it is considered unlikely that any significant environmental effects will result from the implementation of the Wetherley Neighbourhood Plan. Also agree with the report's conclusion that the Wetherley 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.**
- **Environment Agency – No comments received.**

6.7 For the above reasons, it is considered that the Wetherley Neighbourhood Plan is not subject to the requirements of Directive 2001/42/EC, the 'SEA Directive' and accompanying regulations.

7. Appendix 1: Assessment of potential environmental effects

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

| SEA Topic | Likely effect? Y/N | Description of effect | Effect likely to be significant in the context of SEA? |
|---|-----------------------|--|--|
| Biodiversity, flora and fauna (Including biodiversity habitats and species, biodiversity sites, areas of geological interest) | Y | Without mitigation and enhancement measures, the Witherley Neighbourhood Plan has the potential to lead to effects on biodiversity, including through loss of habitat, disturbance, effects on ecological connections and indirect effects such as from impacts on water quality and quantity. | <p>There are no Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) or Special Protection Areas (SPA) present within the Neighbourhood Area. As concluded in Section 5 of the above assessment, the Witherley Neighbourhood Plan would not have implications for The River Mease SAC or Ensors Pool SAC. As such the contents of the Witherley Neighbourhood Plan is not considered to have an impact on the Natura 2000 network of protected sites.</p> <p>In relation to biodiversity, there are no SSSIs present within the Neighbourhood Area. There are however a number of SSSIs within 5km of the Neighbourhood Area, the closest being Sheepy Fields (1.4km), Boons Quarry (1.9km) and Kendall's Meadow (2km).</p> <p>The Neighbourhood Plan Area does lie within the outer SSSI Impact Risk Zone Zones of a number of the nearby SSSIs. Certain development within the 'zones' require consultation with Natural England, depending on the specific zone that the proposal is located.</p> <p>Developments within these outer 'zones' that require consultation include airport, helipads and other aviation proposals, livestock and poultry units, general combustion processes and the discharge of certain</p> |

| SEA Topic | Likely effect? Y/N | Description of effect | Effect likely to be significant in the context of SEA? |
|--|-----------------------|---|---|
| | | | <p>levels of water per day. The Neighbourhood Plan does not propose development of this nature within these zones and therefore consultation with Natural England is not required with respect to these matters.</p> <p>It is recognised that the Neighbourhood Plan includes an overarching biodiversity policy that seeks to safeguard all significant habitats and species, and where possible create new habitats for wildlife. This policy seeks to reduce the likelihood of significant effects on these 'sensitive areas'.</p> <p>Due to the distance of the above identified SSSIs from the Neighbourhood Area, it is considered that effects on biodiversity are not deemed to be significant if the current policy approach proposed in the Witherley Neighbourhood Plan is taken forward.</p> |
| Population (Including residents' quality of life, accessibility to services and facilities, deprivation and similar) | Y | As indicated by the current policy approaches proposed for the Witherley Neighbourhood Plan, the Plan has the potential to have a range of benefits for the quality of life of residents and for accessibility to services, facilities and opportunities. | Whilst the benefits for residents of Witherley Parish from a well-designed neighbourhood plan have the potential to be wide-ranging, these are not deemed to be significant in the context of the SEA Directive. |

| SEA Topic | Likely effect? Y/N | Description of effect | Effect likely to be significant in the context of SEA? |
|--|-----------------------|---|---|
| | | <p>It seeks to prevent the loss of community services and facilities, as well as support the provision of new or improved community facilities. Improvements to the footpath network and cycleways, to facilitate connections to key village services, is also supported.</p> <p>The Witherley Neighbourhood Plan will also support the delivery of affordable housing for people with local connections and help deliver a range of housing to meet local need, including the provision of smaller unit dwellings and those suitable for older people.</p> | |
| Human Health (Incorporating residents' health and wellbeing) | Y | As indicated by the current policy approaches proposed for the Witherley | Whilst the health and wellbeing benefits for residents of the Neighbourhood Area from a well-designed neighbourhood plan have the potential to be wide- |

| SEA Topic | Likely effect? Y/N | Description of effect | Effect likely to be significant in the context of SEA? |
|-------------|-----------------------|---|---|
| | | <p>Neighbourhood Plan, the Plan has the potential to have a range of benefits for residents' health and wellbeing through promoting healthier lifestyles and supporting accessibility to services and facilities.</p> <p>Policies include those that support the enhancement and creation of footpaths and cycleways to access key village services, the protection of local green spaces and other important open spaces, the protection of residential amenity, opportunities for homeworking, and the protection, enhancement and the provision of new community facilities.</p> | ranging, these are not deemed to be significant in the context of the SEA Directive. |
| Soil | Y | It is uncertain whether proposed development | Due to the relatively limited area of land likely to be developed through the Witherley Neighbourhood Plan, |

| SEA Topic | Likely effect? Y/N | Description of effect | Effect likely to be significant in the context of SEA? |
|--|-----------------------|--|--|
| (Including agricultural land, soil erosion, soil quality) | | <p>areas will be sited on land classified as the Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land, as recent detailed agricultural land classification has not taken place.</p> <p>The Plan proposes to update the settlement boundary to take into account recent housing consents and the proposed housing allocations. Policy also seeks to limit development outside of the proposed Settlement Boundary.</p> | effects on the soils resource are unlikely to be significant . |
| Water (Including water quality and availability) | Y | The Witherley Neighbourhood Plan has the potential to lead to a very small-scale increase in water demand in the Neighbourhood Area through supporting the delivery of a new housing provision. | Potential effects on water availability will be limited by the relatively small-scale of proposals likely to be facilitated by the Witherley Neighbourhood Plan. Effects unlikely to be significant . |

| SEA Topic | Likely effect? Y/N | Description of effect | Effect likely to be significant in the context of SEA? |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|---|---|
| | | Policy seeks to improve flood risk resilience in the Neighbourhood Area and supports the implementation of sustainable drainage systems to minimise vulnerability to flooding and poor drainage. | |
| Air (Including air quality) | Y | Whilst new development in the Neighbourhood Area may lead to increased traffic flows and congestion, this is unlikely to lead to marked effects on air quality. In addition, the Witherley Neighbourhood Plan includes policy which seeks to minimise additional traffic generation and movement through the village, facilitates the use of electric vehicles and supports the | No existing air quality issues exist in the Neighbourhood Area and there are no Air Quality Management Areas within the Neighbourhood Area. Any effects on air quality are not deemed to be significant in the context of the SEA Directive. |

| SEA Topic | Likely effect? Y/N | Description of effect | Effect likely to be significant in the context of SEA? |
|---|-----------------------|---|---|
| | | creation of footpaths and cycleways, which may help limit adverse impacts on air quality. | |
| 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)) | Y | <p>In terms of climate change mitigation, the Witherley Neighbourhood Plan actively seeks to locate new housing development within or adjacent to the proposed settlement boundary where local services and facilities are located. This will help limit potential increases in greenhouse gas emissions.</p> <p>Policy encourages the incorporation of Sustainable Drainage Systems which will help meet the challenges of climate change and supports flood resilience.</p> | <p>Due to the small scale, local scope of the Witherley Neighbourhood Plan, the nature and magnitude of effects directly arising as a result of the Witherley Neighbourhood Plan are unlikely to be significant in the context of the SEA Directive.</p> |

| SEA Topic | Likely effect? Y/N | Description of effect | Effect likely to be significant in the context of SEA? |
|--|-----------------------|---|---|
| | | The plan supports appropriate forms of renewable energy infrastructure and also seeks to facilitate the use of electric vehicles with opportunities for new development to accommodate charging points. | |
| Material Assets (Including minerals resources, waste considerations) | Y | <p>The Wetherley Neighbourhood Plan may lead to small increases in the Neighbourhood Area's waste management requirements through supporting the delivery of new housing.</p> <p>No mineral sites or resources, or waste sites are likely to be affected or undermined as a result of the Wetherley Neighbourhood Plan.</p> | Potential increases in waste as a direct result of the Wetherley Neighbourhood Plan will be managed through statutory requirements regarding waste management. Due to their limited magnitude, effects are therefore unlikely to be significant in the context of the SEA Directive. |
| Cultural Heritage | Y | Development undertaken in accordance with the | There are three scheduled monuments within the Neighbourhood Area. One is the moat and fishponds at Ratcliffe Culey. No housing allocations are located |

| SEA Topic | Likely effect? Y/N | Description of effect | Effect likely to be significant in the context of SEA? |
|--|-----------------------|--|---|
| (Including historic environment, cultural heritage, historic settings) | | policies of the Witherley Neighbourhood Plan has the potential to have effects on the fabric and setting of historic environment assets. | <p>within close proximity to this monument. The monument is located outside of the settlement boundary of Ratcliffe Culey, where any new development would be limited.</p> <p>The other is the Manduessedum Roman Villa, part of which is located within the Neighbourhood Area. This monument is outside but abuts the settlement boundary of Witherley. Development in this location would be limited. The Neighbourhood Plan proposes a housing allocation to the north of this scheduled monument. Given the distance between this monument and proposed housing allocation and that the monument is not contained within the defined settlement boundaries, it is unlikely to be directly affected by the policies of the Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>Th other is the bowl barrow at Fenny Drayton but given is separation and distance from the settlement boundary at Fenny Drayton as well as the proposed housing allocation, it is unlikely to be directly affected by the policies of the Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>There is a Conservation Area within the settlement of Witherley. No housing allocations are proposed within the Conservation Area.</p> <p>The edge of the Battle of Bosworth (Field) encroaches into the most eastern part of the Neighbourhood Area. It is located in countryside and given its relative distance</p> |

| SEA Topic | Likely effect? Y/N | Description of effect | Effect likely to be significant in the context of SEA? |
|---|-----------------------|---|--|
| | | | <p>from the parish villages and their defined settlement boundaries and proposed allocations, the battlefield is unlikely to be directly affected by the policies of the Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>There are a number of Listed Buildings within the village of Wetherley and Fenny Drayton. They are located a minimum of 185m from the two housing allocations, and therefore there is unlikely to be an adverse impact on these heritage features. There is also the statutory protection of conservation areas and listed buildings that will run alongside any local plan policy.</p> <p>Therefore, effects are unlikely to be significant in the context of the SEA Directive.</p> |
| Landscape (Including landscape and townscape quality) | Y | Direct effects from the Wetherley Neighbourhood Plan on landscape and townscape character have the potential to take place. | <p>In terms of landscape quality, no 'sensitive areas' as defined by the NPPG are present in the Neighbourhood Area.</p> <p>Overall the Wetherley Neighbourhood Plan's focus on protecting and enhancing the landscape/townscape of the Neighbourhood Area and protecting key features of importance for the historic environment will deliver positive effects on landscape and townscape quality and facilitate enhancements.</p> <p>Therefore, potential effects on landscape character and townscape quality are unlikely to be significant in the context of the SEA Directive.</p> |

Appendix 2: Annex I and Annex II Projects, EIA Directive

Annex I Projects, EIA Directive

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

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

Annex II Projects, EIA Directive

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

1. Agriculture, silviculture* and aquaculture restructuring of rural land holdings; use of uncultivated land or seminatural areas for intensive agriculture; water management projects for agriculture; initial afforestation* and deforestation* for the purpose of conversion to a different land use; intensive livestock installations (projects not included in Annex I); intensive fish farming; reclamation of land from the sea.
2. Extractive industry Quarries, open-cast mining, peat extraction (projects not included in Annex I); underground mining; dredging; deep drilling; surface installations for coal, gas, ore and shale extraction.
3. Energy industry Installations for production of electricity, steam and hot water and for carrying gas, steam and hot water, and transmission of electricity by overhead cables* (projects not included in Annex I); surface storage of natural gas and fossil fuels; underground storage of combustible gases; briquetting of coal and lignite; installations for processing and storage of radioactive waste (unless included in Annex I); hydroelectric and wind power installations.
4. Production and processing of metals Installations for the production of pig iron or steel; processing of ferrous metals; ferrous metal foundries; installations for smelting metals and surface treatment of metals and plastic materials; assembly and manufacture of motor vehicles and motor-vehicle engines; shipyards; installations for construction and repair of aircraft; manufacture of railway equipment; swaging by explosives; and installations for the roasting and sintering of metallic ores.
5. Metal industry Coke ovens; installations for the manufacture of glass, cement, asbestos and asbestos products (projects not covered by Annex I); smelting mineral substances; manufacture of ceramic products by burning.
6. Chemical industry (projects not included in Annex I) Treatment of intermediate products and production of chemicals; production of pesticides, pharmaceuticals, paint, varnishes, elastomers and peroxides; storage facilities for petroleum, petrochemical products and chemical products.
7. Food industry Manufacture of oils, fats, dairy products, confectionery, syrup, industrial starch; packing and canning; brewing and malting; sugar, fish-meal and fish-oil factories; and installations for the slaughter of animals.
8. Textile, leather, wood and paper industries Industrial plants for paper and board production (projects not included in Annex I); pre-treatment plants; tanning plants; cellulose-processing and production installations.
9. Rubber industry Manufacture and treatment of elastomer-based products.
10. Infrastructure projects (not included in Annex I) Industrial estates; urban development projects (including shopping centres and car parks); railways and transshipment facilities; airfields, roads, harbours, ports, inland-waterways; dams and water storage facilities; tramways, elevated and underground passenger railways etc.; oil and gas pipe-lines; long-distance aqueducts; coastal and sea defence works; groundwater abstraction and artificial groundwater recharge schemes; water transfer schemes between river basins; motorway service areas.

11. Other projects Permanent motor racing and test tracks; waste disposal projects and waste water treatment plants (projects not included in Annex I); sludge disposal sites; storage of scrap iron (including scrap vehicles); test benches for engines etc.; installations for the manufacture of artificial mineral fibres and the recovery or destruction of explosives; knackers' yards.
12. Tourism and leisure Ski-runs, ski-lifts, cable cars etc.; marinas; holiday villages and hotel complexes outside urban areas; permanent camp sites and caravan sites; theme parks and golf courses.
13. Any change or extension of projects listed in Annex I or Annex II, already authorised, executed or in the process of being executed, which may have adverse environmental effects Projects in Annex I, undertaken exclusively or mainly for the development and testing of new methods or products and not used for more than two years.

Note Some of the types of projects listed above are covered by Annex II and the Regulations only if they meet certain threshold levels or other criteria. * A project which is included in Annex II of the Directive but excluded from Schedule 2 of the Regulations (SI 1999/293).

Appendix 3: Responses from the Environmental Consultation Bodies



Ms Alison Gibson
Planit-X Town and Country Planning Services
Ltd
21 New Road
Burton Lazars
Melton Mowbray
Leicestershire
LE14 2UU

Our ref: PL00715722

13 October 2020

Dear Ms Gibson

WITHERLEY NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN - SEA SCREENING REQUEST

Thank you for your consultation of 14 September 2020 and the request for a Screening Opinion in respect of the Witherley Neighbourhood Plan.

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

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

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

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

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

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



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



Historic England

Yours sincerely,

C. Fletcher

Clive Fletcher
Principal Adviser, Historic Places



Date: 23 October 2020
Our ref: 327814
Your ref: none

Alison Gibson MRTPI
Planit-X Town and Country Planning Services Ltd

[REDACTED]

BY EMAIL ONLY



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Dear Alison

Planning consultation: Witherley Neighbourhood Plan- SEA Screening Report

Thank you for your consultation on the above document dated 14 September 2020 which was received by Natural England on 15 September 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 welcomes the Screening Report which assesses the requirement for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) for the Witherley Neighbourhood Plan- .

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

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

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

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

Yours sincerely

SANDRA CLOSE
Planning Adviser

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