



Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening Statement

Halesworth

Neighbourhood Plan 2021-2036

Pre-Submission (Regulation 14) Consultation Version

November 2021

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1. Introduction

1.1 The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017) (as amended) provide protection for sites that are of exceptional importance in respect of rare, endangered or vulnerable natural habitats and species. The network consists of Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs). The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) also states that Ramsar sites should be afforded the same level of protection and refers to SACs, SPAs and Ramsar sites as ‘Habitat Sites’.

1.2 The requirement to undertake Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) of development plans is set out in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017) (as amended through EU Exit legislation). It is also a requirement of Regulation 32 schedule 2 of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012 (as amended). In order to proceed to referendum a Neighbourhood Plan must meet a series of ‘basic conditions’, which include that it does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations.

1.3 Regulation 105 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017) (as amended through EU Exit legislation) states:

‘Where a land use plan:

(a) Is likely to have a significant effect on a European site or a European offshore marine site (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects), and

(b) Is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site,

The plan-making authority for that plan must, before the plan is given effect, make an appropriate assessment of the implications for the site in view of that site’s conservation objectives.’

1.4 The HRA is therefore undertaken in stages and should conclude whether or not a proposal or policy in the Plan would adversely affect the integrity of any sites.

Stage 1: Determining whether a plan is likely to have a significant effect on a European site. This needs to take account of the likely impacts in combination with other relevant plans and projects. This assessment should be made using the precautionary principle. The screening assessment must reflect the outcomes of the 2018 judgement of the Court of Justice of the European Union¹, which has ruled that where

¹ C-323/17 – People over Wind, Peter Sweetman v Coillte Teoranta

mitigation is necessary this must be identified through an Appropriate Assessment.

Stage 2: Carrying out Appropriate Assessment and ascertaining the effect on site integrity. The effects of the plan on the conservation objectives of sites should be assessed, to ascertain whether the plan has an adverse effect on the integrity of a European site.

Stage 3: Identifying mitigation measures and alternative solutions. The aim of this stage is to find ways of avoiding or significantly reducing adverse impacts, so that site integrity is no longer at risk. If there are still likely to be negative impacts, the option should be dropped, unless exceptionally it can be justified by imperative reasons of overriding public interest.

- 1.5 The Halesworth Neighbourhood Plan is being produced by Halesworth Town Council. The 'Halesworth Neighbourhood Plan Pre-Submission (Regulation 14) Consultation Version' (referred to as the neighbourhood plan for the purposes of this document) has been sent to East Suffolk Council and this screening assessment considers whether there are likely significant effects (LSEs) on protected Habitat sites and whether a full Appropriate Assessment will be required.
- 1.6 The Halesworth Neighbourhood Plan will need to be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan. The adopted Local Plan is currently the East Suffolk Council Waveney Local Plan (2019) (referred to as the Local Plan for the purposes of this document). The Halesworth Neighbourhood Plan has been developed within the context of the Local Plan.
- 1.7 The Local Plan was subject to Habitats Regulations Assessment as part of its production (see appendix 1). Where screening identified a likely significant effect, an Appropriate Assessment was undertaken and mitigation measures identified were incorporated within the Local Plan, resulting in a conclusion that the local plan will not lead to any adverse effects on Habitat sites within and in the vicinity of the (then) Waveney District. Significant effects were identified in relation to recreation (including dog walking), air quality and biodiversity net gain. The Council has subsequently undertaken to produce a Recreational Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy and requires payment towards mitigation from residential developments within 13km of the protected Habitat sites.
- 1.8 This screening report contains the results of Stage 1 (above) in relation to the Halesworth Neighbourhood Plan. Stages 2 and 3 are only required if the screening

stage concludes that there is likely to be a significant impact on a Habitat site. The initial screening has been undertaken by East Suffolk Council and is subject to consultation with Natural England as a statutory consultee.

2. Protected sites covered by this screening report

- 2.1 Sites included in this assessment are listed in Table 1 below. This includes all sites that are within 20km of the Halesworth Neighbourhood Plan area (for consistency with the distances applied within the HRA of the Local Plan and adopting the precautionary approach). The locations of the sites are shown on maps in Appendix 2 and the Qualifying Features and Conservation Objectives of the sites are contained in Appendix 3, along with a summary of the pressures and threats as documented in the Appropriate Assessment for the Local Plan.

Table 1: Relevant Habitat sites

Name
Alde-Ore & Butley Estuaries SAC
The Broads SAC
Benacre to Easton Bavents Lagoons SAC
Minsmere to Walberswick Heaths and Marshes SAC
Dews Ponds SAC
Southern North Sea SAC
Alde-Ore Estuary SPA
Benacre to Easton Bavents SPA
Broadland SPA
Outer Thames Estuary SPA
Minsmere-Walberswick SPA
Sandlings SPA
Alde-Ore Estuary Ramsar
Broadland Ramsar
Minsmere-Walberswick Ramsar

3. Halesworth Neighbourhood Plan

- 3.1 Halesworth Town Council is producing a Neighbourhood Plan for Halesworth, in order to set out the vision, objectives and policies for the development of the parish up to 2036, within the context of the Local Plan. This Habitats Regulations Assessment screening assessment reviews ‘Halesworth Neighbourhood Plan Pre-Submission (Regulation 14) Consultation Version’.

3.2 The Neighbourhood Plan includes a range of policies covering the Halesworth Neighbourhood Plan area. A number of polices relate to the full Neighbourhood Plan area whilst others are area/location specific. The Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate specific sites for development. It does place policy requirements for development on specified sites but these sites are within the settlement boundaries for Halesworth defined by the local plan.

3.3 The policies in the Halesworth Neighbourhood Plan are listed in Table 2 below. An assessment of whether each policy is likely to have a significant effect on Habitat sites is included in section 5 of this report.

Table 2: List of Neighbourhood Plan policies

HAL.ENV1	Local green spaces
HAL.ENV2	Protection of open spaces
HAL.ENV3	New nature reserve
HAL.ENV4	Verges
HAL.ENV5	Heritage trees
HAL.HSG1	Provision of large family housing
HAL.HSG2	Small housing sites
HAL.HSG3	Low energy and energy efficient housing design
HAL.ED1	Small-scale commercial workspaces and micro employment areas
HAL.ED2	Tourism and creative industries
HAL.ED3	Major development opportunities
HAL.COM1	Play facilities
HAL.DH1	Design
HAL.DH2	Views and gateways into and out of Halesworth town
HAL.DH3	Non-designated heritage assets
HAL.TM1	Key movement routes
HAL.TM2	Cycle parking
HAL.TM3	Residential electric car charging
HAL.TC1	Enhancing Halesworth town centre

4. Other Plans and Projects

4.1 Regulation 105 of the 2017 Regulations requires consideration to be given to whether a Plan will have an effect either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.

- 4.2 As noted in the introduction, the other key plan is the Local Plan. The Local Plan was adopted in March 2019. The Local Plan sets out the broad scale and distribution of development across the area of East Suffolk formerly covered by the Waveney District and has been subject to an Appropriate Assessment.
- 4.3 Local plan policy WLP1.1 states that 8% of housing growth (approx. 762 dwellings) will take place in Halesworth together with Holton. The draft Halesworth neighbourhood plan policies interpret the strategy and policies of the local plan at a local level. The policies contained in the draft Halesworth neighbourhood plan are proposed to provide locally specific policy for the determination of planning applications in compliance with the local plan's strategy. It does not propose any additional site allocations.
- 4.4 A screening process considered each policy in the Local Plan and concluded that significant effects were likely and that an Appropriate Assessment was needed. The Appropriate Assessment subsequently considered the following themes - recreation pressure from new residential development, air quality from increased road traffic and biodiversity net gain. Mitigation measures were identified within the Appropriate Assessment and were incorporated within the Local Plan, resulting in a conclusion that the plan will not lead to any adverse effects on Habitat sites within and in the vicinity of the (then) Waveney District.
- 4.5 The Council has subsequently produced a Recreational Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy² and requires payment towards mitigation of significant effects from residential developments within 13km of the protected Habitat sites.

5. Assessment of likely significant effects of the Halesworth Neighbourhood Plan on Habitat sites

- 5.1 Table 3 below considers each policy of the Halesworth Neighbourhood Plan in relation to whether there is potential for a likely significant effect on Habitat sites. This constitutes Stage 1 as set out under paragraph 1.4 above. Consideration is given to the characteristics and location of the protected sites. The policies are considered within the context of the Local Plan policies which they must be in general conformity with and which have themselves been subject to Habitats Regulations Assessment, as set out in section 4 above.

² <http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/s106/habitat-mitigation/>

Table 3: Likely significant effects of the Halesworth Neighbourhood Plan

Policy	Assessment of potential impact on Habitat sites	Habitat sites that could possibly be affected	Likely significant effect identified	AA needed?
HAL.ENV1: Local green spaces	This policy designates The Millennium Green and The Town Park as Local Green Spaces. This policy would increase the protection of these existing green spaces for recreational use. This policy has no direct impacts on Habitat sites and therefore no likely significant effects have been identified.	None	None	No
HAL.ENV2: Protection of open spaces	This policy designates areas at Princes Green, Aldergrove Close and Rectory Green as open spaces. This policy would increase the protection of these existing spaces for recreational use. This policy has no direct impacts on Habitat sites and therefore no likely significant effects have been identified.	None	None	No
HAL.ENV3: New nature reserve	This policy designates land to the south of the town as a nature reserve. This policy would create additional green space for recreational use. This may reduce the need for local inhabitants to travel and cause disturbance to other green spaces. This policy has no direct impacts on Habitat sites and therefore no likely significant effects have been identified.	None	None	No
HAL.ENV4: Verges	This policy seeks to retain and protect existing green verges and enhance their biodiversity. This policy has no direct impacts on Habitat sites and therefore no likely significant effects have been identified.	None	None	No
HAL.ENV5: Heritage trees	This policy designates trees shown on the associated map as heritage trees to be preserved and protected. This policy has no direct impacts on Habitat sites and therefore no likely significant effects have been identified.	None	None	No
HAL.HSG1: Provision of	The policy requires at least 15% of dwellings to be 4-bedroom properties	None	None	No

large family housing	in addition to the requirements of WLP8.1 (Housing Mix) in the Waveney Local Plan. This policy has no direct impacts on Habitat sites and therefore no likely significant effects have been identified.			
HAL.HSG2: Small housing sites	This policy does not allocate any sites for residential development. The policy requires proposals for 10 or less dwellings to demonstrate they meet objectives relating to affordable housing, employment, biodiversity and enhancing the conservation area. The policy only lists the objectives for small residential sites. This policy has no direct impacts on Habitat sites and therefore no likely significant effects have been identified.	None	None	No
HAL.HSG3: Low energy and energy efficient housing design	This policy does not allocate any sites for residential development. The policy requires proposals for 10 or less dwellings, or major renovation or enlargements of residential properties to be accompanied by a Sustainability Statement demonstrating how sustainable measure have been incorporated. The policy seeks measures to improve energy efficiency and waste management. Where feasible the policy supports the inclusion of ground/air source heat pumps, solar panels and grey/rainwater harvesting. This policy builds on Local Plan Policy WLP8.28: Sustainable Construction and the Habitats Regulations Assessment of the Local Plan identified no likely significant effects. This policy has no direct impacts on Habitat sites and therefore no likely significant effects have been identified.	None	None	No
HAL.ED1: Small-scale commercial workspaces and micro	The policy supports the provision of small-scale employment facilities and mixed-use developments that provide employment space. The policy designates the existing employment areas Miles Ward Court and Station	None	None	No

employment areas	Yard as Micro Employment Areas. The policy sets requirements for the change of use of existing employment spaces in designated Micro Employment Areas. This policy has no direct impacts on Habitat sites and therefore no likely significant effects have been identified.			
HAL.ED2: Tourism and creative industries	This policy does not allocate any sites for tourism and creative industry uses. The policy supports proposals to improve and enhance the tourism offer and creative industries sector. New proposals within the settlement boundary are encouraged and proposals on sites within approx. 0.5 miles of the Town Centre Boundary must demonstrate they have considered such uses. The development of any new tourism or creative industry uses will be limited to Halesworth Town. This policy has no direct impacts on Habitat sites and therefore no likely significant effects have been identified.	None	None	No
HAL.ED3: Major development opportunities	This policy does not allocate any sites for residential development. The policy supports major mixed-use developments within the settlement boundary. The policy lists some the uses that will be supported on such sites. The policy requires major sites within or adjacent to the Town Centre Boundary to provide public open space and pedestrian links to the Primary Shopping Area. The policy requires major mixed-use sites to ensure that the mix allows all uses to prosper. The policy supports high-quality design and requires it to preserve heritage assets and be sympathetic to surrounding listed buildings and the setting of the Conservation Areas.	None	None	No

	This policy has no direct impacts on Habitat sites and therefore no likely significant effects have been identified.			
HAL.COM1: Play facilities	This policy does not allocate any new sites for play areas. The policy supports proposals to expand and/or improved play areas in locations listed within the policy. The policy also supports the provision of a LEAP on land adjacent to Chediston Street if contributions are made to upgrade the facility at Swan Lane to a NEAP. Improvements would encourage locals to continuing using existing play spaces. This policy has no direct impacts on Habitat sites and therefore no likely significant effects have been identified.	None	None	No
HAL.DH1: Design	The policy requires proposals to demonstrate high quality design which respects the character of Halesworth as identified in the Halesworth Design Guide. The policy provides a list of design principles that should be considered and requires major residential developments to provide a statement and illustration demonstrating the principles and guidance have been addressed. This policy has no direct impacts on Habitat sites and therefore no likely significant effects have been identified.	None	None	No
HAL.DH2: Views and gateways into and out of Halesworth town	The policy requires development proposals to preserve views of St Mary's Church tower as shown on an associated map. The policy also requires development at the gateways to Halesworth in Chediston Street and Walpole Road to create a gradual transition from rural to urban settlement. This policy builds on Local Plan Policy WLP8.35: Landscape Character and the Habitats Regulations Assessment of the Local Plan identified no likely significant effects. This policy has no direct impacts on Habitat sites and therefore no likely significant effects have been identified.	None	None	No

<p>HAL.DH3: Non-designated heritage assets</p>	<p>The policy designates a list of buildings as non-designated heritage assets and provides the requirements for the re-use, loss or alteration of a non-designated heritage asset that should be considered. This policy has no direct impacts on Habitat sites and therefore no likely significant effects have been identified.</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>HAL.TM1: Key movement routes</p>	<p>The policy supports improved cycling and walking, requires where feasible that new development provides access to public transport and other facilities and identifies Key Movement Routes on associated maps. The policy encourages proposals to enhance Key Movement Routes and to not have an unacceptable impact on them. This policy would encourage and increase opportunities for sustainable travel within Halesworth. This policy has no direct impacts on Habitat sites and therefore no likely significant effects have been identified.</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>HAL.TM2: Cycle parking</p>	<p>The policy supports new bicycle parking in Halesworth and encourages commercial and tourist developments to maximise secure cycle parking. This policy builds on support for secure cycle parking in Local Plan Policy WLP8.21: Sustainable Transport and would encourage and increase opportunities for sustainable travel within Halesworth. This policy has no direct impacts on Habitat sites and therefore no likely significant effects have been identified.</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>HAL.TM3: Residential electric car charging</p>	<p>The policy requires residential properties with off-street parking to provide a least one charging point for electric vehicles. The policy also encourages properties of 3 or beds to provide more than one charging point. This policy builds on support for charging points in Local Plan Policy WLP8.21: Sustainable Transport and has no direct impacts on Habitat sites</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>None</p>	<p>No</p>

	and therefore no likely significant effects have been identified.			
HAL.TC1: Enhancing Halesworth town centre	The policy supports enhancing the quality and accessibility of the public realm in Halesworth Town Centre. The policy would support the continued use of the Town Centre and may encourage further footfall in the Halesworth. This policy has no direct impacts on Habitat sites and therefore no likely significant effects have been identified.	None	None	No

6. Summary and conclusions

- 6.1 The Halesworth Neighbourhood Plan will provide policies which will be used for determining planning applications alongside the Local Plan. It includes policies with locally specific criteria to be used for the determination of planning applications within the Halesworth Neighbourhood Plan area.
- 6.2 The Halesworth Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared to be in general conformity with the relevant policies in the Local Plan and will not lead to likely significant effects on Habitat sites.

Signed:

Dated: 22/02/2022



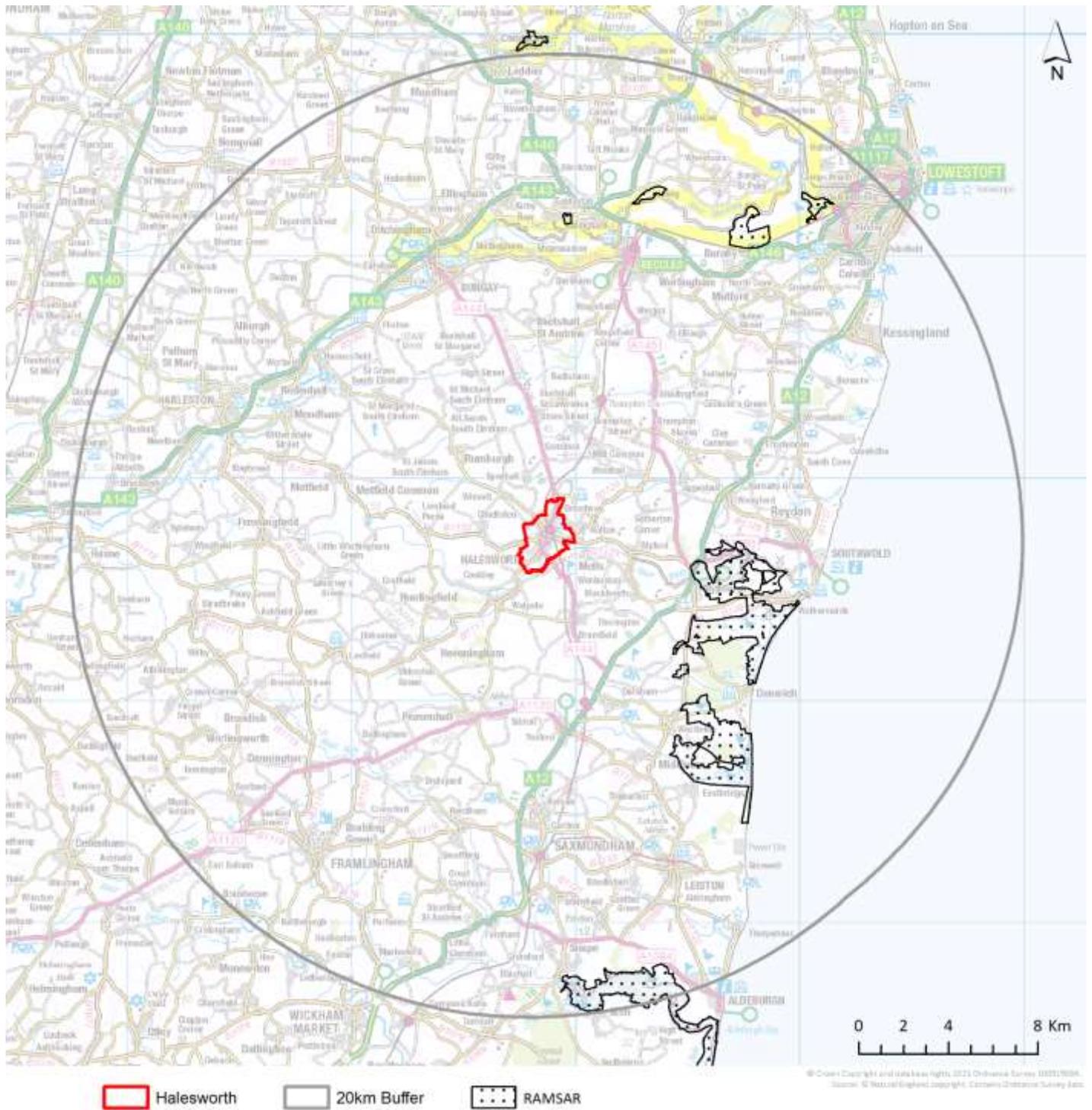
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Appendix 1: Sources of background information

- East Suffolk Council Waveney Local Plan adopted 20 March 2019
- Habitats Regulations Assessment of the Waveney Local Plan (December 2018)
- Habitats Regulations Assessment for the Waveney Local Plan (June 2018)
- Habitats Regulations Assessment of the Waveney Local Plan (superseded) for the Final Draft Plan (March 2018)
- Draft Habitats Regulations Screening Report for the First Draft Waveney Local Plan (July 2017)

Appendix 2: Locations of Habitat sites

RAMSAR Sites



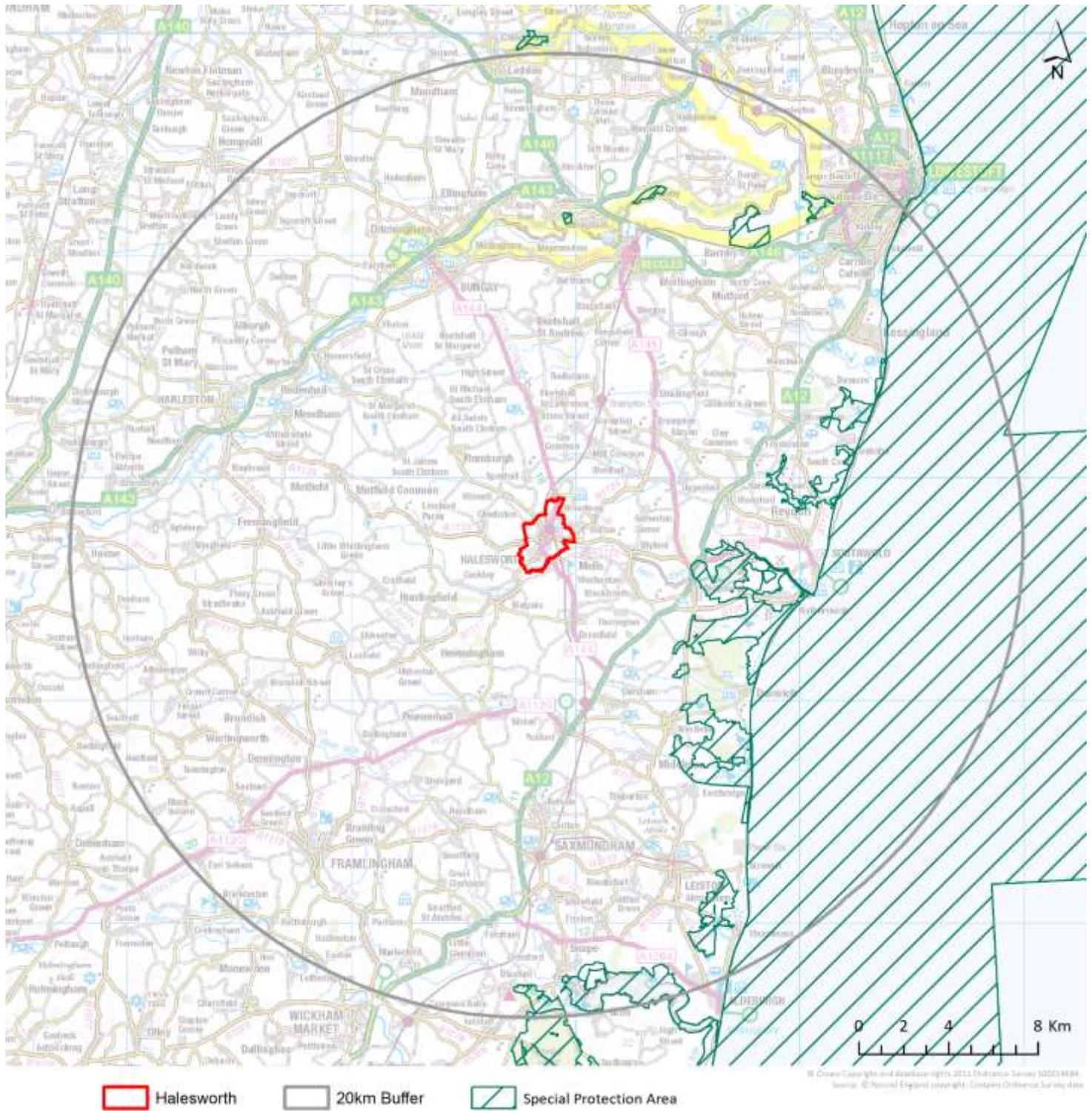
Special Areas of Conservation



 Halesworth  20km Buffer  Special Areas of Conservation

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Special Protection Areas



Appendix 3: Relevant Habitat sites

Name	Qualifying Features	Conservation Objectives	Pressure and threats (as summarised in the Habitats Regulations Assessment for the Waveney Local Plan)
Special Areas of Conservation			
Alde-Ore & Butley Estuaries	H1130. Estuaries H1140. Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide; Intertidal mudflats and sandflats H1330. Atlantic salt meadows (<i>Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritima</i>)	The objectives are to ensure that, subject to natural change, the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its qualifying features, by maintaining or restoring: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •the extent and distribution of qualifying natural habitats and habitats of the qualifying species •the structure and function (including typical species) of qualifying natural habitats •the structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying species •the supporting processes on which qualifying natural habitats and the habitats of qualifying species rely •the populations of each of the qualifying species 	Hydrological changes, public access/disturbance, inappropriate coastal management, coastal squeeze, inappropriate pest control, changes in species distributions, invasive species, air pollution, fisheries (commercial marine and estuarine)

Name	Qualifying Features	Conservation Objectives	Pressure and threats (as summarised in the Habitats Regulations Assessment for the Waveney Local Plan)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •the distribution of qualifying species within the site 	
The Broads	H7210# Calcareous fens with <i>Cladium mariscus</i> and species of the <i>Caricion davallianae</i> S1016 <i>Vertigo moulinsiana</i> : Desmoulin's whorl snail H7230 Alkaline fens H6410 <i>Molinia</i> meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (<i>Molinion caeruleae</i>) H91E0# Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (<i>Alno-Padion</i> , <i>Alnion incanae</i> , <i>Salicion albae</i>) H7140 Transition mires and quaking bogs H3140 Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of <i>Chara</i> spp H3150 Natural eutrophic lakes with <i>Magnopotamion</i> or <i>Hydrocharition</i> -type vegetation S1355 <i>Lutra lutra</i> : Otter S1903 <i>Liparis loeselii</i> : Fen orchid S4056 <i>Anisus vorticulus</i> : Little ramshorn whirlpool snail	Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring; The extent and distribution of qualifying natural habitats and habitats of qualifying species, The structure and function (including typical species) of qualifying natural habitats, The structure and function of the habitats of qualifying species, The supporting processes on which qualifying natural habitats and the habitats of qualifying species rely, The populations of qualifying species, and, The distribution of qualifying species within the site.	Water pollution, climate change, invasive species, siltation, inappropriate water levels, hydrological changes, water abstraction, change in land management, inappropriate ditch management, inappropriate scrub control, changes in species distributions, public access/disturbance, undergrazing, drainage, direct impact from 3rd party
Benacre to Easton	H1150# Coastal lagoons, A195(B) <i>Sterna albifrons</i> : Little tern	Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or	Public access/disturbance, water pollution,

Name	Qualifying Features	Conservation Objectives	Pressure and threats (as summarised in the Habitats Regulations Assessment for the Waveney Local Plan)
Bavents Lagoons	A021(B) Botaurus stellaris: Great bittern A081(B) Circus aeruginosus: Eurasian marsh harrier	restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring; The extent and distribution of qualifying natural habitats, The structure and function (including typical species) of qualifying natural habitats, and, The supporting processes on which qualifying natural habitats rely.	physical modification, changes in species distributions, fisheries (marine and estuarine).
Minsmere to Walberswick Heaths and Marshes	H4030 European dry heaths H1210 Annual vegetation of drift lines H1220 Perennial vegetation of stony banks A052(B) Anas crecca: Eurasian teal A021(B) Botaurus stellaris: Great bittern A081(B) Circus aeruginosus: Eurasian marsh harrier A082(NB) Circus cyaneus: Hen harrier A224(B) Caprimulgus europaeus: European nightjar A056(B) Anas clypeata: Northern shoveler A056(NB) Anas clypeata: Northern shoveler A051(B) Anas strepera: Gadwall A051(NB) Anas strepera: Gadwall	Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring; The extent and distribution of qualifying natural habitats and habitats, The structure and function (including typical species) of	Coastal squeeze, public access/disturbance, changes in species distributions, invasive species, inappropriate pest control, air pollution, water pollution, deer, fisheries (commercial marine and estuarine)

Name	Qualifying Features	Conservation Objectives	Pressure and threats (as summarised in the Habitats Regulations Assessment for the Waveney Local Plan)
	A132(B) <i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i> : Pied avocet A195(B) <i>Sterna albifrons</i> : Little tern A394(NB) <i>Anser albifrons</i> : Greater white-fronted goose	qualifying natural habitats, and, The supporting processes on which qualifying natural habitats rely.	
Dew's Ponds	S1166 <i>Triturus cristatus</i> : Great crested newt	Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring; The extent and distribution of the habitats of qualifying species, The structure and function of the habitats of qualifying species, The supporting processes on which the habitats of qualifying species rely, The populations of qualifying species, and, The distribution of qualifying species within the site.	None identified
Southern North Sea	Harbour porpoise (<i>Phocoena phocoena</i>)	To ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained and that it makes an appropriate contribution to maintaining	N/A

Name	Qualifying Features	Conservation Objectives	Pressure and threats (as summarised in the Habitats Regulations Assessment for the Waveney Local Plan)
		Favourable Conservation Status (FCS) for harbour porpoise in UK waters.	
Special Protection Areas			
Alde-Ore Estuary	Avocet (<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>), Breeding Avocet (<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>), Non-breeding Lesser black-backed gull (<i>Larus fuscus</i>), Breeding Little tern (<i>Sternula albifrons</i>), Breeding Marsh harrier (<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>), Breeding Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>), Non-breeding Ruff (<i>Calidris pugnax</i>), Non-breeding Sandwich tern (<i>Thalasseus sandvicensis</i>), Breeding	The objectives are to ensure that, subject to natural change, the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and that the site contributes to achieving the aims of the Wild Birds Directive, by maintaining or restoring: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •the extent and distribution of the habitats of the qualifying features •the structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying features •the supporting processes on which the habitats of the qualifying features rely •the populations of each of the qualifying features •the distribution of qualifying features within the site 	Hydrological changes, public access/disturbance, inappropriate coastal management, coastal squeeze, inappropriate pest control, changes in species distributions, invasive species, air pollution, fisheries (commercial marine and estuarine)
Broadlands (also Ramsar site)	H7210# Calcareous fens with <i>Cladium mariscus</i> and species of the <i>Caricion davallianae</i> S1016 Vertigo moulinsiana: Desmoulin's whorl snail H7230 Alkaline fens H6410 Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (<i>Molinion caeruleae</i>)	Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable	Water pollution, climate change, invasive species, siltation, inappropriate water levels, hydrological changes, water abstraction, change in land management,

Name	Qualifying Features	Conservation Objectives	Pressure and threats (as summarised in the Habitats Regulations Assessment for the Waveney Local Plan)
	<p>H91E0# Alluvial forests with <i>Alnus glutinosa</i> and <i>Fraxinus excelsior</i> (<i>Alno-Padion</i>, <i>Alnion incanae</i>, <i>Salicion albae</i>)</p> <p>H7140 Transition mires and quaking bogs</p> <p>H3140 Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of <i>Chara</i> spp</p> <p>H3150 Natural eutrophic lakes with <i>Magnopotamion</i> or <i>Hydrocharition</i>-type vegetation</p> <p>S1355 <i>Lutra lutra</i>: Otter</p> <p>S1903 <i>Liparis loeselii</i>: Fen orchid</p> <p>S4056 <i>Anisus vorticulus</i>: Little ramshorn whirlpool snail</p>	<p>Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring;</p> <p>The extent and distribution of qualifying natural habitats and habitats of qualifying species,</p> <p>The structure and function (including typical species) of qualifying natural habitats,</p> <p>The structure and function of the habitats of qualifying species,</p> <p>The supporting processes on which qualifying natural habitats and the habitats of qualifying species rely,</p> <p>The populations of qualifying species, and,</p> <p>The distribution of qualifying species within the site.</p>	<p>inappropriate ditch management, inappropriate scrub control, changes in species distributions, public access/disturbance, undergrazing, drainage, direct impact from 3rd party</p>
Benacre to Easton Barents	<p>H1150# Coastal lagoons,</p> <p>A195(B) <i>Sterna albifrons</i>: Little tern</p> <p>A021(B) <i>Botaurus stellaris</i>: Great bittern</p> <p>A081(B) <i>Circus aeruginosus</i>: Eurasian marsh harrier</p>	<p>Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the aims of the Wild Birds Directive, by maintaining or restoring;</p> <p>The extent and distribution of the</p>	<p>Public access/disturbance, water pollution, physical modification, changes in species distributions, fisheries (marine and estuarine).</p>

Name	Qualifying Features	Conservation Objectives	Pressure and threats (as summarised in the Habitats Regulations Assessment for the Waveney Local Plan)
		habitats of the qualifying features, The structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying features, The supporting processes on which the habitats of the qualifying features rely, The population of each of the qualifying features, and, The distribution of the qualifying features within the site.	
Minsmere to Walberswick (also Ramsar site)	H4030 European dry heaths H1210 Annual vegetation of drift lines H1220 Perennial vegetation of stony banks A052(B) <i>Anas crecca</i> : Eurasian teal A021(B) <i>Botaurus stellaris</i> : Great bittern A081(B) <i>Circus aeruginosus</i> : Eurasian marsh harrier A082(NB) <i>Circus cyaneus</i> : Hen harrier A224(B) <i>Caprimulgus europaeus</i> : European nightjar A056(B) <i>Anas clypeata</i> : Northern shoveler A056(NB) <i>Anas clypeata</i> : Northern shoveler A051(B) <i>Anas strepera</i> : Gadwall A051(NB) <i>Anas strepera</i> : Gadwall A132(B) <i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i> : Pied avocet A195(B) <i>Sterna albifrons</i> : Little tern	Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the aims of the Wild Birds Directive, by maintaining or restoring; The extent and distribution of the habitats of the qualifying features, The structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying features, The supporting processes on which the habitats of the qualifying features rely, The population of each of the qualifying features, and,	Coastal squeeze, public access/disturbance, changes in species distributions, invasive species, inappropriate pest control, air pollution, water pollution, deer, fisheries (commercial marine and estuarine)

Name	Qualifying Features	Conservation Objectives	Pressure and threats (as summarised in the Habitats Regulations Assessment for the Waveney Local Plan)
	A394(NB) Anser albifrons albifrons: Greater white-fronted goose	The distribution of the qualifying features within the site.	
Outer Thames Estuary	A001 (W) Gavia stellate Red-throated Diver A195 (B) Sterna hirundo Common Tern A193 (B) Sternula albifrons Little Tern	Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the aims of the Wild Birds Directive, by maintaining or restoring; The extent and distribution of the habitats of the qualifying features, The structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying features, The supporting processes on which the habitats of the qualifying features rely, The population of each of the qualifying features, and, The distribution of the qualifying features within the site.	
Sandlings	A224(B) Caprimulgus europaeus: European nightjar A246(B) Lullula arborea: Woodlark	Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the aims of the Wild Birds Directive, by	Changes in species distributions, inappropriate scrub control, deer, air pollution, public access/disturbance,

Name	Qualifying Features	Conservation Objectives	Pressure and threats (as summarised in the Habitats Regulations Assessment for the Waveney Local Plan)
		maintaining or restoring; - The extent and distribution of the habitats of the qualifying features - The structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying features - The supporting processes on which the habitats of the qualifying features rely - The population of each of the qualifying features, and, - The distribution of the qualifying features within the site.	
Ramsar Sites			
Alde-Ore Estuary	Avocet (<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>), Breeding Avocet (<i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i>), Non-breeding Lesser black-backed gull (<i>Larus fuscus</i>), Breeding Little tern (<i>Sternula albifrons</i>), Breeding Marsh harrier (<i>Circus aeruginosus</i>), Breeding Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>), Non-breeding Ruff (<i>Calidris pugnax</i>), Non-breeding Sandwich tern (<i>Thalasseus sandvicensis</i>), Breeding	The objectives are to ensure that, subject to natural change, the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and that the site contributes to achieving the aims of the Wild Birds Directive, by maintaining or restoring: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •the extent and distribution of the habitats of the qualifying features •the structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying features •the supporting processes on which the habitats of the 	N/A

Name	Qualifying Features	Conservation Objectives	Pressure and threats (as summarised in the Habitats Regulations Assessment for the Waveney Local Plan)
		qualifying features rely <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •the populations of each of the qualifying features •the distribution of qualifying features within the site 	
Broadland	<p>Ramsar Criterion 1 The site contains a mosaic of marine, freshwater, marshland and associated habitats, complete with transition areas in between. Contains the largest continuous stand of reedbeds in England and Wales and rare transition in grazing marsh ditch plants from brackish to fresh water.</p> <p>Ramsar criterion 2 This site supports nine nationally scarce plants and at least 26 red data book invertebrates. Supports a population of the mollusc <i>Vertigo angustior</i> (Habitats Directive Annex II; British Red Data Book Endangered), recently discovered on the Blyth estuary river walls.</p>	Natural England considers the Conservation Advice packages for the overlapping European Marine Site designations to be, in most cases, sufficient to support the management of the Ramsar interests.	N/A
Minsmere-Walberswick	<p>Ramsar Criterion 1 The site contains a mosaic of marine, freshwater, marshland and associated habitats, complete with transition areas in between. Contains the largest continuous stand of reedbeds in England and Wales and rare transition in grazing marsh ditch plants from brackish to fresh water.</p> <p>Ramsar criterion 2 This site supports nine nationally scarce plants and at</p>	Natural England considers the Conservation Advice packages for the overlapping European Marine Site designations to be, in most cases, sufficient to support the management of the Ramsar interests.	N/A

Name	Qualifying Features	Conservation Objectives	Pressure and threats (as summarised in the Habitats Regulations Assessment for the Waveney Local Plan)
	<p>least 26 red data book invertebrates. Supports a population of the mollusc <i>Vertigo angustior</i> (Habitats Directive Annex II; British Red Data Book Endangered), recently discovered on the Blyth estuary river walls.</p>		

Appendix 4: Natural England Consultation Response

Date: 29 November 2021
Our ref: Draft Halesworth Neighbourhood Plan
Your ref: 375449

Ruth Bishop
East Suffolk Council
Ruth.Bishop@eastsuffolk.gov.uk

BY EMAIL ONLY



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CW1 6GJ

T 0300 060 3900

Dear Ruth Bishop

Draft Halesworth Neighbourhood Plan HRA and SEA Screening Opinions

Thank you for your consultation on the above dated 24 November 2021 which was received by Natural England on 24 November 2021

Natural England is a non-departmental public body. Our statutory purpose is to ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced, and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development.

Screening Request: Strategic Environmental Assessment

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

Neighbourhood Plan

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

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

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

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

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

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

Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening

Natural England agrees with the report's conclusions that the Draft Halesworth 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 would be required.

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

Yours sincerely

Jacqui Salt
Consultations Team