

Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Opinion Determination

For the Lowestoft Neighbourhood Plan

February 2023



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This Screening Opinion corrects and replaces that carried out in July 2021 and published in July 2022. The screening opinion was carried out against the earlier iteration of the Neighbourhood Plan and has been reassessed against the plan dated September 2022. No significant material changes were found, and the opinion remains the same.

1. Introduction.

In some circumstances a Neighbourhood Plan could have significant environmental effects and may fall within the scope of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 and so require Strategic Environmental Assessment.

One of the basic conditions that will be tested by the independent examiner is whether the making of the Plan is compatible with European Union Obligations. Whether a Neighbourhood Plan requires a strategic environmental assessment, and the level of detail needed, will depend on what is proposed in the draft Neighbourhood Plan.

This screening report is designed to test whether the contents of the Lowestoft Neighbourhood Plan require a full Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). The screening was originally undertaken on the Draft Lowestoft Neighbourhood Development Plan Regulation 14 dated May 2021. The conclusions were then reconsidered against an updated version of the draft Neighbourhood Plan produced in July 2022 (and which was dated September 2022). However, no significant material changes were found, and therefore the conclusions of the screening remain the same. The legislative background below outlines the regulations that require the use of this screening exercise. Section 4 provides a screening assessment of the likely significant effects of the Plan and the need for a full SEA.

2. Legislative Background.

The basis for Strategic Environmental Assessments and Sustainability Appraisal legislation is European Directive 2001/42/EC 'on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the Environment'. This document is also known as the Strategic Environmental Assessment (or SEA) Directive. European Directive 2001/42/EC was transposed into English law by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (as amended through EU exit legislation), or SEA Regulations.

The SEA Regulations include a definition of 'plans and programmes' to which the regulations apply, and which programmes are required by legislative, regulatory, or administrative provisions.

A Neighbourhood Plan is not required by legislative, regulatory, or administrative provisions. It is an optional process under the provision of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (subsequently amended by the Localism Act 2011). However, once a Neighbourhood Plan is 'made' it becomes part of the statutory development plan for the area to which it applies. As such, it therefore forms part of a plan that is required by legislative provisions.

3. Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects referred to in Article 3(5) of Directive 2001/42/EC.

The preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan triggers a requirement to determine whether it is likely to have a significant environmental effect. This requirement is discharged by the 'responsible authority' being the authority by which or on whose behalf the plan is prepared. Before making a determination, the responsible authority shall: -

- a) Take into account the criteria specified in Schedule 1 to these Regulations (EIA Regulations); and
- b) Consult the consultation bodies.

The consultation bodies are defined in section 4 of the SEA Regulations. As the responsible authority, East Suffolk Council has consulted with the statutory consultation bodies: Historic England; the Environment Agency; and Natural England. Responses were received from Historic England and Natural England on the initial screening exercise in 2021, and these are contained in the appendices of this report.

Schedule 1 of the SEA Regulations sets out the criteria for determining likely significant effects as follows:

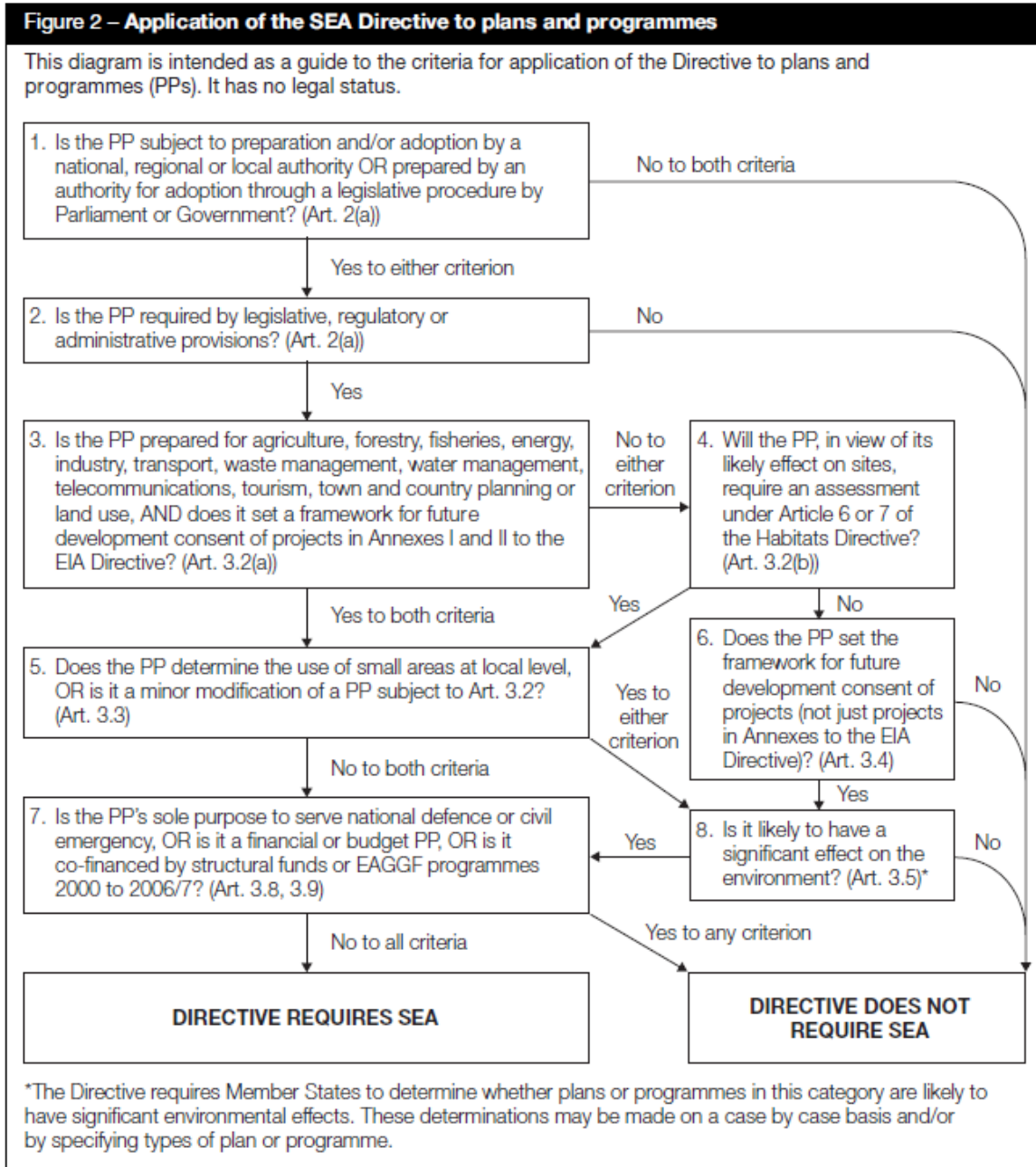
- 1. The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular, to:
 - a) The degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources,
 - b) The degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy,
 - c) The relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development,
 - d) Environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme,
 - e) The relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of community legislation on the environment (e.g. plans and programmes linked to waste-management or water protection).
- 2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to:
 - a) The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects,
 - b) The cumulative nature of the effects,
 - c) The trans boundary nature of the effects,
 - d) The risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents),

- e) The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)
- f) the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:
 - i. special natural characteristics or cultural heritage;
 - ii. exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values;
 - iii. intensive land-use; and
- g) the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, community or international protection status.

Source: Annex 2 of SEA Directive 2001/42/EC

4. Assessment

The diagram below illustrates the process for screening a planning document to ascertain whether a full SEA is required.



Source: A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (2005)

The following assessment applies the questions from the preceding diagram. The answers determine whether the Neighbourhood Plan will require a full Strategic Environmental Assessment.

1. Is the PP subject to preparation and/or adoption by a national, regional or local authority OR prepared by an authority for adoption through a legislative procedure by Parliament or Government? (Art. 2(a))

Yes. The preparation and adoption of the Neighbourhood Plan is allowed under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Localism Act 2011. The Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared by Lowestoft Town Council as the relevant body and, subject to successful completion of the relevant processes as set out in the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) and the Neighbourhood Planning (Referendums) Regulations 2012 (as amended), will be made by East Suffolk Council.

2. Is the PP required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions? (Art. 2(a))

No. A Neighbourhood Development Plan is not required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions. It is an optional process under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (amended by the Localism Act 2011). However, once a Neighbourhood Plan is made it becomes part of the statutory development plan for the area to which it applies. As such it forms part of a plan that is required by legislative provisions.

3. Is the PP prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism, town and country planning or land use, AND does it set a framework for future development consent of projects in Annexes I and II to the EIA Directive? (Art 3.2(a))

Yes. The Neighbourhood Plan falls within the category of town and country planning and relates to the local (parish) level. The designated neighbourhood plan area includes all of Lowestoft Parish, including Gunton, Kirkley and Pakefield within the East Suffolk Council area. The draft NP dated September 2022 contains twenty numbered policies. Policy LH1 'Residential Development' allows for limited new residential development, such as upper floor conversions in the town centre and other small-scale developments within the defined NP area.

Policy support in the draft NP is provided for: development including Affordable Housing; conversion of buildings to residential accommodation; protection of local green spaces; safe access and walking and cycling routes for new development; and design principles. The draft NP policies have their basis in strategic policies set out in the East Suffolk - Waveney Local Plan (the local plan) which was adopted in March 2019.

The Local Plan identifies Lowestoft, as a location for growth and allocates 56% of growth here. Sites are allocated for housing; existing employment; and open space. The draft NP's map shows the neighbourhood plan area contains Ancient Woodland; County Wildlife Site; National Nature Reserve; Ramsar site; Site of Special Scientific Interest; Special Area of Conservation; and Special Protection Area.

The Neighbourhood Plan makes no change to strategic policies and is not considered to impact on other strategic designations. The Local Plan has been subject to both sustainability appraisal (including strategic environmental assessment) and Appropriate Assessment under the Habitat Regulations.

The Local Plan including supporting documents and policy maps can be viewed here: <http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/planning/local-plans/waveney-local-plan/>.

4. Will the PP, in view of its likely effect on sites, require an assessment for future development under Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive? (Art. 3.2 (b))

No. The draft NP does not allocate any land for new built development over and above the local plan which has already been subject to Sustainability Appraisal (including Strategic Environmental Assessment) and Appropriate Assessment under the Habitats Regulations. A separate Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening Statement has been produced and this concludes that an Appropriate Assessment will not be required.

5. Does the PP 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. The draft neighbourhood plan relates solely to the neighbourhood plan area. The local plan sets out the boundary around Lowestoft within which residential and employment development is directed. Policies in the local plan would also allow for minor infilling and limited residential development within the defined settlement boundaries.

6. Does the PP set the framework for future development consent of projects (not just projects in annexes to the EIA Directive)? (Art 3(4))

Yes. The draft Neighbourhood Plan does not, on its own, set the framework for future development consent of projects. By virtue of its inclusion as part of the Development Plan, upon the making of the Neighbourhood Plan, the Neighbourhood Plan contributes to the framework for future development consent of projects. Thus, the Neighbourhood Plan does contribute to the setting of the framework. The draft Neighbourhood Plan is prepared in the context of the Waveney Local Plan which has been subject to Sustainability Appraisal (incorporating the requirement for SEA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment.

7. Is the PP'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 EAGGF programmes 2000 to 2006/7? (Art 3.8, 3.9)


No. Not applicable.

8. Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment? (Art. 3(5))

No. The plan does not allocate land for built development and is not considered to result in significant effects on the environment.

5. Conclusion

The draft Lowestoft Neighbourhood Development Plan dated September 2022 (received in July 2022) does not allocate land for built development and applies to a localised area. The policies reflect and implement strategic policies in the Local Plan to such a degree as to not result in any significant environmental effects. The local plan has been subject to Sustainability Appraisal including Strategic Environmental Assessment and Appropriate Assessment under the Habitats Regulations Assessment. It is considered by East Suffolk Council, following consultation with statutory consultees, that it is not necessary for a Strategic Environmental Assessment to be undertaken of the draft Lowestoft Neighbourhood Plan to ensure compliance with EU obligations.

Signed: 

Dated: 09/02/2023

Andrea McMillan
Planning Manager (Policy, Delivery and Specialist Services)
East Suffolk Council

Appendix 1 Response from Environment Agency

No response received

Appendix 2 Response from Natural England

Lowestoft Neighbourhood Plan SEA Scoping Opinion

Date: 23 July 2021
Our ref: 359063
Your ref: Lowestoft Neighbourhood Plan

Melanie Seabrook
East Suffolk Council
[REDACTED]

BY EMAIL ONLY



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

T 0300 060 3900

Dear Ms Seabrook,

Lowestoft Neighbourhood Plan SEA Scoping Opinion

Thank you for your consultation on the above dated 05 July 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.

Natural England is a statutory consultee in neighbourhood planning and must be consulted on draft neighbourhood development plans by the Parish/Town Councils or Neighbourhood Forums where they consider our interests would be affected by the proposals made.

Natural England has no specific comments to make on this neighbourhood plan SEA scoping.

However, we refer you to the advice in the attached annex which covers the issues and opportunities that should be considered when preparing a Neighbourhood Plan.

For any further consultations on your plan, please contact: consultations@naturalengland.org.uk.

Yours sincerely,

Ben Jones
Consultations Team

Annex 1 - Neighbourhood planning and the natural environment: information, issues and opportunities

Natural environment information sources

The [Magic](http://magic.defra.gov.uk/)¹ website will provide you with much of the nationally held natural environment data for your plan area. The most relevant layers for you to consider are: **Agricultural Land Classification**, **Ancient Woodland**, **Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty**, **Local Nature Reserves**, **National Parks (England)**, **National Trails**, **Priority Habitat Inventory**, **public rights of way (on the Ordnance Survey base map)** and **Sites of Special Scientific Interest (including their impact risk zones)**. Local environmental record centres may hold a range of additional information on the natural environment. A list of local record centres is available [here](#)².

Priority habitats are those habitats of particular importance for nature conservation, and the list of them can be found [here](#)³. Most of these will be mapped either as **Sites of Special Scientific Interest**, on the Magic website or as **Local Wildlife Sites**. Your local planning authority should be able to supply you with the locations of Local Wildlife Sites.

National Character Areas (NCAs) divide England into 159 distinct natural areas. Each character area is defined by a unique combination of landscape, biodiversity, geodiversity and cultural and economic activity. NCA profiles contain descriptions of the area and statements of environmental opportunity, which may be useful to inform proposals in your plan. NCA information can be found [here](#)⁴.

There may also be a local **landscape character assessment** covering your area. This is a tool to help understand the character and local distinctiveness of the landscape and identify the features that give it a sense of place. It can help to inform, plan and manage change in the area. Your local planning authority should be able to help you access these if you can't find them online.

If your neighbourhood planning area is within or adjacent to a **National Park** or **Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)**, the relevant National Park/AONB Management Plan for the area will set out useful information about the protected landscape. You can access the plans on from the relevant National Park Authority or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty website.

General mapped information on **soil types** and **Agricultural Land Classification** is available (under 'landscape') on the [Magic](http://magic.defra.gov.uk/)⁵ website and also from the [LandIS website](http://www.landis.org.uk/index.cfm)⁶, which contains more information about obtaining soil data.

Natural environment issues to consider

The [National Planning Policy Framework](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework-2)⁷ sets out national planning policy on protecting and enhancing the natural environment. [Planning Practice Guidance](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/planning-practice-guidance)⁸ sets out supporting guidance.

Your local planning authority should be able to provide you with further advice on the potential impacts of your plan or order on the natural environment and the need for any environmental assessments.

Landscape

¹ <http://magic.defra.gov.uk/>

² <http://www.nbn-nftr.org.uk/nftr/nbn>

³ <http://web.archive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140711133551/http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/conservation/biodiversity/protectandmanage/habitatsandspecies/importance.aspx>

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-character-area-profiles-data-for-local-decision-making>

⁵ <http://magic.defra.gov.uk/>

⁶ <http://www.landis.org.uk/index.cfm>

⁷ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework-2>

⁸ <http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/blog/guidance/natural-environment/>

Your plans or orders may present opportunities to protect and enhance locally valued landscapes. You may want to consider identifying distinctive local landscape features or characteristics such as ponds, woodland or dry stone walls and think about how any new development proposals can respect and enhance local landscape character and distinctiveness.

If you are proposing development within or close to a protected landscape (National Park or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) or other sensitive location, we recommend that you carry out a landscape assessment of the proposal. Landscape assessments can help you to choose the most appropriate sites for development and help to avoid or minimise impacts of development on the landscape through careful siting, design and landscaping.

Wildlife habitats

Some proposals can have adverse impacts on designated wildlife sites or other priority habitats (listed [here](#)⁹), such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest or [Ancient woodland](#)¹⁰. If there are likely to be any adverse impacts you'll need to think about how such impacts can be avoided, mitigated or, as a last resort, compensated for.

Priority and protected species

You'll also want to consider whether any proposals might affect priority species (listed [here](#)¹¹) or protected species. To help you do this, Natural England has produced advice [here](#)¹² to help understand the impact of particular developments on protected species.

Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land

Soil is a finite resource that fulfils many important functions and services for society. It is a growing medium for food, timber and other crops, a store for carbon and water, a reservoir of biodiversity and a buffer against pollution. If you are proposing development, you should seek to use areas of poorer quality agricultural land in preference to that of a higher quality in line with National Planning Policy Framework para 112. For more information, see our publication [Agricultural Land Classification: protecting the best and most versatile agricultural land](#)¹³.

Improving your natural environment

Your plan or order can offer exciting opportunities to enhance your local environment. If you are setting out policies on new development or proposing sites for development, you may wish to consider identifying what environmental features you want to be retained or enhanced or new features you would like to see created as part of any new development. Examples might include:

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

You may also want to consider enhancing your local area in other ways, for example by:

⁹<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140711133551/http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/conservation/biodiversity/protectandmanage/habsandspeciesimportance.aspx>

¹⁰<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/ancient-woodland-and-veteran-trees-protection-surveys-licences>

¹¹<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140711133551/http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/conservation/biodiversity/protectandmanage/habsandspeciesimportance.aspx>

¹²<https://www.gov.uk/protected-species-and-sites-how-to-review-planning-proposals>

¹³<http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/35012>

- Setting out in your plan how you would like to implement elements of a wider Green Infrastructure Strategy (if one exists) in your community.
- Assessing needs for accessible greenspace and setting out proposals to address any deficiencies or enhance provision.
- Identifying green areas of particular importance for special protection through Local Green Space designation (see [Planning Practice Guidance on this](#) ¹⁴).
- Managing existing (and new) public spaces to be more wildlife friendly (e.g. by sowing wild flower strips in less used parts of parks, changing hedge cutting timings and frequency).
- Planting additional street trees.
- Identifying any improvements to the existing public right of way network, e.g. cutting back hedges, improving the surface, clearing litter or installing kissing gates) or extending the network to create missing links.
- Restoring neglected environmental features (e.g. coppicing a prominent hedge that is in poor condition, or clearing away an eyesore).

¹⁴ <http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/blog/guidance/open-space-sports-and-recreation-facilities-public-rights-of-way-and-local-green-space/local-green-space-designation/>

Further comments in respect of the amended plan

Date: 19 October 2022
Our ref: 409378
Your ref: Lowestoft Neighbourhood Plan

Ms. Seabrook
[REDACTED]

BY EMAIL ONLY



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

T 0300 060 3900

Dear Ms Seabrook

Lowestoft Neighbourhood Plan – SEA and HRA screening report consultation

Thank you for your consultation on the above dated 10 October 2022 which was received by Natural England on the same date.

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.

Where Neighbourhood Plans could have significant environmental effects, they may require a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) under the Environment Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (as amended). Further guidance on deciding whether the proposals are likely to have significant environmental effects and the requirements for consulting Natural England on SEA are set out in the [planning practice guidance](#).

Planning practice guidance also outlines that if an appropriate assessment is required for your neighbourhood plan this will also engage the need for a SEA. One of the basic conditions that will be tested by the independent examiner is whether the neighbourhood plan is compatible with European obligations, including those under the SEA Directive. Where a SEA is required it should be prepared in accordance with [regulation 12](#) of the SEA Regulations.

Where a neighbourhood plan could potentially affect a [‘habitats site’](#), it will be necessary to screen the plan in relation to the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017), as amended (the ‘Habitats Regulations’). Where likely significant effects are identified, it will be necessary to undertake an appropriate assessment of the neighbourhood plan and, if needed, identify and secure appropriate mitigation measures to ensure the plan does not result in an adverse effect on the integrity of the habitats site.

Natural England welcomes the Screening Reports which assess the requirement for SEA and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) for the Lowestoft Neighbourhood Plan.

I can confirm that Natural England agrees with the conclusions of the reports that it is not likely there will be significant environmental effects arising from the policies in the plan, which have not already been accounted for within the adopted local plan. Therefore, the Lowestoft Neighbourhood Plan does not require a SEA to be undertaken. Natural England also agrees that the Plan would be unlikely to result in any significant effect to European Sites, either alone or in combination, and therefore an appropriate assessment under the Habitats Regulations is not required.

Aside from this, Natural England have no specific comments at this stage. We would be happy to

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

Yours sincerely

Joe Thompsett
Norfolk & Suffolk Team

Appendix 3 Response from Historic England

Subject: Lowestoft Neighbourhood Plan SEA scoping opinion

From: James, Edward [REDACTED]
Sent: 20 August 2021 16:54
To: PlanningPolicy <PlanningPolicy@eastsuffolk.gov.uk>
Cc: Melanie Seabrook [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: Lowestoft Neighbourhood Plan SEA scoping opinion

Dear Melanie,

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

The Screening Report indicates that the Council considers that the plan will not have any significant effects on the historic environment. We note that the plan's draft policies do not propose to allocate any sites for development. The draft policies document provided does support the development of the former hospital site in Policy LH1. However, as it does not specifically allocate the site for development, but merely provides guiding principles to ensure a higher quality of development, we do not consider this would cause significant effects.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Kind regards,

Ed

Edward James
Historic Places Adviser - East of England
Historic England

Direct Line: [REDACTED]
Mobile: [REDACTED]



Historic England
Brooklands | 24 Brooklands Avenue | Cambridge | CB2 8BU
www.historicengland.org.uk

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From: Melanie Seabrook [REDACTED]
Sent: 05 July 2021 09:53
To: planning.ipswich@environment-agency.gov.uk; EastPlanningPolicy
<eastplanningpolicy@HistoricEngland.org.uk>; consultations@naturalengland.org.uk
Subject: Lowestoft Neighbourhood Plan SEA scoping opinion

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Dear Consultee

**DRAFT LOWESTOFT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN
SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL INCORPORATING STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT DRAFT
SCOPING REPORT DATED MAY 2021**

Lowestoft Town Council is currently in the process of developing a Neighbourhood Plan. The Draft Plan sets out policies for the development and use of land in the parish of Lowestoft (including Kirkley and

Pakefield). In particular the Plan will include policies for the allocation of land for housing development. At this stage the amount of land, housing numbers and the preferred site(s) have not been firmly established, however, some broad locations have been identified.

The Plan is in the early stages of policy development and East Suffolk Council has recently undertaken a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) screening opinion to determine whether or not the contents of the Lowestoft Neighbourhood Plan require a full SEA.

A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Scoping Report has been prepared for the Draft Lowestoft Neighbourhood Plan and is attached to this email. As an SEA consultation body we would welcome your comments on whether you consider the content and scope of the report is appropriate.

I would request any comments you wish to make by Friday 12th August 2021.

Kindest regards

Melanie



Melanie Seabrook BA (Hons) MA | Planner (Policy & Delivery)
East Suffolk Council

www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk
www.eastsuffolkmeansbusiness.co.uk

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Further comments received in respect of the re-consultation

From: James, Edward [REDACTED]
Sent: 14 November 2022 16:01
To: Melanie Seabrook
Subject: RE: Lowestoft Neighbourhood Plan SEA Screening October 2022

Dear Mel,

Thank you for inviting Historic England to comment on this consultation. As the Government's adviser on the historic environment Historic England is keen to ensure that the protection of the historic environment is fully taken into account at all stages and levels of the local planning process. Therefore we welcome this opportunity to review the Screening Report for this plan. For the purposes of this consultation, Historic England will confine its advice to the question, "Is it (the Lowestoft Neighbourhood Plan – October 2022 draft) likely to have a significant effect on the historic environment?". Our comments are based on the information supplied with the Screening Opinion.

The Screening Report indicates that the Council considers that the plan will not have any significant effects on the historic environment. We note that the plan does not propose to allocate any sites for development.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Kind regards,

Ed

Edward James
Historic Places Adviser - East of England

Historic England

Direct Line: [REDACTED]
Mobile: [REDACTED]



Historic England

Brooklands | 24 Brooklands Avenue | Cambridge | CB2 8BU

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From: Melanie Seabrook [REDACTED]

Sent: 10 October 2022 12:05

To: EastPlanningPolicy <EastPlanningPolicy@HistoricEngland.org.uk>; Ipswich, Planning <planning.ipswich@environment-agency.gov.uk>; SM-NE-Consultations (NE)

<consultations@naturalengland.org.uk>

Subject: Lowestoft Neighbourhood Plan

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Dear all,

You may recall that we consulted you back in early 2021 regarding the Lowestoft Neighbourhood Development Plan.

We have received an amended version and for the sake of clarity and transparency we have decided to reconult.

We have reached the same conclusion insofar as a full screening is not required as the changes made are not so significant to warrant a full screening of the plan.

If you could let me have a response as soon as possible, but no later than Monday 14th November I would be most grateful

If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me.

Many thanks and kindest regards

Melanie



Melanie Seabrook BA (Hons) MA | Planner (Policy & Delivery)
East Suffolk Council

<https://teams.microsoft.com/l/chat/0/0?users=melanie.seabrook%40eastsuffolk.gov>

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