

Hammerwich Neighbourhood Plan

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) & Habitat Regulations Assessment

Screening Report
(October 2020)

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This screening report is an assessment of whether or not the contents of the Hammerwich Neighbourhood Plan (hereafter known as 'HNP') requires a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in accordance with the European Directive 2001/42/ EC and associated Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004. This screening assessment has taken place on the draft '*Hammerwich Neighbourhood Plan (As at August 2020)*' as provided by Hammerwich Parish Council for the purposes of this screening assessment in October 2020.
- 1.2 This report will also screen to determine whether the HNP requires a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) in accordance with Article 6(3) and (4) of the EU Habitats Directive and with Regulation 61 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended). A HRA is required when it is deemed that likely adverse significant effects may occur on protected European Sites (Natura 2000 sites) as a result of the implementation of a plan/project. As a general 'rule of thumb' it is identified that sites with pathways of 10-15km of the plan/project boundary should be included with a HRA. Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Cannock Extension Canal SAC, Pasturefields Saltmarsh SAC, and Humber Estuary are within a 15km radius of the plan boundary. Whilst the River Mease SAC is within 15km of the HNP boundary, the HNP boundary is outside the water catchment area. Appendix 1 shows the Plan Boundary in relation to the 15km radius of Natura 2000 sites.
- 1.3 The purpose of the HNP is to provide a set of statutory planning policies to guide development within the neighbourhood area over the life of the plan. The Plan provides a series of policies under several themes/areas which it hopes will guide development.
- 1.4 The legislative background set out in the following section outlines the regulations that require the need for this screening exercise. Section 3, provides a screening assessment of both the likely significant environmental effects of the HNP and the need for SEA. Section 4, provides a screening assessment of both the likely significant effects of the implementation of the HNP and the need for a Habitats Regulation Assessment.
- 1.5 This report will be split into two parts. The first will cover the screening for the SEA and the second will cover the screening process for the HRA. A summary of findings and conclusions for both screening processes can be found in the conclusions chapter at section 5.

2. Legislative Background

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

- 2.1 The basis for Strategic Environmental Assessments and Sustainability Appraisal legislation is European Directive 2001/42/EC and 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).
- 2.2 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 required Local Authorities to produce Sustainability Appraisals (SA) for all local development documents to meet the requirement of the EU Directive on SEA. It is considered best practice to incorporate requirements of the SEA Directive into an SA as discussed within the NPPF at paragraph 165. However, the 2008 Planning Act amended the requirement to undertake a Sustainability Appraisal for only development plan documents (DPD's), but did not remove the requirement to produce a Strategic Environmental Assessment. As a Neighbourhood Plan is not a development plan document it therefore does not legally require a Sustainability Appraisal. Where appropriate, however, an SEA still needs to be undertaken in line with the SEA regulations. The purpose of this report is to determine if SEA is required for the Hammerwich Neighbourhood Plan.
- 2.3 The District Council is required to consult three statutory consultation bodies designated within the regulations, these are; English Heritage, Natural England and Environment Agency on whether a SEA is required. Details of the consultation bodies responses can be found at Appendix 3.

Habitat Regulation Assessment (HRA)

- 2.4 It is required by article 6 (3) of the EU Habitats Directive and by regulation 61 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended) that an appropriate assessment is carried out with regard to the Conservation Objectives of the European Sites and with reference to other plans and projects to identify if any significant effect is likely for any European Site.
- 2.5 To fulfil the legal requirements to identify if likely significant effects will occur with the implementation of the HNP upon European Sites (Natura 2000 sites) a screening assessment has been undertaken and is set out in section 4 of this report.
- 2.6 The legislation requires where there is a "risk" of a significant effect on a European Site, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects then there will be requirement for the plan to progress from HRA screening to an Appropriate Assessment. This is known as the precautionary principle.

Description of the Plan or Programme

- 2.7 The HNP has been prepared by the HNP steering group on behalf of the Qualifying Body (Hammerwich Parish Council). The Plan includes thirteen policies split into six themes. These include parish and community facilities, housing, traffic and transport, the local environment, the local economy and education.

3. SEA Screening

Criteria for Assessing the Effects of HNP

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

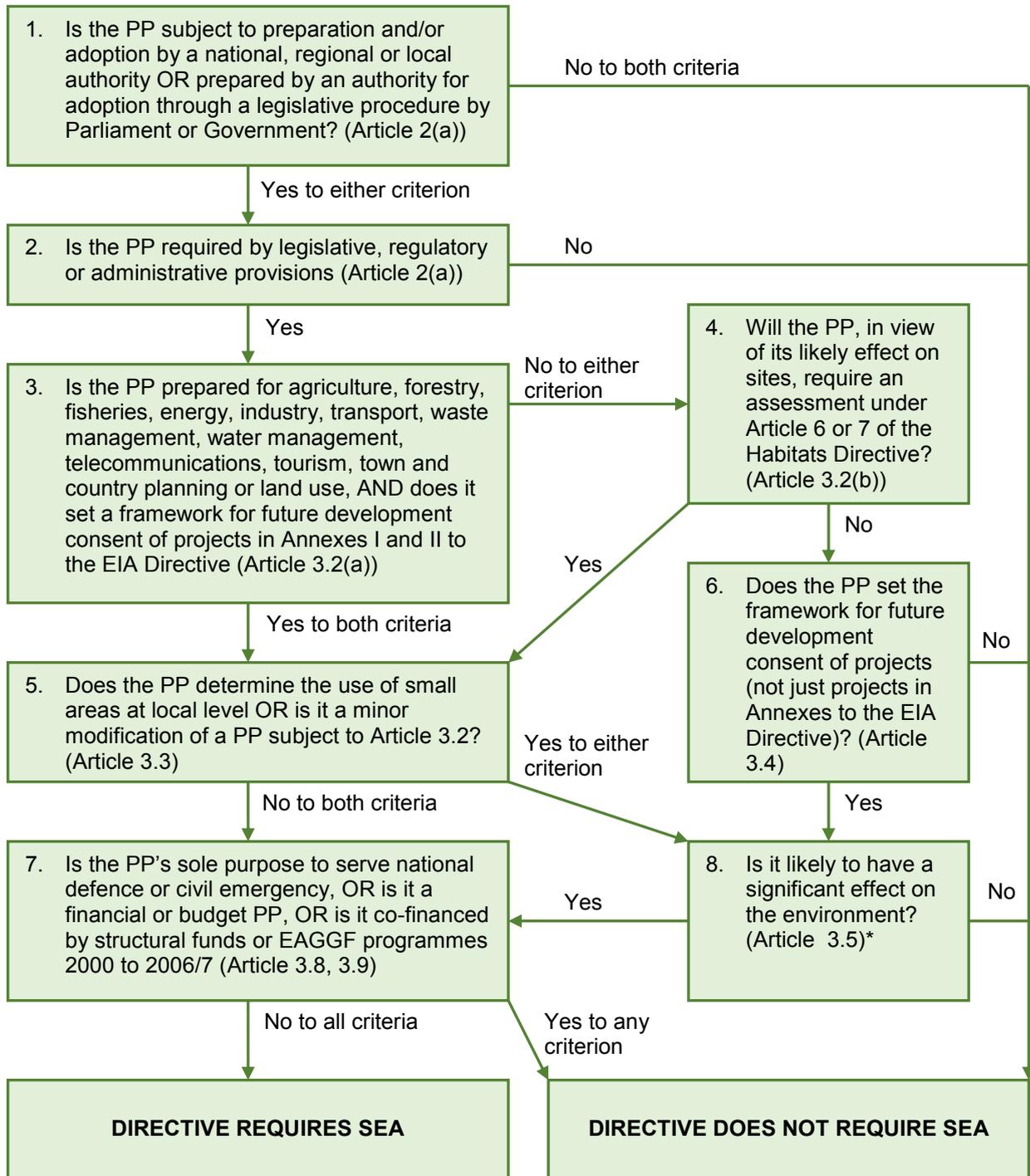
1. The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular, to
 - the degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources,
 - the degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy,
 - the relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development,
 - environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme,
 - 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
 - the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects,
 - the cumulative nature of the effects,
 - the transboundary 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

Assessment

- 3.2 It is required by the Localism Act that Neighbourhood Plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan. The development plan for Lichfield District currently comprises of the adopted Local Plan Strategy and the adopted Local Plan Allocations. Therefore the Neighbourhood Plan must be in general conformity with these policies. The Local Plan Strategy and Local Plan Allocations was subject to a full Sustainability Appraisal which included a SEA assessment. This ensured that there were no likely significant effects which would be produced from the implementation of the Local Plan and if so ensured mitigation measures were in place.
- 3.3 Guidance upon SEA's written by the Department of the Environment produces a diagram to the process for screening a planning document to ascertain whether a full SEA is required, see figure1.

Figure 1. Application of the SEA Directive to plans and programmes (PPs)



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

3.4 The process in figure 1 has been undertaken and the findings can be viewed in Table 1. Table 1 shows the assessment of whether the HNP will require a full SEA. The questions in table 1 are drawn from the diagram above which sets out how the SEA Directive should be applied.

Table 1: Establishing the Need for SEA

Stage	Yes/No	Reason
1. Is the PP (plan or programme) 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	This Neighbourhood Plan is prepared by Hammerwich Parish Council (as the Qualifying Body) under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Localism Act 2011. Once the plan is 'made' subject to examination and having received 50%+ or more 'yes' votes through a referendum it will be adopted by Lichfield District Council and become part of the Statutory Development Plan for the area.
2. Is the PP required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions? (Art. 2(a))	Yes	Communities have a right to produce a Neighbourhood Plan; however communities are not required by legislative, regulatory or administrative purposes to produce a Neighbourhood Plan. However, once 'made' the HNP would form part of the statutory development plan, and will be used when making decisions on planning applications within the Neighbourhood Area. Therefore it is considered necessary to answer the following questions to determine further if an SEA is required.
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 HNP is prepared for town and country planning and land use. The plan sets out a framework for future development in the Hammerwich Neighbourhood Area. Once 'made' the HNP would form part of the statutory development plan, and will be used when making decisions on planning applications which may include development which may fall under Annex I and II of the EIA directive.
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))	Yes	The Neighbourhood Plan could potentially have an impact on internationally designated wildlife sites covered by the Habitats Regulations. See screening assessment for HRA in following section of this report.

Stage	Yes/No	Reason
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 HNP does not identify any land allocations at the local level. Once 'made' the Hammerwich Neighbourhood Plan would form part of the statutory development plan and be used when making decisions on planning applications of small areas at the local level.
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 HNP, once the 'made', forms part of the statutory development plan and will be used to determine planning applications within the designated Hammerwich Neighbourhood Area. Therefore the Neighbourhood Plan will set the framework for future developments.
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	The Hammerwich Neighbourhood Plan does not deal with any of these categories of plan.
8. Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment? (Art. 3.5)	Yes	The HNP could potentially have a significant effect on the environment not just within the neighbourhood area but also within the District. The HNP could also impact upon Cannock Chase SAC a Natura 2000 sites, (see HRA section). For these reasons a case by case assessment of the HNP is required.

3.5 A number of the criteria above suggest that SEA of the Hammerwich Neighbourhood Plan may be required. Criteria 8 of the assessment in Figure 1 and Table 1 considered that the Neighbourhood Plan may have a significant effect on the environment depending on the proposals within the plan and a case by case assessment may be made on a case by case basis. The criteria for undertaking such an assessment are drawn from Article 3(5) of the SEA Directive as set out at paragraph 3.1 of this report.

3.6 The following assessment will consider the likelihood of the Hammerwich Neighbourhood Plan (as published at the date of this report) to have significant effects on the environment.

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

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)	Summary of Significant effects
The characteristics of the plans, having regard to;	
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.	Once 'made'; the HNP will set out the framework which will be used to determine proposals for development within the neighbourhood area. The plan does not propose development in excess of that identified within the adopted Local Plan Strategy (LPS). As such the SA/SEA carried out by the District Council for the LPS could be considered sufficient.
The degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans or programmes including those in a hierarchy.	<p>The HNP must be in general conformity with the Lichfield District Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework. The Local Plan Review is still at a relatively early stage of production and as such the neighbourhood plan cannot be influence by or influence this. The HNP only provides policies for the area it covers and the Local Plan Strategy and Local Plan Allocations will provide the necessary strategic context when determining planning applications.</p> <p>The HNP will help to deliver the overall aims of the Local Plan. Hammerwich Parish (the neighbourhood area) includes an area of southern Burntwood which is identified as the second most sustainable settlement within the District in the Local Plan Strategy. The Neighbourhood Plan does not propose to restrict development which is considered to be in broad conformity with the LPS.</p>
The relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development.	Any Neighbourhood Plan is required to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and therefore the likelihood of significant effects on the environment is minimised. This plan contains policies to protect the environment and does not seek to allocate sites for development and as such the impact of the plan on the environment is minimal.
Environmental problems relevant to the plan.	Any environmental impacts of the proposals within the ENP are unlikely to arise.

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)	Summary of Significant effects
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).	The HNP has to be in general conformity with the Local Plan. The adopted Local Plan Strategy and Local Plan Allocations has had regard to European Community legislation on the environment and therefore this legislation will not be relevant for the Neighbourhood Plan.
Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular to;	
The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects.	Development is supported within the HNP and therefore an element of environmental change will occur, the impacts of which will depend upon the proposals and will be subject to the policies within the LPS and LPA. The LPS seeks to guide development to ensure it is delivered to high levels of sustainability.
The cumulative nature of the effects.	The cumulative effects of proposals within the HNP are unlikely to be significant on the local environment given no sites are allocated for development, therefore the level of development proposed does not exceed that within the adopted LPS.
The trans boundary nature of the effects.	Effects will be local with limited effects on neighbouring areas as the policies within the HNP only apply to the designated area.
The risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents).	There is limited risk to human health or the environment as a result of the HNP.
The magnitude spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected).	The scale of development proposed through the HNP is small and does not exceed that proposed in the LPS therefore effects are likely to be localised. It is unlikely that the effects of proposals within the neighbourhood plan will be large scale and extensive.

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)	Summary of Significant effects
<p>The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - special natural characteristics or cultural heritage - exceeded environmental quality standards - intensive land use 	<p>The HNP is likely to affect the value and vulnerability of the area in relation to the special natural characteristics or cultural heritage due to the impacts upon the Cannock Chase SAC through increasing recreational pressure on the site. However, the plan does not promote greater residential development than is set out within the LPS which includes policies to mitigate for the impacts of recreational pressure on the SAC. The HNP and LPS policies would be used to ensure mitigation is secured.</p> <p>The level of development proposed through the HNP is unlikely to lead to intensive land use and as such not affect the value and vulnerability of the area.</p>
<p>The effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, community or international protection status.</p>	<p>The Cannock Chase SAC and AONB lies within 15km of the HNP boundary. Developments within the Cannock Chase SAC 15km zone of influence will in combination have an effect on the integrity of the SAC. The HNP would need to be in accordance with the LPS Policy NR7 which ensures that before development is permitted it must demonstrate that it (alone or in combination) will not have an adverse effect, whether direct or indirect, upon the integrity of the SAC having regard to avoidance or mitigation measures. Chasewater SSSI is within the neighbourhood area.</p> <p>The HNP boundary is within 15km of the Cannock Extension Canal SAC, Pasturefields Salt Marsh SAC, Humber Estuary and outside the River Mease SAC water catchment. There will be no significant effects from the proposals within the HNP on these SAC.</p>

Screening Outcome

- 3.7 The HNP does not allocate sites for development, and does not promote more development than is set out within the LPS. The suite of policies included within the plan are not considered to restrict development or seek to propose greater development than is set out within the LPS.
- 3.8 The conclusions of the above screening assessment on Hammerwich Neighbourhood Plan indicate that Strategic Environmental Assessment will not be required for the HNP.

4. HRA Screening

- 4.1 The Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) refers to the assessment required for any plan or project to assess the potential impacts against the conservation objectives of Natura 2000 wildlife sites. The assessment must determine whether the plans would adversely affect, or are likely to affect, the integrity of a site(s) in terms of its nature conservation objectives. Where negative effects are identified other options should be examined to avoid any potential damaging effects.
- 4.2 Under Criteria 4 of Figure 1 and Table 1 it was concluded that the Neighbourhood Plan may have an impact upon internationally designated sites and as such a 'case by case' assessment is required.
- 4.3 The HRA process is generally divided into three stages. The initial stage of the HRA process is called the screening stage and determines if there are any likely significant effects or risk of significant effects possible as a result of the implementation of the plan. If there are significant effects the plan will need to undertake an Appropriate Assessment. The screening process should provide a description of the plan and an identification of the Natura 2000 sites which may be affected by the plan and assess the significance of any possible effects on the identified sites.
- 4.4 The Lichfield Local Plan Strategy was subject to HRA during its production. This assessment looked at all internationally designated sites which could be impacted by development within Lichfield District. [The Habitat Regulations Assessment: Lichfield District & Tamworth Borough \(May 2012\)](#) was updated by the [Addendum to Habitat Regulations Assessment \(January 2014\)](#) which concluded that the Local Plan Strategy (as modified by the proposed Main Modifications) would have no likely significant effects upon European sites. The Local Plan Allocations document has also been supported by HRA during its production and follows from the Local Plan Strategy. [The Habitat Regulations Assessment \(January 2017\)](#) and [Habitat Regulations Assessment \(January 2018\)](#) have been published alongside the allocations document.
- 4.5 This section of the report provides a "screening" assessment for the HNP. It looks at the potential impacts of the plan's proposals on European Sites within 15km of the Neighbourhood Plan area; these sites are illustrated at Appendix 1. The following screening assessment will determine if the ENP will have any likely significant effects to determine whether the subsequent stages will be required.

Relevant Natura 2000 sites

- 4.6 The relevant Natura 2000 sites within 15km of the Hammerwich Neighbourhood Area are;
- Cannock Chase SAC – approx. 7.3km to the north west;
 - Cannock Extension Canal – approx. 2.5km to the south west;
 - River Mease SAC – approx. 11.8 to the east;
 - Humber Estuary SAC – River Trent whose catchment is part of the Humber Estuary SAC is within the HNP boundary.
- 4.7 The Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation (SAC), The Cannock Extension Canal SAC and the River Mease SAC are within a 15km radius of the Hammerwich Neighbourhood Area boundary. However, the HNP boundary is not within the River Mease water catchment area, the River

Trent whose water catchment is part of the Humber Estuary SAC is within the HNP boundary. Therefore the HRA screening assessment needs to identify if any likely significant effects on the reasons for these sites to be designated will be caused by the implementation of the plan. This assessment has been undertaken having regard to the results and information in the HRA and HRA addendum prepared for the Local Plan Strategy and is set out at Table 3.

Table 3: Sites within 15km of Hammerwich Neighbourhood Area¹

Name of Site	Reason for Designation	Conservation Objectives	Identified Impacts
Cannock Chase SAC	<p>Annex I habitats that are a primary reason for selection of this site</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ European dry heaths <p>Annex I habitats present as a qualifying feature, but not a primary reason for selection of this site</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> ▪ Wet heathland with cross leaved heath 	<p>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;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 the qualifying natural habitats rely 	<p>Visitor pressures include dog walking, horse riding, mountain biking and off-track activities such as orienteering, all of which cause disturbance and result in erosion, new track creation and vegetation damage. Bracken invasion is significant, but is being controlled. Birch and pine scrub, much of the latter from surrounding commercial plantations, is continually invading the site and has to be controlled. High visitor usage and the fact that a significant proportion of the site is Common Land, requiring Secretary of State approval before fencing can take place, means that the reintroduction of sustainable management in the form of livestock grazing has many problems. Cannock Chase overlies coal measures which have been deep-mined. Mining fissures continue to appear across the site even though mining has ceased and this is thought to detrimentally affect site hydrology. Furthermore the underlying Sherwood Sandstone is a major aquifer with water abstracted for public and industrial uses and the effects of this on the wetland features of the Chase are not fully understood.</p>
Cannock Extension Canal SAC	<p>Annex II species that are a primary reason for selection of this site</p>	<p>Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure</p>	<p>The population of <i>Luronium natans</i> in this cul-de-sac canal is dependent upon a balanced level of boat traffic. If the canal is not used,</p>

¹ Extracts from the Habitat Regulations Assessment: Lichfield District & Tamworth Borough (May 2012)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Floating water-plantain <i>Luronium natans</i> 	<p>that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The extent and distribution of habitats of qualifying species • The structure and function of the habitats of qualifying species • The supporting processes on the habitats of qualifying species rely • The populations of qualifying species, and, • The distribution of qualifying species within the site 	<p>the abundant growth of other aquatic macrophytes may shade-out the <i>Luronium natans</i> unless routinely controlled by cutting. An increase in recreational activity would be to the detriment of <i>Luronium natans</i>. Existing discharges of surface water run-off, principally from roads, cause some reduction in water quality.</p>
<p>River Mease SAC</p>	<p>Annex I habitats present as a qualifying feature, but not a primary reason for selection of this site</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Water courses of plain to montane levels with the <i>Ranuncion fluitantis</i> and <i>Callitricho-Batrachion</i> vegetation <p>Annex II species that are a primary reason for selection of this site</p>	<p>Maintain the river as a favourable habitat for floating formations of water Crowfoot (<i>ranunculus</i>), populations of bull head, spined loach and white clawed crayfish and the river and adjoining land as habitat for populations of otter.</p>	<p>The River Mease is an unusually semi-natural system in a largely rural landscape, dominated by intensive agriculture. Water quality and quantity are vital to the European interests, whilst competition for water resources is high. Diffuse pollution and excessive sedimentation are catchment-wide issues which have the potential to affect the site. The SSSI assessment report undertaken in 2007 notes the site's adverse condition and identifies the following issues: drainage, invasive freshwater species, water pollution – agriculture/run-off, water pollution – discharge. Significant new development could take place within the</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Spined loach <i>Cobitis taenia</i> ▪ Bullhead <i>Cottus gobio</i> <p>Annex II species present as a qualifying feature, but not a primary reason for site selection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ White-clawed (or Atlantic stream) crayfish <i>Austropotamobius pallipes</i> ▪ Otter <i>Lutra lutra</i> 		<p>catchment as a result of new housing and employment development in North-West Leicestershire, South Derbyshire and East Staffs which may impact upon water quality and quantity. The continuing creation of the National Forest will lead to further catchment wide changes in land use.</p>
<p>Humber Estuary</p>	<p>Annex I habitats that are a primary reason for selection of this site</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Estuaries ▪ Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide <p>Annex I habitats present as a qualifying feature, but not a primary reason for selection of this site</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sandbanks which are slightly covered by sea water all the time ▪ Coastal lagoons * Priority feature 	<p>Sandbanks which are slightly covered by sea water all the time - for which the area is considered to support a significant presence.</p> <p>Estuaries, for which this is considered to be one of the best areas in the United Kingdom.</p> <p>Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide, of which this is considered to be one of the best areas in the United Kingdom.</p>	<p>The Humber Estuary is subject to the impacts of human activities (past and present) as well as ongoing processes such as sea level rise and climate change. Management intervention is therefore necessary to enable the estuary to recover and to secure the ecological resilience required to respond to both natural and anthropogenic change. Key issues include coastal squeeze, impacts on the sediment budget, and geomorphological structure and function of the estuary (due to sea level rise, flood defence works, dredging, and the construction, operation and maintenance of ports, pipelines and other infrastructure), changes in water quality and flows, pressure from additional built development, and damage and disturbance arising from access, recreation and other activities. Coastal squeeze is being addressed through the development and implementation of the Humber Flood Risk</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand ▪ Atlantic salt meadows (Glauco- Puccinellietalia maritimae) ▪ Embryonic shifting dunes ▪ Shifting dunes along the shoreline with Ammophila arenaria (‘white dunes’) ▪ Fixed dunes with herbaceous vegetation (‘grey dunes’) * Priority feature ▪ Dunes with Hippophae rhamnoides <p>Annex II species present as a qualifying feature, but not a primary reason for site selection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sea lamprey <i>Petromyzon marinus</i> ▪ River lamprey <i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i> ▪ Grey seal <i>Halichoerus grypus</i> 	<p>Coastal lagoons, for which the area is considered to support a significant presence.</p> <p>Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand, for which the area is considered to support a significant presence.</p> <p>Atlantic salt meadows (Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae) for which the area is considered to support a significant presence.</p> <p>Embryonic shifting dunes, which are considered to be rare as its total extent in the United Kingdom is estimated to be less than 1000 hectares, for which the area is considered to support a significant presence.</p> <p>Shifting dunes along the shoreline with Ammophila arenaria (“white dunes”), for which the area is considered to support a significant presence.</p> <p>Fixed dunes with herbaceous vegetation (“grey dunes”), for which the area is considered to support a significant presence.</p>	<p>Management Strategy. All proposals for flood defence, development, dredging, abstractions and discharges which require consent from any statutory body, and land use plans which may have impacts upon the site are subject to assessment under the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 (the “Habitats Regulations”). Diffuse pollution will be addressed through a range of measures including implementation of the Waste Water Framework Directive and Catchment Sensitive Farming initiatives.</p> <p>Other issues are addressed via a range of measures including regulation of on-site land management activities and implementation of the Humber Management Scheme, developed by all relevant statutory bodies to assist in the delivery of their duties under the Habitats Regulations.</p>
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		<p>Dunes with <i>Hippophae rhamnoides</i>, which is considered to be rare as its total extent in the United Kingdom is estimated to be less than 1000 hectares, for which the area is considered to support a significant presence.</p> <p><i>Petromyzon marinus</i>, for which the area is considered to support a significant presence.</p> <p><i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i> for which the area is considered to support a significant presence.</p> <p><i>Halichoerus grypus</i> for which the area is considered to support a significant presence.</p>	
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- 4.8 The likelihood of significant effects have been assessed in relation to the specific features and environmental conditions of the protected sites, as could be effected by the HNP, or in combination with other known plans, taking particular account of the sites conservation objectives. As part of establishing what effects are significant, the probability of impact, duration of the impact, frequency of any impact and reversibility of impact have been considered.
- 4.9 Tables 4-7 set out the assessment based on the effects of the HNP on the four sites detailed above.

Table 4: Cannock Chase SAC

	Direct Habitat loss	Impact on protected species	Air Quality	Water Quality	Recreational Pressures	Water Quantity	Change in Surrounding Land Use	Invasive Species
Is HNP likely to impact upon this site	Potential	Potential	No	No	Yes	No	No	No
Possible effects in combination with other plans	The site is influenced by traffic and visitors from a wide area. Evidence has been produced which demonstrates that any new development within 15km of the SAC will, alone or in combination, have an impact upon the integrity of the SAC due to the potential for increasing visitors to the SAC.							
Assessment of effects and why not considered significant	The Hammerwich Neighbourhood Area is approximately 7.3km south east of the Cannock Chase SAC. Evidence has highlighted there are vulnerabilities from recreational pressures caused predominantly by increased use from new residential development but also from other forms of development within a 15km radius of the SAC. The HNP as drafted does not include any policies relating to development / allocations. Local Plan Strategy includes policy NR7 (Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation) which requires development to demonstrate that alone or in combination with other developments it will not have an adverse effect whether direct or indirect upon the integrity of the Cannock Chase SAC. Local Plan Policy NR7 ensures that any development within the neighbourhood area will need to demonstrate that it will not have adverse effects upon the SAC.							
Conclusion: No significant effects								

Table 5: Cannock Extension Canal SAC

	Direct Habitat loss	Impact on protected species	Air Quality	Water Quality	Recreational Pressures	Water Quantity	Change in Surrounding Land Use	Invasive Species
Is HNP likely to impact upon this site	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Possible effects in	None.							

combination with other plans	
Assessment of effects and why not considered significant	The Hammerwich Neighbourhood area 2.5km from the SAC. Development within the neighbourhood area would not have a direct impact upon the habitat, any protected species, air and water quality of this site nor would any policies within the plan as drafted have a direct impact upon the site.
Conclusion: No significant effects	

Table 6: River Mease SAC

	Direct Habitat loss	Impact on protected species	Air Quality	Water Quality	Recreational Pressures	Water Quantity	Change in Surrounding Land Use	Invasive Species
Is ENP likely to impact upon this site	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Possible effects in combination with other plans	None. The Local Plan Strategy includes policy to ensure that development is only permitted where it can be demonstrated that there will not be an adverse effect upon the integrity of the SAC.							
Assessment of effects and why not considered significant	Whilst the Hammerwich Neighbourhood Plan Area is within 15km of the River Mease SAC, it is outside of the River Mease SAC catchment area. As such no significant effects are likely.							
Conclusion: No significant effects								

Table 7: Humber Estuary SAC

	Direct Habitat loss	Impact on protected species	Air Quality	Water Quality	Recreational Pressures	Water Quantity	Change in Surrounding Land Use	Invasive Species
Is ENP likely to impact upon this site	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Possible effects in combination with other plans	None - The site is currently managed as a National Nature Reserve. It would be vulnerable to on site physical alterations to the water quality and quantity. There are many plans still being developed along the length of the River system.							
Assessment of effects and why not considered significant	Site is over 20km from the HNP boundary. Development proposals within the neighbourhood area will not affect the site physically as any effects would be through discharges into the River Tame and Trent as this eventually flows to the Humber. As the HNP does not propose more growth than the Local Plan it is unlikely this position would change.							
Conclusion: No significant effects								

Screening Outcome

- 4.10 Tables 4.7 do not identify any significant effects upon the identified European sites as a result of the HNP (as published at the date of this report).
- 4.11 Appendix 2 sets out a detailed assessment of the likely significant effects on European sites as a result of each policy within the HNP. The assessment concludes that none of the policies within the HNP are likely to have significant impacts upon the European sites identified within the assessment. Additionally:
- Whilst the HRA conclusions acknowledges the presence of additional mitigations, avoidance and cancellation measures within the Local Plan Strategy they are not required as mitigation measures of the Hammerwich Neighbourhood Plan;
 - Appendix 2 provides a review on a policy by policy basis. This assessment does not identify any policies with the potential for significant effects;
 - The HRA was carried out on the precautionary principle basis; and
 - Government guidance remains that generally neighbourhood plans are unlikely to result in significant effects.
- 4.12 The conclusions of the screening assessment above indicate that no further stages of Appropriate Assessment are required for the HNP.

5. Conclusions and recommendations of the Screening Assessments

- 5.1 This report contains the detail of the assessment of the need for the Hammerwich Neighbourhood Plan to be subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment as required by the SEA Directive and Appropriate Assessment as required by the Habitats Directive.
- 5.2 The assessment of both of these requirements has been undertaken on the Draft Hammerwich Neighbourhood Plan produced in August 2020 for the purposes of this screening assessment. As such if the content of the Neighbourhood Plan is significantly changed there may be the need for a further screening exercise to be undertaken on any modified version of the Neighbourhood Plan.

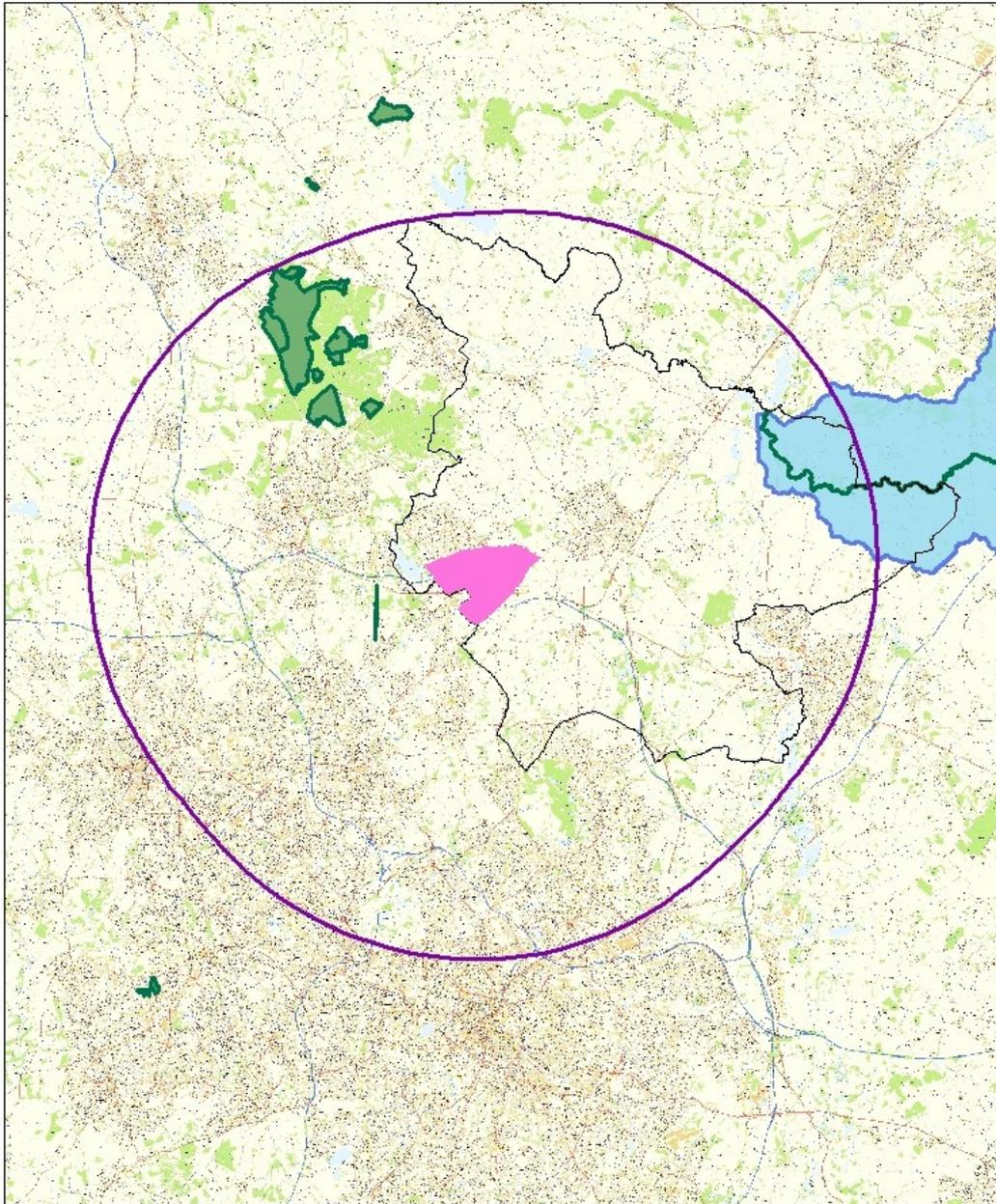
Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

- 5.3 In relation to the requirement for the Hammerwich Neighbourhood Plan to be subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment, the assessment detailed in Section 3 of this report concludes that as the plan in its current form is not likely to have significant environmental effects and therefore SEA will not be required. The statutory consultees indicated they agreed with the conclusions of this screening report with regard to SEA.

Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)

- 5.4 In relation to the requirement for the Hammeriwch Neighbourhood Plan to be subject to Habitat Regulations Assessment, the assessment detailed at Section 4 of this report concludes that there are no potential significant effects upon European Sites and no further work as part of the compliance with the Habitat Regulations will be required.

Appendix 1: Map of Natura 2000 sites within 15km of Neighbourhood Plan Boundary



Key

-  Hammerwich 15Km Radius
-  Hammerwich
-  Lichfield District Boundary
-  Special Areas of Conservation
-  River Mease SAC Water Catchment

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Appendix 2 – HRA review of Proposed Policies in Hammerwich Neighbourhood Plan

HNP Policy Number	Description of Policy	Any likely significant effects on European Sites anticipated as a result of the policy?
Policy CF1: Protecting and enhancing local facilities	Supports proposals to enhance or extend community facilities.	No – The policy does not itself propose development. It provides support for improvements for existing facilities
Policy VB1: Village boundary of Hammerwich Village	Defines a village boundary for Hammerwich	No – The policy does not itself propose development.
Policy H1: New housing development – siting and mix of housing types	Supports small scale infill housing development and conversions. Encourages development on such sites to provide accommodate suitable for older people.	No – the policy does not itself propose development.
Policy H2: Housing development design	Lists out the design requirements within the Sustainable Design SPD and additional requirements sought on development.	No – the policy does not itself propose development.
Policy T1: Increased traffic from new developments	Requires traffic impacts of any new developments to be assessed.	No – the policy does not itself propose development.
Policy T2: Car parking standards for new developments	Sets out car parking standards for new development	No – the policy does not itself propose development
Policy T3: New cycle routes	Support the creation of new and improvements to existing cycle routes within the Neighbourhood Area and improvements to the Lichfield & Hatherton Canal towpath	No – the policy does not itself propose development.
Policy T4: Reinstatement of the Lichfield to Walsall railway line	Supports the reinstatement of passenger services with the provision of a new station should proposals be brought forward to	No – the policy does not itself propose development.

HNP Policy Number	Description of Policy	Any likely significant effects on European Sites anticipated as a result of the policy?
	reopen the Walsall to Lichfield railway line	
<i>Policy LEnv1: Parks and Public Open Spacea</i>	Supports enhancement of facilities for sport and recreation in areas of open space	No – the policy does not itself propose development.
<i>Policy LEnv2: Protecting the key views across the countryside to and from Hammerwich Village</i>	Development should respect the visual amenity and sense of place afforded by two key views	No – the policy does not itself propose development.
<i>Policy LEnv3: Local Heritage Assets</i>	Requires development to take into account the impact on heritage assets.	No – the policy does not itself propose development.
<i>Policy Le1: Support for retail and commercial uses</i>	Provides support for proposals which improve existing or provide new retail and commercial facilities	No – the policy does not itself propose development.
<i>Policy Ed1: Supporting local education provision</i>	Provides support for proposals to enhance facilities at Ridgeway Primary School and Erasmus Darwin Academy	No – the policy does not itself propose development.

Appendix 3: SEA & HRA Screening Opinion and Statutory Consultee Responses

The following appendix includes the screening opinion requests from Lichfield District Council to the Statutory Bodies (Natural England, Historic England and Environment Agency) who have been consulted through the SEA & HRA process and their responses.

- 3.1 SEA & HRA Screening Opinion Letter**
- 3.2 Natural England Response**
- 3.3 Historic England Response**

Appendix 3.1: SEA & HRA Screening Opinion Letter

Your ref Hammerwich neighbourhood plan
Our ref HNP-SEA/HRA
Ask for Sarah Matile
Email Sarah.matile@lichfielddc.gov.uk



District Council House, Frog Lane
Lichfield, Staffordshire WS13 6YZ

Customer Services 01543 308000
Direct Line 01543 308152

29th October 2020

Dear Sir/Madam,

Hammerwich neighbourhood plan – screening opinion for an SEA & HRA

Hammerwich Parish Council has requested Lichfield District Council to undertake screening for SEA & HRA of their draft Neighbourhood Plan. The District Council has undertaken a screening process and produced the attached Screening Report which concludes that SEA and HRA of the Hammerwich Neighbourhood Plan (as currently drafted) will not be required.

Under the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (SI No.1633) Lichfield District Council ('the responsible authority') is required to consult with the consultation bodies in determining whether or not the plan is likely to have significant environmental effects and will therefore require an SEA. The Parish Council also requested screening opinion with regards to the need for a Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)

I am therefore requesting that you consider the attached Screening Report and provide any comments on its conclusions to assist in determining whether or not the plan is likely to have significant environmental effects and will therefore require an SEA. I would also welcome your comments on the need for a HRA.

If you have any comments I would ask for these to be sent within the next 25 working days (by 3rd December 2020) and if you have any queries please contact myself on 01543 308152. If no reply is received by **5pm on 3rd December 2020** will be assumed that you concur with the conclusions of the Screening Report.

Yours faithfully,

Sarah Matile
Spatial Policy & Delivery
Spatial Policy & Delivery - Economic Growth



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[lichfield_dc](https://twitter.com/lichfield_dc)



[MyStaffs App](#)

Appendix 3.2: Natural England Response

Date: 09 November 2020
Our ref: 333221
Your ref: Hammerwich Neighbourhood Plan



Sarah Matile
Lichfield District Council
sarah.matile@lichfielddc.gov.uk

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

T 0300 060 3900

BY EMAIL ONLY

Dear Sarah

Screening report for Hammerwich Neighbourhood Plan

Thank you for your consultation on the above dated 29 October 2020 which was received by Natural England on 29 October 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.

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 Hammerwich 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

3.3 Historic England Response



Historic England

Ms Sarah Matile
Lichfield District Council
District Council House
Frog Lane
Lichfield
Staffordshire
WS13 6YZ

Direct Dial: 0121 625 6887

Our ref: PL00723422

3 December 2020

Dear Ms Matile

HAMMERWICH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN SEA & HRA CONSULTATION

Thank you for the above consultation.

For the purposes of consultations on SEA, Historic England confines its advice to the question, "Is the Plan or proposal 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 by yourselves in your consultation to us.

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

Regarding HRA Historic England does not disagree with your conclusions but would defer to the opinions of the other statutory consultees.

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/strategic-environmental-assessment-sustainability-appraisal-historic-environment/>

I hope this advice is helpful.

Yours sincerely,

P.Boland

Peter Boland
Historic Places Advisor
peter.boland@HistoricEngland.org.uk

cc:



THE AXIS 10 HOLLIDAY STREET BIRMINGHAM B1 1TF

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Historic England



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