

HULLAVINGTON DRAFT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN HABITATS REGULATIONS ASSESSMENT (HRA) SCREENING

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. This HRA screening relates to the *Hullavington Neighbourhood Plan 2016-2026 Pre Submission Draft*.
- 1.2. The HRA screening has been carried out to comply with Regulation 105 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 ('the Habitats Regulations'). Under these Regulations, a competent authority must consider whether a relevant plan is likely to have a significant effect on any European Sites before deciding to give any consent, permission or other authorisation. If the screening exercise demonstrates significant effects are likely, the competent authority must undertake an appropriate assessment (AA) to determine the effects of the plan on the conservation objectives of the European Site(s) in question, consult the appropriate statutory nature conservation body and have regard to its representations. Both the screening and the full appropriate assessment, must consider the impacts of the plan alone and in combination with other plans or projects.
- 1.3. It is usually the case that a plan of this nature does not go into the detailed aspects of development proposals and therefore the full effects of potential development cannot be accurately assessed at the plan making stage. Specific development details will typically be identified by means of a planning application which would be subject to further, more detailed HRA where applicable.
- 1.4. Where appropriate assessment is undertaken with respect of specific European Sites, the competent authority may only authorise the plan or project where it has first ascertained, taking into consideration the sites' conservation objectives, that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the European Site or sites. Otherwise the plan cannot be authorised unless specific statutory tests are met.
- 1.5. Wiltshire Council has conducted the following HRA screening as competent authority for the Hullavington Neighbourhood Plan. Where risks to European Sites are identified amendments must be incorporated into the plan to remove these before the plan is made. Likewise, changes to the plan, or the planning context must also be considered under the Regulations before the final plan is considered by a referendum and adopted.

2. SCREENING FOR APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT

2.1 Screening Methodology

- 2.1.1 Each element of the draft plan ¹ has been categorised against the screening criteria developed on behalf of, and endorsed by Natural England². This approach is advised to help provide a clear audit trail for the assessment of local planning documents (which may be applied to neighbourhood plans), and if necessary identify the need for the policies to be

¹ Hullavington Neighbourhood Plan 2016-2026 Pre Submission Draft

² David Tyldesley Associates (2009) *The Habitats Regulations Assessment of Local Development Documents* (Revised Draft Guidance)

removed / amended or new policies added to be certain that the plan will not have a significant negative effect on a European Site.

2.1.2 The screening criteria used are as follows:

- Category A1: The policy will not itself lead to development e.g. because it relates to design or other qualitative criteria for development;
- Category A2: The policy is intended to protect the natural environment;
- Category A3: The policy is intended to conserve or enhance the natural, built or historic environment;
- Category A4: The policy would positively steer development away from European sites and associated sensitive areas;
- Category A5: The policy would have no effect because no development could occur through the policy itself, the development being implemented through later policies in the same plan, which are more specific and therefore more appropriate to assess for their effects on European Sites and associated sensitive areas.
- Category B – no significant effect;
- Category C – likely significant effect alone; and
- Category D – Likely significant effects in combination.

2.1.3 The effect of each policy has been considered both individually and in combination with other plans and projects. Where there is a potential for likely significant effects an appropriate assessment must be undertaken. The effects of the whole plan have also been considered in combination with the adopted Wiltshire Core Strategy.

2.2 Screening for Wiltshire Core Strategy HRA

2.2.1 The Wiltshire Core Strategy HRA (October 2009, February 2012³, March 2013⁴, and April 2014⁵) identified general parameters to determine the likelihood of potential impact on Natura 2000 (European protected) sites. The following parameters were identified and assessed for the following Natura 2000 sites.

Recreation – Natura 2000 sites within 5km of the plan area, or where Salisbury Plain Special Protection Area (SPA)/Special Area of Conservation (SAC) is within 15km of the plan area:

- Salisbury Plain SAC and SPA
- River Avon SAC
- New Forest SAC / SPA

Hydrology / Hydrogeology - Sites that fall wholly or partly within the Wessex Water Resource Zone may be susceptible to impact:

- Salisbury Plain SAC / SPA

³ Wiltshire Core Strategy Submission Draft – Assessment under the Habitats Regulations, Wiltshire Council, February 2012

⁴ Wiltshire Core Strategy – Assessment under the Habitats Regulations, Wiltshire Council, March 2013

⁵ Wiltshire Core Strategy Updated Habitats Regulations Assessment, April 2014

- Bath and Bradford on Avon Bats SAC
- Pewsey Downs SAC
- North Meadow and Clattinger Farm SAC
- River Avon SAC
- River Lambourn SAC
- Kennet & Lambourn Floodplain SAC

Air Pollution / Nitrogen Deposition – Natura 2000 sites within 200m of a main road

- Porton Down SPA
- Salisbury Plain SAC / SPA
- Southampton Water SPA
- Clattinger Farm SAC
- River Avon SAC
- Rodborough Common SAC
- Cotswolds Beechwoods SAC

Physical Damage / Interruption of Flight Lines / Disturbance

- Bath and Bradford on Avon Bats SAC
- Porton Down SPA

2.3 Settlement screening for Hullavington

- 2.3.1 Since the Wiltshire Core Strategy was adopted in January 2015, the Council has published a pre-submission draft of the Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations Plan together with a HRA dated 21 June 2017. An Addendum to the HRA was published on 4 May 2018. The screening criteria for the HRA for the DPD were refined on the basis of best available scientific evidence, local knowledge and the Council's experience of carrying out HRA's in the local area. A settlement level screening assessment forms part of the Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations Plan HRA which included an assessment of Hullavington. The HRA screening assessment did not identify any likely significant effects on any European Site that would be triggered by development at the settlement.

2.4 Screening of Policies in Hullavington Neighbourhood Plan

- 2.4.1 The draft Hullavington Neighbourhood Plan includes policies to address the following objectives:
- Provide high quality new homes to meet the village's current and emerging housing needs.
 - Enhance and reinforce the historic character and distinctiveness of the village through:
 - a) Design that maintains the distinctive character of the village, and
 - b) Respect for the village setting and surrounding landscape.

- Conserve and facilitate interaction with the natural environment by:
 - a) Protecting and maintaining an effective network of green space to improve quality of life,
 - b) Enhancing biodiversity, and
 - c) Providing open public space accessible to the whole community.

All parts of the plan have been screened for potential impacts upon the Natura 2000 network, as detailed in Section 3.

3. INITIAL HABITATS REGULATIONS SCREENING ASSESSMENT OF THE HULLAVINGTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

a) Screening assessment of individual policies

A / B (Green) – Screened out

C / D (Red) – Screened in

Policy	Categorisation in initial screening	Comments and recommendations
<p>Policy 1 Proposed Settlement Boundary The revised settlement boundary as identified in the Proposals Map (Fig 15).</p> <p>Development proposals will be supported within the settlement boundary, subject to compliance with all, non site-specific, policies in the Neighbourhood Plan, the saved policies of the North Wiltshire Plan and Wiltshire Core Strategy.</p> <p>Development proposals outside the settlement boundary will not be permitted unless:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • they are in accordance with the Wiltshire Core Strategy policies in respect of appropriate uses in the countryside; • they relate to necessary utilities infrastructure and where no reasonable alternative location is possible; • they are in compliance with all the non site specific policies within this Neighbourhood Plan, the saved policies of the North Wiltshire Local Plan and Wiltshire Core Strategy. 	A1	<p>The policy is intended to steer and set criteria for development and to restrict it to within the settlement boundary, with certain stipulated exceptions. The policy also proposes a revised settlement boundary that would incorporate SHLAA site 690. It is considered that development within the proposed settlement boundary and the plan area would be sufficiently distant from any features associated with any European site, such that no likely significant effect would occur.</p>
<p>Policy 2 Allocation and delivery of the site adjacent to the school (690) for development at Hullavington as shown on the map in Fig. 23. SHLAA site 690 approximately 4 hectares located between the C31 (Norton Road) and The Primary and Nursery School is allocated for the development of approximately 70 homes, which will deliver a sustainable high quality</p>	B	<p>This policy proposes the development of one site chosen by the residents of Hullavington and this constitutes SHLAA site 690 which is incorporated within the Proposed Settlement Boundary which is put forward in the plan. The plan clearly specifies</p>

Policy	Categorisation in initial screening	Comments and recommendations
<p>development, which shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • include the production of a Master Plan for the site produced with meaningful and continued input and engagement from stakeholders; • deliver a community car park; • provide around 0.2 hectares for school expansion; • deliver approximately 70 homes including a target of 40% affordable housing; • deliver predominantly 2 and 3 bed properties, unless it can be clearly demonstrated through robust, up to date market evidence an alternative mix is required • deliver high quality housing that uses traditional materials, where possible, designed to be in keeping with the historic buildings and layout of the village, referencing 'The New Development Design Concept' Appendix C. Designs should be locally distinctive reflecting style and scale proportionate to the historic central spine of Hullavington (which can be seen in Fig. 11 on page 7); • assess the impact on the adjoining traditional cottages in Newtown and take this into account when planning the site layout in order to mitigate as far as is possible any adverse effect; • maximise opportunities for accessible and adaptable dwellings • use native species hedgerows and dry stone walling along the boundary of the site to reflect and safeguard the historic character of the village, keeping the development in context with its traditional rural environment; settling the new development in the wider rural landscape by having regard to Wiltshire's Landscape Character Assessment, ensuring that the tranquil, peaceful character and setting of the village is retained; • include means of enclosure within the development that reflects the traditional, rural context of the village. Where new green landscaping boundaries are planted, they shall be of native or wildlife enhancing hedgerow species, to encourage biodiversity • conserve and enhance the network of green infrastructure that contributes towards increasing biodiversity, providing appropriate buffers to natural spaces 		<p>that: <i>'No other areas of land outside the village boundary will be developed for housing within the Plan Period, and we feel that none of the areas that were put forward as potential Open Green Spaces need additional protection in this Plan.'</i></p> <p>It is noted that Policy 2 makes specific reference to conserving and protecting biodiversity and protected, priority and notable species and habitats; and to increasing and enhancing biodiversity and incorporating new habitat and features for wildlife within any new development, and this is welcomed.</p>

Policy	Categorisation in initial screening	Comments and recommendations
<p>that have community and local biodiversity significance e.g. the Brook, as shown in Fig.23;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • restore or enhance connectivity for nature and people through the site, helping to provide better links between urban and rural landscapes creating accessible and attractive places for communities to make regular contact with the natural environment, retaining and where possible enhancing the Public Rights of Way which bisect the development; • provide open public space incorporating informal recreation space, providing clear arrangements for the long-term maintenance and management of the green infrastructure assets; • be designed so as to limit the impact of light pollution on local amenity, on intrinsically dark landscapes and nature conservation, having regard for the findings and recommendations of an ecological assessment for the site; • protect the residential amenity of adjoining occupiers; • maximise opportunities for energy efficiency in terms passive and active approaches to sustainable development; • demonstrate traffic generation does not adversely affect road and pedestrian safety; • show that the proposal meets current parking standards appropriate for the size of dwelling; • show how parking will be integrated within any landscaping scheme for the development, so that it provides sufficient spaces for the proposed development whilst not dominating the street scene; • provide an appropriate level of private external amenity space to include refuse and recycling storage to ensure a high quality and a well-managed property and streetscape, and • provide good pedestrian and cycle connections to the surrounding countryside and village, while demonstrating how safe pedestrian access will be achieved, with particular focus to those who are using a pushchair, wheelchair, walking aid or mobility scooter. 		

Policy	Categorisation in initial screening	Comments and recommendations
<p>Policy 3 Delivering development other than the allocated site</p> <p>All proposals for development or redevelopment will be expected to, where appropriate have regard to the size and scale of the development and should;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • deliver high quality design that is in keeping with the historic buildings and layout of the village and rural nature of the Parish; referencing ‘The New Development Design Concept’ Appendix C. Designs should be locally distinctive reflecting the style and rural nature of both the Parish and village particularly the historic central spine of Hullavington which can be seen in Fig. 11 on page 7; • provide high quality boundary treatments, which reflect the character of the Parish, referring to the ‘New development Design Concept’ Appendix C, using traditional materials, where possible to keep the development in context with both the village and wider Parish. Any means of enclosure within the development should reflect the traditional, rural nature of the Parish. Where new green landscaping boundaries are planted, they shall be comprised of native or wildlife enhancing hedgerow species, to encourage biodiversity; • proposals that may impact on a heritage asset, whether designated or non-designated, should be accompanied by an assessment of the significance of the asset and the impact of the proposal upon its significance, using appropriate expertise, where necessary. In the case of a heritage asset with archaeological interest, a desk top assessment should be submitted and, where necessary, a field evaluation carried out; • maintain the key characteristics of the area and setting of the village within the wider landscape, as defined in the Wiltshire Landscape Character Assessment; • retain and protect the network of Public Rights of Way in the Parish; • demonstrate that all the functional environmental infrastructure and connections have been taken into account in the design of the scheme or site layout, including impacts on ecosystem services; biodiversity; and recreation within and near to the application site and show how this understanding has positively contributed to place making and influenced the proposal; • protect and where possible enhance wildlife habitats and corridors, 	A1	<p>The policy is intended to steer and set criteria for any proposed development other than the allocated site put forward within the plan. This includes criteria in terms of biodiversity and green spaces and this is welcomed. It is considered that development within the proposed settlement boundary and plan area would be sufficiently distant from any features associated with any European site, such that no likely significant effect would occur.</p>

Policy	Categorisation in initial screening	Comments and recommendations
<p>encouraging biodiversity by conserving the network of green infrastructure that contributes towards increasing biodiversity, providing appropriate buffers to natural spaces that have community, biodiversity and heritage significance;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide adequate off-street parking for customers, residents and visitors and well-planned on street parking where required. Showing that the proposals meet current parking standards and how parking will be integrated within any landscaping scheme; • provide an appropriate level of private external amenity space to include refuse and recycling storage to ensure a high quality and a well-managed property and streetscape; • provide good pedestrian and cycle connections to the surrounding countryside and village; • demonstrate traffic generation and parking does not adversely affect road and pedestrian safety • protect the residential amenity of adjoining occupiers, and • contribute to the provision, extension and maintenance of accessible green space, including green space for sport and children’s play space for the enjoyment of residents, in accordance with Wiltshire Council’s open space provision. <p>The incorporation of sustainable design features into development proposals will be strongly supported.</p>		

Impacts have been screened out for the reasons provided in the Wiltshire Core Strategy HRA and Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations Plan HRA (21 June 2017) and Addendum (4 May 2018). (See Section 2 of this HRA screening.)

Given the location, scale and nature of the development proposals put forward within the policies contained within the plan, no likely significant effects on European Sites or their qualifying features as a result of the plan have been identified.

- b) Assessment of all elements of the plan 'in combination':
 - The draft policies set out within the plan would not have any in combination effects.
- c) Assessment of the effects of the plan as a whole, in combination with the Wiltshire Core Strategy:
 - The plan would not have any in combination effects with the Wiltshire Core Strategy and the Swindon Core Strategy.

4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1 The draft policies allocate one site for the development of seventy high quality homes, including affordable housing, (namely the SHLAA site 690) within the proposed revised settlement boundary. The policies also set specific criteria for any new development relating to such matters as creating public open space; protecting and enhancing biodiversity, habitats and wildlife corridors; protecting the heritage and landscape setting of the plan area and guiding the design and quality of new housing. Given the location of the plan area and the one allocated development site, together with the content of the policies contained within the plan, it is assessed that there would be no likely significant effects upon Natura 2000 sites as a result of the plan.
- 4.2 It can therefore be concluded that the Pre Submission Draft of the Hullavington Neighbourhood Plan would have no likely significant effects upon the Natura 2000 network alone or in combination, and as such no appropriate assessment is considered necessary by Wiltshire Council as the competent authority.

Please note that HRA is an iterative process and future iterations of the plan should also be screened if the policies change significantly.

Assessment completed by [REDACTED], Ecologist, Wiltshire Council 29/08/2018