



PLAN-IT X
TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING SERVICES

Weldon

Neighbourhood Plan

Habitat Regulations Screening

Report

July 2024

**PLANIT-X TOWN AND COUNTRY
PLANNING SERVICES LTD**

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RTPI

mediation of space - making of place

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1. Introduction

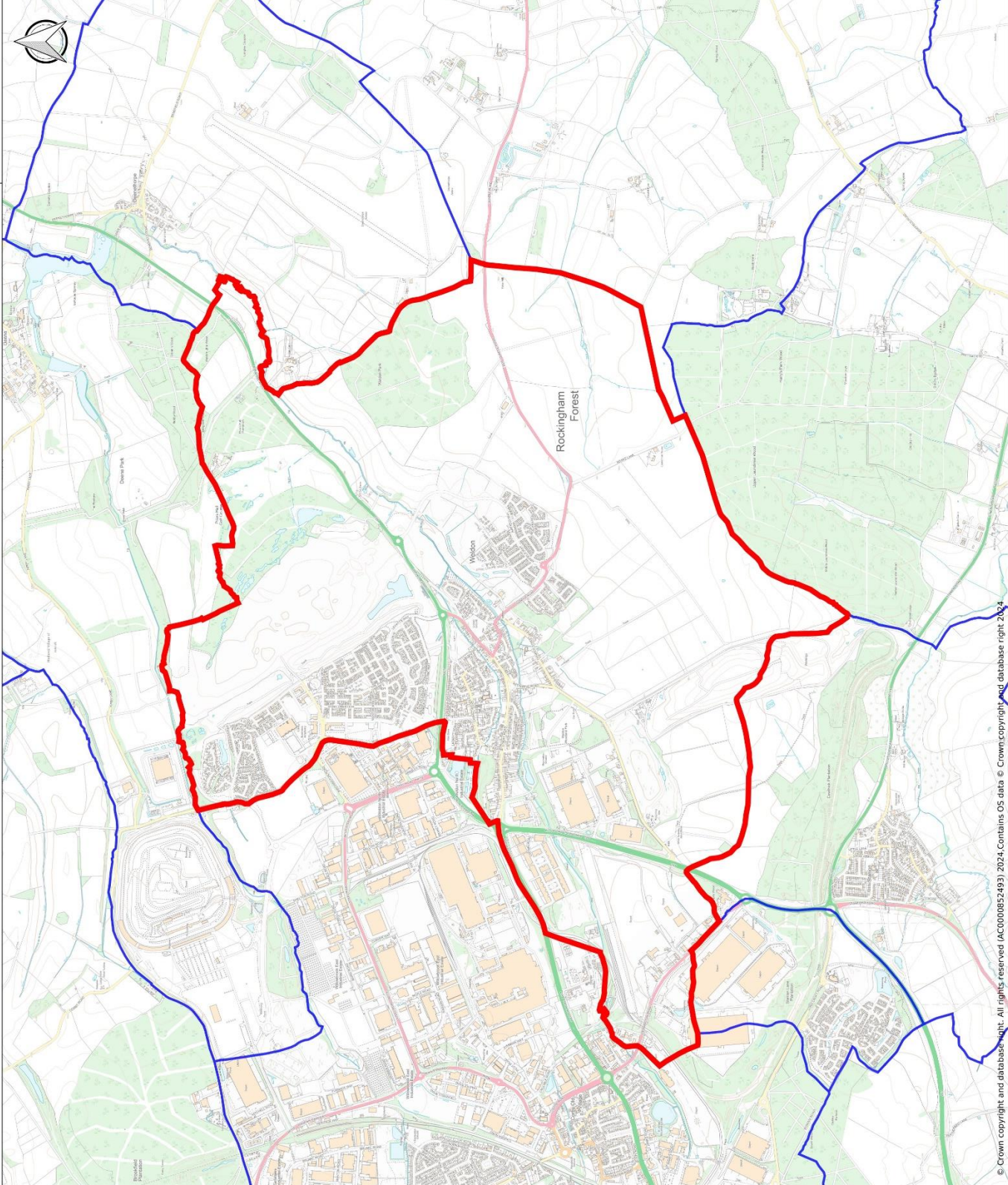
- 1.1 This Habitat Regulations Screening Report has been undertaken to support the Weldon Neighbourhood Plan which is being produced by the Weldon Parish Council in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended).
- 1.2 The aim of this Screening Report is to assess whether there are likely to be significant effects on European Sites as a result of the emerging policies set out in the pre-submission draft Neighbourhood Plan that would necessitate the production of a full Habitat Regulations Assessment.
- 1.3 This report assesses, as far as practical, whether there are likely to be any significant effects on the qualifying features of European Designated Sites within or relatively proximate to the approved Neighbourhood Plan area, which comprises the civil parish of Weldon.



Parish



Neighbourhood Plan Area



2. Details of the Neighbourhood Plan

Title of the plan:

- 2.1 Weldon Neighbourhood Plan.

Name of Qualifying Body and Local Planning Authority:

- 2.2 The qualifying body preparing the Weldon Neighbourhood Plan is Weldon Parish Council. The Local Planning Authority is North Northamptonshire Council.
- 2.3 From 1 April 2021, North Northamptonshire Council became the single unitary council responsible for providing a range of public services to residents and businesses in the areas of Corby, East Northamptonshire, Kettering and Wellingborough. It has replaced Corby Borough Council, East Northamptonshire Council, Kettering Borough Council and the Borough Council of Wellingborough, and now delivers all the services which were previously provided by these councils.

Weldon Neighbourhood Plan contact point:

Email: scweldonpc@gmail.com

Location and spatial extent of the Weldon Neighbourhood Plan:

- 2.4 The Weldon Neighbourhood Plan covers the Weldon Neighbourhood Area, comprising the parish of Weldon which is located within North Northamptonshire. It is a large rural parish immediately to the east of Corby, with a population of 6,800 and 2,600 homes (2021 Census).
- 2.5 The Prior Hall Park and Weldon Park developments, located within the Parish, have resulted in significant housing growth and a range of services and facilities, including play areas, schools and community centre. For planning purposes these two areas are located within the Corby Urban Area. The old village of Weldon is distinct from these developments and has a good range of services including pubs, cricket club, village store and post office, village hall and a village green.

Timeframe of the Weldon Neighbourhood Plan:

- 2.6 2024 to 2031.

Main aims of the Weldon Neighbourhood Plan:

- 2.7 The following vision statement has been prepared for the Plan and makes it clear what the Plan is aiming to achieve:

Weldon Parish is a geographically large parish with deep historical roots.

Whilst we acknowledge the significant changes that will follow the building-out of the Strategic Development site within the Neighbourhood Area, our vision seeks to ensure the retention of the rural character and green spaces of the remainder of the Neighbourhood Area through incorporating small-scale expansion in conjunction with the existing settlements of Weldon village. Future housing provision should be in keeping with the village character and should include a mix of housing to cater for young people, older people and those with disabilities, including affordable homes to allow younger families to live in the parish and to contribute to its development. Public transport provision, a wider range of employment opportunities, adequate broadband speeds to encourage home working, and a managed traffic system are part of the vision for the future.

We wish to see the strategic developments protect the open spaces that form a strong element of the master plan, and for the design guide to be followed in each distinctive area.

The vision is for strengthening further a healthy community spirit and for future development to enable the overall rural identity of the parish to be retained and to ensure connectivity within and between settlements.

In 2031 Weldon parish will have retained its existing character, friendliness and sense of community that parishioners are so proud of. Outside the strategic site it will remain a unique rural settlement with distinct areas of separation from other local villages and towns, enjoying open views of the countryside and increased access to areas of natural beauty.

Relationship with the Local Plan:

- 2.8 The Weldon Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared in the context of the North Northamptonshire Development Plan. For the purposes of the Weldon Neighbourhood Plan, the relevant parts are the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy 2011-2031 (Adopted July 2016) and the Part 2 Local Plan for Corby 2011-2031 (Adopted September 2021).
- 2.9 The North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (JCS) was adopted in July 2016. It is the overall strategic plan for North Northamptonshire setting out the spatial strategy. Corby is a focus for growth.
- 2.10 The Part 2 Local Plan for Corby develops in more detail the strategy outlined in the JCS and identifies sites for uses such as housing, employment and open space. It also contains development management policies which will be used to assess planning applications over the plan period. The Part 2 Local Plan for Corby defines the Settlement Boundary around the old village of Weldon.
- 2.11 Work has started on the North Northamptonshire Local Plan Review, to take into account changes since 2016 and extend the plan period to 2041. The Plan will cover both strategic and non-strategic matters. An initial consultation on its scope and issues was undertaken in March 2022. The

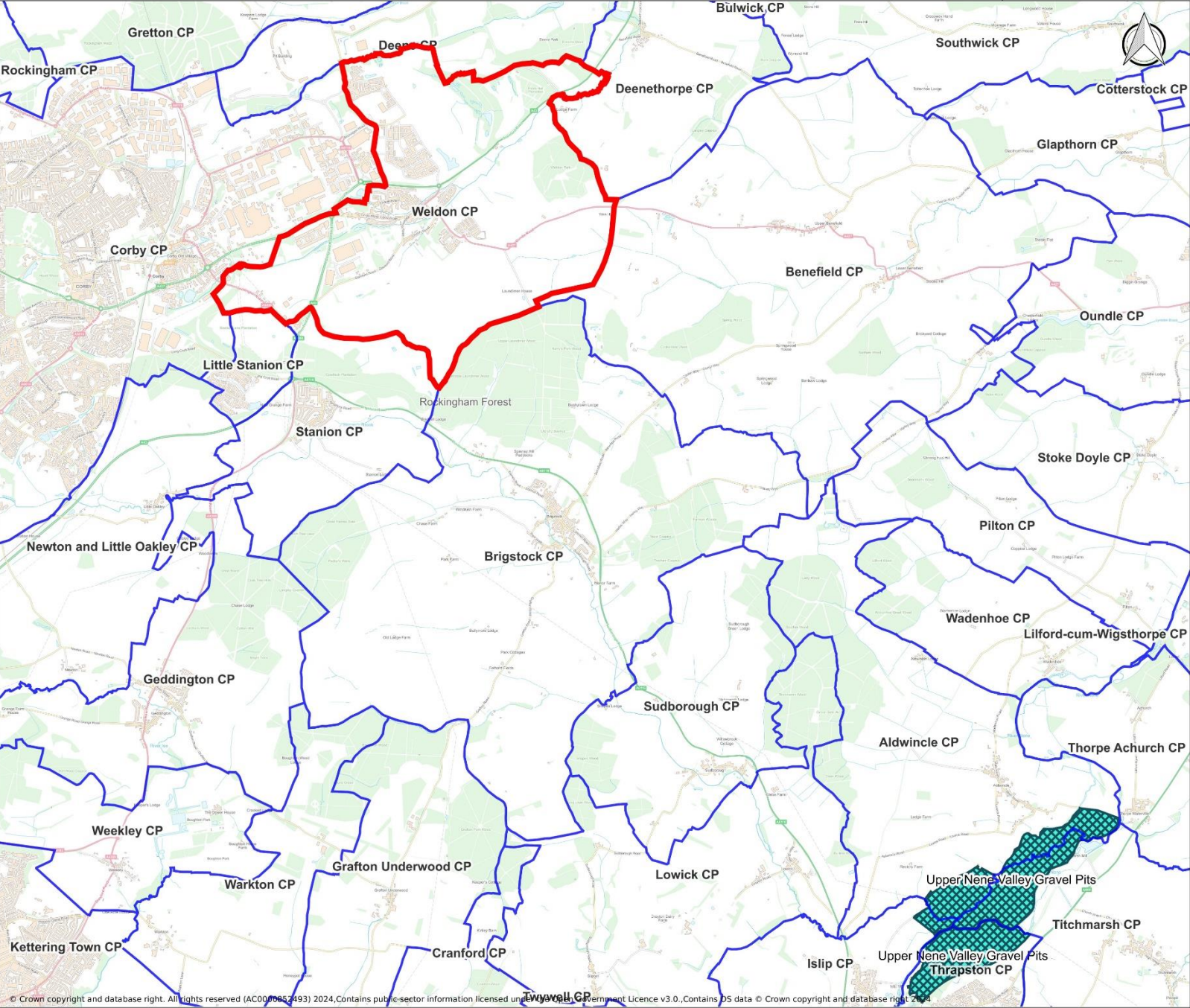
Local Plan is due to be sent to the Secretary State for examination in 2024 and its adoption is anticipated for 2026.

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

- 2.12 The Joint Core Strategy identifies a hierarchy of settlements, based on their sustainability, for the purposes of determining the distribution of housing across North Northamptonshire. Corby is identified as a Growth Town and the focus for the majority of growth. Weldon villages is a rural area. For planning purposes Priors Hall Park and Weldon Park, comprising the North East Corby Sustainable Urban Extension, are located within the Corby Urban Area.
- 2.13 The Part 2 Local Plan for Corby confirms that there is an oversupply of housing in the rural parishes. The significant development that has taken place on the strategic sites (Priors Hall Park and Weldon Park) are acknowledged. There is therefore no specific housing requirement identified for Weldon.
- 2.14 A rural housing needs survey conducted in October 2017 identified 40 new homes needed in the Parish (26 of which to be in the form of affordable rent or ownership). This target however has been exceeded as a result of the development at Priors Hall Park.
- 2.15 Therefore, there are no proposed housing allocations in the Weldon Neighbourhood Plan.

3. Legislative Background

- 3.1 A European site is protected by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 as amended (known as the Habitats Regulations).
- 3.2 The following European sites are protected by the Habitats Regulations and any proposals that could affect them will require an HRA:
- Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)
 - Special Protection Areas (SPAs)
- 3.3 Any proposals affecting the following sites would also require an HRA because these are protected by government policy:
- proposed SACs
 - potential SPAs
 - Ramsar sites - wetlands of international importance (both listed and proposed)
 - areas secured as sites compensating for damage to a European site
- 3.4 The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, state that submitted Plans need to be accompanied by a statement explaining how the proposed Plan meets the 'basic conditions' set out in Schedule 4B of the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act. These basic conditions include a requirement to demonstrate how the Plan is compatible with EU obligations, which include the need to undertake a Habitat Regulations Assessment.
- 3.5 The HRA process should be taken at a level of detail that is appropriate and proportional and the first stage in the process is known as 'screening'. This is a risk assessment to decide whether the subsequent stage, known as 'Appropriate Assessment', is required. The essential question is: "Is the plan, either alone or in combination with other relevant projects and plans, likely to result in a significant effect upon European sites?"
- 3.6 The objective of screening is to identify those policies that can, without any detailed proposal, be said to be unlikely to result in significant adverse effects upon European sites, usually because there is no mechanism for an adverse interaction with such a site. Only if a significant effect is likely would the need for an Appropriate Assessment of the Weldon Neighbourhood Plan be triggered.



Special Protection Areas



RAMSAR



Parish



Neighbourhood Plan Area



4. North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy Habitat Regulations Assessment

- 4.1 The Weldon Neighbourhood Plan must be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area.
- 4.2 The North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (JCS) was adopted in July 2016. It is the strategic Part 1 Local Plan for Corby, East Northamptonshire, Kettering and Wellingborough. It outlines a big picture to be developed in more detail through the Part 2 Local Plans prepared by the District and Borough Councils and by Neighbourhood Plans prepared by Neighbourhood Planning Groups.
- 4.3 In 2013 a Habitat Regulations Appropriate Assessment (Likely Significant Effects) exercise for the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy was undertaken. A further Habitat Regulations Assessment was prepared in January 2015 to accompany the JCS public consultation.
- 4.4 The Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) concluded that mechanisms to avoid adverse effects on the integrity of the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA had been incorporated into the Joint Core Strategy (JCS) and the planning application determination process. The JCS Inspector's report indicates that the HRA was satisfactory and taking into account advice from relevant consultees, notably Natural England, the Inspector concluded that the JCS was sound and consistent with Government policy.
- 4.5 The North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy defines a 3km zone from the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA/Ramsar site within which development could result in increased activity within the SPA/Ramsar. This HRA also defined a 4km zone from for the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA/Ramsar site within which development on previously developed farmland could impact designated bird features associated with the SPA/Ramsar site.

The Part 2 Local Plan for Corby

- 4.6 The Habitat Regulations Assessment of the Part 2 Local Plan for Corby (2019) identifies that, as the Borough of Corby and all allocated sites within the Part 2 Local Plan for Corby are located more than 9km from the SPA/Ramsar site, it is possible to conclude that no likely significant effects will arise from the Local Plan Part 2, alone or in combination with other plans and projects.

5. Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA

- 5.1 Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA covers 1,358 hectares in total and is located along the River Nene between Northampton and Thorpe Waterville to the east. The SPA consists of 20 separate blocks of land and water fragmented by roads and other features and located adjacent and / or close to urban areas. A map illustrating the extent of the SPA can be viewed [here](#).
- 5.2 The SPA comprises a chain of extant and extinct gravel pits that follow alluvial deposits along the River Nene. It is dominated by a mix of shallow and deeper inland waterbodies, with associated marginal vegetation, improved grassland and nationally scarce wet broad-leaved deciduous woodland dominated by white willow (*Salix alba*) with crack willow (*S. fragilis*) and occasionally ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*), Osier (*S. viminalis*) and grey willow (*S. cinereal*). The site contains internationally important populations of nonbreeding wintering waterbirds that have been found in numbers in excess of 20,000 individuals.
- 5.3 The site's conservation objectives have been taken into account including consideration of the citation for the site and information supplied by Natural England. The potential significant effects of the proposals on the international nature conservation interests for which the site was designated may be summarised as:
- Changes in water quality related to increased levels of sewerage outfall (increased phosphate loading) and diffuse pollution sources.
 - Indirect disturbance and environmental nuisance (air quality, noise, lighting, visitor pressure) leading to a decrease in key species populations over time.
- 5.4 The Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area (SPA) is located to the south east of the Neighbourhood Area. The nearest block is located approximately 9.4km from the Weldon Neighbourhood Area at its nearest point.

6. Screening Assessment

6.1 The table below provides an assessment of any likely significant effect of each Neighbourhood Plan policy on the European Designated Sites. For the purposes of this assessment the policies appraised are those that were approved by Weldon Parish Council for inclusion in the Weldon Neighbourhood Plan Draft Plan for Regulation 14 Consultation (2024).

Key

- No likely significant effect (NLSE) on the site's qualifying features
- Likely significant effect (LSE) on the site's qualifying features
- Uncertain whether it is NLSE or LSE

Weldon Neighbourhood Plan Policy	Comments	Likely effect in identified sites – Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA
Policy H1: Settlement Boundary Appropriate development within the settlement boundary will be supported. Land outside of the settlement boundary will be treated as open countryside.	This policy does not outline sites for development. It seeks to steer development to the appropriate location. In addition, given the distance between the Parish and the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA, it is considered unlikely to have a significant negative effect on its qualifying features or any in combination effects, with other projects and plans.	NLSE
Policy H2: Priors Hall Park and Weldon Park Seeks to manage the environmental and amenity impacts of these developments.	This policy itself does not seek to deliver new development. The ambition of this policy is to manage the impact of the development across a range of issues, including amenity, highway safety, design and landscape.	NLSE
Policy H3: Housing Mix Seeks a mix of housing types to meet the local needs including	This policy itself does not seek to deliver new development. The ambition of this policy is to address the imbalance in the existing housing stock and to enable	NLSE

Weldon Neighbourhood Plan Policy	Comments	Likely effect in identified sites – Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA
smaller homes and homes suitable for older people and people with disabilities.	dwellings to be built in Weldon to meet local housing needs. .	
Policy H4: Affordable Housing Provision Seeks a supply of affordable housing to meet local need.	This policy itself does not seek to deliver new development. The ambition of this policy is to address the limited opportunities for affordable housing within Weldon village.	NLSE
Policy H5: Windfall Sites Identifies when small infill or redevelopment sites will be supported.	This policy does not outline sites for development. It seeks to support housing that is appropriate to the character of the Neighbourhood Area. Any development will be of a small scale. In addition, given the distance between the Parish and the Upper Nene Valley Gavel Pits SPA, it is considered unlikely to have a significant negative effect on its qualifying features or any in combination effects, with other projects and plans.	NLSE
Policy H6: Design Development should reflect the local distinctiveness and character neighbourhood area and satisfy design requirements.	The policy itself does not seek to deliver new development. Its purpose is to facilitate appropriate design for development of one or more houses.	NLSE
Policy ENV1: Protection of Local Green Space Designates 3 sites as Local Green Space and seeks	This policy itself will not lead to development. Its purpose is to protect Local Green Spaces.	NLSE

Weldon Neighbourhood Plan Policy	Comments	Likely effect in identified sites – Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA
the protection of their openness and special character.		
Policy ENV2: Important Open Spaces Designates sites for their amenity, biodiversity, sport and recreation value, and their attractiveness and tranquillity. Seeks their protection and suitable replacement.	This policy itself does not seek to deliver new development. Its purpose is to protect important open spaces.	NLSE
Policy ENV3: Protection of Sites of Natural Environment Significance Identifies and seek to protect features of local environmental or geological importance.	This policy itself does not seek to deliver new development. Its purpose is to protect habitats and the natural environment.	NLSE
Policy ENV4: Biodiversity and Habitat Connectivity Seeks to protect local ecological habitats and features, and biodiversity improvements.	The policy itself does not seek to deliver new development. Its purpose is to protect habitats and species.	NLSE
Policy ENV5: Protection of Sites of Historical Environment Significance	This policy itself does not seek to deliver new development. Its purpose is to protect historic features.	NLSE

Weldon Neighbourhood Plan Policy	Comments	Likely effect in identified sites – Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA
Identifies significant local historical features. The significance of these features will be balanced against the local benefit of any development that would affect or damage them.		
Policy ENV6: Managing Flood Risk Requires the impact of flood risk to be considered and the provision of appropriate flood management measures.	The policy itself will not lead to new development. Its ambition is to manage the impact of development on local flooding issues.	NLSE
Policy ENV7: Footpaths and Bridleways Seeks to protect the existing network of footpaths and bridleways.	The policy itself will not lead to development. Its purpose is to protect footpaths and bridleways within the Neighbourhood Area. Due to the distance between the Neighbourhood Area and the SPA, it is considered that this policy approach would not facilitate improved access to the SPA and therefore not result in a negative impact on the qualifying features of the SPA.	NLSE
Policy CA1: The Retention of Community Facilities and Amenities	The policy itself will not lead to development. Its purpose is to protect community facilities or seek their appropriate replacement.	NLSE

Weldon Neighbourhood Plan Policy	Comments	Likely effect in identified sites – Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA
The loss of existing community facilities will only be permitted in specified circumstances.		
Policy CA2: New or Improved Community Facilities Supports improvements in the quality or range of community facilities.	The policy itself will not lead to development. Its purpose is to improve community facilities.	NLSE
Policy BE6: Broadband and Mobile Phone Infrastructure Supports increased access to communication infrastructure and for new developments to access to superfast broadband.	The policy itself will not lead to development. Its purpose is to improve access to the communication network within the Neighbourhood Area.	NLSE
Policy T1: Traffic Management. Seeks to manage the traffic impacts of development and minimise any increase in vehicular traffic.	The policy itself will not lead to development. This criteria based policy seeks to avoid the exacerbation of the traffic and parking issues experienced by the Parish.	
Policy T2: Electric Vehicles Supports the provision of communal vehicular charging points.	The policy itself will not lead to development. Having regard to the character of the Parish and the number of homes without on-site parking, the policy supports the provision of communal charging points.	NLSE

Weldon Neighbourhood Plan Policy	Comments	Likely effect in identified sites – Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA
Policy T3: Footpaths and Cycle Paths Supports the extension and upgrade to the footpath and cycle path network.	<p>The policy itself will not lead to development. Its purpose is to improve footways and cycle links within the Neighbourhood Area, providing an alternative to the car, and support the health of parishioners and visitors.</p> <p>Due to the distance between the Neighbourhood Area and the SPA, it is considered that this policy approach would not facilitate improved access to the SPA and therefore not result in a negative impact on the qualifying features of the SPA.</p>	NLSE
Policy BE1: Support for Existing Businesses and Employment Opportunities Seeks to resist the loss of existing business and employment opportunities.	The ambition of this policy is to see the continuation of a thriving local community, supporting local business and employment.	NLSE
Policy BE2: Support for New Business and Employment Supports the provision of business and employment development.	The ambition of this policy is to see the continuation of a thriving local community, supporting local business and employment. Any development will be in keeping and of an appropriate small-scale. It is a criteria-based policy and does not outline sites for development. It is, therefore, unlikely to have a significant negative effect on any of the qualifying features or any in combination effects.	NLSE

Weldon Neighbourhood Plan Policy	Comments	Likely effect in identified sites – Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA
Policy BE3: Home Working Supports appropriate development that facilitates home working.	This policy supports the development of residential buildings for home working, subject to a number of criteria. The policy does not outline sites for development.	NLSE

7. Conclusion

- 7.1 The HRA of the JCS has resulted in policy amendments and mechanisms to avoid likely significant effects upon the Upper New Valley Gravel Pits SPA arising from the implementation of its adopted planning policies. The HRA of the Part 2 Local Plan for Corby concluded there will be no significant effects arising from the implementation of its policies.
- 7.2 The Weldon Neighbourhood Plan must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan. In addition, this assessment suggests that there are unlikely to be significant negative effects on a European Designated Site resulting from the policies detailed within the draft Weldon Neighbourhood Plan. Given the assessment of the Neighbourhood Plan there are considered to be no in-combination effects.
- 7.3 Given the distance between the Neighbourhood Area and the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA, the plan does not include policies that allocate land for development, and the likely scale of future development, a full Habitat Regulations Assessment is not required.
- 7.4 The HRA screening of the Weldon Neighbourhood Plan has been undertaken in accordance with currently available guidance as required under the Habitat Regulations.
- 7.5 Natural England, Historic England and the Environment Agency have been consulted during the preparation of this HRA Screening Report. Their responses are summarised below.
 - Historic England – Regarding the HRA, Historic England does not disagree with the conclusion that a full Habitat Regulations Assessment is not required but would defer to the opinions of the other statutory consultees.

- Natural England – It is Natural England's advice, based on the material supplied with the consultation, that significant effects on Habitats sites, either alone or in combination, are unlikely. The proposed neighbourhood plan is unlikely to significantly affect any Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ), Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection areas (SPA), Ramsar wetland or sites in the process of becoming SACs or SPAs ('candidate SACs', 'possible SACs', 'potential SPAs') or a Ramsar wetland. The plan area is unlikely to have a significant effect on a National Park, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty or Heritage Coast, and is unlikely to impact upon the purposes for which these areas are designated or defined.
- Environment Agency – no comments made with respect to the HRA.

A full copy of the responses received is attached as Appendix 1.

Therefore, based on the draft Neighbourhood Plan, a full Habitats Regulation Assessments is not required, as the plan is considered unlikely to have significant adverse effects on the Natura 2000 network of protected sites.

Appendix 1: Responses from Environmental Consultation Bodies



Historic England

Planit-X Town and Country Planning Services
Ltd

Direct Dial: [REDACTED]

Our ref: PL00796118

20 June 2024

Dear Ms Gibson

**WELDON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN SEA & HRA SCREENING OPINION
CONSULTATION**

Thank you for your consultation and the invitation to comment on the SEA Screening Document for the above Neighbourhood Plan.

For the purposes of consultations on SEA Screening Opinions, Historic England confines its advice to the question, "Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment?" in respect of our area of concern, cultural heritage.

Our comments are based on the information supplied with the screening request. On the basis of the information supplied and in the context of the criteria set out in Schedule 1 of the Environmental Assessment Regulations [Annex II of the 'SEA' Directive], Historic England concurs with your view 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://www.historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/sustainability-appraisal-and-strategic-environmental-assessment-advice-note-8/>

I trust the above comments will be of help in taking forward the Neighbourhood Plan.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]



THE FOUNDRY 82 GRANVILLE STREET BIRMINGHAM B1 2LH

Telephone 0121 625 6888
[HistoricEngland.org.uk](https://www.historicengland.org.uk)

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



Historic England

Historic Places Adviser

@HistoricEngland.org.uk

Date: 24 June 2024
Our ref: 478867
Your ref: Weldon Neighbourhood Plan



Plant-X Town and Country Planning Services Ltd

Hartbeam House
Crewe Business Park
Electra Way
Crewe
Cheshire
CW1 8GU

T 0283 893 3800

BY EMAIL ONLY

info@plant-x.co.uk

Dear [REDACTED]

Weldon Neighbourhood Plan - SEA & HRA Screening Consultation

Thank you for your consultation on the above dated and received by Natural England on 20 May 2024.

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 (SEA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)

It is Natural England's advice, on the basis of the material supplied with the consultation, that:

- significant effects on statutorily designated nature conservation sites or landscapes are unlikely; and,
- significant effects on Habitats sites¹, either alone or in combination, are unlikely.

The proposed neighbourhood plan is unlikely to significantly affect any Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ), Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection areas (SPA), Ramsar wetland or sites in the process of becoming SACs or SPAs ('candidate SACs', 'possible SACs', 'potential SPAs') or a Ramsar wetland. The plan area is unlikely to have a significant effect on a National Park, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty or Heritage Coast, and is unlikely to impact upon the purposes for which these areas are designated or defined.

Guidance on the assessment of Neighbourhood Plans, in line with the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 is contained within the [Planning Practice Guidance](#). This identifies three triggers that may require the production of an SEA:

- 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.

Natural England does not hold information on the location of significant populations of protected

¹ Habitats sites are those referred to in the [National Planning Policy Framework](#) (Annex 2 - glossary) as "any site which would be included within the definition of regulation 8 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 for the purpose of those regulations, including candidate Special Areas of Conservation, Sites of Community Importance, Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas and any relevant Marine Sites".

species, so is unable to advise whether this plan is likely to affect protected species to such an extent as to require an SEA. Further information is included in Natural England's [standing advice](#) on protected species.

Furthermore, Natural England does not routinely maintain locally specific data on all environmental assets. The plan may have environmental impacts on priority species and/or habitats, local wildlife sites, soils and best and most versatile agricultural land, or on local landscape character that may be sufficient to warrant an SEA. Information on ancient woodland, ancient and veteran trees is set out in Natural England/Forestry Commission [standing advice](#).

We therefore recommend that advice is sought from your ecological, landscape and soils advisers, local record centre, recording society or wildlife body on the local soils, best and most versatile agricultural land, landscape, geodiversity and biodiversity receptors that may be affected by the plan before determining whether a SEA is necessary.

Natural England reserves the right to provide further advice on the environmental assessment of the plan. This includes any third party appeal against any screening decision you may make. If a SEA is required, Natural England must be consulted at the scoping and environmental report stages.

Please send any new consultations, or further information on this consultation to consultations@naturalengland.org.uk

Yours sincerely



Consultations Team

From: [REDACTED]@environment-agency.gov.uk>

Sent: Thursday, June 27, 2024 09:54

To: [REDACTED]@planit-x.co.uk>

Subject: RE: Weldon Neighbourhood Plan

Hello [REDACTED],

Thank you for your email.

I apologise for the delay in replying.

Whilst there are a number of environmental constraints associated with the Plan Area (Main River of the Environment Agency, flood zone), we nevertheless do not disagree with the conclusion that a SEA is not required.

Regards

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
Planning Specialist, Sustainable Places Team

Environment Agency | Trentside Offices, Scarrington Road, West Bridgford, Nottingham NG2 5BR

[REDACTED]



**Creating a better place
for people and wildlife**



Please note as part of my commitment to reducing my climate impact I may not send a "Thank you" email.' [Carbon saving of not sending thank you emails](#)