

SEA & HRA SCREENING REPORT – WALTHAM AND THORPE ARNOLD NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Prepared by Melton Borough Council

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Plan Viewable at - <http://www.wotwatapc.org.uk/neighbourhood-plan.html>

SEA

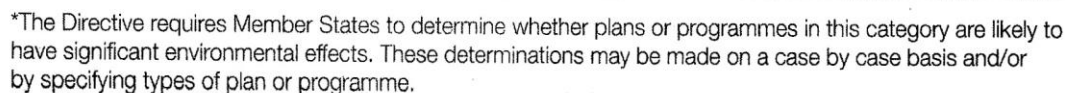
Introduction

This screening report is tests whether or not the Waltham and Thorpe Arnold Neighbourhood Development Plan requires a Strategic Environmental Assessment.

This exercise tests whether there are likely to be significant environmental effects arising from the policies in the draft NDP. An environmental assessment is a requirement of The Environmental Assessment of plans and Programmes Regulations 2004. The Authority has undertaken an assessment of the draft policies in the Submission document (July, 2017) which contain the main land-use principles of the Neighbourhood Development Plan. Comments are invited from the Statutory consultation bodies on the conclusions contained in this report.

The Neighbourhood Development Plan sets the local planning policy framework for Waltham and Thorpe Arnold Parish. When the Plan is 'made' by the local planning authority, it will become part of the Development Plan for Melton Borough and be used for the deciding of Planning Applications in the Parish, and in due course will be joined by the Melton Local Plan. Whilst the Neighbourhood Development Plan has been prepared in advance of the Melton Local Plan, communications between the Council and the Neighbourhood Development Plan Group have ensured that the Neighbourhood Development Plan has been completed in general conformity with the emerging strategic policies in the Melton Local Plan.

This diagram is intended as a guide to the criteria for application of the Directive to plans and programmes (PPs). It has no legal status.



Waltham & Thorpe Arnold Neighbourhood Development Plan

SEA Criteria

SEA Criterion	Yes/No (no other answer except Yes/No)	Explanation
<p>Is the PP subject to preparation and/or adoption by a national, regional or local authority</p> <p>OR</p> <p>prepared by an authority for adoption through a legislative procedure by Parliament or Government (Regulation 3)</p>	Yes	Neighbourhood Development Plans are prepared by Parish/Town Councils or designated Forums/Community Organisations. These are qualifying bodies under the Town and Country Planning Act as amended by the Localism Act 2011.
<p>Is the PP required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions? (Regulation 3)</p>	Yes	While there is no obligation on communities to create a Neighbourhood Development Plan, once they chose to do so it becomes part of the Statutory Development Plan.
<p>Is the PP prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism, town and country planning or land use</p> <p>AND</p> <p>does it set a framework for future development consent of projects in Annexes I and II to the EIA Directive? (Regulation 4(2)(a))</p>	Yes	Neighbourhood Development Plans can cover some of the topics identified in this list and they could set the framework for development of a scale that would fall under Annex II of the EIA Directive. However for Neighbourhood Development Plans, developments which fall under Annex I of the EIA Directive are “excluded development” as set out in Section 61k of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011)

SEA Criterion	Yes/No (no other answer except Yes/No)	Explanation
Will the PP, in view of its likely effect on sites, require an assessment under Articles 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive? (Regulation 4(2)(b))	No	This Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate sites for development. Sites to be delivered are through extant planning permissions and allocations within the Local Plan.
Does the PP determine the use of small areas at local level OR is it a minor modification of a PP subject to Regulation 4(2)(a) (Regulation 4(3))	Yes	Neighbourhood Development Plans by definition determine the use of small areas at a local level.
Does the PP set the framework for future development consent of projects (not just projects in Annexes to the EIA Directive)? (Regulation 4(4))	Yes	A Neighbourhood Development Plan forms part of the development plan and therefore will be used in the decision making process. The policies in a Neighbourhood Development Plan therefore set the framework for future developments.
Is the PP likely to have a significant effect on the environment? (Regulation 4(5))	No	This Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate sites. The policies within the plan are based predominantly around design, tenure, social improvements and improvements to the environment. It is therefore deemed that the Waltham and Thorpe Arnold Neighbourhood Development

SEA Criterion	Yes/No (no other answer except Yes/No)	Explanation
		Plan will not have significant impact on the environment.
<p>Is the PP's sole purpose to serve national defence or civil emergency</p> <p>OR</p> <p>is it co-financed by structural funds or EAGGF programmes 2000 to 2006/7</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Is it a financial or budget PP?</p>	No	No to all criterions.

Likely Significance of Effects on the Environment

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects on the environment	Likely to have significant environmental effects? Yes/No (no other answer except Yes/No)	Summary of significant environmental effects (negative and positive)
the degree to which the PP sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources	No	The Waltham and Thorpe Arnold Neighbourhood Development Plan is not a site allocations document. . The policies within the plan are based predominantly around design and improvements to the environment. It is therefore deemed that the Waltham and Thorpe Arnold Neighbourhood Development Plan will not have significant impact on the environment.
the degree to which the PP influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy	No	There has been much communication between the Neighbourhood Development Plan Group and the Borough Council to ensure that the Waltham and Thorpe Arnold Neighbourhood Development Plan and the Emerging Melton Local Plan are in broad conformity. A Neighbourhood Development Plan is influenced by Local and National Policy, not the other way round.
the relevance of the PP for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development	No	Whilst the Waltham and Thorpe Arnold Neighbourhood Development Plan does not seek to deliver allocations, it does follow the principles of sustainable growth. Furthermore it does promote policies relevant to the environment to ensure that there is an integrated approach to development

		and the environment.
environmental problems relevant to the PP	No	None known.
the relevance of the PP for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (e.g. PPs linked to waste management or water protection	No	This PP does not look at the management of waste or other such issues. These will be handled by Borough/County led PPs and thus out of the remit of the Waltham and Thorpe Arnold Neighbourhood Development Plan.
the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects	No	The Waltham and Thorpe Arnold Neighbourhood Development Plan does not allocate sites. It instead adds restrictions and design & environmental considerations on developments.
the cumulative nature of the effects	No	The Waltham and Thorpe Arnold Neighbourhood Development Plan does not allocate sites for development. It instead adds restrictions and design & environmental considerations on developments.
the transboundary nature of the effects	No	This plan is localised to the Parish of Waltham and Thorpe Arnold and as the plan does not promote additional largescale development, it is unlikely that there will be effects on neighbouring Parishes.
the risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents)	No	The Waltham and Thorpe Arnold Neighbourhood Development Plan does not allocate sites or development directly, therefore it is unlikely to have a significant environmental effect on either the risks to human health or the environment.
the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area	No	This plan is localised to the Parish Waltham and Thorpe Arnold and does not promote

and size of the population likely to be affected)		additional development, therefore effects are unlikely to be significant.
<p>the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:</p> <p>(i) special natural characteristics or cultural heritage;</p> <p>(ii) exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values</p> <p>(iii) intensive land-use</p>	No	<p>The Parish of Waltham and Thorpe Arnold contains a number of Environmental and Heritage assets and constraints. The Parish contains no SSI's, although Stonesby Quarry sits just to the west of Waltham.</p> <p>Waltham has a conservation area, but Thorpe Arnold does not.</p> <p>The Neighbourhood Plan does not look to allocate sites. The Neighbourhood Development Plan also looks at opportunities to improve environmental features which must be weighed into the planning balance. Overall the Neighbourhood Development Plan will have negligible impact on the criterion.</p>
the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status	No	No nationally or internationally protected landscapes in or in the setting of the Parish. Those landscapes that hold community protection are designated through this plan.

Part E – Summary of Environmental Effects

1) The Waltham and Thorpe Arnold Neighbourhood Development Plan is not document that allocates sites for housing or any other intensive development use.

2) The Neighbourhood Development Plan looks to protect a number of locations known to have environmental significance through a number of environmental policies. This will likely have a positive impact on the environment.

Overall it is considered that while the Waltham and Thorpe Arnold Neighbourhood Development Plan will, if made, have some a negligible impact on the environment and as such will **not** have significant environmental effects, whilst contributing to promoting sustainable development in the Parish.

Part F – Screening Outcome

Screening is required under the Strategic Environmental Assessment Regulations, 2010 (Legal Notice 497 of 2010). It is our view that:

- ☐ An SEA is required because the PP falls under the scope of Regulation 4(3) of the Regulations and is likely to have significant environmental effects
- ☐ An SEA is required because the PP falls under the scope of Regulation 4(4) of the Regulations and is likely to have significant environmental effects
- ☒ An SEA is not required because the PP is unlikely to have significant environmental effects.

HRA

Introduction

HRA screening is split into three stages, the first of which, like SEA is the screening stage. Again like SEA, the screening stage is to firstly establish if there are any likely significant effects possible as a result of the implementation of the plan. The screening process focusses around Natura 2000 sites, which are internationally protected wildlife sites.

The Neighbourhood Development Plan sets the local planning policy framework for Waltham and Thorpe Arnold Parish. When the Plan is 'adopted' by the local planning authority, it will become part of the Development Plan for Melton Borough and be used for the deciding of Planning Applications in the Parish, and in due course will be joined by the Melton Local Plan. Whilst the Neighbourhood Development Plan has been completed in advance of the Melton Local Plan, communications between the Council and the Neighbourhood Development Plan Group have ensured that the Neighbourhood Development Plan has been completed in general conformity with the emerging strategic policies in the Melton Local Plan.

Unlike many Neighbourhood Plans across the Borough, this plan does not allocate land for housing or any intense land use.

Relevant Natura 2000 Sites

Rutland Water Special Protection Area (SPA)/RAMSAR is the nearest international designated site to the Waltham and Thorpe Arnold Neighbourhood Development Plan boundary (15km to Parish Boundary, 16km to Thorpe Arnold and 19km to Waltham).

Rutland Water is a man made pump storage reservoir created by the damming of the Gwash Valley in 1975 and is the largest reservoir in the United Kingdom. In general the reservoir is drawn down in the summer and filled during the autumn and winter months when river levels are high. The main habitats are open water and a mosaic of lagoons, reedswamp, marsh, old meadows, scrub and woodland. The lagoons are one of the most important areas for wintering wildfowl.

SPA	Qualifies under Article 4.2 by supporting populations of European importance of the following migratory species over winter: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Shoveler <i>Anas clypeata</i>- Teal <i>Anas crecca</i>*- Wigeon <i>Anas Penelope</i>*- Gadwall <i>Anas strepera</i>- Tufted Duck <i>Aythya fuligula</i>*- Goldeneye <i>Bucephala clangula</i>*- Mute Swan <i>Cygnus atria</i>*
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Goosander Mergus merganser* - Great Crested Grebe Podiceps cristatus* <p>Qualifies under Article 4.2 by regularly supporting at least 20,000 waterfowl.</p> <p>* Species that may be removed following the SPA Review *Stroud et al, 2001; The UK SPA network: its scope and content, JNCC)</p>
RAMSAR	<p>R RAMSAR criterion 5 – Assemblages of international importance</p> <p>Species with peak counts in winter:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 19274 waterfowl (5 year peak mean 1998-99 – 2002/2003) <p>RAMSAR criterion 6 – Species/populations occurring at levels of international importance</p> <p>Qualifying Species:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gadwall Anas strepera - Northern shoveler Anas clypeata

This site has been assessed for HRA in the Rutland County Council Core Strategy and Site Allocations and Policies Document (the District the site is within), as well as the Uppingham Neighbourhood Development Plan which was made in 2016. The Screening Report for the latter, which was negatively screened, can be found at: <http://media.freeola.com/other/28083/sa-sea-hrascreeningreport-2.pdf> .

The following is an assessment of Rutland Water from the aforementioned HRA screening

“The sensitivities and vulnerabilities of the site have been identified in HRA assessments for Rutland County Council’s Core Strategy and Site Allocations and Policies. It is identified that the most noticeable species are the populations of gadwall and shoveler (it is likely that all other species will be removed from the site citation (other than as Assemblage species) by the SPA Review, when adopted). Data on the use of the site by these species indicate that gadwall and shoveler numbers peak in the autumn, generally around September/October, before declining over the winter period. This suggests that Rutland is mainly used as a refuge whilst species are moulting in early autumn, before dispersing from the site to other wintering areas as winter progresses. During the winter, gadwall and shoveler occupy more extensive open waters of lakes, reservoirs and gravel puts. Threats include disturbance and water pollution. The principle sensitivities and vulnerabilities of Rutland Water therefore include:

- Water Quality. The level of phosphate can vary above the recommended level at certain times of the year. This increases the risk of a shift in the trophic status of the water body to an algae dominated system, which would adversely affect the site;

- Water level. The water level is linked to abstraction and affects accessible aquatic plants are for wildfowl feeding on the site. The ecological perturbation that frequent lowering and raising of water levels causes could be an important factor in whether or not a switch in trophic status occurs.
- Recreation. Management of the trout fishery has caused some debate over potential effects on site ecology. In addition, water sports such as sailing have the potential to affect the site through disturbance. Casual recreation around the site margins may also affect some interest features. The site and the interest features are most likely to be vulnerable to disturbance during the key autumn period.” (Uppingham SEA and HRA Screening Report, May 2013).

Impacts as a result of the plan

The Waltham and Thorpe Arnold Neighbourhood Development Plan, is not a document that delivers housing allocations, it is limited in its scale. Any modest impacts arising from the plan are unlikely to effect the Natura 2000 site in any demonstrable way. The watercourses that runs through the Parish are not tributaries of Rutland Water.

The conclusion of this report therefore is that there is likely to be no demonstrable impact on Rutland Water at all, nor any other Natura 2000 site and as such there is no likely significant impact on Rutland Water or any other Natura 2000 sites. Therefore a full HRA assessment will not be required.

James Beverley

Name of Officer responsible for the Screening Report

Melton Borough Council

Name of Responsible Authority

23/05/17

Date