



*Basingstoke
and Deane*



Neighbourhood Planning Screening Report – Kingsclere

**Final version following consideration
by consultation bodies**

**Strategic Environmental Impact
Assessment**

and

Habitats Regulations Assessment

Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council

April 2015

Table of contents

1. Non-technical summary	3
2. Introduction	4
3. Generic screening assessment of Neighbourhood Plans	7
4. Description of the Neighbourhood Plan	11
5. SEA screening assessment	14
6. HRA screening assessment	17
7. Conclusions	28
Appendix 1 - Environmental constraints	30
Appendix 2 - Details of European sites within 10km of Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council	32
Appendix 3 - Maps of European sites within 10km of Basingstoke and Deane Borough	42
Appendix 4 – Responses from ‘consultation bodies’	47

1. Non-technical Summary

- 1.1 A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is required under European legislation for all plans which may have a significant effect on the environment.
- 1.2 The purpose of SEA is to provide a high level of protection for the environment and to integrate considerations of the environment into the preparation and adoption of plans with a view to promoting sustainable development.
- 1.3 The SEA process sets out criteria for assessing the significance of the impact of a plan on the environment. For example, if a plan proposes a housing development it may have an impact on the wildlife of the area or have an impact on landscape. If a significant effect is possible, the assessment requires the consideration of alternative options and for the evaluation of the potential effects on the environment.
- 1.4 To ascertain if SEA is required, a “screening” exercise is undertaken which looks at the proposals and policies in a Neighbourhood Plan to see if a significant effect on the environment is likely. The criteria for making the screening assessment are set out in the relevant legislation.
- 1.5 A Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) is a process which looks at the potential impact of proposals within a plan on what are termed ‘European sites’. In relation to the Basingstoke and Deane area the relevant European sites are a number of Special Protection Areas (SPA) and Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) outside of, but within 10km of the borough.
- 1.6 The initial stage of the HRA process involves consideration of the reasons for designation and the conservation objectives of each European site within a reasonable distance of the Neighbourhood Plan area. The next stage is to consider the potential impact of the proposals within the plan on any European sites which could be affected.
- 1.7 **This report details the assessment of the Kingsclere Neighbourhood Plan against the need for an SEA and/or HRA to be produced to accompany the Neighbourhood Plan. It concludes that an SEA is considered to be required but it would not need to be subject to HRA.**
- 1.8 The preliminary version of the SEA and HRA screening assessment was sent to the three statutory consultees (the Environment Agency, English Heritage and Natural England) for comment, and their views have been factored into the finalised conclusions.

2. Introduction

- 2.1 The Kingsclere Neighbourhood Plan must comply with EU obligations. An important element of this requirement is that the borough council needs to determine whether the neighbourhood plan should be subject to a Strategic Environmental Impact Assessment (SEA) and/or Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA). This is an important legal requirement and a screening process in relation to this legislation should form an integral part of the neighbourhood planning process as early as possible. The main consideration will be whether the plan is likely to have significant environmental effects (in relation to SEA) or a significant effect on a European site (i.e. a site protected by the Habitats Directive).

Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 2.2 The need for environmental assessment of Neighbourhood Plans stems from EU Directive 2001/42/EC – known as the SEA Directive. The SEA Directive applies to a wide range of public plans and programmes (e.g. on land use, transport, energy, waste, agriculture, etc. and includes those at the ‘local level’). The SEA Directive 2001 has been transposed into English law via The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (EAPP).
- 2.3 As per the information set out in the National Planning Practice Guide, it will be necessary for the borough council to screen the proposed Neighbourhood Plan in order to determine whether the plans/programmes are likely to have significant environmental effects¹. The screening procedure is based on criteria set out in Schedule 1 of the EAPP Regulations 2004. This report assesses the Neighbourhood Plan against those criteria, and on that basis sets out whether an SEA (in the form of an Environmental Report) is required. Figure 2.1 below sets out the basic framework for establishing whether an SEA will be required.

¹ The national practice guide states the following:

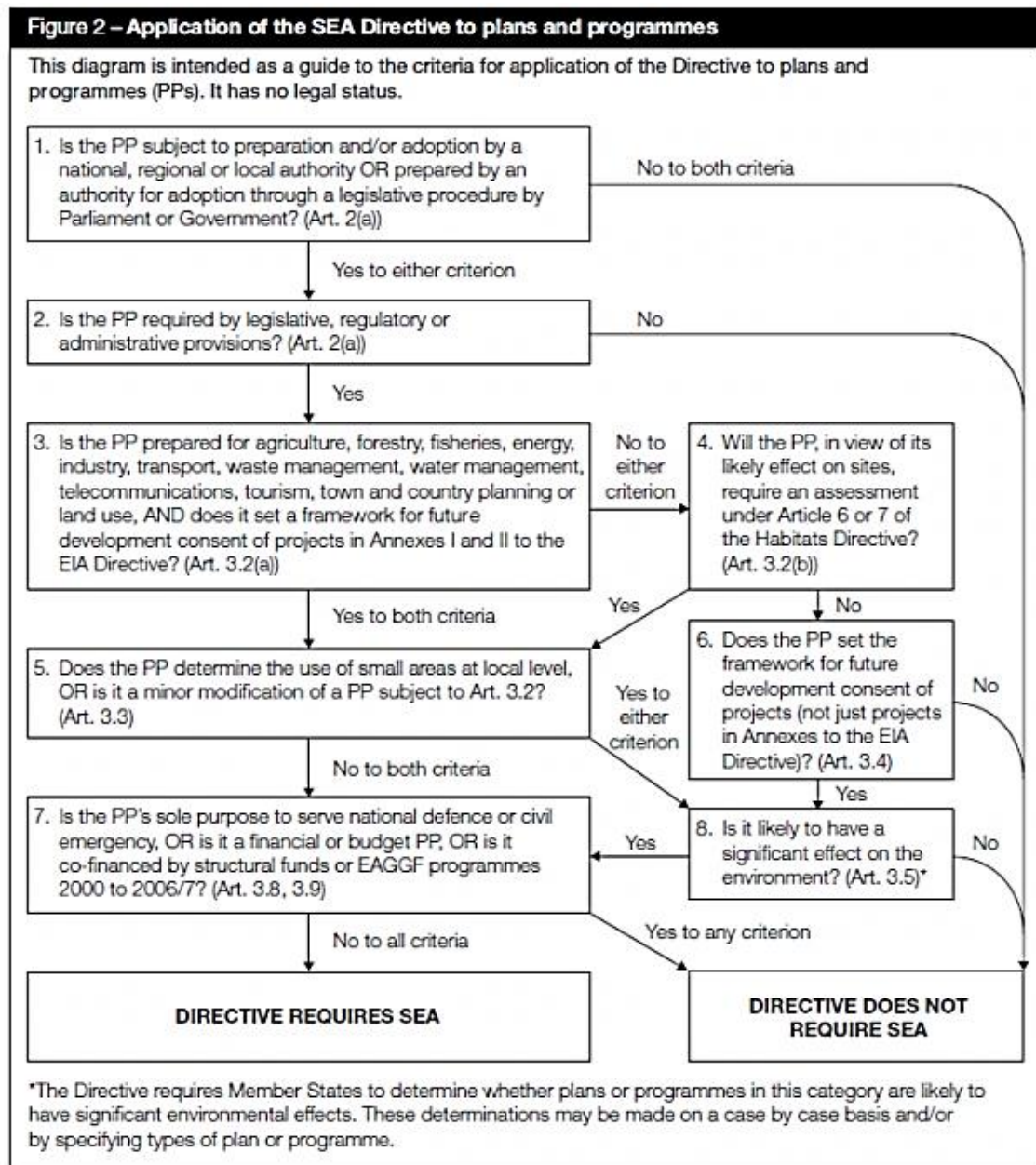
Does a neighbourhood plan require a strategic environmental assessment?

In some limited circumstances, where a [neighbourhood plan](#) could have significant environmental effects, it may fall within the scope of the [Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004](#) and so require a strategic environmental assessment. One of the basic conditions that will be tested by the [independent examiner](#) is whether the making of the neighbourhood plan is compatible with European obligations. Whether a neighbourhood plan requires a strategic environmental assessment, and (if so) the level of detail needed, will depend on what is proposed in the draft neighbourhood plan. A strategic environmental assessment may be required, for example, 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](#).

<http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/blog/guidance/strategic-environmental-assessment-and-sustainability-appraisal/does-a-neighbourhood-plan-require-a-sustainability-appraisal/>

Figure 2.1 – Diagram indicating whether an SEA is required for a plan or project



Habitats Regulations

2.4 In addition to the screening of Neighbourhood Plans in relation to SEA, there is a need to assess the likelihood of proposals or policies within a Neighbourhood Plan having an adverse impact on European sites². This Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) is required by the Habitats Directive as transposed into English law via The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010.

² In relation to the Basingstoke and Deane area, relevant European sites consist of areas designated as Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Areas (SPA).

- 2.5 A Habitats Regulations Assessment may be required depending on the contents of the Neighbourhood Plan and the potential impact of the plan on European sites. A case by case assessment of Neighbourhood Plans will need to be undertaken to see if a full HRA is required.
- 2.6 The approach to assessing the potential impact of a Neighbourhood Plan on a European site, and the need for an HRA, include consideration of the reasons for designation and conservation objectives for each site within a reasonable distance from the Neighbourhood Plan area (which was set at 10km in the borough council's Habitats Regulations Screening Assessment supporting the emerging Local Plan). Where relevant the key environmental conditions that support the site are assessed below against the proposals within the Neighbourhood Plan.

Consultation bodies

- 2.7 Once the preliminary assessments of the requirement for both SEA and HRA had been undertaken, the Environment Agency, Natural England and English Heritage were consulted on the initial conclusions. This report incorporates the consultation responses provided by these consultation bodies, which have informed the finalised conclusions.

3. Generic Screening Assessment of Neighbourhood Plans

- 3.1 In the first instance, in order to establish if a Neighbourhood Plan potentially needs to be accompanied by a full SEA, a generic assessment of Neighbourhood Plans has been undertaken with the results of this assessment being set out below in Figure 3.1. The Assessment criteria set out in Figure 3.1 is derived from the government guidance produced to accompany the EAPP Regulations 2004: A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive³.
- 3.2 The assessment below illustrates that Neighbourhood Plans can be subject to the SEA Directive, and concludes that the need for an SEA in respect of any particular Neighbourhood Plan will ultimately come down to whether the Neighbourhood Plan is likely to have a significant effect on the environment. Therefore, Neighbourhood Plans will need to be screened on a case by case basis.

Figure 3.1 - Generic screening assessment of Neighbourhood Plans

Assessment criteria	y/n	Assessment
1. Is the Neighbourhood Plan 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	Neighbourhood Plans are prepared by parish or town councils (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 has been prepared, and subject to examination and referendum, it will be “made” by Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council as the Local Planning Authority
2. Is the Neighbourhood Plan required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions? (Art. 2(a))	Yes	It is not a requirement for a parish to produce a Neighbourhood Plan. However, a Neighbourhood Plan, once “made” does form part of the statutory Development Plan and will be used when making decisions on planning applications.

³ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/7657/practicalguidesea.pdf

<p>3. Is the Neighbourhood Plan 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 Environmental Impact Assessment Directive? (Art 3.2(a))</p>	<p>yes</p>	<p>Neighbourhood plans will cover town and country planning/land use, and may also cover other issues in the list set out. In addition, it will also set part of the framework for possible future consents covered by Annex II of the EIA Directive. Development under Annex I however, would be excluded development.</p>
<p>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))</p>	<p>?</p>	<p>Given that there are no sites designated under the Habitats Directive in the borough, the only impact on such sites could be on those outside the borough, and any effect on those sites is unlikely given the separation distances involved. However, a case by case assessment should still be carried out and included within the screening report.</p>
<p>5. Does the Neighbourhood Plan 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)</p>	<p>yes</p>	<p>A Neighbourhood Plan can determine the use of small areas at the local level.</p>
<p>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)</p>	<p>yes</p>	<p>A Neighbourhood Plan forms part of the development plan and therefore will be used in the decision making process in relation to planning applications. The policies in a Neighbourhood Plan therefore set the framework for future development proposals.</p>
<p>7. Is the Neighbourhood Plan 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(European Agricultural Guarantee Fund) programmes 2000 to 2006/7? (Art 3.8, 3.9)</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>A Neighbourhood Plan does not deal with any of these categories of plan.</p>
<p>8. Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment? (Art. 3.5)</p>	<p>?</p>	<p>The impact of a Neighbourhood Plan on the environment will depend on the proposals and policies included. For this</p>

reason a case by case assessment of each Neighbourhood Plan will be required.

- 3.3 Given that Neighbourhood Plans may be subject to the requirement for an SEA where they are likely to have a significant effect on the environment, the next step is to establish how to determine whether such effects are likely when assessing each plan on a case by case basis. The criteria for making that assessment are set out in Schedule 1 of the EAPP Regulations 2004. Please see figure 3.2 below for a full list of the relevant criteria.
- 3.4 The list set out below forms the basis for the full assessment of the Neighbourhood Plan in question, which is set out in section 5 below.

Figure 3.2 - Criteria for determining likely significance of effects on the environment (as per section 9 of the EAPP Regulations 2004, this list is taken from Schedule 1 of the EAPP Regulations 2004).

Schedule 1 - criteria for determining the likely significance of effects on the environment

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

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

4. Description of the Neighbourhood Plan

- 4.1 Kingsclere is a historic village located towards the north of the borough with a population of 3,163 (2011, Kingsclere Parish). In 2011 there were 1,457 dwellings in the Parish. The village is adjacent to the A339 Newbury Road, which forms a hard northern boundary. It is situated in attractive countryside, lying at the junction between the chalkland landscape to the south and the clay landscape to the north. The land to the south of the village is designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) whilst the historic core of the village is designated as a conservation area. A flood zone (encompassing Zones 2 and 3) runs through the centre of the village. There are also various Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) within the village and wider parish. The records of the Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre show that the following species are present within the Kingsclere parish area: birds; butterflies; a number of rare plant species; trout; hedgehog; hare; badger and dormouse.
- 4.2 Policy SS5 in the Submission Local Plan sets out the requirement for Kingsclere to provide approximately 50 new houses within the neighbourhood area. This will need to be provided on sites which provide at least 10 units. The parish council neighbourhood planning group are currently considering a range of sites in order to meet the required housing need. These sites are set out in a site analysis report which has been produced by consultants:

<http://cms.hugofox.com/resources/attachs/59cd6af8-f774-4566-aeeb-b00ca90e021c.pdf>

- 4.3 The sites being actively considered at the time of the site assessment report are:
- KING 002 – Fawconer Road
 - KING 004 – East of Kevin Close
 - KING 005 – West of Winchester Road
 - KI 02 – Land North of Strokins Road
 - KI 03 – Land North of Coppice Road
 - NP5 – Land West of Garret Close
 - NP6 – Land Povey's Mead
 - NP8 – Land at Keeps Mead

(Please see map below showing the location of the various sites.)

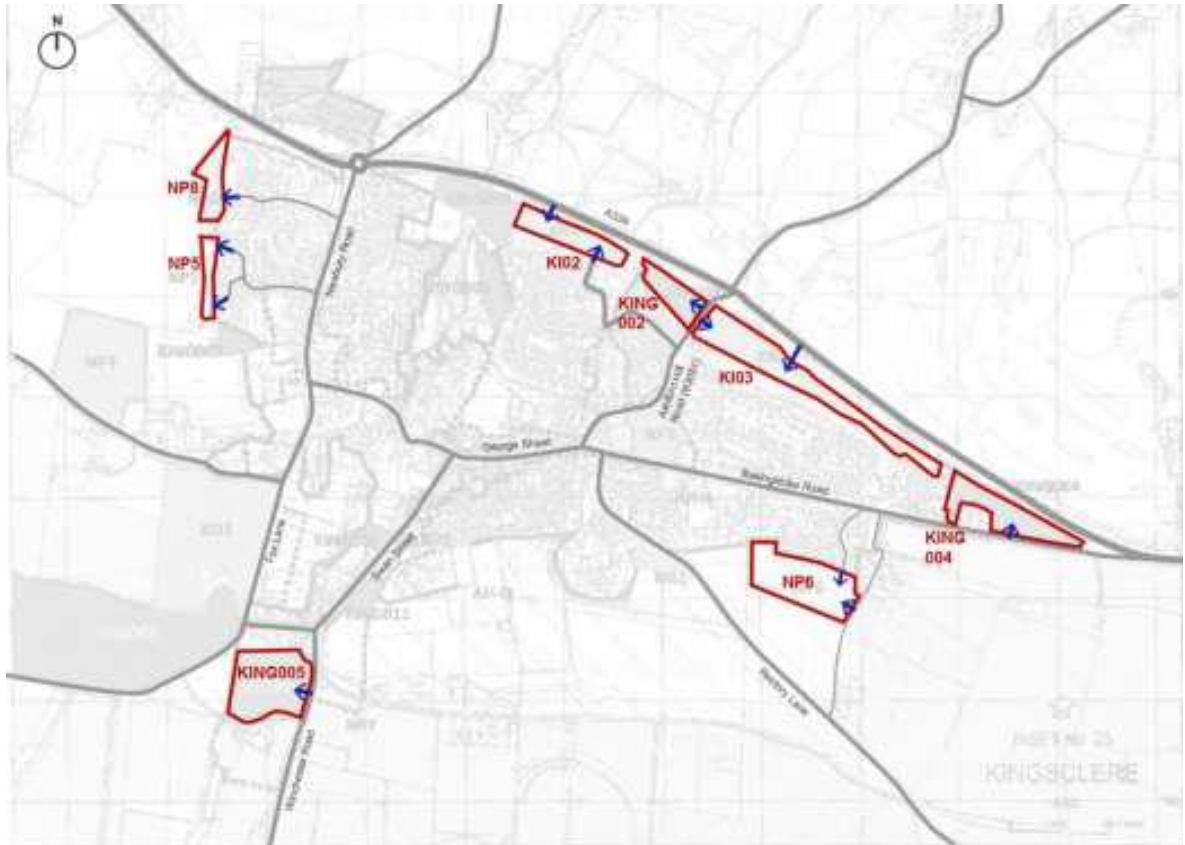


Figure 4.1 – map showing location of sites considered in site assessment report commission by Kingsclere Neighbourhood Planning Group

- 4.4 The site assessment report recommends that KING 002, KING 005 and NP6 are potentially the most suitable for allocation. However, at this stage it is not clear which sites will be allocated in the Neighbourhood Plan. Of these 3 sites recommended by the consultants, KING 005 appears the most environmentally sensitive, as it is immediately adjacent to the AONB, is within the conservation area and has Flood Zones on the edge adjacent to Winchester Road. KING 002 is located well away from the AONB and is outside of the conservation area, though may have biodiversity constraints. NP6 is immediately adjacent to the AONB, though there appear to be few other environmental constraints.
- 4.5 The neighbourhood planning group is still actively considering the other sites assessed in the site assessment report. A brief analysis of those sites is therefore set out below in case these sites are still being considered for allocation. KING 004 is immediately adjacent to the AONB, though there appear to be few other significant environmental constraints. KI 02 and KI 03 are both well away from the AONB and are outside of the conservation area, but the sites do contain SINCs, however detailed development proposals have recently been received for these sites which take account of environmental and access concerns. NP5 and NP8 are long thin sites on the western edge of the settlement, both of which contain a large number of trees, some of which are subject to Tree Preservation Orders. A further new site,

Porch Farm, adjacent to the western side of sites NP5 and NP8, has since become available and is also being considered. The neighbourhood planning group have engaged consultants to assess the Porch Farm site and proposals received for sites KI02 and KI03.

5. SEA Screening Assessment

- 5.1 At present it is difficult to know exactly what will be proposed in the final version of the Neighbourhood Plan. However, the approximate parameters of the development and policies being proposed for inclusion in the draft Neighbourhood Plan, as set out in Section 4 of this report, have been used to undertake this screening assessment.
- 5.2 If it is found that an SEA is required, any changes to the quantum of development can be assessed through the SEA process. However, where the conclusion of a screening exercise is that an SEA is not required, any changes to the quantum of development and/or policies being proposed should be subject to a further screening assessment to ensure that significant effects are not likely.
- 5.3 Under Criteria 8 of the assessment in Figure 3.1, it was concluded that neighbourhood plans may have a significant effect on the environment depending on the specific policies and proposals within each document and that a case by case assessment is required. The criteria for undertaking such an assessment are set out in Schedule 1 EAPP 2004. Figure 5.1 below outlines the results of this assessment against the Schedule 1 parameters.

SEA Assessment of neighbourhood plan

Figure 5.1 - Assessment of likelihood of significant effects on the environment

Significant effect criteria	Assessment
The characteristics of the plan having regard to:	
(a) the degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources;	The Neighbourhood Plan will set a framework for various types of projects and activities, including site allocations, and in so doing will influence the size, location and operating conditions of the development in question. The policies in the Plan will also set criteria which will be applied to planning applications.
(b) the degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy;	Though unlikely, the Plan could inform supplementary planning documents (such as design guidance), development briefs or site specific guidance.
(c) the relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development;	The Plan will have regard to the objective of achieving sustainable development in the local area. It will be in conformity with the strategic policies in the Adopted Local Plan, and will have regard to the policies in the emerging Local Plan.

(d) environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme; and	The Plan will seek to address environmental, economic and social issues in the neighbourhood area.
(e) the relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (e.g. plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection).	The Plan is relevant to various aspects of Community legislation, such as environmental protection and conservation of biodiversity.
Characteristics of the effects likely having regard, in particular, to:	
(a) the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects;	The Plan will set the local vision, objectives and policies to guide new development in neighbourhood area. It is likely to result in long-term effects associated with changes to land use and physical development of land.
(b) the cumulative nature of the effects;	There are likely to be some fairly limited local cumulative effects arising from and between the different proposals and policies in the Plan.
(c) the transboundary nature of the effects;	There will be no transboundary effects (in relation to other EU member states).
(d) the risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents);	There are unlikely to be any significant risks to human health, though there is a limited risk of harm to the environment during construction works.
(e) the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected);	The magnitude of the effects will be regulated by the relatively small number of units being allocated (50 units), meaning the effects are likely to be largely localised (i.e. within the neighbourhood area). However, there could be effects over a moderately larger area in relation to issues such as landscape impact and highways.
(f) the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to – (i) special natural characteristics or cultural heritage; . (ii) exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values; or . (iii) intensive land-use; and	There are various parts of the Neighbourhood Area which are both highly valued and vulnerable, namely the various SINCs, and the Conservation Area. There are also Listed Buildings which could be affected (in terms of setting). There are also a number of archaeological sites within the neighbourhood area.
(g) the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.	The neighbourhood area includes a sizable proportion of land which is designated as part of the AONB, which could be affected by development

covered by the Neighbourhood Plan. The setting of the AONB could also be affected.

- 5.4 The LPA's initial assessment of the Kingsclere Neighbourhood Plan concluded that an Environmental Report was not required (as set out in the preliminary version of this report which was sent to the consultation bodies). However, following consultation with the consultation bodies it is considered that an SEA is necessary. The full consultation responses received are set out in Appendix 4 below.
- 5.5 Natural England have set out in their response that as far as their strategic environmental interests are concerned (including but not limited to statutory designated sites, landscapes and protected species, geology and soils), there are likely to be significant environmental effects as a result of the proposed plan. English Heritage noted the presence of a conservation area and 95 listed buildings, and have concluded that an SEA should be required. However, they have stated that they are happy to review this position in light of the final selection of development site allocations.
- 5.6 The Environment Agency considered that the proposed neighbourhood plan could lead to significant effects on the environment if the development proposed is not managed effectively. However, they considered that an SEA would not be necessary.
- 5.7 In light of the consultation responses received from Natural England and English Heritage, and given the sensitive nature of the neighbourhood area, owing to the presence of a conservation area, numerous listed buildings and the AONB, and when considering the advice contained within the NPPG⁴, it is considered that an SEA is required in relation to the proposed neighbourhood plan.

⁴ Paragraph: 046 Reference ID: 11-046-20150209. Of particular relevance in this regard is that the neighbourhood plan will be allocating sites, and the neighbourhood area contains sensitive natural and heritage assets that may be affected by the plan.

6. HRA Screening Assessment

- 6.1 The Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) refers to the assessment required for any plan or project to assess the potential implications for what are termed 'European sites'. Such sites consist of areas designated as Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Areas (SPA). There is also an international designation known as RAMSAR sites, which whilst being covered by different legislation should be subject to the same consideration as European sites.
- 6.2 There are no European sites in the borough. However, there are a number of SPAs and SACs located outside of the borough which could be affected by development taking place within the Basingstoke and Deane borough (please see Appendix 2 for the details of those areas). Therefore, it is still necessary to consider whether there could be any potential impact on European sites stemming from neighbourhood planning.
- 6.3 European sites are offered the highest level of protection under European law and the consequent national legislation transposing it into English law (The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010, known as the Habitats Regulations). The Habitats Regulations sets out the process to assess the potential implications of a Neighbourhood Plan on European sites.
- 6.4 The first stage is to screen the Neighbourhood Plan in order to establish whether it may have a significant effect on a European site. Only if there may be such an effect will it be necessary to undertake a process called 'appropriate assessment'⁵ in relation to a European site.
- 6.5 In undertaking the screening to establish whether there will be a significant effect, the 'precautionary principle' will need to be followed. The requirement to adhere to the precautionary approach is established by case law and clarified by European Union and domestic government guidance⁶. The use of the precautionary principle requires that when considering the likelihood of a possible effect on a European site it will be assumed that such impacts will occur if there is insufficient evidence to the contrary.
- 6.6 In carrying out the screening assessment, the borough council has addressed the various requirements set out in the European

⁵ The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010

61.—(1) A competent authority, before deciding to undertake, or give any consent, permission or other authorisation for, a plan or project which—

(a) is likely to have a significant effect on a European site or a European offshore marine site (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects), and

(b) is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of that site, must make an appropriate assessment of the implications for that site in view of that site's conservation objectives.

⁶ Landelijke Vereniging tot Behoud van de Waddenzee v. Secretary of State for Agriculture, Nature Conservation and Fisheries (Case C127/02), ECJ 7/9/04

Commission guidance⁷. The guidance sets out various steps which need to be followed:

- i) description of project or plan
- ii) characteristics of the European site
- iii) assessment of significance

The description of the Neighbourhood Plan has been set out in section 4 above. Therefore, this section focuses on the characteristics of any relevant European sites, their significance, and ultimately whether there are likely to be any significant effects.

- 6.7 The Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council emerging Local Plan has been subject to a Habitats Regulations Screening Assessment. This contains a detailed assessment of each of the 8 European sites within 10km of the borough boundary. These are set out in Appendix 2 below, and inform the assessment process documented in this report. Appendix 3 includes maps of these sites, also taken from the Habitats Regulations Screening Assessment.
- 6.8 The implications of the policies and proposals in the neighbourhood plan have been assessed against each of the European sites within 10km of the neighbourhood area boundary in order to establish the likelihood of a significant effect on the reason for designation of the European site in question. This assessment has been undertaken having regard to the results and information in the HRA screening assessment prepared for the emerging Local Plan for Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council, and in the light of the relevant European Commission guidance (as referred to above), which forms the basis for the assessment criteria set out below.

⁷ http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/management/docs/art6/natura_2000_assess_en.pdf
Pages 18 - 23

Assessments of European sites with 10km of the neighbourhood area

6.9 The neighbourhood area is within the 10km buffer zone of 3 European sites:

- Kennet and Lambourn Floodplain SAC
- Kennet Valley Alderwoods SAC
- River Lambourn SAC

Accordingly, a screening matrix has been completed in relation to each area. These assessments demonstrate that there will be no significant effects on the relevant European sites.

Kennet and Lambourn Floodplain SAC

6.10 Turning firstly to the Kennet and Lambourn Floodplain SAC. This site represents a cluster of sites covering 114.47ha in the Kennet and Lambourn valleys. Only a very small part of the neighbourhood area is within 5km of the SAC and the majority of the rest of the neighbourhood area is located wider area within the 10km search area. However, Kingsclere is downstream from the SAC and given that the main vulnerabilities of the SAC are to changes in the water flow and quality, the Neighbourhood Plan is unlikely to significantly impact upon the SAC.

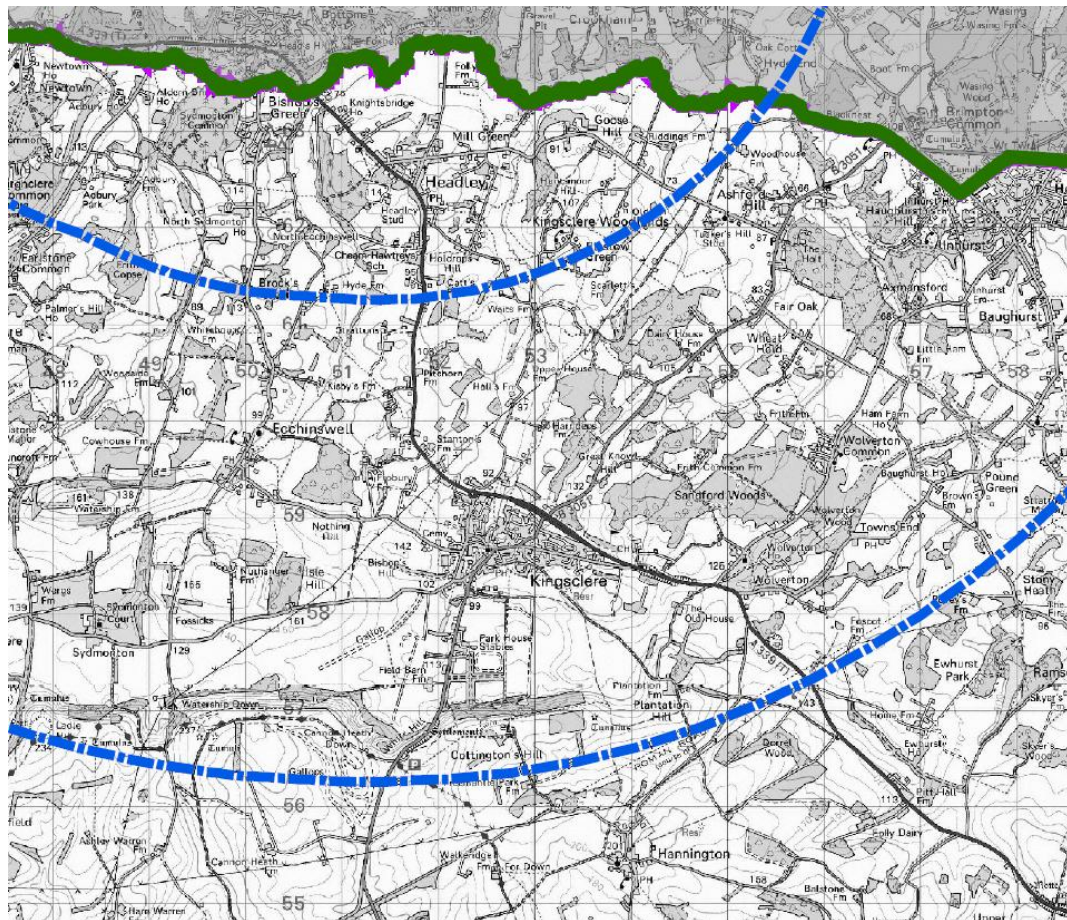


Fig 6.1 relationship with Kennet and Lambourn Floodplain SAC buffer zones

Screening Matrix

Name of European site⁸: Kennet and Lambourne Floodplain SAC

<p>Describe the individual elements of the project (either alone or in combination with other plan or projects) likely to give rise to impacts on the European site.</p>	<p>Physical development within the neighbourhood area (mainly in the form of housing sites around the village of Kingsclere) will have an impact on the localised environment. However, given the distance between such development and the SAC, which is over 5km, combined with the geographical relationship referred to in paragraph 6.10 above, there will be no direct or significant impact on the European site.</p>
<p>Describe any likely direct, indirect or secondary impacts of the project (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) on the European site by virtue of: size and scale; land-take; distance from the European site or key features; resource requirements (e.g. water abstraction); emissions; excavation requirements; transportation requirements; duration of construction activities.</p>	<p>The development covered by the Neighbourhood Plan is likely to result in some environmental impacts in the form of limited atmospheric pollution, as well as landscape and highways impacts. There would also be some limited, localised, environmental impacts flowing from construction processes. However, none of these would be of a scale which could reasonably be considered to impact significantly on the SAC, given the significant separation distance of over 5km (between the likely development areas around the village and the SAC).</p>
<p>Describe any likely changes to the site arising as a result of: reduction of habitat area; disturbance to key species; habitat or species fragmentation; reduction in species density; changes in key indicators of conservation value (e.g. water quality); climate change.</p>	<p>Given the scale of development required by policy SS5 in the Submission Local Plan (approximately 50 units), and the separation distance in relation to the SAC, no development in the neighbourhood area is likely to result in the impacts listed opposite.</p>
<p>Describe any likely impacts on the European site as a whole in terms of: interference with the key relationships that define the structure of the site; interference with key relationships that define the function of the site.</p>	<p>Given the location of the neighbourhood area and potential development sites in relation to the SAC, there will be no likely impacts on the European site as a whole.</p>

⁸ Please see Appendix 2 for details of the European site itself

<p>Provide indicator of significance as a result of the identification of effects set out above in terms of: loss; fragmentation; disruption; disturbance; changes to key elements.</p>	<p>The Plan is likely to predominantly facilitate housing development (for approximately 50 units), the effects of which will be largely restricted to within the neighbourhood area (with the exception of highways implications and some visual impacts). Therefore, having regard to the European Commission report concerning the assessment of the effects on Natura 2000 sites⁹, it is considered that there is likely to be a negligible impact on the significance of the European site, as there will be no loss, fragmentation or disturbance of habitat areas which form part of the European site (which is located over 5 km from the likely development sites).</p>
<p>Describe from the above those elements of the plan where the above impacts are likely to be significant or where the scale or magnitude of impacts is not known.</p>	<p>Given the location of the development to be allocated in the Plan relative to the SAC, combined with the scale and nature of the proposed development (approximately 50 residential units), it is considered there will be no significant impact on the SAC.</p>
<p>Conclusion</p>	<p>No significant effects on the SAC are considered to be likely.</p>

⁹ Page 20, paragraph 3.1.5
http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/management/docs/art6/natura_2000_assess_en.pdf

Kennet Valley Alderwoods SAC

- 6.11 The conservation interest of the site is critically dependent upon maintenance of constantly high groundwater levels. There are, however, no known threats to groundwater levels. The site is subject to low levels of intervention and natural processes are allowed to prevail to a large extent. A WGS scheme is in place which favours the maintenance of the characteristic alder woodland composition.
- 6.12 Although a small part of the parish lies within the 10km buffer, the only tributary of the Kennet within the borough is the River Enborne and this joins the Kennet well downstream of the SAC. Therefore, it is considered that any development covered by the Neighbourhood Plan is not likely to significantly impact on this SAC.

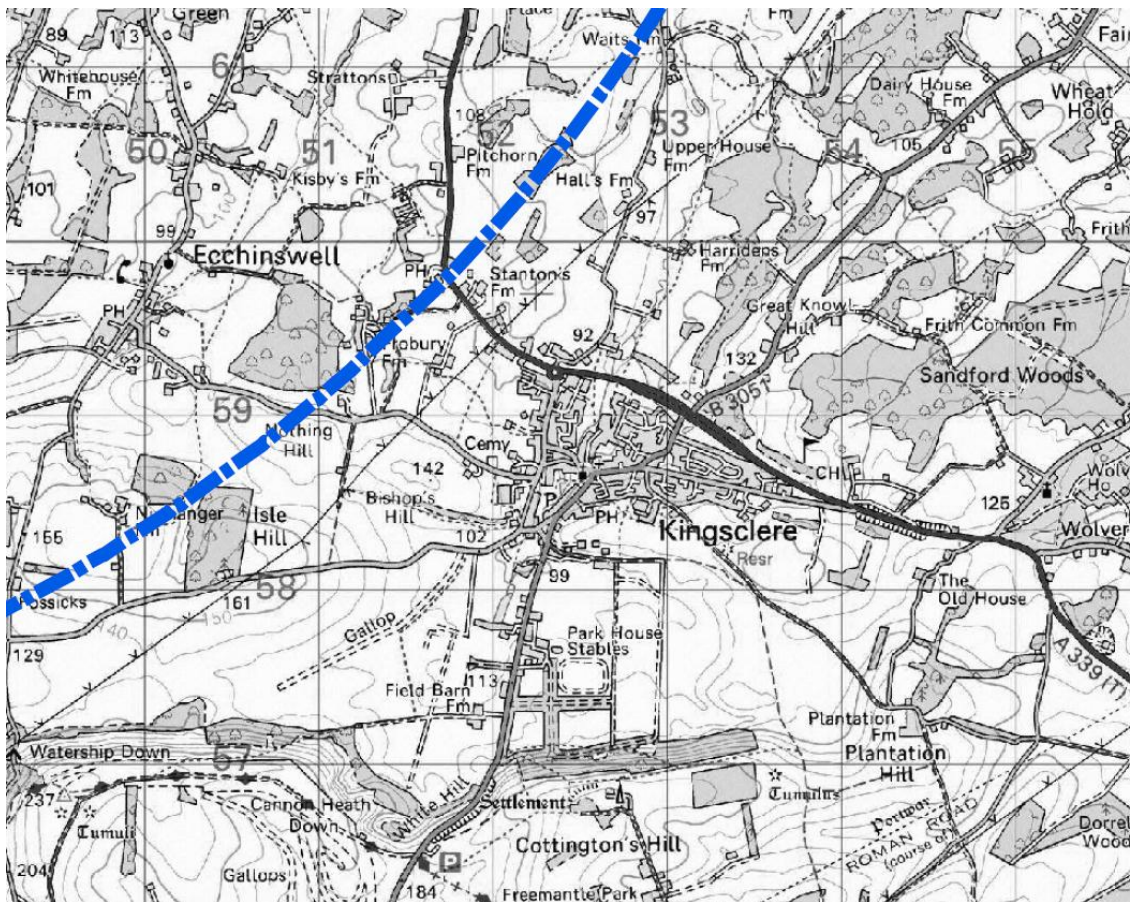


Fig 6.2 relationship with Kennet Valley Alderwoods SAC 10 km buffer zone

Screening Matrix

Name of European site¹⁰: Kennet Valley Alderwoods SAC

<p>Describe the individual elements of the project (either alone or in combination with other plan or projects) likely to give rise to impacts on the European site.</p>	<p>Physical development within the neighbourhood area (in the form of the development of housing sites) will have an impact on the localised environment. However, given the distance between such development and the SAC, which is over 10km, combined with the geographical relationship referred to in 6.12 above, there will be no direct or significant impact on the European site.</p>
<p>Describe any likely direct, indirect or secondary impacts of the project (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) on the European site by virtue of: size and scale; land-take; distance from the European site or key features; resource requirements (e.g. water abstraction); emissions; excavation requirements; transportation requirements; duration of construction activities.</p>	<p>The Plan is likely to result in some environmental impacts in the form of limited atmospheric pollution, as well as landscape and highways impacts. There would also be some limited, localised, environmental impacts flowing from construction processes. However, none of these would be of a scale which could reasonably be considered to impact significantly on the SAC, given the significant separation distance of over 10km between the likely development areas and the SAC.</p>
<p>Describe any likely changes to the site arising as a result of: reduction of habitat area; disturbance to key species; habitat or species fragmentation; reduction in species density; changes in key indicators of conservation value (e.g. water quality); climate change.</p>	<p>Given the scale of development required by policy SS5 in the Submission Local Plan (approximately 50 units), and the separation distance in relation to the SAC, no development in the neighbourhood area is likely to result in the impacts listed opposite.</p>
<p>Describe any likely impacts on the European site as a whole in terms of: interference with the key relationships that define the structure of the site; interference with key relationships that define the function of the site.</p>	<p>Given the location of the neighbourhood area and potential development sites in relation to the SAC, there will be no likely impacts on the European site as a whole.</p>
<p>Provide indicator of significance as a result of the identification of effects set out above in terms of: loss; fragmentation; disruption; disturbance; changes to key</p>	<p>The Plan is likely to predominantly facilitate housing development (for approximately 50 units), the effects of which will be largely restricted to within the neighbourhood area (which</p>

¹⁰ Please see Appendix 2 for details of the European site itself

elements.	the exception of highways implications and some visual impacts). Therefore, having regard to the European Commission report concerning the assessment of the effects on Natura 2000 sites ¹¹ , it is considered that there is likely to be a negligible impact on the significance of the European site, as there will be no loss, fragmentation or disturbance of habitat areas which form part of the European site (which is located over 10 km from the likely development sites).
Describe from the above those elements of the plan where the above impacts are likely to be significant or where the scale or magnitude of impacts is not known.	Given the location of the development to be allocated in the Neighbourhood Plan relative to the SAC, combined with the scale and nature of the proposed development (approximately 50 residential units), it is considered there will be no significant impact on the SAC.
Conclusion	No significant effects on the SAC are considered to be likely.

¹¹ Page 20, paragraph 3.1.5

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/management/docs/art6/natura_2000_assessment_en.pdf

The River Lambourn SAC

- 6.13 The River Lambourn SAC consists of the River Lambourn water body over an area of 27 hectares. The River Lambourn rises in the chalk of the Berkshire Downs, is 26 km long, and flows through the Kennet Valley to Newbury where it joins the River Kennet. The River Lambourn has one of the least modified catchments in southern England and has one of the lowest levels of abstraction. Water quality, water quantity and habitat quality are all considered to be high. However, localised higher water nutrient levels and siltation problems are at present associated with sewage treatment works. Natural England and the Environment Agency have produced an agreed protocol for dealing with issues affecting the river.
- 6.14 Kingsclere is located outside of the 5km buffer, but within the 10km buffer. The River Lambourn is a tributary of the River Kennet and drains south-eastwards from the Berkshire Downs – its catchment area lies to the north-west of Newbury and therefore shouldn't be affected by proposed policies within the Kingsclere neighbourhood area, accordingly, no significant impact on the SAC is considered likely.

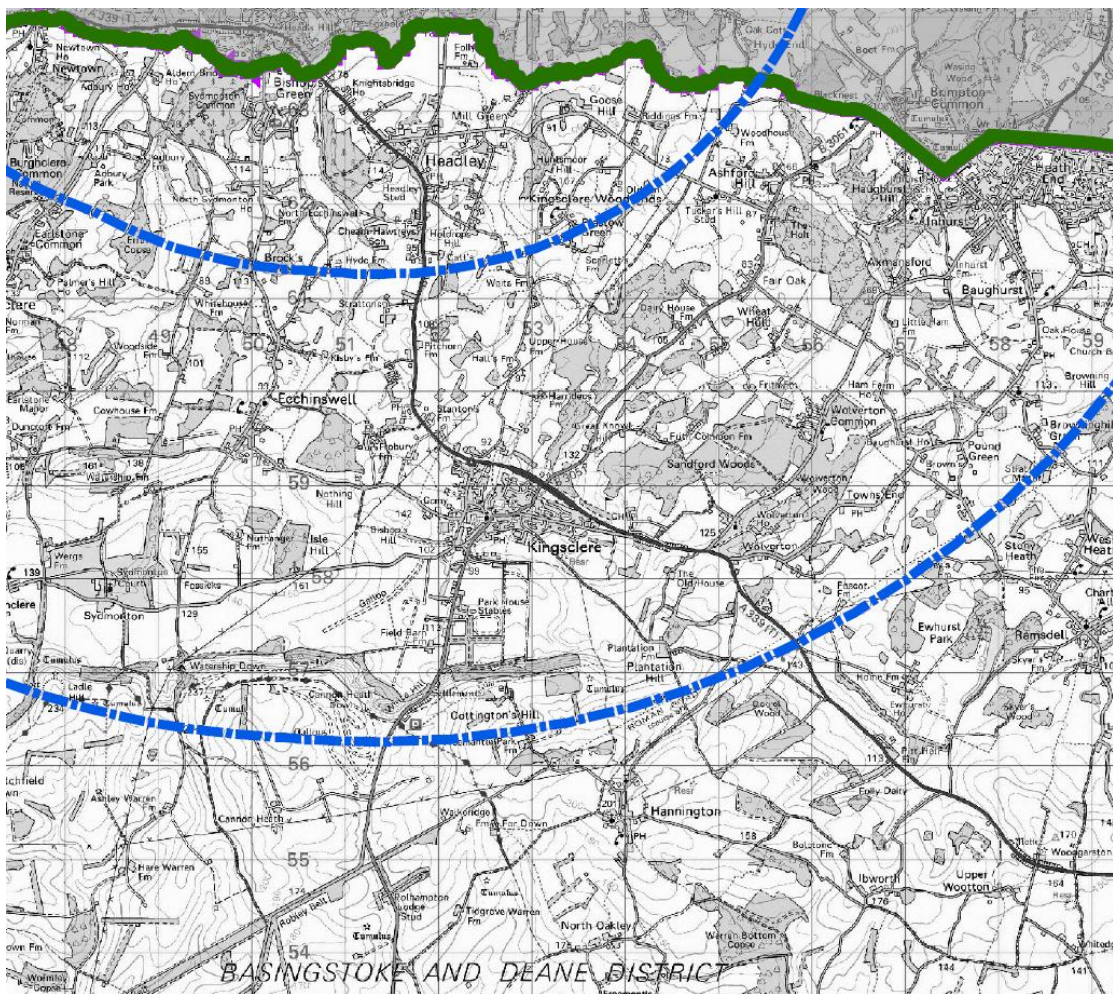


Fig 6.3 relationship with River Lambourn SAC buffer zones

Screening Matrix

Name of European site¹²: The River Lambourn SAC

<p>Describe the individual elements of the project (either alone or in combination with other plan or projects) likely to give rise to impacts on the European site.</p>	<p>Physical development within the neighbourhood area (in the form of the development of housing sites) will have an impact on the localised environment. However, given the distance between such development and the SAC, which is over 5km, combined with the geographical relationship referred to in 6.14 above, there will be no direct or significant impact on the European site.</p>
<p>Describe any likely direct, indirect or secondary impacts of the project (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) on the European site by virtue of: size and scale; land-take; distance from the European site or key features; resource requirements (e.g. water abstraction); emissions; excavation requirements; transportation requirements; duration of construction activities.</p>	<p>The neighbourhood plan is likely to result in some environmental impacts in the form of limited atmospheric pollution, as well as landscape and highways impacts. There would also be some limited, localised, environmental impacts flowing from construction processes. However, none of these would be of a scale which could reasonably be considered to impact significantly on the SAC, given the significant separation distance of over 5km (between the likely development areas and the SAC).</p>
<p>Describe any likely changes to the site arising as a result of: reduction of habitat area; disturbance to key species; habitat or species fragmentation; reduction in species density; changes in key indicators of conservation value (e.g. water quality); climate change.</p>	<p>Given the scale of development required by policy SS5 in the Submission Local Plan (approximately 50 units), and the separation distance in relation to the SAC, no development in the neighbourhood area is likely to result in the impacts listed opposite.</p>
<p>Describe any likely impacts on the European site as a whole in terms of: interference with the key relationships that define the structure of the site; interference with key relationships that define the function of the site.</p>	<p>Given the location of the neighbourhood area and potential development sites in relation to the SAC, there will be no likely impacts on the European site as a whole.</p>

¹² Please see Appendix 2 for details of the European site itself

Provide indicator of significance as a result of the identification of effects set out above in terms of: loss; fragmentation; disruption; disturbance; changes to key elements.	The plan is likely to predominantly facilitate housing development (for approximately 50 units), the effects of which will be largely restricted to within the neighbourhood area (which the exception of highways implications and visual impacts). Therefore, having regard to the European Commission report concerning the assessment of the effects on Natura 2000 sites ¹³ , it is considered that there is likely to be a negligible impact on the significance of the European site, as there will be no loss, fragmentation or disturbance of habitat areas which form part of the European site (which is located over 5 km from the likely development sites).
Describe from the above those elements of the plan where the above impacts are likely to be significant or where the scale or magnitude of impacts is not known.	Given the location of the development to be allocated in the Plan relative to the SAC, combined with the scale and nature of the proposed development (approximately 50 residential units), it is considered there will be no significant impact on the SAC.
Conclusion	No significant effects on the SAC are considered to be likely.

6.15 It should also be noted that the neighbourhood plan, and the borough council's Submission Local Plan (and current adopted Local Plan) include measures which will mitigate environmental impacts. This will reduce still further the potential for there to be any impact on the European site.

6.16 In addition, the borough council has carried out its own screening of the Submission Local Plan, and concluded that the Local Plan will not result in any significant adverse impact on the SPA. Therefore, this reinforces the conclusion that the Neighbourhood Plan is not likely to have any impact on the European site.

Overall conclusion regarding HRA

6.17 Natural England consider that no HRA is required, whilst the Environment Agency and English Heritage have registered no comment on this issue. Therefore, it is considered that in light of the above

¹³ Page 20, paragraph 3.1.5

http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/management/docs/art6/natura_2000_asses_en.pdf

analysis and the consultation responses received, it is concluded that an HRA is not required.

7. Conclusions

- 7.1 This report contains the assessment as to whether the Kingsclere Neighbourhood Plan should be subject to the requirement for the submission of an Environmental Report as required by the EAPP Regulations 2004 and/or Appropriate Assessment as required by the Habitats Regulations 2010.
- 7.2 The assessment for both of these requirements has been undertaken on the basis of proposals and policies outlined in Section 4 of this report and within the strategic framework established by the 'saved policies' of the Basingstoke and Deane Borough Local Plan Review Adopted Local Plan Review 1996-2011. The assessment also takes account of the relevant evidence base supporting the emerging Local Plan.
- 7.3 **The conclusion, based on the above assessment is that an SEA is considered to be required but that the Plan would not need to be subject to HRA.**

Strategic Environmental Assessment

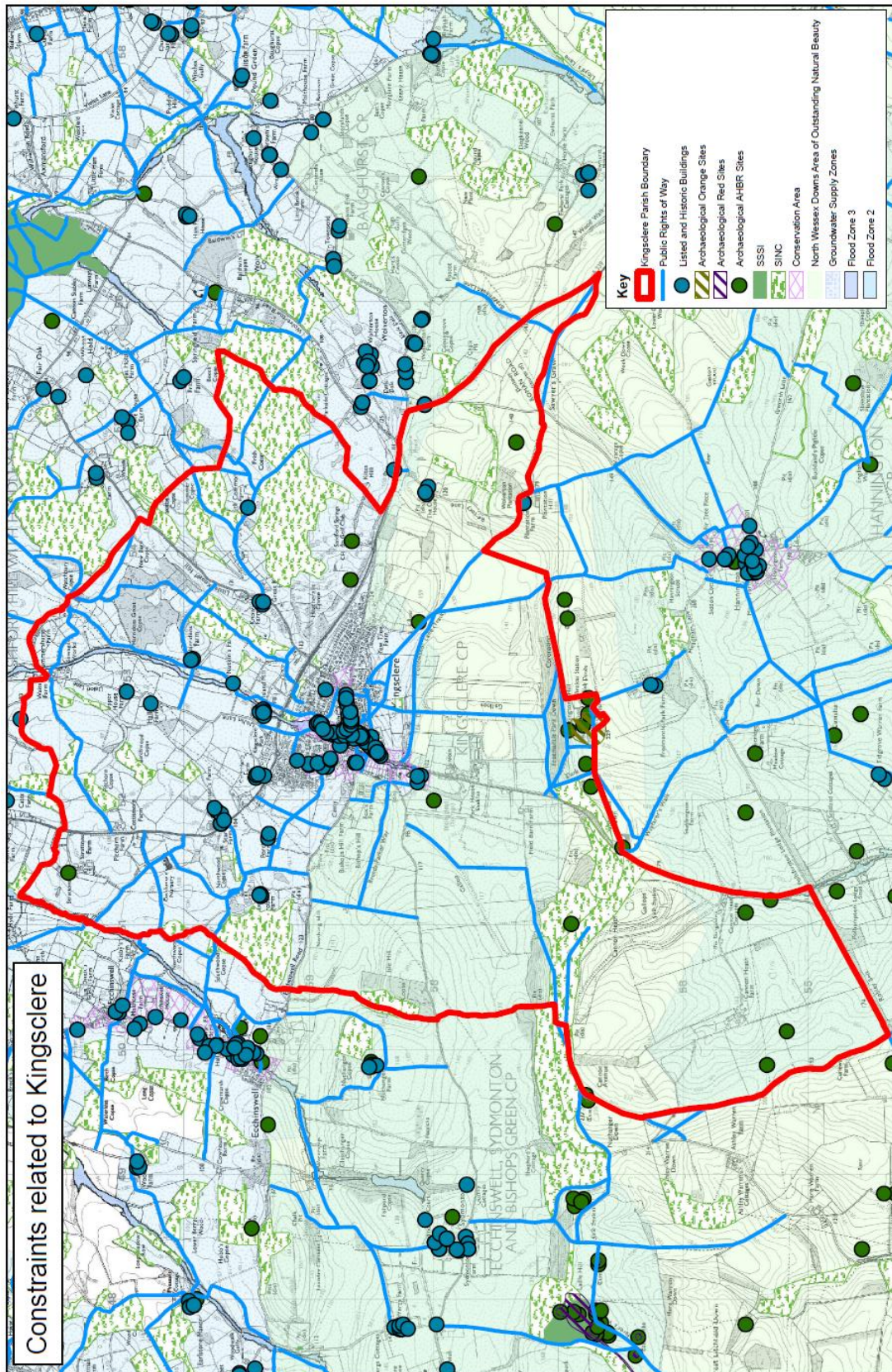
- 7.4 Natural England have set out in their response that as far as their strategic environmental interests are concerned (including but not limited to statutory designated sites, landscapes and protected species, geology and soils), there are likely to be significant environmental effects as a result of the proposed plan. English Heritage noted the presence of a conservation area and 95 listed buildings, and have also concluded that an SEA should be required.
- 7.5 In light of the consultation responses received from Natural England and English Heritage, and given the sensitive nature of the neighbourhood area, owing to the presence of a conservation area, numerous listed buildings and the AONB, and when considering the advice contained within the NPPG¹⁴, it is considered that an SEA is required in relation to the proposed neighbourhood plan.

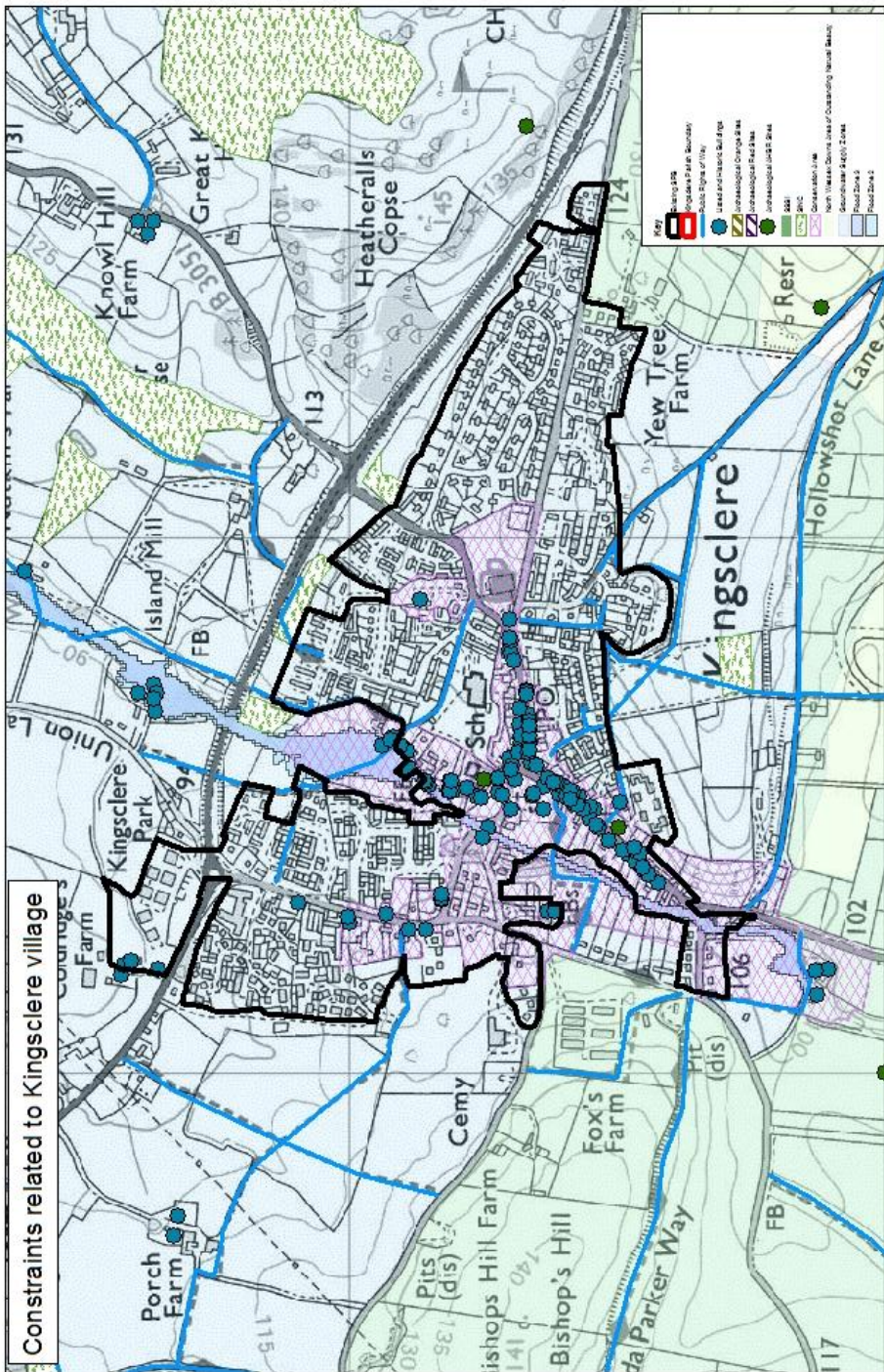
¹⁴ Paragraph: 046 Reference ID: 11-046-20150209. Of particular relevance in this regard is that the neighbourhood plan will be allocating sites, and the neighbourhood area contains sensitive natural and heritage assets that may be affected by the plan.

Habitats Regulations Assessment

- 7.6 The neighbourhood area is with 10km of three European sites. However, the village itself, and hence the likely location of the most environmentally relevant development, is outside of the 5km buffer zone for each of those European sites. In addition, the geographical relationship between the neighbourhood area and the European sites suggests that there is no likelihood of any impact on the European sites. Therefore, it is considered that no Appropriate Assessment is required. Natural England have stated that they agree with that conclusion.

Appendix 1 – Environmental Constraints





Constraints related to Kingsclere village

Key

- Proposed Zone Boundary
- Parish Zone of Influence
- Urban Area
- Urban Area (Core)
- Urban Area (Peripheral)
- Urban Area (Rural)
- Urban Area (Special)
- Urban Area (Other)
- Urban Area (Residential)
- Urban Area (Industrial)
- Urban Area (Commercial)
- Urban Area (Community)
- Urban Area (Other)
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Scale 1:10,000

Appendix 2 – Details of European sites within 10km of Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council

Thames Basin Heaths SPA

Introduction

The Thames Basin Heaths cover an area of 8,400 hectares and comprise a rare example of lowland heathland across Surrey, Hampshire and Berkshire. The heaths support significant populations of 3 important bird species and consist of 13 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). Hazeley Heath SSSI is the nearest part of the SPA to the borough (located within 5km of the borough boundary).

Due to the size, location and nature of this site and the surrounding development pressure, English Nature published a draft Delivery Plan for the Thames Basin Heaths SPA in May 2006. This was updated by the „Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area Delivery Framework“ published in January 2009 (Thames Basin Heaths Joint Strategic Partnership Board). The document sets out a strategic approach for development by providing a consistent method through which local authorities can meet the requirements of the Habitats Regulations through avoidance and mitigation measures.

Features of European Interest

Annex I birds and regularly occurring migratory birds not listed on Annex I:

- *Caprimulgus europaeus* (nightjar)
- *Lullula arborea* (woodlark)
- *Sylvia undata* (Dartford warbler)

Key environmental conditions/ vulnerability of the site

The mosaic of habitats which form the internationally important lowland heathland are dependent on active heathland management. Lack of grazing and other traditional management practices therefore pose a threat.

Development pressure on neighbouring land, urbanisation issues and the cumulative and indirect effects of neighbouring developments also pose a potential long-term problem. A strategic approach to accommodating development whilst ensuring compatibility with the Habitats Regulations is being addressed through the Thames Basin Heaths Area Based Delivery Project. This seeks to address the detrimental impacts of recreational pressure, particularly dog walking, on ground nesting bird populations.

Wealden Heaths phase II SPA

Introduction

The Wealden Heaths Phase II SPA is located across the counties of Surrey, Hampshire and West Sussex and comprises 4 Sites of Special Scientific Interest, namely Woolmer Forest SSSI and SAC, Broxhead and Kingsley Commons SSSI, Bramshott and Ludshott Commons SSSI and Devil's Punchbowl SSSI. A small area to the south east of the borough is located within 10km of the SPA.

Features of European Interest

Annex I birds and regularly occurring migratory birds not listed on Annex I:

- *Caprimulgus europaeus* (nightjar)
- *Lullula arborea* (woodlark)
- *Sylvia undata* (Dartford warbler)

Key environmental conditions/ vulnerability of the site

The heathland habitats of the Special Protection Area are very dependent upon grazing and other traditional management practices. The SPA is vulnerable to urbanisation issues, fly tipping and heathland fires and there is increasing pressure for development associated with military training activities. Formal and informal recreation activities are a potential threat to the breeding success of Annex 1 birds. The heaths are also dependent on high water tables to maintain their features of interest, and are therefore sensitive to any potential lowering of water levels due to water abstraction. In the most recent condition assessment process, parts of the heathland were not in favourable condition, with concerns about inappropriate vegetation species, vehicle damage and invasive species.

East Hampshire Hangers SAC

Introduction

The East Hampshire Hangers SAC is a large complex of predominantly broadleaved deciduous woodland comprising seven Sites of Special Scientific Interest:

- Upper Greensand Hangers: Wyck to Wheatley
- Wick Wood and Worldham Hangers
- Coombe Wood and The Lythe
- Selborne Common
- Noar Hill
- Wealden Edge Hangers
- Upper Greensand Hangers: Empshott to Hawkley

Features of European Interest

The East Hampshire Hangers qualify as a SAC for both habitats and species. Firstly, the site contains the following Habitats Directive Annex I habitats:

- Dry grasslands and scrublands on chalk or limestone, including important orchid sites: Noar Hill in particular, has an outstanding assemblage of orchids, including one of the largest UK populations of the nationally scarce musk orchid *Herminium monorchis*;
- Beech forests on neutral to rich soils: the site is extremely rich in terms of vascular plants;
- Mixed woodland on base-rich soils associated with rocky slopes: along with Rook Clift SAC, in the south-east of England, this habitat is only represented here;
- Dry grasslands or scrublands on chalk or limestone (though not a primary reason for site selection);
- Yew-dominated woodland (though not a primary reason for site selection).

Secondly, the site contains the Habitats Directive Annex II species early gentian *Gentianella anglica* and *Triturus cristatus* (great crested newt).

The key environmental conditions that have been defined for this site are:

- Maintenance of grazing;
- Absence of direct fertilisation; and
- Low nutrient runoff from surrounding land although the Hanger woodlands are vulnerable to nutrient run-off leading to eutrophication;
- Minimal air pollution – nitrogen deposition may cause reduction in diversity, sulphur deposition can cause acidification;
- Well-drained soils.

Key environmental conditions / vulnerability of the site

Being steep and narrow, the Hanger woodlands are vulnerable to nutrient runoff from adjacent agricultural land, leading to eutrophication and growth of ruderal vegetation when, for example neglected coppice is cut. Within the Hangers over-maturity and outbreaks of beech disease have been observed. Management is hampered by sparse mast years, few seed trees, the presence of deep litter layers and difficulties in extracting felled timber due to the steep slopes present.

Natural England will be exploring mechanisms that can be put in place to curtail damaging agricultural activities in the vicinity of the site. Natural England is liaising closely with the Forestry Commission regarding positive management of these woodlands through Woodland Grant Schemes and, for example, the Challenge Fund.

Kennet & Lambourne Floodplain SAC

Introduction

The Kennet and Lambourn Floodplain SAC is a composite site of approximately 114 hectares located within West Berkshire and Wiltshire. The site has the general character of 59% bogs, marshes and water fringed vegetation, 40% humid and Mesophile grassland, and 1% standing or running water.

The cluster of sites selected in the Kennet and Lambourn valleys support one of the most extensive known populations of Desmoulin's whorl snail (*Vertigo moulinsiana*) in the UK. The conservation objective related to the sites' designation is to maintain in favourable condition, the habitat for the population of Desmoulin's whorl snail (*Vertigo moulinsiana*).

Features of European Interest

The Kennet and Lambourne Floodplain SAC qualify as a SAC for both habitats and species. Firstly, the site contains the following Habitats Directive Annex I habitats:

- Water courses of plain to montane levels with the *Ranunculion fluitantis* and *Callitrichio-Batrachion* vegetation

Secondly, the site contains the Habitats Directive Annex II species:

- Lampetra planeri* (Brook Lamprey)
- Cottus gobio* (bullhead)

Key environmental conditions / vulnerability of the site

The River Lambourn has one of the least modified catchments in southern England and has one of the lowest levels of abstraction. Water quality, water quantity and habitat quality are all considered to be high. However, localised higher water nutrient levels and siltation problems are at present associated with sewage treatment works. Natural England and the Environment Agency have produced an agreed protocol for dealing with issues affecting the river.

Kennet Valley Alderwoods SAC

Introduction

The Kennet Valley Alderwoods SAC consists of two sites of approximately 56 hectares in total located within West Berkshire in the Kennet floodplain. Its general site characteristic is of broad leaved deciduous woodland. The woodlands are the largest remaining fragments of damp, ash-alder woodland in the Kennet floodplain area. The conservation of the site is dependent upon maintaining a constantly high groundwater level.

Features of European Interest

The Kennet Valley Alderwoods SAC qualify as a SAC for containing the following Habitats Directive Annex I habitats:

- Alluvial forests with *Alnus glutinosa* and *Fraxinus excelsior* (Alno- Padion, Alnion incanae, Salicion albae)

Key environmental conditions/ vulnerability of the site

The conservation interest of the site is critically dependent upon maintenance of constantly high groundwater levels. However, there are no known threats to groundwater levels. The site is subject to low levels of intervention and natural processes are allowed to prevail to a large extent. A Woodland Grant Scheme is in place which favours the maintenance of the characteristic alder woodland composition.

River Itchen SAC

Introduction

The River Itchen is a chalk river that rises from the chalk aquifer of the Hampshire Downs (near Alresford) and flows through Winchester to join the Solent at Southampton. It hosts a number of habitats which support nationally and internationally important plants and animals. These require certain water levels with little variation over the course of a year, and fast flow rates. The whole river, including its three headwater tributaries, are designated as a SSSI.

Features of European Interest

The River Itchen SAC qualify as a SAC for both habitats and species. Firstly, the site contains the following Habitats Directive Annex I habitats:

- Water courses of plain to montane levels with the *Ranunculus fluitantis* and *Callitriche-Batrachion* vegetation

Secondly, the site contains the following Habitats Directive Annex II species:

- *Vertigo moulinsiana* (Desmoulin's whorl snail)
- *Coenagrion mercuriale* (Southern damselfly)
- *Austropotamobius pallipes* (white-clawed crayfish)
- *Petromyzon marinus*
- *Lampetra planeri* (Brook Lamprey)
- *Lampetra fluviatilis*
- *Salmo salar* (atlantic salmon)
- *Cottus gobio* (bullhead)
- *Lutra lutra* (otter)

Key environmental conditions/ vulnerability of the site

The river's ecology depends on maintaining a uniform, fast flow of water. A principal threat to the habitats within this SAC is considered to be the decrease in flow velocities and increase in siltation, in turn affecting macrophyte cover. Recent surveys have shown declines in *Ranunculus* cover since 1990, attributable to increased abstractions in the upper catchment,

coupled with a series of years with below-average rainfall. Low flows interact with nutrient inputs from point sources to produce localised increases in filamentous algae and nutrient-tolerant macrophytes at the expense of *Ranunculus*.

The Environment Agency is initiating a major study of the river's macrophytes, from which a predictive model will be developed which will aid decisions on whether to reduce water abstraction at critical times. Efforts are currently being made to increase the viability of the southern damselfly population through population studies and a Species Action Plan.

River Lambourn SAC

Introduction

The River Lambourn SAC consists of the River Lambourn water body over an area of 27 hectares. The River Lambourn rises in the chalk of the Berkshire Downs, is 26 km long, and flows through the Kennet Valley to Newbury where it joins the River Kennet. It has one important tributary, the Winterbourne stream, which flows into the Lambourn from the north-east, just upstream of Newbury. It is also a designated SSSI.

Features of European Interest

The River Lambourn SAC qualify as a SAC for both habitats and species. Firstly, the site contains the following Habitats Directive Annex I habitats:

- Water courses of plain to montane levels with the *Ranunculus fluitans* and *Callitriche-Batrachium* vegetation

Secondly, the site contains the following Habitats Directive Annex II species:

- *Lampetra planeri* (Brook Lamprey)
- *Cottus gobio* (bullhead)

Key environmental conditions/ vulnerability of the site

The River Lambourn has one of the least modified catchments in southern England and has one of the lowest levels of abstraction. Water quality, water quantity and habitat quality are all considered to be high. However, localised higher water nutrient levels and siltation problems are at present associated with sewage treatment works. Natural England and the Environment Agency have produced an agreed protocol for dealing with issues affecting the river.

Shortheath Common SAC

Introduction

Shortheath Common is a heathland site located on the western Weald. It comprises a single SSSI which covers approximately 58 hectares. The site was historically grazed but now is recovering from the encroachment of scrub.

Features of European Interest

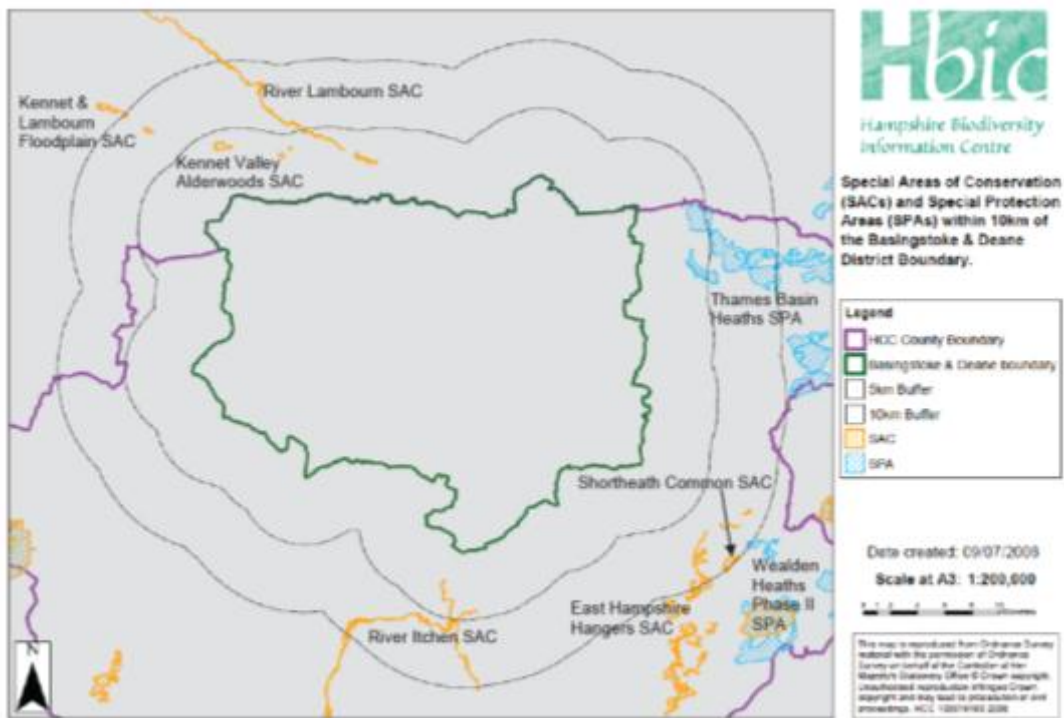
The Shortheath Common SAC qualifies as a SAC for containing the following Habitats Directive Annex I habitats:

- Natural dystrophic lakes and ponds
- Northern Atlantic wet heaths with *Erica tetralix*
- European dry heaths
- Transition mires and quaking bogs
- Bog woodland

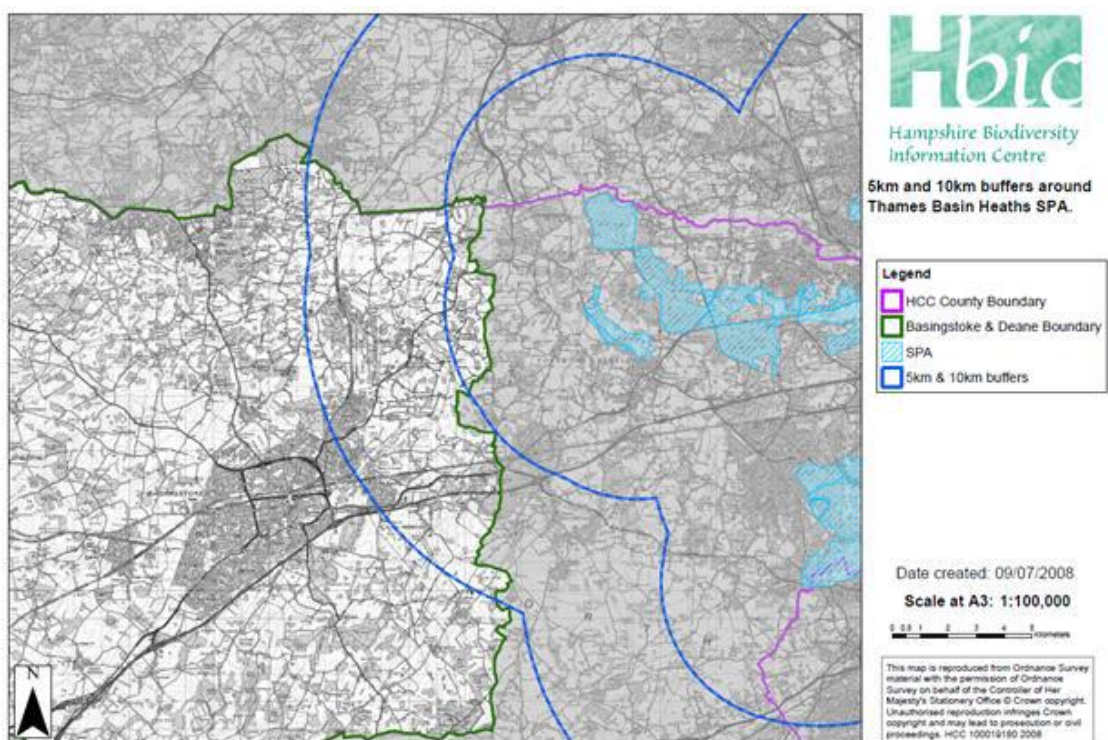
Key environmental conditions/ vulnerability of the site

The site is vulnerable to encroachment of invasive scrub and trees due to cessation of traditional grazing management. Erosional risk and fire are also threats. A Natural England Wildlife Enhancement Scheme agreement has been entered into in an attempt to address the ecological deterioration. The heaths are also dependent on high water tables to maintain their features of interest, and are therefore sensitive to any potential lowering of water levels due to water abstraction. Protection of the site therefore relies on careful management of water levels and recreational activities and good air quality.

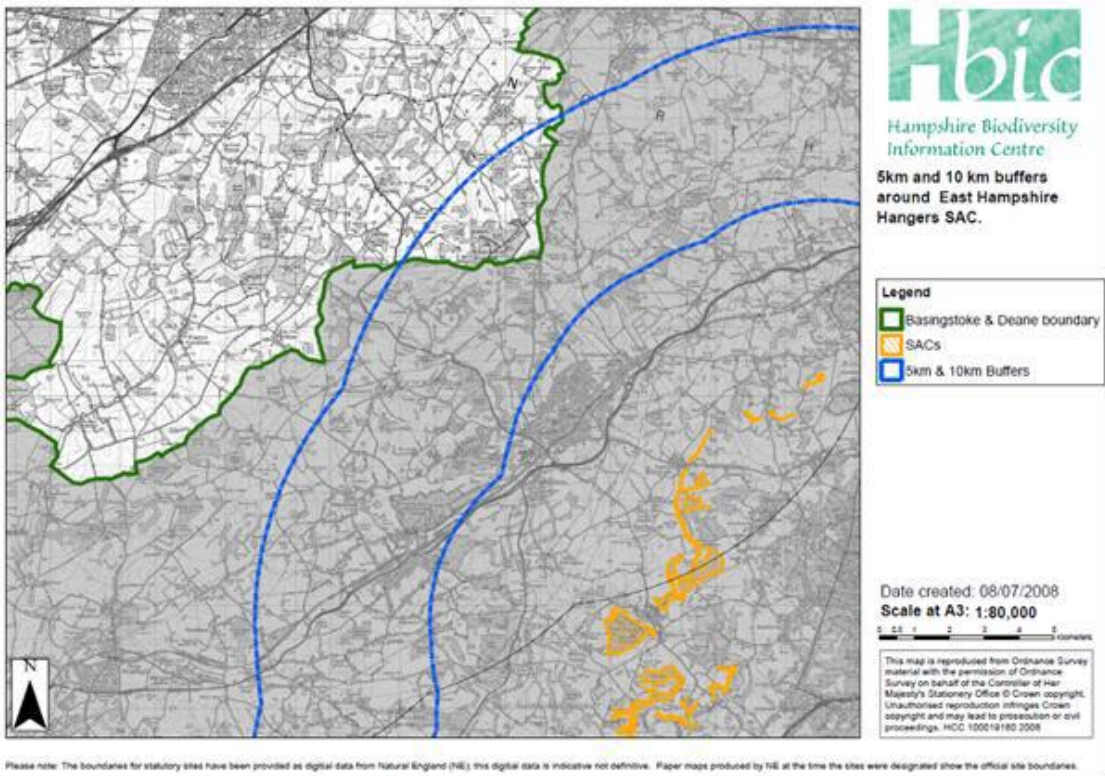
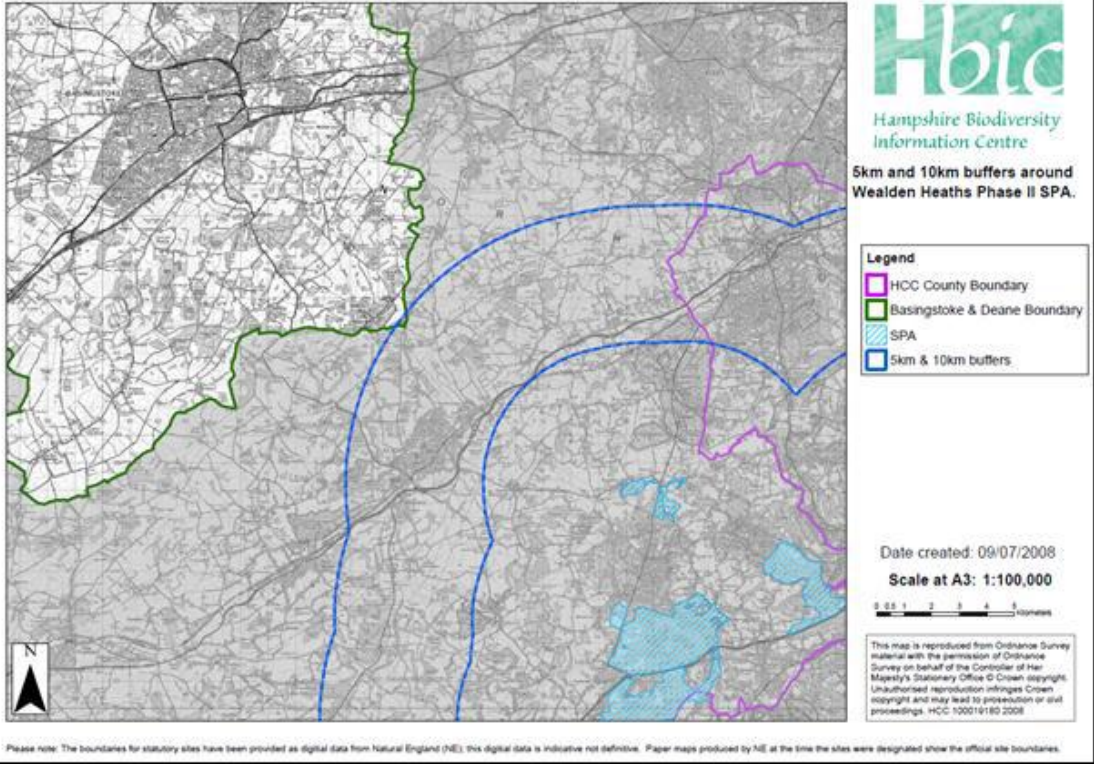
Appendix 3 - Maps of European sites within 10km of Basingstoke and Deane Borough

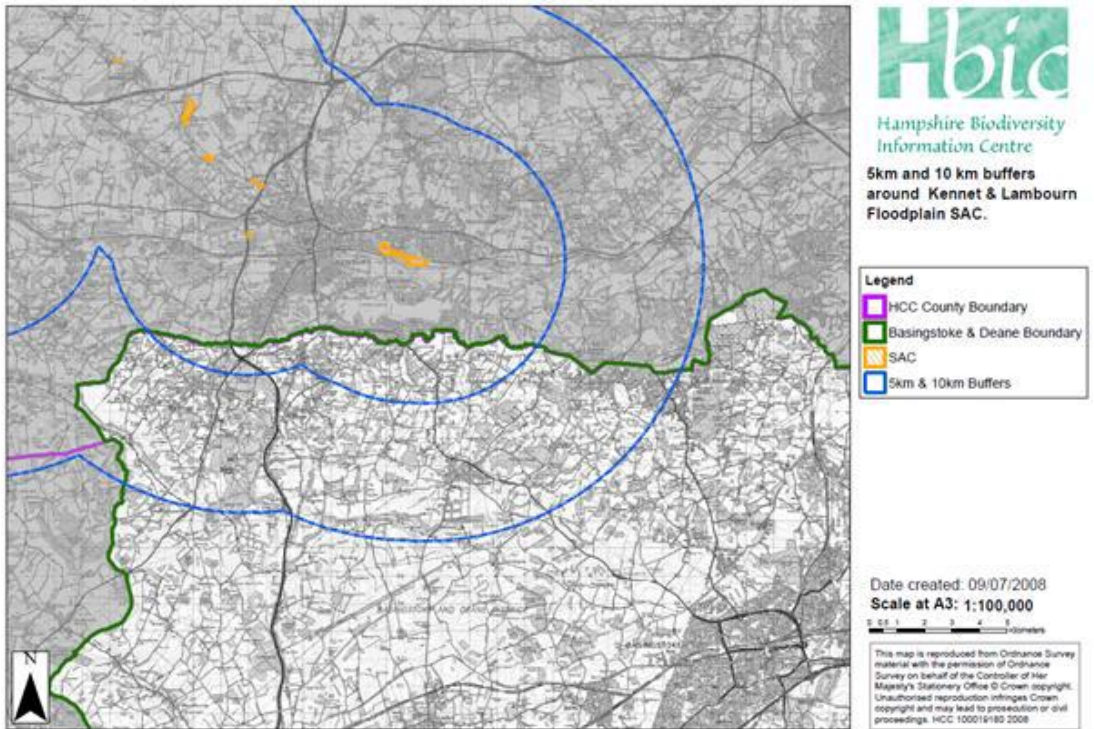


Please note: The boundaries for statutory sites have been provided as digital data from Natural England (NE); this digital data is indicative not definitive. Paper maps produced by NE at the time the sites were designated show the official site boundaries.

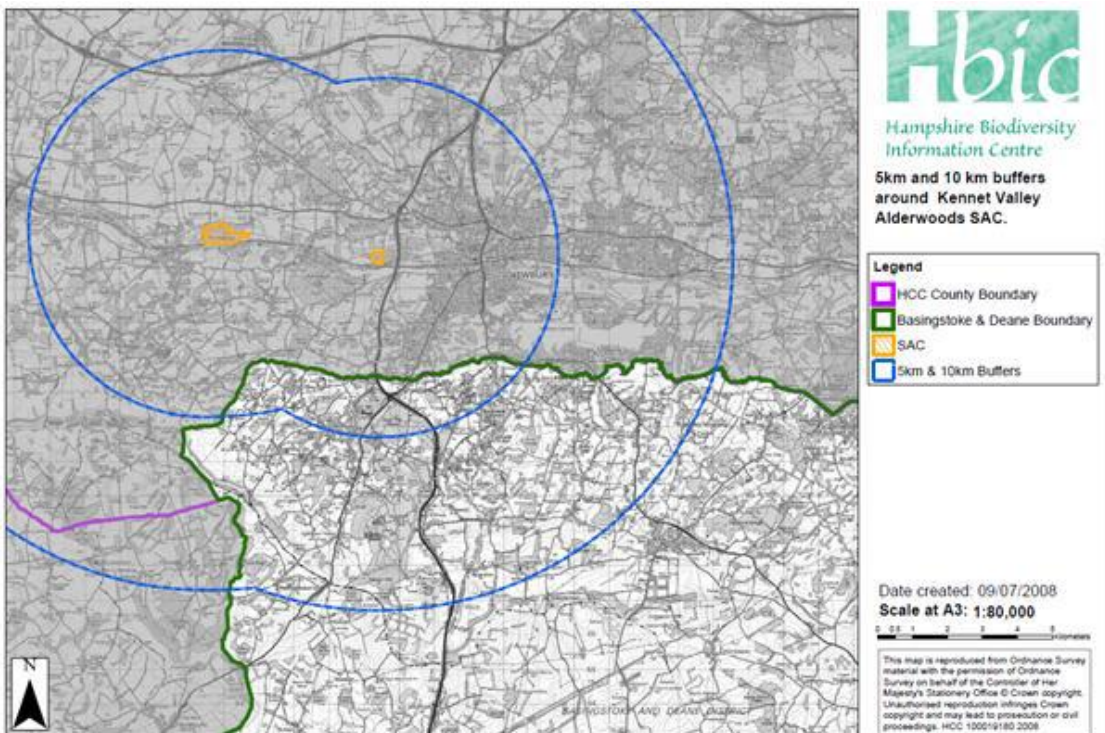


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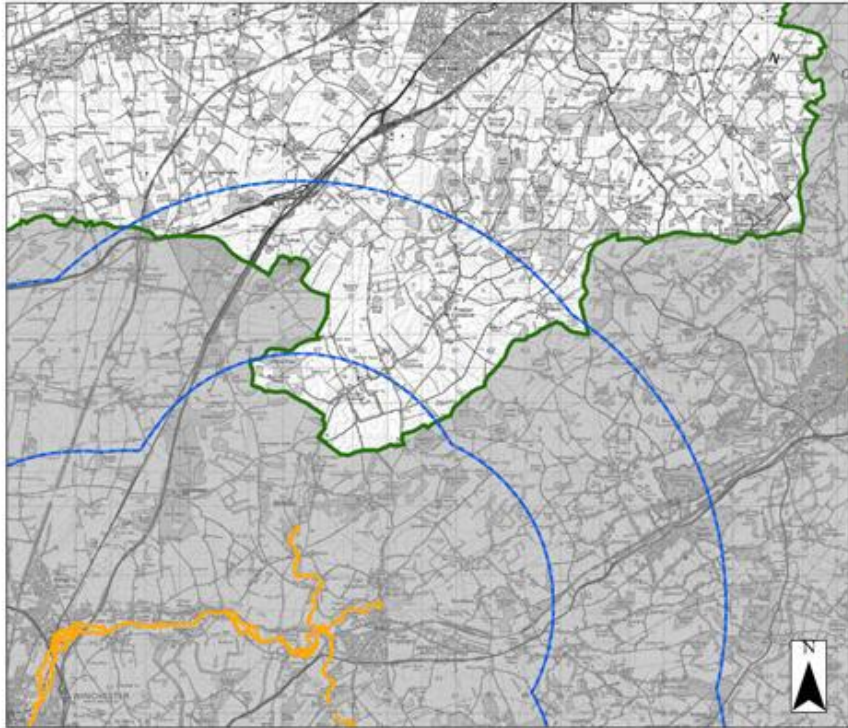




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Hbic
 Hampshire Biodiversity
 Information Centre

**5km and 10 km buffers
 around River Itchen
 SAC.**

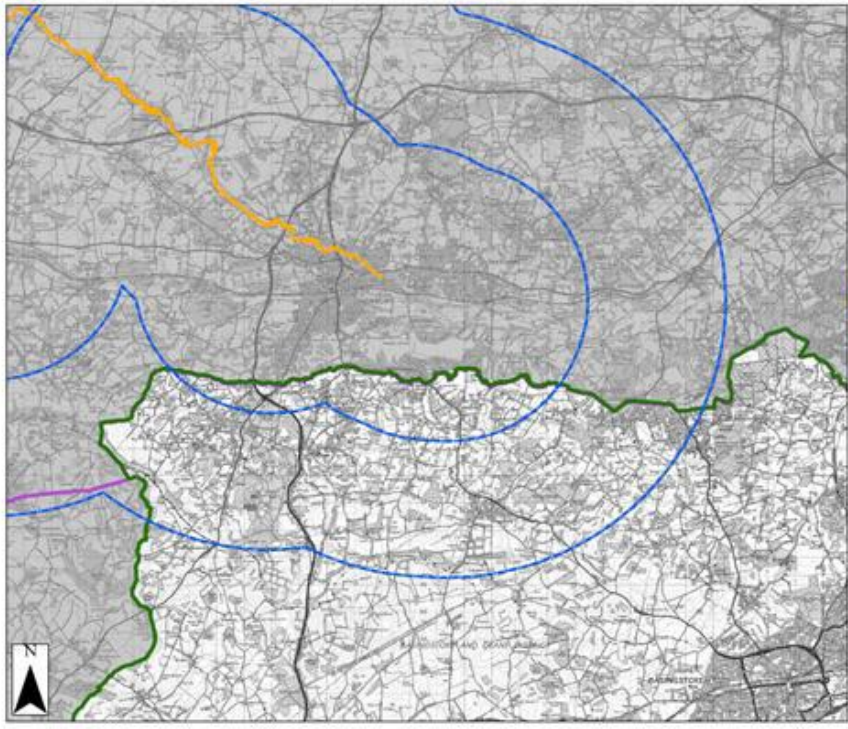
- Legend**
- Basingstoke & Deane Boundary
 - SAC
 - 5km & 10km Buffers

Date created: 09/07/2008
 Scale at A3: 1:80,000



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Hbic
 Hampshire Biodiversity
 Information Centre

**5km and 10 km buffers
 around River Lambourn
 SAC.**

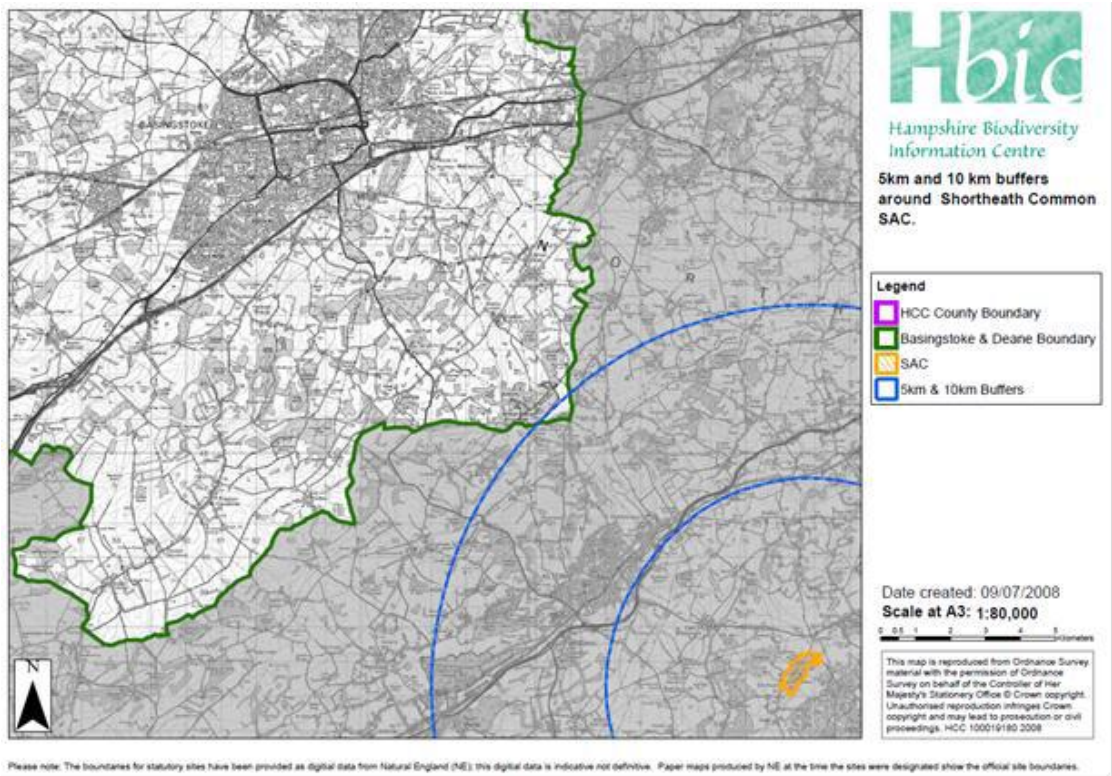
- Legend**
- HCC County Boundary
 - Basingstoke & Deane boundary
 - SAC
 - 5km & 10km Buffers

Date created: 09/07/2008
 Scale at A3: 1:100,000



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(Source for all: Basingstoke and Deane Pre-Submission Local Plan Habitats Regulations Screening Assessment)

Appendix 4 – Comments received from consultation bodies

Natural England

Date: 20th March 2015

Our ref: 145779

Your ref: -

Andrew.Rushmer@basingstoke.gov.uk

Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council



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

BY EMAIL ONLY

T 0300 060 3900

Dear Andrew,

Screening the Kingsclere Neighbourhood Plan for SEA and HRA

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.

SEA screening

It is our advice, on the basis of the material supplied with the consultation, that, in so far as our strategic environmental interests are concerned (including but not limited to statutory designated sites, landscapes and protected species, geology and soils) are concerned, that there is likely to be significant environmental effects from the proposed plan.

Guidance on the assessment of Neighbourhood Plans in light of the SEA Directive is contained within the National Planning Practice Guidance¹. 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 allocations contained within the plan are capable of having significant effects on sensitive sites that Natural England has a statutory duty to protect. As we have no evidence of these effects having been assessed within a Local Plan, we consider that there should now be an assessment in order to determine the potential impact on these sensitive sites and what possibilities exist for the avoidance/mitigation of the effects.

The following sites have been identified as being potentially significantly affected by the plan allocations:

- North Wessex Downs AONB Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

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.

HRA screening

We agree that the Plan would not need to be subject to HRA.

For any correspondence or queries relating to this consultation only, please contact Charles Routh on 07990 773630. For any new consultations or issues, please contact consultations@naturalengland.org.uk.

Yours sincerely,

Charles Routh

Lead Adviser, on behalf of Hampshire and Dorset Team, Natural England.



ENGLISH HERITAGE

SOUTH EAST

Mr Andrew Rushmer
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London Road
Basingstoke
Hampshire, RG21 4AH.

Our ref: HD/P5229/01
Your ref:
Telephone 01483 252040
Fax

31st March 2015

Dear Andrew,

Kingsclere Neighbourhood Plan SEA Screening Opinion

Thank you for your e-mail and letter of 23rd February seeking our opinion on whether the Kingsclere Neighbourhood Plan is likely to have significant environmental effects.

We note that the Plan will allocate land for at least 50 dwellings. Kingsclere parish has a conservation area and 95 listed building entries, including the grade II* Church of St Mary and 20, Swan Street. Without knowing exactly where the sites for the 50 dwellings are to be, we cannot be sure that the Plan will not have a significant (historic) environmental effect or effects.

We have carefully considered the Council's Screening Opinion but, as it stands therefore, we have to conclude that the Plan should be subject to SEA. However, we would be happy to review this opinion when we the development site allocations have been selected.

Even a formal SEA is not eventually believed to be necessary, we would nevertheless suggest that the Plan is subject to a form of sustainability appraisal to assess potential site allocations against a set of agreed criteria and to assess and monitor the Plan's policies and proposals against a set of agreed objectives.

We hope these comments are helpful.

Thank you again for consulting English Heritage.

Cont'd

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Please note that English Heritage operates an access to information policy.
Correspondence or information which you send us may therefore become publicly available



Kind regards,

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Environment Agency

creating a better place



Andrew Rushmer
Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council
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Basingstoke
Hampshire
RG21 4AH

Our ref: WA/2011/109908/SE-
01/SC1-L01
Your ref:
Date: 31 March 2015

Dear Mr Rushmer

Re: Strategic Environment Impact Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening Report for Kingsclere Neighbourhood Plan

Thank you for consulting us on the above screening opinion. This consultation was received on 23 February 2015. After reviewing the screening report we have the following comments to make:

Strategic Environment Impact Assessment (SEA)

The screening report correctly identifies that the central area of the neighbourhood plan is affected by flood zones 3 and 2.

The area of the plan is also partly located within the groundwater Source Protection Zone 1 (SPZ1) and is underlain by a principle aquifer. This means that the area is a high sensitive location with regard to the protection of groundwater.

SPZ1 and principle aquifer identify the catchment areas of sources of potable water and show where they may be at particular risk from polluting activities on or below the land surface.

We have identified that site KING 005 - West of Winchester Road, as showed within the sites allocation map (Figure 4.1 of the screening report) is partly located within flood zones 3 and 2, SPZ1 and within a principle aquifer. Moreover, the site is right next to the public water supply abstraction, meaning that the proposed development would not be able to discharge any foul sewage to ground as it would cause problems at the water abstraction borehole. Finally, site NP6 – Land Povey's Mead, as showed, is located within SPZ1 and a principle aquifer. However, within the area of the plan there are foul sewers to which new developments could discharge to.

Therefore, due to the above constraints if development was not managed appropriately then there could be a significant impact on the environment. However, **we concur that an Environmental Report is not necessary.**

Cont'd..



ea/11/06/1001

Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)

We have no comments to make on this.

Advices to LPA and Kingsclere Parish Council

Advice note 1

We advise the Parish contacts Thames Water to check the capacity of the foul sewage infrastructure.

Advice note 2

The sequential test should be applied for site allocations or any proposed development for local plans as set out in paragraph 100 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The aim should be to have all the allocated sites directed away from sites at higher risk of flooding. Site allocation KING 005 - West of Winchester Road lies within flood zones 2 and 3 and therefore this site will need to be sequentially tested.

Further Information

We would like to offer the advice contained within our leaflet 'Planning for the environment at the neighbourhood level', A PDF copy is attached to this email for your convenience.

If you have any queries then please do not hesitate to contact me. We look forward to working with you and the community on future stages of the plan.

Yours faithfully

Miss Donatella Cillo
Sustainable Places | Planning Advisor

Direct dial 0118953 5498

Email: planning-farnham@environment-agency.gov.uk