

Barrowby Neighbourhood Plan

Strategic Environmental Assessment & Habitat Regulations Assessment Screening Statement

February 2025



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1. Introduction

This document contains the Screening Statements for the Barrowby Neighbourhood Plan, with regard to whether a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and / or Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) are required to be undertaken.

Regulation 15 of the 2012 Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations sets out the information that must accompany a Neighbourhood Plan when submitted to the local planning authority. In February 2015 amendments to the Neighbourhood Plan Regulations came into force; this is known as the Neighbourhood Planning (General) (Amendment) Regulations 2015. Regulation 2(4) of these amendments adds additions to the list of documents that a qualifying body must submit to a local planning authority with a Neighbourhood Plan. The additional document which must be submitted is either an environmental report prepared in accordance with the relevant regulations or, if the outcome concludes that an SEA or HRA is not necessary, a statement that sets out how environmental issues have been taken into account and considered during the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan.

The National Planning Policy Framework (para 167) advises that assessments should be proportionate and should not repeat policy assessment that has already taken place. In view of this, only a high-level screening assessment of the Plan has been undertaken, and this assessment should be read in conjunction with the relevant reports produced for the South Kesteven Local Plan.

This preliminary Screening Assessment has been prepared on behalf of the Barrowby Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and Barrowby Parish Council by the group's professional adviser, OpenPlan.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

Following the UK's exit from the European Union, the UK has retained key environmental assessment regulations that were originally derived from EU law. The **Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)** requirements, initially established under the **EU SEA Directive (2001/42/EC)**, have been incorporated into UK legislation through the **Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004**. These regulations continue to apply to plans and programmes that require strategic environmental consideration.

While the UK government has expressed an intention to review and reform environmental assessment processes, the core principles of SEA and habitat protection remain embedded in domestic law, continuing to guide planning and development decisions.

The objective of undertaking a SEA is *“to provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes with a view to promoting sustainable development, by ensuring that an environmental assessment is carried out of certain plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment.”*¹

¹ SEA Directive, Article 1

Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)

Habitat protection regulations, which stem from the **EU Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC)** and **Birds Directive (2009/147/EC)**, were also transposed into UK law, through the **Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)**. Following the UK's exit from the EU, these were retained and amended via the **Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019**, ensuring that the UK maintains the requirement for **Habitats Regulations Assessments (HRA)** for projects affecting protected sites.

European protected sites (the 'Natura 2000 Network') are of exceptional importance for the conservation of important species and natural habitats within the European Union. The network of European protected sites comprises Special Protection Areas (SPAs) designated under the Birds Directive (79/409/EEC), Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) designated under the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) and Ramsar sites designated under the Ramsar Convention 1975. Government guidance advises that potential SPAs (pSPA), candidate SACs (cSAC) and potential Ramsar (pRamsar) sites are also included in HRA's.

As a land use plan, an assessment of the Barrowby Neighbourhood Plan may be required under the Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) Regulations 2012 (the Habitat Regulations) and Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive in order to determine whether the Plan may result in significant effects on identified sites.

As with the SEA, a screening process is employed to establish whether any elements of the Draft Plan could have a significant effect on these sites. Regulation 32 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) further reemphasises the importance of carrying out this assessment by stating that one of the basic conditions that must be met before the Plan may be 'made' is that *"the making of the neighbourhood plan is not likely to have a significant effect on a European site (as defined in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2012) or a European offshore marine site (as defined in the Offshore Marine Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 2007 (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects))"*².

Summary of Findings

Following the undertaking of the Screening Assessments, it is considered that the Plan, in its current form, **will not have any significant negative effects on the environment or any sites that are protected by the provisions of the relevant regulations**. It is considered, therefore, that **a full environmental assessment and habitat regulations assessment is not required**.

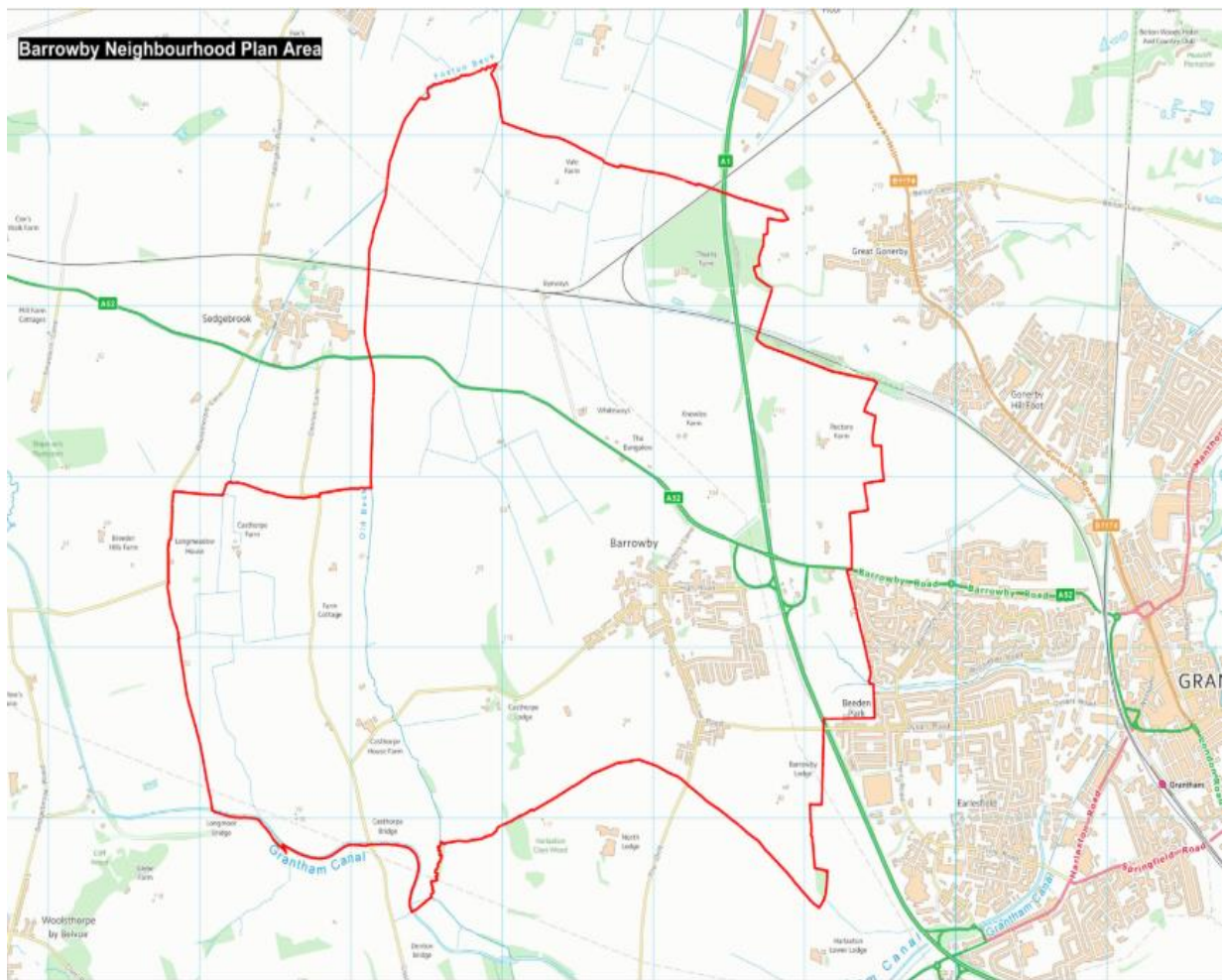
This opinion has been reached by assessing the contents of the Pre-Submission Draft of the Neighbourhood Plan. The Plan has been assessed against criteria provided in Schedule 1 of the 2004 Regulations and with regard to Regulation 32 of the 2015 Neighbourhood Planning Regulations & the Habitat Regulations. The conclusions are set out in Section 6 of this report.

² Planning Guidance - Paragraph: 079; Reference ID: 41-079-20140306

2. The Barrowby Neighbourhood Plan

The Neighbourhood Plan is being developed by Barrowby Parish Council, the Qualifying Body for the Barrowby Neighbourhood Area in South Kesteven District, Lincolnshire, as depicted in Figure 1, below. The Plan has been devised to cover the period to 2031.

Figure 1: Designated Neighbourhood Area



Barrowby Designated Neighbourhood Area

Plan Overview

As detailed below, the priorities of the Plan are captured in the Vision and Community, to be delivered through the application of 8 development management policies specific to the Neighbourhood Area.

Vision

In twenty years, Barrowby will be a thriving, eco-friendly village that balances growth with its cherished rural character, ensuring a high quality of life for residents of all ages. Barrowby will be a sustainable and inclusive parish that respects its past while embracing its future.

Community Objectives

The Neighbourhood Plan's objectives are based on the Vision, and they provide the context for the Neighbourhood Plan's Policies.

1. Community spirit and social cohesion

Promote community spirit and social cohesion, creating an interconnected community where residents are active in leading and participating in community activities.

2. Transport and parking issues

Address current traffic and parking issues by promoting more sustainable means of transportation, including walking, cycling and use of buses.

3. Celebration of Barrowby's history and character

Celebrate the history and distinctive character of the village, conserving and enhancing its built heritage and ensuring that new developments contribute positively to its character and appearance.

4. Appropriate scale of residential development

To meet the community's housing needs, enable further residential development of appropriate scale, form and type in appropriate locations within the village's developed footprint.

5. Employment opportunities

Provide for appropriate employment opportunities in the parish, including small businesses and working from home opportunities, as well as more traditional activities such as agriculture.

6. Community facilities

Promote the development, enhancement and long-term sustainability of community facilities and community-oriented commercial activities.

7. Footpaths and green spaces

Preserve and maintain the existing network of footpaths and green open spaces, ensuring adequate access for all and equipped spaces for users of different ages.

8. Protection of our rural setting and distinctiveness

Protect our rural parish's countryside, and the clear distinction between Barrowby village and the neighbouring town of Grantham.

9. Preservation of green features ecology

Preserve existing green features and plan for the future greening of the village and wider parish, protecting ecological corridors and wildlife habitats, and achieving harmony between human socio-economic development and natural environment quality.

10. Broadband and digital connectivity

Promote broadband and digital connectivity and improved access to utilities for existing and new development.

11. Resilience

Improve resilience to the impacts of climate change, including increased flood risk, ensuring the safety of people and properties.

Development Management Policies

The 8 development management policies included in the Neighbourhood Plan are summarised in the following table.

Policy	Summary
Policy 1: Sustainable Development	This policy supports development that enhances sustainability in Barrowby Parish by promoting a healthy, safe, and attractive environment, encouraging access to key services via active travel or public transport, achieving carbon neutrality by 2050, increasing biodiversity, and minimizing resource use and waste.
Policy 2: Delivering Good Design	This policy ensures that development in Barrowby Parish aligns with local character, is both attractive and functional, and meets community design aspirations. It requires full consideration of the Barrowby Design Codes and Guidance in all relevant developments.
Policy 3: Housing Development	<p>This policy supports housing development that meets the needs of the local community, ensuring alignment with site location and housing type priorities.</p> <p>The policy defines suitable site locations as:</p> <p>infill sites within the Developed Footprint of Barrowby village; and</p> <p>land within the Parish of Barrowby to the east of the A1.</p>
Policy 4: Community Facilities	This policy identifies key community facilities in Barrowby Parish and aims to protect and enhance them. Proposals for additional community facilities will also be supported, provided they align with other relevant policies.
Policy 5: Conserving Our Historic Environment	This policy aims to protect Barrowby Parish's heritage buildings and structures, along with their settings.

Policy	Summary
Policy 6: Important Views	This policy seeks to protect key views and vistas. Development proposals that interrupt, obscure, or significantly detract from these views will not be supported.
Policy 7: Green Infrastructure, Local Green Spaces, and Biodiversity	This policy aims to protect, enhance and extend the extent of Barrowby’s green infrastructure, which includes greenspaces, woodlands, watercourses and other habitats, and footpaths, bridleways and cycleways. Development that harms green infrastructure, leads to the loss of local green spaces, or reduces biodiversity will not be supported
Policy 8: Renewable Energy	This policy supports development for community energy projects and renewable energy generation. The policy encourages renewable energy development while ensuring it aligns with environmental and community priorities.

3. SEA Screening - Assessment

The table below includes the assessment of the Barrowby Neighbourhood Plan, including its Objectives and Development Management Policies, against the criteria included in Schedule 1 of the 2004 Regulations. The Neighbourhood Plan is being assessed as a whole against the criteria listed below to allow for the consideration of its effects on the environment.

SEA Assessment

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)	Significant effect likely?	Comment
1a 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.	NO	The Barrowby Neighbourhood Plan sets out a spatial vision for the designated Neighbourhood Area and an accompanying framework to guide development proposals. This framework will be delivered by the development management policies contained within the Plan. The framework will have some impacts on the environment, noticeably the support for development proposals. However, it is deemed that these impacts will not be significant, due to their small-scale and localised nature.
1b The degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy.	NO	<p>The Plan, where possible, will respond to rather than influence other plans and programmes. It is part of a hierarchy, but is at the lowest tier, sitting below the South Kesteven Local Plan (Local level) and National Planning Policy Framework (National level), and has thus been influenced by these higher-tier and pre-existing plans, rather than having an influence on them.</p> <p>The Plan has been developed with a view towards the emerging revised South Kesteven Local Plan but will remain below it in the policy hierarchy.</p> <p>The policies within a neighbourhood plan apply only within the designated neighbourhood area, hence the Plan will not have a direct impact on adjoining areas.</p>
1c The relevance of the plan or programme for the integration	NO	The Plan promotes sustainable development within the Neighbourhood Area. This is clearly articulated

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)	Significant effect likely?	Comment
of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development.		<p>in Policy 1. The Vision & Objectives, in conjunction with the development management policies, work to ensure that all development proposals brought forward in the area will take this balance into account.</p> <p>Specifically, the forms of development supported by policies 1, 3, 4, and 7 are viewed as key to ensuring the long-term sustainability of the Plan area. The growth provided for is limited and is balanced by the protection of key environmental and social / cultural assets, both through criteria in the above policies themselves, and through policies 2, 5 and 6.</p> <p>As a result, it is considered that the Plan effectively integrates and balances all potential environmental considerations, and that potential impacts are, therefore, unlikely to be significant.</p>
1d Environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme.	NO	As noted above, the Plan supports limited development on several fronts, including residential development and employment development, all of which could have some effects on the environment. However, existing national and local planning policies, the specific criteria included within the policies in the Plan, and the planning application process, will collectively ensure that these effects are not significant.
1e The relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of legislation on the environment (for example, plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection).	NO	The Plan is intended to be in compliance with the South Kesteven Local Plan, which has taken into account the existing European and National legislative framework for environmental protection. The Plan will therefore have a positive effect on compliance with regards to relevant legislation and programmes. It is considered that none of the proposals within the Plan will compromise this position.
2a The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects.	NO	It is deemed highly unlikely that there will be any irreversible damaging environmental impacts associated with the Plan. The policies within the

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)	Significant effect likely?	Comment
		<p>Plan seek to ensure new development is sustainable in context, and promotes the enhancement and protection of environmental assets.</p> <p>Should any unforeseen significant effects on the environment arise as a result of the Plan, the intention to monitor the Plan and also to review/update the Plan when required will allow these effects to be addressed.</p>
2b The cumulative nature of the effects.	NO	It is considered that the Policies contained in the Plan, cumulatively, will have minimal negative effects on the environment and will in fact have moderate to significant positive effects through the stipulations included. It is considered that all effects will be at a local level.
2c The transboundary nature of the effects.	NO	Effects will be local, with no expected impacts on neighbouring areas.
2d The risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents).	NO	No obvious risks have been identified, as the overall aim of the Plan is to ensure the careful management of development and the continued sustainability of the Plan area.
2e The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected).	NO	<p>The Plan relates to, and will have an influence over, a designated neighbourhood area of approximately 1,436 hectares, with a usual resident population of approximately 2,000 people (Census 2021).</p> <p>It is deemed the Plan as a whole will have a positive impact upon local residents through the protection and enhancement of local environmental and social / cultural assets, and the promotion of sustainable development.</p>
2f The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to: (i) special natural characteristics or cultural heritage;	NO	<p>The Plan is deemed unlikely to have an adverse effect on the natural characteristics and cultural heritage of the neighbourhood area.</p> <p>Natural characteristics</p> <p>There are no SSSIs within the Plan area, but about 20 within 15kms of the boundary. The impact risk</p>

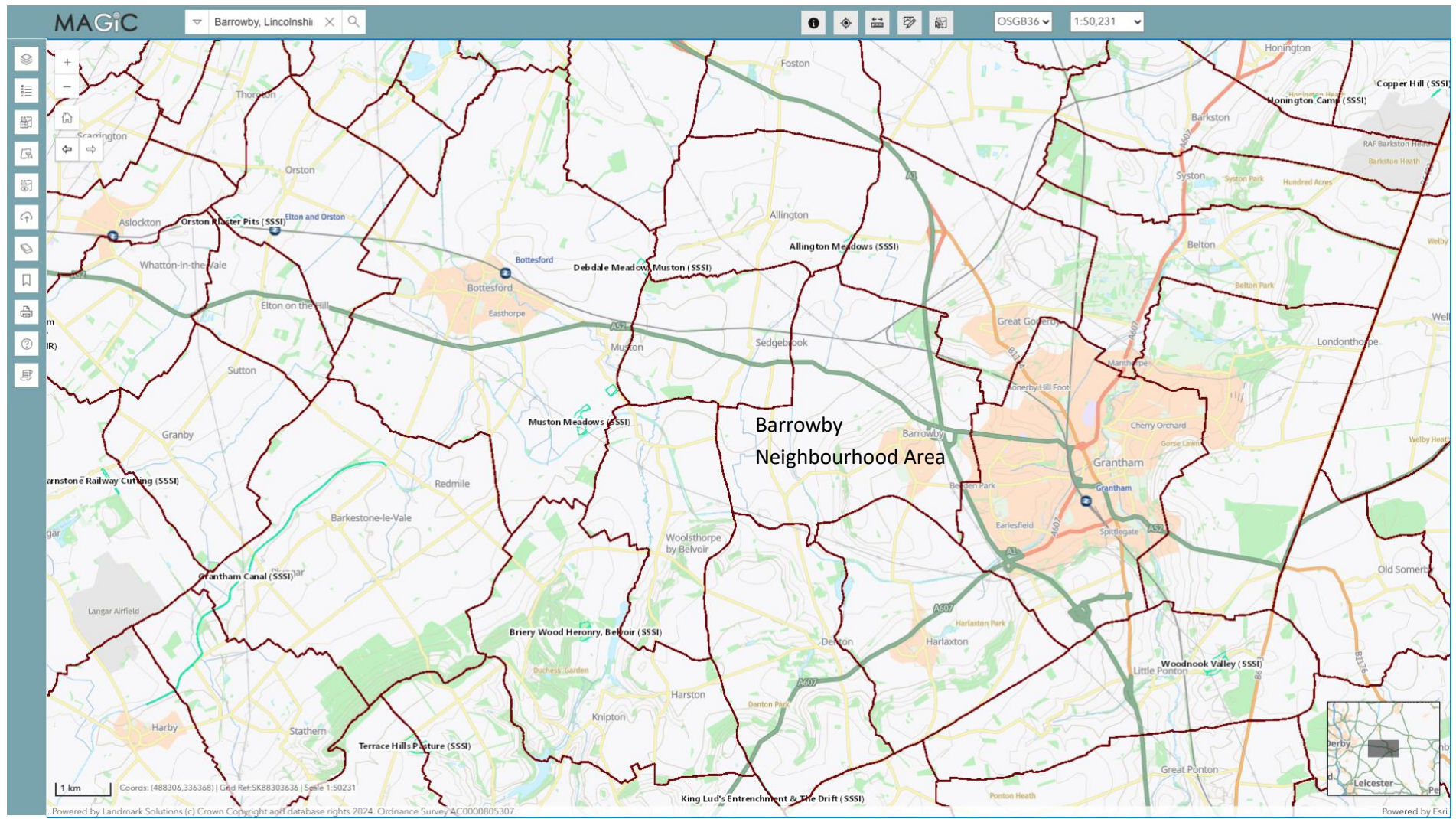
Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)	Significant effect likely?	Comment
<p>(ii) exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values; or</p> <p>(iii) intensive land-use.</p>		<p>zones for several of these designations extend into the Neighbourhood Area.</p> <p>There is 1 small Local Wildlife Site just beyond and to the north-west of the village. A further Local Wildlife Site, Harlaxton Clays Wood, lies outside the Parish but immediately adjoins its southern boundary.</p> <p>The Plan includes a policy designed to protect and enhance the natural assets in the Neighbourhood Area – Policy 7, which addresses green infrastructure, Local Green Spaces and Biodiversity.</p> <p>The Local Plan has already allocated land for housing development, which has commenced, and the environmental impacts of this development have been considered in the District Council's Local Plan making process. Neighbourhood Plan Policy 3 – Housing Development – does not allocate any sites for further housing development, but specifies locations where small-scale (mostly infill) development may be permissible, subject to environmental and other considerations</p> <p>Cultural heritage</p> <p>There are no World Heritage Sites, Protected Wreck Sites, Registered Battlefields, or Registered Parks and Gardens in the Neighbourhood Area. Barrowby Cemetery, in Top Road, is identified as an Unregistered Park and Garden. There are no Scheduled Ancient Monuments in the Parish.</p> <p>The core of Barrowby village is designated as a conservation area. There are several Listed Buildings in the Parish.</p> <p>Policy 5 – Conserving Our Historic Environment - specifically addresses, and protects, local heritage assets.</p>

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)	Significant effect likely?	Comment
		It is considered that the development supported by the Plan will not result in significant effects on the identified natural or cultural heritage assets. Furthermore, the Plan does not exceed environmental quality standards or limit values, and does not provide specific policies in relation to intensive land uses.
2g The effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, community or international protection status.	NO	It is considered that the Plan will not adversely affect areas of landscape which have recognised community, national or international protection. The need for new development to respect important views is set out in Policy 6.

4. HRA Screening – Assessment

For the HRA screening assessment, the designated neighbourhood area was assessed to identify if any Special Protection Areas (SPA), Special Areas of Conservation sites (SAC), or Ramsar sites were located within the boundary, as well as those considered as potential sites (pSPA, ppSPA, cSAC & pRamsar). There are none. The assessment also identified if any of these internationally important sites were located within a 15km radius from the Neighbourhood Plan area. No such sites have been identified.

Figure 4: Map of Sites of Scientific Interest in relation to the Barrowby Neighbourhood Area (from DEFRA “MAGIC” Map)



HRA Screening Matrix

The screening matrix below shows which types of impacts on relevant protected sites could potentially result from each of the policies and sites allocated in the Barrowby Neighbourhood Plan. Where a site is not expected to have a particular type of impact, the relevant cell is shaded **green**. Where a site could potentially have a certain type of impact, this is shown in **orange**. The final column sets out the screening conclusions.

Policy	Likely activities (operations) to result as a consequence of the proposal	Likely effects if proposal implemented	Relevant protected site(s) potentially affected	Could the proposal have likely significant effects on relevant protected sites?
Policy 1: Sustainable Development	Residential development. Economic development. Increase in vehicular traffic. Increase in recreation pressure.	Physical loss and damage. Air pollution. Disturbance from recreation.	None	<p>No significant effects anticipated.</p> <p>It would not be expected for birds to be dependent on the habitat within the development boundary.</p> <p>This Policy alone would not be expected to cause a significant increase in traffic and air pollution in the area.</p> <p>With regard to pathways, it is considered that the nature and small scale of the development supported in this Policy, including the distance between the potential development sites and any relevant protected</p>

Policy	Likely activities (operations) to result as a consequence of the proposal	Likely effects if proposal implemented	Relevant protected site(s) potentially affected	Could the proposal have likely significant effects on relevant protected sites?
				sites, and intervening infrastructure and settlements, will not result in significant effects occurring.
Policy 2: Delivering Good Design	None. This policy encourages maintaining local character.	N/A	None	No
Policy 3: Housing Development	This policy provides for limited additional housing, mostly on infill sites within the existing built-up area, to meet local needs, particularly for young and older people.	None	None	No
Policy 4: Community Facilities	This policy identifies community facilities that should be protected or enhanced / supplemented.	None	None	No

Policy	Likely activities (operations) to result as a consequence of the proposal	Likely effects if proposal implemented	Relevant protected site(s) potentially affected	Could the proposal have likely significant effects on relevant protected sites?
Policy 5: Conserving Our Historic Environment	None. This policy seeks to preserve or enhance the Barrowby's built heritage.	None	None	No
Policy 6: Important Views	This policy seeks to protect key views and vistas by resisting development proposals that would interrupt, obscure, or significantly detract from them.	None	None	No
Policy 7: Green Infrastructure, Local Green Spaces and Biodiversity	None. Policy 7 ensures that development proposals achieve appropriate Biodiversity Net Gain and improve linkages both between existing and new green infrastructure assets and with residential areas.	None	None	No
Policy 8: Renewable Energy	This policy support community energy projects,	None	None	No

Policy	Likely activities (operations) to result as a consequence of the proposal	Likely effects if proposal implemented	Relevant protected site(s) potentially affected	Could the proposal have likely significant effects on relevant protected sites?
	subject to a range of environmental protections.			

5. In-combination Effects

Regulation 105 of the Amended Habitats Regulations 2017 requires an Appropriate Assessment where *“a land use plan is likely to have a significant effect on a European site (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) and is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site”*. Therefore, it is necessary to consider whether there may be significant effects from the Barrowby Neighbourhood Plan in combination with other plans or projects.

The first stage in identifying ‘in-combination’ effects involves identifying which other plans and projects in addition to the Barrowby Neighbourhood Plan may affect the sites that were the focus of this assessment. The scale of development proposed by the Barrowby Neighbourhood Plan is in conformity with the South Kesteven Local Plan, contributing to the Local Plan’s housing projections. The scale of housing development proposed, together with the Neighbourhood Area’s distance from any protected area, means that its ‘in-combination’ effect is insignificant.

6. Conclusions

SEA Screening

On the basis of the SEA Screening Assessment set out in this document, it is considered that the Barrowby Neighbourhood Plan will not have significant environmental effects in relation to any of the criteria set out in Schedule 1 of the SEA Regulations, and therefore **does not need to be subject to a full SEA**.

HRA Screening

The HRA Screening Assessment concludes that no significant effects are likely to occur with regard to the any relevant protected habitat. As such, it is considered that **a full HRA is not required to be undertaken**.

