



Necton Neighbourhood Plan
Habitat Regulation Assessment
Screening Report
June 2023

Habitat Regulation Assessment including Appropriate Assessment

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Appendix 1: Details of relevant European Sites

1. Introduction and Legislative Background

1.1 This Habitat Regulations Assessment Report has been undertaken in order to support the Necton Neighbourhood Plan (NNP) which is being produced by the Necton Parish Council in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended).

1.2 The aim of this Report is to assess whether there are likely to be any significant effects on European Designated Site as a result of the emerging policies set out in the emerging Neighbourhood Plan that would need the production of a full Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA), also known as an Appropriate Assessment.

1.3 This report considers the potential for likely significant effects (LSE) in relation to the qualifying features of European Designated Sites within or relatively proximate to the approved Neighbourhood Plan area, which comprises the civil parish of Necton Neighbourhood Plan (Stage 1 of the HRA process).

1.4 Feedback from Natural England and Norfolk County Council has been sought and taken into consideration prior to finalising the conclusions of this screening assessment. As the NNP evolves at later stages of its preparation any changes will further be considered to ensure no LSEs arise.

1.5 This assessment has been undertaken by Capita Plc on behalf of Breckland District Council.

Legislative background

1.6 Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive states that:

Any plan or project not directly connected with, or necessary to, the management of the [European] site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall be subject to appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site's conservation objectives. In the light of the conclusions of the assessment of the of the implications for the site and subject to the provisions of paragraph 4, the competent national authorities shall agree to the plan or project only after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned and, if appropriate, after having obtained the opinion of the general public.

1.7 The purpose of the Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) is therefore to ensure the protection of European Designated Sites (Natura 2000) wherever practicable. European Designated Sites are designed to form an ecologically coherent network of designated spaces across Europe.

1.8 European Designated Sites, (Natura 2000) include **Special Protection Areas (SPAs)** and **Special Areas for Conservation (SAC)**. As a matter of policy the government also expects authorities to treat **Ramsar sites, candidate Special Areas of Conservation (cSAC)** and **proposed Special Protection Areas (pSPA)** as if they are European Designated Sites for the purpose of considering development proposals that may affect them.

Definitions (taken from the DEFRA - Joint Nature Conservation Committee)

- **Special Protection Areas (SPAs)** are strictly protected sites classified in accordance with Article 4 of the EC Birds Directive, which came into force in April 1979. They are classified for rare and vulnerable birds and for regularly occurring migratory species.
- **Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)** are strictly protected sites designated under the EC Habitats Directive. Article 3 of the Habitats Directive requires the establishment of a European network of important high-quality conservation sites that will make a significant contribution to conserving the 189 habitat types and 788 species. The listed habitat types and species are those considered to be most in need of conservation at a European level (excluding birds).
- **Ramsar sites** are wetlands of international importance designated under the Ramsar Convention.

1.9 The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, state that submitted Plans need to be accompanied by a statement explaining how the proposed Plan meets the ‘basic conditions’ set out in Schedule 4B of the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act. These basic conditions include a requirement to demonstrate how the Plan is compatible with EU obligations, which include the need to undertake a Habitat Regulations Assessment.

1.10 Regulation 32 of the 2012 Regulations prescribes a further basic condition for a neighbourhood plan. This requires that the neighbourhood plan should not be likely to have a significant effect on a European Site (as defined in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017), either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.

1.11 Government guidance¹ indicates that an appropriate assessment for a more strategic plan, such as the Local Plan, can consider the impacts on sites and confirm the suitability or likely success of mitigation measures for associated non-strategic policies and projects. An individual assessment of non-strategic policies and projects may not be necessary in some

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/appropriate-assessment>

limited cases where the strategic appropriate assessment is sufficiently robust. This would need to contain complete, precise and definitive findings and conclusions capable of removing all reasonable scientific doubt on the impacts of the non-strategic policies (e.g. Neighbourhood Plans) and/or project(s). As long as these measures have been properly considered in a recent plan, and the development will not create additional risks of a significant effect on a habitats site, there may not be a need for further assessment at the non-strategic level.

1.12. Currently Breckland District Council have an adopted Local Plan that has been subjected to a Habitat Regulation Assessment. The current version of this is the *Breckland Local Plan Habitats Regulation Assessment at Publication Stage*; Footprint Ecology, 2019².

²Liley and Hoskin (2019), *Breckland Local Plan Habitats Regulations Assessment at Main Modification Stage*, Footprint Ecology. https://www.breckland.gov.uk/media/11607/Breckland-Local-Plan-Main-Modifications-HRA-050219/pdf/Breckland_Local_Plan_Main_Modifications_HRA_050219.pdf?m=636855832847300000

2. Identification of Designations

2.1 The first step in producing this Habitat Regulation Assessment Report involves the identification of European Designated Sites (referred to as ‘Habitat Sites’ in the NPPF) within the Necton Neighbourhood Plan (NNP) area itself, or in close proximity to it, or sites beyond that may be impacted by NNP proposals. European Designated Sites were identified using open-source software provided by DEFRA (Magic). There are no European Designated Sites identified within the parish and the closest site is Breckland Special Protection Area (approximately 3.8 km from the NP).

2.2 In considering potential effects of this plan regard has been given to whether the implementation of the policies will ensure the conservation objectives for the European Sites are achieved and whether any significant effects are likely. In considering which sites may require consideration as part of this screening assessment, the following sites have been identified within a 20km radius and areas based on Nutrient Neutrality catchments. This adopts the approach taken in the 2008 and 2019 strategic HRA:

Designated site	Distance from NP boundary	Include in screening assessment
River Wensum (SAC)	11.5 km	Yes
Roydon Common & Dersingham Bog (SAC)	19.5 km	No
Norfolk Valley Fens (SAC)	6.4 km	Yes
Breckland (SAC)	8.3 km	Yes
Breckland (SPA)	3.8km	Yes
The Broads (SAC)	34.5km	Yes

2.3 Nutrient Neutrality is a means to ensure that new developments do not add existing nutrients within vulnerable watercourses. Breckland District Council received a letter dated 16 March 2022 from Natural England concerning nutrient pollution in the protected habitats of the River Wensum Special Area of Conservation and the Broads Special Area of Conservation and Ramsar site. This means that development within the catchment of the River Wensum and Broads would cause potential harm to these international sites. Land towards the eastern boundary of the Necton Neighbourhood Plan area drain into water courses that form part of the catchment for both the River Wensum (SAC) and The Broads (SAC). Despite the relative distance of this neighbourhood plan to these designated sites, as a potential mechanism for harm exists, both are included within this screening assessment.

2.4 The Breckland SPA, Breckland SAC and Norfolk Fens SPA are also screened in for consideration in this assessment. No other European Designated Sites have been considered in this assessment as the nearest component units of which are considered sufficiently

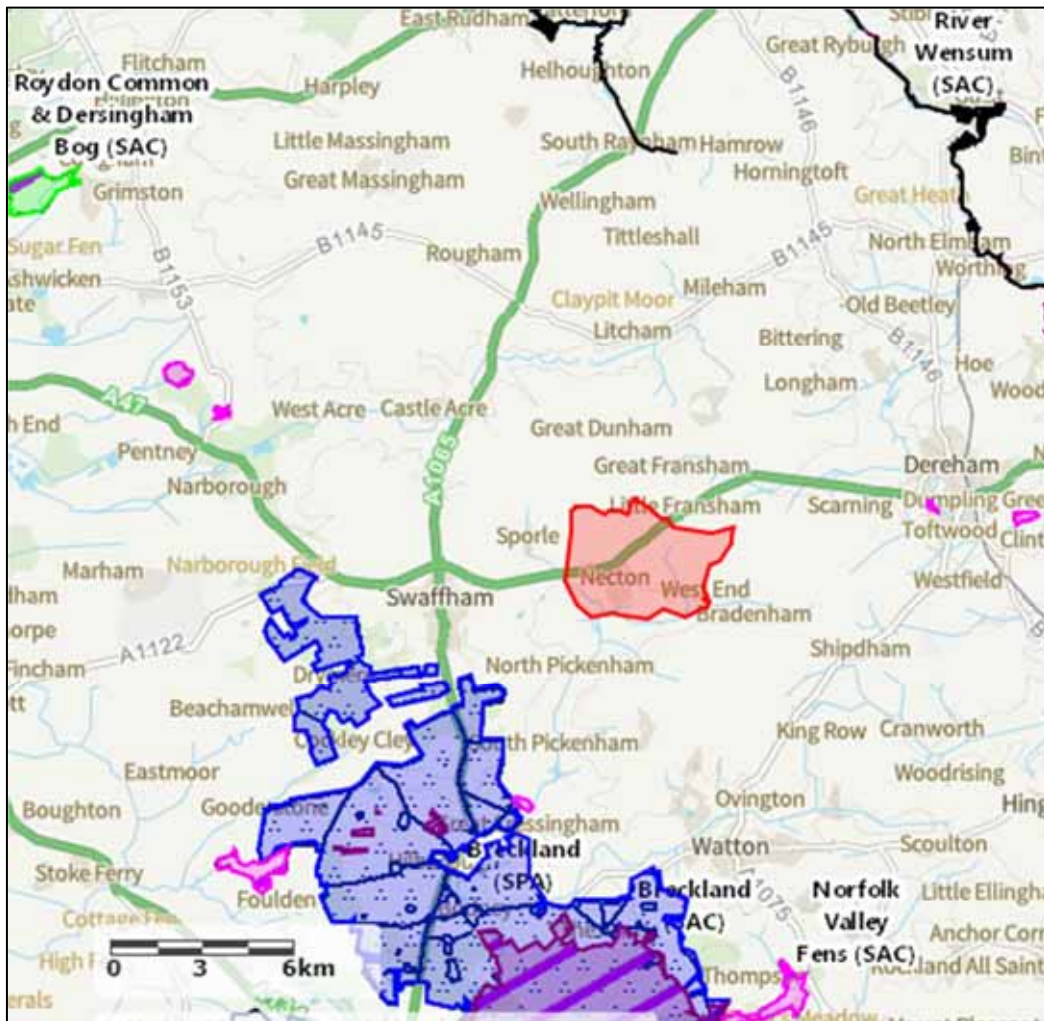
distant (over 12km) that no likely significant effects are likely to occur from the policies of the NNP.

2.4 Below is a map showing the locations of the European designated sites in relation to the parish (Figure 1). The features for which the sites are designated, and their conservation objectives are appended at Appendix 1.

2.4 For clarity it is confirmed here that the Necton Neighbourhood Plan is not directly connected with, or necessary to, the conservation management of the European Sites.

2.5 The next step in the assessment is to undertake a screening as to establish whether the proposed policies could have a significant effect on the European Designated Sites. Specifically, the assessment considers potential effects that the policies may have on the 'qualifying features' of the European Designated Site. The 'qualifying features' for the identified European Designated Site is provided at Appendix 1.

Figure 1: Necton Neighbourhood Plan Area in relation to relevant European Designated Sites



- Necton Neighbourhood Plan Area
- Breckland SPA
- Breckland SAC
- Norfolk Valley Fens SAC
- Roydon Common and Dersingham Bog SAC
- River Wensum SAC

3. Screening Assessment

3.1 Stage 1 of the HRA process is a screening assessment. The table below provides an assessment of any likely significant effect of each Neighbourhood Plan policy on the European Designated Site. For the purposes of this assessment the policies appraised are those that were issued in the NNP Plan Regulation 14 version.

Key

- No likely significant effect (NLSE) on the internationally designated sites’ qualifying features
- Likely significant effect (LSE) on the internationally designated sites’ qualifying features
- Uncertain whether it is NSLE or LSE.

LANDSCAPE AND HERITAGE	
Policy NTN1 - Housing Mix	
In all housing developments of ten or more homes, the housing mix in terms of number of bedrooms shall be in accordance with the Necton Housing Needs Assessment 2022, unless it can be demonstrated that: i. the particular circumstances relating to the tenure of the housing dictate otherwise; or ii. the latest publicly available housing needs information for the Plan area identify a need for a different mix.	
Comments	Likely effect on River Wensum, Norfolk Valley Fens, The Broads, Breckland SPA
<i>The policy aims to encourage housing to be in line with the Housing Needs Assessment 2022. The policy may, if adopted, result in a housing mix that differs from expectations within Policy HOU-01 and Policy HOU-07 of the Local Plan. However, the policy does not lead to more development than the existing Local plan and therefore will not have a significant impact to the European Sites.</i>	<i>No likely significant effect (NLSE) on the European sites’ qualifying features</i>

Policy NTN 2 - Protecting Necton's Landscape Character	
<p>Proposals must, proportionate to the development, demonstrate how the landscape characteristics of the site and its vicinity have been considered in preparing the scheme and having regard to the guidance contained in the Necton Landscape Assessment 2022.</p> <p>As appropriate to their scale, nature and location and to ensure that they conserve the essential landscape, heritage and rural character of the parish, development proposals should demonstrate how they: i. have regard to, and conserve, or enhance, the landscape character and the setting of the parish, as referenced in the Necton Landscape Assessment; and ii. will ensure that there is no unacceptable impact on the key features of the important views identified on the Policies Map.</p>	
Comments	Likely effect on River Wensum, Norfolk Valley Fens, The Broads, Breckland SPA
<i>The policy aims to protect and enhance heritage assets and is consistent with the Breckland Local Plan (including Policies ENV 05, ENV 07), however all identified important views may need to have further justification.</i>	<i>No likely significant effect (NLSE) on the European sites' qualifying features</i>
Policy NTN 3 - Local Green Spaces	
<p>The following Local Green Spaces are designated in this Plan and identified on the Policies Map: 1. The churchyard 2. War memorial and cemetery 3. Folly View amenity open space 4. Masons Drive / Hale Road amenity open space 5. Briar Close amenity open space 6. Jubilee Way amenity open spaces 7. Elizabeth Drive amenity open space 8. Queen Elizabeth Memorial Wood, (formerly the Marl Pit) between Ketts Hill and St Andrews Lane</p> <p>Development in the Local Green Spaces will be consistent with national policy for Green Belts.</p>	
Comments	Likely effect on River Wensum, Norfolk Valley Fens, The Broads, Breckland SPA
<i>The policy aims to protect and enhance heritage assets and is consistent with the Breckland Local Plan (including Policies Gen 01, 2, ENV 07), however some allocated Local Green Spaces may need further evidence to further justify the allocation.</i>	<i>No likely significant effect (NLSE) on the European sites' qualifying features</i>

Policy NTN 4 - Local Heritage Assets

Local Heritage Assets, including buildings, structures, features and gardens of local interest must be protected.

The following properties and buildings (and as shown on the Policies Map) are identified as Local Heritage Assets:

1. Library and Reading Rooms, School Road
2. Old Post Office, 2 School Road
3. Former farmhouse and dairy building, 9-11 School Road
4. Swiss Cottage, Tuns Road
5. Old Blacksmith's building, Church Farm, Tuns Road
6. Plaque identifying the location of the Community Coal House, Eastgate Park
7. Old Rectory, St Andrews Lane
8. Former Necton Mill, Mill Street
9. Necton Mill buildings, Mill Street
10. Old Butcher's building, Mill Street
11. Former Methodist Chapel, 52 Chantry Lane
12. Old Good woman public house, Chantry Lane
13. Pear Tree Cottage, Chapel Road
14. West Cottage, Chapel Road
15. Former Baptist Chapel, Chapel Road
16. Mother of Necton's cottage remains, Little Drift
17. Old Carpenters Arms public house, Ivy Todd

Development proposals should be designed to respect the integrity and appearance of Local Heritage Assets. Proposals for any works that would lead to the loss of or substantial harm to a Local Heritage Asset should be supported by an appropriate analysis of the significance of the asset together with an explanation of the wider public benefits of the proposal.

Comments	Likely effect on River Wensum, Norfolk Valley Fens, The Broads, Breckland SPA
<i>The policy aims to protect and enhance heritage assets and is consistent with the Breckland Local Plan (Including Env 07).</i>	<i>No likely significant effect (NLSE) on the European sites' qualifying features</i>

Policy NTN 5 - Development Design

Proposals for all new development must reflect the local characteristics and circumstances of the site by creating and contributing to a high quality, safe and sustainable environment.

Planning applications should demonstrate how they satisfy the requirements of the Development Design Checklist in Appendix 4 of this Plan and, as appropriate to the proposal:

1. integrate with existing paths, streets, circulation networks and patterns of activity;
2. reinforce or enhance the established village character of streets, greens, and other spaces;
3. include boundary treatments that reflect the character and materials of the local vicinity;
4. do not involve the loss or partial loss of gardens, important open, green or landscaped areas, which make a significant contribution to the character and appearance of the locality;
5. taking mitigation measures into account, do not affect adversely: a. any historic, architectural or archaeological heritage assets of the site and its surroundings; and b. important landscape characteristics including trees and ancient hedgerows and other prominent topographic features;
6. do not locate sensitive development where its users and nearby residents would be significantly and adversely affected by noise, smell, vibration, or other forms of pollution from existing sources, unless adequate and appropriate mitigation can be implemented;
7. produce designs, in accordance with standards, that maintain or enhance the safety of the highway network and seek to ensure permeability through new housing areas, taking opportunities to connect new development into the heart of the existing settlement by sustainable modes of travel;
8. where appropriate, make adequate provision for the covered storage of all wheelie bins and dedicated cycle storage in accordance with adopted cycle parking standards;
9. include suitable ducting capable of accepting fibre to enable superfast broadband; and
10. provide one electric vehicle charging point per new off-street parking place created.

Where new off-highway car parking provision is created for non-residential uses or public car parking, ducting and cabling shall be laid to enable charging points to be provided at every space and the minimum number of charging points shall be provided in accordance with adopted standards at the time of the application.

Comments	Likely effect on River Wensum, Norfolk Valley Fens, The Broads, Breckland SPA
<p><i>The policy encourages the protection and enhancement of heritage assets and local characteristics. The further integration of existing paths, streets and circulation networks may encourage more users to use paths. However, this benefits existing residents and visitors and potential occupiers of new dwellings but is unlikely to significantly increase from the impacts upon European designated sites vulnerable to recreational disturbance.</i></p>	<p><i>No likely significant effect (NLSE) on the European sites' qualifying features.</i></p>

<p><i>The policy seeks to build upon policies within the Local Plan (Including Gen 1, HOU 11, Env 06, ENV 07, COM 01, INF 01).</i></p> <p><i>The encouragement of electric vehicles may reduce local population therefore will not have a significant impact at European Designated Sites.</i></p>	
<p>Policy NTN 6 - Sustainable Construction Practices</p>	
<p>For all appropriate development, proposals that incorporate current best practice in energy conservation will be supported where such measures are designed to be integral to the building design and minimise any detrimental impact on the building or its surroundings. Development proposals should demonstrate how they:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> maximise the benefits of solar gain in site layouts and orientation of buildings; incorporate best practice in energy conservation and be designed to achieve maximum achievable energy efficiency; avoid fossil fuel-based heating systems; incorporate current sustainable design and construction measures and energy efficiency measures, such as, where feasible, ground/air source heat pumps, solar panels, thermal and pV systems; and make provision for grey water/rainwater, and/or surface water harvesting and recycling. 	
<p>Comments</p>	<p>Likely effect on River Wensum, Norfolk Valley Fens, The Broads, Breckland SPA</p>
<p><i>This policy encourages water harvesting, recycling and cleaner energy use. Given the scale and the distance to European Designated Sites, there will not be a significant impact.</i></p> <p><i>The policy seeks to build upon policies within the Local Plan (including Policy TR 01).</i></p>	<p><i>No likely significant effect (NLSE) on the European sites' qualifying features</i></p>
<p>Policy NTN 7 - Renewable Energy</p>	
<p>Renewable energy generation schemes, including those that form part of wider development proposals, will be supported where their scale, siting and cumulative effects would not have a significant adverse impact on:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> neighbouring uses or amenity; visual amenity, particularly from sensitive viewpoints; environmental and heritage assets; the best and most versatile agricultural land; and highway safety. <p>Where development is permitted, mitigation measures, such as landscaping, may be required to minimise any potential negative visual amenity and/or highway impacts.</p>	
<p>Comments</p>	<p>Likely effect on River Wensum, Norfolk Valley Fens, The Broads, Breckland SPA</p>

<p><i>This policy encourages protection of heritage assets and is sensitive to visual amenity and highway safety. The policy seeks to build upon policies within the Local Plan (including Env 07, ENV 10, COM 03).</i></p>	<p><i>No likely significant effect (NLSE) on the European sites' qualifying features</i></p>
<p>Policy NTN 8 - Flooding and Sustainable Drainage</p>	
<p>Proposals for all new development will be required to submit schemes appropriate to the scale of the proposal detailing how on-site drainage and water resources will be managed so as not to cause or exacerbate surface water and fluvial flooding elsewhere.</p> <p>Proposals should, as appropriate include the use of above ground open Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS). These could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • wetland and other water features, which can help reduce flood risk whilst offering other benefits including water quality, amenity/recreational areas, and biodiversity benefits; and • rainwater and stormwater harvesting and recycling; and other natural drainage systems where easily accessible maintenance can be achieved. 	
<p style="text-align: center;">Comments</p>	<p>Likely effect on River Wensum, Norfolk Valley Fens, The Broads, Breckland SPA</p>
<p><i>The inclusion of SuDS manages run-off and the flow of storm water, and can deliver additional biodiversity benefits. SuDS can also help prevent pollution from new developments entering the water courses. Overall, the impact is not significant to European Designated Sites.</i></p> <p><i>The policy seeks to build upon policies within the Local Plan (Including Env 09).</i></p>	<p><i>No likely significant effect (NLSE) on the European sites' qualifying features</i></p>
<p>Policy NTN 9 - Community Facilities</p>	
<p>Proposals that will result in the loss of the following existing community facilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Centre • Sports and Social Club • Primary School • Post Office • Necton Stores • Butchers • Dispensing surgeries • Petrol filling station with food store • Vehicle electric charging points • Drive-through coffee shop • Service / repair garage and MOT station • All Saints' Church • Windmill pub / restaurant (closed at present); 	

<p>will only be permitted where:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> it can be demonstrated that the current use is not economically viable nor likely to become viable. Where appropriate, supporting financial evidence should be provided including any efforts to advertise the premises for sale for a minimum of 12 months; and b. it can be demonstrated that there is no local demand for the use and that the building/site is not needed for any alternative social, community or leisure use; or c. alternative facilities and services are available, or replacement provision is made, of at least equivalent standard, in a location that is accessible to the community it serves with good access by public transport or by cycling or walking. 	
Comments	Likely effect on River Wensum, Norfolk Valley Fens, The Broads, Breckland SPA
<i>The aim of the policy is to protect local facilities. This will not have a significant impact on European Designated Sites. The policy seeks to build upon policies within the Local Plan (Including COM 04).</i>	<i>No likely significant effect (NLSE) on the European sites' qualifying features</i>
Policy NTN 10 - Sport and Recreation Facilities	
<p>The Plan identifies the following facilities (as shown on the Policies Map) as important sport and recreational facilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Playing Field, and • The Primary School Playing Field <p>Proposals for development at these locations will be determined in accordance with Policy ENV 4 of the adopted Local Plan or subsequent replacement policy.</p>	
Comments	Likely effect on River Wensum, Norfolk Valley Fens, The Broads, Breckland SPA
<i>The aim of the policy is to identify recreational facilities. The use of the recreational facilities is unlikely to have a significant impact to European Sites. The policy aligns with the Local Plan (Including COM 04).</i>	<i>No likely significant effect (NLSE) on the European sites' qualifying features</i>
Policy NTN 11 - Public Rights of Way	
<p>Measures to improve and extend the existing network of public rights of way and bridleways will be supported where their value as biodiversity corridors is safeguarded. Where practicable development proposals should incorporate measures to enhance biodiversity within the improved or extended public right of way.</p>	
Comments	Likely effect on River Wensum, Norfolk Valley Fens, The Broads, Breckland SPA
<i>The further integration of existing public rights of ways and bridleways may encourage more users to use paths. However, the distance from the European designated sites will not cause a</i>	<i>No likely significant effect (NLSE) on the</i>

significant impact. The policy seeks to build upon policies within the Local Plan (Including TR 01, TR 02, Necton Housing Allocation Sites).

European sites' qualifying features

Consultee responses

3.2 Following the consultation process undertaken through June and July 2023 responses were received from Natural England and Norfolk County Council.

3.3 Natural England stated that based on the draft screening assessment the statutorily designated nature conservation sites or landscapes and the Habitats sites, either alone or in combination, are unlikely to be significantly affected by the Neighbourhood Plan.

3.4 Norfolk County Council stated that the Necton Neighbourhood Plan is unlikely to have any significant environmental effects are supported and agreed.

4. Conclusion

4.1 The screening assessment suggests that it is uncertain whether there would be no likely significant negative effects on the European Designated Sites resulting from Policy HB 5 Low impact access routes detailed within the NNP. However, the population of Necton is very low and neither the Breckland Local Plan nor the Neighbourhood Plan seek to increase dwelling numbers. As such, whilst the policy seeks to improve access to the countryside the number of pedestrians and cyclists will remain low. Therefore, it is not considered that there will be likely *significant* effects on the Norfolk Valley Fens SAC and based on the submitted draft, a full Appropriate Assessment (Habitat Regulations Assessment) is not required.

4.2

4.3 In light of this assessment and the feedback received, Breckland Council has concluded that the emerging NNP is not likely to have any significant environmental effect and accordingly will not require a Strategic Environmental Assessment. The main reasons for this conclusion are:

- The NNP does not seek to increase dwelling numbers, and subsequently the population of the area.
- The NNP policies add detail to strategic policies within the Breckland Local Plan. These strategic policies have been subjected to a HRA screening and subsequent Appropriate Assessment.

4.4 This report is based on the Screening Assessment request on the Regulation 14 version of the NNP. Should the contents of the plan subsequently differ from this version, there may be a requirement to revisit this Screening Assessment.

4.5 A copy of this report will be available online on the Breckland Council Neighbourhood Plan website and for inspection at Breckland Council Offices, Elizabeth House, Wolpole Loke, Dereham, Norfolk, NR19 1EE.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Details of relevant European Sites

**European Site Conservation Objectives for
Breckland Special Protection Area
Site Code: UK9009201**



With regard to the SPA and the individual species and/or assemblage of species for which the site has been classified (the 'Qualifying Features' listed below), and subject to natural change;

Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the aims of the Wild Birds Directive, by maintaining or restoring;

- **The extent and distribution of the habitats of the qualifying features**
- **The structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying features**
- **The supporting processes on which the habitats of the qualifying features rely**
- **The population of each of the qualifying features, and,**
- **The distribution of the qualifying features within the site.**

This document should be read in conjunction with the accompanying *Supplementary Advice* document, which provides more detailed advice and information to enable the application and achievement of the Objectives set out above.

Qualifying Features:

- A133 *Burhinus oedicephalus*; Stone-curlew (Breeding)
- A224 *Caprimulgus europaeus*; European nightjar (Breeding)
- A246 *Lulula arborea*; Woodlark (Breeding)

Explanatory Notes: European Site Conservation Objectives

These Conservation Objectives are those referred to in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) ('the Habitats Regulations'). They must be considered when a competent authority is required to make a 'Habitats Regulations Assessment' including an Appropriate Assessment, under the relevant parts of this legislation.

These Conservation Objectives, and the accompanying Supplementary Advice (where this is available), will also provide a framework to inform the management of the European Site and the prevention of deterioration of habitats and significant disturbance of its qualifying features

These Conservation Objectives are set for each bird feature for a [Special Protection Area \(SPA\)](#).

Where these objectives are being met, the site will be considered to exhibit a high degree of integrity and to be contributing to achieving the aims of the Wild Birds Directive.

Publication date: 21 February 2019 (version 3). This document updates and replaces an earlier version dated 30 June 2014 to reflect the consolidation of the Habitats Regulations in 2017.

European Site Conservation Objectives for The Broads Special Area of Conservation Site Code: UK0013577



With regard to the SAC and the natural habitats and/or species for which the site has been designated (the 'Qualifying Features' listed below), and subject to natural change;

Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring;

- The extent and distribution of qualifying natural habitats and habitats of qualifying species
- The structure and function (including typical species) of qualifying natural habitats
- The structure and function of the habitats of qualifying species
- The supporting processes on which qualifying natural habitats and the habitats of qualifying species rely
- The populations of qualifying species, and,
- The distribution of qualifying species within the site.

This document should be read in conjunction with the accompanying *Supplementary Advice* document, which provides more detailed advice and information to enable the application and achievement of the Objectives set out above.

Qualifying Features:

H3140. Hard oligo-mesotrophic waters with benthic vegetation of *Chara* spp.; Calcium-rich nutrient-poor lakes, lochs and pools

H3150. Natural eutrophic lakes with *Magnopotamion* or *Hydrocharition*-type vegetation; Naturally nutrient-rich lakes or lochs which are often dominated by pondweed

H6410. *Molinia* meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (*Molinion caeruleae*); Purple moor-grass meadows

H7140. Transition mires and quaking bogs; Very wet mires often identified by an unstable 'quaking' surface

H7210. Calcareous fens with *Cladium mariscus* and species of the *Caricion davallianae*; Calcium-rich fen dominated by great fen sedge (saw sedge)*

H7230. Alkaline fens; Calcium-rich springwater-fed fens

H91E0. Alluvial forests with *Alnus glutinosa* and *Fraxinus excelsior* (*Alno-Padion*, *Alnion incanae*, *Salicion albae*); Alder woodland on floodplains*

S1016. *Vertigo moulinsiana*; Desmoulin's whorl snail

S1355. *Lutra lutra*; Otter

S1903. *Liparis loeselii*; Fen orchid

S4056. *Anisus vorticulus*; Little whorlpool ram's-horn snail

* denotes a priority natural habitat or species (supporting explanatory text on following page)

*** Priority natural habitats or species**

Some of the natural habitats and species for which UK SACs have been selected are considered to be particular priorities for conservation at a European scale and are subject to special provisions in the Habitats Regulations. These priority natural habitats and species are denoted by an asterisk (*) in Annex I and II of the Habitats Directive. The term 'priority' is also used in other contexts, for example with reference to particular habitats or species that are prioritised in UK Biodiversity Action Plans. It is important to note however that these are not necessarily the priority natural habitats or species within the meaning of the Habitats Regulations.

Explanatory Notes: European Site Conservation Objectives

These Conservation Objectives are those referred to in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 as amended from time to time (the "Habitats Regulations"). They must be considered when a competent authority is required to make a 'Habitats Regulations Assessment', including an Appropriate Assessment, under the relevant parts of this legislation.

These Conservation Objectives and the accompanying Supplementary Advice (where available) will also provide a framework to inform the measures needed to conserve or restore the European Site and the prevention of deterioration or significant disturbance of its qualifying features.

These Conservation Objectives are set for each habitat or species of a [Special Area of Conservation \(SAC\)](#). Where the objectives are met, the site will be considered to exhibit a high degree of integrity and to be contributing to achieving Favourable Conservation Status for that species or habitat type at a UK level. The term 'favourable conservation status' is defined in regulation 3 of the Habitats Regulations.

Publication date: 27 November 2018 (version 3). This document updates and replaces an earlier version dated 30 June 2014 to reflect the consolidation of the Habitats Regulations in 2017.

European Site Conservation Objectives for Norfolk Valley Fens Special Area of Conservation Site Code: UK0012892



With regard to the SAC and the natural habitats and/or species for which the site has been designated (the 'Qualifying Features' listed below), and subject to natural change;

Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring;

- The extent and distribution of qualifying natural habitats and habitats of qualifying species
- The structure and function (including typical species) of qualifying natural habitats
- The structure and function of the habitats of qualifying species
- The supporting processes on which qualifying natural habitats and the habitats of qualifying species rely
- The populations of qualifying species, and,
- The distribution of qualifying species within the site.

This document should be read in conjunction with the accompanying *Supplementary Advice* document, which provides more detailed advice and information to enable the application and achievement of the Objectives set out above.

Qualifying Features:

- H4010. Northern Atlantic wet heaths with *Erica tetralix*; Wet heathland with cross-leaved heath
- H4030. European dry heaths
- H6210. Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies: on calcareous substrates (*Festuco-Brometalia*); Dry grasslands and scrublands on chalk or limestone
- H6410. *Molinia* meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (*Molinion caeruleae*); Purple moor-grass meadows
- H7210. Calcareous fens with *Cladium mariscus* and species of the *Caricion davallianae*; Calcium-rich fen dominated by great fen sedge (saw sedge)*
- H7230. Alkaline fens; Calcium-rich springwater-fed fens
- H91E0. Alluvial forests with *Alnus glutinosa* and *Fraxinus excelsior* (*Alno-Padion*, *Alnion incanae*, *Salicion albae*); Alder woodland on floodplains*
- S1014. *Vertigo angustior*; Narrow-mouthed whorl snail
- S1016. *Vertigo moulinsiana*; Desmoulin's whorl snail

* denotes a priority natural habitat or species (supporting explanatory text on following page)

* Priority natural habitats or species

Some of the natural habitats and species for which UK SACs have been selected are considered to be particular priorities for conservation at a European scale and are subject to special provisions in the Habitats Regulations. These priority natural habitats and species are denoted by an asterisk (*) in Annex I and II of the Habitats Directive. The term 'priority' is also used in other contexts, for example with reference to particular habitats or species that are prioritised in UK Biodiversity Action Plans. It is important to note however that these are not necessarily the priority natural habitats or species within the meaning of the Habitats Regulations.

Explanatory Notes: European Site Conservation Objectives

These Conservation Objectives are those referred to in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 as amended from time to time (the "Habitats Regulations"). They must be considered when a competent authority is required to make a 'Habitats Regulations Assessment', including an Appropriate Assessment, under the relevant parts of this legislation.

These Conservation Objectives and the accompanying Supplementary Advice (where available) will also provide a framework to inform the measures needed to conserve or restore the European Site and the prevention of deterioration or significant disturbance of its qualifying features.

These Conservation Objectives are set for each habitat or species of a [Special Area of Conservation \(SAC\)](#). Where the objectives are met, the site will be considered to exhibit a high degree of integrity and to be contributing to achieving Favourable Conservation Status for that species or habitat type at a UK level. The term 'favourable conservation status' is defined in regulation 3 of the Habitats Regulations.

Publication date: 27 November 2018 (version 3). This document updates and replaces an earlier version dated 30 June 2014 to reflect the consolidation of the Habitats Regulations in 2017.

European Site Conservation Objectives for Breckland Special Area of Conservation Site Code: UK0019865



With regard to the SAC and the natural habitats and/or species for which the site has been designated (the 'Qualifying Features' listed below), and subject to natural change;

Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring;

- The extent and distribution of qualifying natural habitats and habitats of qualifying species
- The structure and function (including typical species) of qualifying natural habitats
- The structure and function of the habitats of qualifying species
- The supporting processes on which qualifying natural habitats and the habitats of qualifying species rely
- The populations of qualifying species, and,
- The distribution of qualifying species within the site.

This document should be read in conjunction with the accompanying *Supplementary Advice* document, which provides more detailed advice and information to enable the application and achievement of the Objectives set out above.

Qualifying Features:

H2330. Inland dunes with open *Corynephorus* and *Agrostis* grasslands; Open grassland with grey-hair grass and common bent grass of inland dunes

H3150. Natural eutrophic lakes with *Magnopotamion* or *Hydrocharition*-type vegetation; Naturally nutrient-rich lakes or lochs which are often dominated by pondweed

H4030. European dry heaths

H6210. Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies: on calcareous substrates (*Festuco-Brometalia*); Dry grasslands and scrublands on chalk or limestone

H91E0. Alluvial forests with *Alnus glutinosa* and *Fraxinus excelsior* (*Alno-Padion*, *Alnion incanae*, *Salicion albae*); Alder woodland on floodplains*

S1166. *Triturus cristatus*; Great crested newt

* denotes a priority natural habitat or species (supporting explanatory text on following page)

* Priority natural habitats or species

Some of the natural habitats and species for which UK SACs have been selected are considered to be particular priorities for conservation at a European scale and are subject to special provisions in the Habitats Regulations. These priority natural habitats and species are denoted by an asterisk (*) in Annex I and II of the Habitats Directive. The term 'priority' is also used in other contexts, for example with reference to particular habitats or species that are prioritised in UK Biodiversity Action Plans. It is important to note however that these are not necessarily the priority natural habitats or species within the meaning of the Habitats Regulations.

Explanatory Notes: European Site Conservation Objectives

These Conservation Objectives are those referred to in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 as amended from time to time (the "Habitats Regulations"). They must be considered when a competent authority is required to make a 'Habitats Regulations Assessment', including an Appropriate Assessment, under the relevant parts of this legislation.

These Conservation Objectives and the accompanying Supplementary Advice (where available) will also provide a framework to inform the measures needed to conserve or restore the European Site and the prevention of deterioration or significant disturbance of its qualifying features.

These Conservation Objectives are set for each habitat or species of a [Special Area of Conservation \(SAC\)](#). Where the objectives are met, the site will be considered to exhibit a high degree of integrity and to be contributing to achieving Favourable Conservation Status for that species or habitat type at a UK level. The term 'favourable conservation status' is defined in regulation 3 of the Habitats Regulations.

Publication date: 27 November 2018 (version 3). This document updates and replaces an earlier version dated 30 June 2014 to reflect the consolidation of the Habitats Regulations in 2017.

European Site Conservation Objectives for River Wensum Special Area of Conservation Site Code: UK0012647



With regard to the SAC and the natural habitats and/or species for which the site has been designated (the 'Qualifying Features' listed below), and subject to natural change;

Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring;

- **The extent and distribution of qualifying natural habitats and habitats of qualifying species**
- **The structure and function (including typical species) of qualifying natural habitats**
- **The structure and function of the habitats of qualifying species**
- **The supporting processes on which qualifying natural habitats and the habitats of qualifying species rely**
- **The populations of qualifying species, and,**
- **The distribution of qualifying species within the site.**

This document should be read in conjunction with the accompanying *Supplementary Advice* document, which provides more detailed advice and information to enable the application and achievement of the Objectives set out above.

Qualifying Features:

H3260. Water courses of plain to montane levels with the *Ranunculion fluitantis* and *Callitriche-Batrachion* vegetation; Rivers with floating vegetation often dominated by water-crowfoot

S1016. *Vertigo moulinsiana*; Desmoulin's whorl snail

S1092. *Austropotamobius pallipes*; White-clawed (or Atlantic stream) crayfish

S1096. *Lampetra planeri*; Brook lamprey

S1163. *Cottus gobio*; Bullhead

Explanatory Notes: European Site Conservation Objectives

These Conservation Objectives are those referred to in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 as amended from time to time (the "Habitats Regulations"). They must be considered when a competent authority is required to make a 'Habitats Regulations Assessment', including an Appropriate Assessment, under the relevant parts of this legislation.

These Conservation Objectives and the accompanying Supplementary Advice (where available) will also provide a framework to inform the measures needed to conserve or restore the European Site and the prevention of deterioration or significant disturbance of its qualifying features.

These Conservation Objectives are set for each habitat or species of a [Special Area of Conservation \(SAC\)](#). Where the objectives are met, the site will be considered to exhibit a high degree of integrity and to be contributing to achieving Favourable Conservation Status for that species or habitat type at a UK level. The term 'favourable conservation status' is defined in regulation 3 of the Habitats Regulations.

Publication date: 27 November 2018 (version 3). This document updates and replaces an earlier version dated 30 June 2014 to reflect the consolidation of the Habitats Regulations in 2017.

Appendix 2: Consultees Response

Date: 29 June 2023
Our ref: 437985 & 437986
Your ref: N/A

Mr Andrew Darcy
Breckland Council
Andrew.darcy@breckland.gov.uk

BY EMAIL ONLY



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

T 0300 060 3900

Dear Mr Darcy

Necton Neighbourhood Plan SEA & HRA Screening Reports

Thank you for your consultation on the above dated 13 June 2023 which was received by Natural England on the same date.

Natural England is a non-departmental public body. Our statutory purpose is to ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced, and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development.

Screening Request: Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)

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

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

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

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

- a neighbourhood plan allocates sites for development
- the neighbourhood area contains sensitive natural or heritage assets that may be affected by the proposals in the plan
- the neighbourhood plan may have significant environmental effects that have not already been considered and dealt with through a sustainability appraisal of the Local Plan.

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

Natural England does not hold information on the location of significant populations of protected species, so is unable to advise whether this plan is likely to affect protected species to such an extent as to require an SEA. Further information is included in Natural England's [standing advice](#) on protected species.

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

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

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

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

Yours sincerely

Joe Thompsett
Lead Advisor - Norfolk & Suffolk Team

JW

Joe Wyatt <Joe.Wyatt@norfolk.gov.uk>

To: Howarth, Adam (Capita Public Service)



Mon 24/07/2023 11:57

****EXTERNAL****

Dear Mr Howarth,

Thank you for consulting Norfolk County Council (NCC) on the above draft SEA and HRA Screening reports for Necton Neighbourhood Plan.

Apologies for the delayed response, but we received a comment from our Natural Environment team below:

The conclusions set out in both the draft Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening Report, and draft Habitat Regulation Assessment (HRA) Screening Report that the Necton Neighbourhood Plan is unlikely to have any significant environmental effects are supported and agreed.

If you have any questions regarding the above comment, please don't hesitate to respond to myself or to the Natural Environment team directly at NETI@norfolk.gov.uk

Kind regards,

Joe

Joe Wyatt, Strategic Planning Apprentice
Community and Environmental Services
County Hall, Martineau Lane, Norwich, NR1 2DH