

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) for the Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan

SEA Environmental Report

Great Addington Parish Council

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Quality information

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Non-technical summary

Background

AECOM is commissioned to lead on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in support of the emerging Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan. The Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared under the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012 and in the context of the local planning framework of North Northamptonshire. Once 'made' the Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan decisions on planning applications will be made using both North Northamptonshire's local plan and the Neighbourhood Plan, and any other material considerations.

SEA is a required process for considering and communicating the likely effects of an emerging plan, and alternatives, with a view to avoiding and mitigating potential negative effects and maximising potential positive effects.

This Non-technical Summary (NTS) provides a summary of the Environmental Report for the Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan. It is published alongside the Plan under Regulation 14 of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations (2012, as amended).

Structure of the Environmental Report / this NTS

SEA reporting essentially involves answering the following questions in turn:

1. What has plan-making/ SEA involved up to this point?
 - including in relation to 'reasonable alternatives'.
2. What are the SEA findings at this stage?
 - i.e., in relation to the draft plan.
3. What happens next?

Each of these questions is answered in turn within a discrete 'part' of the Environmental Report and summarised within this NTS. However, firstly there is a need to set the scene further by answering the questions 'What is the Plan seeking to achieve?' and 'What's the scope of the SEA?'.

What is the Plan seeking to achieve?

Whilst the North Northamptonshire Local Plan Joint Core Strategy 2011-2031 (JCS - July 2016) does not provide a housing figure for the neighbourhood area, the East Northamptonshire Local Plan Part 2 (December 2023) provides an indicative figure of 11-20 dwellings for Great Addington to deliver.

The vision for the Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan is set out in the figure below:



Figure: The Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan vision

What is the scope of the SEA?

The scope of the SEA is reflected in a list of topics and objectives, which, taken together, indicate the parameters of the SEA and provide a methodological 'framework' for assessment. Each option / proposal of the Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan will be assessed consistently using this framework, presented in Table 3.1 of the main report.

Plan making / SEA up to this point

An important element of the required SEA process involves assessing 'reasonable alternatives' in time to inform development of the draft proposals, and then publishing information on reasonable alternatives for consultation alongside the draft proposals.

As such, Part 1 of the Environmental Report explains how work was undertaken to develop and assess a 'reasonable' range of alternative approaches for the Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan.

Specifically, Part 1 of the report:

1. Explains the process of establishing the reasonable alternatives.
2. Presents the outcomes of assessing the reasonable alternatives; and
3. Explains reasons for developing a preferred option, considering the assessment.

Establishing the reasonable alternatives

Part 1 of the Environmental Report explores both the strategic parameters provided by the JCS and East Northamptonshire Local Plan Part 2, and the available site options to establish alternatives to the preferred approach for housing development. Two alternative site options are established for housing development and taken forward for assessment. These are:

- Option 1: Site B – Southeast of Rushglen Farm – capacity of 16 - 41 dwellings.
- Option 2: Site C – South of Cranford Road – capacity of 20 - 27 dwellings.

Assessing the reasonable alternatives

The two options above were each assessed against the SEA themes and objectives established through scoping, and the findings are presented in Chapter 6 of this Environmental Report.

Table: Reasonable alternatives assessment findings

SEA Theme	Significant effect?	Option 1	Option 2
Biodiversity and geodiversity	Significant effect?	No	No
	Rank	2	1
Climate change and flood risk	Significant effect?	No	No
	Rank	=	=
Community wellbeing	Significant effect?	Yes – positive	Yes - positive
	Rank	1	2
Historic environment	Significant effect?	No	No
	Rank	2	1
Land, soil and water resources	Significant effect?	No	No
	Rank	2	1
Landscape	Significant effect?	No	No
	Rank	2	1
Transportation and movement	Significant effect?	No	No

Rank	2	1
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Overall, no potential significant negative effects have been identified. Significant positive effects are considered likely in relation to community wellbeing, due to both options contributing additional housing to meet the local need. However, Option 1 is ranked more favourably than Option 2, due to the potential to bring forward a greater level of positive effects.

Both options are ranked equally for climate change and flood risk – reflecting the low risk of flooding on both sites, and their access to the settlement centre. It is anticipated that neutral effects would occur through either option.

For the remaining SEA themes, Option 2 is ranked more favourably. This reflects the removal of the site from important BAP Priority Habitats and historic environment assets, the smaller size of the site, its reduced potential to impact on settlement character, and its lower contribution to additional vehicles on the local road network.

It is noted that both options have the potential for minor negative effects for the biodiversity and geodiversity theme – due to the likely habitat loss through development and the overlap with SSSI IRZs. Both options are also anticipated to lead to minor negative effects due to the potential loss of productive agricultural land. Both are likely to bring forward minor negative effects for transportation, due to increasing the number of private vehicles on the road. Furthermore, both options are likely to bring forward minor negative effects pre-mitigation for landscape due to the potential to disrupt the character of the neighbourhood area.

Furthermore, Option 1 has the potential for minor negative effects due to the potential to impact upon the setting of a historic environment feature. It also has the potential for minor negative effects linked to landscape through the increased likelihood of impacting upon settlement character and important views. Developing the preferred approach

Developing the preferred approach

The Parish Council's preferred approach is Option 1 (Site B - Southeast of Rushglen Farm), reflecting the outcomes of their individual site assessment, and the SEA. This is due to the site being able to deliver a scale of development deemed acceptable by the local community; the site having good potential to deliver a layout that protects the character of the village, the potential to reduce countryside encroachment, and the ability to deliver community benefits – including a community recreation area.

Notably, the SEA will inform policy development and mitigation for the progression of Site B and (reflecting the assessment) a HRA will assess the draft plan proposals and design mitigation will be developed.

Assessment findings at this stage

Overall, no potential significant negative effects have been identified through the policy appraisal of the Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan. Significant positive effects are considered likely in relation to community wellbeing. This reflects the plan seeking to deliver small-scale housing that will meet the identified local need, as well as the focus on designating green spaces, safeguarding infrastructure, and

promoting active lifestyles. These contribute to enhancing physical and mental health and wellbeing within the community.

Minor positive effects are considered likely for the historic environment, landscape and biodiversity. This is due to the focus of the Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan maintaining and enhancing green infrastructure – which will contribute to the setting of heritage features, the historic character of the neighbourhood area, and biodiversity connectivity. Additionally, there are policies linked to protecting named specific heritage features and the countryside environment, and policies focused on bringing forward ecological improvements. Minor positive effects also reflect the incorporation of the HRA findings to mitigate effects to the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits site. These all contribute to the minor positive effects that are anticipated for these themes. Minor positive effects are also concluded likely for transportation and movement, given the focus of the plan policies on parking provision, safeguarding and extending the existing public rights of way, and providing safe access to and from the site allocation for pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles.

Broadly neutral effects are considered likely for climate change and flood risk, and land, soil, and water resources. This reflects the unlikely deviation from baseline conditions, linked to the site allocation of approximately 16 new homes, and the policy provisions: for example, focusing development within and adjacent to the settlement boundary. Broadly neutral effects are also considered likely for landscape. This reflects the location of the site adjacent to the settlement boundary, and the mitigation measures included in the site allocation policy to reduce landscape impacts. It also considers the wider policy provision.

Two recommendations are made – relating to biodiversity and geodiversity, and the historic environment. These recommendations will help to protect the integrity of a key habitat area and the special qualities of a designated building through the development of the site. However, uptake of these recommendations will not lead to changes to the likely overall effects.

Next steps – plan finalisation and monitoring

Following Regulation 14 consultation, responses will be considered in finalising the Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan and SEA for submission. Following submission, the Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan and supporting evidence will be published for further consultation, and then subjected to Independent Examination. At Independent Examination, the Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan will be considered in terms of whether it meets the Basic Conditions for Neighbourhood Plans and is in general conformity with the Local Plan.

If the examination leads to a favourable outcome, the Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan will then be subject to a referendum, organised by North Northamptonshire Council. If more than 50% of those who vote agree with the Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan, then it will be ‘made’. Once ‘made’, the Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan will become part of the Development Plan for the North Northamptonshire area, covering the defined neighbourhood area.

The SEA regulations require ‘measures envisaged concerning monitoring’ to be outlined in this report. This refers to the monitoring of likely significant effects of the Neighbourhood Plan to identify any unforeseen effects early and take remedial action as appropriate.

It is anticipated that monitoring of effects of the Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan will be undertaken by North Northamptonshire Council as part of the process of preparing its Annual Monitoring Report (AMR). No significant negative effects are considered likely in the implementation of the Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan that would warrant more stringent monitoring over and above that already undertaken by the Council.

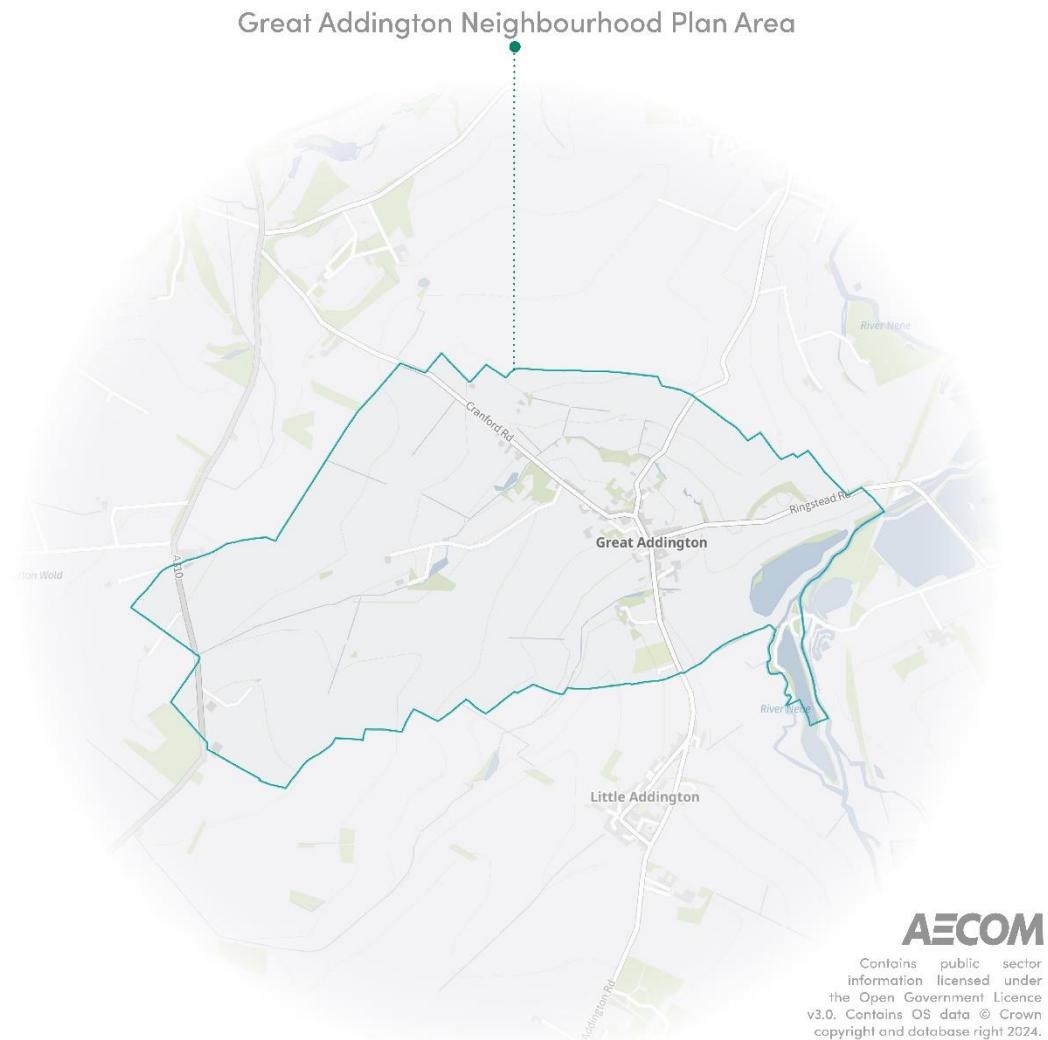


Figure 1.1: The Great Addington Neighbourhood area

1. Introduction

Background

- 1.1 AECOM has been commissioned to undertake an independent Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in support of the emerging Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan.
- 1.2 The Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared under the Localism Act 2011¹ and the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012², and in the context of the local plan for North Northamptonshire³. The neighbourhood area covers the civil parish of Great Addington in Northamptonshire, located to the south-east of Kettering (as shown in **Error! Reference source not found.** above).
- 1.3 Once 'made', the decisions on planning applications will be made using both the Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan and the North Northamptonshire Local Plan, and any other material considerations.
- 1.4 SEA is a required process for considering and communicating the likely effects of an emerging plan, and alternatives, with a view to avoiding and mitigating potential negative effects and maximising potential positive effects⁴.

SEA explained

- 1.5 Formal screening for the Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan has not been undertaken by North Northamptonshire Council. However, given the presence of a European designated site and the intention to allocate land for development, it is likely an SEA and HRA will be required.
- 1.6 It is a requirement that the SEA process is undertaken in-line with the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004⁵. The Regulations stipulate that a report (known as the Environmental Report) must be published for consultation alongside the draft plan that "*identifies, describes, and evaluates*" the likely significant effects of implementing "*the plan, and reasonable alternatives*". The report must then be considered when finalising the plan.
- 1.7 More specifically, the report can be structured to address requirements by answering the following three questions:
 - 1) What has plan-making / SEA involved up to this point?
 - including in relation to 'reasonable alternatives'.
 - 2) What are the SEA findings at this stage?
 - i.e., in relation to the current draft plan.

¹ UK Government (2011): [Localism Act 2011](#)

² UK Government (2012): [The Neighbourhood Planning \(General\) Regulations 2012](#)

³ North Northamptonshire Council (2023): Northamptonshire Local Plan Joint Core Strategy, [East Northamptonshire Local Plan \(Part 2\)](#)

⁴ Regulation 15 of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations (2012, as amended) requires that each Neighbourhood Plan is submitted to the Local Authority alongside either: A) an Environmental Report, or B) a statement of reasons why SEA is not required, prepared following a 'screening' process.

⁵ UK Government (2004): [The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004](#)

3) What happens next?

This Environmental Report

1.8 This report is the Environmental Report for the Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan. It is published alongside the 'pre-submission draft' version of the Plan, under Regulation 14 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended). The report answers the three questions outlined above in turn, as discrete 'parts' of the report. However, before answering these questions, two further sections are presented to continue setting the scene (**Chapters 2 and 3**).

2. What is the plan seeking to achieve?

Introduction

2.1 This section is an introductory chapter to consider the context provided by both the North Northamptonshire Council's local plan, and the vision and objectives of the Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan. The designated neighbourhood area is depicted in **Error! Reference source not found..**

Local Plan context for the Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan

2.2 The strategic policy context is set by the North Northamptonshire Council's local plan. This primarily consists of the North Northamptonshire Local Plan Joint Core Strategy (JCS)⁶, which was adopted in July 2016, and the East Northamptonshire Local Plan Part 2, which was adopted on the December 2023⁷.

2.3 The JCS identifies Great Addington as a village within the rural area of East Northamptonshire, suitable for small scale development that is required to support the rural economy or meet a local need.

2.4 East Northamptonshire Local Plan Part 2 sets out a rural housing need for Parish Council areas of a particular scale in terms of population. The resulting figures are intended as indicative guidance for potential / emerging Neighbourhood Plans in terms of helping meet future housing need. The indicative housing requirement for Great Addington is 11-20 dwellings, according to the East Northamptonshire Local Plan Part 2.

2.5 It is noted that the JCS is undergoing a review to extend the plan period to 2041. Consultation on the scope and issues was undertaken in 2022 – and a draft plan consultation is scheduled for June 2024.

⁶ North Northamptonshire (2016): [North Northamptonshire Local Plan - Joint Core Strategy](#)

⁷ North Northamptonshire (2023): [East Northamptonshire Local Plan Part 2](#)

Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan vision

2.6 The vision for the Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan is set out in Figure 2.1 below:



Figure 2.1: The Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan vision

3. What is the scope of the SEA?

Summary of SEA scoping

- 3.1 The SEA Regulations require that: “When deciding on the scope and level of detail of the information that must be included in the report, the responsible authority shall consult the consultation bodies”.
- 3.2 In England, the consultation bodies are Natural England, the Environment Agency, and Historic England⁸. These authorities were consulted on the scope of the SEA in March 2024.
- 3.3 The purpose of scoping was to outline the ‘scope’ of the SEA through setting out the following information:
 - A context review of the key environmental and sustainability objectives of national, regional, and local plans and strategies relevant to the Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan.
 - Baseline data against which the Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan can be assessed.
 - The key sustainability issues for the Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan; and
 - An ‘SEA Framework’ of objectives against which the Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan can be assessed.
- 3.4 The comments provided by the consultees on the Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan SEA Scoping Report, and how they have been addressed, can be read in Table 3.1 overleaf. The key issues identified through the SEA Scoping Report is presented within Appendix B. The full response from the Environment Agency can be found within Appendix C.

⁸ These consultation bodies were selected “*by reason of their specific environmental responsibilities, [they] are likely to be concerned by the environmental effect of implementing plans and programmes*” (SEA Directive, Article 6(3)).

Table 3.1: Consultation responses received on the SEA Scoping Report

Consultation response	How the response was considered and addressed
<p>Historic England</p> <p>Historic England have no substantive concerns as to the contents of the document and consider the evidence base for the SEA, the identified key issues and the proposed SEA framework to be well thought out and fit for purpose.</p>	<p>Comment noted. Thank you for your response.</p>
<p>Environment Agency</p> <p>2. Groundwater and contaminated land</p> <p>The consultee has highlighted that the Great Addington neighbourhood area sits on land that acts as an aquifer. As such, increased development could impact upon land quality and contamination and drainage, which could compromise the status of the geology. It recommends this information is fed into the scoping report.</p> <p>Additionally, land affected by contamination can pose a risk to human health, groundwater, surface waters and the wider environment. The consultee presents a number of links for developers to use related to land contamination and risk management.</p> <p>The consultee recommends the Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan identifies the historic landfill site so that any risk posed can be appropriately managed.</p>	<p>Comment noted. The information around aquifers has been added into the Land, soil and water key issue under Appendix B.6, and is considered through this Environmental Report. The recommendation to include reference to the historic landfill site in the Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan has been forwarded to the group. The links provided have been useful guidance for this Environmental Report.</p>
<p>3. Water quality, foul drainage and water efficiency</p> <p>The consultee recommends consultation with Anglian Water to discuss whether there are Water Recycling Centre capacity issues in terms of serving new development in the neighbourhood area.</p>	<p>Comment noted and forwarded to the group.</p>
<p>Natural England</p>	

Consultation response	How the response was considered and addressed
<p>Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Scoping request: Natural England has no specific comments to make on the scope of this neighbourhood plan's SEA.</p> <p>However, we refer you to the advice in the attached annex which covers the issues and opportunities that should be considered when preparing a Neighbourhood Plan.</p>	<p>Comment noted. Thank you for your response and the attached annex, it has proven useful in informing this Environmental Report.</p>

The SEA framework

3.5 The SEA framework presents a list of themes and objectives that together comprise a framework to guide the assessment. This is presented in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2: The SEA Framework

SEA theme	SEA objective
Biodiversity and geodiversity	Protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity.
Climate change and flood risk	Reduce the contribution to climate change made by activities within the neighbourhood area and increase resilience to the potential effects of climate change.
Community wellbeing	Ensure growth in the neighbourhood area is aligned with the needs of all residents, improving accessibility, anticipating future needs and specialist requirements, and supporting cohesive and inclusive communities.
Historic environment	Protect, conserve, and enhance the historic environment within and surrounding the neighbourhood area.
Land, soil, and water resources	Ensure the efficient and effective use of land, and protect and enhance water quality, using water resources in a sustainable manner.
Landscape	Protect and enhance the character and quality of the immediate and surrounding landscape.
Transportation	Promote sustainable transport use and active travel opportunities and reduce the need to travel.

4. Introduction (to Part 1)

Overview

- 4.1 Whilst work on the Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan has been underway for some time, the aim here is not to provide a comprehensive explanation of work to date, but rather to explain work undertaken to develop and appraise reasonable alternatives.
- 4.2 The decision was taken to develop reasonable alternatives in relation to the matter of allocating land for development given that housing growth is known to be a matter of key interest amongst residents and other stakeholders, and that the delivery of new homes is most likely to have significant effects compared to other proposals within the Plan. National Planning Practice Guidance is clear that SEA should focus on matters likely to give rise to significant effects. Wider thematic policy is explored in Part 2 of this report.

Structure of this part of the report

- 4.3 Part 1 of the Environmental Report is structured as follows:
 - Chapter 5 explains the process of establishing reasonable alternatives.
 - Chapter 6 presents the outcomes of appraising the reasonable alternatives; and
 - Chapter 7 explains the Parish Council's reasons for selecting the preferred approach considering the alternatives.

5. Establishing reasonable alternatives

Introduction

- 5.1 The aim of this chapter is to explain the process that led to the establishment of alternatives and thereby present “*an outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with*”⁹.
- 5.2 Specifically, there is a need to explain the strategic parameters that have a bearing on the establishment of options (in relation to the distribution of housing growth) and the work that has been undertaken to date to examine site options (i.e., sites potentially in contention for allocation in the Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan). These parameters are then drawn together in order to arrive at ‘reasonable alternatives’.

How much growth?

- 5.3 As noted in Chapter 2, the adopted JCS 2011-2031 (2016) and the East Northamptonshire Local Plan Part 2 (2023) do not allocate housing sites within the neighbourhood area. However, the East Northamptonshire Local Plan Part 2 provides an indicative housing need for Great Addington of 11-20 new dwellings.
- 5.4 The emerging JCS review is currently at an early stage of plan making. It is expected to follow a similar spatial hierarchy to the adopted JCS, and is not expected to identify housing sites for development.
- 5.5 A local Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) has not been undertaken for the neighbourhood area. However, local consultation in 2023 showed that most residents felt that the Neighbourhood Plan should make some provision for more housing.

Where could growth be located?

- 5.6 The first step in determining the spatial strategy for the neighbourhood plan involved the identification of potential available sites for development:
 - One site has been identified through North Northamptonshire Council’s Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (HELAA).
 - Two further sites have been identified through a local ‘call for sites’ (CfS) process, which was undertaken by Great Addington Parish Council between August and September 2023.
- 5.7 The three sites for consideration are as follows, and shown in Figure 5.1 overleaf:
 1. Site A: South of Ringstead Road – capacity of 656 dwellings.
 2. Site B: Southeast of Rushglen Farm – capacity of 41 dwellings.
 3. Site C: South of Cranford Road – capacity of 27 dwellings.

⁹ Schedule 2(8) of the SEA Regulations

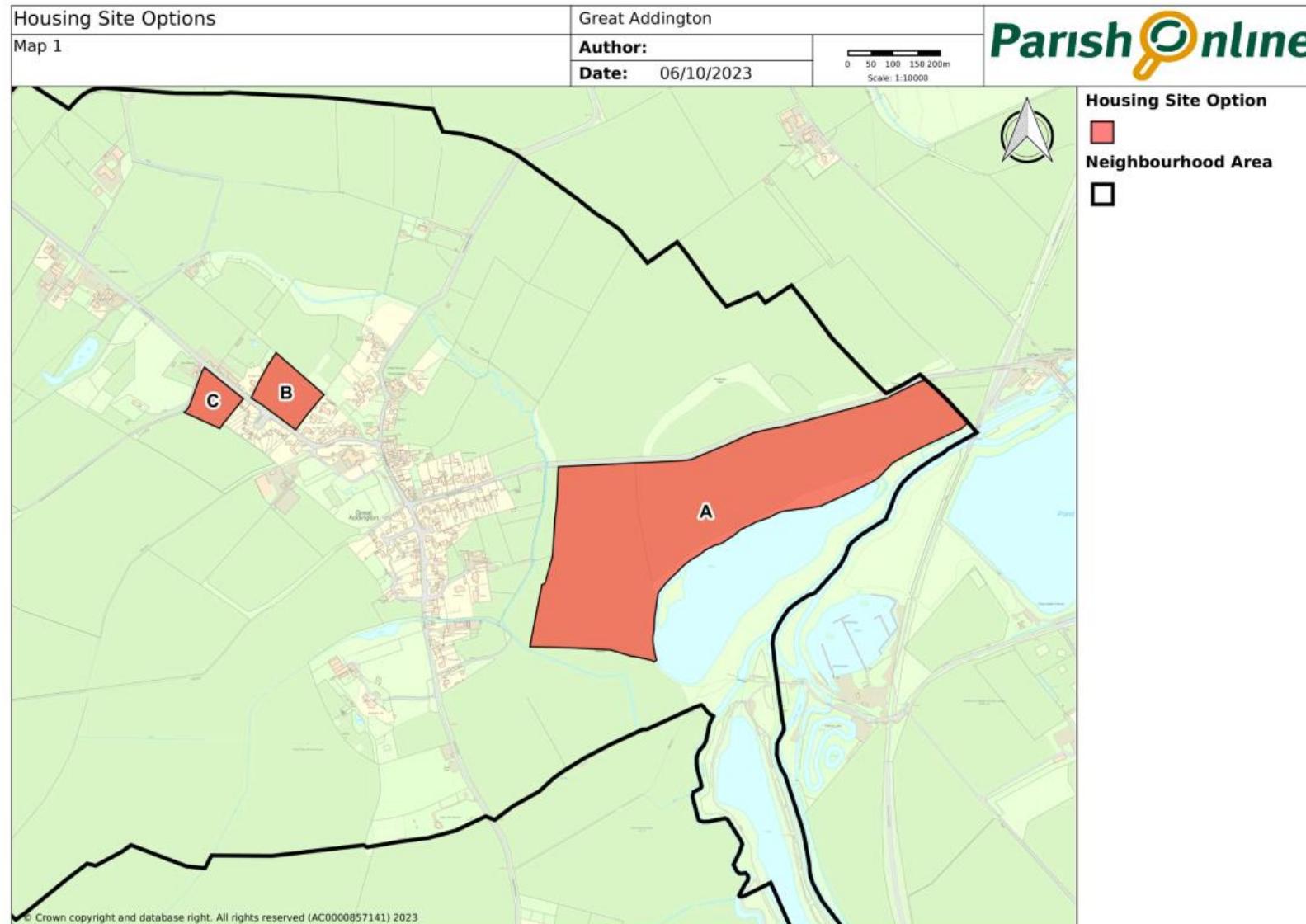


Figure 5.1: A map of identified sites

Options for assessment

- 5.8 Upon reviewing the three sites set out above, Site A has been ruled out for consideration through the SEA for the following reasons:
- 5.9 Firstly, the site is a strategic consideration for the Local Plan given its size and capacity to deliver 656 new dwellings.
- 5.10 Secondly, allocating this site for development would go against the settlement hierarchy – specifically the JCS identifies Great Addington as a village in the rural area suitable for small scale development. Furthermore, the site would not align with objectives of the neighbourhood plan and local consultation, which is to deliver a small level of growth.
- 5.11 It is noted that the landowners of Site B and Site C were requested to submit smaller schemes; they responded with 16 dwellings for Site B and 20 dwellings for Site C. As such, the capacities of the sites have changed to 16 - 41 dwellings on Site B, and 20 - 27 dwellings on Site C.
- 5.12 The remaining sites are taken forward for assessment through the SEA are:
 - Option 1: Site B – Southeast of Rushglen Farm (16 - 41 dwellings).
 - Option 2: Site C – South of Cranford Road (20 - 27 dwellings).

6. Assessing reasonable alternatives

6.1 This chapter presents the appraisal of the two options identified for assessment in Chapter 5. To reiterate, these options are:

- Option 1: Site B – Southeast of Rushglen Farm (16 - 41 dwellings).
- Option 2: Site C – South of Cranford Road (20 - 27 dwellings).

Methodology

6.2 The options identified are subject to high-level assessment and the findings are discussed below. For each of the options, the assessment examines likely significant effects on the baseline, drawing on the sustainability topics and objectives identified through scoping as a methodological framework. Where appropriate neutral effects, or uncertainty, will also be noted.

6.3 Within the summary table, for each row (i.e., for each of the topics that comprise the SEA framework) the columns to the right-hand side seek to both rank the alternatives in order of performance and categorise the performance of each option in terms of effects on the baseline. Effects are written within the columns supported by colour coding. Red indicates a significant negative effect and green a significant positive effect. Grey indicates uncertainty.

6.4 Every effort is made to predict effects accurately, however, where there is a need to rely on assumptions to reach a conclusion on a 'significant effect' this is made explicit in the appraisal text. Where it is not possible to predict likely significant effects based on reasonable assumptions, efforts are made to comment on the relative merits of the alternatives in more general terms and to indicate a rank of preference. This is helpful, as it enables a distinction to be made between the alternatives even where it is not possible to distinguish between them in term of 'significant effects'. Numbers are used to highlight the option or options that are preferred from an SEA perspective with 1 performing the best. Also, '=' is used to denote instances where the alternatives perform on a par.

6.5 Finally, it is important to note that effects are predicted considering the criteria presented within the Regulations¹⁰. So, for example, account is taken of the duration, frequency, and reversibility of effects.

¹⁰ Schedule 1 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.

Summary findings

SEA Theme	Significant effect?	Option 1	Option 2
Biodiversity and geodiversity	Significant effect?	No	No
	Rank	2	1
Climate change and flood risk	Significant effect?	No	No
	Rank	=	=
Community wellbeing	Significant effect?	Yes - positive	Yes - positive
	Rank	1	2
Historic environment	Significant effect?	No	No
	Rank	2	1
Land, soil and water resources	Significant effect?	No	No
	Rank	2	1
Landscape	Significant effect?	No	No
	Rank	2	1
Transportation and movement	Significant effect?	No	No
	Rank	2	1

Biodiversity and geodiversity

6.6 Whilst neither option is within proximity to international or national designations for biodiversity and geodiversity, both are subject to Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) Impact Risk Zones (IRZs) for the types of development likely to come forward through the neighbourhood plan (i.e., residential, rural residential, and rural non-residential). As such, development through either option would require consultation with Natural England.

6.7 The Living England Habitat Map shows the extent and distribution of broad habitat types across England. In this way, both options have a level of acid, calcareous, neutral grassland coverage across the respective sites; Option 1 includes improved grassland habitats, whilst Option 2 also includes arable and horticultural habitats. As such, development through either option would impact upon one or more of these broad habitat types – development would be unable to be focused away from them.

- 6.8 Neither option includes Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Priority Habitat within the boundaries of the site; however, Option 1 is adjacent to an area of deciduous woodland located on the eastern boundary. Given the proximity of the habitat to the site, it is possible development through Option 1 could cause disturbance to biodiversity through increased noise and light pollution. It is noted both options include a degree of boundary hedgerows that likely contribute to the wider biodiversity value of the neighbourhood area.
- 6.9 In terms of National Habitat Network coverage, Option 1 is mostly within Network Enhancement Zone 1, as is approximately half of Option 2. Land within this zone is considered likely to be suitable for the creation of primary habitat – and can be used to expand and join up existing habitat patches. As such, both options present opportunities to improve biodiversity connectivity throughout the neighbourhood area through landscaping, planting, and net gain contributions.
- 6.10 Considering the above, Option 2 is found to be more favourable than Option 1. This is due to Option 2 being removed from important BAP Priority Habitats – thus reducing the potential for disturbance to habitats and species.
- 6.11 However, minor negative effects are anticipated through both options due to the potential for habitat loss on each respective site. Minor effects are also concluded likely due to the overlap with the SSSI IRZs for the types of development that would come forward through the neighbourhood plan. It is recommended mitigation measures are included for both options to reduce the residual effects on the habitat coverage (and the BAP Priority Habitat adjacent to the boundary for Option 1). This could include landscape and design considerations, additional species planting, or focusing development away from the habitat – all of which will help reduce negative impacts.

Climate change and flood risk

- 6.12 Neither option is constrained by fluvial or surface water flood risk, given the distance of the sites from nearby waterbodies, and the drainage pattern of the neighbourhood area.
- 6.13 Any increase in the built footprint of the neighbourhood area is anticipated to increase carbon emissions, linked to an intensification of land use and activity. Given development could come forward with or without the neighbourhood plan in place, the potential increase in carbon emissions should not be considered a way to differentiate the options – nor should it contribute to the concluded level of effects. However, as a low level of growth is proposed under both options, neither are considered likely to have significant effects in respect to emissions.
- 6.14 In terms of location in relation to the settlement centre, both sites are situated along Cranford Road. This route includes pavement to allow for safe pedestrian and cycle movement to the settlement centre and the wider neighbourhood area. As such, both options provide a link to the settlement centre through active travel; and have the potential to encourage a reduction in carbon emissions linked to local journeys through modal shift. On this basis, both options are found to perform equally.
- 6.15 In conclusion, considering the above, both options are found to be ranked equally. This is given that both sites are at low risk of flooding and have

reasonable sustainable access to the settlement centre. Broadly neutral effects are concluded most likely for both options.

Community wellbeing

6.16 The indicative housing requirement for Great Addington, as set by the East Northamptonshire Local Plan Part 2, is 11-20 homes. Both options would meet and exceed this need, with Option 1 having capacity for 16 - 41 dwellings, and Option 2 having capacity for between 20 - 27 dwellings. Both options therefore have the potential to lead to significant positive effects against the community wellbeing SEA theme, meeting the local housing need figure. Both options could deliver a level of affordable housing and therefore perform positively in terms of delivering the type of housing needed locally. In terms of ranking, higher growth through Option 1 is considered to be best performing in this respect. Option 2 could however be considered to perform better than Option 1 through delivering a lower level of homes that better aligns with the aims and objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan. This includes ensuring a sufficient number and range of homes is provided to meet local needs, without having an impact on the existing, and need for new, infrastructure, services and amenities.

6.17 Both sites are well contained within the settlement boundary and are within proximity to existing residential development. As such, development through either option is anticipated to be well integrated into the existing settlement – which will help to foster a good sense of community.

6.18 Both sites are located along Cranford Road, which allows for access to the centre of Great Addington to the south-east, and to the A14 to the north-west. This road allows for safe pedestrian and cycle access into the settlement centre, supporting modal shift and healthy lifestyles. However, neither site has a public right of way within its boundary or within proximity, reducing active travel connectivity within and surrounding the neighbourhood area.

6.19 In terms of community facilities, Option 1 is within 450m of the local primary school, memorial hall, and public house; while Option 2 is within 620m. Neither option is within proximity to designated local green spaces - Addington playing field is over 1km away from both sites. Both options therefore perform similarly in terms of accessibility to services.

6.20 Overall, considering the above, both options perform well against this SEA theme – with the potential to lead to significant positive effects. However, Option 1 is ranked more favourably than Option 2; due to the potential to bring forward a greater level of affordable housing. It is also slightly closer to the services and facilities in the Great Addington settlement, which supports active travel and healthy lifestyles.

Historic environment

6.21 Neither of the options are constrained by designated heritage assets. However, it is likely that development through Option 1 will impact upon views from the Grade II* listed Church of All Saints, which is located to the north-east of the site, further along Cranford Road. Whilst development of the site is unlikely to directly impact upon the setting of the asset, given the distance between the

Church and the site, and existing development between, there could be the potential for indirect adverse effects.

6.22 Considering the above, Option 2 is found to be most favourable, with likely neutral effects. At this stage Option 1 is considered to have the potential to lead to minor negative effects without mitigation, reflecting potential effects on the Grade II* listed Church. It is noted that mitigation, including landscape and design considerations, could lead to residual neutral effects for Option 1. However, this is uncertain at this time.

Land, soil and water resources

6.23 Both options focus growth on sites within an area of provisional Grade 3 'Good to Moderate' agricultural land; however, without a specific agricultural land classification it is not possible to differentiate between Grade 3a and Grade 3b, where Grade 3a is considered 'best and most versatile', and Grade 3b is not. Given Site B and Site C are within proximity to one another, it is reasonable to conclude both sites will be of the same agricultural grade.

6.24 Both sites are greenfield sites in agricultural use. Additionally, both sites are considered to be freely draining and lime-rich loamy soils, and as such cannot be differentiated by their soil type, drainage, soil fertility, or carbon storage capacity. In terms of ranking the options, Option 1 would lead to a slightly greater loss of greenfield land (1.36 hectares as opposed to 0.9 hectares). As such, it is found to perform less favourably. However, it is noted site allocation policies could deliver smaller proposals that retain areas of greenfield space.

6.25 Furthermore, it is noted that Option 1 also has low voltage overhead power lines crossing the site. Neither option would bring forward growth within proximity to a waterbody; and both overlap with the same nitrate vulnerable zones. Moreover, neither option would bring forward development within the mineral safeguarding area that is present within the Great Addington neighbourhood area.

6.26 Overall, minor negative effects are predicted for both options due to the likely small level of productive agricultural land loss. In terms of ranking the options, Option 2 is considered more favourable, given Option 1 involves a slightly greater land take and would require infrastructural changes due to the presence of the overhead power lines.

Landscape

6.27 Neither of the options are constrained by landscape features or designations. This includes tree preservations orders, which are present elsewhere in the neighbourhood area. It is noted the site under Option 1 is crossed by low voltage overhead power lines. The removal of these will likely contribute to enhanced landscape character and amenity on the site.

6.28 Both options would bring forward development adjacent to the settlement boundary of Great Addington, and as such could impact upon the rural countryside outside of the settlement boundary. Both sites are at a similar elevation, with the potential to impact upon views into and out of the village, including in relation to neighbouring residential development. It is however noted that the site sizes are slightly different - Option 1 is 1.36 hectares in size,

and Option 2 is 0.9 hectares. It is noted that a smaller design scheme could be guided by policy to reduce landscape impacts.

6.29 It is noted that options could also set the precedent for further development to the north and south of the settlement respectively. This could impact upon the open, rural countryside outside of the village and alter the settlement pattern in the longer term.

6.30 Considering the above, minor negative effects are concluded for both options at this stage without mitigation, given development is proposed outside of the settlement boundary, and could disrupt the broadly rural nature of the neighbourhood area. For the purpose of ranking the options, Option 2 is considered best performing given the site is slightly smaller and would have less of an impact on the landscape outside of the settlement boundary.

Transportation and movement

6.31 Both options are located adjacent to the settlement boundary of Great Addington, and are considered to be within a reasonable walking distance of the local services and facilities the settlement provides.

6.32 Both options provide access to these facilities via a pedestrian friendly pavement along Cranford Road, to which both sites are adjacent. In terms of access to sustainable transport, both sites are within proximity of the Hare and Hounds Public House bus stops, which connect Great Addington to Irthlingborough via the 45 Raunds-Wellingborough service. It is noted that this is largely a school transport service; it does not run over weekends or on bank holidays. Given the infrequency of the service, it is not relied upon by the majority of the community.

6.33 Cranford Road allows for vehicular and pedestrian access in to the settlement of Great Addington from the A510 and the A14 to the north-west of the neighbourhood area. These two roads provide access via the private vehicle to larger neighbouring settlements, including Finedon, Kettering, and Thrapston. – it is noted that both options have existing access to Cranford Road. However Option 1, as a slightly larger capacity site, could marginally increase private vehicle users on the roads compared to Option 2. However, this is unlikely to be significant.

6.34 Overall, both options are found to perform relatively similarly in terms of transportation and movement, with minor negative effects predicted at this stage. Both options connect via active travel to the settlement centre, but have a limited sustainable transport offer, with access to the road network. In terms of ranking the options, Option 1 is considered to perform less favourably given its size, as it would likely lead to a greater increase in private vehicles on the road than Option 2.

Conclusions

6.35 Overall, no potential significant negative effects have been identified. Significant positive effects are considered likely in relation to community wellbeing, due to both options contributing additional housing to meet the local need. However, Option 1 is ranked more favourably than Option 2, due to the potential to bring forward a greater level of positive effects.

6.36 Both options are ranked equally for climate change and flood risk – reflecting the low risk of flooding on both sites, and their access to the settlement centre. It is anticipated that neutral effects would occur through either option.

6.37 For the remaining SEA themes, Option 2 is ranked more favourably. This reflects the removal of the site from important BAP Priority Habitats and historic environment assets, the smaller size of the site, its reduced potential to impact on settlement character, and its lower contribution to additional vehicles on the local road network.

6.38 It is noted that both options have the potential for minor negative effects for the biodiversity and geodiversity theme – due to the likely habitat loss through development and the overlap with SSSI IRZs. Both options are also anticipated to lead to minor negative effects due to the potential loss of productive agricultural land. Both are likely to bring forward minor negative effects for transportation, due to increasing the number of private vehicles on the road. Furthermore, both options are likely to bring forward minor negative effects pre-mitigation for landscape due to the potential to disrupt the character of the neighbourhood area.

6.39 Furthermore, Option 1 has the potential for minor negative effects due to the potential to impact upon the setting of a historic environment feature. It also has the potential for minor negative effects linked to landscape through the increased likelihood of impacting upon settlement character and important views.

7. Developing the preferred approach

- 7.1 The Parish Council's preferred approach is Option 1 (Site B - Southeast of Rushglen Farm). This reflects the outcomes of their individual site assessment, and the SEA. The following reasoning is provided for the progression of Option 1.
- 7.2 "Option 1 is preferred as it will deliver a scale of development deemed acceptable by the local community; the site has good potential to deliver a layout that protects the character of the village, reduces countryside encroachment, and delivers community benefits – including a community recreation area."
- 7.3 Notably, the SEA will inform policy development and mitigation for the progression of Site B and (reflecting the assessment) a HRA will assess the draft plan proposals and design mitigation will be developed.

8. Introduction (to Part 2)

8.1 This chapter presents an appraisal of the pre-submission draft of the Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan under the seven SEA topic headings, reflecting the established assessment framework (see **Chapter 3**).

Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan policies

8.2 The Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan contains 22 policies. These are contained in **Table 8.1**.

Table 8.1: Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan policies

Policy Reference	Policy Name
GA1	Parking Standards
GA2	The Countryside
GA3	Locally Important Views
GA4	Public Rights of Way network
GA5	Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area Mitigation Strategy
GA6	Ecology and Biodiversity
GA7	Trees and Hedges
GA8	Water Management
GA9	Locally Valued Heritage Assets
GA10	Design
GA11	Local Green Space
GA12	Ultrafast Connectivity
GA13	Retention of Community Services and Facilities
GA14	Infrastructure
GA15	Housing Requirement
GA16	Infill
GA17	Land North of Cranford Road, Great Addington
GA18	Housing Mix
GA19	Affordable Housing
GA20	Residential Conversion of Rural Buildings
GA21	Business Conversion of Rural Buildings
GA22	Working from Home

Methodology

- 8.3 The assessment identifies and evaluates 'likely significant effects' on the baseline, drawing on the sustainability objectives identified through scoping as a methodological framework.
- 8.4 Every effort is made to predict effects accurately; however, this is inherently challenging given the strategic nature of the policies under consideration and understanding of the baseline (now and in the future under a 'no plan' scenario) that is inevitably limited. Given uncertainties there is a need to make assumptions, e.g., in relation to plan implementation and aspects of the baseline that might be impacted. Assumptions are made cautiously and explained within the text (with the aim of striking a balance between comprehensiveness and conciseness). In many instances, given reasonable assumptions, it is not possible to predict 'significant effects', but it is possible to comment on merits (or otherwise) of the draft plan in more general terms.
- 8.5 Finally, it is important to note that effects are predicted taking account of the criteria presented within Schedule 1 of the SEA Regulations. So, for example, account is taken of the probability, duration, frequency, and reversibility of effects as far as possible. Cumulative effects are also considered, i.e., the potential for the Neighbourhood Plan to impact an aspect of the baseline when implemented alongside other plans, programmes, and projects. These effect 'characteristics' are described within the assessment as appropriate.

9. Appraisal of the Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan

Biodiversity and geodiversity

- 9.1 In terms of European designated sites, the neighbourhood area intersects with the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Ramsar, Special Protection Area (SPA) in the eastern extent. A Habitats Regulations Assessment has been carried out for the Neighbourhood Plan; the recommended policy wording has been incorporated into the Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan.
- 9.2 The Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan includes a specific policy in relation to the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits site. Policy GA5 indicates that residential development coming forward within 3km of the designated Ramsar and SPA site will need to financially contribute to mitigation measures, which will help combat any adverse impacts. This will likely include contributing funds to both onsite and offsite biodiversity projects – for example, supporting habitat restoration projects. Furthermore, Policy GA5 also includes the need to incorporate non-financial mitigation measures where necessary and appropriate. This will likely include measures like tree planting. This policy is a clear benefit for biodiversity and geodiversity, as it aims to ensure residential development within proximity to the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits designated sites does not adversely affect the value of the site, and contributes to biodiversity value in the wider area.
- 9.3 In terms of nationally designated sites, the neighbourhood area intersects with the Upper Nene Valley Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) in the eastern extent. Additionally, there are two further SSSIs within proximity to the neighbourhood area – the Cranford St John SSSI approximately 1.5km to the north-west, and Twywell Gullet SSSI approximately 1.4km to the north. The neighbourhood area falls within SSSI Impact Risk Zones for residential development of ten units or more. The Neighbourhood Plan allocates Land North of Cranford Road, Great Addington through Policy GA17 for approximately 16 dwellings, and therefore consultation with Natural England would be required. It is considered that this has been addressed through Policy GA17, which outlines the need to mitigate any adverse impacts to the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits designations.
- 9.4 Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Priority Habitats in the neighbourhood area include coastal and floodplain grazing marsh in the eastern extent, deciduous woodland, and traditional orchards. With regards to the National Habitat Network¹¹, the eastern half of the neighbourhood area has sections of Network Enhancement Zone 1, Network Enhancement Zone 2, and Network Expansion Zone. These are areas of land that have the potential to support the expansion, linking and / or joining of biodiversity networks across the landscape, and could be suitable for the creation of primary habitat. The site

¹¹ The National Habitat Network is a spatial dataset that describes the geographic extent and location of habitat networks for 18 priority habitats based primarily, but not exclusively, on the Priority Habitat Inventory. The Priority Habitat Inventory is a spatial dataset that describes the geographic extent and location of Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006) Section 41 habitats of principal importance. This inventory replaces Natural England's previous separate BAP habitat inventories. Additional data has also been added in relation to habitat restoration-creation, restorable habitat, plus fragmentation action, and network enhancement and expansion zones.

allocated under policy GA17 has an area of deciduous woodland BAP Priority Habitat on its eastern site boundary; the site is entirely within Network Enhancement Zone 1.

- 9.5 Policy GA17: Land North of Cranford Road, Great Addington indicates the residential development of the site must include onsite biodiversity net gains (unless it is not possible to achieve through the design of the proposed scheme), and retain hedgerows as far as possible (replanting with native species if a level of loss is necessary). This will allow for continued and enhanced levels of biodiversity and connectivity by ensuring the site is well integrated into the biodiversity network, and does not bring forward adverse impacts to the biodiversity value of the neighbourhood area.
- 9.6 Additionally, Policy GA17 indicates an area of land should be safeguarded to provide onsite biodiversity net gain if it cannot be achieved through the design of the scheme or in other parts of the site. This demonstrates a focus on protecting and enhancing the biodiversity value of the site through development. To further strengthen the Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan it is recommended that the site allocation policy include reference to the adjacent BAP Priority Habitat, to ensure its protection. This will contribute to maintaining the wider biodiversity value and connectivity of the neighbourhood area.
- 9.7 Policy GA6 provides protection to the local biodiversity resource, ensuring that development does not cause harm to the ecological network in the neighbourhood area –including specific features and habitat areas. Rather, development is expected to retain important features and habitat areas, as well as ecological corridors; this will help to retain the biodiversity connectivity in the neighbourhood area. Under this policy development is also expected to bring forward biodiversity net gain, with a focus on linking wetland habitats. This policy is also a clear benefit for biodiversity and geodiversity in the neighbourhood area, as it ensures biodiversity protection and enhancement.
- 9.8 The wider plan policies also work to benefit biodiversity and geodiversity. Policy GA7 sets out stipulations for the retention of existing trees and hedgerows in the neighbourhood area, indicating development proposals that result in the loss of these features will not be supported. This helps to protect the existing biodiversity network in Great Addington by retaining connections, safe routes and refuge areas for species to move through. The network could be added to through policy GA8, which indicates the installation of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) will need to incorporate biodiversity considerations. This could include the planting of local species to help intercept water and reduce flood risk.
- 9.9 Finally, policies GA20 and GA21 are of note in relation to biodiversity objectives, requiring that rural building conversions for residential and business use undertake surveys and include mitigation measures where protected species are present. This will help to reduce impacts to important local species and maintain biodiversity value in Great Addington.
- 9.10 In conclusion, **minor positive effects** are considered likely through the Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan. This reflects the focus on protecting biodiversity value on the site allocation, and maintaining and enhancing green infrastructure. It also reflects the incorporation of the HRA findings within the policy provision. Adding a stipulation into policy GA17 to protect the integrity of

the nearby BAP Priority Habitat will work to further enhance positive effects for biodiversity on the site.

Climate change and flood risk

9.11 The Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan provides an opportunity to include policies that help to reduce carbon emissions created by new development in the area, and to adapt to the impacts of climate change. While it is recognised that there is little value in duplicating planning policies which are already set out in the Local Plan, the Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan should focus on what could be strengthened, and respond to local considerations. This can include vulnerability to overheating, flooding or water stress impacts, car dependency, opportunities for renewable energy, sustainable design, and construction.

9.12 In terms of climate change adaptation, fluvial flood risk is concentrated within the eastern extent of the neighbourhood area – this part is in Flood Zone 3, associated with the River Nene and adjoining watercourses. As such, surface water flood risk is largely linked to these watercourses in the eastern part as well – with additional areas of surface water flood risk in the western part of the neighbourhood area. The site allocation (policy GA17) has no risk of fluvial flooding. Whilst there is very low risk of surface water flooding within the site, policy GA17: Land North of Cranford Road, Great Addington sets requirements for managing flood risk. This includes the need for sustainable drainage systems in order to mitigate the surface water flood risk on the site. Policy GA8 more widely focuses on water management, and outlines stipulations for the incorporation of SuDS to manage surface water. This will help to manage surface water flood risk across the neighbourhood area, which is especially important in the eastern and western extents as well as around the settlement boundary of Great Addington.

9.13 Additionally, policy GA17 includes stipulations in relation to climate change adaptation. This is demonstrated through the need to achieve biodiversity net gain on site, and the need to retain (and if not, replace) boundary hedgerows. Increased levels of vegetation on the site that will likely come forward through these policy stipulations will contribute to climate change and flood risk mitigation – by capturing and storing increased levels of CO₂ through photosynthesis, and intercepting water runoff.

9.14 In terms of climate change mitigation, transportation is a key consideration of the Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan. In terms of the site allocation, policy GA17 indicates that safe pedestrian and cycle access will be implemented along Cranford Road, which will connect to the existing active transport network. This will likely contribute to reducing emissions linked to transportation in the neighbourhood area, by supporting active travel uptake. Policy GA4 also performs well in this respect, placing focus on protecting existing and creating new public rights of way. Finally, policy GA22 outlines that development will be supported where it can facilitate working from home (where appropriate). This is likely to help contribute to reducing emissions linked to transportation and movement, as more of the working population will be able to reduce their travel to work.

9.15 Reflecting on the above, as it stands **broadly neutral effects** are considered likely through the Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan. This reflects the broad

support provided through the policy framework to climate change adaptation and mitigation objectives; and the low level of housing growth proposed in a relatively sustainable location.

Community wellbeing

9.16 As presented through Policy GA15, the housing requirement for the Great Addington neighbourhood area is 11 to 20 dwellings between 2021 and 2040. This is to be met through existing commitments, infill / windfall development (policy GA16: Infill), and a site allocation (policy GA17: Land North of Cranford Road, Great Addington). The site allocation under policy GA17 includes 1.4 hectares of land, of which 0.61 hectares is earmarked for residential development of approximately 16 new dwellings. This positively contributes towards the identified local housing need.

9.17 Furthermore, it is considered that the delivery of housing at Land North of Cranford Road will allow an appropriate mix of tenures to come forward (policy GA18: Housing Mix), of which some will be affordable housing (policy GA19: Affordable Housing). This includes meeting the housing needs of older people and providing homes for first time buyers. The Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan also outlines support for the residential conversion of rural buildings; again, contributing to community wellbeing by providing more homes – which in turn could help reduce the level of deprivation in the neighbourhood area.

9.18 Community facilities within the neighbourhood area include a memorial hall, a church, a pub, and a primary school. In terms of the site allocation, Land North of Cranford Road is well located to access these facilities, being less than 500m to the north-west of the settlement centre. However, given the lack of medical infrastructure, retail facilities and education services (e.g., higher education, and nurseries / pre-schools), it is highly likely residents travel (via private vehicle) out of the neighbourhood area for wider facilities. This likely includes travel to larger settlements such as Finedon, Kettering, and Thrapston.

9.19 In the context of the above, it is noted that the neighbourhood area is within the 20% most deprived neighbourhoods for barriers to housing and services. This likely reflects house prices and availability, and access to infrastructure and facilities. It is considered that identified housing deprivation largely reflects the rural nature of the neighbourhood area, and as such the delivery of new housing at Land North of Cranford Road will lead to positive effects in this respect.

9.20 Policy GA17 makes provision for community infrastructure delivery alongside new housing by including 0.8 hectares of land for a community recreation area. This will support the improved health and wellbeing of residents, including through increased community cohesion.

9.21 Land North of Cranford Road is outside but adjacent to the settlement boundary – located to the north-west of the settlement centre and surrounded by existing development. This helps to ensure new development will integrate well with the existing community. Furthermore, site allocation policy GA17 indicates safe pedestrian and cyclist access to and from the site will be achieved; thus, supporting the health and wellbeing of new and existing residents.

- 9.22 In terms of the wider Neighbourhood Plan policy framework, policy GA4 and GA11 perform positively through designating local green space and extending public rights of way in the neighbourhood area. This will support strong, healthy communities that are well connected.
- 9.23 Policies GA12, GA13, GA14, GA21 and GA22 also perform well in relation to community wellbeing, placing a focus on local employment and infrastructure. Policy GA13 and GA14 support the protection and enhancement of community assets; while policy GA12 supports the necessary infrastructure to facilitate working from home. Policies GA21 and GA22 work to support working from home and business development by providing appropriate infrastructure and employment space.
- 9.24 In conclusion, the Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan is considered likely to lead to **significant positive effects** in relation to community wellbeing objectives. This is through the delivery of housing in a sustainable location that meets local needs; as well as protecting and enhancing the community infrastructure offer and local economy.

Historic environment

- 9.25 The historic environment within the Great Addington neighbourhood area comprises of nine listed buildings (one Grade II* and eight Grade II). It is noted there are also two scheduled monuments within proximity to the neighbourhood area.
- 9.26 The site allocation policy does not make specific stipulations for the historic environment. Whilst the site is broadly removed from heritage constraints, it is noted that developing the site could impact upon views from a Grade II* listed structure; therefore, impacting upon its special qualities. It is recommended that a stipulation is included within the site allocation policy to reduce any potential visual impacts to and from the asset. This could include landscaping to screen development from the feature.
- 9.27 In terms of the wider Neighbourhood Plan policy framework, policy GA9: Locally Valued Heritage Assets places focus on the local historic environment. The policy names several locally important heritage assets as well as wider features, and indicates development proposals that could impact upon these features or their settings will need to be assessed – having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the asset. This will positively contribute towards historic environment objectives, as it ensures development does not unnecessarily bring harm to local heritage.
- 9.28 Policy GA2 is also of relevance, seeking to protect the countryside (land outside of the settlement boundary but within the neighbourhood area boundary) and its intrinsic heritage value. This will deliver positive effects, safeguarding the heritage value of the landscape itself, and safeguarding the historic setting of the listed buildings – thus retaining their historic significance.
- 9.29 Similar effects are likely through the delivery of Policy GA7 which provides a level of protection to trees and hedgerows, and local green space under policy GA11. The retention of these features will likely contribute to a maintained historic setting for important heritage features. Furthermore, policy GA10 indicates development will need to be high quality in order to protect the historic

beauty of the area. Again, this ensures that the setting of historic features and the wider historic environment is provided a level of protection.

9.30 Finally of note are Policy GA20 and GA21, which support the reuse and conversion of buildings for residential and business use where it does not impact upon the historic character or setting of the structures. This is beneficial as it brings redundant buildings back into use and could provide structural upgrades to keep the features sound – allowing for their continued contribution to the wider historic environment.

9.31 In conclusion, broadly **minor positive effects** are concluded on the assumption that the recommendation made is adopted. The Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan performs well, protecting and enhancing designated and non-designated features, alongside the wider historic landscape.

Land, soil and water resources

9.32 The entire Great Addington neighbourhood area is considered to be covered by Grade 3 'Good to Moderate' agricultural quality land; however, it is not possible to determine whether this is Grade 3a (i.e., Best and Most Versatile (BMV) agricultural land) or Grade 3b (poorer quality agricultural land). The neighbourhood area is located across two waterbody catchments: Addington Brook, and the Nene – conf Ise to Islip; however, it is noted the overlap with the latter is a small area in the eastern extent. Both have a moderate ecological status according to 2022 data, and neither required a chemical status assessment in the same year. Additionally, there are three nitrate vulnerability zones that overlap with the Great Addington neighbourhood area, as well as a drinking water safeguarding zone. The eastern part of the neighbourhood area sits within a mineral safeguarding area; if development were to come forward in this area, consultation with Northamptonshire County Council would likely be required to ensure important resources are not sterilised.

9.33 The site allocated under policy GA17: Land North of Cranford Road, is located on greenfield land that is provisionally rated as Grade 3 'Good to Moderate' agricultural land. This site is susceptible to drainage problems; as such, policy GA17 includes a requirement for sustainable urban drainage systems to be incorporated that consider the disposal of surface water and foul water. This will help to maintain water quality.

9.34 Additionally, policy GA16 supports infill development within the settlement boundary. This will contribute positively towards protecting the greenfield and agricultural land resource within the neighbourhood area.

9.35 In terms of the wider Neighbourhood Plan policy framework, policy GA2 performs positively through protecting the countryside within the neighbourhood area for its natural resources. Furthermore, policy GA7 helps to maintain soil resources by retaining existing trees and hedgerows, which contributes to safeguarding underlying soils. Policy GA11 is also noteworthy, as it designates areas of local green space – limiting the potential for development and subsequent land and soil loss.

9.36 Policy GA20 indicates residential conversion of rural buildings will be supported where proposed extensions and alterations are within the original curtilage of

the structure. Again, this works to ensure that land take is reduced – thus protecting soil resources and quality outside of developed areas.

9.37 Water resources are considered under policy GA8, which indicates surface water will be managed sustainably in order to maintain quality. This includes ensuring drainage systems are protected, and excess water does not discharge into the sewerage system as far as possible. This reduces the risk of pollutants entering the water system.

9.38 In conclusion, the Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan performs positively through making numerous policy provisions for the protection of land, soil and water resources within the neighbourhood area. However, the site allocation will result in a small loss of greenfield land which cannot be mitigated. As such, **neutral effects** are concluded.

Landscape

9.39 In terms of the delivery of housing in the neighbourhood area, Policy GA16 indicates the plan's support of infill development. This has positive effects for the local landscape, as it seeks to focus development within the defined settlement boundary, a less sensitive part of the neighbourhood area. It also lowers the potential for impacts to the landscape through changes to views and loss/ damage to important landscape features.

9.40 The site allocation under policy GA17: Land North of Cranford Road, could impact upon the rural countryside outside of the settlement boundary given it is located adjacent to the Great Addington settlement boundary. Whilst the site is relatively level in elevation, and at a similar elevation to existing development, it is possible development could impact on views into and out of the settlement due to its size (1.36 hectares). Policy GA17 seeks to address potential landscape impacts, and therefore includes the requirement for a landscaping scheme to bring forward green features, and the relocation of overhead electricity lines. This will help to enhance the landscape amenity and reduce visual impacts of development on the settlement and rural countryside.

9.41 In terms of the wider Neighbourhood Plan policy framework, policy GA2 indicates land outside of the Great Addington settlement boundary will be protected for its intrinsic character and beauty; while policy GA3 seeks to protect important views that are highly characteristic of the neighbourhood area.

9.42 Ecological maintenance and enhancement proposed through policy GA6 and policy GA7 also support the local landscape, by retaining and developing green features that support landscape character and form key parts of views. The same can be said of policy GA11, which seeks to designate and safeguard local green space.

9.43 Policy GA10 requires all development to be in line with the Great Addington Design Guide. This includes (but is not limited to) considering the rural character of the neighbourhood area, the natural environment, the vernacular architecture and features, and agricultural heritage. By incorporating this policy, the Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan is ensuring new development that comes forward is of high design quality and integrates well with existing

structures; thus, reducing potential adverse effects on local landscape character and key features.

9.44 Finally of note are policies GA20 and GA21, which support the conversion of rural buildings where local character is maintained, and development respects local building styles and materials.

9.45 In conclusion, **broadly neutral effects** are anticipated through the Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan. This reflects the landscape considerations under policy GA17 which will help mitigate any adverse effects, and the wider considerations of the plan which includes the protection of key views (policy GA3) and the enhancement of green features (policies GA6 and GA7).

Transportation and movement

9.46 There are no sustainable transportation networks serving the neighbourhood area – the nearest being located in Wellingborough, approximately 6.7km to the south-west. In terms of active travel, there are a number of footpaths, and one bridleway, to facilitate active transport within and outside the neighbourhood area. With regards to the local road network, there is an A road that passes through the western extent of the neighbourhood area; the settlement provides a good level of access to the A14, A45, and the A6. Speeding and the volume of traffic is a concern for the residents of the neighbourhood area, especially along Cranford Road. Parking issues are also a key concern, especially during peak times.

9.47 The site allocated under policy GA17: Land North of Cranford Road, Great Addington is located in a relatively sustainable location adjacent to the settlement boundary, approximately 450m from the settlement centre. It is adjacent to Cranford Road – allowing for vehicular transport to the settlement centre and to the A510 outside the neighbourhood area to the north-west. Cranford Road has safe pedestrian access via a raised pavement; it is noted there is also a grass verge – both of which allow for access to the settlement centre. Policy GA17 indicates that development of the site will be supported where speed reduction measures are put in place on the approach to the settlement, and safe pedestrian and cycle access is achieved - connecting to existing and proposed active transport. This will help to ensure vehicular movements along Cranford Road, and site ingress and egress, is made as safe as possible – and speeding concerns are addressed. It will also help to encourage an uptake in active transportation provision for localised journeys, by providing safe cycle and pedestrian access and linkages to the wider active transport network.

9.48 In terms of the wider Neighbourhood Plan policy framework, policy GA1 works to reduce the existing level of parking issues in the neighbourhood area, through ensuring suitable parking spaces are integrated into development. Policy GA4 is focused on the public rights of way network – outlining the need to protect the existing routeways and the importance of creating new ones (where appropriate). This will help to support an uptake in active travel and reduce private vehicle usage, which will contribute to improved road safety. Policy GA14 also performs well in this respect, requiring new development to include access to the countryside. Road usage is further considered through policy GA21 which indicates the conversion of buildings for business use will be

supported where proposals would not generate additional levels of traffic that would compromise the local road network.

9.49 Overall, requirements set out through the site allocation policy and the wider policy framework seek to allocate a site in a sustainable location, maintain and enhance active transportation provision, provide safe access to the road network, and contribute additional parking. Recognising that more strategic transport issues (like the lack of sustainable transportation opportunities within the neighbourhood area) are beyond of the scope of the Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan, **minor positive effects** are concluded likely through the plan.

10. Conclusions and recommendations

- 10.1 Overall, no potential significant negative effects have been identified through the policy appraisal of the Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan. Significant positive effects are considered likely in relation to community wellbeing. This reflects the plan seeking to deliver small-scale housing that will meet the identified local need, as well as the focus on designating green spaces, safeguarding infrastructure, and promoting active lifestyles. These contribute to enhancing physical and mental health and wellbeing within the community.
- 10.2 Minor positive effects are considered likely for the historic environment, landscape and biodiversity. This is due to the focus of the Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan maintaining and enhancing green infrastructure – which will contribute to the setting of heritage features, the historic character of the neighbourhood area, and biodiversity connectivity. Additionally, there are policies linked to protecting named specific heritage features and the countryside environment, and policies focused on bringing forward ecological improvements. Minor positive effects also reflect the incorporation of the HRA findings to mitigate effects to the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits site. These all contribute to the minor positive effects that are anticipated for these themes. Minor positive effects are also concluded likely for transportation and movement, given the focus of the plan policies on parking provision, safeguarding and extending the existing public rights of way, and providing safe access to and from the site allocation for pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles.
- 10.3 Broadly neutral effects are considered likely for climate change and flood risk, and land, soil, and water resources. This reflects the unlikely deviation from baseline conditions, linked to the site allocation of approximately 16 new homes, and the policy provisions: for example, focusing development within and adjacent to the settlement boundary. Broadly neutral effects are also considered likely for landscape. This reflects the location of the site adjacent to the settlement boundary, and the mitigation measures included in the site allocation policy to reduce landscape impacts. It also considers the wider policy provision.
- 10.4 Two recommendations are made – relating to biodiversity and geodiversity, and the historic environment. These recommendations will help to protect the integrity of a key habitat area and the special qualities of a designated building through the development of the site. However, uptake of these recommendations will not lead to changes to the likely overall effects.

11. Next steps and monitoring

11.1 This part of the report explains the next steps that will be taken as part of plan-making and SEA.

Plan finalisation

11.2 Following Regulation 14 consultation, responses will be considered in finalising the Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan and SEA for submission. Following submission, the Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan and supporting evidence will be published for further consultation, and then subjected to Independent Examination. At Independent Examination, the Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan will be considered in terms of whether it meets the Basic Conditions for Neighbourhood Plans and is in general conformity with the Local Plan.

11.3 If the examination leads to a favourable outcome, the Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan will then be subject to a referendum, organised by North Northamptonshire Council. If more than 50% of those who vote agree with the Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan, then it will be 'made'. Once 'made', the Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan will become part of the Development Plan for the North Northamptonshire area, covering the defined neighbourhood area.

Monitoring

11.4 The SEA regulations require 'measures envisaged concerning monitoring' to be outlined in this report. This refers to the monitoring of likely significant effects of the Neighbourhood Plan to identify any unforeseen effects early and take remedial action as appropriate.

11.5 It is anticipated that monitoring of effects of the Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan will be undertaken by North Northamptonshire Council as part of the process of preparing its Annual Monitoring Report (AMR). No significant negative effects are considered likely in the implementation of the Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan that would warrant more stringent monitoring over and above that already undertaken by the Council.

Appendix A Regulatory requirements

As discussed in **Chapter 1**, Schedule 2 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans Regulations 2004 (the Regulations) explains the information that must be contained in the Environmental Report. However, interpretation of Schedule 2 is not straightforward. **Table AA.1** overleaf links the structure of this report to an interpretation of Schedule 2 requirements, whilst **Table AA.2** explains this interpretation. Finally, **Table AA.3** identifies how and where within the Environmental Report the regulatory requirements have / will be met.

Table AA.1: Questions answered by this Environmental Report in-line with an interpretation of regulatory requirements

Environmental Report question	In line with the SEA Regulations, the report must include... ¹²
What is the plan seeking to achieve?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An outline of the contents and main objectives of the plan.
What is the sustainability 'context'?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relationship with other relevant plans and programmes. The relevant environmental protection objectives established at international or national level. Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan including those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance.
What's the scope of the SEA?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan. The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected. Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan including those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance.
What is the sustainability 'baseline'?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key problems/issues and objectives that should be a focus of (i.e., provide a 'framework' for) assessment.
What are the key issues and objectives?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outline reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with. The likely significant effects associated with alternatives. Outline reasons for selecting the preferred approach in-light of alternatives appraisal/a description of how environmental objectives and considerations are reflected in the current version of the plan.
What has plan-making / SEA involved up to this point?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The likely significant effects associated with the Regulation 14 version of the plan. The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects of implementing the Regulation 14 version of the plan.
What are the assessment findings at this stage?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The next steps for the plan making /SEA process.
What happens next?	

¹² NB this column does not quote directly from Schedule II of the Regulations. Rather, it reflects a degree of interpretation.

Table AA.2 Questions answered by this Environmental Report, in-line with regulatory requirements

Schedule 2

The report must include...

- (a) an outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan and relationship with other relevant plans and programmes;
- (b) the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan
- (c) the environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected;
- (d) any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan or programme including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance, such as areas designated pursuant to Directives 79/409/EEC and 92/43/EEC;
- (e) the environmental protection objectives, established at international, Community or Member State level, which are relevant to the plan and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation;
- (f) the likely significant effects on the environment including on issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors;
- (g) the measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the plan;
- (h) an outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with and a description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties (such as technical deficiencies or lack of know-how) encountered in compiling the required information
- (i) a description of the measures envisaged concerning monitoring.

Interpretation of Schedule 2

The report must include...

An outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan and relationship with other relevant plans and programmes	i.e. answer - <i>What's the plan seeking to achieve?</i>
Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance The relevant environmental protection objectives, established at international or national level	i.e. answer - <i>What's the 'context'?</i>
The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan' The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance Key environmental problems / issues and objectives that should be a focus of appraisal	i.e. answer - <i>What's the 'baseline'?</i> i.e. answer - <i>What are the key issues & objectives?</i>
An outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with (i.e. an explanation of the 'reasonableness of the approach')	i.e. answer - <i>What has Plan-making / SA involved up to this point?</i> [Part 1 of the Report]
The likely significant effects associated with alternatives, including on issues such as... ... and an outline of the reasons for selecting the preferred approach in light of the alternatives considered / a description of how environmental objectives and considerations are reflected in the draft plan.	i.e. answer - <i>What are the assessment findings at this current stage?</i> [Part 2 of the Report]
The likely significant effects associated with the draft plan The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects of implementing the draft plan	i.e. answer - <i>What happens next?</i> [Part 3 of the Report]
A description of the measures envisaged concerning monitoring	

Table AA.3 ‘Checklist’ of how (throughout the SEA process) and where (within this report) regulatory requirements have been, are and will be met

Regulatory requirement	Discussion of how requirement is met
Schedule 2 of the regulations lists the information to be provided within the SA Report	
1. An outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan or programme, and relationship with other relevant plans and programmes;	Chapter 2 ('What is the plan seeking to achieve') presents this information.
2. The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan or programme;	These matters have been considered in detail through scoping work, which has involved dedicated consultation on a Scoping Report. The ‘SEA framework’ – the outcome of scoping – is presented within Chapter 3 ('What is the scope of the SEA?'). More detailed messages, established through a context and baseline review are also presented in Appendix B of this Environmental Report.
3. The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected;	
4. Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan or programme including those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance, such as areas designated pursuant to Directives 79/409/EEC and 92/43/EEC.;	
5. The environmental protection, objectives, established at international, Community or national level, which are relevant to the plan or programme and the way those objectives and any environmental, considerations have been considered during its preparation;	The SEA framework is presented within Chapter 3 ('What is the scope of the SEA'). Also, Appendix B presents key messages from the context review.
	With regards to explaining “how...considerations have been taken into account”, Chapter 7 explains the Steering Group’s ‘reasons for supporting the preferred approach’, i.e., explains how/ why the preferred approach is justified in light of alternatives appraisal.
6. The likely significant effects on the environment, including on issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors. (Footnote: These effects should include secondary, cumulative, synergistic, short, medium and long-term permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects);	Chapter 6 presents alternatives appraisal findings (in relation to housing growth, which is a ‘stand-out’ plan policy area). Chapters 9 presents an appraisal of the plan. With regards to assessment methodology, Chapter 8 explains the role of the SEA framework/scope, and the need to consider the potential for various effect characteristics/ dimensions, e.g., timescale.
7. The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme;	The assessment highlights certain tensions between competing objectives, which might potentially be actioned by the Examiner, when finalising the plan. Also, specific recommendations are made in Chapter 10.
8. An outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with, and a description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties (such as technical deficiencies or lack of know-how)	Chapters 4 and 5 deal with ‘Reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with’, in that there is an explanation of the reasons for focusing on particular issues and options.

Regulatory requirement	Discussion of how requirement is met
encountered in compiling the required information;	Also, Chapter 7 explains the Parish Council's 'reasons for selecting the preferred option' (in-light of alternatives assessment).
9. Description of measures envisaged concerning monitoring in accordance with Art. 10;	Chapter 11 presents measures envisaged concerning monitoring.
10. A non-technical summary of the information provided under the above headings	The NTS is provided at the beginning of this Environmental Report.

The SA Report must be published alongside the Draft Plan, in accordance with the following regulations

authorities with environmental responsibility and the public, shall be given an early and effective opportunity within appropriate time frames to express their opinion on the Draft Plan or programme and the accompanying environmental report before the adoption of the plan or programme (Art. 6.1, 6.2)

The SA must be considered, alongside consultation response, when finalising the plan.

The environmental report prepared pursuant to Article 5, the opinions expressed pursuant to Article 6 and the results of any transboundary consultations entered into pursuant to Article 7 shall be considered during the preparation of the plan or programme and before its adoption or submission to the legislative procedure.

At the current time, this Environmental Report is published alongside the 'submission' version of the Bentley Neighbourhood Plan, with a view to informing Regulation 16 consultation.

Assessment findings presented within this Environmental Report, and consultation responses received, have been fed back to the Steering Group and have informed plan finalisation.

Appendix B Scoping information – key issues

The following key issues have been identified through the SEA Scoping process, which considers the policy context of the neighbourhood area, baseline and future baseline conditions of the SEA topics, before identifying particular problems or opportunities that should be focused upon.

B.1 Air quality

The effects of air quality on biodiversity and geodiversity will be explored in the related SEA theme. The Great Addington neighbourhood area is not within proximity to an AQMA, given North Northamptonshire has not declared any within its authority boundaries. Additionally, there have been no recorded exceedances of monitored pollutants within North Northamptonshire, and there are no monitoring sites within the neighbourhood area. Given the low level of growth likely to be proposed for the neighbourhood area, it is unlikely that significant impacts on air quality would occur. On this basis, it is proposed that air quality is scoped out of the SEA for the GANP.

B.2 Biodiversity and geodiversity

Air quality and pollution impacts on the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA and Ramsar site are a concern to Natural England and the local planning authority. The GANP could help support the maintenance and enhancement of the designated areas by supporting the mitigation measures outlined in the associated SPD Mitigation Strategy. Much of the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SSSI is within unfavourable condition. Whilst it is noted the designation has experienced improvements, it is possible further development in Great Addington would increase pressure on the site and cause a level of decline. As such, it will be important for the neighbourhood plan to ensure the protection of this designation continues, and opportunities to enhance biodiversity and geodiversity value of the site are engaged with.

BAP Priority Habitat provision in the neighbourhood area is mostly focused on the eastern half – within and in proximity to the existing Great Addington settlement. The eastern part of the neighbourhood area, including the settlement of Great Addington, does fall within Network Enhancement Zones and Network Expansion Zones. This presents a greater opportunity for the neighbourhood plan to secure biodiversity net gains through development.

B.3 Climate change and flood risk

The eastern and western parts of the neighbourhood area, along with the outskirts of Great Addington village centre, are at greater risk of fluvial and surface water flooding. This is linked to the presence of watercourses, including the River Nene. The GANP provides an opportunity to guide potential development away from areas at greater risk of flooding to avoid loss of or damage to property.

The GANP is seeking to allocate sites for development. As such, it is likely CO₂ emissions originating from the area will increase. It will be important for new

development to adopt best building practices to limit the increase in emissions, such as using sustainable materials and incorporating renewable energy infrastructure.

CO₂ emissions associated with transportation remain higher than other sectors in North Northamptonshire. This highlights the importance of accessible development and the delivery of sustainable transport infrastructure. The GANP can seek to address this locally, particularly by strengthening active travel routes and opportunities to increase self-containment.

B.4 Community wellbeing

Given the small level of growth likely through the GANP, new housing development in the neighbourhood area does not have the potential to increase pressure on the existing community infrastructure. It is noted that development through the GANP could encourage new community infrastructure to come forward, which would support new and existing residents.

The Great Addington neighbourhood area experiences high levels of deprivation linked to barriers to housing and services, reflecting the broadly rural nature of the village. New housing in the neighbourhood area will contribute positively towards addressing deprivation in this respect. However, it is recognised that local services are relatively limited, which reflects the size of the Great Addington settlement.

B.5 Historic environment

There are a number of designated heritage features in the neighbourhood area that contribute to the historic character of the village, especially the village core. Any development in close proximity to designated and non-designated assets will need to consider the potential impact on the intrinsic qualities of an asset and its setting. It is also recognised that development presents an opportunity to increase the understanding of and access to assets of local and national importance, and this is likely to be a key consideration for the emerging neighbourhood plan.

By encouraging the understanding of and access to local and national designations within and in proximity to the neighbourhood area, the GANP presents an opportunity to provide a growth strategy that protects the historic character of the area and specific heritage features. The GANP can also help to maintain and enhance the historic environment by ensuring that new development is sensitive to the historic setting of the neighbourhood area in terms of design and layout.

B.6 Land, soil, and water resources

The entire neighbourhood area outside of the Great Addington settlement is considered to be Grade 3 ALC land, though it is not possible to determine whether this Grade 3a 'best and most versatile' land, or Grade 3b. Given that there are no brownfield sites within the neighbourhood area, any development coming forward is likely to be on greenfield land. This will likely have an adverse effect on local land resources. Whilst it is possible this development could occur on Grade 3a land, it is unlikely to lead to a significant level of loss of higher quality agricultural land.

There are a number of water quality designations overlapping with the neighbourhood area. Additionally, the neighbourhood area sits on land identified as an aquifer. Development through the GANP could negatively impact upon these designations through increased levels of pollutants entering the water system –

though this is unlikely to be significant. Additionally, water resource management is undertaken by Anglian Water and its associated WRMP19, which will likely set out management and mitigation techniques to protect and enhance water quality.

Given the neighbourhood area is within a mineral safeguarding zone, consultation with Northamptonshire County Council will likely need to occur before development can be brought forward. It will be important for development to be focused away from any important areas within this safeguarding zone in the neighbourhood area boundary.

B.7 Landscape

There are a number of TPOs in the neighbourhood area, mostly located along Ringstead Road, Woodford Road, and Lower Street. TPOs contribute to the landscape and street scene by supporting views and bringing a level of beauty / detail. Notably these TPOs likely contribute to the setting of the gateways into and out of the Great Addington settlement, and any new development will need to be considerate of these features.

It will be important for the GANP to protect the local landscape, including its coherence and characteristics. This will bring benefits to other SEA themes, including biodiversity and climate change, by maintaining features which support wildlife and natural processes, such as gardens and areas of higher concentrations of trees.

It is recognised the Northamptonshire Current Landscape Character Assessment has not been updated since 2010. This is considered to be a gap in the baseline evidence; however, it is recognised that landscape changes over time are incremental.

B.8 Transportation and movement

Sustainable travel in the neighbourhood area is limited, as there are no bus or rail services. As such any new homes proposed through the GANP will likely lead to a further reliance on the private vehicle. This has the potential to lead to increased congestion (either in new areas or adding to existing areas) – however, this is not likely to be significant given the level of growth proposed.

The GANP presents an opportunity to support improvements / upgrades to sustainable forms of travel within the neighbourhood area.

Appendix C – Environment Agency Response

Our ref: AN/2022/133336/OR03/IS1-L01

Your ref:

Date: 23 April 2024

Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan – SEA Scoping Report consultation.

I refer to your consultation dated 28 March 2024 in relation to the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) screening report for the Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan.

We aim to reduce flood risk, while protecting and enhancing the water environment. Our comments on this matter are therefore made solely from these points of view.

Environment Agency position.

We note consultees are invited to comment on the need for SEA, as well as the content of this Scoping Report and, in particular, the evidence base for the SEA, the identified key issues and the proposed SEA framework.

It is noted that part of the area covered by the Neighbourhood Plan includes part of the

Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Ramsar site, the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special

Protection Area (SPA) and the Upper Nene Gravel Pits Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). As you will be aware, these are nationally important designations from a nature conservation point of view. There are also locally important sites in the vicinity. Any development in the area concerned should take into consideration the potential risk to them all. All the watercourses passing through Great Addington eventually discharge into these sensitive receptors. As nationally important sites are involved, whether or not this matter needs to be subject to SEA will depend greatly on the views received from Natural England in relation to the impact of the Neighbourhood Plan on these designations.

Without prejudice to any views Natural England may have, we welcome the reference in Section 4.12 to achieving biodiversity and environmental net gains. In addition, we have views on the following topics which we should be grateful if you could take into account in progressing this matter:

Environment Agency
Nene House (Pytchley Lodge Industrial Estate) Pytchley Lodge Road, Kettering, Northamptonshire, NN15 6JQ.

Customer services line: 03708 506 506
www.gov.uk/environment-agency

Cont/d..

Flood risk

The commentary on flood risk in Sections 5.4 and 5.7 is correct in that parts of the Parish are within flood zone 3.

The watercourse flowing through the village is not main river and the modelling for this watercourse was produced based on national scale generalised modelling and not from local scale detailed modelling. We are therefore unable to provide detailed information such as flood levels. The national scale generalised modelling covers all watercourses with a catchment greater than 3km². It also includes dry valleys so the flood map may show a flood extent where there is no watercourse. This flood mapping information is currently being updated and due to be published later in 2024/2025 in line with the new national model.

The modelling produced for the Middle Nene covering the main river in this area shows that the adjacent fields are within flood zone 3b the functional floodplain. This zone comprises land where water from rivers or the sea has to flow or be stored in times of flood.

We support the aim to steer development away from areas of the Parish at greater risk of flooding.

Groundwater and contaminated land

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) paragraph 180 states that the planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by preventing both new and existing development from contributing to or being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of water pollution. Government policy also states that planning policies and decisions should also ensure that adequate site investigation information, prepared by a competent person, is presented (NPPF, paragraph 189).

We recommend that the following is considered for adding in Section 8.1 of your document:

The Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan area mainly lies over geology classified as principal and secondary A aquifers. The principal aquifers can support water supply and river base flow on a strategic scale, whereas secondary A can support local abstractions and baseflow to streams and rivers. The use (or potential use) of groundwater in the area makes parts of the area vulnerable to pollution from certain types of development. Best practice to ensure groundwater is protected from pollution and as a resource is contained within guidance document 'The Environment Agency's approach to groundwater protection' available at www.gov.uk. This publication sets out our position for a wide range of activities and developments, including:

- Waste management
- Discharge of liquid effluents
- Land contamination
- Ground source heat pumps
- Cemetery developments
- Drainage

We also recommend inserting within Section 8.1

Land affected by contamination may pose risk to human health, groundwater, surface waters and the wider environment. We recommend that developers should:

- Follow the risk management framework provided in [Land Contamination: Risk Management](#), when dealing with land affected by contamination
- Refer to our [Guiding principles for land contamination](#) for the type of information that we require in order to assess risks to controlled waters from the site - the local authority can advise on risk to other receptors, such as human health
- Consider using the [National Quality Mark Scheme for Land Contamination Management](#) which involves the use of competent persons to ensure that land contamination risks are appropriately managed
- Refer to the [contaminated land](#) pages on gov.uk for more information

The majority of the Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan area is predominantly greenfield. However, any brownfield site should be investigated in accord with the above guidance. There is one historic landfill is located within the area covered by the Plan (Home Farm - active until 1984 with inert waste deposited). It is worth identifying in the Great Addington Neighbourhood Plan so any risk posed can be appropriate managed.

Water quality, foul drainage and water efficiency

We note there are seven references to 'water quality' in the document, but no reference to 'sewage'. This is a significant omission. It is suggested that Anglian Water needs to be consulted about whether there are any Water Recycling Centre capacity issues in terms of serving new development in the Neighbourhood Plan area and the situation with this needs to be referred to in the document. Related to this, we welcome the reference in Section 8.11 to maximising water efficiency. This will help reduce the amount of foul drainage from developments within the Neighbourhood Plan area and lessen any pressure on Water Recycling Centres.

Waste material

We also have the following general advice relating to waste materials for developers which you may wish to include as an Appendix to the Plan:

Advice from the Environment Agency about waste materials

Permitting requirements

Developers are advised to find out more information about the permit application process online and to send a pre-application enquiry form via the gov.uk website if needed: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/environmental-permit-preapplication-advice-form>

In circumstances where an activity/operation meets certain criteria, an exemption from permitting may apply. More information on exempt activities can be found here: [Register, renew or change waste exemptions - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/register-renew-or-change-waste-exemptions)

Movement of waste off-site – Duty of Care & Carriers, Brokers and Dealers Regulations

The Environmental Protection (Duty of Care) Regulations 1991 for dealing with waste materials are applicable to any off-site movements of wastes.

The code of practice applies to you if you produce, carry, keep, dispose of, treat, import or have control of waste in England or Wales.

The law requires anyone dealing with waste to keep it safe and make sure it is dealt with responsibly and only given to businesses authorised to take it. The code of practice can be found here: [Waste duty of care: code of practice \(accessible version\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/waste-duty-of-care-code-of-practice)

If you need to register as a carrier of waste, please follow the instructions here: [Register or renew as a waste carrier, broker or dealer - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/register-or-renew-as-a-waste-carrier-broker-or-dealer)

Movement of waste off-site – Duty of Care & Carriers, Brokers and Dealers Regulations Characterisation and Classification of Waste

In order to meet the applicant's objectives for the waste hierarchy and obligations under the duty of care, it is important that waste is properly classified. Some waste (e.g. wood and wood-based products) may be either a hazardous or non-hazardous waste dependent upon whether or not they have had preservative treatments.

Proper classification of the waste both ensures compliance and enables the correct onward handling and treatment to be applied. In the case of treated wood, it may require high temperature incineration in a directive compliant facility.

Waste Hierarchy

The developer must apply the waste hierarchy as a priority order of prevention, re-use, recycling before considering other recovery or disposal options. Government guidance on the waste hierarchy in England can be found here:

[Waste hierarchy guidance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/waste-hierarchy-guidance)

Management and Reporting Systems

Where a development involves any significant construction or related activities, we would recommend using a management and reporting system to minimise and track the fate of construction wastes, such as that set out in PAS402: 2013, or an appropriate equivalent assurance methodology. This should ensure that any waste

contractors employed are suitably responsible in ensuring waste only goes to legitimate destinations.

Further links which may be of use:

[Pollution prevention for businesses - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/pollution-prevention-for-businesses)

Use of waste on-site

If materials that are potentially waste are to be used on-site, the applicant will need to ensure they can comply with the exclusion from the Waste Framework Directive (WFD)

(article 2(1) (c)) for the use of, 'uncontaminated soil and other naturally occurring material excavated in the course of construction activities, etc...' in order for the material not to be considered as waste. Meeting these criteria will mean waste permitting requirements do not apply.

Where the applicant cannot meet the criteria, they will be required to obtain the appropriate waste permit or exemption from us.

A deposit of waste to land will either be a disposal or a recovery activity. The legal test for recovery is set out in Article 3(15) of WFD as:

- any operation the principal result of which is waste serving a useful purpose by replacing other materials which would otherwise have been used to fulfil a particular function, or waste being prepared to fulfil that function, in the plant or in the wider economy
- We have produced guidance on the recovery test which can be viewed at [Waste recovery plans and deposit for recovery permits - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/waste-recovery-plans-and-deposit-for-recovery-permits)

You can find more information on the Waste Framework Directive here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/environmental-permitting-guidance-the-waste-framework-directive>

More information on the use of waste in exempt activities can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/waste-exemptions-using-waste>

Non-waste activities are not regulated by us (i.e. activities carried out under the CL:ARE Code of Practice), however you will need to decide if materials meet End of Waste or By-products criteria (as defined by the Waste Framework Directive).

Should you require any additional information, or wish to discuss these matters further, please do not hesitate to contact me on the number below.

Yours sincerely

Mr Wayne Cattell Planning Advisor

Direct dial 07876001706

Direct e-mail wayne.cattell@environment-agency.gov.uk

