



East Cambridgeshire
District Council

Habitats Regulation Assessment Methodology and Screening Document

Proposed Submission Local Plan

November 2017

(Update of the January 2017 Screening Report)

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Abbreviations

AA	Appropriate Assessment
AW	Anglian Water
CAMS	Catchment Abstraction Management Strategy
CFMP	Catchment Flood Management Plan
ha	Hectare
HRA	Habitats Regulation Assessment
km	Kilometres
M	Metres
NE	Natural England
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
PSA	Public Service Agreement
RBMP	River Basin Management Plan
RSPB	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
SAC	Special Areas of Conservation
SPA	Special Protection Areas
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
SuDS	Sustainable Drainage System
WCS	Water Cycle Study
WRC	Water Recycling Centre

Executive Summary

This report presents the methodology, findings conclusions of the Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) for the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan. It updates the HRA Report published in January 2017.

The purpose of a Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) is to assess the impacts of a plan or project, alone or in combination with other plans or projects, against the conservation objectives of relevant Natura 2000 and Ramsar sites, to determine whether it would adversely affect the integrity of these sites.

The following Natura 2000 sites were scoped into this HRA for consideration:

- Fenland SAC (including Wicken Fen, Woodwalton Fen and Chippenham Fen Ramsars)
- Ouse Washes SAC/SPA/Ramsar
- Devil's Dyke SAC
- Breckland SAC/SPA

The potential significant effects identified during the HRA screening were:

- Habitat damage and/or loss
- Disturbance from urbanisation effects (for example, predation by cats)
- Disturbance from increased recreational pressure
- Reduced air quality as a result of increased vehicle journeys
- Water quality changes from water consumption and abstraction
- Reduced water quality from pollution due to increased demand for waste water treatment

The policies in the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan have undergone HRA screening. The HRA screening process has considered the potential for likely significant effects on Natura and Ramsar sites listed above from all the policies and allocations in the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan.

The findings of the re-screening of the Further Draft version of the Local Plan recommended avoidance and mitigation measures for resolving adverse effects for identified impacts of the Plan.

The HRA of the Proposed Submission Local Plan has undertaken a screening assessment of the policies and site allocations within the Plan. A number of policies could not be ruled out for potential likely significant effects and so these were considered in more detail, including in-combination with other policies in the Plan and with other plans and projects. Following further consideration, this HRA has screened out all elements of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan and therefore it can be concluded that the Plan would not be likely to have a significant negative effect on a Natura 2000 or Ramsar site alone, or in combination with other plans or projects. It is therefore recommended that further HRA work is not required.

Natural England will be consulted on this screening recommendation prior to the submission of the Local Plan to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government.

1. Introduction

1.1 East Cambridgeshire District Council is currently preparing a new Local Plan for the district to replace the adopted Local Plan (April, 2015). The Local Plan will set out a vision, objectives and policies to guide the sustainable growth and development of the district over the plan period 2016-2036.

1.2 This report forms Stage 1 (Screening) of the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) for the emerging East Cambridgeshire Local Plan. It sets out the methodology, results and conclusions of the HRA screening, to determine whether the Local Plan, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects, is likely to have a significant adverse effect on a Natura 2000 site, and thus whether full Appropriate Assessment (AA) (Stage 2 of HRA) is required.

1.3 The document has been prepared by East Cambridgeshire District Council as the relevant competent authority. This is the second version of the HRA Screening Report, (the first was published in January 2017 alongside the Further Draft version of the Local Plan) and has been updated as the Local Plan continues to progress towards adoption. It has been prepared to sit alongside and inform consultation on the Proposed Submission version of the Local Plan, November 2017. The council has also prepared a Sustainability Appraisal (incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment) and this work has been undertaken alongside the HRA, with the two assessments informing each other where appropriate.

Background to the Local Plan

1.4 A Local Plan was adopted by the Council in April 2015. This set the framework for significant growth across the district, especially at Soham, Littleport and Ely. The Council is now preparing a new Local Plan, which will replace the 2015 Plan on adoption (currently scheduled for September 2018).

1.5 The new Local Plan will set out the strategy for sustainable development in the whole of East Cambridgeshire to 2036, and will contain several key elements:

- An overall **spatial vision** setting out how the district is likely to change up to 2036
- A set of **spatial objectives** setting out the main policy directions that need to be pursued if the vision is achieved
- A series of **strategic and development management policies** to guide the assessment of planning applications
- Individual **chapters for each settlement** within the district
- A series of **site-specific policies** to guide the assessment of planning applications for particular sites
- The accompanying Sustainability Appraisal includes **monitoring indicators and targets** for implementation of the Local Plan.

1.6 The Plan broadly follows the approach of the 2015 Local Plan, focussing growth in the district's market towns of Ely, Littleport and Soham. The first stage in the preparation of the new Plan was the Preliminary Draft Plan stage, which was subject to public consultation between 12 February and 24 March 2016. At this stage, the Plan set out draft figures for housing and jobs growth and did not identify any sites to be allocated to meet housing or employment need.

1.7 Following the close of the consultation, the Local Plan was revised in light of the comments received, new evidence and any changes to national policy and guidance. This revised draft, the Further Draft Local Plan, was subject to public consultation between 12 January and 22 February 2017. It proposed the delivery of 11,400 new homes as well as 6,900 new jobs, between 2014 and 2036. It identified preferred sites which could be allocated meet these needs.

1.8 Following the consultation on the Further Draft Local Plan, the Plan was again revised in light of the comments received, new evidence and any changes to national policy and guidance. The Proposed Submission Local Plan revises the new homes target down to 10,835 new homes, allocates sites for around 10,490 new homes (some with existing planning permission) and assumes 850 new dwellings will come forward as windfall. It sets out a target of 6,000 new jobs between 2014 and 2036, which is also a lower figure than set out in the Further Draft version of the Plan. The Plan allocates 150ha of employment land to meet forecast jobs needs.

1.9 For further details regarding the Local Plan timetable, please visit the Local Development Scheme live update page of the council's website¹.

Key components of the emerging East Cambridgeshire Local Plan

1.10 The following section describes the emerging proposals within the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan, which will subsequently be considered against the key vulnerabilities of the N2K sites identified in **Table 8, Section 3** of this report.

1.11 The main policy elements contained in the Local Plan are summarised in **Table 1**. Following the strategic and development control policies, there are 48 settlement chapters that provide a section for each settlement, setting out policies relevant and specific to that place, as well as site allocations for housing, employment, mixed use and Local Green Spaces.

Table 1: Summary of strategic and development control policies (Proposed Submission Stage)

Local Plan Ref	Policy	Summary
Chapters 1 & 2	Vision Strategic objectives	The Plan sets out 22 overall objectives and a vision for how East Cambridgeshire up to 2036.
Chapter 3	LP1: A Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development	A policy which promotes, in principle, sustainable development in the district.
	LP2: Level and Distribution of Growth	A policy which sets out the total quantum of growth in dwellings and jobs, for the period 2014-36. Also states that growth will be main town led, but also broadly distributed across the district.
	LP3: The Settlement Hierarchy and the Countryside	A policy setting out the settlement hierarchy, how this applies to allocations and the application of development boundaries to the settlements in the hierarchy.
	LP4: Green Belt	A policy which seeks to protect those parts of the Cambridge green belt within the district.
Chapter 4	LP5: Community-led development	A policy setting out the criteria to be met for a development proposal to be considered a community-led development.
	LP6: Meeting	A policy setting out the requirements for affordable housing,

¹ <https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/local-development-framework/monitoring-and-local-development-scheme>

Local Plan Ref	Policy	Summary
	Local Housing Needs	Higher Access Standards, self-build homes, residential care accommodation and Park Homes.
	LP7: Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople sites	A policy making provision for allocated and non-allocated sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.
	LP8: Delivering Prosperity and Jobs	A policy making provision for employment allocations. Also sets out criteria against which non-allocated sites will be considered.
	LP9: Equine Development	A policy to ensure that equine development is appropriate in scale and setting for its location.
	LP10: Development Affecting the Horse Racing Industry	A policy ensuring that development does not have an adverse impact upon the horseracing industry.
	LP11: Tourist Facilities and Visitor Attractions	A policy that supports viable tourism development of appropriate scale/ design in appropriate locations.
	LP12: Tourist Accommodation (excluding holiday cottages)	A policy to support appropriate and viable new or extended tourism accommodation.
	LP13: Holiday Cottage Accommodation	A policy supporting accommodation that is well related to existing settlements, or re-uses existing buildings in the open countryside.
	LP14: Retail and Other Main Town Centre Uses	A policy defining town centres and identifying appropriate development for within and outside these areas.
	LP15: Retail Uses in Town Centres	A policy protecting the retail function of town centres. Also setting out the criteria any changes from A1 retail use will be considered against.
Chapter 5	LP16: Infrastructure to Support Growth	A policy setting out the need to provide infrastructure to support growth, either in support of new development or as development in its own right.
	LP17: Creating a Sustainable, Efficient and Resilient Transport Network	A policy setting out the requirements for new development in relation to the transport network.
	LP18: Improving Cycle Provision	A policy to ensure that accessibility to key destinations by bicycle is safe. Also, setting out how this will be achieved.
	LP19: Maintaining and Improving Community Facilities	A policy seeking to protect existing facilities, and also encourage appropriate new stand-alone facilities, or facilities as part of wider development proposals.
	LP20: Delivering Green Infrastructure, Trees and Woodland	A policy to secure new green infrastructure, either alongside new development, or in its own right.

Local Plan Ref	Policy	Summary
	LP21: Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities	A policy to ensure that new outdoor open space, sport and recreational provision is provided at an appropriate scale and location. Also to identify/ confirm that new indoor provision will be provided through the CIL process, and also seeking to protect existing areas of provision.
Chapter 6	LP22: Achieving Design Excellence	A policy setting out the standards for design of new development.
	LP23: Water Efficiency	A policy which requires new development to achieve the optional Technical Housing standard for water-efficiency.
	LP24: Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Development	A policy setting out the standards and expectations of development in relation to renewable and low carbon energy development.
	LP25: Managing Water Resources and Flood Risk	A policy seeking to ensure that new development does not increase the risk of flooding, and also seeking to protect the water environment.
	LP26: Pollution and Land Contamination	A policy seeking to minimise, and where possible reduce pollution and land contamination.
	LP27: Conserving and Enhancing Heritage Assets	A policy seeking to conserve and enhance heritage assets and their settings within the district.
	LP28: Landscape, Treescape and Built Environment Character, including Cathedral Views	A policy to ensure that development is sympathetic to the character area in which it is located, and also to ensure that views of Ely Cathedral are protected.
	LP29: Conserving Local Green Spaces	A policy making provision for Local Green Space allocations and seeking to protect them from development.
	LP30: Conserving and Enhancing Biodiversity and Geodiversity	A policy seeking to conserve and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity within the district.
	LP31: Development in the Countryside	A policy supporting a range of developments in the countryside only in exceptional cases.
	LP32: Infill Development in Locations Outside of Development Envelopes	A policy with strict criteria supporting infill development in select areas of the district, outside of development boundaries.
	LP33: Residential Annexes	A policy that seeks to ensure that any residential annexe development is solely provided as ancillary to the original dwelling and not as a new dwelling.

Report Purpose and Overview

1.12 This report sets out the methodology, results and conclusions of the HRA Screening for the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan, Proposed Submission (November, 2017). The report is structured into the following sections:

- **Section 2** provides an overview of HRA, relevant guidance and key stages in the assessment process;
- **Section 3** sets out the methodology for the screening process , including those N2K sites that may be adversely affected, their key vulnerabilities and potential impacts arising from the Local Plan;
- **Section 4** summarises the results of the HRA screening;
- **Section 5** considers the Local Plan policies and site allocations in combination with each other and with other plans and projects;
- **Section 6** presents the conclusions and the consultation process with Natural England;
- **Section 7** sets out the next steps.

2. Habitats Regulation Assessment: Legislation and Requirements

2.1 The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended) (the Habitat Regulations) require HRA to be applied to all statutory land use plans in England and Wales. Therefore, in accordance with these Regulations, Local Planning Authorities must demonstrate that the implementation of a Local Plan would not adversely affect the integrity of Natura 2000 sites within or outside of the plan area, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects. This is known as a 'Habitats Regulation Assessment' (HRA).

2.2 The Habitats Regulations transpose the requirements of the European Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna (the Habitats Directive). European Sites or Natura 2000 sites is a Europe-wide network of sites of international importance for nature conservation established under the Habitats Directive. The network comprises Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs). SPAs are designated under the European Directive 79/409/EEC 'on the Conservation of Wild Birds' (the Birds Directive) for the protection of wild birds and their habitats (including particularly rare and vulnerable species listed in Annex 1 of the Birds Directive, and migratory species). SACs are designated under the Habitats Directive and target particular habitats (Annex 1) and/or species (Annex II) identified as being of European importance.

2.3 The Government also expects candidate SACs (cSACs), potential SPAs (pSPAs), and Ramsar sites to be included within the HRA². Ramsar sites support internationally important wetland habitats and are listed under the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat (Ramsar Convention, 1971).

2.4 This report treats all sites named above as being of equal status for the purpose of this HRA report. In subsequent sections of this report, the terms 'Natura 2000' and 'N2K' are used to refer to this collection of sites.

HRA Guidance and Best Practice

2.5 The Habitat Regulations do not prescribe a particular methodology for carrying out the HRA of Local Plans. The HRA Screening of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan has been carried out in accordance with current available guidance, which includes draft HRA guidance published by the Government: 'Planning for the Protection of European Sites: Appropriate Assessment (DCLG, 2006) and more recently, Scottish Natural Heritage guidance on HRA of Plans: 'Habitats Regulation Appraisal of Plans Guidance for Plan Making Bodies in Scotland' (David Tyldesley and Associates for Scottish Natural Heritage, August 2010 and updated January 2015). Although the later guidance is for Scottish plan making bodies, the council considers that the general principles and approaches set out in this guidance are transferable and can be applied to HRA in England, subject to minor revisions.

Main Stages of HRA

2.6 The DCLG guidance recommends the HRA process is divided into the following key stages:

Stage 1 – Screening for likely significant effects

2.7 The process identifies whether a plan, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects, is likely to have a significant impact on a Natura 2000 site. European Commission (2001) guidance recommends that the screening stage should comprise the following elements:

- Determining whether the plan is directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site – if it is then no further assessment is necessary

² NPPF (March 2012, para 118

- Describing the plan and other plans and projects that, ‘in combination’, have the potential to have significant effects on a Natura 2000 site
- Identifying the potential effects on the site
- Assessing the significance of any effects

2.8 If the screening stage concludes that there are likely to be no significant impacts on European sites then there will be no need to progress to Stage 2 – Appropriate Assessment.

Stage 2 - Appropriate Assessment (AA)

2.9 This is only required when the screening process determines that the plan is likely to have a significant effect on a Natura 2000 site. An AA assesses the impacts of the proposed plan/policies against the conservation objectives of the relevant Natura 2000 sites. Should the AA identify significant negative effects, alternative plan options should be examined to avoid any potential damaging effects: the plan may only be adopted under such circumstances if there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest.

Stage 3 – Mitigation Measures and Assessment of Alternative Solutions

2.10 The process which examines alternative ways of achieving the objectives of the project or plan that avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of Natura 2000 sites. Includes development of mitigation measures, including timescales and mechanisms for delivery.

2.11 If significant negative effects remain, a plan or project may only be adopted under such circumstances if there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest, where it is deemed that the plan or project should proceed.

2.12 The key stages and specific tasks undertaken for the HRA of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan are set out in **Appendix 1** and **Table 2, Section 3** of this report.

Precautionary Principle

2.13 The stages described above must be undertaken with the rigorous application of the precautionary principle. This requires those undertaking the exercise to be confident that the plan will not have a significant impact on relevant conservation objectives. Where uncertainty or doubt remains, an adverse impact should be assumed.

The Precautionary Principle

Prudent action that avoids the possibility of irreversible environmental damage in situations where the scientific evidence is inconclusive but the potential damage could be significant.

Consultation with Natural England

2.14 Natural England is the statutory nature conservation body who will assist in obtaining the necessary information, help agree the process, and work with the competent authority on agreeing the outcomes and mitigation proposals. Plan-making authorities are required to consult the appropriate nature conservation body regarding the assessment ‘*within such reasonable time as the plan-making authority may specify*’.

2.15 The council has worked closely with Natural England for many years, in relation to HRA Screening Reports associated with previous Local Plans, including the most recent Local Plan adopted in April 2015. That Local Plan, it was agreed by Natural England, did not need to progress to Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment. However, the new emerging Local Plan covers a different time period, and is proposing differing growth patterns and some new site allocations. As such, a new HRA Screening Report needs to be prepared, which is what this document is.

2.16 This Screening Report will be sent to Natural England in November 2017 for its comments, but it will also be available on our website during the consultation period on the Local Plan. As such, views on this Report are welcome from anybody.

3. Screening Methodology

3.1 The first step is to decide whether a Plan should be subject to HRA. This will depend on the type of plan or project and on its potential effects on a Natura 2000 site. The first question in making the decision is, 'is the whole of the plan directly connected with or necessary to the management of a Natura 2000 site for nature conservation purposes?'. The East Cambridgeshire Local Plan is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of a Natura 2000 site for nature conservation purposes.

3.2 Therefore the next question to ask is whether the plan would be likely to have a significant effect on a Natura 2000 site or European Offshore Marine Site, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects (after screening, potential mitigation and re-screening)? It is necessary for the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan to be subject to HRA screening to answer this question.

3.3 The following tasks are involved in the screening process. This Screening Report takes each of those tasks in turn, and explains briefly the methodology undertaken in each case. Tasks 6 to 7 have been added to the process for the Proposed Submission stage, in recognition that it is possible to apply mitigation measures through revised Local Plan policies to address likely significant effects.

Stages in HRA Screening Process

3.4 The HRA screening process is summarised in **Table 2** below and detailed in **Appendix 1**. The HRA process is iterative and has been revisited as the Local Plan has developed.

Table 2: HRA screening key stages

Stages	Habitats Regulation Assessment
Stage 1. Screening for likely significant effects	Task 1 - Identify Natura 2000 sites in and around the Plan area that should be considered in the assessment.
	Task 2 – Gather information on the N2K sites, including the vulnerabilities of their qualifying features, conservation objectives and condition of site. Identify the changes to environmental conditions that may occur as a result of implementing the Plan.
	Task 3 - Identify key components of the emerging East Cambridgeshire Local Plan, including the plan objectives and policies.
	Task 4 – Determine, through a screening exercise, all aspects of the Plan which would have not effect on a Natura 2000 site and those aspects where it is not possible to rule out the risk of significant effects, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.
	Task 5 - Consider whether other plans or projects, in conjunction with the Local Plan, would have the potential for adverse effects on the qualifying features of identified sites.
	Task 6 – If following Task 5, significant effects remain likely, identify and apply mitigation measures to avoid potential effects.
	Task 7 – Re screen the Plan after mitigation measures have been applied.
	Task 8 - Conclude whether there are likely significant effects. If there are no likely significant effects, consult Natural England on the screening recommendation that the further AA stages of the HRA are not necessary;

Task 9 – If, after Task 7 , significant effects are judged likely or uncertainty exists, or Natural England disagrees with the screening recommendation that an AA is not necessary proceed to Stage 2 AA .
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A Likely Significant Effect

3.5 A significant effect is one that could undermine the conservation objectives of a Natura 2000 site. The likelihood of it occurring should adopt the precautionary principle, taking into account the ecological circumstances of the site. A likely effect is one that cannot be ruled out on the basis of objective information.³

Mitigation Provided by the Local Plan

3.6 It may be possible for some or all of the potential effects of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan to be mitigated through the implementation of other policies in the Local Plan itself. For example, the provision of green infrastructure within new housing development may help to mitigate increased recreational pressure on a N2K site.

3.7 Mitigation measures can be built into the screening process where there is potential for a policy or policies in the Plan to have a significant effect on a N2K site and these effects can be avoided or reduced by straightforward modifications to the Plan. These mitigation measures may include:

- Deletion of policy wording or a proposal to eliminate all potential effects of the Plan on the N2K site;
- Reduction measures to reduce the potential effects of the Plan on the N2K site, such as a reduction in the scale of a proposal;
- Relocation or alteration of the spatial distribution of a proposal;
- Changes to the phasing or timing of a proposal, so that its potential effects can be managed over time;
- Requiring a proposal to be dependent on key infrastructure provision, such as waste water treatment being in place before it can proceed;
- Requiring buffer zones to be put in place to protect a site from potential significant effects.

3.8 Mitigation measures will be applied to policies and proposals in the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan with likely significant effects alone, or within plan in combination effects, or with in combination effects with other plans or projects, to try and reach a stage where all policies and proposals in the Plan have no individual or cumulative effects following mitigation. Where policies and proposals still have likely significant effects on re-screening the Plan, these will have to be taken forward to an AA.

Screening assumptions regarding likely significant effects

3.9 During the screening stage the following assumptions were used when reaching a conclusion about the likely significant effects of a policy or site allocation.

Physical loss and/or damage of habitat

3.10 In relation to onsite damage and/or loss of habitat, any development resulting from the policies and site allocations in the Local Plan would only take place within the administrative boundary of East Cambridgeshire; therefore only N2K sites within the district boundary could potentially be affected as a result of physical loss or damage of habitat.

³ <http://www.snh.gov.uk/docs/A1500925.pdf>

3.11 Such effects needed to be considered for:

- Fenland SAC (Wicken Fen and Chippenham Fen) but not Woodwalton Fen which is in Huntingdonshire district, and around 15km from the East Cambs district border.
- Devil's Dyke SAC
- Ouse Washes SAC

3.12 In relation offsite loss and/or damage, where this takes place outside the boundaries of a N2K site, it could still have an impact on the integrity of that site, if the habitat supports qualifying species from within the site, such as habitat used for foraging or roosting by birds or bats.

3.13 In East Cambridgeshire, surrounding agricultural land could be used by migratory (wintering) birds areas for rest and grazing outside of the Ouse Washes SAC during the winter season. The surrounding land of the Breckland SAC/SPA is used by stone curlew for nesting.

3.14 Likely significant effects relating to offsite habitat loss/damage are most relevant for:

- Ouse Washes SAC
- Breckland SAC/SPA

Disturbance

Urbanisation

3.15 Key impacts of urbanisation include fly tipping of garden waste, litter, increased risk of fire and cat predation, (impacts from trampling, eutrophication (dog fouling) and habitat damage are covered under recreational pressure). Proximity to urban centres and high population pressure means these impacts are all exacerbated and as a result, particular management measures are often required. Urbanisation effects tend to occur over short distances.

3.16 The HRA for the Breckland Local Plan⁴ summarised the key issues for the SPA as predation from cats and increased fire risk. The key issues for the SAC included fly tipping, introduction and spread of alien plants and increased fire risk. A buffer zone of 400m from the boundary of the relevant N2K site was used and any sites within 400m were removed from the plan. This distance has been used in other areas, for example the Thames Basin, with under 400m being a distance at which the urbanisation impacts of built development cannot be mitigated for. Development beyond 400m may still have urban effects, but may be able to proceed with mitigation. This distance has therefore been applied in the screening of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan.

Recreational pressure

3.17 It could be assumed that N2K Sites that are within easy walking distance of a residential site allocation are likely to be visited more regularly than those that are not, however, HRAs of other Local Plans have considered this issue and research has demonstrated that the majority of visitors to such sites are by car. A visitor assessment of the Thames Basin Heaths SPA⁵ determined that the majority of visitors travel by car and 94% of visitor postcodes fell within a 5km radius of the SPA boundary. A visitor study undertaken by Footprint Ecology in 2011⁶, found that the median distance

⁴ [file:///H:/Downloads/Breckland Local Plan Publication HRA_090817.pdf](file:///H:/Downloads/Breckland%20Local%20Plan%20Publication%20HRA%20090817.pdf)

⁵ Fearnley, H. and Liley, D. 2013. Results of the 2012/13 visitor survey on the Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA). Natural England Commissioned Reports

⁶ Fearnley, H., Liley, D. and Cruickshanks, K. (2010). Visitor survey from results Breckland SPA. Footprint Ecology.

among visitors to Breckland SPA was 8.81km.

3.18 Natural England have advised East Cambridgeshire District Council that any development within 8km of N2K sites should be taken into consideration as part of this HRA. Therefore, 8km is considered an appropriate distance inside which recreational pressure impacts could require mitigation measures. The nature of the proposed development will be taken into account in relation to this impact. For example, employment sites are less likely to result in increased recreation pressure than residential sites, as the employees will be in work within the employment site for the majority of their time spent there. Therefore site allocations with no housing element have been assumed to not give rise to increased recreational pressure.

3.19 Recreational pressure can impact on N2K sites both within and outside the district, given that the majority of visitors to such sites are by car and the distances people are prepared to travel. This could lead to potential in-combination effects with development in neighbouring administrative areas.

3.20 Likely significant effects relating to recreational pressure are relevant to:

- Wicken Fen SAC
- Chippenham Fen SAC
- Ouse Washes SAC
- Devil's Dyke SAC
- Breckland SAC

Air quality

3.21 There is potential for increased atmospheric pollution arising from air pollutants associated with increased vehicle journeys from residents, businesses and construction traffic associated with new housing and employment development, to access employment, services and facilities.

3.22 Air pollution is most likely to affect N2K sites where plant, soil and water habitats are qualifying features. Deposition of pollutants to the ground and vegetation can alter the characteristics of the soil, affecting PH and nitrogen levels.

3.23 According to 'The Highways Agency Design Manual for Roads and Bridges, Section 3, Part 1'⁷, in terms of nitrogen deposition from traffic emissions, only increased in Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) of 1000 AADT or more are considered significant. Additionally, it is widely accepted that air pollution from roads is unlikely to be significant beyond 200m from the road itself (**Figure 1**). In most cases, only traffic on major roads (e.g. 'A' roads) is considered sufficient to affect air quality at a level significant to habitats. 200m is therefore the distance that has been used in this HRA to determine whether N2K sites are likely to be significantly affected by the Local Plan in terms of reduced air quality from atmospheric pollution.

⁷ <http://www.standardsforhighways.co.uk/ha/standards/dmrb/vol11/section3/ha20707.pdf>

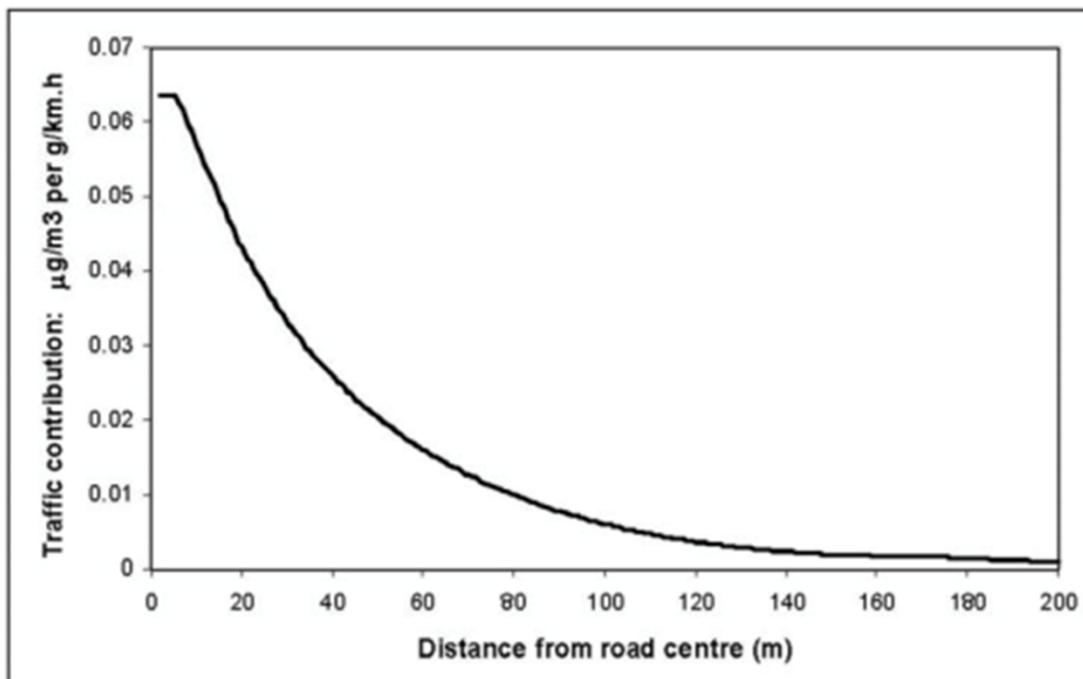


Figure 1: Traffic Contribution to Pollutant Concentration at Different Distances from the Road Centre (DfT)⁸

3.24 Two of the N2K sites screened into this HRA have qualifying features potentially vulnerable to atmospheric pollution.

3.25 In terms of the Breckland SAC, those features potentially affected by atmospheric pollution include; Stone Curlew, Woodlark, open grassland with grey-hair grass and common bent grass of inland dunes, European dry heaths and, dry grasslands and scrublands on chalk or limestone (important orchid sites). Given the location of the site in relation to the preferred site allocations in the Local Plan (5km plus) and the position of the major transport routes in East Cambridgeshire, it is assumed that any major roads within 200m of Breckland are unlikely to be used by residents of the Plan area for commuting, accessing services or facilities.

3.26 For Devil's Dyke SAC, those features potentially affected are dry grasslands and scrublands on chalk or limestone (important orchid sites). The Site Improvement Plan for Devil's Dyke states air pollution is a key issue: "*nitrogen deposition exceeds the site-relevant critical load for ecosystem protection and hence there is a risk of harmful effects, but the sensitive features are currently considered to be in favourable condition on the site. This requires further investigation*". Devil's Dyke lies within 200m of the A14 and A1304. Given that these roads may be used for vehicle journeys by residents from East Cambridgeshire to access services and facilities in Newmarket, consideration of air quality should be included within the HRA.

3.27 Likely significant effects relating to recreational pressure is relevant to:

- Devil's Dyke SAC

Screening Categories

3.28 The screening of the Plan will involve a series of steps to remove or 'screen out' those elements of the Plan that are not likely to have a significant effect on a Natura 2000, and to ensure

⁸ <http://www.standardsforhighways.co.uk/ha/standards/dmrb/vol11/section3/ha20707.pdf>

other aspects of the Plan are ‘screened in’ where further appraisal is required. The screening methodology has been slightly amended for this Proposed Submission version of the Local Plan to use screening categories for the classification of potential effects of the Plan. They will be used to ‘screen out’ policies/aspects of the Plan that are not likely to have a significant effect on a Natura 2000 site and ‘screen in’ policies/aspects of the Plan that have potential to have a significant effect on a Natura 2000 site. These are broadly based on the screening categories set out within the HRA guidance for Scotland: ‘HRA of Plans – Guidance for Plan Making Bodies in Scotland, August 2010’⁹.

3.29 When considering significant effects, the European Court of Justice (2004, para 4.2.1 of 2010 Guidance) indicated that effects which would not undermine the conservation objectives of a Natura 2000 site should not be regarded as significant: thus, where a policy/aspect of the Plan may potentially have a *positive* significant effect on a Natura 2000 site, this policy/part can be ‘screened out’ because the impact would not be negative.

Table 3: Screening categories for HRA screening: categorising the potential effects of the Plan

Screening Category	Type of Policy
‘N’ categories: screened out or eliminated elements of the Plan	
Plan elements assessed as not likely to have a significant effect on a Natura 2000 site if implemented, either alone or in combination with effects from other plans or projects	
N1	General strategy statement or general criteria based policy not likely to have a significant effect as the policy will not lead to development itself.
N2	Policy refers to proposals that are not generated by the Plan and therefore excluded from the assessment. For example, a policy that refers to a transport project, which is identified in another Plan and possibly by another authority (and this will have been subject to HRA for the other Plan).
N3	Policies intend to protect, conserve or enhance the natural (including biodiversity), built or historic environment, or that positively steers development away from Natura 2000 sites.
N4	Policies that will not lead to development itself, because they are qualitative or design criteria based policies, which guide development. For example, a policy may encourage certain types of housing, but does not provide for the specifically lead to the development of such housing.
N5	Policy makes provision for change or promotes development but would have no likely significant effect on a Natura 2000 site, because there is no physical, ecological, hydrological, chemical or biological link or pathway between the changes the policy may cause and the site’s qualifying interests of any Natura 2000 site. This category also covers policies that may have a positive effect; or would not otherwise undermine the conservation objectives for the site.
N6	Policies that make provision for change/promotes development, but where the effects on a Natura 2000 site are trivial or ‘de minimis’, or so restricted in scale or remote from a site, even if combined with other effects, that they would not undermine the conservation objectives for the Natura 2000 site. For example, a policy that focuses development in existing urban areas whereby the likelihood of the policy affecting an isolated, relatively inaccessible Natura 2000 site is remote.
N7	Policies that promote development or change but where it is so general it is not known where, when or how the aspect of the Plan may be implemented or where the potential effects may occur, or which Natura 2000 sites, if any, may be affected.

⁹ David Tyldesley and Associates for Scottish Natural Heritage (2010) Habitats Regulation Appraisal of Plans and Guidance for Plan-Making Bodies in Scotland

'P' category: screen in elements of the Plan	
Plan elements considered likely to have a significant effect on a Natura 2000 site	
P	<p>Policy/proposal/element of the Plan with potential to have a likely significant effect and therefore subject to further assessment, including consideration of potential mitigation measures.</p> <p>This category will cover:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Policies which have been identified as having likely significant effects, either alone or in combination, and directly or indirectly, and are therefore subject to further appraisal; and ● Policies where it is not possible to conclude likely significant effects as this is currently uncertain. <p>Potential mitigation measures will be identified and considered, and the policy rescreened, with the possibility of being subject to AA (at which further mitigation can be applied).</p>

Plans or projects that may act in-combination

3.30 The Regulations require that the impacts and effects of any land use plan should be considered in combination with other plans and projects that may also affect N2K sites. This is because other plans could lead to potentially significant 'in-combination' effects when implemented together with the Local Plan.

3.31 The guidance states that only those documents that are considered most relevant should be considered for the 'in combination' test, as an exhaustive list could render the assessment exercise unworkable. The other plans and projects considered relevant to the 'in-combination' assessment are set out in **Table 4** and **Table 5** below.

Table 4: Local Development Plans of Local Authorities surrounding East Cambridgeshire

Name of plan or project	Status	Plan requirements	Details of HRA work completed	Potential impacts that could cause in-combination effects?
Fenland Local Plan	Adopted May 2014	11,000 dwellings (2011-2031, plus 550 on the edge of Wisbech in Kings Lynn and West Norfolk). 7,200 new jobs 85ha new employment land	Screening Report – further assessment not required	General effects relating to growth and development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Habitat damage and/or loss • Disturbance from recreational pressure • Increased demand for water resources • Reduced water quality from pollution • Atmospheric pollution from increased vehicle journeys Potential effects are unlikely as the HRA concluded no likely significant effects.
King's Lynn and West Norfolk Core Strategy	Adopted July 2011	16,500 dwellings (2001 to 2026) 5,000 new jobs by 2021.	Appropriate Assessment Identified potential effects on Breckland SAC/SPA from proximity and disturbance and recreational pressure. With policy amendments, concluded no likely significant effects on N2K sites.	General effects relating to growth and development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Habitat damage and/or loss • Disturbance from recreational pressure • Increased demand for water resources • Reduced water quality from pollution • Atmospheric pollution from increased vehicle journeys CS12 Environmental Assets

Name of plan or project	Status	Plan requirements	Details of HRA work completed	Potential impacts that could cause in-combination effects?
				provides mitigation for potential significant effects, restricting new development within 1,500m of the Breckland SPA.
King's Lynn and West Norfolk Site Allocations & Development Management Policies Plan	September 2016	Sets out land allocations and development management policies.	Appropriate Assessment Identified potential effects on The Wash SPA and The Wash and North Norfolk SAC from combined effects of increased recreational pressure.	General effects relating to growth and development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Habitat damage and/or loss • Disturbance from recreational pressure • Increased demand for water resources • Reduced water quality from pollution • Atmospheric pollution from increased vehicle journeys DM19 provides mitigation for potential significant effects, requiring project level HRA and an agreed package of habitat protection measures to avoid adverse effects on European sites.
Forest Heath Core Strategy	Adopted 2010	7,300 new jobs by 2026 16ha additional employment land Policy CS 2 restricts new development to within 1500m of components of the Breckland SPA designated for Stone Curlew, and within any 1km grid squares which	Appropriate Assessment	General effects relating to growth and development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Habitat damage and/or loss • Disturbance from recreational pressure • Increased demand for water resources • Reduced water quality from pollution • Atmospheric pollution

Name of plan or project	Status	Plan requirements	Details of HRA work completed	Potential impacts that could cause in-combination effects?
		<p>has supported 5 or more nesting attempts, and to within 400m of components designated for Woodlark and Nightjar. Proposals for development in these areas will require a project level HRA.</p> <p>New road infrastructure or improvements will not be allowed within 200m of sites designated as SACs.</p>		<p>from increased vehicle journeys</p> <p>CS2 Natural Environment provides mitigation for potential significant effects, restricting new development within 1,500m of the Breckland SPA. New road infrastructure will not be allowed within 200m of sites designated as SACs.</p>
<p>Forest Heath Single Issue Review Core Strategy Policy CS7 Overall Housing Provision and Distribution</p>	<p>Proposed Submission 2017</p>	<p>6,800 dwellings (2011-2031)</p>	<p>Appropriate Assessment</p> <p>Potential effect identified through screening on Breckland SPA from disturbance and other urban edge effects. AA recommended requirement inserted into the Plan for a project level HRA to rule out adverse effects on the integrity of the Breckland SPA.</p>	<p>General effects relating to growth and development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Habitat damage and/or loss • Disturbance from recreational pressure • Increased demand for water resources • Reduced water quality from pollution • Atmospheric pollution from increased vehicle journeys <p>Potential for in-combination effects as the Plan has not been adopted and the HRA work is incomplete.</p>
<p>Forest Heath / St Edmundsbury Joint Development Management Policies Document</p>	<p>Adopted Feb 2015</p>	<p>Sets out development management policies</p>	<p>Screening Report – further assessment not required</p> <p>Concluded no likely significant effects.</p>	<p>General effects relating to growth and development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Habitat damage and/or loss • Disturbance from

Name of plan or project	Status	Plan requirements	Details of HRA work completed	Potential impacts that could cause in-combination effects?
				<p>recreational pressure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased demand for water resources • Reduced water quality from pollution • Atmospheric pollution from increased vehicle journeys <p>DM12 provides mitigation for potential significant effects, requiring all new development shown to contribute to recreational disturbance and visitor pressure within the Breckland SPA and SAC to make appropriate S106 contributions towards management projects.</p>
Forest Heath Site Allocations Local Plan	Proposed Submission, January 2017	Sets out land allocations and development management policies.	Appropriate Assessment	<p>General effects relating to growth and development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Habitat damage and/or loss • Disturbance from recreational pressure • Increased demand for water resources • Reduced water quality from pollution • Atmospheric pollution from increased vehicle journeys <p>Potential for in-combination effects as the Plan has not been adopted and the HRA work is in-</p>

Name of plan or project	Status	Plan requirements	Details of HRA work completed	Potential impacts that could cause in-combination effects?
St Edmundsbury Core Strategy	Adopted 2010	15,631 dwellings (2008-2031) 13,000 new jobs by 2026	Screening Report – further assessment not required Potential effects identified on Breckland SAC/SPA through increased recreational pressure, but concluded no significant effects due to mitigation measures included in the Plan.	complete. General effects relating to growth and development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Habitat damage and/or loss • Disturbance from recreational pressure • Increased demand for water resources • Reduced water quality from pollution • Atmospheric pollution from increased vehicle journeys CS2 Sustainable Development provides mitigation for potential significant effects, protecting the network of designated sites, including Breckland SPA. Applies 400m buffer zone for Woodlark and Nightjar and 1,500m for areas that support Stone Curlew.
St Edmundsbury Vision 2031 (set of three site allocation Local Plans)	Adopted 2014	Sets out land allocations and policies.	Screening Report – further assessment not required Concluded no likely significant effects.	General effects relating to growth and development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Habitat damage and/or loss • Disturbance from recreational pressure • Increased demand for water resources • Reduced water quality from pollution • Atmospheric pollution from increased vehicle

Name of plan or project	Status	Plan requirements	Details of HRA work completed	Potential impacts that could cause in-combination effects?
				journeys
South Cambridgeshire Pre-submission Draft Local Plan	Draft Local Plan submitted March 2014	19,500 dwellings and 85 Gypsy and Traveller pitches. 22,000 new jobs	Screening Report – further assessment not required Concluded no likely significant effects.	General effects relating to growth and development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Habitat damage and/or loss • Disturbance from recreational pressure • Increased demand for water resources • Reduced water quality from pollution • Atmospheric pollution from increased vehicle journeys
Huntingdonshire Core Strategy	Adopted 2009	14,000 dwellings (2001 - 2026) 85ha new employment land before 2026 13,000 new jobs	Screening Report – further assessment not required Concluded no likely significant effects.	General effects relating to growth and development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Habitat damage and/or loss • Disturbance from recreational pressure • Increased demand for water resources • Reduced water quality from pollution • Atmospheric pollution from increased vehicle journeys
Huntingdonshire Local Plan	Consultation Draft 2017	21,000 dwellings (2011-2036) 14,900 new jobs	Appropriate Assessment The HRA identified potential significant effects on the Ouse Washes SAC/SPA/Ramsar from increased flooding. These effects	General effects relating to growth and development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Habitat damage and/or loss • Disturbance from recreational pressure

Name of plan or project	Status	Plan requirements	Details of HRA work completed	Potential impacts that could cause in-combination effects?
			could be avoided by changes to the wording of some of the policies in the Plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased demand for water resources Reduced water quality from pollution Atmospheric pollution from increased vehicle journeys <p>Potential for in-combination effects as the Plan has not been adopted and the HRA work is incomplete.</p>

Table 5: Other relevant plans or projects to the in-combination assessment

Plan or Project	Status	Main Considerations
Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan Core Strategy	Adopted 2011	Sets out strategic objectives and policies for sustainable minerals and waste development.
Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Local Plan Site Specific Proposals	Adopted 2012	The HRA concluded no adverse effects likely on N2K sites.
Cambridgeshire Local Transport Plan 2011-2031	Adopted July 2015	<p>Sets out the transport strategy for the county and provides details of transport schemes to deliver the strategy. Includes schemes to improve air quality and the environment, improvements to public transport and schemes to encourage walking and cycling, therefore it focuses on how negative effects from transport can be reduced.</p> <p>HRA concluded that none of the schemes or strategic within the LTP will likely result in significant effects in any of the N2K sites included within the assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ely Southern Bypass – no likely significant effects, primarily due to the distance of the scheme from N2K sites. Soham railway station – concluded no likely significant effects
East Cambridgeshire Transport Strategy	Adopted July 2017	Sets out a detailed policy framework and action plan of potential transport

Plan or Project	Status	Main Considerations
		<p>improvements for the area, addressing current problems and consistent with third Cambridgeshire Local Transport Plan.</p> <p>Supports the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan by taking into account the predicted levels of growth and detailing the transport infrastructure and services necessary to deliver this growth.</p>
Anglian Water's Water Resources Management Plan	2015	Sets out the proposed approach for providing water resources in the future
Cam and Ely Ouse Abstraction Licensing Strategy	2017	<p>Sets out how the Environment Agency's will manage future abstraction within the Cam and Ely catchment.</p> <p>Under the Habitats Regulations, the Environment Agency has a duty to assess the effects of existing abstraction licences and any new applications to make sure they are not impacting on internationally important nature conservation sites. Water efficiency is also tested by the Environment Agency before a new licence is granted. If the assessment of a new application shows that it could have an impact on a SAC/SPA, the Environment Agency will have to follow strict rules in setting a time limit for their licence.</p>
Old Bedford and Middle Level Abstraction Licensing Strategy	2017	<p>Sets out how the Environment Agency's will manage future abstraction within the Old Bedford and Middle Level catchment.</p> <p>Under the Habitats Regulations, the Environment Agency has a duty to assess the effects of existing abstraction licences and any new applications to make sure they are not impacting on internationally important nature conservation sites. Water efficiency is also tested by the Environment Agency before a new licence is granted. If the assessment of a new application shows that it could have an impact on a SAC/SPA, the Environment Agency will have to follow strict rules in setting a time limit for their licence.</p>
Anglian River Basin Management Plan	2015	Sets out the measures needed to bring more waters to good status to meet the requirements of the Water Framework Directive.
Great Ouse Catchment Flood Management Plan Summary Report	2011	Used by the Environment Agency and partners to plan and agree the most effective way to manage flood risk in the Great Ouse catchment.

Natura 2000 sites considered in the assessment

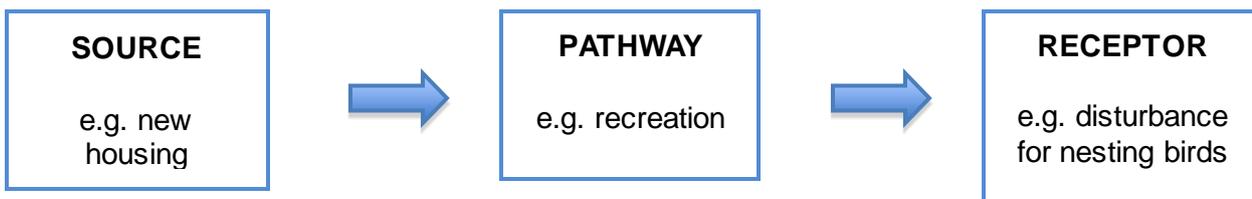
3.32 The East Cambridgeshire Local Plan has the potential to impact on areas that are beyond the administrative boundaries of the district. It is commonly recognised in HRA guidance that, when considering the potential for effects on N2K sites that distance itself is not a definitive guide to the likelihood or severity of an impact. There are other factors that will influence the relative distance at which an impact can occur, such as the prevailing wind or river flow direction. This means that development proposed in a Local Plan that is some distance away from a N2K site could potentially effect the site, and therefore should be considered as part of HRA screening.

3.33 Rather than rely on distance alone, best practice is to use a 'source-pathway-receptor' model (as shown in **Figure 2**) which focuses on whether there is a pathway by which impacts from the Plan can affect the vulnerabilities/sensitivities of a N2K sites' environmental conditions.

3.34 The potential pathways include:

- **Wind** – whether potential impacts can reach the Natura 2000 site/s via the prevailing wind;
- **River network** – whether impacts are connected by the river network to the Natura 2000 site/s;
- **Water supply** – the connectivity of the water supply;
- **Roads** – Natura 2000 site/s in relation to the road network and the feasibility of air, noise and light pollution from increased traffic on the roads, due to a greater population or greater accessibility;
- **Species movement** – distance between Natura 2000 site/s and the location of other important habitats within the boundary of the plan area, such as SSSIs, Country Parks and Nature Reserves.

Figure 2: Source, Pathway, Receptor Model



3.35 Using this approach, the N2K sites within or adjacent to East Cambridgeshire with the potential to be affected by the Local Plan are identified in **Table 6** below and scoped into the HRA. A map of the location of Natura 2000 Sites is provided overleaf (**Figure 3**).

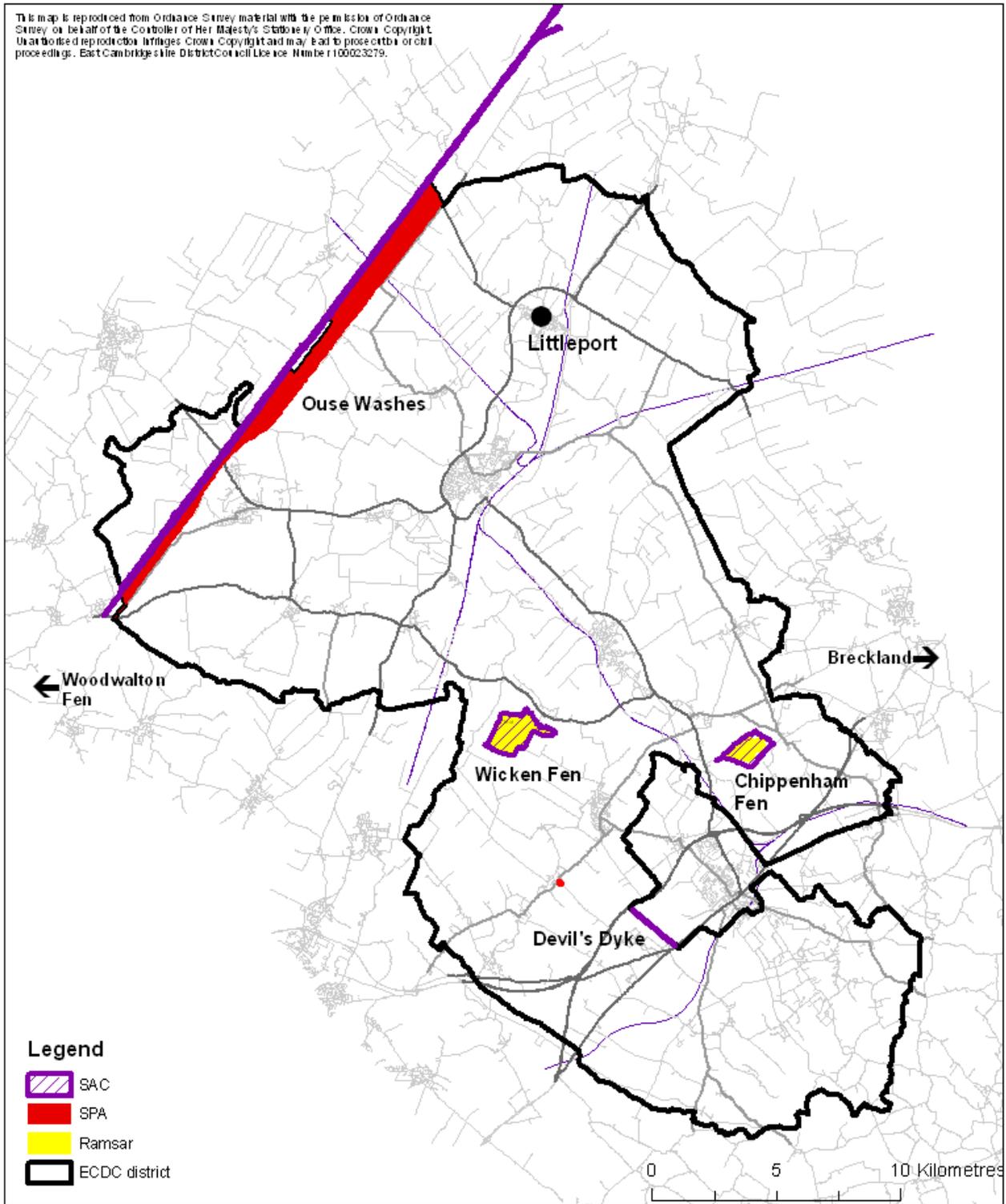
Table 6: Natura 2000 Sites

Site	Location	SAC	SPA	Ramsar
Fenland (Wicken Fen, Woodwalton Fen, Chippenham Fen)	Within (or partially within) the district (apart from the Woodwalton element, which is in Huntingdonshire district, and around 15km from the East Cambs district border)	✓		✓
Ouse Washes	Within (or partially within) the district	✓	✓	✓
Devil's Dyke	Within (or partially within) the district	✓		
Breckland	Outside the district, but within 15km (Forest Heath)	✓	✓	

Information on Natura 2000 sites

3.36 To enable a screening to be undertaken, details of each site have been collated and presented in **Appendix 2**. This information has been used to determine whether the policies and proposals of the Local Plan will lead to deterioration, disturbance or other negative impact on the designated features of those sites.

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SAC, SPA and Ramsar sites



East Cambridgeshire District Council
November 2012



1:200,000

Figure 3: Location of Natura 2000 sites

Potential impacts arising from the Local Plan

3.37 The provisions for new growth and development in the Local Plan have the potential to generate a range of environmental impacts that, depending on their nature, magnitude, location and duration, can potentially impact on N2K sites, depending on the impact, pathway and vulnerabilities of the site.

3.38 The following potential effects can arise from growth and development in general, and related activities, identified in **Table 7** below.

Table 7: Local Plan development: summary of effects and impacts

Potential Effects	Description of Impacts
Physical loss and/or damage of habitats and species	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Direct land take, removal and loss of supporting and foraging habitat, green corridors and species ● Changes to sediment patterns (rivers and coastal locations) ● Trampling ● Severance/barrier effect ● Fire ● Erosion ● Prevention of natural processes ● Fragmentation
Water supply levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Potential for drying and reduced water levels arising from increase in water abstraction levels (volume) to provide supply (e.g. new housing). This may lead to reduced water resources at Natura 2000 sites: changes to water levels can impact on river flow and water quality. ● Potential impact on groundwater in water cycle by foundations and buildings altering groundwater flow. ● Flooding/stormwater ● Barrier effect (migratory species)
Water quality changes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Potential for reduced water quality and water pollution from potential increase in surface water run off levels (volume) as a result of new development, which can lead to contamination of watercourse links and reduced water quality at Natura 2000 sites. ● Potential increase in accelerated run off arising from new hard standing/non-permeable surfaces of new development. ● Hydrological cycle impacts from additional take up of land, loss of permeable surfaces and topography alteration may impact on water cycle, potentially resulting in flood risk impacts and water quality impacts on Natura 2000 sites. ● Potential increase in volume of waste water discharges (consented) which can lead to

Potential Effects	Description of Impacts
	<p>reduced water quality at Natura 2000 sites.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Potential increase in pressure in sewage infrastructure network and capacity.
Disturbance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Increased recreation activity and/or visitor pressure as a result of new development and population increase. ● Potential for increased disturbance to habitats and species as a result of development if it significantly increases the number of people travelling and visiting N2K. ● Potential for increased noise potential from larger footfall of people. ● Potential for noise and light pollution (from artificial lighting of development and increased traffic) ● Potential for noise and vibration from construction. ● Biological disturbance (direct mortality, competition from non-native species, introduction of disease, natural succession, rapid population fluctuations) from development, predation by domestic pets, introduction of non-native species from gardens etc.
Changes in air quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Potential for increased atmospheric pollution from dust ● Increased traffic movements arising from construction and occupation of new development potentially leading to increased air pollution arising from increased vehicular movements and trips ● Potential for increased emissions from new buildings ● Potential for noise and light pollution (from development and increased traffic) ● Changes in the composition of air quality as a result of development or a significant increase in trips near the vicinity of a N2K site could potentially cause air pollution that may damage vegetation and harm species living in these habitats.

Environmental conditions and key vulnerabilities of qualifying features

Table 8 below sets out the specific vulnerabilities of the Natura 2000 sites.

Table 8: Natura 2000 Sites: Vulnerability, Pressures and Threats (summarised from Natural England’s Site Improvement Plans and advice to the council)

Site	Vulnerability						Summary of Pressures/Threats
	Physical Habitat Loss	Physical Damage	Disturbance Recreational Pressure	Water Quantity	Water Pollution	Atmospheric Pollution	
Devil’s Dyke	✓	✓	✓	x	x	✓	This species rich calcareous grassland is vulnerable to vegetation succession by rank grasses and requires active management by grazing. It is also vulnerable to increased recreational pressure. Habitat degradation is occurring, particularly through trampling of vegetation and soil enrichment from dog excrement. Antisocial behaviour such as littering, fires and other activities is damaging vegetation. Dogs off leads also pose a risk to the continuance of the essential long term management of the site through livestock grazing. The site is also potentially at risk from atmospheric nitrogen deposition, although the site improvement plan states this requires further investigation.
Wicken Fen	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	This site is vulnerable to vegetation succession and requires management to retain fen characteristics. Hydrological changes associated with off-site agricultural drainage and land reclaim threatens the sites designated features. In addition nitrification from agricultural run-off and abstraction from the underlying aquifer. Nitrogen deposition exceeds site relevant critical loads. This has the potential to affect the Molinia meadow and calcareous fen features although there is no information known on any current impacts.
Chippenham Fen	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Key threats include water pollution and hydrological changes. There is considerable pressure in the region from the water abstraction that may affect the local springs and aquifer. The habitats within the site are highly sensitive to inorganic fertilisers and pesticides, applications of which should be avoided both within the site itself and in adjacent

Site	Vulnerability						Summary of Pressures/Threats
	Physical Habitat Loss	Physical Damage	Disturbance Recreational Pressure	Water Quantity	Water Pollution	Atmospheric Pollution	
							surrounding areas. There is also inappropriate scrub control and cutting/mowing in some areas. Nitrogen deposition exceeds site relevant critical loads. This has the potential to affect the Molinia meadow and calcareous fen features although there is no information known on any current impacts.
Woodwalton Fen	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	✓	Key threats include water pollution and hydrological changes. Historical poor water quality and more persistent flooding has resulted in a decline in biodiversity and site features. The quality of the water from the agricultural run-off needs to be monitored. Nitrogen deposition exceeds site relevant critical loads. This has the potential to affect the Molinia meadow and calcareous fen features although there is no information known on any current impacts.
Ouse Washes	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	The Ouse Washes are extremely vulnerable to changes in hydrology and the site is currently suffering from eutrophication and changes in water quality as a result of agricultural run-off and the input of water with high nutrient levels from sewage treatment works. Off-site changes in hydrology have the potential to affect the site's integrity. Over the past 25yrs it has also been noted that there has been an increase in summer flooding as well as high water levels in winter. This has adversely affected both the breeding birds and the traditional washland management regime. It also results in Glyceria grass (sweet rush) competing with the other grasses and herbs, which may affect food availability for wintering waterfowl. High winter water levels also reduce grazing area for wigeon.
Breckland	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Grazing by sheep/cattle is essential to the maintenance of habitats. Undergrazing, both by domestic livestock and wild rabbits affects the majority of grassland & heathland sites throughout

Site	Vulnerability						Summary of Pressures/Threats
	Physical Habitat Loss	Physical Damage	Disturbance Recreational Pressure	Water Quantity	Water Pollution	Atmospheric Pollution	
							<p>the SPA/SAC, which puts at risk the quality of SAC habitats and their characteristic species, including SPA bird species. Development, especially for housing, roads and solar farms, can impact on SPA species through disturbance (Stone Curlew, Woodlark, Nightjar). Recreational and other activities have the potential to impact both SAC and SPA features. SAC features may be affected through eutrophication (dog fouling, unauthorised fires) and disturbance of soils, in particular on commons and heaths. Habitat fragmentation is a key threat, with connectivity between heaths poor and the landscape between them hostile to species dispersal. Local groundwater abstraction can negatively impact on the Breckland meres. A further key threat is air pollution from atmospheric nitrogen deposition.</p>

4. Assessment of effects – Local Plan alone

4.1 An assessment has been undertaken to identify the likely significant effects of the Local Plan alone on the integrity of the identified N2K sites. A screening matrix was prepared to assess which policies and site allocations would be likely to have a significant effect on a N2K site.

4.2 The draft policies and site allocations in the Further Draft version of the Local Plan were screened for likely significant effects in January 2017 and presented in the Further Draft HRA report. Following the close of the public consultation on the Further Draft Local Plan, the policies and allocations in the Plan were re-screened using the screening categories set out in **Table 3** and taking into account the comments received from consultation with Natural England¹⁰, so that recommendations from the HRA could be fed into the preparation of the next stage of the Plan. This re-screening is presented in **Appendices 5, 6 and 7**.

4.3 The screening assessment was then undertaken again for the Proposed Submission Local Plan, which has undergone a number of changes since the Further Draft version was published. **Table 9** sets out the findings of the screening of the Proposed Submission Local Plan policies, **Table 10** sets out the findings of the screening of the settlement policies and **Table 11** sets out the findings of the screening of the site allocations. The tables identify how mitigation measures have been applied within the Plan to address potential effects identified at the Further Draft Plan stage.

4.4 The potential for other plans or projects to act ‘in-combination’ with those policies and site allocations described in the screening matrix is discussed in the section following the screening tables.

¹⁰ See Appendix 4

Table 9: Screening Assessment of the East Cambridgeshire Proposed Submission Local (Proposed Submission, November 2017)

Strategic and Development Control Policies			
Policy	Description of Avoidance Mitigation Measures within the Local Plan	Screening Category	Screening Assessment
Vision	n/a	N1	This is a general statement which sets out the overarching vision for the future development of East Cambridgeshire to 2036. The vision would not have a direct effect on a N2K site because no development could occur through the vision itself.
Objectives	n/a	N1	A set of strategic objectives to address key issues facing the East Cambridgeshire area. They will not have a direct effect on a N2K site because no development could occur through the objectives themselves.
LP1: A Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development	n/a	N1	This 'headline' policy sets out the overarching plan commitment to sustainability and confirms a commitment to the presumption in favour of sustainable development. The policy has no direct impact on N2K sites as it provides for sustainable development. Indirectly it has the potential for positive effects on the wider environment.
LP2: Level and Distribution of Growth	<p>Policy LP30 Conserving and Enhancing Biodiversity states that the highest level of protection will be afforded to international sites designated for their nature conservation or geological importance. Development proposals that are likely to have an adverse effect, either alone or in-combination, on European sites must satisfy the requirements of the Habitats Regulations, determining site specific impacts and avoiding or mitigating against impacts where identified.</p> <p>Policy LP26 Pollution and Contamination requires major development proposals adjacent to</p>	P	<p>This policy sets out the overall scale of new development in the area up to 2036. It sets out the overall housing growth target across East Cambridgeshire of 10,835 new homes (2016 to 2036) and seeks to facilitate the delivery of 6,000 new jobs (2014-2036). It therefore provides for residential and employment focused development. These figures have been reduced from the Further Draft version of the Plan (from 11,400 to 10,835 homes, and from 6,900 to 6,000 jobs).</p> <p>Unmitigated, this policy could lead to effects from increased <u>recreational pressure</u> as much of the development will be within 8km of a N2K site. There could also be effects from <u>urbanisation</u>, where qualifying features are sensitive to such impacts.</p> <p>Where development is adjacent to/or in close proximity to, a N2K site, there is a risk of <u>loss or damage to habitat</u> that supports qualifying features of the site.</p> <p>New housing and employment has the potential to lead to increased</p>

Strategic and Development Control Policies			
Policy	Description of Avoidance Mitigation Measures within the Local Plan	Screening Category	Screening Assessment
	<p>international and nationally designated biodiversity sites to submit an air quality assessment to demonstrate no significant adverse effect on sensitive features.</p> <p>Policy LP17 and LP18 seek to encourage sustainable travel which should help to mitigate the impact of development on air pollution from vehicle traffic.</p> <p>A number of policies in the Plan protect or enhance existing open spaces, or seek to increase open space, sport and recreational opportunities within the district. Policy LP21 requires major development proposals to provide open space in excess of the standards set out in the policy where such provision is needed to mitigate the effects of increased recreational pressure on national or internationally designated biodiversity sites.</p> <p>LP23 may help to mitigate the impact of new development on the water environment by setting the nationally set technical standards for water efficiency. LP25 seeks to protect the water environment and to ensure the necessary waste water infrastructure is in place before development commences.</p>		<p>road journeys within the district and beyond, and therefore potentially <u>reduced air quality</u> on a N2K site where it lies within 200m of a major road.</p> <p>There is potential for increased pressure for water abstraction and treatment, potentially leading to <u>reduced water levels and water quality</u>.</p> <p>There is also the potential for in combination and cross boundary effects beyond the district area with development proposed in the surrounding local authorities.</p> <p>The Plan includes a number of policies that may help to mitigate these effects, but they need further consideration before they can be screened out.</p>

Strategic and Development Control Policies			
Policy	Description of Avoidance Mitigation Measures within the Local Plan	Screening Category	Screening Assessment
LP3: The Settlement Hierarchy and the Countryside	n/a	N1	<p>This policy establishes a settlement hierarchy and identifies settlements that fall within each of the categories. It is predominantly a means of categorising villages, and does not set out a quantity of growth, nor define how growth should be distributed across the settlement hierarchy (these issues are addressed under Policy LP3 Level and Distribution of Growth).</p> <p>As this policy is a general policy statement and does not detail the growth strategy for each category of settlement, the policy itself is unlikely to have any likely significant effects on the N2K sites.</p>
LP4: Green Belt	n/a	N1	<p>This policy requires development in the Green Belt to be in-line with the NPPF. Where development is acceptable, it sets out general criteria to guide proposals.</p> <p>This is a general criteria based policy that does not lead to development itself and therefore is not likely to result in significant effects, either alone or in combination.</p>
LP5: Community-led development	n/a	N1	<p>This policy supports community-led development schemes for housing, small business units and other appropriate uses. It is non-site specific and does not set out a quantum of development.</p> <p>This is a general policy statement that does not lead to development itself and therefore is not likely to result in significant effects, either alone or in combination.</p>
LP6: Meeting Local Housing Needs	Policy LP30 Conserving and Enhancing Biodiversity states that the highest level of protection will be afforded to international sites designated for their nature conservation or geological importance. Development proposals that are likely to have an adverse	N4	<p>This policy sets out the requirements for affordable housing, higher access standards, self-build homes, residential care accommodation and park homes.</p> <p>There is no development proposed through the policy itself, as this will occur through lower level planning applications. The policy itself will therefore not result in likely significant effects, either alone or in combination.</p>

Strategic and Development Control Policies			
Policy	Description of Avoidance Mitigation Measures within the Local Plan	Screening Category	Screening Assessment
	effect, either alone or in-combination, on European sites must satisfy the requirements of the Habitats Regulations, determining site specific impacts and avoiding or mitigating against impacts where identified.		
LP7: Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople sites	The policy requires that the proposal should not conflict with other local or national policies relating to flood risk, contamination, landscape character, protection of the natural and built environment, heritage assets or agricultural land quality.	N6	<p>This policy sets out where Gypsy and Traveller sites are to be allocated to meet need as well as qualitative criteria which will be used in determining proposals for the development of sites to meet Gypsy and Traveller needs. Two sites are allocated on the Policies Map for Gypsy and Traveller pitch provision. These sites were allocated in the 2015 Local Plan and therefore have been 'rolled forward':</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land at Muckdungle Corner, Newmarket Road, Bottisham • Land at Pony Lodge, Grunty Fen Road, Witchford <p>While the criteria based elements of the policy will not lead to development, the allocation of sites and identification of the indicative level of development on each site means that there is potential for this policy to have effects on N2K, as Gypsy and Traveller sites can result in the same impact pathways as other types of residential development.</p> <p>However, given the proposed sites are small-scale (maximum of 2 pitches) it is considered that the potential effects of any development would be very restricted in scale and so remote from any of the N2K sites that they would not undermine the conservation objectives for the sites. This policy would also be subject to compliance with other policies protecting N2K sites, such as LP30. On this basis, this policy can be screened out.</p>
LP8: Delivering Prosperity and Jobs	Policy LP30 Conserving and Enhancing Biodiversity states that the highest level of protection will be afford to international sites	P	<p>This policy makes provision for employment development, which can potentially lead to likely significant effects on N2K sites. This policy predominantly formalises existing employment areas and/or consents, however the policy also supports the creation of new</p>

Strategic and Development Control Policies			
Policy	Description of Avoidance Mitigation Measures within the Local Plan	Screening Category	Screening Assessment
	designated for their nature conservation or geological importance. Development proposals that are likely to have an adverse effect, either alone or in-combination, on European sites must satisfy the requirements of the Habitats Regulations, determining site specific impacts and avoiding or mitigating against impacts where identified.		<p>employment sites or areas in certain locations, in principle, subject to criteria.</p> <p>There is potential for likely significant effects on N2K sites from <u>reduced air quality</u> due to increased road journeys, particularly where N2K sites are within 200m of major roads.</p> <p>There is potential for <u>urbanisation</u> effects relating to construction and operational activities, from employment development located within 400m of a N2K site.</p> <p>There is potential for increased pressure for water abstraction and treatment, potentially leading to <u>reduced water levels and water quality</u>.</p> <p>There is also the potential for in combination and cross boundary effects beyond the district area with development proposed in the surrounding local authorities.</p> <p>The Plan includes a number of policies that may help to mitigate these effects, but they need further consideration before they can be screened out.</p>
LP9: Equine Development	Policy LP30 Conserving and Enhancing Biodiversity states that the highest level of protection will be afforded to international sites designated for their nature conservation or geological importance. Development proposals that are likely to have an adverse effect, either alone or in-combination, on European sites must satisfy the requirements of the Habitats Regulations, determining site specific impacts and avoiding or mitigating against impacts where identified.	N4	<p>This policy is non-site specific, and sets out general criteria for the consideration of horse racing or equestrian development.</p> <p>There is no development proposed through the policy itself, as this will occur through lower level planning applications.</p> <p>Any proposal for development must also be in accordance with other policies in the Plan. The mitigation provided by the wording of policy LP30 in relation to Natura 2000 sites, and required at the project level, will help to ensure that any lower level proposals for development do not have likely significant effects on any of the Natura 2000 sites, either alone or in combination.</p>

Strategic and Development Control Policies			
Policy	Description of Avoidance Mitigation Measures within the Local Plan	Screening Category	Screening Assessment
LP10: Development Affecting the Horse Racing Industry	n/a	N1	<p>This policy is non-site specific, and ensures that development does not have an adverse impact upon the horse racing industry.</p> <p>There is no development proposed through the policy itself, as this will occur through lower level planning applications.</p> <p>Any proposal for development must also be in accordance with other policies in the Plan. The mitigation provided by the wording of policy LP30 in relation to Natura 2000 sites, and required at the project level, will help to ensure that any lower level proposals for development do not have likely significant effects on any of the Natura 2000 sites, either alone or in combination.</p>
LP11: Tourist Facilities and Visitor Attractions	The policy states proposals for new or extended tourist facilities will be supported where it can be demonstrated that recreational pressure on nearby protected nature conservation sites (especially those with European protection status) is not significantly increased, or, if the proposed development has the potential to significantly increase recreational pressure, it will need to be demonstrated through an appropriate (but proportionate) assessment that such an increase is not likely to have a significant negative impact on the protected site.	N4	<p>This policy supports proposals for new or extended tourist facilities where a proposal can demonstrate it meets a set of criteria.</p> <p>One of the criterion states: '<i>Recreation pressure on nearby protected nature conservation sites (especially those with European protection status) is not significantly increased, or, if the proposed development has the potential to significantly increase recreational pressure, it will need to be demonstrated through an appropriate (but proportionate) assessment that such an increase is not likely to have a significant negative impact on the protected site</i>'.</p> <p>As this policy includes specific protection of N2K sites, it is unlikely to lead to likely significant effects.</p>
LP12: Tourist Accommodation (excluding holiday cottages)	The policy states proposals for new or extended tourist facilities will be supported where it can be demonstrated that recreational pressure on nearby protected nature conservation sites (especially those	N4	<p>This policy supports proposals for new or extended hotels, caravan, caravan-lodge, camping sites, marinas and moorings where a proposal can demonstrate it meets a set of criteria.</p> <p>One of the criterion states: '<i>Recreation pressure on nearby protected nature conservation sites (especially those with European protection</i></p>

Strategic and Development Control Policies			
Policy	Description of Avoidance Mitigation Measures within the Local Plan	Screening Category	Screening Assessment
	with European protection status) is not significantly increased, or, if the proposed development has the potential to significantly increase recreational pressure, it will need to be demonstrated through an appropriate (but proportionate) assessment that such an increase is not likely to have a significant negative impact on the protected site		<p><i>status) is not significantly increased, or, if the proposed development has the potential to significantly increase recreational pressure, it will need to be demonstrated through an appropriate (but proportionate) assessment that such an increase is not likely to have a significant negative impact on the protected site'.</i></p> <p>As this policy includes a specific provision to protect N2K sites, it is unlikely to lead to likely significant effects.</p>
LP13: Holiday Cottage Accommodation	n/a	N4	<p>This policy is a general policy and is non-site specific. It states that accommodation in the countryside will only be allowed where it involves the re-use of an existing building, for a maximum of 2 dwellings.</p> <p>This policy does not provide for a quantum of development and so will be unlikely to have a significant effect on N2K sites.</p>
LP14: Location of Retail and Town Centre Uses	n/a	N4	<p>This policy focuses retail and town centre uses to within existing town centres and therefore away from sensitive N2K sites. It does not provide for a quantum of retail development.</p> <p>As such, is unlikely to have a likely significant effect on N2K sites.</p>
LP15: Retail Uses in Town Centres	n/a	N6	<p>This policy relates to Primary Shopping Frontages and Secondary Shopping Frontages in Ely, as well as Soham and Littleport town centres, and seeks to retain the vitality and viability of such centres. It relates to existing retail centres only.</p> <p>This policy does not provide for the quantum of retail development.</p> <p>As such, is unlikely to have a likely significant effect on N2K sites.</p>
LP16: Infrastructure to Support Growth	The types of infrastructure referred to in the policy include transport and water supply, which may help to avoid effects of development relating to increased vehicle traffic and increased demand for water.	N1	<p>This policy confirms the need for infrastructure to be provided alongside development, which would include necessary water/sewerage infrastructure. It does not allocate a quantity of development or identify the location of any development.</p> <p>The provision of appropriate infrastructure will ensure development will</p>

Strategic and Development Control Policies			
Policy	Description of Avoidance Mitigation Measures within the Local Plan	Screening Category	Screening Assessment
	<p>Policy LP30 Conserving and Enhancing Biodiversity states that the highest level of protection will be afforded to international sites designated for their nature conservation or geological importance. Development proposals that are likely to have an adverse effect, either alone or in-combination, on European sites must satisfy the requirements of the Habitats Regulations, determining site specific impacts and avoiding or mitigating against impacts where identified.</p>		not lead to likely significantly effects on N2K sites.
<p>LP17: Creating a Sustainable, Efficient and Resilient Transport Network</p>	<p>The requirement for new development to reduce the need to travel and to prioritise sustainable travel modes should help to mitigate the potential impacts of development in relation to increased air pollution from vehicle traffic.</p> <p>Policy LP30 Conserving and Enhancing Biodiversity states that the highest level of protection will be afforded to international sites designated for their nature conservation or geological importance. Development proposals that are likely to have an adverse effect, either alone or in-combination, on European sites must satisfy the requirements of the Habitats</p>	N4	<p>This policy sets out the requirements for new development in relation to the transport network. The policy does not identify any specific transport related scheme, location type or quantum of development.</p> <p>At the Further Draft stage, this policy could not be screened out of the assessment as the provision of transport infrastructure has the potential to increase traffic movements and therefore reduce <u>air quality</u> along roads in close proximity to the N2K sites, thus potentially resulting in a likely significant effect.</p> <p>However, the Proposed Submission Local Plan includes a strengthened Policy LP26 and LP30, both of which should ensure that any potential effects arising from LP17 are identified and avoided or mitigated against.</p> <p>Indirectly, the implementation of this policy may help N2K sites which are prone to transport related pollutants as a result of its promotion of a more sustainable transport network that have the potential to result in a reduction in emissions of air pollutants.</p>

Strategic and Development Control Policies			
Policy	Description of Avoidance Mitigation Measures within the Local Plan	Screening Category	Screening Assessment
	Regulations, determining site specific impacts and avoiding or mitigating against impacts where identified.		
LP18: Improving Cycle Provision	The requirement for new development to aim to assist delivery of a substantial increase in the uptake of cycling across the district should help to mitigate the potential impacts of development in relation to increased air pollution from vehicle traffic.	N4	<p>This policy encourages cycling as a sustainable means of transport in East Cambridgeshire. It seeks to ensure that accessibility to key destinations by bicycle is safe and sets out how this will be achieved. It refers generally to the delivery of identified cycle network improvements identified in other documents, such as the Local Transport Plan and the Transport Strategy for East Cambridgeshire, but not to the names of specific schemes contained within such documents.</p> <p>This policy has no direct impact on N2K sites as it will not specifically lead to development itself. However, indirectly, its implementation may help N2K sites which are prone to transport related pollutants, as a result of its promotion of a more sustainable transport network, which could result in a reduction in emissions of air pollutants.</p>
LP19: Maintaining and Improving Community Facilities	Policy LP30 Conserving and Enhancing Biodiversity states that the highest level of protection will be afforded to international sites designated for their nature conservation or geological importance. Development proposals that are likely to have an adverse effect, either alone or in-combination, on European sites must satisfy the requirements of the Habitats Regulations, determining site specific impacts and avoiding or mitigating against impacts where identified.	N4	<p>This policy seeks to protect existing community facilities, and also encourage appropriate new stand-alone facilities, or facilities as part of wider development proposals.</p> <p>The policy encourages the development of new community facilities but does not directly lead to the development of them. The policy itself will therefore not result in likely significant effects, either alone or in combination.</p>
LP20: Delivering Green Infrastructure, Trees and Woodland	This policy includes avoidance measures for the potential impacts on N2K from recreational pressure by	N3	This policy seeks to secure new green infrastructure, either alongside new development, or in its own right.

Strategic and Development Control Policies			
Policy	Description of Avoidance Mitigation Measures within the Local Plan	Screening Category	Screening Assessment
	stating that proposals which may result in recreational pressure on designated biodiversity sites will be particularly expected to provide such green infrastructure'.		<p>At the Further Draft Stage, it was not possible to screen out this policy as the policy could be strengthened to ensure mitigation is delivered to address the adverse effects of recreational pressure on designated sites.</p> <p>The Proposed Submission version of this policy should have positive effects on N2K sites as a result of the positive aspects implementing such a policy will have on the wider environment. These benefits are twofold, firstly, direct benefits to the individual sites through creation and protection of biodiversity; but also indirectly through increased opportunities for recreation through extensive walking, cycling and other forms of recreation which can help mitigate the effects of climate change and alleviate the recreational pressure on other N2K sites.</p> <p>Additionally, the policy has been revised to state '<i>Proposals which may result in recreational pressure on designated biodiversity sites will be particularly expected to provide such green infrastructure</i>'.</p> <p>The Local Plan has committed to a network of green open spaces and green corridors as well as policies to improve existing sites. All provision will need to take place alongside development and would be in place before the final occupation and end of construction. In the case of Ely Country Park, Phase 1 and 2 have already been completed and has consequently created a more accessible and higher quality recreational experience as well as having a conservation and biodiversity focus, enhancing the wetlands, meadows and woodland of the Ely Pits and Meadows SSSI. Phase 3 will commence alongside the North Ely development and will have a more recreational focus whilst protecting the impact on the conservation achievements of Phase 1 and 2 on the SSSI.</p> <p>This is a positive policy, as it provides for the protection of green infrastructure that can result in recreational activities being diverted away from N2K sites, and it requires development proposals to provide green infrastructure where they may result in recreational pressure on</p>

Strategic and Development Control Policies			
Policy	Description of Avoidance Mitigation Measures within the Local Plan	Screening Category	Screening Assessment
			designated sites.
LP21: Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities	This policy includes avoidance measures for the potential impacts on N2K from recreational pressure by stating that for some major development proposals it may be necessary to provide open space in excess of what is set out in the policy, where it is identified that such additional provision is needed to mitigate the effects of increased recreational pressure on nationally or internationally designated biodiversity sites.	N7	<p>At the Further Draft stage, this policy could not be screened out of the assessment, as the policy could be strengthened in relation to the impacts of increased recreational pressure on nationally or internationally designated sites.</p> <p>The Proposed Submission version of this policy seeks to ensure that new residential development delivers outdoor open space, sport and recreational provision at an appropriate scale and location. It also sets out criteria against which proposals involving the loss of existing open space, sport and recreational facilities will be determined against. It does not directly lead to development itself, as the new open space, sport and recreational facilities would arise as a result of other policies (i.e. those that allocate sites), as well as windfall development. While the site allocations are defined, the exact open space requirements are not known as they are dependent on scheme design and negotiation at the planning application stage.</p> <p>The policy specifically states that for some major development proposals it may be necessary to provide open space in excess of what is set out in the policy, '<i>...where it is identified that such additional provision is needed to mitigate the effects of increased recreational pressure on nationally or internationally designated biodiversity sites</i>'.</p> <p>The policy is therefore considerably more comprehensive than the Local Plan 2015, and will give a much stronger ability for the council to require appropriate levels of open space, sport and recreational facilities are provided in the district.</p>
LP22: Achieving Design Excellence	n/a	N4	<p>This policy is a design criteria based policy, which seeks to guide development in relation to achieving design excellence.</p> <p>The policy will not directly lead to development and promotes measures intended to have a positive effect. The policy itself will therefore not</p>

Strategic and Development Control Policies			
Policy	Description of Avoidance Mitigation Measures within the Local Plan	Screening Category	Screening Assessment
			result in likely significant effects, either alone or in combination.
LP23: Water Efficiency	This policy may help to mitigate the impact of new development on the water environment by setting the nationally set technical standards for water efficiency.	N3	<p>This policy requires new development to achieve the optional technical housing standard for water-efficiency of no more than 110 litres per day.</p> <p>In East Cambridgeshire, water resources are under stress. This policy therefore has the potential for positive effects on N2K sites as a result of the positive aspects implementing such a policy will have on the water environment.</p> <p>By minimise water use (to the maximum permitted by national policy), development will not only minimise water 'take' (from abstraction etc) but also minimise volume of waste water. The N2K sites in or near East Cambridgeshire are particularly vulnerable to water related issues, and therefore this policy is particularly important in that local context.</p>
LP24: Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Development	Policy LP30 Conserving and Enhancing Biodiversity states that the highest level of protection will be afforded to international sites designated for their nature conservation or geological importance. Development proposals that are likely to have an adverse effect, either alone or in-combination, on European sites must satisfy the requirements of the Habitats Regulations, determining site specific impacts and avoiding or mitigating against impacts where identified.	N7	<p>This policy sets out the standards and expectations of development in relation to renewable and low carbon energy development. It states proposals will be assessed taking into account biodiversity considerations. The policy does not identify the location or quantum of development.</p> <p>This policy therefore, has is not likely to have direct significant effects on N2K sites, though there is potential for a positive effect on air quality (the degree depending on the amount of development which implements its measures). Indirectly it has the potential for positive effects on the wider environment through its positive approach to appropriate renewable energy and energy efficiency development.</p>
LP25: Managing Water Resources and Flood Risk	The policy should help to mitigate the potential impacts of new development on water quantity and quality, by requiring adequate foul water treatment and disposal	N3	This policy is in two parts, with the first around (minimising) flood risk, as well as positive nature conservation aspects, such as the need for and methods to reduce increases in water quantity in to river systems through use of SuDS, which also improves water quality. Part two of the policy has a particular focus on protecting the water environment.

Strategic and Development Control Policies			
Policy	Description of Avoidance Mitigation Measures within the Local Plan	Screening Category	Screening Assessment
	<p>infrastructure in place in time to serve the development, SuDS to deliver improvements in water quality, and that development contributes positively to the water environment.</p>		<p>A major part of East Cambridgeshire District drains into the River Great Ouse catchment. The Ouse Washes (SAC, SPA and Ramsar) form part of this river system. However, River Great Ouse joins the Ouse Washes site at Denver Sluice, downstream of the Washes so development within East Cambridgeshire should not be a major factor to consider. However, main drainage systems, for example to the west of Ely, direct water to pumping stations along the Hundred Foot River and water is abstracted from the Hundred Foot River to replenish the internal ditch system within the Ouse Washes. There is therefore hydrological connectivity between the catchment and the washes. Current evidence does not indicate that existing phosphate discharges from the WwTWs in East Cambridgeshire are likely to be having an adverse effect upon the Ouse Washes SAC/SPA or SSSI. However, the District Council is committed to the use of sustainable drainage systems to reduce any possible future influence from new development.</p> <p>The Ouse Washes Habitat Creation Project by the Environment Agency proposes for creation of around 500 hectares of new wet grassland habitat to replace habitat deteriorated by increased flooding of the Ouse Washes and to provide for the species once supported by this habitat. This project, in combination with a strong emphasis on climate change mitigation efforts required in the Local Plan, will reduce the risk of flooding and will also indirectly have the potential for positive effects on the wider environment. The project should coincide with the delivery of development within Ely and Littleport, which is phased over a long delivery period and will be supported by a strong network of green spaces and use of SuDS to help improve water quality as well as construction materials and techniques which will help reduce the effects of climate change.</p> <p>This policy therefore has the potential for positive effects on N2K sites as a result of the positive aspects implementing such a policy will have on the wider environment.</p>

Strategic and Development Control Policies			
Policy	Description of Avoidance Mitigation Measures within the Local Plan	Screening Category	Screening Assessment
LP26: Pollution and Land Contamination	This policy should help mitigate the potential impact of reduced air quality from development by requiring major development proposals adjacent to international and nationally designated biodiversity sites to submit an air quality assessment to demonstrate no significant adverse effect on sensitive features.	N3	<p>This policy seeks to minimise, and where possible reduce pollution and land contamination. It highlights the importance of reducing surface water run-off and effluent discharge as a result of development and considering impact on air quality. The policy will not lead to development itself as it sets out criteria against which developments with potential pollution, contamination and waste implications will be considered.</p> <p>At the Further Draft Plan stage this policy could not be screened out of the assessment, because the policy could be strengthened to require development proposals in close proximity to N2K sites to be accompanied by an air quality assessment.</p> <p>The Proposed Submission version of the policy has a specific section on development adjacent to designated sites and states: "...major development proposals adjacent to international and nationally designated biodiversity sites will require an air quality assessment to demonstrate no significant adverse effects on sensitive features, whilst proposals of greater than 'major development' located not immediately adjacent, but within the vicinity of, such designated sites, may also require an air quality assessment if there is the possibility of significant adverse effect arising'.</p> <p>The policy itself will therefore not result in likely significant effects, either alone or in combination, as it seeks to protect the natural environment.</p>
LP27: Conserving and Enhancing Heritage Assets	n/a	N3	<p>This policy seeks to protect, conserve and enhance the historic environment. The policy will not directly lead to development and promotes measures intended to have a positive effect.</p> <p>The policy itself will therefore not result in likely significant effects, either alone or in combination, as it seeks to protect the historic environment.</p>
LP28: Landscape, Treescape and Built Environment Character,	n/a	N3	<p>This policy seeks to ensure that development is sympathetic to the character of the area in which it is located, and also to ensure that views of Ely Cathedral are protected. It sets out criteria to guide the design of</p>

Strategic and Development Control Policies			
Policy	Description of Avoidance Mitigation Measures within the Local Plan	Screening Category	Screening Assessment
including Cathedral Views			<p>development proposals. The policy will not directly lead to development and promotes measures intended to have a positive effect.</p> <p>The policy itself will therefore not result in likely significant effects, either alone or in combination, as it seeks to protect the natural and built environment.</p>
LP29: Conserving Local Green Spaces	This policy may help to mitigate the potential impacts of development in relation to increased recreational pressure, as it seeks to protect existing open space from development.	N3	<p>This policy designates areas of open space as Local Green Space and rules out development on these sites in all but exceptional circumstances.</p> <p>All the designated sites are within or adjacent to settlements, are small scale, and protect what is already there. None are near any N2K sites.</p> <p>This is a positive policy as it provides for the protection of Local Green Space that can result in recreational activities being diverted away from N2K sites. This policy is therefore unlikely to result in likely significant effects on N2K sites, as it seeks to protect the natural environment.</p>
LP30: Conserving and Enhancing Biodiversity and Geodiversity	This policy includes mitigation to avoid the potential impacts of development proposed elsewhere in the Plan, as it states that development proposals likely to have an adverse effect, either alone or in combination, on European designates sites, must satisfy the requirements of the Habitats Regulations, determining site specific impacts and avoiding or mitigating against impacts where identified. Proposals having an adverse impact on the integrity of such areas, that cannot be avoided or adequately mitigated to remove any adverse effect, will not be permitted other	N3	<p>This policy specifically seeks to protect the natural environment, including biodiversity and geodiversity, and seeks net gains in biodiversity and enhancement where possible.</p> <p>The policy has a specific section that explicitly provides protection for designated sites. It states: '<i>Development proposals likely to have an adverse effect, either alone or in combination, on European designates sites, must satisfy the requirements of the Habitats Regulations, determining site specific impacts and avoiding or mitigating against impacts where identified</i>'.</p> <p>This policy only supports proposals where there will be no adverse effect on protected species and the wider environment, and therefore is not likely to result in significant effects on N2K sites. Indirectly it has the potential for positive effects on the wider environment, through for example, its policy requirement to seek to deliver a net gain in biodiversity.</p>

Strategic and Development Control Policies			
Policy	Description of Avoidance Mitigation Measures within the Local Plan	Screening Category	Screening Assessment
	than in exceptional circumstances.		
LP31: Development in the Countryside	Policy LP30 Conserving and Enhancing Biodiversity states that the highest level of protection will be afforded to international sites designated for their nature conservation or geological importance. Development proposals that are likely to have an adverse effect, either alone or in-combination, on European sites must satisfy the requirements of the Habitats Regulations, determining site specific impacts and avoiding or mitigating against impacts where identified.	N4	<p>This policy guides development proposals that may come forward in the countryside, which includes any land or area outside of a development envelope or other policy designation or allocation (as identified on the Policies Map).</p> <p>The policy addresses various considerations, including affordable housing exception sites, dwellings for rural workers, replacement of a dwelling, re-use and conversion of non-residential buildings for residential use, mobile homes, non-residential development, agricultural diversification and, protecting the best and most versatile agricultural land.</p> <p>There is no development proposed through the policy itself, as this will occur through lower level planning applications. The policy itself will therefore not result in likely significant effects, either alone or in combination.</p>
LP32: Infill Development in Locations Outside of Development Envelopes	Policy LP30 Conserving and Enhancing Biodiversity states that the highest level of protection will be afforded to international sites designated for their nature conservation or geological importance. Development proposals that are likely to have an adverse effect, either alone or in-combination, on European sites must satisfy the requirements of the Habitats Regulations, determining site specific impacts and avoiding or mitigating against impacts where identified.	N4	<p>This policy sets out criteria to guide infill development in the countryside. It limits infill development to no more than 2 dwellings.</p> <p>There is no development proposed through the policy itself, as this will occur through lower level planning applications. The policy itself will therefore not result in likely significant effects, either alone or in combination.</p>
LP33: Residential Annexes (new policy)	n/a	N4	This policy sets out criteria to guide the design of proposals in relation to residential annexes. It does not provide a location or quantum of development. It could result in very small scale development in terms of

Strategic and Development Control Policies			
Policy	Description of Avoidance Mitigation Measures within the Local Plan	Screening Category	Screening Assessment
			<p>a small increase in bedspaces. However the scale of potential development means there are no impact pathways present.</p> <p>This policy will therefore not result in likely significant effects, either alone or in combination.</p>

Table 10: Screening Assessment of Settlement Policies

4.4 Each settlement chapter includes a general policy that supports proposals that maintain and/or expand community facilities and states that proposals should respect the local character of the settlement. These policies promote development and change, but do not state when, where or how these will be brought forward. These policies have been categorised as ‘N1’, a general policy statement, and have been screened out of the assessment. Each settlement chapter also includes a policy setting out the priority infrastructure items for the settlement. These have been categorised as ‘N7’, as the policies promote development or change by encouraging new community facilities, but it does not state when, where or how these will be brought forward.

4.5 Some of the settlement chapters contain infrastructure policies that have been categorised differently to above, or contain with additional policies to the two standard policies common to all settlement chapters. The screening assessment of these is set out in the table below.

Settlement	Policies	Screening Category	Screening Assessment
Ely	Ely1	N1	<p>This policy sets out the spatial strategy for Ely for which all development proposals need to comply and respond positively to. It includes the delivery of high quality housing-led growth, regeneration of urban brownfield sites, delivery of infrastructure and delivery of new leisure and retail facilities. The policy itself does not set out a quantity of development or allocate sites around Ely.</p> <p>As such, as this policy is a general policy statement the policy itself is not likely to have a significant effect on N2K sites.</p>
	Ely2	N2/N5	<p>This policy sets out priority infrastructure items for the Ely, including the Ely southern bypass, improvements to the cycle network, upgrade to sewage facilities and enhanced health facilities, including the Princess of Wales Hospital.</p>

Settlement	Policies	Screening Category	Screening Assessment
			The Ely southern bypass is not a proposal generated by the Local Plan, but identified in the Third Cambridgeshire Local Transport Plan, 2015 and therefore can be excluded from the assessment. For the rest of the policy, there are no likely significant effects on the nearest N2k site (Ouse Washes) as there are no impact pathways between the changes the policy may cause and the site's qualifying interests.
Soham	Soham2	N2/N5	<p>This policy sets out priority infrastructure items for the village, including improvements to Soham library, provision of a railway station, improvements to the Commons and Fountain Lane recreation ground, provision of a new cricket ground, pedestrian and cycle routes and facilities and public realm enhancements.</p> <p>Soham railway station is not a project generated by the Local Plan, but is identified in the Third Cambridgeshire Local Transport Plan 2015, and therefore can be excluded from the assessment.</p> <p>There are no likely significant effects on the nearest N2K sites: Wicken Fen and Chippenham Fen, as there are no impact pathways between the changes the policy may cause and the site's qualifying interests.</p>
	Soham12	N6	<p>This policy seeks to support the regeneration of Soham town centre, supporting, in principle, the redevelopment of sites within the town centre, especially for new, improved and intensification of sites for retail purposes.</p> <p>It is not considered that this policy will result in development that would have a significant effect on a N2K site because the policy focuses on the regeneration of an existing urban area to the likelihood of negative effects is low.</p>
	Soham13	N3	This policy protects the network of green lanes and public rights of way in Soham and seeks to protect and enhance the wildlife, landscape and recreational quality of the Commons. As a policy that intends to protect and enhance the historic and natural (including biodiversity) environment, it is not likely to have a significant effect on a N2K site.
Witchford	Witchford7	N3	This policy seeks to protect open and undeveloped areas of land around the village of Witchford. Such areas may also provide opportunities for outdoor sport and recreation and access to the countryside. . As a policy that intends to protect and enhance the natural environment, it is not likely to have a significant effect on a N2K site.

Table 11: Screening Assessment of Site Allocations

Settlement	Site Policies	Site Ref.	Site Address	Detail	Screening Assessment
Ashley	Ashley3	ASH.LGS1	Wavier Pond, Church Street		This is a Local Green Space site allocation that will protect open space from development. It can be screened out as there are no impact pathways to N2K sites.
Bottisham	Bottisham4	BOT.H1	Land east of Bell Road	50 dwellings New allotments	Bottisham is approximately 4km from Devil's Dyke SAC. This allocation alone is unlikely to lead to a significant effect on N2K sites due to the scale of development proposed. However, there is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Devil's Dyke SAC from residential allocations in combination with one another. There is also the potential for this site to contribute to <u>reduced air quality</u> through traffic movements past Devil's Dyke SAC in combination.
	Bottisham3	BOT.E1	Extension to Tunbridge Lane Business Park	0.9 ha	Bottisham is approximately 4km from Devil's Dyke SAC. There is potential for this site to contribute to <u>reduced air quality</u> through traffic movements past Devil's Dyke SAC in combination.
	Bottisham3	BOT.LGS1	Ancient Meadows		This is a Local Green Space site allocation that will protect open space from development. It can be screened out as there are no impact pathways to N2K sites.
Brinkley	Brinkley3	BRI.LGS.1	Beechcroft Field		This is a Local Green Space site allocation that will protect open space from development. It can be screened out as there are no impact pathways to N2K sites.
Burrough Green / Borough End	Burrough Green / Borough End3	BRG.H1	Land off Brinkley Road, Borough End	11 dwellings	Burrough Green/Burrough End is approximately 3km from Devil's Dyke SAC. This allocation alone is unlikely to lead to a significant effect on N2K sites due to the scale of development proposed. However, there is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Devil's Dyke SAC from residential allocations in combination with one another. There is potential for this site to contribute to <u>reduced air quality</u> through traffic movements past Devil's Dyke SAC in combination.
Burwell	Burwell3	BUR.H1	Land off Newmarket	350 dwellings	Burwell is approximately 3km from Wicken Fen and within 5km of the Devil's Dyke. It has a Water Recycling Centre that connects to Burwell

Settlement	Site Policies	Site Ref.	Site Address	Detail	Screening Assessment
			Road		<p>Lode.</p> <p>There is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Devil's Dyke SAC from this residential allocation alone and in combination with other residential allocations.</p> <p>Wicken Fen is vulnerable to <u>changes in water quantity and quality</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on this key vulnerability in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
		BUR.PH1	Land at Stanford Park, Weirs Drove	91 dwellings	<p>Burwell is approximately 3km from Wicken Fen and within 5km of the Devil's Dyke. It has a Water Recycling Centre that connects to Burwell Lode.</p> <p>This allocation alone is unlikely to lead to a significant effect on N2K sites due to the scale of development proposed. However, there is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Devil's Dyke SAC from residential allocations in combination with one another.</p> <p>Wicken Fen is vulnerable to <u>changes in water quantity and quality</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on this key vulnerability in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
		BUR.M1	Former DS Site, Reach Road	67 dwellings	This site is already under construction and therefore can be screened out.
		BUR.E1	Land at Reach Road	2.8ha	<p>Burwell is approximately 3km from Wicken Fen and within 5km of the Devil's Dyke.</p> <p>There are no impact pathways present between this site and Wicken Fen or Devil's Dyke.</p>
		BUR.LGS1	Pauline Swamp		This is a Local Green Space site allocation that will protect open space from development. It can be screened out as there are no impact pathways to N2K sites.
Cheveley	Cheveley3	CHV.H1	Land between 199 and 209 High Street	15 dwellings	This site is already under construction and therefore can be screened out.

Settlement	Site Policies	Site Ref.	Site Address	Detail	Screening Assessment
		CHV.H2	Brook Stud, High Street	10 dwellings	<p>Cheveley is approximately 4km from Devil's Dyke SAC.</p> <p>This allocation alone is unlikely to lead to a significant effect on N2K sites due to the scale of development proposed. However, there is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Devil's Dyke SAC from residential allocations in combination with one another.</p>
Dullingham	Dullingham3	DUL.H1	Land at Kettlefields	15 dwellings	<p>Dullingham is approximately 2km from Devil's Dyke SAC.</p> <p>This allocation alone is unlikely to lead to a significant effect on N2K sites due to the scale of development proposed. However, there is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Devil's Dyke SAC from residential allocations in combination with one another.</p> <p>There is potential for this site to contribute to <u>reduced air quality</u> through traffic movements past Devil's Dyke SAC in combination.</p>
Ely	Ely3	ELY.H1	Land off Lynn Road	19 dwellings	<p>Ely is approximately 7km from the Ouse Washes SAC. It has two Water Recycling Centres that connect to Ely Ouse.</p> <p>This allocation alone is unlikely to lead to a significant effect on N2K sites due to the scale of development proposed. However, there is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Ouse Washes SAC from residential allocations in combination with one another.</p> <p>The Ouse Washes is vulnerable to <u>changes in water quantity and quality</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on this key vulnerability in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
	Ely3	ELY.H2	Land at Barton Road Car Park	11 dwellings	<p>Ely is approximately 7km from the Ouse Washes SAC. It has two Water Recycling Centres that connect to Ely Ouse.</p> <p>This allocation alone is unlikely to lead to a significant effect on N2K sites due to the scale of development proposed. However, there is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Ouse Washes SAC from residential allocations in combination with</p>

Settlement	Site Policies	Site Ref.	Site Address	Detail	Screening Assessment
					<p>one another.</p> <p>The Ouse Washes is vulnerable to <u>changes in water quantity and quality</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on this key vulnerability in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
	Ely3	ELY.H3	Former Depot, Lisle Lane	58 dwellings	<p>Ely is approximately 7km from the Ouse Washes SAC. It has two Water Recycling Centres that connect to Ely Ouse.</p> <p>This allocation alone is unlikely to lead to a significant effect on N2K sites due to the scale of development proposed. However, there is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Ouse Washes SAC from residential allocations in combination with one another.</p> <p>The Ouse Washes is vulnerable to <u>changes in water quantity and quality</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on this key vulnerability in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
	Ely3	ELY.M1	North Ely	3,000 dwellings	<p>Ely is approximately 7km from the Ouse Washes SAC. It has two Water Recycling Centres that connect to Ely Ouse.</p> <p>There is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Ouse Washes SAC from this residential allocation alone and in combination with other residential allocations.</p> <p>The Ouse Washes is vulnerable to <u>changes in water quantity and quality</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on this key vulnerability in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
	Ely3	ELY.M2	The Grange, Nutholt Lane	10-50 dwellings	<p>Ely is approximately 7km from the Ouse Washes SAC. It has two Water Recycling Centres that connect to Ely Ouse.</p> <p>This allocation alone is unlikely to lead to a significant effect on N2K sites due to the scale of development proposed. However, there is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Ouse Washes SAC from residential allocations in combination with one another.</p>

Settlement	Site Policies	Site Ref.	Site Address	Detail	Screening Assessment
					The Ouse Washes is vulnerable to <u>changes in water quantity and quality</u> . Development could lead to potential effects on this key vulnerability in combination with other residential allocations.
Ely3		ELY.M3	Paradise Area, off Nutholt Lane	50-65 dwellings	<p>Ely is approximately 7km from the Ouse Washes SAC. It has two Water Recycling Centres that connect to Ely Ouse.</p> <p>This allocation alone is unlikely to lead to a significant effect on N2K sites due to the scale of development proposed. However, there is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Ouse Washes SAC from residential allocations in combination with one another.</p> <p>The Ouse Washes is vulnerable to <u>changes in water quantity and quality</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on this key vulnerability in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
Ely3 Ely4		ELY.M4	Station Gateway	100-200 dwellings Employment uses (B1 and B2) Small scale retail	<p>Ely is approximately 7km from the Ouse Washes SAC. It has two Water Recycling Centres that connect to Ely Ouse.</p> <p>This allocation alone is unlikely to lead to a significant effect on N2K sites due to the scale of development proposed. However, there is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Ouse Washes SAC from residential allocations in combination with one another.</p> <p>The Ouse Washes is vulnerable to <u>changes in water quantity and quality</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on this key vulnerability in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
Ely3 Ely5		ELY.M5	Octagon Business Park, Angel Drove	13.1ha	<p>Ely is approximately 7km from the Ouse Washes SAC. It has two Water Recycling Centres that connect to Ely Ouse.</p> <p>The Ouse Washes is vulnerable to <u>changes in water quantity and quality</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on this key vulnerability in combination with other residential allocations.</p>

Settlement	Site Policies	Site Ref.	Site Address	Detail	Screening Assessment
	Ely3 Ely6	ELY.M6	Princess of Wales Hospital	77 dwellings	<p>Ely is approximately 7km from the Ouse Washes SAC. It has two Water Recycling Centres that connect to Ely Ouse.</p> <p>This allocation alone is unlikely to lead to a significant effect on N2K sites due to the scale of development proposed. However, there is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Ouse Washes SAC from residential allocations in combination with one another.</p> <p>The Ouse Washes is vulnerable to <u>changes in water quantity and quality</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on this key vulnerability in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
	Ely3	ELY.E1	Ely Road and Rail Distribution Centre	11.2ha	<p>Ely is approximately 7km from the Ouse Washes SAC. It has two Water Recycling Centres that connect to Ely Ouse.</p> <p>The Ouse Washes is vulnerable to <u>changes in water quantity and quality</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on this key vulnerability in combination with other residential allocations</p>
	Ely3 Ely7	ELY.E2 (a-c)	Lancaster Way Business Park	82.1ha	<p>Ely is approximately 7km from the Ouse Washes SAC. It has two Water Recycling Centres that connect to Ely Ouse.</p> <p>The Ouse Washes is vulnerable to <u>changes in water quantity and quality</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on this key vulnerability in combination with other residential allocations</p>
	Ely3	ELY.L1	Downham Road sports and leisure hub	6.1ha	<p>Ely is approximately 7km from the Ouse Washes SAC. It has two Water Recycling Centres that connect to Ely Ouse.</p> <p>The Ouse Washes is vulnerable to <u>changes in water quantity and quality</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on this key vulnerability in combination with other residential allocations</p>
Fordham	Fordham3	FRD.H1	Land south of Mildenhall Road, East of Collin's Hill	20 dwellings	<p>Fordham is approximately 1.5km from Chippenham Fen (part of Fenland SAC).</p> <p>This allocation alone is unlikely to lead to a significant effect on N2K sites due to the scale of development proposed. However, there is</p>

Settlement	Site Policies	Site Ref.	Site Address	Detail	Screening Assessment
					<p>potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Chippenham Fen from residential allocations in combination with one another.</p> <p>Chippenham Fen is vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
		FRD.H2	Land north east of Rules Garden	15 dwellings	<p>Fordham is approximately 1.5km from Chippenham Fen (part of Fenland SAC).</p> <p>This allocation alone is unlikely to lead to a significant effect on N2K sites due to the scale of development proposed. However, there is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Chippenham Fen from residential allocations in combination with one another.</p> <p>Chippenham Fen is vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
		FRD.H3	Land off Station Road	27 dwellings	<p>Fordham is approximately 1.5km from Chippenham Fen (part of Fenland SAC).</p> <p>This allocation alone is unlikely to lead to a significant effect on N2K sites due to the scale of development proposed. However, there is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Chippenham Fen from residential allocations in combination with one another.</p>
		FRD.H4	Land off Steward's Field	12 dwellings	<p>Fordham is approximately 1.5km from Chippenham Fen (part of Fenland SAC).</p> <p>This allocation alone is unlikely to lead to a significant effect on N2K sites due to the scale of development proposed. However, there is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Chippenham Fen from residential allocations in combination with one another.</p>

Settlement	Site Policies	Site Ref.	Site Address	Detail	Screening Assessment
					Chippenham Fen is vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u> . Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.
	Fordham4	FRD.M1	Scotsdale Garden Centre, Market Street	150 dwellings Employment land (between 1-2ha) Community facilities, such as open space and recreational facilities	<p>Fordham is approximately 1.5km from Chippenham Fen (part of Fenland SAC).</p> <p>This allocation alone is unlikely to lead to a significant effect on N2K sites due to the scale of development proposed. However, there is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Chippenham Fen from residential allocations in combination with one another.</p> <p>Chippenham Fen is vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
	Fordham5	FRD.M2	Land north of Mildenhall Road	79 dwellings (maximum) Open space and recreational facilities (an increase in dwellings from the Further Draft)	<p>Fordham is approximately 1.5km from Chippenham Fen (part of Fenland SAC).</p> <p>This allocation alone is unlikely to lead to a significant effect on N2K sites due to the scale of development proposed. However, there is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Chippenham Fen from residential allocations in combination with one another.</p> <p>Chippenham Fen is vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
	Fordham6	FRD.E1	Employment cluster, south of Fordham	83.2ha Allocated for B1/B2/B8 uses, except site D which is for B1/B2 only Undertake	<p>Fordham is approximately 1.5km from Chippenham Fen (part of Fenland SAC).</p> <p>The employment allocation FRD.E1D is less than 400m from the Fenland SAC (Chippenham Fen). There is therefore potential for <u>urbanisation effects</u> relating to construction and operational activities and potentially effects on <u>water quality and quantity</u> from surface</p>

Settlement	Site Policies	Site Ref.	Site Address	Detail	Screening Assessment
				project level HRA screening	<p>water run-off and increased demand for water.</p> <p>At this stage there is some uncertainty as to whether the proposals, either in isolation or in combination with other development, will have a significant effect on the integrity of Chippenham Fen and therefore they have been screened in.</p>
Haddenham	Haddenham3 Haddenham4	HAD.H1	Land off West End (new site)	54 dwellings	<p>Haddenham is approximately 5km from the Ouse Washes SAC. It has a Water Recycling Centre.</p> <p>This allocation alone is unlikely to lead to a significant effect on N2K sites due to the scale of development proposed. However, there is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Ouse Washes SAC from residential allocations in combination with one another.</p>
	Haddenham3	HAD.H2	Land at New Road	24 dwellings	<p>Haddenham is approximately 5km from the Ouse Washes SAC. It has a Water Recycling Centre.</p> <p>This allocation alone is unlikely to lead to a significant effect on N2K sites due to the scale of development proposed. However, there is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Ouse Washes SAC from residential allocations in combination with one another.</p> <p>The Ouse Washes is vulnerable to <u>changes in water quantity and quality</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on this key vulnerability in combination with other residential allocations</p>
		HAD.H3	Land east of Chewells Lane	40 dwellings	<p>Haddenham is approximately 5km from the Ouse Washes SAC. It has a Water Recycling Centre.</p> <p>This allocation alone is unlikely to lead to a significant effect on N2K sites due to the scale of development proposed. However, there is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Ouse Washes SAC from residential allocations in combination with one another.</p> <p>The Ouse Washes is vulnerable to <u>changes in water quantity and quality</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on this key vulnerability in combination with other residential allocations</p>

Settlement	Site Policies	Site Ref.	Site Address	Detail	Screening Assessment
		HAD.E1	Land at Haddenham Business Park, Station Road	0.8ha	<p>Haddenham is approximately 5km from the Ouse Washes SAC. It has a Water Recycling Centre.</p> <p>The Ouse Washes is vulnerable to <u>changes in water quantity and quality</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on this key vulnerability in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
Isleham	Isleham3	ISL.H1	Land south and west of Lady Frances Court	40 dwellings (an increase in dwellings from the Further Draft)	<p>Isleham is approximately 4 km from Chippenham Fen (part of Fenland SAC). It has a Water Recycling Centre that connects to Ely Ouse.</p> <p>This allocation alone is unlikely to lead to a significant effect on N2K sites due to the scale of development proposed. However, there is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Chippenham Fen from residential allocations in combination with one another.</p> <p>Chippenham Fen is vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
	Isleham3	ISL.H2	Land at 5a Fordham Road	10 dwellings (a reduction in dwellings from the Further Draft)	<p>Isleham is approximately 4 km from Chippenham Fen (part of Fenland SAC). It has a Water Recycling Centre that connects to Ely Ouse.</p> <p>This allocation alone is unlikely to lead to a significant effect on N2K sites due to the scale of development proposed. However, there is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Chippenham Fen from residential allocations in combination with one another.</p> <p>Chippenham Fen is vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
	Isleham3	ISL.H3	Land west of Hall Barn Road	14 dwellings (an increase in dwellings from the Further	<p>Isleham is approximately 4 km from Chippenham Fen (part of Fenland SAC). It has a Water Recycling Centre that connects to Ely Ouse.</p> <p>This allocation alone is unlikely to lead to a significant effect on N2K</p>

Settlement	Site Policies	Site Ref.	Site Address	Detail	Screening Assessment
				Draft)	<p>sites due to the scale of development proposed. However, there is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Chippenham Fen from residential allocations in combination with one another.</p> <p>Chippenham Fen is vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
	Isleham4	ISL.H4	Land off Fordham Road	125 dwellings (a reduction in dwellings from the Further Draft) 1-1.5ha for recreational facilities	<p>Isleham is approximately 4 km from Chippenham Fen (part of Fenland SAC). It has a Water Recycling Centre that connects to Ely Ouse.</p> <p>This allocation alone is unlikely to lead to a significant effect on N2K sites due to the scale of development proposed. However, there is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Chippenham Fen from residential allocations in combination with one another.</p> <p>Chippenham Fen is vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
	Isleham3	ISL.E1	Land adjacent to Hall Barn Road Industrial Estate	0.8 ha	<p>Isleham is approximately 4 km from Chippenham Fen (part of Fenland SAC). It has a Water Recycling Centre that connects to Ely Ouse.</p> <p>Chippenham Fen is vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
Kennett	Kennett4	KEN.M1	Land to the West of Station Road	500 dwellings 2-5ha employment element Primary school Local centre with retail and	<p>Kennett is located within 2km of land designated as Breckland Farmland SSSI, a component of Breckland SPA. Residential development in this location poses a potential risk to the notified Stone Curlew interest. There is potential for <u>increased disturbance from recreational pressure</u>.</p> <p>The site is close to Chippenham Fen (approximately 4.5km) and there</p>

Settlement	Site Policies	Site Ref.	Site Address	Detail	Screening Assessment
				community facilities	<p>is potential for development to place <u>increased disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on this N2K site as well as the Breckland SPA.</p> <p>Chippenham Fen is vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
Kirtling	Kirtling3	KIR.LGS1	Kirtling Playing Field		This is a Local Green Space site allocation that will protect open space from development. It can be screened out as there are no impact pathways to N2K sites.
	Kirtling3	KIR.LGS2	Cricket Pitch		This is a Local Green Space site allocation that will protect open space from development. It can be screened out as there are no impact pathways to N2K sites.
Little Downham	Little Downham3	Land West of Ely Road	LTD.H1	25 dwellings	<p>Little Downham is approximately 4.3km from Ouse Washes SAC. It has a Water Recycling Centre.</p> <p>This allocation alone is unlikely to lead to a significant effect on N2K sites due to the scale of development proposed. However, there is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Ouse Washes SAC from residential allocations in combination with one another.</p> <p>The Ouse Washes is vulnerable to <u>changes in water quantity and quality</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on this key vulnerability in combination with other residential allocations</p>
Little Thetford	Little Thetford3	LTT.H1	Kand north of The Wyches	15 dwellings	<p>Little Thetford is approximately 6 km from Wicken Fen.</p> <p>This allocation alone is unlikely to lead to a significant effect on N2K sites due to the scale of development proposed. However, there is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Wicken Fen SAC from residential allocations in combination with one another.</p> <p>Wicken Fen is vulnerable to <u>changes in water quantity and quality</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on this key vulnerability in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
	Little Thetford3	LTT.H2	Land south of Caravan Park,	10 dwellings	Little Thetford is approximately 6 km from Wicken Fen.

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			Two Acres, Ely Road		<p>This allocation alone is unlikely to lead to a significant effect on N2K sites due to the scale of development proposed. However, there is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Wicken Fen SAC from residential allocations in combination with one another.</p> <p>Wicken Fen is vulnerable to <u>changes in water quantity and quality</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on this key vulnerability in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
Littleport	Littleport3	LIT.H1	Old Station Goods Yard, Station Road	50 dwellings	<p>Littleport is approximately 5km from the Ouse Washes SAC. It has a Water Recycling Centre.</p> <p>The Ouse Washes are vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development in close proximity could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities.</p> <p>This allocation alone is unlikely to lead to a significant effect on N2K sites due to the scale of development proposed. However, there is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Ouse Washes SAC from residential allocations in combination with one another.</p>
	Littleport3	LIT.H2	Highfield Farm, Ely Road	269 dwellings (dwellings remaining)	<p>Littleport is approximately 5km from the Ouse Washes SAC.</p> <p>This site allocation is already under construction and therefore can be screened out.</p>
	Littleport3	LIT.H3	Land north east of 5 Beck Lane	21 dwellings (an increase in dwellings from the Further Draft)	<p>Littleport is approximately 5km from the Ouse Washes SAC. It has a Water Recycling Centre.</p> <p>There is potential for <u>physical loss of habitat</u> outside of the boundary of the Ouse Washes SAC used by migratory (wintering) birds for rest and grazing.</p> <p>The Ouse Washes are vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development in close proximity could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities.</p> <p>This allocation alone is unlikely to lead to a significant effect on N2K</p>

Settlement	Site Policies	Site Ref.	Site Address	Detail	Screening Assessment
					sites due to the scale of development proposed. However, there is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Ouses Washes SAC from residential allocations in combination with one another.
	Littleport3	LIT.H4	Field west of 1B Upton Lane	63 dwellings	<p>Littleport is approximately 5km from the Ouse Washes SAC. It has a Water Recycling Centre.</p> <p>There is potential for <u>physical loss of habitat</u> outside of the boundary of the Ouse Washes SAC used by migratory (wintering) birds for rest and grazing.</p> <p>The Ouse Washes are vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development in close proximity could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities.</p> <p>This allocation alone is unlikely to lead to a significant effect on N2K sites due to the scale of development proposed. However, there is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Ouse Washes SAC from residential allocations in combination with one another.</p>
	Littleport3 Littleport4	LIT.H5	Land west of Highfields	600 dwellings Element of employment Public open space and play facilities Community facilities Local retail and small scale employment	<p>Littleport is approximately 5km from the Ouse Washes SAC. It has a Water Recycling Centre.</p> <p>There is potential for <u>physical loss of habitat</u> outside of the boundary of the Ouse Washes SAC used by migratory (wintering) birds for rest and grazing.</p> <p>The Ouse Washes are vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development in close proximity could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities.</p> <p>There is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Ouse Washes SAC from this residential allocation alone and in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
	Littleport3 Littleport5	LIT.M1	West of Woodfen Road	250 dwellings	<p>Littleport is approximately 5km from the Ouse Washes SAC. It has a Water Recycling Centre.</p> <p>There is potential for <u>physical loss of habitat</u> outside of the boundary of the Ouse Washes SAC used by migratory (wintering) birds for rest</p>

Settlement	Site Policies	Site Ref.	Site Address	Detail	Screening Assessment
					<p>and grazing.</p> <p>The Ouse Washes are vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development in close proximity could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities.</p> <p>There is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Ouse Washes SAC from this residential allocation alone and in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
Littleport3 Littleport6		LIT.M2	Land south of Grange Lane	1,200 dwellings (600 in the plan period) Element of employment and local retail On site community facilities and infrastructure Potential country park	<p>Littleport is approximately 5km from the Ouse Washes SAC. It has a Water Recycling Centre.</p> <p>There is potential for <u>physical loss of habitat</u> outside of the boundary of the Ouse Washes SAC used by migratory (wintering) birds for rest and grazing.</p> <p>The Ouse Washes are vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development in close proximity could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities.</p> <p>There is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Ouse Washes SAC from this residential allocation alone and in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
Littleport3 Littleport7		LIT.E1	Land north of Wisbech Rd Business Park	33.0ha	<p>Littleport is approximately 5km from the Ouse Washes SAC. It has a Water Recycling Centre.</p> <p>There is potential for <u>physical loss of habitat</u> outside of the boundary of the Ouse Washes SAC used by migratory (wintering) birds for rest and grazing.</p> <p>The Ouse Washes are vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development in close proximity could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities.</p>
Littleport3		LIT.E2	Land west of 150 Wisbech Road	1.5ha	<p>Littleport is approximately 5km from the Ouse Washes SAC. It has a Water Recycling Centre.</p> <p>There is potential for <u>physical loss of habitat</u> outside of the boundary of the Ouse Washes SAC used by migratory (wintering) birds for rest</p>

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					<p>and grazing.</p> <p>The Ouse Washes are vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development in close proximity could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities.</p>
Lode with Long Meadow	Lode with Long Meadow3	LOD.H1	Sunny Ridge Farmyard, Station Road	20 dwellings	<p>Lode with Long Meadow is approximately 6km from Devil's Dyke SAC and 7km from Wicken Fen. It has a Water Recycling Centre.</p> <p>This allocation alone is unlikely to lead to a significant effect on N2K sites due to the scale of development proposed. However, there is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Devil's Dyke SAC and Wicken Fen SAC from residential allocations in combination with one another.</p>
Mepal	Mepal3 Mepal4	MEP.H1	Land at Brick Lane	50 dwellings	<p>Mepal is approximately 0.5 km from Ouse Washes SAC. It has a Water Recycling Centre.</p> <p>There is potential for <u>physical loss of habitat</u> outside of the boundary of the Ouse Washes SAC used by migratory (wintering) birds for rest and grazing.</p> <p>The Ouse Washes are vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.</p> <p>This allocation alone is unlikely to lead to a significant effect on N2K sites due to the scale of development proposed. However, there is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Ouse Washes SAC from residential allocations in combination with one another.</p>
Newmarket Fringe	Newmarket Fringe3	NFR.H1	Site Adjacent to 37 St Johns Avenue (new site)	21 dwellings	<p>The Newmarket Fringe allocation is approximately 1km from Devil's Dyke SAC and 5.8km from Chippenham Fen SAC. It has a Water Recycling Centre that connects to Newmarket Public Drain.</p> <p>This allocation alone is unlikely to lead to a significant effect on N2K sites due to the scale of development proposed. However, there is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Devil's Dyke and Chippenham Fen SAC from residential allocations in combination with one another.</p>

Settlement	Site Policies	Site Ref.	Site Address	Detail	Screening Assessment
					Chippenham Fen is vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u> . Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.
	Newmarket Fringe3	NFR.LGS1	Peterhouse Drive		This is a Local Green Space site allocation that will protect open space from development. It can be screened out as there are no impact pathways to N2K sites.
Reach	Reach3	REA.LGS1	The Hythe		This is a Local Green Space site allocation that will protect open space from development. It can be screened out as there are no impact pathways to N2K sites.
Soham	Soham3 Soham4	SOH.H1	Land at Brook Street	300 dwellings 8ha public open space on site, including at least 2 play areas	<p>Soham is approximately 3km from Wicken Fen and 5km from Chippenham Fen. It has a Water Recycling Centre that connects to Soham Lode.</p> <p>There is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Chippenham Fen and Wicken Fen from this residential allocation alone and in combination with other residential allocations.</p> <p>Chippenham Fen and Wicken Fen are both vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
	Soham3	SOH.H2	Land at 117 Mereside	11 dwellings	<p>Soham is approximately 3km from Wicken Fen and 5km from Chippenham Fen. It has a Water Recycling Centre that connects to Soham Lode.</p> <p>There is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Chippenham Fen and Wicken Fen from this residential allocation alone and in combination with other residential allocations.</p> <p>Chippenham Fen and Wicken Fen are both vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
	Soham3	SOH.H3	Land rear of 23-49 Fordham Road	87 dwellings	Soham is approximately 3km from Wicken Fen and 5km from Chippenham Fen. It has a Water Recycling Centre that connects to Soham Lode.

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					<p>There is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Chippenham Fen and Wicken Fen in combination with other residential allocations.</p> <p>Chippenham Fen and Wicken Fen are both vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
	Soham3	SOH.H4	Land off Fordham Road	90 dwellings	<p>Soham is approximately 3km from Wicken Fen and 5km from Chippenham Fen. It has a Water Recycling Centre that connects to Soham Lode.</p> <p>There is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Chippenham Fen and Wicken Fen in combination with other residential allocations.</p> <p>Chippenham Fen and Wicken Fen are both vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
	Soham3 Soham5	SOH.H5	Land south of Blackberry Lane	130 dwellings (a reduction from Further Draft stage) 1.1 ha open space	<p>Soham is approximately 3km from Wicken Fen and 5km from Chippenham Fen. It has a Water Recycling Centre that connects to Soham Lode.</p> <p>There is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Chippenham Fen and Wicken Fen in combination with other residential allocations.</p> <p>Chippenham Fen and Wicken Fen are both vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
	Soham3 Soham6	SOH.H6	Land north of Blackberry	85 dwellings	<p>Soham is approximately 3km from Wicken Fen and 5km from Chippenham Fen. It has a Water Recycling Centre that connects to</p>

Settlement	Site Policies	Site Ref.	Site Address	Detail	Screening Assessment
			Lane	(a reduction from Further Draft stage) 0.7 ha open space	<p>Soham Lode.</p> <p>There is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Chippenham Fen and Wicken Fen in combination with other residential allocations.</p> <p>Chippenham Fen and Wicken Fen are both vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
	Soham3	SOH.H7	Land west of The Cherry Tree Public House, Cherrytree Lane	126 dwellings	<p>Soham is approximately 3km from Wicken Fen and 5km from Chippenham Fen. It has a Water Recycling Centre that connects to Soham Lode.</p> <p>There is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Chippenham Fen and Wicken Fen in combination with other residential allocations.</p> <p>Chippenham Fen and Wicken Fen are both vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
	Soham3	SOH.H8	Land parcel east of 2 The Shade	88 dwellings (an increase from Further Draft stage)	<p>Soham is approximately 3km from Wicken Fen and 5km from Chippenham Fen. It has a Water Recycling Centre that connects to Soham Lode.</p> <p>There is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Chippenham Fen and Wicken Fen in combination with other residential allocations.</p> <p>Chippenham Fen and Wicken Fen are both vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
	Soham3 Soham7	SOH.H9	Land south of Cherrytree	200 dwellings On site primary	<p>Soham is approximately 3km from Wicken Fen and 5km from Chippenham Fen. It has a Water Recycling Centre that connects to</p>

Settlement	Site Policies	Site Ref.	Site Address	Detail	Screening Assessment
			Lane, west of Orchard Row	school Open space	Soham Lode. There is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Chippenham Fen and Wicken Fen in combination with other residential allocations. Chippenham Fen and Wicken Fen are both vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u> . Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.
	Soham3	SOH.H10	Land off Kingfisher Drive	100 dwellings maximum	Soham is approximately 3km from Wicken Fen and 5km from Chippenham Fen. It has a Water Recycling Centre that connects to Soham Lode. There is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Chippenham Fen and Wicken Fen in combination with other residential allocations. Chippenham Fen and Wicken Fen are both vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u> . Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.
	Soham3 Soham8	SOH.H11	Land at Northfield Road	170 dwellings (a reduction from Further Draft stage) Open space	Soham is approximately 3km from Wicken Fen and 5km from Chippenham Fen. It has a Water Recycling Centre that connects to Soham Lode. There is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Chippenham Fen and Wicken Fen in combination with other residential allocations. Chippenham Fen and Wicken Fen are both vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u> . Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.
	Soham3	SOH.H12	Land to rear of 7 and 7A	17 dwellings	Soham is approximately 3km from Wicken Fen and 5km from Chippenham Fen. It has a Water Recycling Centre that connects to

Settlement	Site Policies	Site Ref.	Site Address	Detail	Screening Assessment
			Townsend		<p>Soham Lode.</p> <p>There is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Chippenham Fen and Wicken Fen in combination with other residential allocations.</p> <p>Chippenham Fen and Wicken Fen are both vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
	Soham3	SOH.H13	Soham Health Centre, Pratt Street	10 dwellings	<p>Soham is approximately 3km from Wicken Fen and over 5km from Chippenham Fen.</p> <p>There is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Wicken Fen and Chippenham Fen and possibly Devil's Dyke in combination.</p> <p>Chippenham Fen and Wicken Fen are both vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
	Soham3	SOH.H14	90 Paddock Street	10 dwellings	<p>Soham is approximately 3km from Wicken Fen and 5km from Chippenham Fen. It has a Water Recycling Centre that connects to Soham Lode.</p> <p>There is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Chippenham Fen and Wicken Fen in combination with other residential allocations.</p> <p>Chippenham Fen and Wicken Fen are both vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
	Soham3	SOH.H15	Grassed area opposite 3 The Shade (new	13 dwellings	<p>Soham is approximately 3km from Wicken Fen and 5km from Chippenham Fen. It has a Water Recycling Centre that connects to Soham Lode.</p>

Settlement	Site Policies	Site Ref.	Site Address	Detail	Screening Assessment
			site)		<p>There is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Chippenham Fen and Wicken Fen in combination with other residential allocations.</p> <p>Chippenham Fen and Wicken Fen are both vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
Soham3 Soham9		SOH.M1	Eastern Gateway	<p>550 dwellings (a reduction from Further Draft stage)</p> <p>0.5ha of B1/B2 employment land 0.4ha extension to medial centre 1.1ha for extension to primary school 11.6ha open space 3ha garden centre or employment use Small scale retail</p>	<p>Soham is approximately 3km from Wicken Fen and 5km from Chippenham Fen. It has a Water Recycling Centre that connects to Soham Lode.</p> <p>There is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Chippenham Fen and Wicken Fen from this residential allocation alone and in combination with other residential allocations.</p> <p>Chippenham Fen and Wicken Fen are both vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
Soham3		SOH.M2	Land north west of The Shade School	20 dwellings	<p>Soham is approximately 3km from Wicken Fen and 5km from Chippenham Fen. It has a Water Recycling Centre that connects to Soham Lode.</p> <p>There is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Chippenham Fen and Wicken Fen in combination with other residential allocations.</p>

Settlement	Site Policies	Site Ref.	Site Address	Detail	Screening Assessment
					Chippenham Fen and Wicken Fen are both vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u> . Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.
	Soham3 Soham10	SOH.M3	Land off Station Road	90 dwellings 0.5ha employment land 0.6ha train station building and ancillary facilities	Soham is approximately 3km from Wicken Fen and 5km from Chippenham Fen. It has a Water Recycling Centre that connects to Soham Lode. There is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Chippenham Fen and Wicken Fen in combination with other residential allocations. Chippenham Fen and Wicken Fen are both vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u> . Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.
	Soham3 Soham11	SOH.E1	Land east of A142 bypass	10.8ha	Soham is approximately 3km from Wicken Fen and 5km from Chippenham Fen. It has a Water Recycling Centre that connects to Soham Lode. Chippenham Fen and Wicken Fen are both vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u> . Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.
Stretham	Stretham3 Stretham4	STR.H1	Land at Manor Farm, Stretham	100 dwellings Cemetery extension	Stretham is approximately 5km from Wicken Fen This site allocation is already under construction and therefore can be screened out.
Stuntney	Stuntney3	STU.LGS1	Stutney Play Area		This is a Local Green Space site allocation that will protect open space from development. It can be screened out as there are no impact pathways to N2K sites.
Sutton	Sutton3 Sutton4	SUT.H1	Land north of the Brook and west of Mepal	50-250 dwellings Open space	Sutton is approximately 1.5km from the Ouse Washes SAC. There is potential for <u>physical loss of habitat</u> outside of the boundary of the Ouse Washes SAC used by migratory (wintering) birds for rest

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			Rd		<p>and grazing.</p> <p>The Ouse Washes are vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.</p> <p>There is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Ouse Washes SAC from this residential allocation alone and in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
	Sutton3 Sutton5	SUT.H2	Land east of Garden Close	25 dwellings	<p>Sutton is approximately 1.5km from the Ouse Washes SAC.</p> <p>There is potential for <u>physical loss of habitat</u> outside of the boundary of the Ouse Washes SAC used by migratory (wintering) birds for rest and grazing.</p> <p>The Ouse Washes are vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.</p> <p>There is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Ouse Washes in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
	Sutton3	SUT.E1	Elean Business Park	34.7ha	<p>Sutton is approximately 1.5km from the Ouse Washes SAC.</p> <p>The Ouse Washes are vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
	Sutton3	SUT.LGS1	Recreation Ground, of The Brook		<p>This is a Local Green Space site allocation that will protect open space from development. It can be screened out as there are no impact pathways to N2K sites.</p>
	Sutton3	SUT.LGS2	Old Recreation Ground, Lawn Lane		<p>This is a Local Green Space site allocation that will protect open space from development. It can be screened out as there are no impact pathways to N2K sites.</p>
Swaffham Bulbeck	Swaffham Bulbeck3 Swaffham Bulbeck4	SWB.H1	Land off Heath Road and Quarry Lane	38 dwellings	<p>Swaffham Bulbeck is approximately 4km from Devil's Dyke SAC and 7km from Wicken Fen.</p>

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					<p>There is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Devil's Dyke and Wicken Fen in combination with other residential allocations.</p> <p>There is potential for this site to contribute to <u>reduced air quality</u> through traffic movements past Devil's Dyke SAC in combination.</p> <p>Wicken Fen is vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
	Swaffham Bulbeck3 Swaffham Bulbeck5	SWB.H2	Land fronting Heath Road	18 dwellings	<p>Swaffham Bulbeck is approximately 4km from Devil's Dyke SAC and 7km from Wicken Fen.</p> <p>There is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Devil's Dyke and Wicken Fen in combination with other residential allocations.</p> <p>There is potential for this site to contribute to <u>reduced air quality</u> through traffic movements past Devil's Dyke SAC in combination.</p> <p>Wicken Fen is vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
	Swaffham Bulbeck3	SWB.H3	Hillside Mill, Quarry Lane (new site)	12 dwellings	<p>Swaffham Bulbeck is approximately 4km from Devil's Dyke SAC and 7km from Wicken Fen.</p> <p>There is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Devil's Dyke and Wicken Fen in combination with other residential allocations.</p> <p>There is potential for this site to contribute to <u>reduced air quality</u> through traffic movements past Devil's Dyke SAC in combination.</p> <p>Wicken Fen is vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.</p>

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Swaffham Prior	Swaffham Prior3 Swaffham Prior4	SWP.E1	Land east of Goodwin Farm, Heath Road	1.1ha	Swaffham Prior is within 1km of Devil's Dyke SAC. There is also the potential for this site to contribute to <u>reduced air quality</u> through traffic movements past Devil's Dyke SAC in combination.
	Swaffham Prior3 Swaffham, Prior5	SWP.H1	Rear of 73 High Street (new site)	20 dwellings	Swaffham Prior is within 1km of Devil's Dyke SAC. There is also the potential for this site to contribute to <u>reduced air quality</u> through traffic movements past Devil's Dyke SAC in combination.
	Swaffham Prior3	SWP.LGS1	Playing Field, High Street		This is a Local Green Space site allocation that will protect open space from development. It can be screened out as there are no impact pathways to N2K sites.
	Swaffham Prior3	SWP.LGS2	Coopers Green, Green Head Road		This is a Local Green Space site allocation that will protect open space from development. It can be screened out as there are no impact pathways to N2K sites.
Wilburton	Wilburton3	WIL.H1	Land off Station Road	35 dwellings	Wilburton is approximately 7km from the Ouse Washes SAC and 8km from Wicken Fen SAC. It has a Water Recycling Centre that connects to Grunty Fen Catchwater. There is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on the Ouse Washes and Wicken Fen in combination with other residential allocations. Both the Ouse Washes and Wicken Fen are vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u> . Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.
	Wilburton3 Wilburton4	WIL.H2	Land west of Clarke's Lane and south of Hinton Way	25 dwellings	Wilburton is approximately 7km from the Ouse Washes SAC and 8km from Wicken Fen SAC. It has a Water Recycling Centre that connects to Grunty Fen Catchwater. There is potential for increased <u>disturbance</u> from recreational activities on the Ouse Washes and Wicken Fen in combination with other residential allocations. Both the Ouse Washes and Wicken Fen are vulnerable to <u>changes in</u>

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					<u>water quality and quantity</u> . Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.
Witcham	Witcham3	WTM.H1	Kings of Witcham, The Slade	10 dwellings	<p>Witcham is approximately 3km from the Ouse Washes SAC. It has a Water Recycling Centre.</p> <p>There is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on the Ouse Washes in combination with other residential allocations.</p> <p>The Ouse Washes is vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on this key vulnerability in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
Witchford	Witchford3 Witchford4	WFD.H1	Land north of Field End	128 dwellings (maximum)	<p>Witchford is approximately 7km from the Ouse Washes SAC. It has a Water Recycling Centre.</p> <p>There is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on the Ouse Washes in combination with other residential allocations.</p> <p>The Ouse Washes are vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
	Witchford3 Witchford5	WFD.H2	Land at Common Road	120 dwellings	<p>Witchford is approximately 7km from the Ouse Washes SAC. It has a Water Recycling Centre.</p> <p>There is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on the Ouse Washes in combination with other residential allocations.</p> <p>The Ouse Washes are vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
	Witchford3	WFD.H3	Land south of Main Road	46 dwellings	Witchford is approximately 7km from the Ouse Washes SAC. It has a Water Recycling Centre.

Settlement	Site Policies	Site Ref.	Site Address	Detail	Screening Assessment
					<p>There is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on the Ouse Washes in combination with other residential allocations.</p> <p>The Ouse Washes are vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
Witchford3		WFD.H4	Land to the rear of 1-7 Sutton Road	13 dwellings	<p>Witchford is approximately 7km from the Ouse Washes SAC. It has a Water Recycling Centre.</p> <p>There is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on the Ouse Washes in combination with other residential allocations.</p> <p>The Ouse Washes are vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
Witchford3		WFD.E1	Sedgeway Business Park	5.4ha	<p>Witchford is approximately 7km from the Ouse Washes SAC. It has a Water Recycling Centre.</p> <p>The Ouse Washes are vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
Witchford3		WFD.LGS1	Victoria Green		This is a Local Green Space site allocation that will protect open space from development. It can be screened out as there are no impact pathways to N2K sites.
Witchford3		WFD.LGS2	Millenium Wood		This is a Local Green Space site allocation that will protect open space from development. It can be screened out as there are no impact pathways to N2K sites.
Witchford3		WFD.LGS3	Manor Road		This is a Local Green Space site allocation that will protect open space from development. It can be screened out as there are no impact pathways to N2K sites.
Witchford3		WFD.LGS4	Between Field		This is a Local Green Space site allocation that will protect open

Settlement	Site Policies	Site Ref.	Site Address	Detail	Screening Assessment
			End and Wheats Close		space from development. It can be screened out as there are no impact pathways to N2K sites.
	Witchford3	WFD.LGS5	Broadway		This is a Local Green Space site allocation that will protect open space from development. It can be screened out as there are no impact pathways to N2K sites.
	Witchford3	WFD.LGS6	Common Road		This is a Local Green Space site allocation that will protect open space from development. It can be screened out as there are no impact pathways to N2K sites.
	Witchford3	WFD.LGS7	Horse Meadow, Main Street		This is a Local Green Space site allocation that will protect open space from development. It can be screened out as there are no impact pathways to N2K sites.

5. Assessment of effects – considering the Local Plan policies in combination with each other and other plans and projects

5.1 **Table 5** above identified that, at an initial screening, the following policies have potential for significant effects (alone or in combination with other plans or projects) on the N2K sites identified in **Table 3**:

- LP2 Level and Distribution of Growth
- LP8 Delivering Prosperity and Jobs

5.2 Additionally, a number of site allocations within the settlement chapters could not be screened out of the initial screening assessment (**Table 7**). These sites are within the following settlements:

- Bottisham
- Burrough Green and Burrough End
- Burwell
- Cheveley
- Dullingham
- Ely
- Fordham
- Haddenham
- Isleham
- Kennett
- Little Downham
- Little Thetford
- Littleport
- Lode with Longmeadow
- Mepal
- Newmarket Fringe
- Soham
- Sutton
- Swaffham Bulbeck
- Swaffham Prior
- Wilburton
- Witcham
- Witchford

5.3 The following section will consider these potential effects in more detail, by impact type. It takes into account the potential in-combination effects with development proposed within surrounding areas and the mitigation measures that are set out in other plans and in the Local Plan itself, to draw conclusions as to the likelihood and significance of such effects occurring.

Physical damage or loss of habitat

5.4 As the N2K sites are protected, it is very unlikely development could result in on-site damage or loss of habitat. The initial screening of the Local Plan in **Table 5** and **Table 7** did not identify any potential for on-site habitat damage or loss as there are no development sites proposed in the Local Plan that overlap any of the boundaries of the N2K sites.

5.5 However, the screening did identify potential for damage or loss of off-site habitat, which although not part of a N2K site, plays an important role in the life cycle of qualifying species and therefore, could have an adverse effect on the integrity of the N2K site. This is particularly relevant to birds, where feeding/foraging areas can be located beyond the boundaries of a protected site.

5.6 The screening assessment identified the following N2K sites potentially at risk from physical damage or loss of off-site habitat as a result of site allocations proposed in the Local Plan.

Table 12: N2K screened in for potential effects in relation to physical damage or loss to off-site habitat

Name of N2K site	Name of settlement/s with residential allocations within 400m of N2K site	Details of Site Allocation	Site Description/Current Use
Ouse Washes	Littleport	LIT.H3 – 21 dwellings	Greenfield; currently in agricultural use
		LIT.H4 – 63 dwellings	Greenfield; open space/outdoor recreation
		LIT.M2 – 1,200 dwellings, plus an element of employment	Greenfield; currently in agricultural use
		LIT.E1 – 33 ha	Greenfield; currently in agricultural use
		LIT.E2 – 1.5 ha	Greenfield; currently in agricultural use
	Mepal	MEP.H1 – 50 dwellings	Greenfield; currently in agricultural use
	Sutton	SUT.H1 – 50-250 dwellings	Greenfield; currently in agricultural use
		SUT.H2 – 25 dwellings	Greenfield; garden and private amenity land

5.7 Those qualifying species of the Ouse Washes SPA known to range further than the designated site: Whooper Swan and Berwick's Swan, are known to travel up to 30km between roosting and

foraging sites¹¹. These birds select certain field types for foraging, including open grassland and arable stubble fields, so their field usage varies from year to year.

5.8 The small scale nature of the proposed development at Mepal (50 dwellings), and its location within the village envelope adjacent to the village to the west of the A142, together with the mitigation provided in the Plan, is such that significant effects on the conservation objectives of the Ouse Washes are unlikely.

5.9 The not insignificant expansion of Littleport could have an impact on migratory (wintering) birds that use the currently agricultural land for rest and grazing outside of the Ouse Washes during the winter season due to the historical loss of foraging areas. A map produced by Lucking et al (2004) illustrated the areas of sensitive bird populations in relation to **wind turbine** development. The map (see **Appendix 3**) does indicate Littleport as an area of high risk, though this is in relation to wind turbines and there are no proposals for wind turbines at Littleport (or elsewhere for that matter). Advice from RSPB also indicates from available data from surveys for Bewick's and Whooper Swans outside of the Ouse Washes (with the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust), the most frequent counts of swans did not coincide with areas proposed for significant development.

5.10 Sutton is very close to the Ouse Washes. Whilst the scale of development is relatively low for Sutton, the location of a relative large allocation (250 dwellings) could potentially impact on migratory (wintering) birds that use the currently agricultural areas for rest and grazing outside of the Ouse Washes during the winter season due to the historical loss of foraging areas. However, the scale of this site (18.3ha, which will include areas of open space) is considered to be insignificant when compared with the large volume of alternative agricultural land available. There is also no known knowledge of birds using the said land for foraging.

5.11 Considering the above issues and evidence, and the scale of development proposed, it is not considered that there is likely to be any significant impact on the conservation objectives of the Ouse Washes.

Other Plans and Projects

5.12 The Ouse Washes Site Improvement Plan¹² sets out details of a habitat creation/restoration strategy to create 500ha of wetland grassland habitat adjacent to the Ouse Washes to offset a historical decline of breeding and wintering bird species on the Ouse Washes. At the time of the Plan, 92ha of habitat creation was underway at Coveney with a further site identified at Sutton. This project provides some mitigation to the potential loss of agricultural land used as rest and foraging areas outside of the Ouse Washes.

5.13 Kings Lynn Core Strategy HRA identified potential effects on the Ouse Washes as a result of the renewable energy and climate change policy, however it concluded no likely significant effects after the policy was modified.

5.14 No other neighbouring Local Plan HRAs have identified damage or loss of habitat as a potential or likely significant effect.

Mitigation Measures in the Plan

5.15 The Proposed Submission Local Plan includes a number of policies that will help to mitigate potential damage or loss of off-site habitat arising from new residential development:

General policies:

¹¹ <https://windfarmbirdsveys.com/services/breeding-bird-surveys/mapping-and-transect-surveys/whooper-swan/>

¹² <file:///H:/Downloads/SIP141009FINALv1.0%20Ouse%20Washes.pdf>

- LP20 Delivering Green Infrastructure
- LP30 Conserving and Enhancing Biodiversity and Geodiversity

Settlement Policies:

- *Mepal*

Mepal1 requires all development proposals to be carefully scrutinised to ensure that there is no adverse impact on the Ouse Washes.

- *Littleport*

Littleport6 requires site **LIT.M2** to deliver a significant net biodiversity gain

Recommendations to ensure no likely significant effects resulting from the Plan

5.16 The Local Plan includes a strong policy framework that will ensure new development protects designated habitats and species, and delivers a net gain in biodiversity where possible, in accordance with the NPPF. Provided that these policies are implemented, this HRA has no further recommendations.

It can reasonably be concluded, after taking into account the above mitigation measures and consideration of other plans, that there will be no likely significant effects, alone or in combination, resulting from damage or loss to habitat through the implementation of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan.

Disturbance from increased recreational pressure

5.17 There is potential for increased visitor pressure and recreational activity arising from residents of new housing within East Cambridgeshire seeking recreational open space to visit close to home and further afield, which may include N2K sites. Recreational use of a N2K site has the potential to disturb sensitive species, cause damage of habitats through trampling and cause eutrophication as a result of dog fouling.

5.18 However, recreational use can be managed and not cause a significant problem. At Woodwalton Fen, dogs are not permitted on the site. At Chippenham Fen, both the site and the surrounding area are privately owned. While there are Public Rights of Way running across the site, access beyond these paths is by permit only. Therefore, recreational use is recognised as part of the site management of most sites, and there are Management Plans to reduce and avoid adverse effects from recreational pressure. At the Ouses Washes, public access to the Ouse Washes is strictly managed and encouraged in some parts (for example, for bird watching at the RSPB Ouse Washes Nature Reserve).

5.19 The screening assessment identified the following N2K sites potentially at risk of adverse effect from recreational pressure as a result of residential allocations proposed in the Local Plan.

Table 13: N2K sites screened in for potential effects in relation to increased recreational pressure

Name of N2K site	Name of settlement/s with residential allocations	Total indicative number of new dwellings within 8km of the N2K site
Devil's Dyke	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bottisham • Burrough Green/Burrough End • Burwell • Lode with Long Meadow • Newmarket Fringe • Swaffham Bulbeck 	591 dwellings
Ouse Washes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ely • Haddenham • Little Downham • Littleport • Mepal • Pymoor • Sutton • Wilburton • Witcham • Witchford 	6,614 dwellings
Wicken Fen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Burwell • Little Thetford • Lode • Soham • Swaffham Bulbeck • Wicken 	2,365 dwellings

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wilburton 	
Chippenham Fen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fordham • Isleham • Kennett • Newmarket Fringe • Soham • Wicken 	3,117 dwellings
Breckland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kennett 	500 dwellings

Devil's Dyke

5.20 Devil's Dyke is accessed via a long distance footpath, a Public Right of Way, running the length of the dyke. Parking is available at the July Racecourse, Newmarket. Although recreation impacts are not listed as a site vulnerability in the Site Improvement Plan, Natural England have advised the council that recreational pressure is an issue.

Ouse Washes

5.21 There is a network of Public Rights of Way in the Washes, the RSPB manage a nature reserve at Welches Dam and, the Wildlife Trust manage a nature reserve at Welney, both of which have a visitor centre and bird hides. Public access and recreational impact is not listed as a vulnerability of the site in the Site Improvement Plan.

Wicken Fen

5.22 Public access is actively encouraged by the National Trust, which places public access "at the very heart of the Wicken Fen Vision"¹³ to provide green space for people to escape the pressures of everyday life and have access to nature. As a National Nature Reserve, visitor access to Wicken Fen is encouraged and managed. The site is open to the public throughout the year, however, entry to the site is by permit only to help control visitor numbers. Public access and recreational impact is not listed as a vulnerability of the site in the Site Improvement Plan.

Chippenham Fen

5.23 Public access is limited to Public Rights of Way and is by permit only, which are generally requested by naturalists. Public access and recreational impact is not listed as a vulnerability of the site in the Site Improvement Plan.

5.24 In view of the policy framework in the Local Plan for the protection and enhancement of existing open space, and new development to either provide open space on site or make financial contributions to off-site provision, additional recreational use on Devil's Dyke, Ouse Washes, Wicken Fen and Chippenham Fen is unlikely to result in significant effects.

Breckland

5.25 The qualifying features of the Breckland SPA; Stone Curlew, Nightjar and Woodlark, are sensitive to disturbance by human activity; a vulnerability listed in the Site Improvement Plan.

Kennett:

5.26 All 500 dwellings are proposed to come forward via a single, large scale mixed use site: KEN.M1 and Policy **Kennett4**. The site is approximately 2km from Breckland Farmland SSSI, a component of Breckland SPA. This SSSI lies between Bury St Edmunds in Suffolk and Swaffham in Norfolk. The designation citation for the SSSI states:

¹³ <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/wicken-fen-nature-reserve/documents/wicken-fen-vision-strategy-document.pdf>

“The predominant land use within the SSSI is arable. This is characterised by field scale vegetables and root crops, generally in rotation with cereals and outdoor pig units. Management for gamebirds is also a characteristic feature. Stone curlews nest from March each year in cultivated land which has plenty of bare ground and very short vegetation. Late sown spring crops such as sugar beet and vegetables are favoured. They also occupy set-aside where this has been rotovated. Stone curlews are very sensitive to recreational disturbance and benefit from lack of recreational access on agricultural land; they are not usually affected by mechanised agricultural operations. Other habitats such as grassland are used for foraging. A restored mineral working also supports breeding stone curlews. Breckland Farmland SSSI is adjoined by a number of heathland SSSIs which also provide breeding and foraging habitat for stone curlew”¹⁴.

5.27 Natural England’s Impact Risk Zones tool, available through www.magic.gov.uk, indicates that residential development in the location of site KEN.M1, poses a potential risk to the notified Stone Curlew interest of Breckland Farmland SSSI, and thereby the relevant qualifying feature of the SPA. Natural England advise pathways for development related impacts include damage to and disturbance of habitat, increased disturbance from people, lighting and noise.

5.28 Disturbance on the Stone curlew qualifying feature caused by urbanisation effects as a result of development at site KEN.M1 are unlikely, as the site is greater than 400m in distance from the Breckland Farmland SSSI.

5.29 In terms of disturbance impacts from recreational pressure, it is useful to look to the recent HRA of the Breckland Local Plan¹⁵. The HRA applied a 1500m buffer around the boundary of the SPA to indicate where habitat supports the Stone curlew. A secondary buffer was then applied – based on 1km cells that held at least 5 nesting attempts recorded between 2011-2015 and relates to cells within 3km of the SPA only. In addition, orange grid cells show areas where there are no or limited (less than half the area) survey data available from the RSPB. Site KEN.M1 falls within the orange grid cells. The Breckland HRA recommends a precautionary approach should be taken to sites that fall within this area and that a project level HRA will need to assess the habitat suitability and any need for additional survey work.

5.30 On this basis, recreational impacts as a result of site KEN.M1 are currently uncertain and cannot be screened out at the Local Plan level. However, it is appropriate that they are assessed by a project level HRA, when more detail is known about a development proposal. Policy **Kennett4** requires this project level assessment.

Other Plans and Projects

5.31 The review of other relevant plans identified potential effects on N2K sites scoped into the HRA in relation to recreational pressure. However, the HRA work for each of the Local Authorities concluded that there would be no residual adverse effect after taking into account mitigation measures, proposed in the Local Plan or elsewhere. The Forest Heath Site Allocations Local Plan HRA identified potential for likely significant effects on Breckland SPA. This was due to Site allocations being within 7.5km of one or more N2K sites. Likely significant recreation pressure effects on Breckland SPA were subsequently ruled out, as it was judged that the mitigation offered by the policies in the Plan, together with the linkages to the Recreation Mitigation and Monitoring Strategy set out in the Accessible Natural Greenspace Study, was sufficient to avoid likely significant effects. The HRA for the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan identified potential effects as a result of increased recreation pressure on Devil’s Dyke SAC and Fenland SAC. No likely significant effects were concluded in relation to these N2K sites, as there were no major allocations within 5km of the sites and in relation to Fenland SAC, visitor numbers are carefully managed.

¹⁴ <https://necmsi.esdm.co.uk/PDFsForWeb/Citation/2000442.pdf>

¹⁵ file:///H:/Downloads/Breckland_HRA_preferred_sites_and_settlements_180916.pdf

Mitigation Measures in the Plan

5.32 The Proposed Submission Local Plan includes a number of policies that will help to mitigate potential recreational pressure arising from new residential development:

General policies:

- LP17 Creating a Sustainable, Efficient and Resilient Transport Network
- LP20 Delivering Green Infrastructure
- LP21 Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities
- LP29 Conserving Local Green Spaces
- LP30 Conserving and Enhancing Biodiversity and Geodiversity

5.33 These policies aim to encourage improvement to existing open space, sport and recreation facilities; provide new open space, sport and recreation facilities, safeguard existing open spaces from development, ensure development proposals contribute to creating new or enhancement of existing green infrastructure, and require a financial contribution (where appropriate) towards the delivery, improvement and management of off-site provision of opens space.

Settlement Policies:

- *Burwell*

The Local Plan currently recognises the sensitivity of the Devil's Dyke SAC under the settlement chapter for Burwell. Policy **Burwell1** states all development to the south of the village will be carefully scrutinised to ensure that there is no adverse impact upon the Dyke.

Policy **Burwell4** sets out the requirements in relation to site BUR.H1 for around 350 dwellings. This requires the provision of 2.2 ha of public open space and at least 1 play area, as well as 2.5ha of land for outdoor sports provision. This will contribute to mitigating the effects of additional recreational pressure from this development.

- *Chippenham*

Policy **Chippenham1** requires any proposals that come forward in the village to be careful scrutinised to ensure that there is no adverse impact on Chippenham Fen.

- *Fordham*

Policy **Fordham2** requires development proposals to contribute directly, or through developer contributions, to improve open space. Policies **Fordham4** and **Fordham5** require these sites to deliver open space and recreational facilities. These policies will contribute to mitigating the effects of additional recreational pressure from development within this settlement.

- *Isleham*

Policy **Isleham2** requires improvements to play areas and open space, which will contribute to mitigating the effects of additional recreational pressure from development within this settlement.

- *Little Downham*

Policy **Little Downham2** requires development proposals to contribute directly or through developer contributions, to improve the sports ground and open space. This will contribute to mitigating the effects of additional recreational pressure from development within this settlement.

- *Littleport*

Policy **Littleport1** requires new development to improve opportunities to access open space through investment in a network of attractive greenspaces, linking to the wider countryside.

Littleport5 requires site LIT.M2 to provide public open space and play facilities, whilst **Littleport6** requires site LIT.M3 to provide open space and recreational facilities, to include a significant area of landscaping and open space (20-25%), potentially in the form of a country park.

The above will contribute to mitigating the effects of additional recreational pressure from development within this settlement.

- *Mepal*

Policy **Mepal1** provides specific protection to the Ouse Washes, requiring all development proposals to be carefully scrutinised to ensure that there is no adverse impact.

- *Newmarket Fringe*

Policy **Newmarket1** seeks to protect existing open space from development within the built up area of Newmarket.

- *Pymoor*

Policy **Pymoor1** provides specific protection to the Ouse Washes, requiring all development proposals to be carefully scrutinised to ensure that there is no adverse impact.

- *Soham*

Policy **Soham1** requires development proposals to protect and enhance the green setting of Soham, including the Commons, and green network/links.

Policies **Soham4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9** all require their respective site allocations to provide public open space.

This above measures will contribute to mitigating the effects of additional recreational pressure from development in Soham.

- *Sutton*

Policy **Sutton4** requires site SUT.H1 to provide public open space and areas of play. This will contribute to mitigating the effects of additional recreational pressure from development within this settlement.

- *Wicken*

Policy **Wicken1** provides specific protection to Wicken Fen, requiring all development proposals to be carefully scrutinised to ensure that there is no adverse impact.

Recommendations to ensure no likely significant effects resulting from the Plan

5.34 The following modifications to the Local Plan are recommended to ensure no adverse effect as a result of increased recreational pressure:

- **Burwell:** Natural England advise that **Burwell1** should recognise Devil's Dyke as a SSSI and a designated N2K site.
- **Isleham:** Policy **Isleham4** should include the requirement for an ecological assessment that should consider the effects of increased recreational pressure on N2K sites.
- **Littleport:** Under **Littleport6**, Natural England advises an area of 40% is necessary for a country park, given the current lack of green space provision and expected future demands. They also advise a Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity Strategy is prepared to deliver habitat creation and access management measures to improve the green infrastructure network.
- **Soham:** Natural England advises that development proposals in Soham should provide an ecological assessment that considers the effects of increased recreational pressure on N2K sites.

It can reasonably be concluded, after taking into account the above mitigation measures and consideration of other plans, that there will be no likely significant effects, alone or in combination, resulting from recreational pressure through the implementation of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan.

Disturbance from urbanisation effects

5.35 Proximity to new development, both during construction and once operational, can result in adverse effects on protected habitats and species.

5.36 The screening assessment identified the following N2K sites potentially at risk of adverse effect from urbanisation effects as a result of site allocations proposed in the Local Plan based on the assumptions set out in **Section 3**.

Table 14: N2K sites screened in for potential effects in relation to urbanisation impacts

Name of N2K site	Name of settlement/s with residential allocations within 400m of N2K site	Details of Site Allocation
Chippenham Fen Ramsar	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fordham	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• FRD.E1D – 83.2ha employment allocation <p>Consists of a cluster of sites where the following are within 400m of Chippenham Fen:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• FRD.E1(d) 12.4ha• FRD.E1(e) 5.5ha

5.37 Two sites, (FRD.E1(d) and FRD.E1(e)), that form part of the employment allocation **FRD.E1D**, are less than 400m from the Fenland SAC (Chippenham Fen). Any development within 400m of a N2K site has the potential to result in a likely significant effect. Due to its close proximity, site FRD.E1D has the potential to result in dust deposition, noise and vibration impacts, lighting and visual disturbance and surface runoff during both construction and operation. However, these impact pathways cannot be investigated in detail at the Local Plan level, as they are related to how the site will be designed and what construction methods will be used.

5.38 Development proposals on this site will, therefore, require detailed assessment at project stage, including, where necessary, the submission of sufficient information from the applicant to enable the Council to complete, in consultation with Natural England, a project level Appropriate Assessment under the Habitats Regulation Assessment process. Policy **Fordham6** requires this project level assessment.

Mitigation Measures in the Plan

5.39 The Proposed Submission Local Plan includes some policies that will help to mitigate potential urbanisation effects arising from new residential development:

General policies:

- LP26 Pollution and Land Contamination
- LP30 Conserving and Enhancing Biodiversity and Geodiversity

Settlement Policies:

- *Fordham*

Fordham1 requires all development proposals to be carefully scrutinised to ensure that there is no adverse impacts on Brackland Rough SSSI and Chippenham Fen.

Fordham6 requires, for FRD.E1(d) and FRD.E1(e), a project level HRA screening for approval by the council. Where this identifies a likely significant effect on Chippenham Fen (or any other European protected site) applicants will be required to submit sufficient information for a project level Appropriate Assessment to be undertaken to ensure there will be no adverse effect on such European sites.

Other plans and projects

5.40 None of the Local Plan HRAs of neighbouring local authorities have identified urbanisation effects as having a likely significant effect on Chippenham Fen Ramsar.

Recommendations to ensure no likely significant effects resulting from the Plan

5.41 Policy **Fordham6** includes criteria for a project level HRA to be carried out and considered at application stage to ensure no adverse effects on Chippenham Fen Ramsar will result from development. The implementation of this criteria and LP30 Conserving and Enhancing Biodiversity and Geodiversity, should ensure no likely significant effects as a result of site allocation FRD.E1D. Therefore this HRA makes no further recommendations.

It can reasonably be concluded, after taking into account the above mitigation measures and consideration of other plans, that there will be no likely significant effects, alone or in combination, resulting from urbanisation through the implementation of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan.

Reduced air quality

5.42 Increased atmospheric pollution resulting from increased traffic flow levels arising from new development can impact on protected habitats and species.

5.43 The screening assessment was unable to rule out likely significant effects in relation to reduced air quality in relation to Devil's Dyke SAC, which is within 200m of both the A14 and A1304, two of the main routes into Newmarket. This is because some of the site allocations are located in settlements to the south of Newmarket which are most likely to look to Newmarket for services and facilities, and whose residents would most likely use the A14 or A1304.

5.44 Likely significant effects can be ruled out on Wicken Fen, Chippenham Fen, Woodwalton Fen Ramsars and Breckland SAC. There are no roads within 200m of these designated sites that are likely to experience an increase in traffic flows as a result of new development proposed in the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan.

5.45 The screening assessment identified the following site allocations that could lead to reduced air quality.

Table 15: Site allocations screened in for potential effects on Devil's Dyke SAC in relation to reduced air quality

Name of settlement/s with residential allocations	Details of site allocation
Bottisham	BOT.H1 - 50 dwellings
Burrough Green/Burrough End	BRG.H1 - 11 dwellings
Swaffham Bulbeck	SWB.H1 - 56 dwellings
Swaffham Prior	SWP.E1 - 1.1 hectares employment land

5.46 The priority habitat type of Devil's Dyke SAC sensitive to nitrogen deposition is H6210 Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates (Festuco-Brometalia) (important orchid sites). This site interest feature has a critical load range for nitrogen of 15 to 25 KgN/ha/yr. The 3 year average (2013-2015) for the deposition of nitrogen is 15.5, which exceeds the minimum figure but is well below the upper level. The impacts of exceedance are: an increase in tall grasses; decline in diversity; increased mineralization; nitrogen leaching and surface acidification¹⁶.

5.47 Bottisham is a large village located between Cambridge and Newmarket. It has a good range of services, including a primary and secondary school. However residents are likely to look to Cambridge or Newmarket for employment, as employment provision in the village is limited, and to undertake a large weekly shop. Burrough Green is a medium village located 5 miles south west of Newmarket. It has a primary school but not a secondary school. Employment provision is also limited. Swaffham Bulbeck and Swaffham Prior are also medium villages; Swaffham Bulbeck is located between Cambridge and Newmarket and Swaffham prior is located 5 miles west of Newmarket and 10 Miles north east of Cambridge. Again, residents are likely to look to Cambridge or Newmarket for employment.

¹⁶ <http://www.apis.ac.uk/srcl>

5.48 The total indicative number of new dwellings arising from the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan from sites screened in for potential air quality effects is 117, and the total amount of employment land is 1.1ha. Whilst the actual impact of the Local Plan on air quality is difficult to quantify, the small scale nature of these developments means that there is unlikely to be a significant increase in vehicle traffic as a result of development within East Cambridgeshire. Significant effects on Devil's Dyke are therefore unlikely.

Mitigation Measures in the Plan

5.49 The Proposed Submission Local Plan includes a number of policies that will help to mitigate potential reduced air quality arising from new residential development:

General policies:

- LP3 The Settlement Hierarchy and the Countryside
- LP14 Retail and Other Main Town Centre Uses
- LP17 Creating a Sustainable, Efficient and Resilient Transport Network
- LP18 Improving Cycle Provision
- LP20 Delivering Green Infrastructure
- LP21 Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities
- LP26 Pollution and Land Contamination
- LP29 Conserving Local Green Spaces
- LP30 Conserving and Enhancing Biodiversity and Geodiversity

5.50 Policies LP3 and LP14 establish a preference for development to be focused in existing urban centres, which will help to reduce the need to travel by car and reduce the distance travelled to access services and facilities, which will contribute to minimising air pollution from vehicle traffic.

5.51 Policies LP17 and LP18 require development proposals to demonstrate that they minimise travel, maximise use of sustainable travel modes and assist in the delivery of a substantial increase in the uptake of cycling across the district. The implementation of these policies should also help to minimise air pollution from vehicle traffic. Policy LP26 requires major development proposals to submit an air quality assessment to demonstrate no significant adverse effect on sensitive features of designated sites.

5.52 Open space and green infrastructure policies which protect existing open space and provide enhanced or new provision, should help to provide opportunities for recreation close to where people live, minimising the need to travel by car to access such facilities.

Settlement Policies:

- *Bottisham*

Policy **Bottisham1** requires development proposals to contribute directly or through developer contributions, to the creation of new cycleways and improvements to bus services and facilities. This would have a positive impact on reducing car journeys and therefore on reducing the impact on air quality of vehicle traffic.

- *Burrough Green/Burrough End*

Policy **Burrough2** requires development proposals to contribute directly or through developer contributions, to improvements to pedestrian/cycle routes. This would have a positive impact on reducing car journeys and therefore on reducing the impact on air quality of vehicle traffic.

- *Burwell*

The Local Plan currently recognises the sensitivity of the Devil's Dyke under the settlement chapter for Burwell. Policy **Burwell1** states all development to the south of the village will be carefully scrutinised to ensure that there is no adverse impact upon the Dyke.

- *Swaffham Bulbeck*

Policy **Swaffham Bulbeck2** requires development proposals to contribute directly or through developer contributions, to improvements to pedestrian/cycle routes and cycling facilities. This would have a positive impact on reducing car journeys and therefore on reducing the impact on air quality of vehicle traffic.

- *Swaffham Prior*

Policy **Swaffham Prior2** requires development proposals to contribute directly or through developer contributions, to improvements to pedestrian/cycle routes. This would have a positive impact on reducing car journeys and therefore on reducing the impact on air quality of vehicle traffic.

Other Plans and Projects

5.53 The HRA of the Forest Heath Single Issue Review ruled out likely significant effects on the Devil's Dyke SAC as a result of impacts from reduced air quality.

5.54 Therefore there is unlikely to be a significant effect on the conservation objectives and qualifying features of the Devil's Dyke SAC as a result of in-combination effects of atmospheric pollution arising from increased traffic flows in neighbouring authority areas.

Recommendations to ensure no likely significant effects resulting from the Plan

5.55 Policy LP26 requires major development proposals to submit an air quality assessment to demonstrate no significant adverse effect on sensitive features of designated sites. The implementation of this criteria and LP30 Conserving and Enhancing Biodiversity and Geodiversity, should ensure no likely significant effects as a result of reduced air quality. Therefore this HRA makes no further recommendations.

It can reasonably be concluded, after taking into account the above mitigation measures and consideration of other plans, that there will be no likely significant effects, alone or in combination, resulting from reduced air quality through the implementation of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan.

Water quantity changes

5.56 Development within East Cambridgeshire will increase demand for water. Increased water abstraction for new development has the potential to impact on aquifers, surface and ground water and reduce water levels, impacting on peak river flow. An increase in peak flow runoff may result in increased flood risk downstream which could impact negatively on features of water dependent sites.

5.57 Water in East Cambridgeshire is predominantly supplied by Anglian Water, with Cambridge Water supplying a small area in the west of the district. The Environment Agency has undertaken an assessment¹⁷ of water stress across the UK; the assessment has classified Anglian Water supply regions as areas of “serious” water stress.

5.58 Through the latest cycle of River Basin Management Plans, for existing abstraction licences, the Environment Agency prioritises actions to protect and improve N2K sites and address the most seriously damaging abstractions. All abstractors in surface water and groundwater bodies, where serious damage is occurring or could occur without action, will have their licences constrained.

5.59 Water level management is strictly controlled by the CAMS and licencing regimes, and this is a strong mitigation measure to maintain adequate water levels and flows to the N2K sites.

Anglian Water’s Water Resources Management Plan

5.60 Water companies have a statutory duty to establish how planned development in their area can be serviced. Anglian Water's 2015 WRMP¹⁸ demonstrates the pressures on water resources throughout the Anglian Water supply area. The area is divided into 19 Water Resource Zones (WRZs) of which East Cambridgeshire is mainly supplied from three; The Ely, Newmarket and Cheveley. The WRMP aims to set out the company's 25-year strategy for maintaining the balance between supply and demand in a region at risk from population growth, climate change and growing environment needs. Both Ely and Cheveley WRZs were forecast a deficit in supply for the WRMP period to 2040. The WRMP sets out preferred schemes in each WRZ to maintain the supply demand balance. The WRMP was subject to HRA during its preparation. The HRA¹⁹ concluded that the preferred schemes in the Ely, Newmarket and Cheveley WRZs would not result in adverse effects on the integrity of European Sites. This implies that there should be no requirement for adverse levels of water abstraction from any of the aquifers connected to N2K sites.

Cam and Ely Ouse Abstraction Licensing Strategy/ Old Bedford and Middle Level Abstraction Licensing Strategy

5.61 Catchment Abstraction Management Strategies are prepared by the Environment Agency and set out how it will manage water resources in each catchment and contribute to the implementation of the Water Framework Directive.

5.62 The majority of East Cambridgeshire is located within the Cam and Ely Ouse abstraction area, with a small part of the area to the west located within the Old Bedford and Middle Level abstraction

¹⁷ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/244333/water-stressed-classification-2013.pdf

¹⁸ http://www.anglianwater.co.uk/assets/media/WRMP_2015.pdf

¹⁹ [http://www.anglianwater.co.uk/assets/media/2015 WRMP HRA Main Report.pdf](http://www.anglianwater.co.uk/assets/media/2015_WRMP_HRA_Main_Report.pdf)

area.

5.63 The Cam and Ely Ouse CAMS identifies that the main water resources pressures are extensive water supply abstraction along with river support schemes and water transfers. The CAMS identifies a number of designated sites where flows have fallen below the Environmental Flow Indicator. The relevant abstraction licences are therefore assessed to make sure they are not impacting on nationally or internationally designated sites.

Mitigation Measures in the Plan

5.64 The Proposed Submission Local Plan includes a number of policies that will help to mitigate potential effects from water quantity changes arising from the demand new development will place on water supply:

General policies:

- LP16 Infrastructure to Support Growth
- LP23 Water Efficiency
- LP24 Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Development
- LP25 Managing Water Resources and Flood Risk
- LP26 Pollution and Land Contamination
- LP30 Conserving and Enhancing Biodiversity and Geodiversity

5.65 Policy LP23 requires development proposals to meet the national water efficiency standard of 110 litres per occupier per day. LP25 sets out specific criteria to implement multi-functional SuDS to deliver biodiversity and amenity benefits and the requirement to demonstrate adequate foul water treatment and disposal already exists or can be provided in time to serve the development. These measures will protect water-dependent habitat and the species they support from the effects of development. The policy also requires proposals to demonstrate that water is available to support the development; that development will not adversely affect surface and ground water quality in line with the Water Framework Directive; and that adequate foul water treatment and disposal exists / can be provided in time to serve the development.

5.66 LP26 requires development proposals to take into account potential environmental impacts, including impacts on the natural environment, air quality and surface and groundwater quality that may arise from the development.

Settlement Policies:

- *Chippenham*

Policy **Chippenham1** requires any proposals that come forward in the village to be carefully scrutinised to ensure that there is no adverse impact on Chippenham Fen.

- *Mepal*

Policy **Mepal1** provides specific protection to the Ouse Washes, requiring all development proposals to be carefully scrutinised to ensure that there is no adverse impact.

- *Pymoor*

Policy **Pymoor1** provides specific protection to the Ouse Washes, requiring all development proposals to be carefully scrutinised to ensure that there is no adverse impact.

- *Wicken*

Policy **Wicken1** provides specific protection to Wicken Fen, requiring all development proposals to be carefully scrutinised to ensure that there is no adverse impact.

Other Plans and Projects

5.67 The HRA screening of the Forest Heath Single Issue Review was unable to rule out likely significant effects in relation to water quantity on Chippenham Fen Ramsar and Breckland SAC. However, the Appropriate Assessment was able to rule out any adverse effects, either alone or in combination, as no changes have been proposed to abstractions relating to Breckland or Chippenham as part of the Environment Agency's Restoring Sustainable Abstraction programme.

5.68 The South Cambridgeshire Local Plan HRA screening identified possible effects on the Ouse Washes SAC/Ramsar, Breckland SAC and Fenland SAC. However, it concluded an Appropriate Assessment was not needed, as there were unlikely to be significant effects as a consequence of implementing the Local Plan.

Recommendations to ensure no likely significant effects resulting from the Plan

5.69 The Local Plan includes a strong policy framework that will ensure new development takes into account potential environmental impacts, and that proposals demonstrate that water infrastructure is available to support the development. Provided that these policies are implemented, this HRA has no further recommendations.

It can reasonably be concluded, after taking into account the above mitigation measures and consideration of other plans, that there will be no likely significant effects, alone or in combination, resulting from water quantity changes through the implementation of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan.

Reduction in water quality

5.70 New development could result in increased treated waste water discharges which may reduce the quality of water entering the water network through nutrient enrichment. New development could also result in overloading of the combined sewer network during storm events with the potential for flooding and contamination of hydrologically connected N2K sites. An increase in the area of impermeable surfaces from urban development could increase the potential for contaminated surface water runoff which could impact on hydrologically connected N2K sites.

5.71 The site improvement plans for the Breckland SAC/SPA, Ouse Washes SAC/Ramsar and Fenland SAC (Chippenham Fen, Wicken Fen and Woodwalton Fen Ramsars) identify water pollution as a priority pressure/threat for the sites. The screening assessment identified potential effects for all but Woodwalton Fen Ramsar and Breckland SAC/SPA, as both sites are located some distance from proposed development in the Local Plan. Potential effects depend on the hydrological connections between the N2K sites and the Water Recycling Centres (WRCs) discharge points and combined sewer networks that serve East Cambridgeshire.

5.72 Water treatment in East Cambridgeshire is carried out by Anglian Water, through the WRCs. Sewerage undertakers must consider growth in demand for wastewater services when preparing their five-yearly Strategic Business Plans which set out investment for the next Asset Management Plan period.

5.73 Water quality is strictly controlled via a regulatory regime comprising of the Environment Agency's Review of Consents of discharges to water bodies, specifically from Anglian Water's WRCs in the case of East Cambridgeshire. The Environment Agency has a statutory duty under the Water Framework Directive and the Habitats Directive to ensure that discharge consents will be legally compliant. New legislative requirements should lead to an increase in the use of SUDs in major developments. These should help to mitigate any deterioration in water quality from development sites.

Anglian River Basin Management Plans (RBMP)

5.74 The Anglian RBMP²⁰ was updated in 2015 and identified a number of pressures on the water environment and significant water management issues. The RBMP describes how development and land-use planning needs to consider a number of issues relevant to the RBMP including sustainable drainage systems, green and blue infrastructure, sewage treatment options (tertiary phosphate treatments), water efficiency measures, infrastructure and development locations and the reduction of nutrients from diffuse pollution. The RBMP provides a summary of measures to protect and improve the water environment in the river basin District.

Great Ouse Catchment Flood Management Plan (CFMP)

5.75 The study area is covered by the Great Ouse CFMP²¹. The East Cambridgeshire area is covered by Sub-area 10, The Fens, which is mainly flat, low-lying fenland with dispersed villages and small towns. This area is covered by Policy Option 4, which is for low, moderate or high flood risk where flood risk is already managed effectively but further actions may be needed to keep pace with climate change.

²⁰ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/anglian-river-basin-district-river-basin-management-plan>

²¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/great-ouse-catchment-flood-management-plan>

5.76 Additionally, parts of the study area are covered by Sub-area 1, Bedford Ouse Rural and Eastern Rivers, a large sub-area which comprises of villages or isolated areas scattered through rural areas. This area is covered by Policy Option 3, which is for areas of low to moderate flood risk where existing flood risk is generally managed effectively.

East Cambridgeshire Water Cycle Study (WCS)

5.77 As part of the East Cambridgeshire Water Cycle Study (December 2016 and updated October 2017)²², Anglian Water undertook a sewerage system capacity assessment based on the site allocations and housing numbers set out in the Further Draft Local Plan. A red/amber/green traffic light system was used to score each site. In terms of WRC capacity, 79% of the sites have access to WRC where there is capacity to serve growth. 12% would require infrastructure and/or treatment upgrades to serve growth. There are 10% of WRC that may need to be upgraded but a more detailed assessment is needed. In terms of foul sewerage capacity, 6% of sites have the capacity to serve the proposed development and 92% of sites would require infrastructure upgrades. 2% of sites are remote from the nearest sewer thus connecting to the foul sewerage network may not be viable. In terms of surface water network capacity, all sites within the AW management area face major constraints to the provision of surface water infrastructure. The East Cambridgeshire Local Plan includes policy LP16 that states that planning permission will only be granted if it can be demonstrated that there is, or will be, sufficient infrastructure capacity to support all the necessary requirements arising from the development. This includes necessary water infrastructure.

5.78 An assessment of the available headroom and flow consents at each of the key WRCs within East Cambridgeshire District Council was carried out. All the WRCs are currently within their DWF permits, however 4 WRCs would require an upgrade in order to serve all the proposed growth. Careful planning of the phasing of development in these areas is required.

5.79 The WCS included a water quality impact assessment. It is the objective of the Water Framework Directive that all water bodies should meet Good Ecological Status (GES), or where they have been highly modified, meet Good Ecological Potential (GEP). The WCS therefore assessed whether the proposed increase in effluent from future growth could prevent a watercourse from meeting GES or GEP. The water quality impact assessment was undertaken for the following WRCs, in agreement with the Environment Agency, and receiving water bodies:

- Bottisham – Swaffham Bulbeck Lode
- Burwell – Burwell Lode
- Ely – Ely Ouse
- Ely (New) – Ely Ouse
- Newmarket - Newmarket No. 1 Public Drain
- Soham – Soham Lode

5.80 The results of the water quality impact assessment were all WRCs are currently working within their permits with the exception of Ely (New) that exceeds its permit for Phosphate. Proposed growth is predicted to lead to deterioration greater than 10% and/or class deterioration in WFD determinants at Burwell, Ely (New) and Soham WRCs. In the case of Soham this can be accommodated through an upgrade to the WRC (Application of BAT) and a tightening of permits,

²² See <https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/local-development-framework/local-plan-review-document-library-0> for the latest versions of the Water Cycle Study and Strategic Flood Risk Assessment

however for Burwell the deterioration in phosphate cannot be reduced to less than 10% using BAT. In this case environmental capacity is considered to be a constraint to growth.

5.81 The WCS considered potential risk of increased flood flows in watercourses due to additional flows of sewage effluent. It concluded that the impact of increased effluent flows is likely to have no significant impact upon flood risk in the receiving watercourses at any of the proposed sites.

East Cambridgeshire Strategic Flood Risk Assessment

5.82 A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (Level 1 and 2, 2017) ²³ has been undertaken to ensure that development is directed away from areas at risk of flooding. Additionally, all development proposals are assessed in accordance with the NNPF and the advice of the Environment Agency is sought in relevant cases to ensure that inappropriate development is not allowed in flood sensitive areas.

Ouse Washes Water Level Management Plan

5.83 The Environment Agency has produced a Water Level Management Plan which aims to maintain the current water level management regime in the long term.

Mitigation Measures in the Plan

5.84 The East Cambridgeshire Local Plan includes a strong policy framework around protecting the water environment and this, alongside the regulatory regime outlined above, should ensure that the Local Plan will not have a significant adverse effect on any N2K site through the water quality impact pathway.

5.85 The Proposed Submission Local Plan includes a number of policies that will help to mitigate potential effects from water quantity changes arising from the demand new development will place on water supply:

General policies:

- LP16 Infrastructure to Support Growth
- LP23 Water Efficiency
- LP24 Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Development
- LP25 Managing Water Resources and Flood Risk
- LP26 Pollution and Land Contamination
- LP30 Conserving and Enhancing Biodiversity and Geodiversity

5.86 Policy LP23 requires development proposals to meet the national water efficiency standard of 110 litres per occupier per day. LP25 sets out specific criteria to implement multi-functional SuDS to deliver biodiversity and amenity benefits and the requirement to demonstrate adequate foul water treatment and disposal already exists or can be provided in time to serve the development. These measures will protect water-dependent habitat and the species they support from the effects of development. The policy also requires proposals to demonstrate that water is available to support the development; that development will not adversely affect surface and ground water quality in line with the Water Framework Directive; and that adequate foul water treatment and disposal exists / can be provided in time to serve the development.

5.87 LP26 requires development proposals to take into account potential environmental impacts, including impacts on the natural environment, air quality and surface and groundwater quality that may arise from the development.

²³ See <https://www.eastcambs.gov.uk/local-development-framework/local-plan-review-document-library-0> for the latest version of the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment.

Settlement Policies:

- *Chippenham*

Policy **Chippenham1** requires any proposals that come forward in the village to be carefully scrutinised to ensure that there is no adverse impact on Chippenham Fen.

- *Ely*

Policy **Ely2** requires development proposals to contribute directly or through developer contributions, to upgrade sewage treatment facilities. This will have a positive impact on ensuring the water treatment network can accommodate the increase in population and therefore avoid adverse effects on water quality.

- *Fordham*

Policy **Fordham1** provides specific protection for Chippenham Fen, requiring all development proposals to be carefully scrutinised to ensure that there is no adverse impact.

Policy **Fordham6** requires applications for sites FRD.E1 and FRD.E2 to undertake a project level HRA screening for approval by the council.

- *Isleham*

Policy **Isleham2** requires development proposals to contribute directly or through developer contributions, to potentially upgrade waste water treatment works. This will have a positive impact on ensuring the water treatment network can accommodate the increase in population and therefore avoid adverse effects on water quality.

Policy **Isleham4** requires proposals for site **ISL.H4** to ensure no adverse effect on groundwater.

- *Kennett*

Policy **Kennett4** requires proposals for site **KEN.M1** to prepare a thorough ecological assessment sufficient to enable a project level HRA.

- *Mepal*

Policy **Mepal1** provides specific protection to the Ouse Washes, requiring all development proposals to be carefully scrutinised to ensure that there is no adverse impact.

- *Pymoor*

Policy **Pymoor1** provides specific protection to the Ouse Washes, requiring all development proposals to be carefully scrutinised to ensure that there is no adverse impact.

- *Wicken*

Policy **Wicken1** provides specific protection to Wicken Fen, requiring all development proposals to be carefully scrutinised to ensure that there is no adverse impact.

Other Plans and Projects

5.88 The HRAs of the Local Plans of neighbouring administrative areas have considered the issue of water quality. The HRA of the Forest Heath Single Issue Review could not rule out water quality effects on Breckland SAC. An Appropriate Assessment undertook a more detailed assessment in relation to Tuddenham WRC and concluded that with the tightening of treatment standards for permitted limits of ammonia and phosphorous, the Local Plan would not have adverse effect on the integrity of the Breckland SAC.

5.89 South Cambridgeshire Local Plan HRA screening identified potential effects on the Ouse Washes SAC/Ramsar and Fenland SAC, however concluded no likely significant effects from the

Local Plan.

Recommendations to ensure no likely significant effects resulting from the Plan

5.90 The WCS assessed whether the amount and distribution of growth proposed by the Local Plan could be accommodated within existing WRCs discharge consents and sewer network capacity. It concluded that water quality effects would not be a constraint to growth at any of the WRCs assessed.

5.91 The Local Plan includes strong policy safeguards to secure measures that may be required to protect water quality and N2K sites. Provided that these are implemented, this HRA has no further recommendations.

It can reasonably be concluded, after taking into account the above mitigation measures and consideration of other plans, that there will be no likely significant effects, alone or in combination, resulting from water quality changes through the implementation of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan.

6. Conclusions

6.1 It is the opinion of the Local Planning Authority that it is reasonable to conclude that the policies within the Local Plan identified as having potential effects, alone or in combination with other plans and projects, are unlikely to result in significant adverse effects on any of the Natura 2000 or Ramsar Sites and can be screened out.

6.2 As no policies remain likely to have significant negative effects, it is the recommendation of this screening assessment that further Appropriate Assessment of the Local Plan is not necessary.

Consultation with Natural England

6.3 A HRA Screening Report similar to this one was prepared for the Further Draft version of the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan. The Report concluded that the Further Draft Local Plan would be unlikely to have any significant effects on any of the Natura 2000 or Ramsar Sites, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects.

6.4 Natural England was consulted on this screening opinion in January 2017. Their response can be found in **Appendix 5**. They did not agree with the council's conclusion of no likely significant effect and, in particular, had concerns around the impact of increased recreation pressure arising from the proposed growth in the Plan, as well as consideration of in-combination effects. They also set out recommendations as to how the policies in the Plan could be amended so that the Plan could mitigate likely significant effects. This HRA screening report demonstrates how these concerns have been addressed by the council for the Proposed Submission Local Plan.

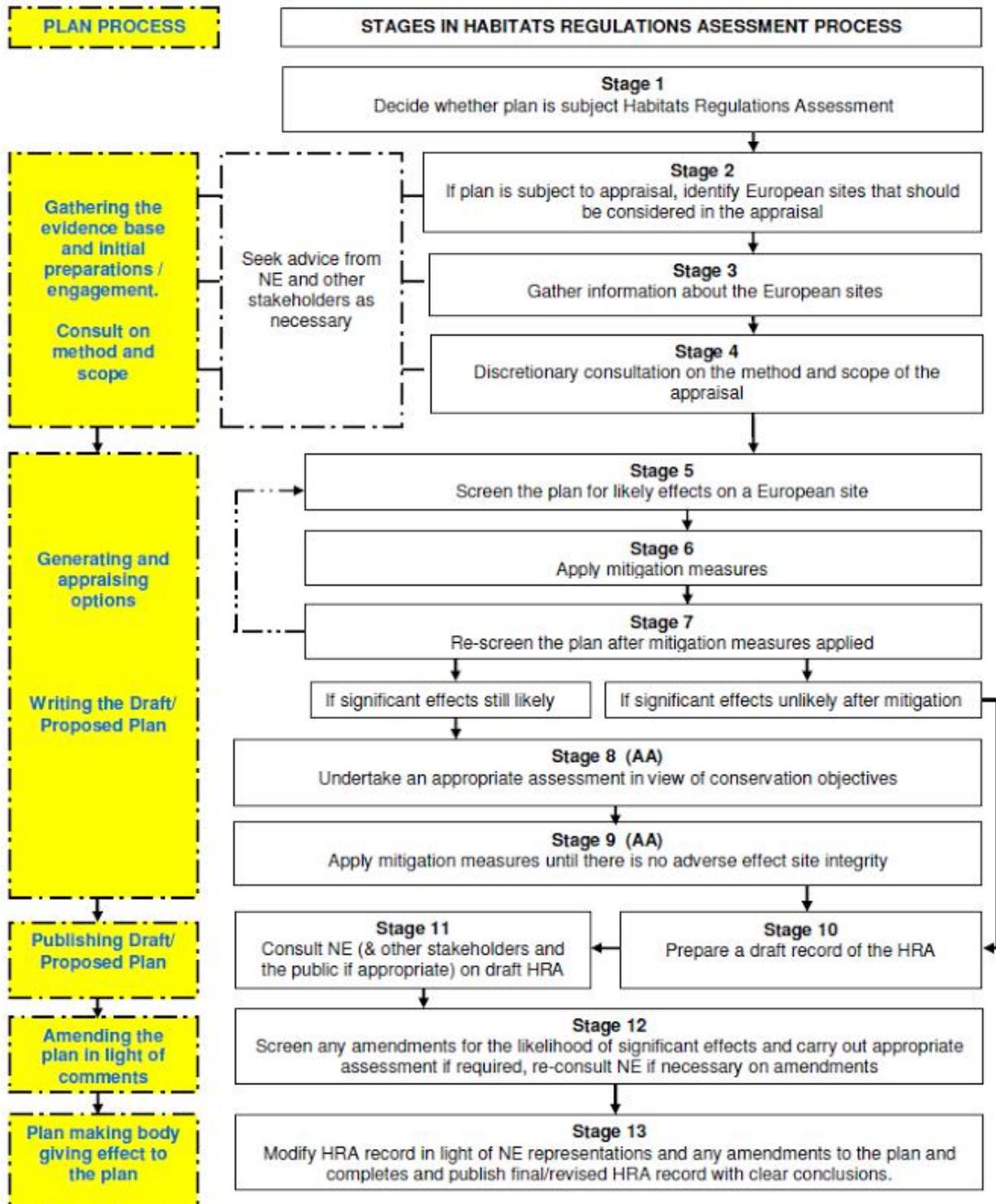
6.5 Natural England will be consulted on this revised HRA screening recommendation for the Proposed Submission East Cambridgeshire Local Plan, namely that an Appropriate Assessment is not necessary. This will take place at the same time as the consultation on the Proposed Submission Local Plan, 8 November to 19 December 2017.

7. Future Stages

Submission Version Local Plan

7.1 Following the consultation on the Proposed Submission Local Plan, the Submission version of the Local Plan will be formally submitted to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government who will appoint an Inspector to hold an independent examination of the Plan (submission is scheduled for February 2018). Subject to Natural England's response to this HRA Screening Report, a copy of this report and Natural England's response will be submitted as evidence alongside the Local Plan.

Appendix 1: Key Stages of the Habitats Regulation Assessment Process for Plans



Appendix 2: Details of the Natura 2000 sites

Devil's Dyke

Designation and Code: Special Area of Conservation (SAC) – UK0030037

Location: East Cambridgeshire and Forest Heath in Suffolk

Area: 8.02 ha

1. Characteristics of the Natura 2000 site

a) Site Description:

- This section is the most species rich of the Devil's Dyke which as a whole stretches for approximately 7.5 miles from the Fen Edge at Reach ending at Ditton Green. The section that is identified as a SAC is adjacent to Newmarket Heath. Devil's Dyke consists of a mosaic of CG3 *Bromus erectus* and CG5 *Bromus erectus* – *Brachypodium pinnatum* calcareous grasslands.
- It is the only known UK semi-natural dry grassland site for lizard orchid *Himantoglossum hircinum*. Lizard orchid is nationally rare (i.e. occurring in 15 or fewer 10x10 km squares) and is vulnerable in Great Britain. It is restricted to calcareous grasslands and dunes in southern England.
- The Dyke is in private ownership. There is a Devil's Dyke Restoration Project set up which is a partnership scheme involving Natural England, English Heritage, Cambridgeshire Wildlife Trust and the Cambridgeshire County Council working with landowners and managers and local people. The aim of the project is to restore the Dyke and there is an agreed management plan. The species rich calcareous grassland requires active management without which it rapidly becomes dominated by rank grasses which leads to the encroachment of scrub over time. Traditional management is by grazing.
- The Pasque flower is a speciality of the dyke and a Local Species Action Plan has been produced for this plant.

b) Access: There is a public right of way running along the Dyke. Parking is available at the July Racecourse, Newmarket. As grazing declined in the early part of the twentieth century, scrub has encroached onto many areas of the dyke.

c) Primary Reason for Designation:

Supports Annex I Habitats, supporting the priority habitat type "orchid rich sites". Devil's Dyke consists of a mosaic of CG3 *Bromus erectus* and CG5 *Bromus erectus* – *Brachypodium pinnatum* calcareous grasslands. It is the only known UK semi-natural dry grassland site for lizard orchid *Himantoglossum hircinum*.

d) General Site Characteristics

Dry grassland. Steppes (100%)

Soil and geology – Basic, Limestone.

Geomorphology and landscape – Lowland

2. Qualifying Features

Not applicable

3. Conservation Objectives

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

- The extent and distribution of qualifying natural habitats;
- The structure and function (including typical species) of qualifying natural habitats; and
- The supporting processes on which qualifying natural habitats rely.

4. Current Site Condition

In the SAC area there had been some scrub encroachment on the southern part of the site and some clearance work has been undertaken. A survey carried out by Natural England in September 2007 assessed this section of the dyke as being in favourable condition. The site is meeting 100% of its PSA targets.

SSSI Condition Summary for Devil's Dyke SSSI (compiled 4 October 2017)

	% meeting area of favourable or unfavourable recovering	Favourable	Unfavourable - Recovering	Unfavourable - No change	Unfavourable - Declining	Partially Destroyed	Destroyed
Area (ha)	39.77	19.71	20.06				
Percentage	100	49.57	50.43	0	0	0	0

5. Site Vulnerability (including pressure and trends):

- Inappropriate Scrub Control: Scrub encroachment is damaging some parts of the site and is likely to cause grassland to deteriorate;
- Risk of atmospheric nitrogen deposition: nitrogen deposition exceeds the site-relevant critical local for ecosystem protection and hence there is a risk of harmful effects, but the sensitive features are currently considered to be in favourable condition on the site.

Sources:

Devil's Dyke Site Improvement Plan:

[file:///H:/Downloads/SIP141223FINALv1.0%20Devils%20Dyke%20\(1\).pdf](file:///H:/Downloads/SIP141223FINALv1.0%20Devils%20Dyke%20(1).pdf)

SAC: <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/protectedsites/sacselection/sac.asp?EUCode=UK0030037>

Conservation objectives: <file:///H:/Downloads/UK0030037-Devil%60s-Dyke-SAC-V2.pdf>

Fenland

Designation and Code: Special Area of Conservation (SAC) – UK 0014782

Wicken Fen – UK 11077, Chippenham Fen – UK 11014, Woodwalton Fen – UK 11078

Location: Wicken Fen and Chippenham Fen are in East Cambridgeshire; Woodwalton Fen is in Huntingdonshire.

Area: 618.64 ha

1. Characteristics of the Natura 2000 site

a) Site Description:

There are three fens together that make up the Fenland SAC: Wicken Fen, Chippenham Fen, Woodwalton Fen. Fenland contains, particularly at Chippenham Fen, one of the most extensive examples of the tall herb-rich East Anglian type of M24 *Molinia caerulea* – *Cirsium dissectum* fen meadow. It is important for the conservation of the geographical and ecological range of the habitat type, as this type of fen-meadow is rare and ecologically distinctive in East Anglia.

The individual sites within Fenland hold large areas of calcareous fens with a long and well-documented history of regular management. There is a full range from species poor *Cladium*-dominated fen to species rich fen with a lower proportion of *Cladium* and containing such species as black dog-rush *Schoenus nigricans*, tormentil *Potentilla eetcta* and meadow thistle *Cirsium dissectum*. There are good transitions to purple moor-grass *Molinia caerulea* and rush pastures, all set within a mosaic of reedbeds and wet pastures. Considered to be rare as its total extent in the UK is estimated to be less than 1,000ha.

b) Primary Reason for Designation:

Supports Annex I Habitats:

Molinia meadows on calcareous, peaty or clayey-silt-laden soils (*Molinia caerulea*),
Calcareous fens with *Cladium mariscus* and species of the *Caricion davallianae*

d) General Site Characteristics:

Bog Marshes. Water fringed vegetation. Fens. (70%)
Broad-leaved deciduous woodland (20%)
Inland water bodies (standing water, running water) (5%)
Other arable land (5%)

2. Qualifying Features

Annex II Species:

Cobitis taenia (Spined loach), for which the area is considered to support a significant presence.

Triturus cristatus (Great crested newt), for which the area is considered to support a significant presence.

3. Conservation Objectives

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

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

4. Current Site Condition:

See Chippenham Fen, Wicken Fen and Woodwalton Fen.

5. Site Vulnerability (including pressure and trends):

- Water pollution: nutrient enrichment of Chippenham Fen component, fed from a mixture of groundwater, rainfall and surface runoff.
- Hydrological changes related to public water supply abstraction
- Air pollution impact of atmospheric nitrogen deposition.

Sources:

Fenland Site Improvement Plan: <file:///H:/Downloads/SIP141006FINALv1.0%20Fenland%20SAC.pdf>

SAC: <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/protectedsites/sacselection/sac.asp?EUCode=UK0014782>

Conservation objectives: <file:///H:/Downloads/UK0014782-Fenland-SAC-V2.pdf>

DESCRIPTION OF EACH SITE THAT TOGETHER FORMS THE FENLAND SAC

Wicken Fen

Designation and Code: Ramsar UK11077

Location: East Cambridgeshire

Area: 254 ha

1. Characteristics of the Natura 2000 site

a) Site Description:

- This site is a marginal remnant of the original peat fenland of the East Anglian basin. It has been preserved as a flood catchment area, and its water level is controlled by sluice gates.
- The original peat fen lies to the north of Wicken Lodge. The site here supports fern communities of carr and sedge. The carr scrub is largely of alder buckthorn *Frangula alnus*, buckthorn *Rhamnus catharticus* and sallow over a sparse vegetation of fen plants and including marsh fen *Thelypteris palustris*. The more open areas of sedge fen are typically of tall grasses, saw sedge *Cladium mariscus*, purple moor grass *Molina caerulea*, sedges *Carex* spp and rushes *Juncus* spp. Nationally important higher plants include *Viola persicifolia*, *Lathyrus palustris*, *Myriophyllum verticillatum*, *Oenanthe fluviatilis* and milk parsley *Peucedanum palustre*.
- To the south of the Wicken Lode, the area is of rough pasture land, reedbed and pools which are attractive to breeding wetland birds and to wintering wildfowl, the area being subjected to winter flooding.
- The dykes, abandoned claypits and other watercourses carry a great wealth of aquatic plants. Many, such as greater spearwort *Ranunculus flammula* and lesser water-plaintain *Baldellia ranunculoides* are now uncommon elsewhere.

b) Management and ownership:

The site is owned by the National Trust and managed by a local management committee, which reports to the East Anglian Regional Office of the National Trust. The continuation of the historic systems of management and the effective monitoring and maintenance of water levels underlies the Fen's ecology and are crucial for the success of all other management practices. The Fen is artificially protected from drying out by a water-retaining membrane.

c) Access:

There is a visitor centre and shop, nature trails, three hides and 16km of walking routes. Entry is by permit only to help control visitor numbers. Visitors are also managed by 'zoning' parts of the Fen near the entrance, leaving the more remote parts of the site relatively undisturbed. The Fen is open throughout the year from dawn to dusk.

d) Primary Reason for Designation:

Meets Ramsar Criteria

- Criterion 1: One of the most outstanding remnants of East Anglian peat fens. The area is one of the few, which has not been drained. Traditional management has created a mosaic of habitats from open water to sedge and litter fields.
- Criterion 2: The site supports one species of British Red Data Book plant fen violet *Viola persicifolia* which survives at only two other sites in Britain. It contains eight nationally scarce plants and 121 British Red Data invertebrates.

e) General Site Characteristics:

- Soil and geology: neutral, clay, peat
- Geomorphology and landscape: lowland
- pH: acidic, alkaline
- Wetland: 100% peatlands (including peat bogs swamps, fens)

2. Qualifying Features

Not applicable

3. Conservation Objectives:

Not applicable

4. Current Site Condition:

SSSI Condition Summary for Wicken Fen SSSI (compiled 4 October 2017)

	% meeting area of favourable or unfavourable recovering	Favourable	Unfavourable - Recovering	Unfavourable - No change	Unfavourable - Declining	Partially Destroyed	Destroyed
Area (ha)	254.49	119.53	134.96				
Percentage	100	46.97	53.03	0	0	0	0

5. Site Vulnerability (including pressure and trends):

The reason for the adverse conditions is related to inappropriate water levels in the fen, marsh and swamp areas. Work carried out in the nearby river system to prevent flooding in the 1960s means that the site no longer receives the amount of winter water as it did in the past. This has brought about a lowering of the water table over the past 40 years (Ramsar Report 5.5.06).

Sources:

Fenland Site Improvement Plan: <file:///H:/Downloads/SIP141006FINALv1.0%20Fenland%20SAC.pdf>

Ramsar: <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/pdf/RIS/UK11077.pdf>

Chippenham Fen

Designation and Code: Ramsar UK11014

Location: East Cambridgeshire

Area: 112 ha

1. Characteristics of the Natura 2000 site

a) Site description:

- The site comprises areas of tall and often rich fen, fen grassland and basic flush that have developed over shallow peat soils. The site also contains calcareous grassland, neutral grassland, woodland, mixed scrub and open water.
- The site is in a shallow peat-filled depression underlain by a thick layer of marl which rises to the surface in places. The fen is fed by rainfall and springs from the chalk aquifer. There are several ponds on the site and a system of dykes take water from the springs, in the south of the reserve, to the Chippenham River, near its northern boundary.
- The areas of tall fen are dominated by a mosaic of saw sedge *Cladium mariscus* and reed *Phragmites australis* are present with abundant purple moor grass *Molinia caerulea*. A rich fen has developed in mown areas supporting the nationally rare *Selinum carvifolia*. In one area this merges into a species rich basic flush where black bog rush *Schoenus nigricans* becomes abundant. Dense and scattered scrub has developed. There are areas of chalk grassland that grade into the fen grassland. The damp neutral grassland meadows are developing a fen meadow flora. The ditches support a rich aquatic flora.
- The water level is controlled within a series of ditches.
- Because the fen contains such a wide range of habitats it supports a wide variety of breeding bird species, including hobby, short-eared owl, nightingale and several species of warbler. It also forms the winter roosting for hen harriers.

b) Management and ownership:

Both the site and surrounding areas are privately owned. Part of the site is under unspecified tenure. The site is mainly used for nature conservation. The site is actively managed by Natural England through regular cutting and grazing with cattle. Encroaching scrub is being removed to restore fen where appropriate. A water compensation scheme has been instituted to ameliorate the effects of water abstraction. The Environment Agency monitors groundwater changes in the aquifer.

c) Access:

There are rights of way across the site. Access away from the paths is by permit only. The nearest car parking is in the villages of Fordham or Chippenham. There is a low level of usage by local inhabitants using the rights of way through the middle of the site according to the Ramsar information sheet. Few people apply for permits for recreational purposes, they are mainly requested by naturalists.

d) Primary Reason for Designation:

Meets Ramsar Criteria:

- Criterion 1: Spring-fed calcareous basin mire with a long history of management which is partly reflected in the diversity of the present-day vegetation.
- Criterion 2: The invertebrate fauna is very rich partly due to its transitional position between Fenland and Breckland. The species list is very long, including many rare and scarce invertebrates, characteristics of ancient fenland sites in GB.
- Criterion 3: the site supports diverse vegetation types, rare and scarce plants. The site is the stronghold of Cambridge milk parsley (*Selinum carvifolia*).

e) General Site Characteristics:

- Soil and geology: peat, limestone/chalk
- Geomorphology and landscape: lowland, valley, pools
- pH: alkaline
- Inland Wetland: 48.8% peatlands (including peat bogs swamps, fens); 35.5% forested peatland; 12.4% shrub-dominated wetlands; 1.7% canals and drainage channels; 0.8% freshwater marshes and; 0.8% rivers, streams, creeks.

2. Qualifying Features

Not applicable

3. Conservation Objectives:

Not applicable

4. Current Site Condition:

For reporting purposes the SSSI is divided into 15 units. Chippenham Fen has suffered from a changed hydrological regime due to abstraction from the underlying chalk aquifer. This problem is being addressed through supply of supplementary water together with a programme of vegetation and invertebrate population monitoring. Natural England, the Environment Agency and Anglian Water Group are taking this project forward.

SSSI Condition Summary for Chippenham Fen SSSI (compiled 4 October 2017)

	% meeting area of favourable or unfavourable recovering	Favourable	Unfavourable - Recovering	Unfavourable - No change	Unfavourable - Declining	Partially Destroyed	Destroyed
Area (ha)	155.87	140.73	15.14				
Percentage	100	90.29	9.71	0	0	0	0

5. Site Vulnerability (including pressure and trends):

- Hydrological changes: There is considerable pressure in the region from the water abstraction that may affect the local springs and aquifer. Persistent drought is a potential threat as 7 of 9 years in the recent past have received well below average rainfall for the regions (Report dated 2002).
- The habitats within the site are highly sensitive to inorganic fertilisers and pesticides, applications of which should be avoided both within the site itself and in adjacent surrounding areas.
- Chippenham Fen is affected by high nutrient water reaching the fen from a mixture of groundwater, rainfall and run off. In periods of low flow, poor quality water may have a more dramatic effect on the site's vascular plant assemblages.

Sources:

Fenland Site Improvement Plan: <file:///H:/Downloads/SIP141006FINALv1.0%20Fenland%20SAC.pdf>

Ramsar: <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/pdf/RIS/UK11014.pdf>

Woodwalton Fen

Designation and Code: Ramsar UK11078

Location: Huntingdonshire

Area: 229.7 ha

1. Characteristics of the Natura 2000 site

a) Site description:

- This fen holds a range of wetland plant communities once characteristic of large areas of the East Anglian fens. The site was once a raised bog associated with the former Whittlesey Mere and was dug for peat in the late 19th century when most of the acidic peat was removed, exposing the underlying fen peat. The vegetation of the area today largely reflects this historical use of the site. The open fen and swamp communities represented are of several types. A relict of the acid peat holds stands of purple moor-grass *Molinia caerulea* with ling *Calluna vulgaris*, bog myrtle *Myrica gale*, tormentil *Potentilla erecta* and the saw sedge *Cladium mariscus*. A further swamp community is dominated by purple small-reed *Calamagrostis epigejos*. Mixed fen covers a significant part of the site. This vegetation community is floristically rich and contains species such as meadow rue *Thalictrum flavum*, yellow iris *Iris pseudacorus*, swamp meadow-grass *Poa palustris* and great water dock *Rumex hydrolapathum*. Rare fen plants such as the fen wood-rush *Luzula pallescens* and fen violet *Viola persicifolia* occur.
- Of particular note is the network of ditches on the site and these hold many water plants which are now relatively uncommon in Britain including bladderwort *Utricularia vulgaris* and water violet *Hottonia palustris*. In addition, two meres have been dug in order to increase the area of standing water on the site and these have proved valuable for aquatic plant and animal communities. Further habitats of significance on the site include marshy grassland, birch and alder woodland and fen carr. The carr is varied in composition and contains willow *Salix* spp., blackthorn *Prunus spinosa*, birch *betula* spp and guelder rose *Viburnum opulus*.
- The whole site is a patchwork of wetland communities, providing a habitat for many uncommon plant and insect species-a number of which are confined to East Anglia.

b) Management and ownership:

- The site was purchased by Hon Charles Rothschild in 1910 and donated to the Society for the Promotion of Nature Reserves (now the Royal Society for Nature Conservation) in 1919. Since the 1950s the proactive management of the site has sought to reverse the drying out process and conserve this crucial fenland habitat. The site is leased from the Wildlife Trust to Natural England.
- The effective monitoring and maintenance of water levels underlies the Fen ecology and is crucial for the success of all other management practises. A Water Level Management Plan has been implemented and the site is flooded in winter in time of high water flows thus protecting low-lying farmland. However as a consequence nutrient levels in the water can be high due to agricultural runoff. Water inflows and outflows are strictly controlled. In the 1980s clay sealed banks were constructed around the perimeter of the reserve, this isolated water levels on the fen from that of the surrounding area. The Great Fen project aims to link this nature reserve with Holme Fen.

c) Access:

Parking is limited at this site, some being available alongside the Great Raveley Drain. There are three marked trails around the fen following the rides. There are no public rights of way across the reserve but visitors are allowed access to the site. There is restricted access to some areas of the site and no dogs are allowed onto any part of the site.

d) Primary Reason for Designation:

Meets Ramsar Criterion:

- Criterion 1: The site is within one of the remaining parts of East Anglia which has not been drained.
- Criterion 2: The site supports 2 species of British Red Data Book plants, fen violet (*Viola persicifolia*) and fen wood rush (*Luzula pallidula*). Aquatic beetles, flies and moths are particularly well represented.

e) General Site Characteristics:

- Soil and geology: acidic, neutral, clay, peat
- Geomorphology and landscape: lowland
- pH: acidic
- Inland Wetland: 100% peatlands (including peat bogs swamps, fens)

2. Qualifying Features

Not applicable

3. Conservation Objectives:

Not applicable

4. Current Site Condition:

Woodwalton Fen takes water in the summer months from the surrounding drains. In the winter the fen is designed to be used as a flood storage area, although this occurs infrequently. In both these circumstances the water entering the Fen is high in nutrients from agricultural run-off. It is intended to undertake research to investigate what effects the flooding may be having on the site. Considerable work has been undertaken to help progress the reed beds towards favourable conditions including annual cutting and installation of windpump to control water levels. Further scrub removal is programmed.

SSSI Condition Summary for Woodwalton Fen SSSI (compiled 4 October 2017)

	% meeting area of favourable or unfavourable recovering	Favourable	Unfavourable - Recovering	Unfavourable - No change	Unfavourable - Declining	Partially Destroyed	Destroyed
Area (ha)	204.67	111.47	93.20	4.38			
Percentage	97.91	53.32	44.58	2.09	0	0	0

5. Site Vulnerability (including pressure and trends):

- Hydrological changes: winter flood water has high silt and nutrient loads which get deposited on the site and can lie on the fields for prolonged periods. Flooding also delays the start of the grazing and mowing season, which in turn promotes vigorous growth of invasive species like soft rush and reed. Impacts include damage and disruption to management infrastructure, flooding of nests and hibernacula and, in some instances, local extinction of species.
- Water pollution: Woodwalton Fen is affected by high-nutrient water which inundates the site in winter and flows into the reserve ditches in summer. Poor water quality has resulted in a decline in biodiversity and a decline in site features within the fen.
- Air pollution: nitrogen deposition exceeds site relevant critical loads. This has the potential to affect the Molinia meadow and calcareous fen features.

Sources:

Fenland Site Improvement Plan: <file:///H:/Downloads/SIP141006FINALv1.0%20Fenland%20SAC.pdf>

Ramsar: <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/pdf/RIS/UK11078.pdf>

Ouse Washes

Designation and Code: Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Area (SPA) and Ramsar Site – UK0013011. The boundaries of the Ramsar site as extended are coincident with those of the Ouse Washes SSSI.

Location: East Cambridgeshire, Fenland and West Norfolk

Area: 2,403 ha (Ramsar site and SSSI site), 311.35 ha (SAC site)

1. Characteristics of the Natura 2000 site

a) Site description:

- The Ouse Washes represent spined loach populations within the River Ouse catchment. The Counter Drain with its clear water and abundant macrophytes is particularly important and a healthy population of spined loach is known to occur.
- The site is an area of seasonally flooded washlands habitat managed in a traditional agricultural manner. The washlands support nationally and internationally important numbers of wintering waterfowl and nationally important numbers of breeding waterfowl. The site is also of note for the large area of unimproved neutral grassland communities, which it holds, and for the richness of the aquatic flora within the associated watercourses.

b) Management and ownership:

Given the extent of the Ouse Washes there are a number of management techniques that need to be carried out in the washes. Wetland grassland requires active management if it is to retain its conservation interest. This has traditionally been done by grazing. Partial winter flooding is required to maintain suitable habitat conditions for wintering birds. A mosaic of winter flooded grassland and permanently un-flooded grassland is desirable. Ditches are artificial habitats created by land drainage – if left unmanaged silt accumulates in the bottom of the ditches leading to the loss the range of aquatic plants and animals colonising the ditches. There needs to be a rotation undertaken on ditch management. Also the level of water in the ditches and its quality needs to be regulated to maintain the optimum level for the plant and animal community. All the habitats are highly sensitive to inorganic fertilisers and pesticides.

c) Access:

There is a network of public rights of way in the Washes. The RSPB manage a nature reserve at Welches Dam where there is a visitor centre and a number of bird hides. The WWT manage a nature reserve at Welney, Norfolk also with a centre and hides.

d) Primary Reason for Designation:

Ramsar:

- Ramsar Criterion 1a: The site qualifies by being a particularly good representative example of a natural or near-natural wetland characteristic of its biogeographical region. It is one of the most extensive areas of seasonally flooding washland of its type in Britain, and the wetland has high conservation value for many plant and animal groups.
- Ramsar Criterion 2a: The site qualifies by supporting a number of rare species of plants and animals. The site holds several nationally scarce plants, including the whorled water-milfoil *Myriophyllum verticillatum*, greater water parsnip *Sium latifolium*, river water-dropwort *Oenanthe fluviatilis*, fringed water-lily *Nymphoides peltata*, long stalked pondweed *Potamogeton praelongus*, hair-like pondweed *Potamogeton trichoides*, grass-wrack pondweed *Potamogeton compressus*, tasteless water-pepper *Polygonum mite*, small water-pepper *Polygonum minus* and marsh dock *Rumex palustris*. Invertebrate records indicate that the site holds a good relict fenland fauna for several groups, reflecting the diversity of wetland habitats. Two rare Red Data Book insects have been recorded, the large darter dragonfly *Libellula fulva* and the riffle beetle *Oulimnius major*.
- Ramsar Criterion 2a - The Ouse Washes also qualifies by supporting a diverse assemblage of rare breeding waterfowl associated with seasonally flooding wet grassland. This includes breeding migratory waders of lowland wet grassland: oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*, redshank *Tringa totanus*, snipe *Gallinago gallinago*, ruff *Phdomachus pugnax*, lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*, and black-tailed godwit *Limosa limosa*, and a diverse assemblage of breeding wildfowl with mute swan *Cygnus olor*, shelduck *Tadorna*

tadorna, gadwall *Anas strepera*, teal *A. crecca*, mallard *A. platyrhynchos*, pintail *A. acuta*, garganey *Anas querquedula* shoveler *A. clypeata*, pochard *Aythya ferina*, tufted duck *Aythya fuligula*, moorhen *Gallinula chloropus* and coot *Fulica atra* occurring regularly. Many of these species are rare and much restricted in Britain and the European Community owing to habitat loss and degradation. The site thus has an important role in maintaining the ranges of several of these species, which have been affected by changes in habitat elsewhere in Britain. Breeding gadwall, mallard, garganey *Anas querquedula*, shoveler and bar-tailed godwit are all present in nationally important numbers.

- Ramsar Criterion 5 - The Ouse Washes qualifies as a wetland of international importance by virtue of regularly supporting over 20,000 waterfowl, with an average peak count of 60,950 birds recorded in the five winter periods 1986/7 to 1990/91.
- Ramsar Criterion 6 - The Ouse Washes also qualifies by supporting, in winter, internationally important populations of the following species (figures given are average peak counts for the five winter period 1986/87 - 1990/91): 4,980 Bewick's swan *Cygnus columbarius bewickii* (29% of the north-west European wintering population); 590 whooper swans *Cygnus Cygnus* (3% of the international population); 38,000 wigeon *Anas penelope* (5% of the north-west European population); 4,100 teal *A. crecca* (1% of NW European); 1,450 pintail *Anas acuta* (2% NW European); and 750 shoveler *Anas clypeata* (2% of NW European). Also notable are the following nationally important wintering populations: 270 cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo* (2% of the British wintering population); 490 mute swan *Cygnus olor* (3% of British); 320 gadwall *Anas strepera* (5% of British); 2,100 pochard *Aythya ferina* (4% of British); 860 tufted duck *Aythya fuligula* (1 % of British); and 2,320 coot *Fulica atra*.
- During severe winter weather elsewhere, the Ouse Washes can assume even greater national and international importance as wildfowl and waders from many other areas arrive, attracted by the relatively mild climate, compared with continental European areas, and the abundant food resources available. The continued international importance of this site is dependant on the maintenance of a winter flooding regime and a high, but controlled summer water table. Over the past 25yrs it has also been noted that there has been an increase in summer flooding as well as high water levels in winter. This has adversely affected both the breeding birds and the traditional washland management regime. It also results in *Glyceria* grass (sweet rush) competing with the other grasses and herbs, which may affect food availability for wintering waterfowl. Persistence of high water levels in the winter also reduces available area of grazing for species such as wigeon.

SPA:

Supports species referred to in Article 4 of the Wild Birds Directive and Annex II Species:

- The Ouse Washes Ramsar site and the Special Protection Area is a wetland of major international importance comprising seasonally flooded wash lands, which are agriculturally managed in a traditional manner. It provides breeding and winter habitats for important assemblages of wetland bird species, particularly wildfowl and waders.
- The boundaries of the Special Protection Area are coincident with those of the Ouse Washes SSSI, apart from the exclusion of a section of the Old Bedford River in the north of the SSSI.
- The Ouse Washes qualifies under Article 4.1 of the EC Birds Directive by supporting, in summer, a nationally important breeding population of ruff *Philomachus pugnax*, an Annex 1 species. In recent years an average of 57 individuals have been recorded, a significant proportion of the British population.
- The site also qualifies under Article 4.1 by regularly supporting internationally or nationally important wintering populations of three Annex 1 species. During the five year period 1986/87 to 1990/91, the following average peak counts were recorded: 4,980 Bewick's swan *Cygnus columbarius bewickii* (29% of the north-west European wintering population, 70% of the British wintering population), and 590 whooper swans *Cygnus Cygnus* (3% of the international population, 10% of British). In addition, between 1982-87 an average of 12 wintering hen harrier *Circus cyaneus* was recorded, representing 2% of the British wintering population.
- The site further qualifies under Article 4.2 as a wetland of international importance by virtue of regularly supporting over 20,000 waterfowl, with an average peak count of 60,950 birds recorded in the five winter period 1986/7 to 1990/91. This total included-internationally or nationally important wintering populations of the following migratory waterfowl (figures given are average peak counts for the five winter period 1986/87 - 1990/91): 270 cormorant *Phalacrocorax carbo* (2% of the British wintering population); 490 mute swan *Cygnus olor* (3% of British); 38,000 wigeon *Anas penelope* (5% of the north-west European population, 15% of British); 320 gadwall *Anas strepera* (5% of British); 4,100 teal *A. crecca* (1% of NW European, 4% of British); 1,450 pintail *Anas acuta* (2% NW European, 6% of British); 750 shoveler *Anas clypeata* (2% of NW European, 8% of British); 2,100 pochard *Aythya ferina* (4% of British); 860 tufted duck *Aythya fuligula* (1% of British); and 2,320 coot *Fulica atra* (1 % of British).

- The site also qualifies under Article 4.2 by virtue of regularly supporting, in summer, a diverse assemblage of the breeding migratory waders of lowland wet grassland including: oystercatcher *Haematopus ostralegus*, redshank *Tringa totanus*, snipe *Gallinago gallinago*, Ruff *Philomachus pugnax* lapwing *Vanellus vanellus*, and black-tailed godwit *Limosa limosa*; and a diverse assemblage of breeding wildfowl with mute swan *Cygnus olor*, shelduck *Tadorna tadorna*, gadwall *Anas strepera*, teal *A. crecca*, mallard *A. platyrhynchos*, pintail *A. acuta*, garganey *Anas. querquedula*, shoveler *A. clypeata*, pochard *Aythya farina*, tufted duck *Aythya fuligula*, moorhen *Gallinula chloropus* and coot *Fulica atra* occurring regularly. Many of these species are rare and much restricted in Britain and the European Community owing to habitat loss and degradation. The site thus has an important role in maintaining the ranges of several of these species, which have been affected by changes in habitat elsewhere in Britain.

SAC:

- Supports Annex II species Spined loach (*Cobitis taenia*) – The Ouse Washes represents spined loach populations within the River Ouse catchment. The Counter Drain is particularly important and a healthy population of spined loach is known to occur.

e) General Site Characteristics:

- Inland water bodies (standing water, running water) (50%)
- Bogs Marshes. Water fringed vegetation. Fens (20%)
- Improved grassland (30%)

2. Qualifying Features

Not applicable

3. Conservation Objectives:

Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features (SAC), or the aims of the Wild Birds Directive (SPA), by maintaining or restoring:

- The extent and distribution of the habitats of qualifying species/features;
- The structure and function of the habitats of qualifying species/features;
- The supporting processes on which qualifying species/features rely.
- The populations of qualifying species/features; and
- The distribution of qualifying species/features within the site.

4. Current Site Condition:

Assessment work was carried out in 2003 and at this time many of the units that comprise the Washes were in an unfavourable state. Only 13% of the site meets the PSA target. 87% is in an unfavourable condition as surveyed in September 2007 but this had not changed from the previous survey in August 2003. The water quality regularly fails to meet total Phosphorus target of 0.1mg/l. Until this can be remedied the site will continue to remain unfavourable.

SSSI Condition Summary for Ouse Washes SSSI (compiled 4 October 2017)

	% meeting area of favourable or unfavourable recovering	Favourable	Unfavourable - Recovering	Unfavourable - No change	Unfavourable - Declining	Partially Destroyed	Destroyed
Area (ha)	480.79	391.13	89.67	2,032.76			
Percentage	19.13	15.56	3.57	80.87	0	0	0

5. Site Vulnerability (including pressure and trends):

- Two independent and parallel rivers comprise the SAC. The Counter Drain / Old Bedford (known also as the outer river) drains adjacent farmland. The New Bedford / Delph (known also as the inner river) is sourced by the River Great Ouse. During the winter and increasingly during the spring and summer

months as well, the inner river takes flood-water from the Great Ouse, and therefore has an important flood defence function. Issues of concern relate to water quantity, water quality, salinity, turbidity and sediment.

- The need to ensure there is sufficient water for the rivers is addressed through the Water Level Management Plan agreed by the Environment Agency and partner organisations. The outer river is also a source of water for nearby arable land forming spray irrigation, but this abstraction is unmetered for the most part. Abstraction of water from the Great Ouse system to Essex via the Ely-Ouse Transfer Scheme is monitored through the Denver License Variation. Other proposals for water abstraction, e.g. to Rutland Water by Anglia Water, have been the subject of assessment, but there are no current proposals.
- Water quality is a major issue of concern. Increases in two plant nutrients - nitrogen and particularly phosphorus (thought to be derived from sewage treatment works) - are leading to changes in the macrophyte communities, shown by a decline in species diversity and the loss of species together with an increase in species tolerant of eutrophic conditions. This is particularly apparent in the inner river. There is evidence that agricultural inputs are a minor component. In addition, blanket-weed (aquatic algae) poses problems to navigation and angling, leading to issues of timing and frequency of aquatic weed-cutting. Water quality issues are currently the subject of debate between the Environment Agency and Natural England. Three sewage treatment works in the Great Ouse will be covered by the Urban Waste Water Directive, but there remain more than 90 smaller works. These will be subject to the Review of Consents to be undertaken by the Environment Agency within the next four years. A case could be prepared and submitted to OFWAT and the Water Industries AMP 4 Programme commencing 2005, in order to strip phosphates from all relevant sewage treatment works in the system.
- In addition, floodwater draining off the adjacent Ouse Washes into the inner river can be of a very poor quality (particularly in warm weather) leading to problems of deoxygenation with resultant fish-kills. The frequency of increased spring and summer flooding on the Ouse Washes is currently being studied to ascertain ways of ameliorating its effects.
- Saline intrusion through the northernmost tidal lock gate may be contributing to an increase in salinity levels of the outer river.
- Conditions must be applied to planning permissions for gravel extraction from quarries near to the SAC, to ensure that drainage water from de-watering and washings does not affect the turbidity and sediment levels in the outer river.

Sources:

Ouse Washes Site Improvement Plan:

[file:///H:/Downloads/SIP141009FINALv1.0%20Ouse%20Washes%20\(2\).pdf](file:///H:/Downloads/SIP141009FINALv1.0%20Ouse%20Washes%20(2).pdf)

SAC: <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/protectedsites/sacselection/sac.asp?EUCode=UK0013011>

Conservation objectives: <file:///H:/Downloads/UK0013011-Ouse-Washes-SAC-V2.pdf>

SPA: <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/pdf/SPA/UK9008041.pdf>

Conservation objectives: <file:///H:/Downloads/UK9008041-Ouse-Washes-SPA-V3.pdf>

Ramsar: <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/pdf/RIS/UK11051.pdf>

Breckland

Designation and Code: Special Protection Area (SPA) – UK9009201, Special Area of Conservation (SAC) – UK0019865

Location: Forest Heath and Kings Lynn and West Norfolk

Area: Although covering much of the same land, the boundary of the SAC is not contiguous with that of the SPA. SPA – 39433.65ha, SAC – 7543.64ha

1. Characteristics of the Natura 2000 site

a) Site description:

- Wangford Warren and adjoining parts of RAF Lakenheath are included in the Breckland site as the only occurrence of this habitat type in the UK. The site has one of the best-preserved systems of active inland sand dunes in the UK. The habitat type, which is in part characterised by the nationally rare grey hair-grass *Corynephorus canescens* occurring here at its only inland station, is associated with open conditions with active sand movement. The site shows the colonisation sequence from open sand to acidic grass-heath
- The Breckland meres in Norfolk represent natural eutrophic lakes in the east of England. They are examples of hollows within glacial outwash deposits and are fed by water from the underlying chalk aquifer. Natural fluctuations in groundwater tables mean that these lakes occasionally dry out. The flora is dominated by stonewort – pondweed *Characeae – Potamogetonaceae* associations.
- The dry heaths of Breckland are representative of European dry heaths in East Anglia, in eastern England, developed under a semi-continental climate. Breckland has an average annual precipitation of only 600mm, relatively hot summers and cool winters. Frosts can occur in any month of the year. The dry acidic heath of Breckland represents H1 *Calluna vulgaris – Festuca ovina* heath in the SAC series. The sand sedge dominated *Carex arenaria* sub-community (H1d) is typical of areas of blown sand – a very unusual feature of this location.
- The highly variable soils of Breckland, with underlying chalk being largely covered with wind-blown sands, have resulted in mosaics of heather-dominated heathland, acidic grassland and calcareous grassland that are unlike those of any other site. In many places there is a linear or patterned distribution of heath and grassland, arising from fossilised soil patterns that formed under peri-glacial conditions. Breckland is important for rare plants, such as perennial knawel *Scleranthus perennis* ssp. *Prostrates*, and rare invertebrates.
- Breckland in East Anglia is the most extensive surviving area of the rare grassland type CG7 *Festuca ovina – Hieracium pilosella – Thymus praecox* grassland. The grassland is rich in rare species typical of dry, winter-cold, continental areas, and approaches the features of grassland types in central Europe more than almost any other semi-dry grassland found in the UK. The terrain is relatively flat, with few physical variations, but there are mosaics of calcareous grassland and heath/acid grassland, giving rise to patterns of structural variation.

b) Primary Reason for Designation:

SAC

Annex I Habitats:

Inland dunes with open *Corynephorus* and *Agrostis* grasslands; natural eutrophic lakes with *Magnopotamion* or *Hydrocharition*-type vegetation; European dry heaths; semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies on calcareous substrates;

SPA

Article 4.1, Annex I Species:

During the breeding season the area regularly supports: Burhinus oediconemus (Stone Curlew) - 60.1% of the GB breeding population, Caprimulgus europaeus (Nightjar) - 12.2% of the GB breeding population, and Lullula arborea (Woodlark) - 28.7% of the GB breeding population.

c) General Site Characteristics:

SAC

Inland water bodies (0.5%)
Bogs. Marshes. Water fringed vegetation. Fens (1%)
Dry grassland (59.4%)
Heath. Scrub. Maquis and garrigue. Phygrana (20%)
Improved grassland (0.2%)
Other arable land (0.1%)
Broad-leaved deciduous woodland (9%)
Coniferous woodland (4%)
Inland rocks. Screes. Sands. Permanent snow and ice (0.5%)
Other land (0.3%)

SPA

Heath. Scrub. Maquis and garrigue. Phygrana (0.9%)
Dry Grassland. Steppes (19.7)
Humid grassland. Mesophile Grassland (1.3%)
Improved grassland (0.3%)
Other arable land (31.5%)
Broad-leaved deciduous woodland (1.4%)
Coniferous woodland (44.7%)

2. Qualifying Features

SAC:

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

The area is considered to support a significant presence of *Triturus cristatus* (Great crested newt).

3. Conservation Objectives:

SAC

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

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

SPA

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

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

4. Current Site Condition:

SSSI Condition Summary for Breckland Farmland SSSI (compiled 4 October 2017)

	% meeting area of favourable or unfavourable recovering	Favourable	Unfavourable - Recovering	Unfavourable - No change	Unfavourable - Declining	Partially Destroyed	Destroyed
Area (ha)	13,392.36	13,392.36					
Percentage	100	100	0	0	0	0	0

SSSI Condition Summary for Breckland Forest SSSI (compiled 4 October 2017)

	% meeting area of favourable or unfavourable recovering	Favourable	Unfavourable - Recovering	Unfavourable - No change	Unfavourable - Declining	Partially Destroyed	Destroyed
Area (ha)	18,125.83	16.22	18,109.61				
Percentage	100	0.09	99.91	0	0	0	0

6. Site Vulnerability (including pressure and trends): ²⁴

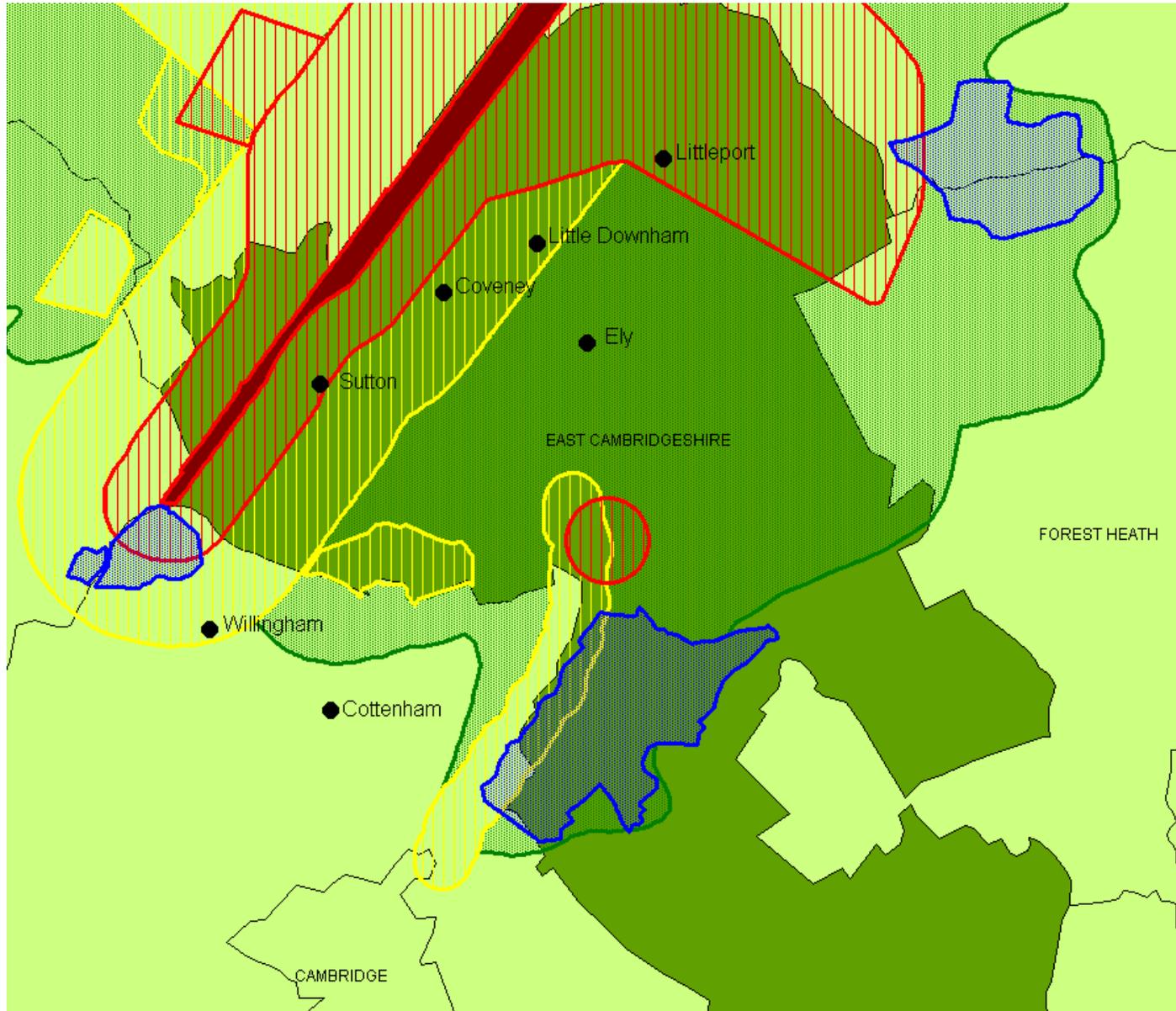
- Grazing by sheep/cattle is essential to the maintenance of habitats. Problems include nutrient deposition from the atmosphere and adjacent arable land, invasion by self-sown trees/shrubs, and uncontrolled and inappropriate recreational activities. Local ground water abstraction has a deleterious impact on the natural eutrophic lakes, the Breckland meres, and is the subject of active liaison between English Nature and the Environment Agency.
- Disturbance: Stone-curlew are largely reliant on arable land for nesting and are thus vulnerable to disturbance and nest destruction from agricultural operations. A recovery project operates to find nests, advise landowners on their operations which might affect Stone-curlews, and to ring chicks. Management agreements are in place to provide nest plots and thus safeguard the population. Agreements have been extended to cover the coming two breeding seasons, after which it is hoped that Higher Level Scheme agreements will be in place.
- Recreational pressure: Recreational and other activities have the potential to impact both SAC and SPA features. The impacts of increased recreational activity are uncertain. Recreational growth in Thetford Forest may impact on Woodlark and Nightjar. SAC features may be affected through eutrophication (dog fouling, unauthorised fires) and disturbance of soils, in particular on commons and heaths.
- Predation: Stone-curlew, Nightjar and Woodlark are vulnerable to predation from corvids and foxes and to disturbance caused by human activity, including dog-walking. In 2005, new public access was introduced on heaths by legislation. Safeguards to protect stone-curlew have been included but the situation will require monitoring to determine how successful restrictions have been in preventing additional disturbance.
- Air pollution: Breckland heathlands and acid grasslands supporting stone-curlew, nightjar and woodlark are fragile in terms of the high background levels of air pollution in the area, particularly high nitrogen loads causing undesirable habitat changes. Research on this topic is ongoing, and measures to export the nutrients off heaths (such as night time sheep folding or topsoil stripping) to counter the effects of pollution are potential management options.
- There are development pressures on the area, particularly for housing, roads and renewables infrastructure, which an impact on SPA species (Stone curlew, Woodlark, Nightjar) and which requires substantial discussion and mitigation in some cases. This is achieved through Natural England commenting on planning applications and providing input to structural and local plans.
- Woodlark and nightjar benefit from clear-fell forestry rotational management. The appropriate management is currently taking place in the forests.

²⁴ Site Improvement Plan Breckland (Natural England, January 2015)

- Habitat fragmentation: some heaths are relatively small and the connectivity between these and the larger heaths too, is poor. In some cases, the individual heaths are physically isolated and the landscape in between is hostile to species dispersal.
- Collecting of eggs of Stone-curlew, and to some extent Nightjar and Woodlark, is believed to be a serious threat to individual birds and to population size. The loss of eggs to this illegal activity is unknown. There is a police-based alert system in place in Breckland to try and reduce this type of crime, and landowners are vigilant.
- Water pollution: there has been a considerable loss of aquatic species in Ringmere and nutrients are impacting the mere.

Appendix 3: Core Areas of Sensitive Bird Populations

Extract from Lucking et al (2004) Wind Turbines and Sensitive Bird Populations: Spatial Planning for Wind Turbines in the Fens Natural Area:



Legend

Areas hatched red indicate areas where there is a high likelihood of significant effect on an SPA, or in an area functionally linked to an SPA, or due to the presence of internationally important bird populations considered sensitive to turbine development. Areas hatched amber indicate those zones where either:

- Sensitive bird populations are present but further assessment may reveal a very low risk or detailed layout planning or mitigation may remove any threat
- Sensitive bird populations are expected to be present but further monitoring is required to establish their presence and quantify the likely risk

Areas hatched in green are zones where to the best of our knowledge, there are no significant populations of bird species vulnerable to wind turbine development. Areas hatched in **blue** represent areas of search for wetland and washland creation projects. For the most part, these ideas are conceptual and work on the ground has not started.

Appendix 4. Natural England's Response to the HRA Screening Report of the Further Draft East Cambridgeshire Local Plan

Date: 22 February 2017
Our ref: 206185
Your ref: [Click here to enter text.](#)



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East Cambridgeshire District Council

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BY EMAIL ONLY

Dear Sir/Madam

East Cambridgeshire Local Plan Further Draft Consultation Including Consultation on the Duty to Cooperate

Thank you for consulting Natural England on the above in your email of 17 January 2017.

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

Natural England welcomes the vision and commitments in the Draft Plan to protecting and enhancing the natural environment. We strongly support Plan policies to protect and enhance biodiversity and green infrastructure across East Cambridgeshire. Through such an approach, we believe the Local Plan could offer a great opportunity to deliver a healthy natural environment and the benefits that this provides to people. However we note that the scale of proposed development will place considerable additional demands on existing greenspaces and our high quality environment. To achieve the goals of the Plan, we believe there needs to be an ambitious and strategic approach to developing the green infrastructure across the District. In particular, site specific policies need to make a stronger reference as to how they should contribute to biodiversity and green infrastructure. We set out below our detailed comments on the Draft Plan. We would welcome the opportunity to discuss these and how we can support you in delivering the aims and vision of your Plan.

You will be aware that Natural England provided comments on the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan Preliminary Draft in our response dated 24 March 2016 (ref: 178714). Please note that we have not reiterated our previous comments on draft policies. Our comments focus on outstanding issues, additional matters and, in particular, the site allocations.

We note that the Further Draft Plan makes provision for around 10,290 new homes. Many of the allocations are carried forward from the adopted Local Plan 2015, but this emerging Local Plan also proposes many more new sites, in order to meet the need. Major housing allocations are focused in Ely, Littleport, Soham, with medium size developments in Fordham, Burwell, Kennett and Isleham.

Summary of our advice

Whilst there are many elements of the Plan which Natural England supports, our key concern is the failure of the Plan, the HRA and the SA to properly recognise and mitigate for the recreational impacts of the proposed development on the green infrastructure network, including nationally and internationally important wildlife sites.

As currently presented the Plan poses a risk of development coming forward with significant environmental impacts and missed opportunities for strengthening the natural environment to meet the additional demands on it from an increasing population requiring access to greenspace, and the services provided by a healthy natural environment.

Section 1 Introduction

We note that the new Local Plan will replace the existing Local Plan adopted in April 2015 and takes forward much of the development in the adopted Local Plan. Natural England advises that the revised Plan must be considered on its own merits for the purposes of compliance with the requirements of the Habitats Regulations¹ and the SEA Regulations². These assessments must take into account any new evidence that may have emerged since the previous plan preparation and should be consistent with the policies and expectations prescribed through the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). For example, evidence through visitor studies shows that more people are now accessing the countryside on a regular basis for exercise and other health benefits, for dog walking and to appreciate wildlife. Anecdotal evidence shows that people's lifestyles are changing in this regard. Since the previous Plan preparation Natural England's [Impact Risk Zones](#) tool has been developed: this allows Local Planning Authorities to identify those allocations likely to pose a risk to SSSIs through development related effects such as changes in water resources, water quality, air quality and increased recreational pressure. This enables appropriate measures to avoid or mitigate adverse impacts on SSSIs to be identified.

Section 2 Introducing East Cambridgeshire

Natural England welcomes recognition of the importance of the district's natural environment including internationally and nationally designated sites and County Wildlife Sites (CWS). We support objectives to protect and enhance biodiversity, landscape, green infrastructure and high quality agricultural land. Objectives to consider climate change and pollution are also welcomed. The Plan Vision includes an enhanced natural environment with improved green infrastructure to benefit health and measures implemented to climate change, all of which are welcomed.

We suggest that key issues / threats to the natural environment should be set out at this early stage in the Plan, including potential changes in water quality / resources, air quality and increased recreational pressure. Natural England advises that the Plan's vision and emerging development strategy should identify impacts and opportunities for the natural environment with particular emphasis on designated environmental assets. It is disappointing that Natural England's previous comments about the current threats to nationally and internationally designated sites, through increased recreational pressure, have not been fully addressed in this Further Draft Plan. This is a key issue for the Plan given that further development will put these sites and the wider green infrastructure network under significant additional pressure. A key objective of the Local Plan should be to ensure that all relevant development contributes to the delivery of new green infrastructure identified through the Cambridgeshire Green Infrastructure Strategy (Cambridge Horizons, 2011) to mitigate the effects of increased recreational pressure on existing green infrastructure including Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and European sites. Natural England believes this key issue needs to be addressed throughout the Plan and this should be initially highlighted in the *Key issues and challenges* section, particularly under the Biodiversity topic of the table in paragraph 2.1.10. We advise that the Plan generally needs to take a more ambitious and strategic approach to addressing the impacts of increased recreational pressure and ensuring provision of an enhanced GI network capable of supporting the additional demand that will arise through the considerable

¹ The Conservation (of Habitats and Species) Regulations 2010 (as amended). Requirements are set out within Regulations 61 and 62 of the Habitats Regulations, where a series of steps and tests are followed for plans or projects that could potentially affect a European site. The steps and tests set out within Regulations 61 and 62 are commonly referred to as the 'Habitats Regulations Assessment' process. The Government has produced core guidance for competent authorities and developers to assist with the Habitats Regulations Assessment process. This can be found on the Defra website: <http://www.defra.gov.uk/habitats-review/implementation/process-guidance/guidance/sites/>

² The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 implement the requirements of the European Union Directive 2001/42/EC (the 'Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive') on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment.

level of proposed growth.

N.B. Natural England believes that the Cambridgeshire Green Infrastructure Strategy is now in need of an urgent update by the Cambridgeshire authorities. Having been finalised in 2011 the Strategy sought to plan for a resilient green infrastructure network capable of supporting growth levels across Cambridgeshire - as anticipated at that time. Patterns and levels of proposed growth across Cambridgeshire have changed significantly since 2011 with additional major developments such as Waterbeach New Town, close the ECDC boundary, now coming forward. Cambridgeshire's current green infrastructure network is reaching saturation point. Consequently the objectives of the Strategy need to be reviewed and updated to ensure that the GI network is sufficient in extent and quality to meet the increased demand for access to the countryside whilst protecting, buffering and enhancing wildlife sites.

Section 3 A Growing East Cambridgeshire

We understand that the Plan aims to deliver c. 11,400 new homes across the district to 2036, equating to a third increase in total housing stock. A total of approximately 9,556 new homes remain to be delivered through allocations, some of which already have planning permission. Natural England notes that this represents a considerable level of proposed growth for East Cambridgeshire. Whilst we have no objection to this we do have significant concerns that the additional demand this will create for access to the countryside will place excessive and damaging demands on the existing green infrastructure network and may have an adverse effect on a number of designated nature conservation sites. As we have mentioned above, the Cambridgeshire Green Infrastructure Strategy is in need of urgent review and updating to ensure the provision of an extended and more resilient network to serve the level of growth coming forward across Cambridgeshire. In the meantime, the East Cambridgeshire Local Plan must include robust policies to ensure that proposals for major housing schemes will make a significant contribution to enhancing, and preferably extending (by a third, to match growth), the district's green infrastructure network, taking an integrated and strategic approach to this wherever possible.

Our detailed comments on the Plan policies, Habitats Regulations Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal are presented in Annex 1 to this letter.

Duty to Cooperate

Natural England understands from your letter of 12 January 2017 that the Objectively Assessed Need (OAN) for East Cambridgeshire has been determined through the preparation of a further report (dated October 2016) by the Research Unit at Cambridgeshire County Council, which is available on our website. The report suggests that the OAN figure for East Cambridgeshire is 12,900 dwellings between 2014 and 2036, albeit the Local Plan is planning for 11,400, reflecting the 2013 'memorandum of cooperation' between various local authorities to reduce the East Cambridgeshire housing requirement by 1,500 dwellings.

We note your authority's opinion that there is nothing in the emerging plan that amounts to a "strategic matter" as defined in section 33A and as a result, there is no requirement for any joint plan preparation or associated activities. Whilst Natural England generally agrees with this, please note our significant concerns regarding the potential impacts of growth on the green infrastructure network and the need for further consideration of cross-boundary effects from development beyond the district boundary, particularly South Cambridgeshire and Forest Heath district councils.

I hope you will find the above comments helpful. For any queries relating to the specific advice in this letter only please contact Janet Nuttall on 020 802 65894. For any new consultations, or to provide further information on this consultation please send your correspondences to consultations@naturalengland.org.uk.

Yours sincerely

Janet Nuttall
Sustainable Land Use Adviser

Habitats Directive Assessment Screening Document

Natural England welcomes the preparation of this HRA screening assessment to test the effects of the emerging new Local Plan which promotes new growth patterns across the district and some new allocations.

We agree with the European sites (N2K sites) identified as having the potential to be affected by the emerging Local Plan policies and allocations and the threats / vulnerabilities identified for these sites.

As stated in Table 5 under *Policy LP2*, the HRA for the Local Plan 2015 concluded no adverse effect on N2K sites. However, we disagree that there is no new evidence to suggest that the slightly revised growth targets, to be built over a longer period, should come to an alternative conclusion for this new Local Plan. Natural England advises that there is increasing anecdotal evidence, and evidence through visitor studies, to indicate that more people are accessing the countryside including accessible N2K sites. Additional cross-boundary growth is also being proposed.

We generally agree with the screening assessment of strategic and development control policies described in Table 5, with the following exceptions:

Policy LP2: Level and Distribution of Growth

Natural England agrees that increased dwelling stock through the Local Plan is likely to place additional recreational pressure on vulnerable N2K sites including Wicken Fen, Chippenham Fen, Ouse Washes and Breckland. We advise that the qualifying features of Devil's Dyke SAC (and SSSI) are also vulnerable to increased recreational pressure. The qualifying features of N2K sites are currently under threat from increasing visitor pressure. Habitat degradation is occurring, particularly through trampling of vegetation and soil enrichment from dog excrement. Antisocial behaviour such as littering, fires and other activities is damaging vegetation. Dogs off leads also pose a risk to the continuance of the essential long-term management of the site through livestock grazing. A number of established visitor studies (see work by *Footprint Ecology*⁵) have shown that people will generally travel up to 8km by car to visit attractive countryside destinations such as National Nature Reserves hence any development within 8km of N2K sites should be taken into consideration as part of this assessment. In-combination and cross-boundary effects, particularly with development in Forest Heath and South Cambridgeshire districts should be investigated. The general requirement for green infrastructure protection / provision through *Policy LP20* is unlikely to provide sufficient robust mitigation to address the combined effects of all new development on European sites. We do not agree that this pressure will be satisfactorily alleviated through alternative GI proposed through the Local Plan such as Ely Country Park and green corridors. Natural England advises that *Policy LP20* and policies relating to Burwell, Fordham, Isleham, Kennett and Soham should be amended in line with our advice above. This will enable the HRA to screen out likely significant effects for these policies.

It is not clear that the assessment of increased recreational pressure on N2K sites has considered the combined effects of all Plan housing development and relevant cross-boundary development. This matter requires clarification. In our view all housing development will contribute a level of increased pressure on N2K sites, particularly in-combination with other development. Where this level is significant the relevant Plan policies must ensure that proposals will deliver mitigation to address this.

Natural England agrees that on managed sites such as Wicken Fen and Ouse Washes, increased visitor numbers to the sites are not considered a vulnerability and public access is encouraged and managed. Access to Chippenham Fen is by permit only which limits the numbers of visitors to the wider site; however, public rights of ways cross the reserve and their use is likely to increase with new housing in villages such as Fordham. In order to enable the HRA to conclude that development

⁵ <https://www.footprint-ecology.co.uk/services/ecological-survey-and-analysis>

in Fordham is unlikely to have a significant effect on N2K sites we advise that policies Fordham4 – Fordham6 are amended in line with our advice above. Similarly site specific policies for Burwell, Soham, Kennett and Isleham should also be amended in line with our advice on those policies above.

Policy LP17: Creating a sustainable, efficient and resilient transport network

Natural England disagrees with the HRA screening assessment for this policy. As currently worded Policy LP17 does not afford sufficient protection to N2K sites from development. Unless further evidence is available to inform the HRA at this stage, through transport/air quality modelling, to demonstrate that Plan development will not have an adverse effect on N2K sites, specific mitigation / requirements should be provided through plan policies. To address this uncertainty Policy LP17 should be amended, in accordance with our advice above, in order to enable the HRA to screen out significant effects of Local Plan development through air pollution.

Policy LP21: Open space, sport and recreational facilities

The HRA states that this policy has the potential for positive effects on N2K sites through increased opportunities for recreation that the policy will provide, thus reducing the recreational pressure on protected sites. Natural England advises that Policy LP21 needs to be amended in line with our advice above in order for the HRA to screen out this policy.

Policy LP25: Managing water resources and flood risk

The HRA identifies that current evidence does not indicate that existing phosphate discharges from the WwTWs in East Cambridgeshire are likely to be having an adverse effect upon the Ouse Washes SAC/SPA or SSSI. It also states that the District Council is committed to the use of sustainable drainage systems to reduce any possible future influence from new development. Natural England notes from the Water Cycle Study (WCS) draft report (JBA Consulting, December 2016) that further investigation / work is required to ensure sufficient water resources / wastewater collection infrastructure is available to meet proposed growth. However, we welcome requirements g) to q) within Policy LP25 including: *proposals to demonstrate that water is available to support the development; that development will not adversely affect surface and ground water quality in line with the Water Framework Directive; and that adequate foul water treatment and disposal exists / can be provided in time to serve the development.* We believe the WCS should be updated accordingly to inform the HRA and Local Plan and ensure proposed growth will not have any adverse effect on the natural environment, including N2K sites. However, policy LP25 requirements are considered sufficient to enable the HRA to screen out this policy.

Screening Assessment of Site Specific Policies

We generally agree with the screening assessment of site specific policies described in Table 6, with the exception of Burwell, Fordham, Soham, Kennett and Isleham. In order for the HRA to screen out these sites, the relevant policies will need to be amended in line with our advice above.

It is not clear whether the combined effects of increased recreational pressure from all proposed and cross-boundary development, has been considered for sites such as Chippenham Fen, Breckland and Devil's Dyke. Whilst it may be possible to screen out a number of the site-specific development policies on the basis that no, or only very small- scale, housing development is proposed, it is unclear how policies promoting more significant development such as Burwell, Fordham, Isleham, Kennett, Littleport and Soham have been ruled out as insignificant in-combination with other development. Unless further evidence is available to demonstrate that these proposals will not have an adverse effect on N2K sites we advise that relevant policies will need to be amended in accordance with our advice above in order for the HRA to screen out these allocations.

Conclusions

Natural England's view is that the HRA and plan policies should be amended in line with our advice above in order to satisfy the requirements of the Habitats Regulations. Currently we do not agree with the conclusion of no likely significant effect.

Appendix 5. Re-screening of Further Draft Plan taking into account Natural England’s comments

Policies	Screening Category	Screening Assessment
Vision	N1	This is a general statement which sets out the overarching vision for the future development of East Cambridgeshire to 2036. The vision would not have a direct effect on a N2K site because no development could occur through the vision itself.
Objectives	N1	A set of strategic objectives to address key issues facing the East Cambridgeshire area. They will not have a direct effect on a N2K site because no development could occur through the objectives themselves.
LP1: A Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development	N1	This ‘headline’ policy sets out the overarching plan commitment to sustainability and confirms a commitment to the presumption in favour of sustainable development. The policy has no direct impact on N2K sites as it provides for sustainable development. Indirectly it has the potential for positive effects on the wider environment.
LP2: Level and Distribution of Growth	P	<p>This policy sets out the overall scale of new development in the area up to 2036. It sets out the overall growth targets to 2036 for new housing and jobs. The policy provides for the delivery of 11,400 new dwellings, 6,900 new jobs and appropriate other forms of development (such as retail) and infrastructure provision.</p> <p>The distribution of growth and investment will be on a broad proportionate basis across the area, subject to the consideration of deliverability and infrastructure capacity.</p> <p>Unmitigated, this policy could lead to effects from increased <u>recreational pressure</u> as much of the development will be within 8km of a N2K site. There could also be effects from <u>urbanisation</u>, where qualifying features are sensitive to such impacts.</p> <p>Where development is adjacent to/or in close proximity to, a N2K site, there is a risk of <u>loss or damage to habitat</u> that supports qualifying features of the site.</p> <p>New housing and employment has the potential to lead to increased road journeys within the district and beyond, and therefore potentially <u>reduced air quality</u> on a N2K site where it lies within 200m of a major road.</p> <p>There is potential for increased pressure for water abstraction and treatment, potentially leading to <u>reduced water levels and water quality</u>.</p> <p>There is also the potential for in combination and cross boundary effects beyond the district area with development proposed in the surrounding local authorities.</p>

LP3: The Settlement Hierarchy and the Countryside	N1	<p>This policy establishes a settlement hierarchy and identifies settlements that fall within each of the categories. It is predominantly a means of categorising villages, and does not set out a quantity of growth, nor define how growth should be distributed across the settlement hierarchy (these issues are addressed under Policy LP3 Level and Distribution of Growth).</p> <p>As this policy is a general policy statement and does not detail the growth strategy for each category of settlement, the policy itself is unlikely to have any likely significant effects on the N2K sites.</p>
LP4: Green Belt	N1	<p>This policy requires development in the Green Belt to be in-line with the NPPF. Where development is acceptable, it sets out general criteria to guide proposals.</p> <p>This is a general criteria based policy that does not lead to development itself and therefore is not likely to result in significant effects, either alone or in combination.</p>
LP5: Community-led development	N1	<p>This policy supports community-led development schemes for housing, small business units and other appropriate uses. It is non-site specific and does not set out a quantum of development.</p> <p>This is a general policy statement that does not lead to development itself and therefore is not likely to result in significant effects, either alone or in combination.</p>
LP6: Meeting Local Housing Needs	N4	<p>This policy sets out the requirements for affordable housing, higher access standards, self-build homes, residential care accommodation and park homes.</p> <p>There is no development proposed through the policy itself, as this will occur through lower level planning applications. The policy itself will therefore not result in likely significant effects, either alone or in combination.</p>
LP7: Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople sites	N6	<p>This policy sets out where Gypsy and Traveller sites are to be allocated to meet need as well as qualitative criteria which will be used in determining proposals for the development of sites to meet Gypsy and Traveller needs. Two sites are allocated on the Policies Map for Gypsy and Traveller pitch provision. These sites were allocated in the 2015 Local Plan and therefore have been 'rolled forward':</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land at Muckdungle Corner, Newmarket Road, Bottisham • Land at Pony Lodge, Grunty Fen Road, Witchford <p>While the criteria based elements of the policy will not lead to development, the allocation of sites and identification of the indicative level of development on each site means that there is potential for this policy to have effects on N2K sites, as Gypsy and Traveller sites can result in the same impact pathways as other types of residential development.</p> <p>However, given the proposed sites are small-scale (maximum of 2 pitches) it is considered that the potential effects of any development would be very restricted in scale and so remote from any of the N2K sites that they</p>

		would not undermine the conservation objectives for the sites. This policy would also be subject to compliance with other policies protecting N2K sites, such as LP30. On this basis, this policy can be screened out.
LP8: Delivering Prosperity and jobs	P	<p>This policy predominantly formalises existing employment areas and/or consents. It provides for approximately 145.8ha of strategic employment allocations and identifies other employment allocations on the Policies Map. It guides development on land in employment not allocated on the Policies Map and supports new development for small scale businesses uses where proposals can meet a set of criteria.</p> <p>There are policies in the settlement chapters for the strategic employment allocations (see Appendix 7 for more detail on the screening of strategic employment allocations identified in LP8).</p> <p>There is potential for likely significant effects on N2K sites from <u>reduced air quality</u> due to increased road journeys, particularly where N2K sites are within 200m of major roads.</p> <p>There is potential for <u>urbanisation</u> effects relating to construction and operational activities, from employment development located within 400m of a N2K site.</p> <p>There is potential for increased pressure for water abstraction and treatment, potentially leading to <u>reduced water levels and water quality</u>.</p> <p>There is also the potential for in combination and cross boundary effects beyond the district area with development proposed in the surrounding local authorities.</p>
LP9: Equine Development	N4	<p>This policy is non-site specific, and sets out general criteria for the consideration of horse racing or equestrian development.</p> <p>There is no development proposed through the policy itself, as this will occur through lower level planning applications.</p> <p>Any proposal for development must also be in accordance with other policies in the Plan.</p>
LP10: Development affecting the horse racing industry	N1	<p>This policy is non-site specific, and ensures that development does not have an adverse impact upon the horse racing industry.</p> <p>There is no development proposed through the policy itself, as this will occur through lower level planning applications.</p> <p>Any proposal for development must also be in accordance with other policies in the Plan.</p>
LP11: Tourist facilities and visitor attractions	N4	<p>This policy supports proposals for new or extended tourist facilities where a proposal can demonstrate it meets a set of criteria.</p> <p>One of the criterion states: '<i>Recreation pressure on nearby protected nature conservation sites (especially</i></p>

		<p><i>those with European protection status) is not significantly increased, or, if the proposed development has the potential to significantly increase recreational pressure, it will need to be demonstrated through an appropriate (but proportionate) assessment that such an increase is not likely to have a significant negative impact on the protected site'.</i></p> <p>As this policy includes a specific provision to protect N2K sites, it is unlikely to lead to likely significant effects.</p>
LP12: Tourist accommodation (excluding holiday cottages)	N4	<p>This policy supports proposals for new or extended hotels, caravan, caravan-lodge, camping sites, marinas and moorings where a proposal can demonstrate it meets a set of criteria.</p> <p>One of the criterion states: '<i>Recreation pressure on nearby protected nature conservation sites (especially those with European protection status) is not significantly increased, or, if the proposed development has the potential to significantly increase recreational pressure, it will need to be demonstrated through an appropriate (but proportionate) assessment that such an increase is not likely to have a significant negative impact on the protected site'.</i></p> <p>As this policy includes a specific provision to protect N2K sites, it is unlikely to lead to likely significant effects.</p>
LP13: Holiday Cottage Accommodation	N4	<p>This policy is a general policy and is non-site specific. It states that accommodation in the countryside will only be allowed where it involves the re-use of an existing building, for a maximum of 2 dwellings.</p> <p>This policy does not provide for a quantum of development and so will be unlikely to have a significant effect on N2K sites.</p>
LP14: Location of retail and town centre uses	N4	<p>This policy focuses retail and town centre uses to within existing town centres. It does not provide for a quantum of retail development</p> <p>As such, is unlikely to have a likely significant effect on N2K sites.</p>
LP15: Retail uses in town centres	N6	<p>This policy relates to Primary Shopping Frontages and Secondary Shopping Frontages in Ely, as well as Soham and Littleport town centres, and seeks to retain the vitality and viability of such centres. It relates to existing retail centres only.</p> <p>This policy does not provide for the quantum of retail development.</p> <p>As such, is unlikely to have a likely significant effect on N2K sites.</p>
LP16: Infrastructure to support growth	N1	<p>This policy confirms the need for infrastructure to be provided alongside development, which would including necessary water/sewerage infrastructure. It does not allocate a quantity of development or identify the location of nay development.</p> <p>The provision of appropriate infrastructure will ensure development will not lead to likely significantly effects on N2K sites.</p>
LP17: Creating a sustainable,	P	<p>This policy sets out the requirements for new development in relation to the transport network. The policy does not identify any specific transport related scheme, location type or quantum of development.</p>

efficient and resilient transport network		<p>Indirectly, the implementation of this policy may help N2K sites which are prone to transport related pollutants as a result of its promotion of a more sustainable transport network that have the potential to result in a reduction in emissions of air pollutants.</p> <p>However, the provision of transport infrastructure has the potential to increase traffic movements and therefore reduce <u>air quality</u> along roads in close proximity to the N2K sites, thus potentially resulting in a likely significant effect. This policy does not afford specific protection to N2K sites.</p>
LP18: Improving Cycle provision	N4	<p>This policy encourages cycling as a sustainable means of transport in East Cambridgeshire. It seeks to ensure that accessibility to key destinations by bicycle is safe and sets out how this will be achieved. It refers generally to the delivery of identified cycle network improvements identified in other documents, such as the Local Transport Plan and the Transport Strategy for East Cambridgeshire, but not to the names of specific schemes contained within such documents.</p> <p>This policy has no direct impact on N2K sites as it will not specifically lead to development itself. However, indirectly, its implementation may help N2K sites which are prone to transport related pollutants, as a result of its promotion of a more sustainable transport network, which could result in a reduction in emissions of air pollutants.</p>
LP19: Maintaining and improving community facilities	N4	<p>This policy seeks to protect existing community facilities, and also encourage appropriate new stand-alone facilities, or facilities as part of wider development proposals.</p> <p>The policy encourages the development of new community facilities but does not directly lead to the development of them. The policy itself will therefore not result in likely significant effects, either alone or in combination.</p>
LP20: Delivering Green Infrastructure	P	<p>This policy has the potential for positive effects on N2K sites as a result of the positive aspects implementing such a policy will have on the wider environment. These benefits are twofold, firstly, direct benefits to the individual sites through creation and protection of biodiversity; but also indirectly through increased opportunities for recreation through extensive walking, cycling and other forms of recreation which can help mitigate the effects of climate change and alleviate the recreational pressure on other N2K sites.</p> <p>The Local Plan has committed to a network of green open spaces and green corridors as well as policies to improve existing sites. All provision will need to take place alongside development and would be in place before the final occupation and end of construction. In the case of Ely Country Park, Phase 1 and 2 have already been completed and has consequently created a more accessible and higher quality recreational experience as well as having a conservation and biodiversity focus, enhancing the wetlands, meadows and woodland of the Ely Pits and Meadows SSSI. Phase 3 will commence alongside the North Ely development and will have a more recreational focus whilst protecting the impact on the conservation achievements of Phase 1 and 2 on the SSSI.</p>

		<p>However, the policy could be strengthened to ensure mitigation is delivered to address the adverse effects of <u>increased recreational pressure</u> on designated sites and therefore cannot be screened out at this stage.</p>
LP21: Open space, sport and recreational facilities	P	<p>This policy has the potential for positive effects on N2K sites as a result of the positive aspects implementing such a policy will have on the wider environment. This is through increased opportunities for recreation that the policy will provide, thus reducing the recreational pressure on protected sites.</p> <p>However, the policy could be strengthened to make reference to the potential need for development to provide additional on and/or off-site open space where this is needed to mitigate the effects of <u>increased recreational pressure</u> on nationally or internationally designated sites and therefore cannot be screened out at this stage.</p>
LP22: Achieving Design Excellence	N4	<p>This policy is a design criteria based policy, which seeks to guide development in relation to achieving design excellence.</p> <p>The policy will not directly lead to development and promotes measures intended to have a positive effect. The policy itself will therefore not result in likely significant effects, either alone or in combination.</p>
LP23: Water Efficiency	N3	<p>This policy requires new development to achieve the optional technical housing standard for water-efficiency of no more than 110 litres per day.</p> <p>In East Cambridgeshire, water resources are under stress. This policy therefore has the potential for positive effects on N2K sites as a result of the positive aspects implementing such a policy will have on the water environment.</p> <p>By minimise water use (to the maximum permitted by national policy), development will not only minimise water 'take' (from abstraction etc) but also minimise volume of waste water. The N2K sites in or near East Cambridgeshire are particularly vulnerable to water related issues, and therefore this policy is particularly important in that local context.</p>
LP24: Renewable and low carbon development	N7	<p>This policy sets out the standards and expectations of development in relation to renewable and low carbon energy development. It states proposals will be assessed taking into account biodiversity considerations. The policy does not identify the location or quantum of development.</p> <p>This policy therefore, has is not likely to have direct significant effects on N2K sites, though there is potential for a positive effect on air quality (the degree depending on the amount of development which implements its measures). Indirectly it has the potential for positive effects on the wider environment through its positive approach to appropriate renewable energy and energy efficiency development.</p>
LP25: Managing water resources and flood risk	N3	<p>This policy therefore has the potential for positive effects on N2K sites as a result of the positive aspects implementing such a policy will have on the wider environment.</p> <p>The policy is in two parts, with the first around (minimising) flood risk, as well as positive nature conservation</p>

		<p>aspects, such as the need for and methods to reduce increases in water quantity in to river systems through use of SuDS, which also improves water quality. Part two of the policy has a particular focus on protecting the water environment</p> <p>A major part of East Cambridgeshire District drains into the River Great Ouse catchment. The Ouse Washes (SAC, SPA and Ramsar) form part of this river system. However, River Great Ouse joins the Ouse Washes site at Denver Sluice, downstream of the Washes so development within East Cambridgeshire should not be a major factor to consider. However, main drainage systems, for example to the west of Ely, direct water to pumping stations along the Hundred Foot River and water is abstracted from the Hundred Foot River to replenish the internal ditch system within the Ouse Washes. There is therefore hydrological connectivity between the catchment and the washes. Current evidence does not indicate that existing phosphate discharges from the WwTWs in East Cambridgeshire are likely to be having an adverse effect upon the Ouse Washes SAC/SPA or SSSI. However, the District Council is committed to the use of sustainable drainage systems to reduce any possible future influence from new development.</p> <p>The Ouse Washes Habitat Creation Project by the Environment Agency proposes for creation of around 500 hectares of new wet grassland habitat to replace habitat deteriorated by increased flooding of the Ouse Washes and to provide for the species once supported by this habitat. This project, in combination with a strong emphasis on climate change mitigation efforts required in the Local Plan, will reduce the risk of flooding and will also indirectly have the potential for positive effects on the wider environment. The project should coincide with the delivery of development within Ely and Littleport which is phased over a long delivery period and will be supported by a strong network of green spaces and use of SuDS to help improve water quality as well as construction materials and techniques which will help reduce the effects of climate change.</p>
LP26: Pollution and land contamination	P	<p>This policy seeks to minimise, and where possible reduce pollution and land contamination. It highlights the importance of reducing surface water run-off and effluent discharge as a result of development and considering impact on air quality. The policy will not lead to development itself as it sets out criteria against which developments with potential pollution, contamination and waste implications will be considered.</p> <p>However, the policy does not specifically mention N2K sites, some of which are sensitive to atmospheric air pollution. The policy could be strengthened to require development proposals in close proximity to N2K sites to be accompanied by an air quality assessment and therefore cannot be screened out at this stage.</p>
LP27: Conserving and enhancing heritage assets	N3	<p>This policy seeks to protect, conserve and enhance the historic environment. The policy will not directly lead to development and promotes measures intended to have a positive effect.</p> <p>The policy itself will therefore not result in likely significant effects, either alone or in combination, as it seeks to protect the historic environment.</p>
LP28: Landscape	N3	<p>This policy seeks to ensure that development is sympathetic to the character of the area in which it is located,</p>

and townscape character, including cathedral views		<p>and also to ensure that views of Ely Cathedral are protected. It sets out criteria to guide the design of development proposals. The policy will not directly lead to development and promotes measures intended to have a positive effect.</p> <p>The policy itself will therefore not result in likely significant effects, either alone or in combination, as it seeks to protect the natural and built environment.</p>
LP29: Local Green Spaces	N3	<p>This policy designates areas of open space as Local Green Space and rules out development on these sites in all but exceptional circumstances.</p> <p>All the designated sites are within or adjacent to settlements, are small scale, and protect what is already there. None are near any N2K sites.</p> <p>This is a positive policy as it provides for the protection of Local Green Space that can result in recreational activities being diverted away from N2K sites. This policy is therefore unlikely to result in likely significant effects on N2K sites, as it seeks to protect the natural environment.</p>
LP30: Conserving and enhancing biodiversity and geodiversity	N3	<p>This policy specifically seeks to protect the natural environment, including biodiversity and geodiversity, and seeks net gains in biodiversity and enhancement where possible.</p> <p>The policy has a specific section that explicitly provides protection for designated sites. It states: '<i>Development proposals that will have an adverse impact on a European Site or cause significant harm to a Site of Special Scientific Interest, located within or outside East Cambridgeshire, will not be permitted, in accordance with paragraph 118 of the National Planning Policy Framework</i>'.</p> <p>This policy only supports proposals where there will be no adverse effect on protected species and the wider environment, and therefore is not likely to result in significant effects on N2K sites. Indirectly it has the potential for positive effects on the wider environment, through for example, its policy requirement to seek to deliver a net gain in biodiversity.</p>
LP31: Development in the Countryside	N4	<p>This policy guides development proposals that may come forward in the countryside, which includes any land or area outside of a development envelope or other policy designation or allocation (as identified on the Policies Map).</p> <p>The policy addresses various considerations, including affordable housing exception sites, dwellings for rural workers, replacement of a dwelling, re-use and conversion of non-residential buildings for residential use, mobile homes, non-residential development, agricultural diversification and, protecting the best and most versatile agricultural land.</p> <p>There is no development proposed through the policy itself, as this will occur through lower level planning applications. The policy itself will therefore not result in likely significant effects, either alone or in combination.</p>
LP32: Infill	N4	<p>This policy sets out criteria to guide infill development in the countryside. It limits infill development to no more</p>

development in locations outside of development envelopes		than 2 dwellings. There is no development proposed through the policy itself, as this will occur through lower level planning applications. The policy itself will therefore not result in likely significant effects, either alone or in combination.
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Appendix 6. Re-screening of Further Draft Plan Settlement Policies taking into account Natural England's comments

Each settlement chapter includes a general policy that supports proposals that maintain and/or expand community facilities and states that proposals should respect the local character of the settlement. These policies promote development and change, but do not state when, where or how these will be brought forward. These policies have been categorised as 'N1', a general policy statement, and have been screened out of the assessment. Each settlement chapter also includes a policy setting out the priority infrastructure items for the settlement. These have been categorised as 'N7', as the policies promote development or change by encouraging new community facilities, but it does not state when, where or how these will be brought forward.

Some of the settlement chapters contain infrastructure policies that have been categorised differently to above, or contain with additional policies to the two standard policies common to all settlement chapters. The screening assessment of these is set out in the table below.

Settlement	Policies	Screening Category	Screening Assessment
Ely	Ely1	N1	<p>This policy sets out the spatial strategy for Ely for which all development proposals need to comply and respond positively to. It includes the delivery of high quality housing-led growth, regeneration of urban brownfield sites, delivery of infrastructure and delivery of new leisure and retail facilities. The policy itself does not set out a quantity of development or allocate sites around Ely.</p> <p>As such, as this policy is a general policy statement the policy itself is not likely to have a significant effect on N2K sites.</p>
	Ely2	N2/N5	<p>This policy sets out priority infrastructure items for the Ely, including the Ely southern bypass, improvements to the cycle network, upgrade to sewage facilities and enhanced health facilities, including the Princess of Wales Hospital.</p> <p>The Ely southern bypass is not a proposal generated by the Local Plan, but identified in the Third Cambridgeshire Local Transport Plan, 2015 and therefore can be excluded from the assessment. For the rest of the policy, there are no likely significant effects on the nearest N2k site (Ouse Washes) as there are no impact pathways between the changes the policy may cause and the site's qualifying interests.</p>
Kennett	Kennett2	N2/N5	<p>This policy sets out priority infrastructure items for the village, including road safety and traffic management schemes, improvements to pedestrian/cycle routes, provision of a village hall, additional school places and provision of A11/A14 link road.</p>

Settlement	Policies	Screening Category	Screening Assessment
			<p>The A11/A14 link road is not a project generated by the Local Plan, but is identified in the East Cambridgeshire Transport Strategy (2016), and therefore can be excluded from the assessment.</p> <p>There are no likely significant effects on the nearest N2k site: Devils Dyke, as there are no impact pathways between the changes the policy may cause and the site's qualifying interests.</p>
Soham	Soham2	N2/N5	<p>This policy sets out priority infrastructure items for the village, including improvements to Soham library, provision of a railway station, improvements to the Commons and Fountain Lane recreation ground, provision of a new cricket ground, pedestrian and cycle routes and facilities and public realm enhancements.</p> <p>Soham railway station is not a project generated by the Local Plan, but is identified in the Third Cambridgeshire Local Transport Plan 2015, and therefore can be excluded from the assessment.</p> <p>There are no likely significant effects on the nearest N2k sites: Wicken Fen and Chippenham Fen, as there are no impact pathways between the changes the policy may cause and the site's qualifying interests.</p>
	Soham12	N6	<p>This policy seeks to support the regeneration of Soham town centre, supporting, in principle, the redevelopment of sites within the town centre, especially for new, improved and intensification of sites for retail purposes.</p> <p>It is not considered that this policy will result in development that would have a significant effect on a N2K site because the policy focuses on the regeneration of an existing urban area to the likelihood of negative effects is low.</p>
	Soham13	N3	<p>This policy protects the network of green lanes and public rights of way in Soham and seeks to protect and enhance the wildlife, landscape and recreational quality of the Commons. As a policy that intends to protect and enhance the historic and natural (including biodiversity) environment, it is not likely to have a significant effect on a N2K site.</p>

Appendix 7. Re-screening of Further Draft Plan Site Allocations taking into account Natural England's comments

The following table presents the findings of the screening assessment for each site allocation that has been identified in the Further Draft Local Plan. Green shading represents policies that have been screened out of further consideration. Amber shading indicates policies where further consideration is required as a potential pathway of impact exists that cannot be screened out.

Settlement	Site Policies	Site Ref.	Site Address	Detail	Screening Assessment
Ashley	Ashley3	ASH.LGS1	Wavier Pond, Church Street		This is a Local Green Space site allocation that will protect open space from development. It can be screened out as there are no impact pathways to N2K sites.
Bottisham	Bottisham4	BOT.H1	Land east of Bell Road	50 dwellings New allotments	Bottisham is approximately 4km from Devil's Dyke SAC. This allocation alone is unlikely to lead to a significant effect on N2K sites due to the scale of development proposed. However, there is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Devil's Dyke SAC from residential allocations in combination with one another. There is also the potential for this site to contribute to <u>reduced air quality</u> through traffic movements past Devil's Dyke SAC in combination.
	Bottisham3	BOT.E1	Extension to Tunbridge Lane Business Park	0.9 ha	Bottisham is approximately 4km from Devil's Dyke SAC. There is potential for this site to contribute to <u>reduced air quality</u> through traffic movements past Devil's Dyke SAC in combination.
	Bottisham3	BOT.LGS1	Ancient Meadows		This is a Local Green Space site allocation that will protect open space from development. It can be screened out as there are no impact pathways to N2K sites.
Brinkley	Brinkley3	BRI.LGS.1	Beechcroft Field		This is a Local Green Space site allocation that will protect open space from development. It can be screened out as there are no impact pathways to N2K sites.
Burrough Green / Borough End	Burrough Green / Borough End3	BRG.H1	Land off Brinkley Road, Borough End	11 dwellings	Burrough Green/Burrough End is approximately 3km from Devil's Dyke SAC. This allocation alone is unlikely to lead to a significant effect on N2K sites due to the scale of development proposed. However, there is

Settlement	Site Policies	Site Ref.	Site Address	Detail	Screening Assessment
					<p>potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Devil's Dyke SAC from residential allocations in combination with one another.</p> <p>There is potential for this site to contribute to <u>reduced air quality</u> through traffic movements past Devil's Dyke SAC in combination.</p>
Burwell	Burwell3	BUR.H1	Land off Newmarket Road	350 dwellings	<p>Burwell is approximately 3km from Wicken Fen and within 5km of the Devil's Dyke.</p> <p>There is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Devil's Dyke SAC from this residential allocation alone and in combination with other residential allocations.</p> <p>Wicken Fen is vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
		BUR.PH1	Land at Stanford Park, Weirs Drove	91 dwellings	<p>Burwell is approximately 3km from Wicken Fen and within 5km of the Devil's Dyke.</p> <p>This allocation alone is unlikely to lead to a significant effect on N2K sites due to the scale of development proposed. However, there is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Devil's Dyke SAC from residential allocations in combination with one another.</p> <p>Wicken Fen is vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
		BUR.M1	Former DS Site, Reach Road	67 dwellings	<p>This site is already under construction and therefore can be screened out.</p>
		BUR.E1	Land at Reach Road	2.8ha	<p>Burwell is approximately 3km from Wicken Fen and within 5km of the Devil's Dyke.</p> <p>There are no impact pathways present between this site and Wicken Fen or Devil's Dyke.</p>
		BUR.LGS1	Pauline		<p>This is a Local Green Space site allocation that will protect open space from development. It can be screened out as there are no</p>

Settlement	Site Policies	Site Ref.	Site Address	Detail	Screening Assessment
			Swamp		impact pathways to N2K sites.
Cheveley	Cheveley3	CHV.H1	Land between 199 and 209 High Street	15 dwellings	This site is already under construction and therefore can be screened out.
Ely	Ely3	ELY.H1	Land off Lynn Road	19 dwellings	<p>Ely is approximately 7km from the Ouse Washes SAC.</p> <p>This allocation alone is unlikely to lead to a significant effect on N2K sites due to the scale of development proposed. However, there is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Ouse Washes SAC from residential allocations in combination with one another.</p> <p>The Ouse Washes is vulnerable to <u>changes in water quantity and quality</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on this key vulnerability in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
	Ely3	ELY.H2	Land at Barton Road Car Park	11 dwellings	<p>Ely is approximately 7km from the Ouse Washes SAC.</p> <p>This allocation alone is unlikely to lead to a significant effect on N2K sites due to the scale of development proposed. However, there is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Ouse Washes SAC from residential allocations in combination with one another.</p> <p>The Ouse Washes is vulnerable to <u>changes in water quantity and quality</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on this key vulnerability in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
	Ely3	ELY.H3	Former Depot, Lisle Lane	58 dwellings	<p>Ely is approximately 7km from the Ouse Washes SAC.</p> <p>This allocation alone is unlikely to lead to a significant effect on N2K sites due to the scale of development proposed. However, there is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Ouse Washes SAC from residential allocations in combination with one another.</p> <p>The Ouse Washes is vulnerable to <u>changes in water quantity and quality</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on this key</p>

Settlement	Site Policies	Site Ref.	Site Address	Detail	Screening Assessment
					vulnerability in combination with other residential allocations.
	Ely3	ELY.M1	North Ely	3,000 dwellings	<p>Ely is approximately 7km from the Ouse Washes SAC.</p> <p>There is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Ouse Washes SAC from this residential allocation alone and in combination with other residential allocations.</p> <p>The Ouse Washes is vulnerable to <u>changes in water quantity and quality</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on this key vulnerability in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
	Ely3	ELY.M2	The Grange, Nutholt Lane	10-50 dwellings	<p>Ely is approximately 7km from the Ouse Washes SAC.</p> <p>This allocation alone is unlikely to lead to a significant effect on N2K sites due to the scale of development proposed. However, there is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Ouse Washes SAC from residential allocations in combination with one another.</p> <p>The Ouse Washes is vulnerable to <u>changes in water quantity and quality</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on this key vulnerability in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
	Ely3	ELY.M3	Paradise Area, off Nutholt Lane	50-65 dwellings	<p>Ely is approximately 7km from the Ouse Washes SAC.</p> <p>This allocation alone is unlikely to lead to a significant effect on N2K sites due to the scale of development proposed. However, there is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Ouse Washes SAC from residential allocations in combination with one another.</p> <p>The Ouse Washes is vulnerable to <u>changes in water quantity and quality</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on this key vulnerability in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
	Ely3 Ely4	ELY.M4	Station Gateway	100-200 dwellings Employment	<p>Ely is approximately 7km from the Ouse Washes SAC.</p> <p>This allocation alone is unlikely to lead to a significant effect on N2K</p>

Settlement	Site Policies	Site Ref.	Site Address	Detail	Screening Assessment
				uses (B1 and B2) Small scale retail	<p>sites due to the scale of development proposed. However, there is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Ouse Washes SAC from residential allocations in combination with one another.</p> <p>The Ouse Washes is vulnerable to <u>changes in water quantity and quality</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on this key vulnerability in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
Ely3 Ely5		ELY.M5	Octagon Business Park, Angel Drove	13.1ha	<p>Ely is approximately 7km from the Ouse Washes SAC.</p> <p>The Ouse Washes is vulnerable to <u>changes in water quantity and quality</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on this key vulnerability in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
Ely3 Ely6		ELY.M6	Princess of Wales Hospital	77 dwellings	<p>Ely is approximately 7km from the Ouse Washes SAC.</p> <p>This allocation alone is unlikely to lead to a significant effect on N2K sites due to the scale of development proposed. However, there is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Ouse Washes SAC from residential allocations in combination with one another.</p> <p>The Ouse Washes is vulnerable to <u>changes in water quantity and quality</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on this key vulnerability in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
Ely3		ELY.E1	Ely Road and Rail Distribution Centre	11.2ha	<p>Ely is approximately 7km from the Ouse Washes SAC.</p> <p>The Ouse Washes is vulnerable to <u>changes in water quantity and quality</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on this key vulnerability in combination with other residential allocations</p>
Ely3 Ely7		ELY.E2 (a-c)	Lancaster Way Business Park	82.1ha	<p>Ely is approximately 7km from the Ouse Washes SAC.</p> <p>The Ouse Washes is vulnerable to <u>changes in water quantity and quality</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on this key vulnerability in combination with other residential allocations</p>
Ely3		ELY.L1	Downham Road sports	6.1ha	<p>Ely is approximately 7km from the Ouse Washes SAC.</p>

Settlement	Site Policies	Site Ref.	Site Address	Detail	Screening Assessment
			and leisure hub		The Ouse Washes is vulnerable to <u>changes in water quantity and quality</u> . Development could lead to potential effects on this key vulnerability in combination with other residential allocations
Fordham	Fordham3	FRD.H1	Land south of Mildenhall Road, East of Collin's Hill	20 dwellings	<p>Fordham is approximately 1.5km from Chippenham Fen (part of Fenland SAC).</p> <p>This allocation alone is unlikely to lead to a significant effect on N2K sites due to the scale of development proposed. However, there is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Chippenham Fen from residential allocations in combination with one another.</p> <p>Chippenham Fen is vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
		FRD.H2	Land north east of Rules Garden	15 dwellings	<p>Fordham is approximately 1.5km from Chippenham Fen (part of Fenland SAC).</p> <p>This allocation alone is unlikely to lead to a significant effect on N2K sites due to the scale of development proposed. However, there is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Chippenham Fen from residential allocations in combination with one another.</p> <p>Chippenham Fen is vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
		FRD.H3	Land off Station Road	27 dwellings	<p>Fordham is approximately 1.5km from Chippenham Fen (part of Fenland SAC).</p> <p>This allocation alone is unlikely to lead to a significant effect on N2K sites due to the scale of development proposed. However, there is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Chippenham Fen from residential allocations in combination with one another.</p>
		FRD.H4	Land off Steward's	12 dwellings	Fordham is approximately 1.5km from Chippenham Fen (part of Fenland SAC).

Settlement	Site Policies	Site Ref.	Site Address	Detail	Screening Assessment
			Field		<p>This allocation alone is unlikely to lead to a significant effect on N2K sites due to the scale of development proposed. However, there is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Chippenham Fen from residential allocations in combination with one another.</p> <p>Chippenham Fen is vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
	Fordham4	FRD.M1	Scotsdale Garden Centre, Market Street	150 dwellings Employment land (between 1-2ha) Community facilities, such as open space and recreational facilities	<p>Fordham is approximately 1.5km from Chippenham Fen (part of Fenland SAC).</p> <p>This allocation alone is unlikely to lead to a significant effect on N2K sites due to the scale of development proposed. However, there is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Chippenham Fen from residential allocations in combination with one another.</p> <p>Chippenham Fen is vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
	Fordham5	FRD.M2	Land north of Mildenhall Road	30 dwellings Open space and recreational facilities	<p>Fordham is approximately 1.5km from Chippenham Fen (part of Fenland SAC).</p> <p>This allocation alone is unlikely to lead to a significant effect on N2K sites due to the scale of development proposed. However, there is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Chippenham Fen from residential allocations in combination with one another.</p> <p>Chippenham Fen is vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.</p>

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	Fordham6	FRD.E1	Employment cluster, south of Fordham	83.2ha Allocated for B1/B2/B8 uses, except site D which is for B1/B2 only Undertake project level HRA screening	<p>Fordham is approximately 1.5km from Chippenham Fen (part of Fenland SAC).</p> <p>The employment allocation FRD.E1D is less than 400m from the Fenland SAC (Chippenham Fen). There is therefore potential for <u>urbanisation effects</u> relating to construction and operational activities and potentially effects on <u>water quality and quantity</u> from surface water run-off and increased demand for water.</p> <p>At this stage there is some uncertainty as to whether the proposals, either in isolation or in combination with other development, will have a significant effect on the integrity of Chippenham Fen and therefore they have been screened in.</p> <p>Development proposals will, therefore, require detailed assessment at project stage, including, where necessary, the submission of sufficient information from the applicant to enable the Council to complete, in consultation with Natural England, a project level Appropriate Assessment under the Habitats Regulation Assessment process.</p> <p>This policy includes criteria for a project level survey/assessment to be carried out and considered at application stage to ensure no adverse effects on the Fenland SAC and Chippenham Fen Ramsar will result from development.</p>
Haddenham	Haddenham3 Haddenham4	HAD.H1	Land off Rowan Close	15 dwellings	<p>Haddenham is approximately 5km from the Ouse Washes SAC.</p> <p>This allocation alone is unlikely to lead to a significant effect on N2K sites due to the scale of development proposed. However, there is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Ouse Washes SAC from residential allocations in combination with one another.</p>
	Haddenham3	HAD.H2	Land at New Road	24 dwellings	<p>Haddenham is approximately 5km from the Ouse Washes SAC.</p> <p>This allocation alone is unlikely to lead to a significant effect on N2K sites due to the scale of development proposed. However, there is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Ouse Washes SAC from residential allocations in combination with one another.</p>

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					The Ouse Washes is vulnerable to <u>changes in water quantity and quality</u> . Development could lead to potential effects on this key vulnerability in combination with other residential allocations
		HAD.H3	Land east of Chewells Lane	40 dwellings	Haddenham is approximately 5km from the Ouse Washes SAC. This allocation alone is unlikely to lead to a significant effect on N2K sites due to the scale of development proposed. However, there is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Ouse Washes SAC from residential allocations in combination with one another. The Ouse Washes is vulnerable to <u>changes in water quantity and quality</u> . Development could lead to potential effects on this key vulnerability in combination with other residential allocations
		HAD.E1	Land at Haddenham Business Park, Station Road	0.8ha	Haddenham is approximately 5km from the Ouse Washes SAC. The Ouse Washes is vulnerable to <u>changes in water quantity and quality</u> . Development could lead to potential effects on this key vulnerability in combination with other residential allocations.
Isleham	Isleham3	ISL.H1	Land south and west of Lady Frances Court	15 dwellings	Isleham is approximately 4 km from Chippenham Fen (part of Fenland SAC). This allocation alone is unlikely to lead to a significant effect on N2K sites due to the scale of development proposed. However, there is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Chippenham Fen from residential allocations in combination with one another. Chippenham Fen is vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u> . Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.
	Isleham3	ISL.H2	Land at 5a Fordham Road	11 dwellings	Isleham is approximately 4 km from Chippenham Fen (part of Fenland SAC). This allocation alone is unlikely to lead to a significant effect on N2K

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					<p>sites due to the scale of development proposed. However, there is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Chippenham Fen from residential allocations in combination with one another.</p> <p>Chippenham Fen is vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
	Isleham3	ISL.H3	Land west of Hall Barn Road	12 dwellings	<p>Isleham is approximately 4 km from Chippenham Fen (part of Fenland SAC).</p> <p>This allocation alone is unlikely to lead to a significant effect on N2K sites due to the scale of development proposed. However, there is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Chippenham Fen from residential allocations in combination with one another.</p> <p>Chippenham Fen is vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
	Isleham4	ISL.H4	Land off Fordham Road	150 dwellings 1-1.5ha for recreational facilities	<p>Isleham is approximately 4 km from Chippenham Fen (part of Fenland SAC).</p> <p>This allocation alone is unlikely to lead to a significant effect on N2K sites due to the scale of development proposed. However, there is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Chippenham Fen from residential allocations in combination with one another.</p> <p>Chippenham Fen is vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
	Isleham3	ISL.E1	Land adjacent to Hall Barn Road Industrial Estate	0.8 ha	<p>Isleham is approximately 4 km from Chippenham Fen (part of Fenland SAC).</p> <p>Chippenham Fen is vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key</p>

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					vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.
Kennett	Kennett4	KEN.M1	Land to the West of Station Road	500 dwellings 2-5ha employment land (B1/B2/B8 uses) Primary school Local centre with retail and community facilities	<p>Kennett is located within 2km of land designated as Breckland Farmland SSSI, a component of Breckland SPA. Residential development in this location poses a potential risk to the notified Stone Curlew interest. There is potential for <u>increased disturbance from recreational pressure</u>.</p> <p>The site is close to Chippenham Fen (approximately 4.5km) and there is potential for development to place <u>increased disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on this N2K site as well as the Breckland SPA.</p> <p>Chippenham Fen is vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
Kirtling	Kirtling3	KIR.LGS1	Kirtling Playing Field		This is a Local Green Space site allocation that will protect open space from development. It can be screened out as there are no impact pathways to N2K sites.
		KIR.LGS2	Cricket Pitch		This is a Local Green Space site allocation that will protect open space from development. It can be screened out as there are no impact pathways to N2K sites.
Little Downham	Little Downham3	Land West of Ely Road	LTD.H1	25 dwellings	<p>Little Downham is approximately 4.3km from Ouse Washes SAC.</p> <p>This allocation alone is unlikely to lead to a significant effect on N2K sites due to the scale of development proposed. However, there is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Ouse Washes SAC from residential allocations in combination with one another.</p> <p>The Ouse Washes is vulnerable to <u>changes in water quantity and quality</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on this key vulnerability in combination with other residential allocations</p>
Little Thetford	Little Thetford3	LTT.H1	Kand north of The Wyches	15 dwellings	<p>Little Thetford is approximately 6 km from Wicken Fen.</p> <p>This allocation alone is unlikely to lead to a significant effect on N2K</p>

Settlement	Site Policies	Site Ref.	Site Address	Detail	Screening Assessment
					<p>sites due to the scale of development proposed. However, there is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Wicken Fen SAC from residential allocations in combination with one another.</p> <p>Wicken Fen is vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
	Little Thetford3	LTT.H2	Land south of Caravan Park, Two Acres, Ely Road	10 dwellings	<p>Little Thetford is approximately 6 km from Wicken Fen.</p> <p>This allocation alone is unlikely to lead to a significant effect on N2K sites due to the scale of development proposed. However, there is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Wicken Fen SAC from residential allocations in combination with one another.</p> <p>Wicken Fen is vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
Littleport	Littleport3	LIT.H1	Old Station Goods Yard, Station Road	50 dwellings	<p>Littleport is approximately 5km from the Ouse Washes SAC.</p> <p>The Ouse Washes are vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development in close proximity could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities.</p> <p>This allocation alone is unlikely to lead to a significant effect on N2K sites due to the scale of development proposed. However, there is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Ouse Washes SAC from residential allocations in combination with one another.</p>
	Littleport3	LIT.H2	Highfield Farm, Ely Road	287 dwellings	<p>Littleport is approximately 5km from the Ouse Washes SAC.</p> <p>This site allocation is already under construction and therefore can be screened out.</p>
	Littleport3	LIT.H3	Land north	16 dwellings	<p>Littleport is approximately 5km from the Ouse Washes SAC.</p>

Settlement	Site Policies	Site Ref.	Site Address	Detail	Screening Assessment
			east of 5 Beck Lane		<p>There is potential for <u>physical loss of habitat</u> outside of the boundary of the Ouse Washes SAC used by migratory (wintering) birds for rest and grazing.</p> <p>The Ouse Washes are vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development in close proximity could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities.</p> <p>This allocation alone is unlikely to lead to a significant effect on N2K sites due to the scale of development proposed. However, there is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Ouse Washes SAC from residential allocations in combination with one another.</p>
	Littleport3	LIT.H4	Field west of 1B Upton Lane	63 dwellings	<p>Littleport is approximately 5km from the Ouse Washes SAC.</p> <p>There is potential for <u>physical loss of habitat</u> outside of the boundary of the Ouse Washes SAC used by migratory (wintering) birds for rest and grazing.</p> <p>The Ouse Washes are vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development in close proximity could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities.</p> <p>This allocation alone is unlikely to lead to a significant effect on N2K sites due to the scale of development proposed. However, there is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Ouse Washes SAC from residential allocations in combination with one another.</p>
	Littleport3 Littleport4	LIT.M1	West of Woodfen Road	250 dwellings	<p>Littleport is approximately 5km from the Ouse Washes SAC.</p> <p>There is potential for <u>physical loss of habitat</u> outside of the boundary of the Ouse Washes SAC used by migratory (wintering) birds for rest and grazing.</p> <p>The Ouse Washes are vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development in close proximity could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities.</p>

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					There is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Ouse Washes SAC from this residential allocation alone and in combination with other residential allocations.
Littleport3 Littleport5		LIT.M2	Land west of Highfields	600 dwellings Element of employment Public open space and play facilities Community facilities Local retail and small scale employment	<p>Littleport is approximately 5km from the Ouse Washes SAC.</p> <p>There is potential for <u>physical loss of habitat</u> outside of the boundary of the Ouse Washes SAC used by migratory (wintering) birds for rest and grazing.</p> <p>The Ouse Washes are vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development in close proximity could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities.</p> <p>There is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Ouse Washes SAC from this residential allocation alone and in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
Littleport3 Littleport6		LIT.M3	Land south of Grange Lane	1,200 dwellings (600 in the plan period) Element of employment and local retail On site community facilities and infrastructure Potential country park	<p>Littleport is approximately 5km from the Ouse Washes SAC.</p> <p>There is potential for <u>physical loss of habitat</u> outside of the boundary of the Ouse Washes SAC used by migratory (wintering) birds for rest and grazing.</p> <p>The Ouse Washes are vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development in close proximity could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities.</p> <p>There is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Ouse Washes SAC from this residential allocation alone and in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
Littleport3 Littleport7		LIT.E1	Land north of Wisbech Rd Business Park	33.0ha	<p>Littleport is approximately 5km from the Ouse Washes SAC.</p> <p>There is potential for <u>physical loss of habitat</u> outside of the boundary of the Ouse Washes SAC used by migratory (wintering) birds for rest and grazing.</p> <p>The Ouse Washes are vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development in close proximity could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities.</p>

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	Littleport3	LIT.E2	Land west of 150 Wisbech Road	1.5ha	<p>Littleport is approximately 5km from the Ouse Washes SAC.</p> <p>There is potential for <u>physical loss of habitat</u> outside of the boundary of the Ouse Washes SAC used by migratory (wintering) birds for rest and grazing.</p> <p>The Ouse Washes are vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development in close proximity could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities.</p>
Lode with Long Meadow	Lode with Long Meadow3	LOD.H1	Sunny Ridge Farmyard, Station Road	20 dwellings	<p>Lode with Long Meadow is approximately 6km from Devil's Dyke SAC and 7km from Wicken Fen</p> <p>This allocation alone is unlikely to lead to a significant effect on N2K sites due to the scale of development proposed. However, there is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Devil's Dyke SAC and Wicken Fen SAC from residential allocations in combination with one another.</p>
Mepal	Mepal3 Mepal4	MEP.H1	Land at Brick Lane	50 dwellings	<p>Mepal is approximately 0.5 km from Ouse Washes SAC.</p> <p>There is potential for <u>physical loss of habitat</u> outside of the boundary of the Ouse Washes SAC used by migratory (wintering) birds for rest and grazing.</p> <p>The Ouse Washes are vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.</p> <p>This allocation alone is unlikely to lead to a significant effect on N2K sites due to the scale of development proposed. However, there is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Ouse Washes SAC from residential allocations in combination with one another.</p>
Newmarket Fringe	Newmarket Fringe3	WOO.H1	Land off Cricket Field Road	10 dwellings	<p>The Newmarket Fringe allocation is approximately 1km from Devil's Dyke SAC and 5.8km from Chippenham Fen SAC.</p> <p>This allocation alone is unlikely to lead to a significant effect on N2K sites due to the scale of development proposed. However, there is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on</p>

Settlement	Site Policies	Site Ref.	Site Address	Detail	Screening Assessment
					<p>Devil's Dyke and Chippenham Fen SAC from residential allocations in combination with one another.</p> <p>Chippenham Fen is vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
Pymoor	Pymoor3	PYM.H1	Land north-east of 9 Straight Furlong	11 dwellings	<p>Pymoor is approximately less than 1km from Ouse Washes SAC.</p> <p>The Ouse Washes are vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development in close proximity could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities.</p> <p>This allocation alone is unlikely to lead to a significant effect on N2K sites due to the scale of development proposed. However, there is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Ouse Washes SAC from residential allocations in combination with one another.</p>
Reach	Reach3	REA.LGS1	The Hythe		This is a Local Green Space site allocation that will protect open space from development. It can be screened out as there are no impact pathways to N2K sites.
Soham	Soham3 Soham4	SOH.H1	Land at Brook Street	300 dwellings 8ha public open space on site, including at least 2 play areas	<p>Soham is approximately 3km from Wicken Fen and 5km from Chippenham Fen.</p> <p>There is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Chippenham Fen and Wicken Fen from this residential allocation alone and in combination with other residential allocations.</p> <p>Both Chippenham Fen and Wicken Fen are vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
	Soham3	SOH.H2	Land rear of 48-64 Station Road	14 dwellings	<p>Soham is approximately 3km from Wicken Fen and 5km from Chippenham Fen.</p> <p>There is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Chippenham Fen and Wicken Fen in combination with other residential allocations.</p>

Settlement	Site Policies	Site Ref.	Site Address	Detail	Screening Assessment
					Both Chippenham Fen and Wicken Fen are vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u> . Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.
	Soham3	SOH.H3	Land rear of 23-49 Fordham Road	87 dwellings	<p>Soham is approximately 3km from Wicken Fen and 5km from Chippenham Fen.</p> <p>There is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Chippenham Fen and Wicken Fen in combination with other residential allocations.</p> <p>Both Chippenham Fen and Wicken Fen are vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
	Soham3	SOH.H4	Land off Fordham Road	90 dwellings	<p>Soham is approximately 3km from Wicken Fen and 5km from Chippenham Fen.</p> <p>There is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Chippenham Fen and Wicken Fen in combination with other residential allocations.</p> <p>Both Chippenham Fen and Wicken Fen are vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
	Soham3 Soham5	SOH.H5	Land south of Blackberry Lane	160 dwellings 1.2 ha open space	<p>Soham is approximately 3km from Wicken Fen and 5km from Chippenham Fen.</p> <p>There is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Chippenham Fen and Wicken Fen in combination with other residential allocations.</p> <p>Both Chippenham Fen and Wicken Fen are vulnerable to <u>changes in</u></p>

Settlement	Site Policies	Site Ref.	Site Address	Detail	Screening Assessment
					<u>water quality and quantity</u> . Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.
	Soham3 Soham6	SOH.H6	Land north of Blackberry Lane	100 dwellings 0.7 ha open space	<p>Soham is approximately 3km from Wicken Fen and 5km from Chippenham Fen.</p> <p>There is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Chippenham Fen and Wicken Fen in combination with other residential allocations.</p> <p>Both Chippenham Fen and Wicken Fen are vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
	Soham3	SOH.H7	Land west of The Cherry Tree Public House, Cherrytree Lane	126 dwellings	<p>Soham is approximately 3km from Wicken Fen and 5km from Chippenham Fen.</p> <p>There is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Chippenham Fen and Wicken Fen in combination with other residential allocations.</p> <p>Both Chippenham Fen and Wicken Fen are vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
	Soham3	SOH.H8	Land parcel east of 2 The Shade	45 dwellings	<p>Soham is approximately 3km from Wicken Fen and 5km from Chippenham Fen.</p> <p>There is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Chippenham Fen and Wicken Fen in combination with other residential allocations.</p> <p>Both Chippenham Fen and Wicken Fen are vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.</p>

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	Soham3 Soham7	SOH.H9	Land south of Cherrytree Lane, west of Orchard Row	200 dwellings On site primary school Open space	<p>Soham is approximately 3km from Wicken Fen and 5km from Chippenham Fen.</p> <p>There is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Chippenham Fen and Wicken Fen in combination with other residential allocations.</p> <p>Both Chippenham Fen and Wicken Fen are vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
	Soham3	SOH.H10	Land off Kingfisher Drive	100 dwellings maximum	<p>Soham is approximately 3km from Wicken Fen and 5km from Chippenham Fen.</p> <p>There is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Chippenham Fen and Wicken Fen in combination with other residential allocations.</p> <p>Both Chippenham Fen and Wicken Fen are vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
	Soham3 Soham8	SOH.H11	Land at Northfield Road	200 dwellings Open space	<p>Soham is approximately 3km from Wicken Fen and 5km from Chippenham Fen.</p> <p>There is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Chippenham Fen and Wicken Fen in combination with other residential allocations.</p> <p>Both Chippenham Fen and Wicken Fen are vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
	Soham3	SOH.H12	Land to rear of 7 and 7A	17 dwellings	<p>Soham is approximately 3km from Wicken Fen and 5km from Chippenham Fen.</p>

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			Townsend		<p>There is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Chippenham Fen and Wicken Fen in combination with other residential allocations.</p> <p>Both Chippenham Fen and Wicken Fen are vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
	Soham3	SOH.H13	Soham Health Centre, Pratt Street	10 dwellings	<p>Soham is approximately 3km from Wicken Fen and over 5km from Chippenham Fen.</p> <p>There is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Wicken Fen and Chippenham Fen and possibly Devil's Dyke in combination.</p> <p>Both Chippenham Fen and Wicken Fen are vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
	Soham3	SOH.H14	90 Paddock Street	10 dwellings	<p>Soham is approximately 3km from Wicken Fen and 5km from Chippenham Fen.</p> <p>There is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Chippenham Fen and Wicken Fen in combination with other residential allocations.</p> <p>Both Chippenham Fen and Wicken Fen are vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
	Soham3 Soham9	SOH.M1	Eastern Gateway	600 dwellings 0.5ha of B1/B2 employment land 0.4ha extension	<p>Soham is approximately 3km from Wicken Fen and 5km from Chippenham Fen.</p> <p>There is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Chippenham Fen and Wicken Fen from this residential</p>

Settlement	Site Policies	Site Ref.	Site Address	Detail	Screening Assessment
				to medial centre 1.1ha for extension to primary school 11.6ha open space 3ha garden centre or employment use Small scale retail	allocation alone and in combination with other residential allocations. Both Chippenham Fen and Wicken Fen are vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u> . Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.
	Soham3	SOH.M2	Land north west of The Shade School	20 dwellings	Soham is approximately 3km from Wicken Fen and 5km from Chippenham Fen. There is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Chippenham Fen and Wicken Fen in combination with other residential allocations. Both Chippenham Fen and Wicken Fen are vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u> . Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.
	Soham3 Soham10	SOH.M3	Land off Station Road	90 dwellings 0.5ha employment land 0.6ha train station building and ancillary facilities	Soham is approximately 3km from Wicken Fen and 5km from Chippenham Fen. There is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Chippenham Fen and Wicken Fen in combination with other residential allocations. Both Chippenham Fen and Wicken Fen are vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u> . Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.
	Soham3	SOH.E1	Land east of The Shade	5.2ha	Soham is approximately 3km from Wicken Fen and 5km from Chippenham Fen.

Settlement	Site Policies	Site Ref.	Site Address	Detail	Screening Assessment
					Both Chippenham Fen and Wicken Fen are vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u> . Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.
	Soham3 Soham11	SOH.E2	Land east of A142 bypass	10.8ha	Soham is approximately 3km from Wicken Fen and 5km from Chippenham Fen. Both Chippenham Fen and Wicken Fen are vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u> . Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.
Stretham	Stretham3 Stretham4	STR.H1	Land at Manor Farm, Stretham	100 dwellings Cemetery extension	Stretham is approximately 5km from Wicken Fen This site allocation is already under construction and therefore can be screened out.
Stuntney	Stuntney3	STU.LGS1	Stutney Play Area		This is a Local Green Space site allocation that will protect open space from development. It can be screened out as there are no impact pathways to N2K sites.
Sutton	Sutton3 Sutton4	SUT.H1	Land north of the Brook and west of Mepal Rd	250 dwellings Open space	Sutton is approximately 1.5km from the Ouse Washes SAC. There is potential for <u>physical loss of habitat</u> outside of the boundary of the Ouse Washes SAC used by migratory (wintering) birds for rest and grazing. The Ouse Washes are vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u> . Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations. There is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Ouse Washes SAC from this residential allocation alone and in combination with other residential allocations.
	Sutton3 Sutton5	SUT.H2	Land east of Garden Close	25 dwellings	Sutton is approximately 1.5km from the Ouse Washes SAC. There is potential for <u>physical loss of habitat</u> outside of the boundary of the Ouse Washes SAC used by migratory (wintering) birds for rest

Settlement	Site Policies	Site Ref.	Site Address	Detail	Screening Assessment
					<p>and grazing.</p> <p>The Ouse Washes are vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.</p> <p>There is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Ouse Washes in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
	Sutton3	SUT.E1	Elean Business Park	34.7ha	<p>Sutton is approximately 1.5km from the Ouse Washes SAC.</p> <p>The Ouse Washes are vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
Swaffham Bulbeck	Swaffham Bulbeck3 Swaffham Bulbeck4	SWB.H1	Land off Heath Road and Quarry Lane	38 dwellings	<p>Swaffham Bulbeck is approximately 4km from Devil's Dyke SAC and 7km from Wicken Fen.</p> <p>There is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Devil's Dyke and Wicken Fen in combination with other residential allocations.</p> <p>There is also the potential for this site to contribute to <u>reduced air quality</u> through traffic movements past Devil's Dyke SAC in combination.</p> <p>Wicken Fen is vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
	Swaffham Bulbeck3 Swaffham Bulbeck5	SWB.H2	Land fronting Heath Road	18 dwellings	<p>Swaffham Bulbeck is approximately 4km from Devil's Dyke SAC and 7km from Wicken Fen.</p> <p>There is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Devil's Dyke and Wicken Fen in combination with other residential allocations.</p> <p>There is also the potential for this site to contribute to <u>reduced air</u></p>

Settlement	Site Policies	Site Ref.	Site Address	Detail	Screening Assessment
					<p><u>quality</u> through traffic movements past Devil's Dyke SAC in combination.</p> <p>Wicken Fen is vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
Swaffham Prior	Swaffham Prior3 Swaffham Prior4	SWP.E1	Land east of Goodwin Farm, Heath Road	1.1ha	<p>Swaffham Prior is within 1km of Devil's Dyke SAC.</p> <p>There is also the potential for this site to contribute to <u>reduced air quality</u> through traffic movements past Devil's Dyke SAC in combination.</p>
	Swaffham Prior3	SWP.LGS1	Playing Field, High Street		This is a Local Green Space site allocation that will protect open space from development. It can be screened out as there are no impact pathways to N2K sites.
	Swaffham Prior3	SWP.LGS2	Coopers Green, Green Head Road		This is a Local Green Space site allocation that will protect open space from development. It can be screened out as there are no impact pathways to N2K sites.
Wicken	Wicken3	WIC.H1	Land off lower Road	24 dwellings	<p>Wicken is less than 1km from Wicken Fen SAC and 7km from Chippenham Fen SAC.</p> <p>There is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Wicken Fen and Chippenham Fen in combination with other residential allocations.</p> <p>Both Chippenham Fen and Wicken Fen are vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
	Wicken3	WIC.H2	Land South OF Chapel Lane	11 dwellings	<p>Wicken is less than 1km from Wicken Fen SAC and 7km from Chippenham Fen SAC.</p> <p>There is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on Wicken Fen and Chippenham Fen in combination with other residential allocations.</p> <p>Both Chippenham Fen and Wicken Fen are vulnerable to <u>changes in</u></p>

Settlement	Site Policies	Site Ref.	Site Address	Detail	Screening Assessment
					<u>water quality and quantity</u> . Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.
Wilburton	Wilburton3	WIL.H1	Land off Station Road	35 dwellings	<p>Wilburton is approximately 7km from the Ouse Washes SAC and 8km from Wicken Fen SAC.</p> <p>There is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on the Ouse Washes and Wicken Fen in combination with other residential allocations.</p> <p>The Ouse Washes are vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
Witcham	Witcham3	WTM.H1	Kings of Witcham, The Slade	10 dwellings	<p>Witcham is approximately 3km from the Ouse Washes SAC</p> <p>There is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on the Ouse Washes in combination with other residential allocations.</p> <p>The Ouse Washes is vulnerable to <u>changes in water quantity and quality</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on this key vulnerability in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
Witchford	Witchford3 Witchford4	WFD.H1	Land north of Field End	128 dwellings	<p>Witchford is approximately 7km from the Ouse Washes SAC.</p> <p>There is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on the Ouse Washes in combination with other residential allocations.</p> <p>The Ouse Washes are vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
	Witchford3 Witchford5	WFD.H2	Land at Common Road	120 dwellings	<p>Witchford is approximately 7km from the Ouse Washes SAC.</p> <p>There is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational</u></p>

Settlement	Site Policies	Site Ref.	Site Address	Detail	Screening Assessment
					<p><u>pressure</u> on the Ouse Washes in combination with other residential allocations.</p> <p>The Ouse Washes are vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
	Witchford3	WFD.H3	Land south of Main Road	46 dwellings	<p>Witchford is approximately 7km from the Ouse Washes SAC.</p> <p>There is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on the Ouse Washes in combination with other residential allocations.</p> <p>The Ouse Washes are vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
	Witchford3	WFD.H4	Land to the rear of 1-7 Sutton Road	13 dwellings	<p>Witchford is approximately 7km from the Ouse Washes SAC.</p> <p>There is potential for increased <u>disturbance from recreational pressure</u> on the Ouse Washes in combination with other residential allocations.</p> <p>The Ouse Washes are vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
	Witchford3	WFD.E1	Sedgeway Business Park	5.4ha	<p>Witchford is approximately 7km from the Ouse Washes SAC.</p> <p>The Ouse Washes are vulnerable to <u>changes in water quality and quantity</u>. Development could lead to potential effects on these key vulnerabilities in combination with other residential allocations.</p>
	Witchford3	WFD.LGS1	Victoria Green		<p>This is a Local Green Space site allocation that will protect open space from development. It can be screened out as there are no impact pathways to N2K sites.</p>

Settlement	Site Policies	Site Ref.	Site Address	Detail	Screening Assessment
	Witchford3	WFD.LGS2	Millenium Wood		This is a Local Green Space site allocation that will protect open space from development. It can be screened out as there are no impact pathways to N2K sites.
	Witchford3	WFD.LGS3	Manor Road		This is a Local Green Space site allocation that will protect open space from development. It can be screened out as there are no impact pathways to N2K sites.
	Witchford3	WFD.LGS4	Between Field End and Wheats Close		This is a Local Green Space site allocation that will protect open space from development. It can be screened out as there are no impact pathways to N2K sites.
	Witchford3	WFD.LGS5	Broadway		This is a Local Green Space site allocation that will protect open space from development. It can be screened out as there are no impact pathways to N2K sites.
	Witchford3	WFD.LGS6	Common Road		This is a Local Green Space site allocation that will protect open space from development. It can be screened out as there are no impact pathways to N2K sites.
	Witchford3	WFD.LGS7	Horse Meadow, Main Street		This is a Local Green Space site allocation that will protect open space from development. It can be screened out as there are no impact pathways to N2K sites.

Appendix 8: Key recommendations from the HRA re-screening of the Further Draft Local Plan

Taking into account the feedback from Natural England on the January 2017 version of the HRA Screening Report, and the outcome of the re-screening of the Further Draft version of the Local Plan, the following amendments to the Local Plan are recommended to strengthen policies to ensure the Plan will not adversely impact on a N2K site.

Recreation Pressure

- *Policy LP20 Delivering Green Infrastructure* – amend policy wording to require new development to provide open space of a sufficient size and quality to accommodate additional recreation pressure along with any necessary mitigation and visitor access management measures.
- *Policy LP21 Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities* – amend policy wording to require proposals to provide additional open space, sport and/or recreational provision where it is needed to mitigate the effects of increased recreational pressure on nationally or internationally designated sites.
- *Policy LP30 Conserving and Enhancing Biodiversity and Geodiversity* – Amend policy wording to refer to the requirement for proposals likely to have a significant effect on a European site to comply with the requirements of the Habitats Regulations.
- *Burwell* – Policy or supporting text to acknowledge the designation of Devil’s Dyke as a SSSI and SAC.
- *Burwell4* – amend to require proposals to provide a detailed ecological assessment to include consideration of the effects of increased recreational pressure on Devil’s Dyke, sufficient to enable the Local Planning Authority to undertake HRA.
- *Fordham 4 and Fordham 5* - amend to require proposals to provide a detailed ecological assessment to include consideration of the effects of increased recreational pressure on Chippenham Fen Ramsar and Brackland Rough SSSI, sufficient to enable the Local Planning Authority to undertake HRA.
- *Isleham* - amend to require proposals to provide a detailed ecological assessment to include consideration of the effects of increased recreational pressure on nationally and internationally designated sites, sufficient to enable the Local Planning Authority to undertake HRA.
- *Kennett4* – amend to require proposals to provide a detailed ecological assessment sufficient to enable the LPA to undertake an HRA. This should include consideration of the effects of increased recreational pressure on nationally and internationally designated sites.
- *Kennett4* – amend to require proposals to be supported by a Green Infrastructure Strategy incorporating details of measures to mitigate impacts on ecology and deliver environmental enhancements to achieve net gain for biodiversity, landscape and access.
- *Littleport4* - amend to require proposals to contribute towards a Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity Strategy for Littleport.
- *Soham* - amend to require proposals to provide a detailed ecological assessment sufficient to enable the LPA to undertake an HRA. This should include consideration of the effects of increased recreational pressure on nationally and internationally designated sites.

Air Quality

- *Policy LP17 Creating a Sustainable, Efficient and Resilient Transport Network or LP26 Pollution and Land Contamination* – amend to add that transport impacts close to designated sites will require an air quality assessment to demonstrate no adverse effect on sensitive sites.