

Strategic Environmental Assessment & Habitats Regulations Assessment Draft Screening Report

On behalf of Werrington Area Forum

December 2023

Date of assessment:	December 2023
Date/ version of neighbourhood development plan to which Screening Report applies:	Regulation 14 Version (received by PCC 12 th October 2023)

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Overview

Neighbourhood Development Plan to which this Screening Report applies:

Werrington Neighbourhood Plan

Version/ date of Neighbourhood Development Plan to which this Screening Report applies:

Regulation 14 version (received 12th October 2023)

Regulation 14 Consultation has not yet taken place.

Neighbourhood area to which the Neighbourhood Development Plan applies:

Werrington Neighbourhood Area

Parish Council within the neighbourhood area:

Werrington Area Forum

Acronyms

AQMA	Air Quality Management Area
CWS	County Wildlife Site
DC	District Council
DEFRA	Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs
ECJ	European Court of Justice
HRA	Habitats Regulations Assessment
IRZ	Impact Risk Zone
LNR	Local Nature Reserve
NDP	Neighbourhood Development Plan
NNR	National Nature Reserve
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
NPPG	National Planning Practice Guidance
PCC	Peterborough City Council
PLP	Peterborough Local Plan
SA	Sustainability Appraisal
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SPA	Special Protection Area
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
WNP	Werrington Neighbourhood Plan

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The purpose of this report is to undertake a screening exercise against various criteria to determine whether the Werrington Neighbourhood Plan (WNP) requires a full Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and / or Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA). The screening exercise will therefore support the WNP in satisfying the basic conditions and will be submitted as part of the evidence base which will accompany the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 1.2. This version of the Screening Report is referred to as a Draft Screening Report. It has been prepared for consultation with statutory consultation bodies. Once consultation with the Statutory Bodies has been undertaken, the Screening Report will be finalised.
- 1.3. A Neighbourhood Plan must meet the 'basic conditions' set out in 8(2) of Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. This includes (basic condition 'f') demonstrating that the Neighbourhood Plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with EU obligations¹ (which were transcribed into UK law and thus still apply despite the UK leaving the European Union) such as:
 - **Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 June 2001 on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment** (the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive), transposed into UK law by The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004; and
 - **Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora**, which was initially transposed into UK law by The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 with various amendments consolidated by The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended).
- 1.4. In addition, basic condition 'g' requires:

"prescribed conditions are met in relation to the Order (or plan) and prescribed matters have been complied with in connection with the proposal for the order (or neighbourhood plan)."
- 1.5. Notably, this includes demonstrating that the making of the neighbourhood plan does not breach the requirements of Chapter 8 of Part 6 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), which set out the habitat regulation assessment process for land use plans, including consideration of the effect on habitats sites.
- 1.6. Following the United Kingdom's withdrawal from the European Union (i.e. Brexit), EU law no longer has supremacy over British laws. Whilst initially introduced by EU Directives, the processes for SEA and HRA have been transposed into UK law, namely The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (as amended) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended).
- 1.7. In light of Brexit, to enable the continued operation of the HRA processes The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019² made a number of changes to the 2017 Regulations. Most of these changes involved transferring functions from the European Commission to the appropriate authorities in England and Wales, with all other

¹ https://www.gov.uk/guidance/neighbourhood-planning--2?mc_cid=e09f0934ad&mc_eid=c5e5a6ab4a#basic-conditions-for-neighbourhood-plan-to-referendum

² <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukSI/2019/579/contents/made>

processes or terms in the 2017 Regulations remaining unchanged and existing guidance remaining relevant. The obligations of competent authorities (i.e. Peterborough City Council) for the protection of sites or species do not change.

- 1.8. Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) were originally designated under the Habitats Directive and target particular habitats (Annex I) and/or species (Annex II) identified as being of European importance. Special Protection Areas (SPAs) were originally classified under the European Council Directive “on the conservation of wild birds” (79/409/EEC; ‘Birds Directive’) for the protection of wild birds and their habitats.
- 1.9. SACs and SPAs in the UK no longer form part of the EU’s Natura 2000 ecological network. The 2019 Regulations have created a ‘national site network’ on land and at sea, including both the inshore and offshore marine areas in the UK, and includes existing SPAs and SACs.
- 1.10. Ramsar sites are designated wetlands of international importance. Ramsar sites do not form part of the new national site network. Many Ramsar sites overlap with SPAs and SACs and are designated for the same or different species and habitats. All Ramsar sites remain protected in the same way as SPAs and SACs.
- 1.11. This draft Screening Report uses ‘European site’ to refer to what were previously known as ‘Natura 2000’ sites when referring collectively to SPAs, SACs, and Ramsar sites.
- 1.12. In general terms, a Neighbourhood Plan may require full SEA following screening, where its policies and proposals are likely to result in **significant** effects on the environment, particularly where such effects have not already been considered and dealt with, such as through a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) (incorporating SEA) of a Local Plan.
- 1.13. In the context of neighbourhood planning, following screening, should a Neighbourhood Plan be deemed likely to result in a significant impact occurring on a protected site within the national sites network as a result of the plan’s implementation, the HRA proceeds to Appropriate Assessment.
- 1.14. The aim of the HRA process is to assess the potential effects arising from a plan against the nature conservation objectives of any site in the national sites network designated for its nature conservation importance.
- 1.15. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) also expects candidate SACs, potential SPAs and Ramsar sites to be included within the assessment.

2. Planning Context

- 2.1. The basic conditions require a Neighbourhood Plan to be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the Development Plan (the Local Plan) for the area.
- 2.2. Through its strategic policies, the Local Plan effectively defines the parameters within which a Neighbourhood Plan may operate. Throughout their preparation, Local Plans are subject to SEA (generally incorporated through a SA) and HRA. Where a Neighbourhood Plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan, it is likely that many of the environmental effects of the plan will have already been considered through the Local Plan-making process.
- 2.3. National planning policy states that evidence should be proportionate and should not repeat policy assessment already undertaken. It is therefore relevant to consider the strategic policy context for the purpose of avoiding duplication and to identify environmental effects not already considered and addressed through the Local Plan-making process.

Peterborough Local Plan 2016-2036

- 2.4. The adopted Development Plan for the unitary authority of Peterborough is the Peterborough Local Plan (adopted 24 July 2019), which defines strategic (and more locally specific) policies for the growth and regeneration of Peterborough and the surrounding villages.
- 2.5. At the time at which the WNP will likely be examined, the above document is likely to remain the adopted Development Plan for Peterborough. PCC have commenced a review of the Local Plan. The [Peterborough Local Development Scheme \(January 2023\)](#) sets out the timetable for the review. The target for the adoption of the new Local Plan is March 2026.
- 2.6. The Local Plan directs most development to within and adjoining the City of Peterborough (27% in the urban area, 59% through urban extensions to the City) with the remaining housing distributed in the large villages, and to a lesser extent, medium and small villages (5%) and through windfall development (9%).
- 2.7. Policy LP2: The Settlement Hierarchy and the Countryside, sets out a settlement hierarchy for the whole of the Peterborough area, to assist decisions on investment in services and facilities, and on the location and scale of new development. Within this hierarchy, Werrington falls within the existing urban area of the City of Peterborough.
- 2.8. There are no sites within the WNP area allocated for development within adopted Peterborough Local Plan. As such, it can be concluded that Werrington has limited growth planned for in the adopted Local Plan.
- 2.9. During its preparation, the Local Plan was subject to a [full SA](#) (incorporating SEA) and [HRA](#). These Local Plan assessments will be considered in reaching a screening opinion as to whether the WNP requires a SEA and/or HRA.

3. Summary of Werrington Neighbourhood Plan

Overview of the Neighbourhood Development Plan

3.1. The subject of this screening report is the Regulation 14 version of the Werrington Neighbourhood Plan 2023 to 2036. The next stage of the WNP will be the Regulation 14 consultation.

3.2. The WNP has been prepared by Werrington Area Forum (Neighbourhood Forum), the 'qualifying body' for the purposes of neighbourhood planning. The Werrington Neighbourhood Area was formally designated by Peterborough City Council (PCC) on 28 January 2019 and comprises the urban area of Peterborough known as Werrington. The designated area is shown in **Map 3.1** below.

3.3. The WNP sets out the following Vision for the Neighbourhood Area:

"The people of the Designated Area wish to see a thriving, vibrant, caring and safe community where everyone of all ages feel comfortable and valued. We want to preserve the best of what we already have in Werrington - its distinctive character, heritage and natural assets, and bring about improvements with appropriate development. We want Werrington to become an even better place in which to live and to visit."

3.4. The WNP identifies 3 Objectives to achieve the Vision:

3.4.1. Objective 1: Built Environment The protection of the architectural heritage and distinctive characteristics of the area ensuring that new development (within the levels of growth and spatial strategy proposed through the Local Plan) contributes positively to the Designated Area's character in terms of the existing scale, density, location, design and layout.

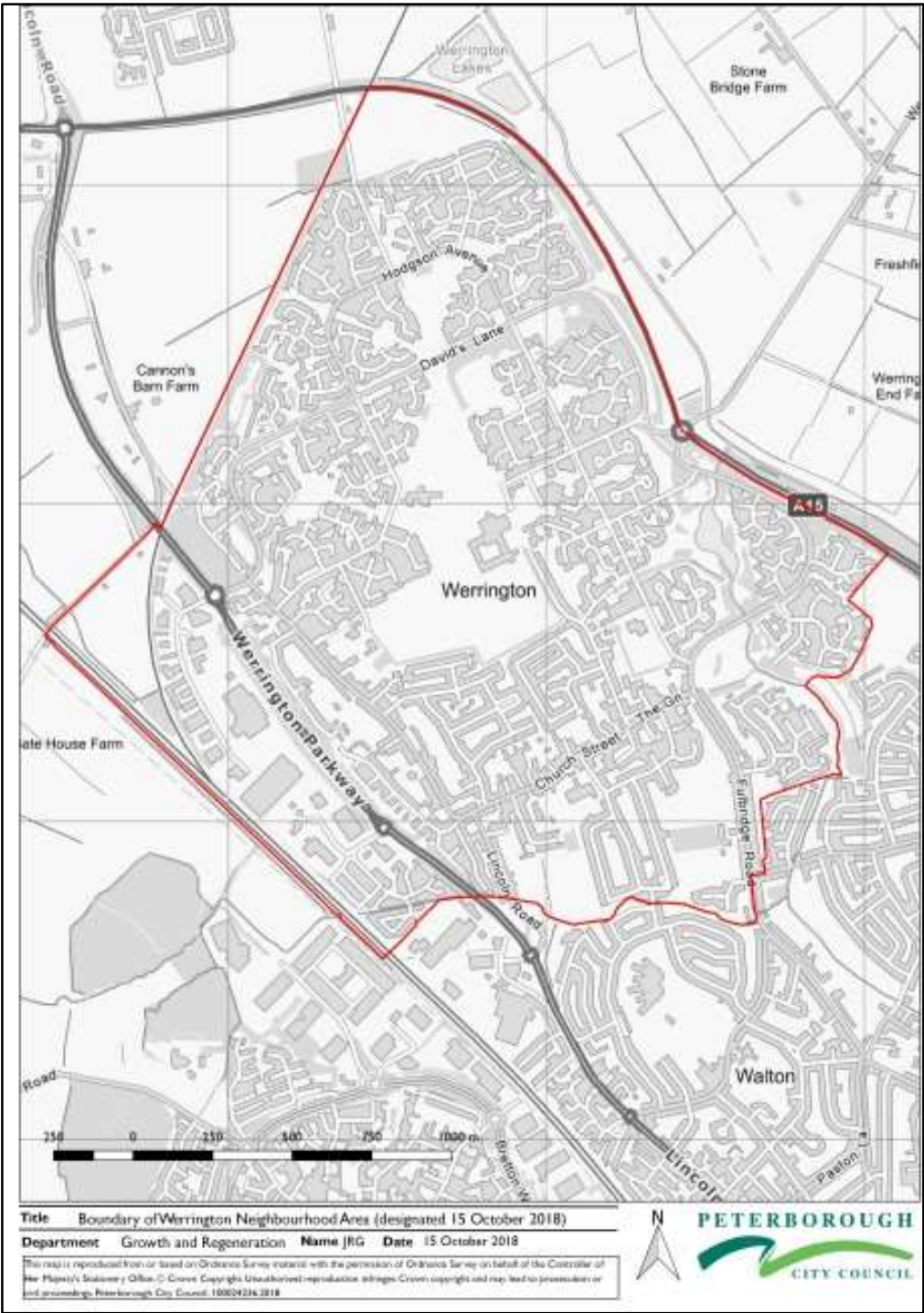
3.4.2. Objective 2: Natural Environment The maintenance and enhancement of the open spaces, natural habitats and green character of the area for the benefit of people, flora and wildlife including the preservation and improvement of access to the countryside.

3.4.3. Objective 3: Community The continued development and improvement of the Designated Area embracing opportunities to support and improve services, facilities and local businesses whilst ensuring the maintenance of its identity, character and integrity.

3.5. To deliver the Vision and Objectives, the WNP proposes 12 policies in total:

- Policy WNP1: Spatial Strategy
- Policy WNP 2: High Quality Design
- Policy WNP 3: Sustainable Construction and Energy Efficiency
- Policy WNP 4: Parking
- Policy WNP 5: Locally Important Views
- Policy WNP 6: Natural Environment
- Policy WNP 7: Local Green Spaces
- Policy WNP 8: Former Sports Ground
- Policy WNP 9: Recreational Facilities
- Policy WNP 10: Footpaths and Cycleways
- Policy WNP 11: Business

Map 3.1: Boundary of the designated Werrington Neighbourhood Area



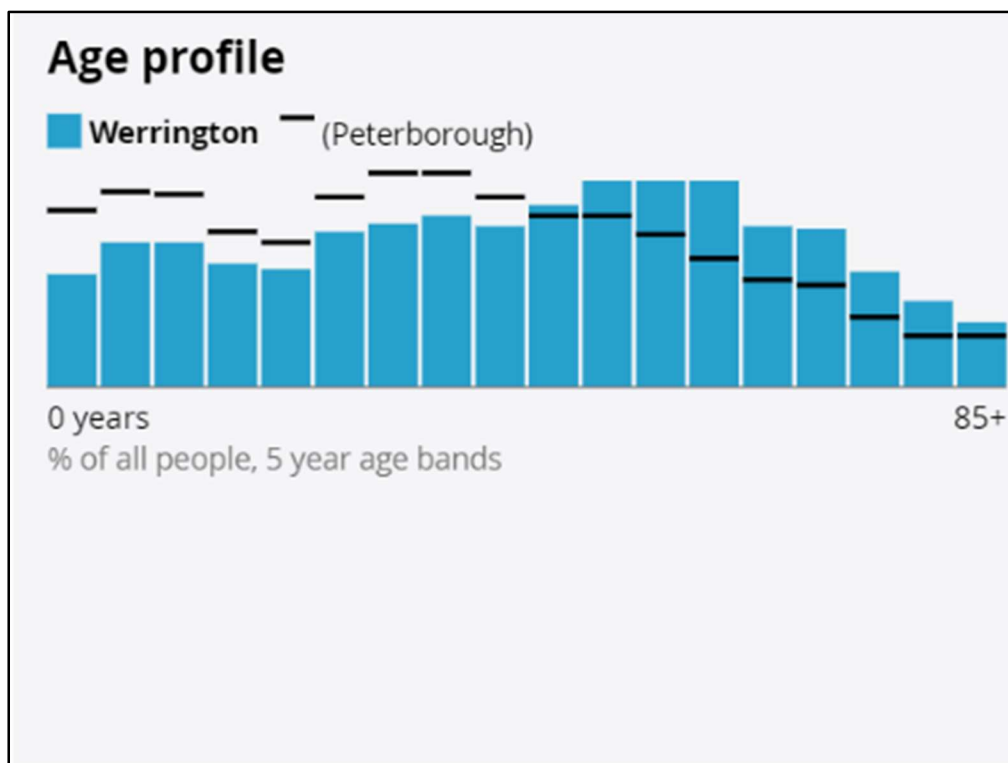
Source: PCC

Summary of Werrington Neighbourhood Area Characteristics

- 3.6. To determine the likely significant effects of the WNP on the environment, it is important to consider the characteristics of the area likely to be affected. A range of sources of information have been used to gather this information, including [Office for National Statistics \(ONS\)](#), [DEFRA Magic Maps](#), Environment Agency [Flood Risk Maps for Planning](#), [PCC Interactive Map](#) and the WNP's own evidence base.
- 3.7. Werrington forms the northern most suburb of the city of Peterborough. To the north and east are agricultural fields and scattered farms with the settlements of Glinton, Peakirk and Newborough beyond, whilst to the west is the township of Bretton. The A15/Werrington Parkway dual carriageways and the East Coast mainline/Great Northern/Great Eastern Joint railway lines, however, form clear boundaries. To the south Werrington merges into the communities of Walton and Gunthorpe, all originally separate villages, with Werrington Brook demarking the boundary for the most part.

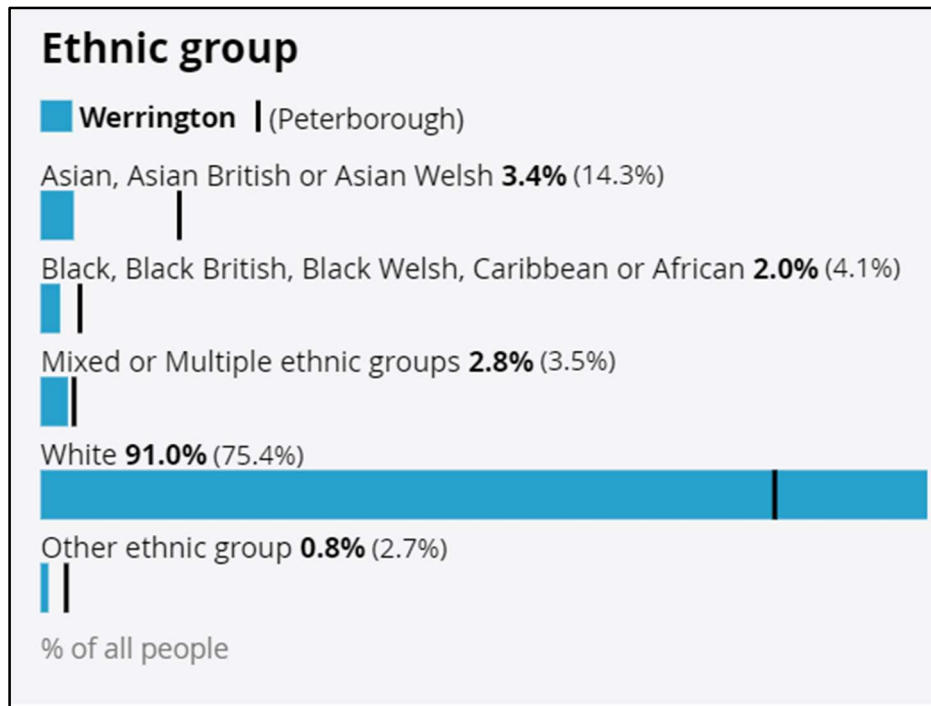
Social

- 3.8. The total population of the Werrington ward at the time of the 2021 Census was 9,881 people. 52% of all people were females and 48% of all people were males (ONS).
- 3.9. The 2021 Census age profile for Werrington shows that there is a higher percentage of the population age 45 and above than for the Peterborough area and a lower percentage aged under 45. The WNP highlights that an increasingly aging population may have implications for the provision of services and facilities in the area.



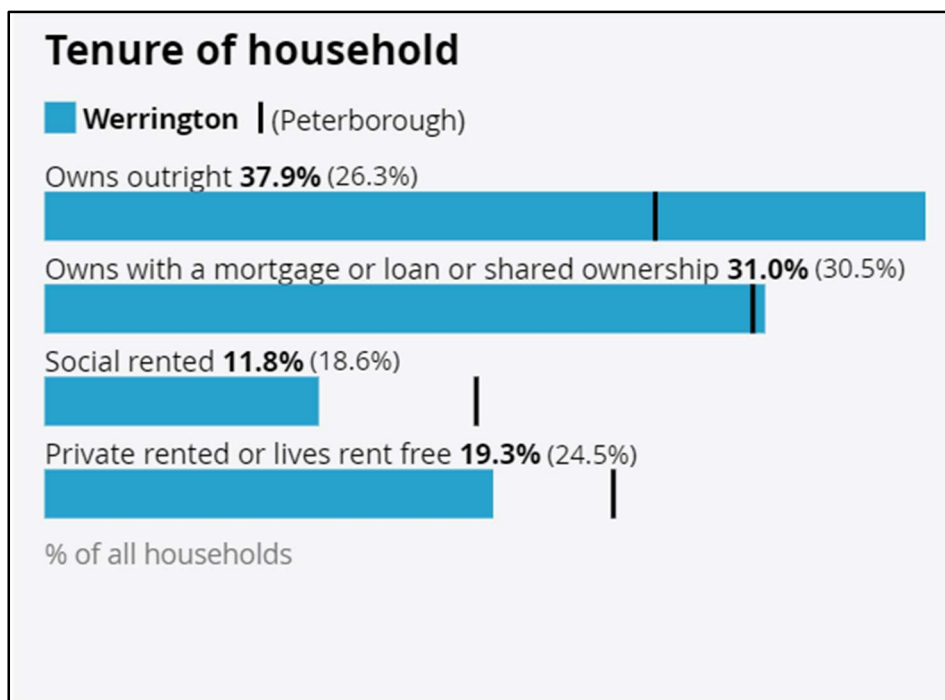
Source: Office for National Statistics – Census 2021

- 3.10. In terms of ethnicity, the population of Werrington is predominantly white (91%). This is a greater percentage of the population than for the Peterborough area (75.4%) and England (81%).



Source: Office for National Statistics – Census 2021

- 3.11. At the time of the 2021 Census, there were 4,500 households in Werrington. 87.1% of usual residents lived in a house or bungalow, 10.9% lived in a flat, maisonette or apartment and 2% in a caravan or other mobile or temporary structure.
- 3.12. In terms of household tenure, a greater percentage of Werrington households own outright or own with a mortgage or loan or shared ownership than for the Peterborough area.



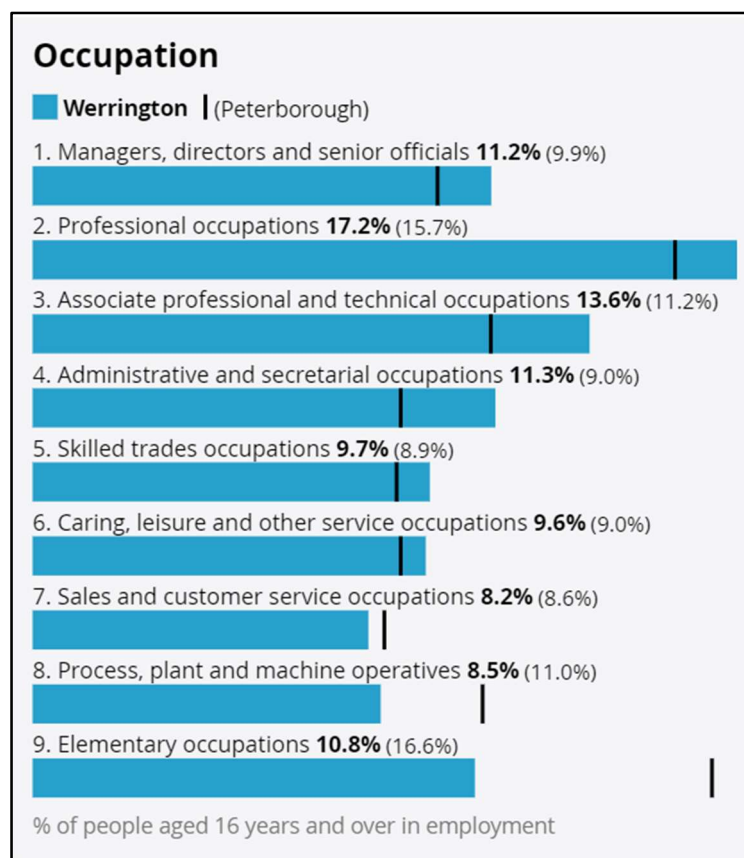
Source: Office for National Statistics – Census 2021

- 3.13. There is a higher percentage of one (31.7%) and two (37.2%) person households living in Werrington than for the Peterborough area (27.8% and 31.6% respectively). 14% of one person households in Werrington are aged 66 years and over.
- 3.14. In terms of the general health of the population living within the Werrington at the time of the 2021 Census, 42.6% of the population of Werrington described their health as 'very good' and 37.3% as 'good'. This is compared to 46.2% and 37.3% for the same categories for Peterborough.
- 3.15. 17.2% of all households in Werrington at the time of the 2021 Census had no cars or vans in the household. This is lower than the figure for the Peterborough area (22.7%) and the figure for England (23.5%).
- 3.16. Werrington ward is ranked in the 20% least deprived neighbourhoods in the country for multiple deprivation³.

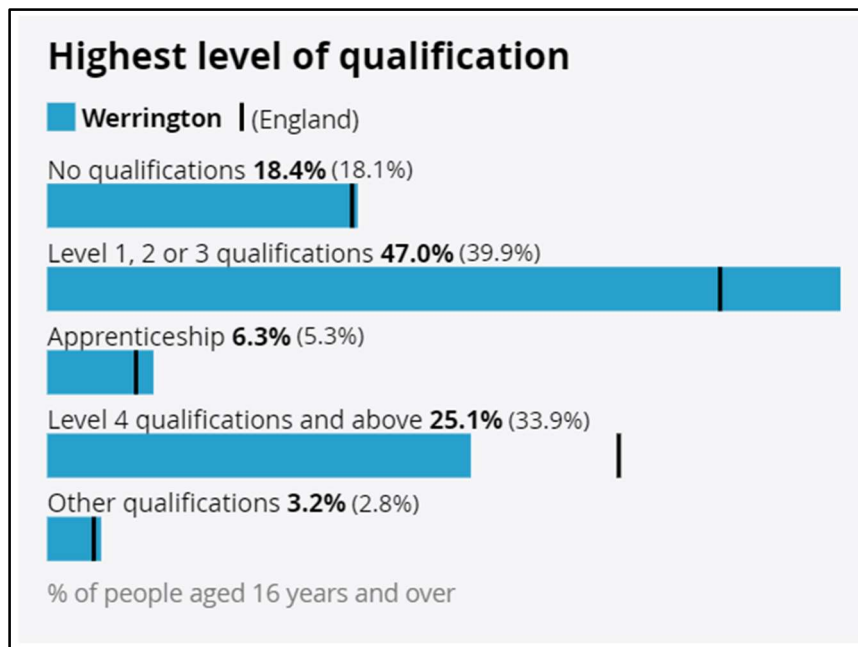
Economic

- 3.17. The 2021 Census gathered information on the percentage of people aged 16 years and over in employment. In Werrington, 58.8% were economically active in employment, slightly above the Peterborough area figure of 57.4%. 2.7% of people aged 16 years and over in Werrington were economically active unemployed.
- 3.18. The graphic below shows the breakdown of occupations of people aged 16 years and over in employment in Werrington at the time of the 2021 Census.

³ https://dclgapps.communities.gov.uk/imd/iod_index.html



Source: Office for National Statistics – Census 2021



Source: Office for National Statistics – Census 2021

3.19. In terms of qualifications, the percentage of Werrington residents aged 16 years and over with no qualifications is similar to the Peterborough average: 18.4% compared to 18.1% for Peterborough. A greater proportion of residents in Werrington have Level 1, 2 or 3 qualifications (47%) compared to the Peterborough area as whole (39.9%).

Environmental

3.20. A search of the following sites within approximately 30km of the centre of Werrington was undertaken⁴:

- Ramsar Sites (England)
- Proposed Ramsar Sites (England)
- Special Areas of Conservation (England)
- Possible Special Areas of Conservation (England)
- Special Protection Areas (England)
- Potential Special Protection Areas (England)

3.21. There are no designated sites within the national site network within the boundary of the WNP. The following sites within the national sites network lie within approximately 30km of the centre of the Werrington Neighbourhood Plan Area ([view here](#)):

- Barnack Hills and Holes SAC
- Grimsthorpe SAC
- Baston Fen SAC
- Rutland Water SPA and Ramsar
- Nene Washes SAC, SPA and Ramsar
- Orton Pit SAC
- Fenland SAC (Woodwalton Fen Ramsar)
- Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA and Ramsar

3.22. There are no Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) within the boundary of the WNP area. Dogsthorpe Star Pits SSSI and Deeping Gravel Pits SSSI are both within 5km. SSSI Impact Risk Zones (IRZs), as defined by Natural England, define zones around each SSSI site which reflect the particular sensitivities of the features for which it has been notified and indicate the types of development proposal which could potentially have adverse impacts. One of these IRZs, for Deeping Gravel Pits SSSI, extends across a small part of the WNP area to the north east and can be [viewed here](#).

3.23. There are no National Nature Reserves (NNRs) within the boundary of the WNP. Castor Hanglands NNR and SSSI lies to the south west of the Neighbourhood Plan Area (approximately 5km). There are no Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) within the Neighbourhood Plan area, however Grimeshaw Wood, Dogsthorpe Star Pit and Eye Green LNRs are located within 6km. The location of statutory designated sites can be [viewed here](#).

3.24. In terms of locally designated sites, there is 1 County Wildlife Site (CWS) (Marholm Crossing) within the boundary of the WNP area (see **Map 3.2**).

3.25. There is no ancient woodland within the boundary of the WNP area. The WNP area contains areas of deciduous woodland and traditional orchard; habitats of principal importance under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006) Section 41. These habitats are largely confined to the eastern and western boundaries of the WNP ([view here](#)).

3.26. The WNP area lies within one National Character Area (NCA): [Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire Claylands](#). The Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire Claylands NCA is a broad, gently undulating, lowland plateau dissected by shallow river valleys. Development

⁴ Using www.magic.defra.gov.uk

pressure in the NCA is high. The need to accommodate this further growth and expansion will present a challenge in ensuring that the character and tranquillity of the area are not adversely affected.

3.27. From a historic environment perspective, there is one Conservation Area within the WNP area: Werrington Conservation Area. This area is shown on **Map 3.3**.

3.28. There are 25 listed buildings within the WNP area⁵ and their location can be [viewed here](#). They are concentrated within the Conservation Area. Most of the listed buildings within the WNP area are Grade II listed, with the exception of the Parish Church of St John the Baptist (Grade I listed).

3.29. There are no Scheduled Monuments within the WNP area, but the following Scheduled Monuments are adjacent or near the WNP area boundary (**Map 3.4**):

- Section of the Car Dyke between Whitepost Road and Fen Bridge

3.30. The Car Dyke is the largest of the known Romano-British canals, stretching from the River Witham in the north to the River Nene in the south. First recognised by antiquaries in the early 18th century, it forms an important feature of the Roman landscape in the Fens.

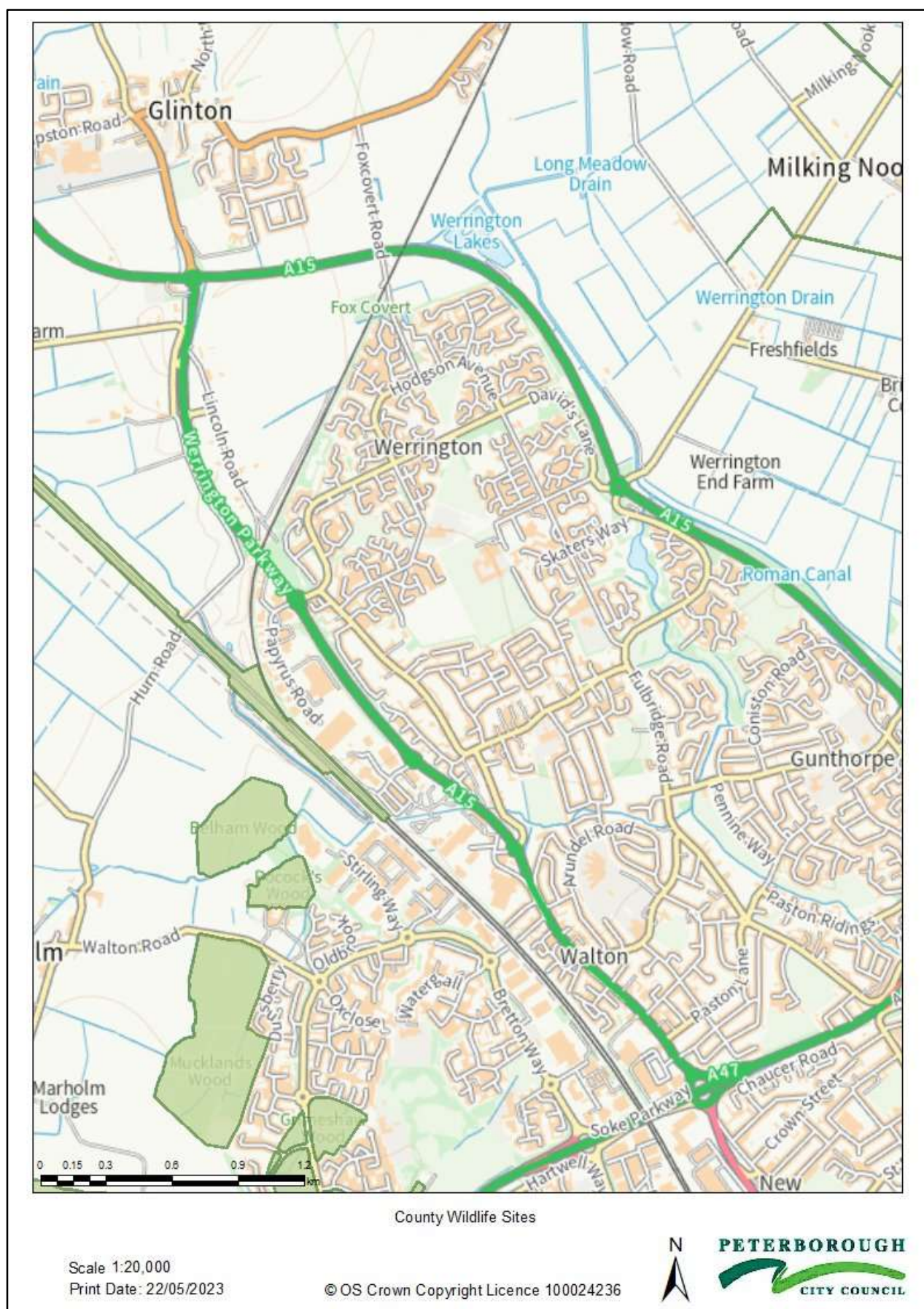
3.31. There are no Registered Parks and Gardens within the WNP area.

3.32. The Local List is a register of over 250 buildings, features or sites that are considered important to the historic environment of Peterborough and the surrounding villages. There are 7 buildings features of sites within the WNP area that are on [Peterborough's Local List](#):

- 105 Church Street
- 107 & 109 Church Street
- 44 Church Street
- 50 Church Street
- 78-82 (even) Church Street
- 1 The Green
- 26 The Green

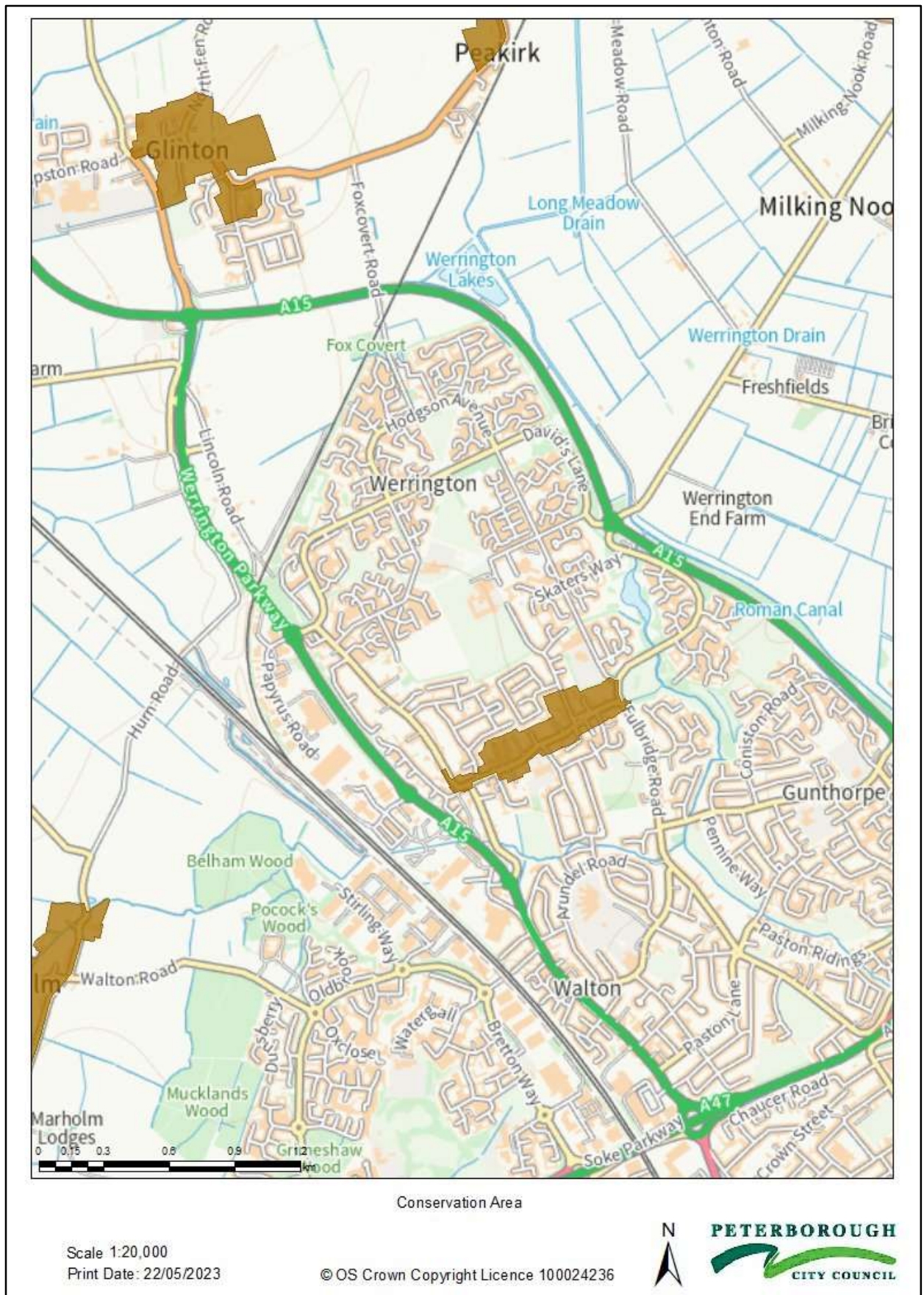
⁵ <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/>

Map 3.2: County Wildlife Sites the Werrington Neighbourhood Plan Area



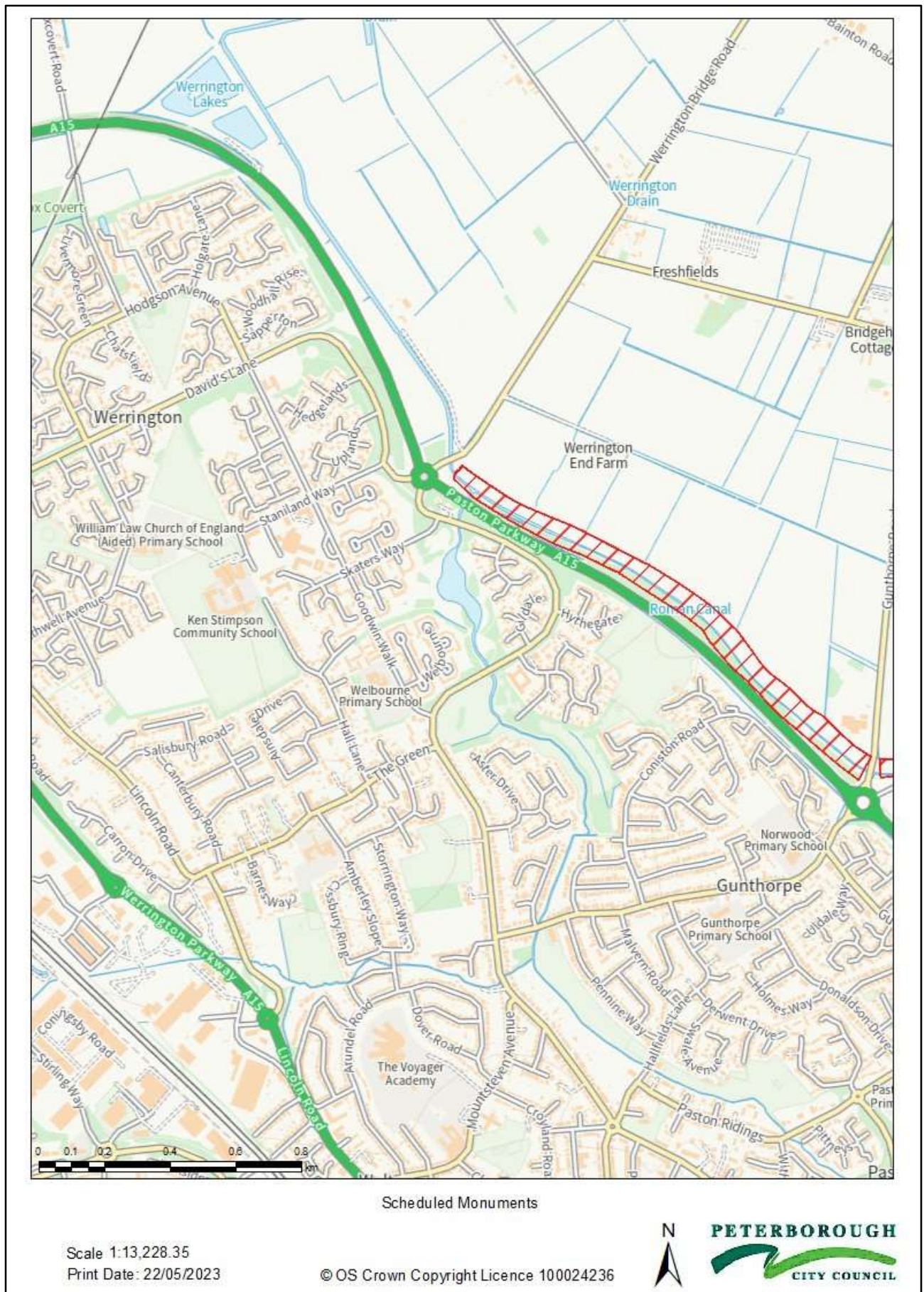
Source: PCC

Map 3.3: Werrington Conservation Area



Source: PCC

Map 3.4: Scheduled Monuments located near to the Neighbourhood Plan Area



Source: PCC

3.33. In terms of the water environment, the WNP area falls within the Environment Agency's [Welland Management Catchment](#) and the Welland Lower Operational Catchment. The Environment Agency monitors waterbodies within the catchment for their chemical and ecological status. The following waterbodies flow through or close to the WNP area:

- Broo Drain (including Marholm Brook)
- Folly River (including Werrington and Marholm Brooks)

3.34. Both waterbodies have poor ecological status with an objective of achieving 'good' status by 2027.

3.35. The WNP area is mostly of low flood risk (flood risk zone 1). There are areas of fluvial flood risk (i.e. flood risk zones 2 and 3) and watercourses within the WNP area, according to the Environment Agency's Flood Risk Maps (see **Map 3.5**). These areas are largely confined to the course of the Werrington Brook in the east and south of the WNP area.

3.36. Source Protection Zones are defined around large and public potable groundwater abstraction sites, including wells, boreholes and springs. Groundwater Source Protection Zones are areas of groundwater where there is particular sensitivity to pollution risks due to the closeness of a drinking water source and groundwater flows. Generally, the closer the activity is to a groundwater source, then the greater the risk. The WNP area does not fall within a Source Protection Zone (view [here](#)).

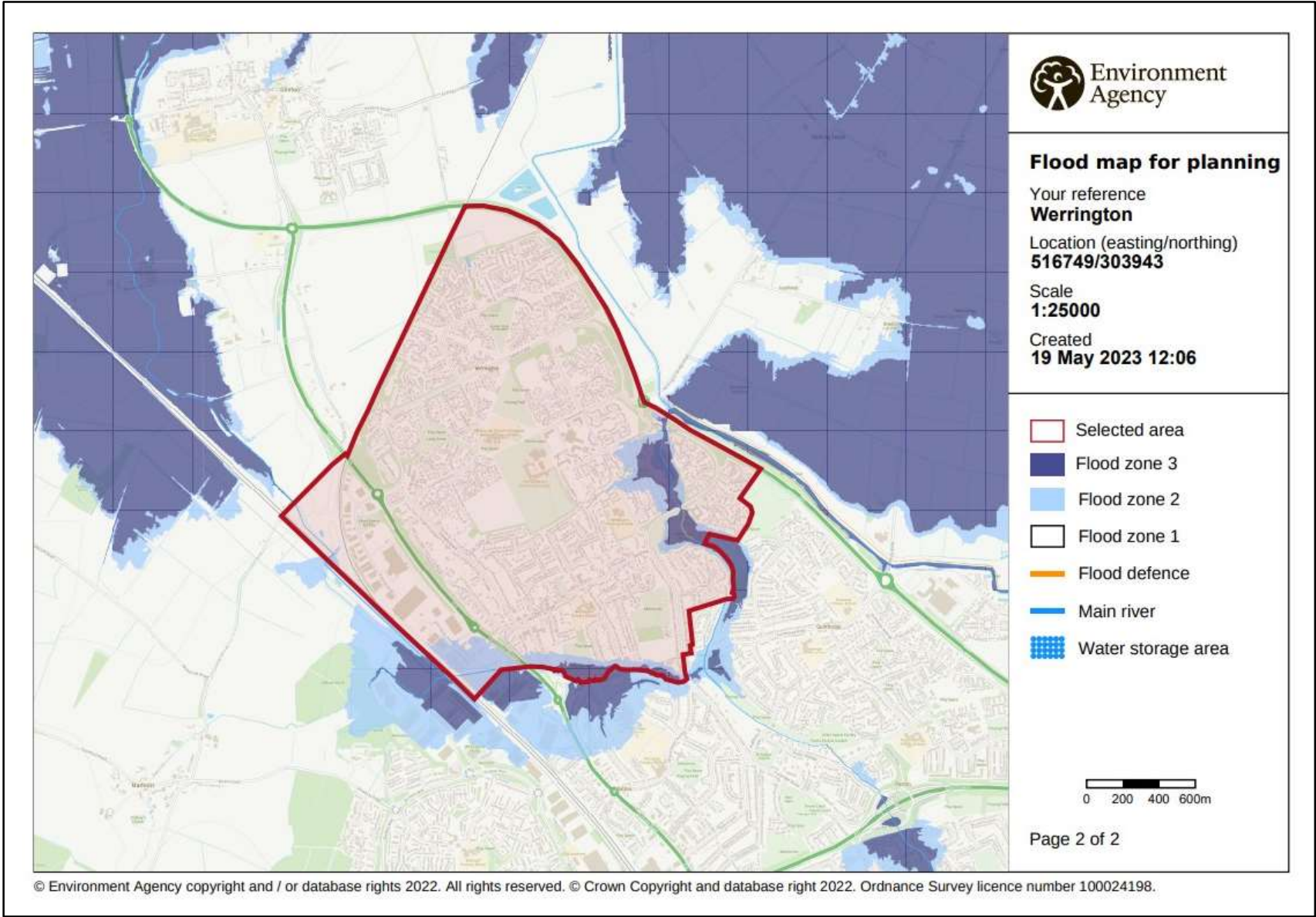
3.37. In terms of air, there is one Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) designated within the Peterborough unitary area for emissions of sulphur dioxide (view the location [here](#)). The source of these emissions is a brickworks located in the neighbouring authority of Fenland District Council. There are no AQMA designations directly affecting Werrington.

3.38. In terms of soils, the predominant soil type within the WNP area is freely draining lime-rich loamy soils⁶. In terms of agricultural land classification, Werrington is predominantly classified as urban⁷.

⁶ National Soil Map of England and Wales, accessed online at www.magic.defra.gov.uk

⁷ Agricultural Land Classification, accessed online at www.magic.defra.gov.uk

Map 3.5: Flood Risk Zones within the Werrington Neighbourhood Plan Area



Source: Environment Agency

4. Screening Methodology

Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 4.1. The Localism Act 2011 (Schedule 9) introduced neighbourhood planning into the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. The 1990 Act, as amended by Schedule 10 of the Localism Act 2011, requires that NDPs meet a set of basic conditions, one of which being that the making of the plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations.
- 4.2. To ensure that a NDP meets this basic condition, a SEA may be required to determine the likely significant environmental effects of implementing the Neighbourhood Plan. The basis for Strategic Environmental legislation is European Directive 2001/42/EC, which was initially transposed into domestic law by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, or 'SEA Regulations'. Detailed guidance of these regulations can be found in the Government publication 'A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive'⁸ and paragraph 073 of the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) 'Neighbourhood Planning' section⁹. Paragraph 073 of the Neighbourhood planning section advises that a Neighbourhood Plan should be screened early. Whether a Neighbourhood Plan proposal requires a SEA, and (if so) the level of detail needed, will depend on what is proposed within the plan.
- 4.3. Where a proposed plan is likely to have a significant effect on a European site or European offshore marine site (in relation to the Habitats Regulations), this will also trigger the need to undertake a SEA. Schedule 2 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 makes provision in relation to the Habitats Regulations. The Regulations requires that any plan or project likely to have a significant effect on a European site must be subject to an Appropriate Assessment. To achieve this, paragraph 1 of Schedule 2 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 prescribes a basic condition that the making of a Neighbourhood Plan is not likely to have a significant effect on a European site or a European offshore marine site. Paragraphs 2 to 5 go on to amend the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 so as to apply its provisions to neighbourhood development orders and plans. A Neighbourhood Plan's (or Neighbourhood Development Order) requirements for Appropriate Assessment are clarified further by the Conservation of Habitats and Species and Planning (Various Amendments) (England and Wales) Regulations 2018.
- 4.4. Article 3(5) of Directive 2001/42/EC and Schedule 1 of the UK Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 detail the criteria for determining whether plans are likely to have significant environmental effects. These criteria are outlined in **Figure 1**.
- 4.5. The Department of the Environment produced a flow chart diagram¹⁰ which sets out the process for screening a planning document to ascertain whether a full SEA is required. The flow chart diagram is provided in **Figure 2**.
- 4.6. Section 5 provides firstly, a screening assessment of the draft WNP, against the assessment criteria (in **Figure 1**) to identify the significance of effects which may arise because of the plan's implementation.

⁸ Available at:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/7657/practicalguidesea.pdf

⁹ Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/neighbourhood-planning--2#basic-conditions-for-neighbourhood-plan-to-referendum>

¹⁰ Department of the Environment, A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (2005)

4.7. Secondly, Section 5 applies the SEA criteria to the draft WNP, as per the flow chart in **Figure 2**, to determine whether the principle of the Neighbourhood Plan would warrant the need for SEA.

4.8. To decide whether a SEA is required, the Council needs to consider the following:

- How the policies in the Neighbourhood Plan might affect the environment, community or economy;
- Whether the policies are likely to adversely affect a “sensitive area”, such as a SAC, SPA, Ramsar or a SSSI, NNR etc.;
- Whether the policies propose a higher level of development that is set out in the Peterborough Local Plan and that has been assessed by the SA of that Plan;
- Whether the implementation of the policies is likely to lead to new development;
- Whether the cumulative impact of the policies taken together may give rise to a significant effect.

Habitats Regulations Assessment

Case Law

4.9. A decision by the European Court of Justice (ECJ) (People Over Wind & Sweetman vs. Coillte Teoranta) in April 2018 has had a significant impact on the HRA process for both Neighbourhood Plans and Local Plans. In short, the ECJ ruled that to determine whether it is necessary to carry out a full HRA of the implications of a plan, it is not appropriate to take account of the mitigation measures at the screening stage. Rather, consideration of mitigation will need to occur at the full Appropriate Assessment stage.

4.10. A consequence of the ECJ’s decision is that mitigation measures set out in a plan cannot be used at the screening stage to conclude there will be ‘no likely significant effects’ on European Sites. Therefore, if a Neighbourhood Plan includes measures to counter the plan’s effects on European Sites these should, in effect, be ignored at the screening stage.

4.11. Previously, plan-making in the UK has followed case law as set out in Application of Hart DC vs. Secretary of the State for Communities and Local Government in 2008, which concluded that: ‘anything which encourages the proponents of plans and projects to incorporate mitigation measures at the earliest possible stage in the evolution of their plan or project is surely to be encouraged.’

4.12. The government has acknowledged that the ECJ’s ruling has caused uncertainty in preparing Neighbourhood Plans and could result in more plans requiring a full SEA or HRA. In December 2018, The Conservation of Habitats and Species and Planning (Various Amendments) (England and Wales) Regulations 2018¹¹ came into force, amending the basic conditions and allowing affected Neighbourhood Plans and Orders to proceed.

4.13. For the avoidance of doubt, this screening report has been undertaken in accordance with the ECJ’s ruling, insofar that the effects of any mitigation measures set out in the policies of the WNP have not been considered.

¹¹ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2018/1307/contents/made>

Figure 1: SEA Assessment Criteria

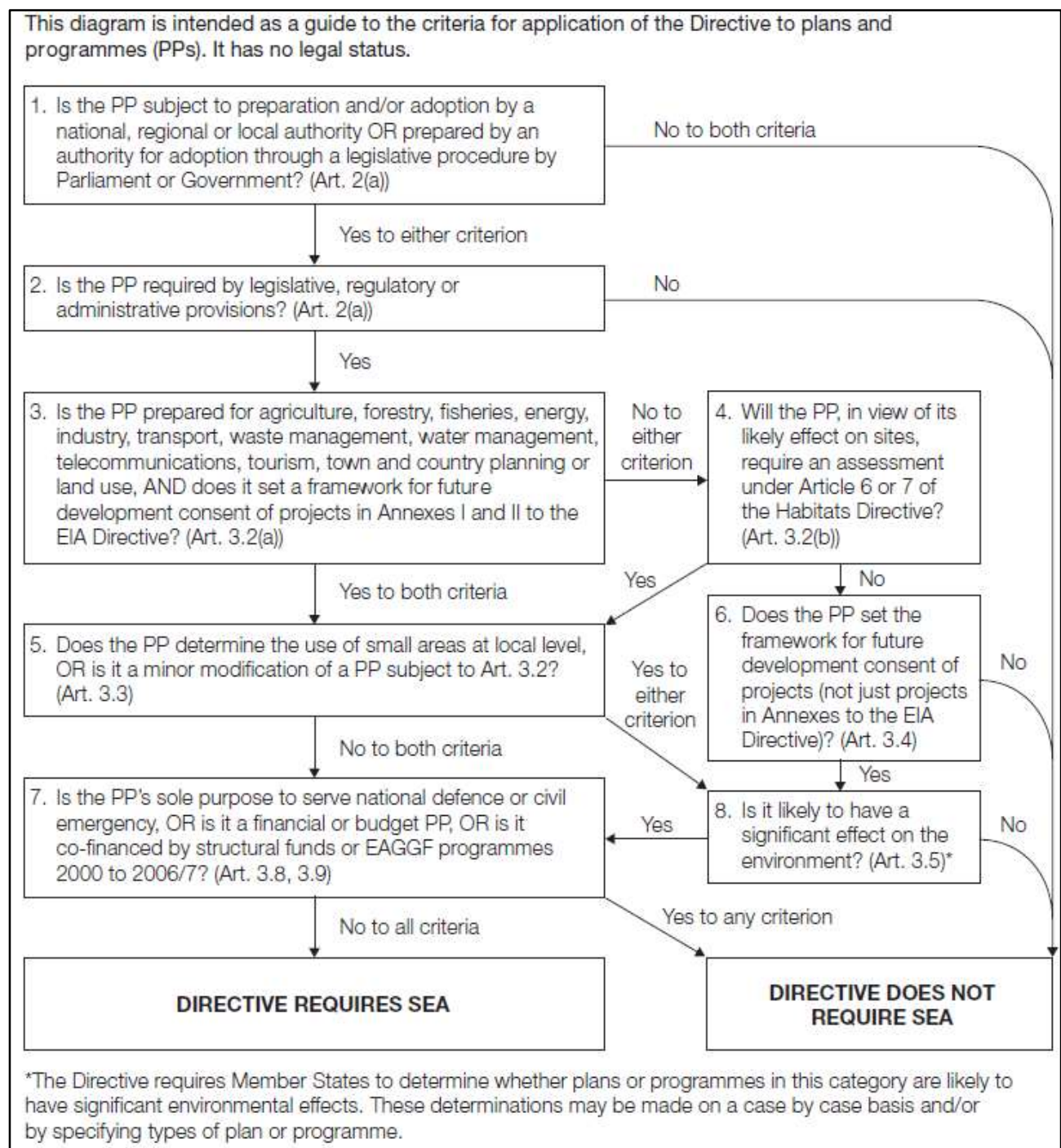
Article 3, Scope

5. Member States shall determine whether plans or programmes referred to in paragraphs 3 and 4 are likely to have significant environmental effects either through case-by-case examination or by specifying types of plans and programmes or by combining both approaches. For this purpose Member States shall in all cases take into account relevant criteria set out in Annex II, in order to ensure that plans and programmes with likely significant effects on the environment are covered by this Directive.

Annex II Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects referred to in Article 3(5)

1. The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular, to
 - the degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources;
 - the degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy;
 - the relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development;
 - environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme;
 - the relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (e.g. plans and programmes linked to waste-management or water protection).
2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to
 - the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects;
 - the cumulative nature of the effects;
 - the transboundary nature of the effects;
 - the risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents);
 - the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected);
 - the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:
 - special natural characteristics or cultural heritage;
 - exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values;
 - intensive land-use;
 - the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.

Figure 2: Application of the SEA Directive to plans and programmes¹²



¹² Annexes I and II of Directive 2011/92/EU (as referred to in Figure 2, question 3) available at: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32011L0092&from=EN> (see <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eia/eia-legalcontext.htm> for details of amendments). Articles 6 and 7 of the Habitats Directive (as referred to in Figure 2, question 4) available at: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:31992L0043&from=EN>.

5. SEA and HRA Screening Assessment of Werrington Neighbourhood Plan

Introduction

- 5.1. The 'responsible authority' in the case of SEA and the 'competent authority' in the case of HRA, must determine whether a plan or programme, in this case the WNP, is likely to have a significant environmental effect with reference to specified criteria. The following section sets out an assessment of the WNP against this criteria.
- 5.2. **Figure 3** and **Figure 4** consider the WNP against the criteria from Annex II of the SEA Directive and Schedule 1 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004. Paragraphs **5.4** to **5.37** consider the likely environmental effects of the draft WNP in relation to the topics set out in Annex I (f) of the SEA Directive.
- 5.3. Paragraphs **5.38** to **5.46** consider the likely significant effects in relation to the conservation objectives for European sites.

Determination of likely significant environmental effects - SEA Screening

Biodiversity, flora and fauna

- 5.4. Paragraph 5.5.1 of the draft WNP states that the open space, woodland and variety of flora and fauna in the designated Neighbourhood Plan Area is greatly valued by the community. As identified in paragraphs 3.21 to 3.23 above, there are no statutory designated wildlife sites within the Werrington Neighbourhood Area. However, the draft WNP identifies numerous local wildlife features important to the area via maps showing the location of key biodiversity areas and significant trees.
- 5.5. Policy WNP 7 Natural Habitats seeks to protect the local natural environment. It requires development proposals to retain features of existing biodiversity value and states that a net gain in biodiversity should be achieved, demonstrated by appropriate evidence. This requirement goes further than adopted Local Plan policy LP28, which requires all development proposals to deliver net gain where possible.
- 5.6. Policy WNP8 Local Green Spaces designates 6 Local Green Spaces to protect them from development. Some of these spaces are special to the local community for their wildlife value, such as Fox Covert Sobrite & newt Pond Field.
- 5.7. Overall, it is expected that the WNP will help to protect and enhance biodiversity, flora and fauna in the Neighbourhood Area and that significant negative impacts arising from the implementation of the plan are unlikely, as the WNP does not set out an overall quantum of development or allocate specific land or sites for development above what is set out in the Peterborough Local Plan.

Population and human health

- 5.8. The health of the population residing within the Werrington Neighbourhood Area is generally good.
- 5.9. Policy WNP8 Local Green Spaces designates open spaces that are used for physical activity and mental wellbeing as Local Green Spaces, including Werrington Allotment Gardens, Hodgson Avenue Playing Fields and Larks Green Play Area. Development on such sites will not be supported other than in very special circumstances. This places a high level of protection on such sites.

- 5.10. Policy WNP 10 Protect and Improve Recreational Facilities recognises the importance of existing leisure and recreational facilities in Warrington to the local community. The policy identifies 13 sites identified for their important leisure and recreational use where current facilities should be retained.
- 5.11. Policy WNP11 Footpaths and Cycleways seeks to protect the public right of way network and supports the enhancement or extensions of the existing network.
- 5.12. Overall, the WNP is not likely to have a significant negative impact on population and human health.

Soil, air and water

- 5.13. There are no AQMAs within the Neighbourhood Area and therefore currently no significant air quality issues.
- 5.14. The Neighbourhood Area is located within the urban area and therefore loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land is not an issue for the WNP.
- 5.15. The majority of the Neighbourhood Plan Area lies within Flood Risk Zone 1. The draft WNP does not include a policy on development and flood risk, however this is covered by policy LP32: Flood and Water Management in the adopted Peterborough Local Plan. This will ensure that any future development does not exacerbate flood risk and surface water run-off within the Neighbourhood Area. Furthermore, the WNP does not include specific allocations for development and therefore is not anticipated to have any direct implications.
- 5.16. Policy WNP3 Sustainable Construction and Energy Efficiency requirements development proposals to submit a sustainability statement that sets out how the development will adapt to climate change, including use of water and management of rainwater. This could result in positive effects in terms of reducing water runoff and increasing water efficiency.
- 5.17. Overall, it is anticipated that there are unlikely to be any significant adverse effects on soil, air or water as a result of implementing the draft policies in the WNP.

Climatic factors

- 5.18. Climatic factors involve the consideration of a plan or programme in relation to climate change. Climate change adaptation and mitigation are closely interrelated and are closely linked to other environmental issues.
- 5.19. Policy LP31 Renewable and Low Carbon Energy of the Peterborough Local Plan requires development proposals to make a positive and significant contribution to: reducing demand for energy and water; minimising the need to travel; taking opportunities to use sustainable materials in the construction process; providing site based renewable energy infrastructure; and carbon off-setting. Policy LP32 Flood and Water Management, seeks to ensure that development does not place itself or others at increased risk of flooding.
- 5.20. Policy WNP 3 in the draft WNP requires all proposals to be accompanied by a Sustainability Statement that shows how a development scheme minimises demand for energy and maximises energy efficiency and achieves carbon dioxide reduction.

- 5.21. Policy WNP4: Car Parking encourages development proposals to include facilities for electric plug-in vehicles in each allocated car parking space.
- 5.22. Policy WNP 7 requires development proposals to deliver a net gain in biodiversity. This should have a positive effect on helping biodiversity adapt to the effects of climate change and absorbing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere.
- 5.23. Policy WNP 10 aims to protect existing leisure and recreational facilities and supports their improvement, or the provision of new facilities. Policy WNP12: Business supports small-scale employment development outside of the designated employment areas where it would provide an opportunity to reduce the need to travel. Maintaining local services and facilities, and increasing local employment opportunities and services, may have a positive effect on reducing greenhouse gas emissions from transport by encouraging journeys by walking and cycling and reducing the need to travel as well as length of journeys.
- 5.24. Overall, it is considered unlikely that there would be any significant adverse impacts on climatic factors as a result of implementing the draft policies in WNP and the policies in the Peterborough Local Plan provide appropriate mitigation.

Material assets

- 5.25. The SEA Directive does not define what is meant by 'material assets' and it can be interpreted in several ways. This screening report takes material assets to include a range of social, physical and environmental infrastructure, such as schools, health facilities, roads, railways, bus services, wastewater treatment works, flood defences etc. Impacts on materials assets are likely to relate to a number of other SEA topics.
- 5.26. In the Peterborough Local Plan, Policy LP14: Infrastructure to Support Growth, aims to ensure that new development is supported by, and has access to necessary infrastructure, such as roads, schools, health and community facilities.
- 5.27. Policy WNP 10 aims to protect existing leisure and recreational facilities and supports their improvement, or the provision of new facilities
- 5.28. Policy WNP11 seeks to protect the public right of way network and supports the enhancement or extensions of the existing network.
- 5.29. It is therefore considered unlikely that that the HNP would have a significant adverse effect on material assets.

Cultural heritage, including architectural and archaeological heritage

- 5.30. As identified above, there is a Conservation Area within the Neighbourhood Area and several listed buildings which are concentrated within this Conservation Area.
- 5.31. The WNP Vision recognises the importance of cultural heritage, stating "We want to preserve the best of what we already have in Werrington – its distinctive character, heritage and natural assets..." and contains a specific objective on the built environment which seeks to protect the architectural heritage and distinctive characteristics of the area.
- 5.32. Policy WNP2: High Quality Design specifically seeks to protect the character of Werrington by setting requirements in relation to the scale, nature and location of development proposals, including criteria 'b' which requires the use of high quality materials to reflect and

enhance the character of the area, and criteria 'e', which requires proposals to have particular regard to the [Werrington] Conservation Area Appraisal and Werrington Character Assessment.

- 5.33. Policy WNP6: Locally Important Views requires all development proposals to be sensitive to the distinctive landscape and settlement character of Werrington. Six 'Locally Important Views' are designated through policy WNP6.
- 5.34. Given that the HNP does not specifically allocate any land or sites for development, taking into account the policies highlighted above, and in combination with policies in the Peterborough Local Plan, it is considered unlikely that any future development that may come forward within the Neighbourhood Area would have a significant negative impact on any heritage assets and their settings.

Landscape

- 5.35. Werrington is located within the existing urban area of Peterborough therefore it is considered unlikely that the HNP would result in a significant impact on landscape character.
- 5.36. Policy WNP8 designates areas of Local Green Space which may add to the character and setting of the Neighbourhood Area.
- 5.37. **This SEA screening therefore considers the HNP is unlikely to have a significant effect on the environment.**

Determination of likely significant effects on European sites - HRA Screening

- 5.38. There are no European Sites (SACs or SPAs) or Ramsar sites within the boundary of the WNP area.
- 5.39. The Peterborough Local Plan Habitats Regulations Assessment Report (HRA 2018) was prepared to accompany the adopted Local Plan on submission for independent examination. The purpose of the report was to set out the methodology, assessment and conclusions of the HRA of the submitted Peterborough Local Plan. The HRA was carried out by PCC as the competent authority, in consultation with Natural England. This HRA is considered relevant and appropriate in the context of this SEA/HRA screening assessment.
- 5.40. The following sites, within and outside of the Peterborough boundary, were scoped into the HRA 2018 for consideration:
- Barnack Hills and Holes SAC
 - Nene Washes SAC, SPA and Ramsar
 - Orton Pit SAC
 - Woodwalton Fen Ramsar
 - Baston Fen SAC
 - Grimsthorpe Park SAC
 - Rutland Water SPA, Ramsar
 - Upper Nene Gravel Pit SPA
 - Ouse Washes SAC, SPA and Ramsar
 - The Wash SPA and Ramsar
 - The Wash and North Norfolk Coast SAC

5.41. The potential impacts identified as a result of the implementation of the Local Plan were:

- Changes in air quality;
- Water quality;
- Water quantity;
- Disturbance: visitor and recreational pressure;
- Increase in predator bird species and collision risk;
- Disturbance: urbanisation;
- Physical loss and/or damage of habitat and species.

5.42. Following initial screening, the HRA identified 16 Local Plan policies with potential for significant adverse effects on the sites identified for consideration. These policies included the allocation of the overall housing and employment growth levels for the whole Peterborough area, the distribution of this growth, and specific site allocations for housing or employment, including policy LP41: Medium Village Allocations.

5.43. However, the Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment found that, when taking into account incorporated mitigation measures within the Local Plan, and consideration of other plans and projects, that none of the 16 policies screened into the assessment would be likely to lead to a significant effect (alone or in combination) in relation to any of the identified impacts on any of the identified sites. The HRA concluded:

“...provided the recommendations made in this Report are (where applicable) incorporated into the Local Plan, it is possible to conclude that the Peterborough Local Plan is compliant with the Habitats Regulations and will not result in likely significant effects on any of the Natura 2000 sites identified, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects.”

5.44. Natural England confirmed the HRA followed accepted methodology, was in line with relevant legislation and guidance, and agreed with the conclusion of the HRA:

5.45. “Natural England is satisfied with the HRA conclusion that, provided the recommendations made in the report are incorporated (where applicable) into the Local Plan, it is possible to conclude that the Peterborough Local Plan will not have an adverse effect on the integrity of any European site alone, or in-combination with other plans and projects.”

5.46. **Having regard to the nature of the policies in the draft WNP and the safeguards in the adopted Peterborough Local Plan, this HRA screening therefore considers that the WNP is not likely to have a significant effect on a European site, either alone or in combination, with other plans and projects.** The WNP does not allocate sites for development but instead provides further local criteria to guide development proposals. The effects arising from planned development on the integrity of European sites have been previously tested through the HRA of the Peterborough Local Plan, which was subject to independent examination.

SEA/HRA Assessment

5.47. **Figure 3** provides assessment of the WNP against the SEA Directive criteria to identify likely significant effects on the environment.

Figure 3. Assessment of the likely significant effects on the environment

SEA Directive criteria and Schedule 1 of Environmental Assessment of plans and programmes Regulations 2004	Assessment	Likely <i>significant</i> environmental effect
1. The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular, to –		
(a) the degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources.	<p>The WNP has been prepared for town and country planning purposes and would, if adopted, form part of the statutory Development Plan and contribute to the framework for future development projects.</p> <p>The principle of development in the Neighbourhood Area, including the nature of development, location and scale, has already been determined by the Peterborough Local Plan (July 2019) and is therefore largely beyond the influence of the WNP. Any significant effects arising from the proposals in the Local Plan have already been identified through the SA and HRA of that plan.</p> <p>The WNP would only apply to a small geographical area (the Werrington Neighbourhood Area) where a limited number of proposals are anticipated over the plan period, and any proposals are expected to be of a small scale.</p>	No
(b) the degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy;	<p>The WNP must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Peterborough Local Plan and the NPPF.</p> <p>The Neighbourhood Plan provides policies for the Plan area, relevant to the Werrington Neighbourhood Area only. The WNP would therefore not strongly influence other plans and programmes higher up the spatial planning hierarchy.</p>	No
(c) the relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development;	It is a basic condition that a Neighbourhood Plan must contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The draft WNP seeks to ensure that environmental considerations are taken into account. It includes the following policies which promote	

SEA Directive criteria and Schedule 1 of Environmental Assessment of plans and programmes Regulations 2004	Assessment	Likely <i>significant</i> environmental effect
	<p>environmental considerations with a view to promoting sustainable development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WNP3: Sustainable Construction and Energy Efficiency • WNP 7: Natural Habitats <p>These policies are compatible with the adopted Peterborough Local Plan, which was subject to both SA/SEA and HRA throughout the plan making process.</p>	
(d) environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme; and	There are no specific environmental problems relevant to the Neighbourhood Plan that have not been identified and assessed through the higher-level Local Plan and its accompanying SA/SEA.	No
(e) the relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (for example, plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection).	The content of the draft WNP is not in conflict with any plans or programmes within the wider area for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment.	No
2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to —		
(a) the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects;	<p>This has been tested through the SA/SEA of the Local Plan.</p> <p>The draft WNP does not allocate sites for development. The effects of the implementation of the WNP are therefore uncertain to a certain extent, as they will depend on windfall sites that may come forward. However, such windfall sites are expected to be limited to small scale, infill development, and therefore the effects are not likely to be significant and are expected to be minimal. It is likely that some policies may result in positive effects by helping to preserve and enhance the environmental features within the Neighbourhood Area.</p> <p>See also paragraphs 5.4 to 5.37 above.</p>	No

SEA Directive criteria and Schedule 1 of Environmental Assessment of plans and programmes Regulations 2004	Assessment	Likely <i>significant</i> environmental effect
(b) the cumulative nature of the effects;	The cumulative effects of implementing the WNP, both between the policies within the WNP and with other plans and programmes, are expected to be very limited in nature and scale, as the plan does not identify a quantum of growth, nor allocate specific land or sites for development.	No
(c) the transboundary nature of the effects;	The WNP is not expected to give rise to any transboundary effects.	No
(d) the risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents);	The WNP is not anticipated to give rise to any significant environmental effects that would pose risk to human health or the environment.	No
(e) the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected);	<p>The population of Werrington at the time of the 2021 Census was 9,881.</p> <p>The spatial extent of any effects of the implementation of the WNP are expected to be limited to the immediate local area (i.e. the Neighbourhood Area), therefore the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects are expected to be limited in both the local and wider district context.</p>	No
<p>(f) the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to—</p> <p>(i) special natural characteristics or cultural heritage;</p> <p>(ii) exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values; or</p> <p>(iii) intensive land-use; and</p>	<p>(i) The draft WNP does not seek to deliver additional development above that proposed in the Peterborough Local Plan.</p> <p>As highlighted in paras 5.4 to 5.37, it is considered unlikely that the WNP would adversely impact the special natural characteristics or cultural heritage of the Neighbourhood Area. The draft WNP is not expected to exceed environmental quality standards or lead to intensive land use.</p> <p>The draft WNP does not allocate any sites for development. Furthermore, the WNP includes draft policies which promote environmental considerations and seek to provide greater protection for the character of the area. Therefore, it is not considered that there will be any significant adverse impacts in terms of criteria (f) (i to iii).</p>	No
(g) the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national,	There are no protected areas or landscapes within the Neighbourhood Area of a national or international	No

SEA Directive criteria and Schedule 1 of Environmental Assessment of plans and programmes Regulations 2004	Assessment	Likely <i>significant</i> environmental effect
Community or international protection status.	protection status. Therefore the WNP is unlikely to result in any significant adverse effects.	

5.48. **Figure 4** applies the SEA Directive criteria to the WNP as per the flow chart in **Figure 2**, to determine whether the principle of the WNP would warrant the need for SEA.

Figure 4: Application of the SEA Directive to Werrington Neighbourhood Plan

Criteria	Response: Yes/ No/ Not applicable	Details
1. Is the NDP subject to preparation and/or adoption by a national, regional or local authority OR prepared by an authority for adoption through a legislative procedure by Parliament or Government? (Art 2 (a))	Yes	<p>The preparation and adoption of the WNP is allowed under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended by the Localism Act 2011. Whilst the WNP has been prepared by Werrington Neighbourhood Forum it will be adopted by PCC as the local authority and will form part of the statutory development plan for the Peterborough area.</p> <p>GO TO STAGE 2</p>
2. Is the NDP required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions? (Art 2 (a))	Yes	<p>Whilst the production of a Neighbourhood Plan is not a requirement and is optional, it will, if made, form part of the statutory development plan for the PCC area. It is therefore important that this screening process considers the potential effects.</p> <p><u>GO TO STAGE 3</u></p>
3. Is the NDP prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism, town and country planning or land use, AND does it set a framework for future development consent of	<p>Yes – Town & Country Planning / land use;</p> <p>No - EIA Directive Annex I & II</p>	<p>The WNP is being prepared for town and country planning and land use, setting a framework for future development consents within the Werrington Neighbourhood Area.</p> <p>However, the NDP does not set a framework for consent of projects in Annexes I and II to the EIA Directive.</p>

Criteria	Response: Yes/ No/ Not applicable	Details
projects in Annexes I and II to the EIA Directive? (Art 3.2 (a))		GO TO STAGE 4
4. Will the NDP, in view of its likely effect on sites, require an assessment for future development under Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive? (Art 3.2 (b))	No	See paras 5.38 to 5.46 above for assessment of the WNP in terms of HRA. GO TO STAGE 6
5. Does the NDP determine the use of small areas at local level, OR is it a minor modification of an NDP subject to Art. 3.2? (Art 3.3)	n/a	
6. Does the NDP set the framework for future development consent of projects (not just projects in annexes to the EIA Directive)? (Art 3.4)	Yes	Once 'made' the WNP forms part of the Development Plan and will be used in the decision-making process on planning applications. It therefore sets the framework for future developments at a local level. GO TO STAGE 8
7. Is the NDP's sole purpose to serve the national defence or civil emergency, OR is it a financial or budget PP, OR is it co-financed by structural funds or EAGGF programmes 2000 to 2006/7?	n/a	
8. Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment?	No	A Neighbourhood Plan could potentially have a significant effect on the environment, dependent on the proposed policies within the NDP. This requires detailed assessment to determine – see paras 5.4 to 5.37 and Figure 3 , which identify that no likely significant effects are expected to arise through implementation of the WNP.
Outcome: SEA NOT REQUIRED		

6. Consultation with Statutory Bodies

- 6.1. The assessment in **Section 5** indicates that it is unlikely that any significant environmental effects will arise from the draft WNP (as submitted at the date of this assessment) and thus a SEA is not required.
- 6.2. The relevant statutory consultation bodies, namely the Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England, have been consulted on this SEA/HRA screening opinion based on the HNP in its current form. The responses received during this consultation are provided below and can be viewed in full in **Appendix 1**.

Consultation Body	Comments
Environment Agency	Response to be inserted following consultation.
Historic England	Response to be inserted following consultation.
Natural England	Response to be inserted following consultation.

7. SEA and HRA Screening Outcome

- 7.1. Having reviewed the environmental characteristics of the WNP area and the vision, objectives and policies against the criteria set out in **Section 5** of this report, PCC consider it is unlikely that there will be any significant environmental effects arising from the WNP and thus the WNP can be **screened out** for further SEA.
- 7.2. The Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England were consulted on the Draft Screening Report: PCC specifically sought their opinion on the conclusion of the Draft Screening Report that further SEA was not necessary. [Add reference to NE, EA and HE comments following consultation].
- 7.3. **Section 5** of this report also indicates that there are unlikely to be any significant effects on a designated site within the National Sites Network arising from the implementation of the WNP, and therefore further HRA assessment under the Habitats Regulations can be **screened out**. [Add reference to NE, EA and HE comments following consultation].
- 7.4. The WNP does not allocate any land or sites for development but provides guidance to be used to determine applications should they come forward. To progress to adoption, the policies in the WNP will need to generally accord with the adopted Peterborough Local Plan, the potential environmental effects of which were duly assessed during the plan-making process through SA/SEA and HRA assessment.
- 7.5. Several the draft WNP policies are particularly environmentally conscientious and address environmental issues positively by seeking to improve the quality of new development to reduce its impacts on the environment.
- 7.6. To take an alternative approach, such as preparing evidence bespoke to the WNP, would be disproportionate and result in unnecessary duplication. This would be contrary to national planning policy.
- 7.7. If the vision, objectives and/or policies covered by the WNP should change significantly during the plan-making process, or specific sites are allocated for development, this screening process should be repeated for the revised Neighbourhood Plan.

Appendix 1: Consultation Responses from Statutory Bodies

Maria Salemme
Peterborough City Council
Planning Policy
Sand Martin House Bittern Way
Fletton Quays
Peterborough
PE2 8TY

Our ref: AN/2015/122967/OT-03/SB1-L01
Your ref: Werrington SEA/HRA Screening
Date: 11 December 2023

Dear Maria

Werrington Neighbourhood Plan, Regulation 14 SEA/HRA Screening Opinion,

Thank you for consulting us on your draft Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening Opinions for the above plan on 02 November 2023.

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

Environment Agency position

I can confirm that we are in agreement that the Werrington Neighbourhood Plan does not need a full Strategic Environmental Assessment or a Habitats Regulations Assessment, and that there are unlikely to be significant impacts on the environment as a result of the Neighbourhood Development Plan.

Notwithstanding this, we do have the following initial informative comments to make on the draft Neighbourhood Plan, which accompanied the screening report. We should be grateful if they could be taken into account as this matter progresses:

Water efficiency

It is noted that draft Policy WNP3 (Sustainable construction and energy efficiency) makes reference to using water more efficiently. Furthermore, we are aware that Policy 32 of the Peterborough Local Plan (2019) is seeking to ensure new development achieves water usage of 110 litres per person per day. With this in mind, it is considered that the Neighbourhood Plan Policy could help this by giving examples of how this can be achieved such as rainwater harvesting and the use of bathroom fittings which minimise water use.

Please note, these are only our initial comments and we reserve the right to make further detailed comments when we receive the formal Regulation 14 consultation on the Plan in due course.

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

Yours sincerely

Miss Emily Fisher
Planning Advisor



Maria Salemme (she/her)

From: McGivern, Ross [REDACTED]
Sent: 17 November 2023 11:08
To: Planning Policy
Subject: Draft Werrington Neighbourhood Plan SEA Screening Opinion

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

CAUTION: This email originates outside of Peterborough City Council's network. Do **NOT** click on links or open attachments unless you recognise the sender and know the content is safe. Please report any concerns or issues to ICT

Dear Maria,

Thank you for inviting Historic England to comment on this consultation. As the Government's adviser on the historic environment Historic England is keen to ensure that the protection of the historic environment is fully taken into account at all stages and levels of the local planning process. Therefore we welcome this opportunity to review the Screening Report for this plan. For the purposes of this consultation, Historic England will confine its advice to the question, "Is it (the Werrington Neighbourhood Plan) likely to have a significant effect on the historic environment?". Our comments are based on the information supplied with the Screening Opinion.

The Screening Report indicates that the Council considers that the plan will not have any significant effects on the historic environment. We note that the plan does not propose to allocate any sites for development.

On the basis of the information supplied, and in the context of the criteria set out in Schedule 1 of the Environmental Assessment Regulations [Annex II of 'SEA' Directive], Historic England concurs with the Council that the preparation of a Strategic Environmental Assessment is not required.

The views of the other two statutory consultation bodies should be taken into account before the overall decision on the need for an SEA is made.

I should be pleased if you can send a copy of the determination as required by REG 11 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.

We should like to stress that this opinion is based on the information provided by you with your correspondence. To avoid any doubt, this does not reflect our obligation to provide further advice on later stages of the SEA process and, potentially, object to specific proposals which may subsequently arise (either as a result of this consultation or in later versions of the plan) where we consider that, despite the SEA, these would have an adverse effect upon the environment.

Historic England strongly advises that the conservation and archaeological staff of the relevant local authorities are closely involved throughout the preparation of the plan and its assessment. They are best placed to advise on; local historic environment issues and priorities, including access to data held in the Historic Environment Record (HER), how the allocation, policy or proposal can be tailored to minimise potential adverse impacts on the historic environment; the nature and design of any required mitigation measures; and opportunities for securing wider benefits for the future conservation and management of heritage assets.

Please do contact me, either via email or the number below, if you have any queries.

Ross McGivern (he/him)
Historic Places Adviser
Mobile no [REDACTED]

East of England Region

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Follow us on Twitter at [@HE_EoE](#)



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Date: 12 December 2023
Our ref: 455768
Your ref: Werrington Neighbourhood Plan



Ms Maria Salemmé
Peterborough City Council

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

BY EMAIL ONLY

T [REDACTED]

Dear Ms Salemmé

Werrington Neighbourhood Plan – SEA & HRA Screening Consultation

Thank you for your consultation on the above dated and received by Natural England on 02 November 2023.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Natural England does not hold information on the location of significant populations of protected

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

species, so is unable to advise whether this plan is likely to affect protected species to such an extent as to require an SEA. Further information is included in Natural England's [standing advice](#) on protected species.

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

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

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

Please send any new consultations, or further information on this consultation to

Yours sincerely

Sally Wintle
Consultations Team