



Gamlingay Neighbourhood Plan  
Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)  
Screening Determination Statement

September 2019

## Executive Summary

This statement sets out the reasons for the determination that the draft Gamlingay Neighbourhood Plan is likely to require a Strategic Environmental Assessment. In addition, this statement determines that the making of the Gamlingay Neighbourhood Plan is not likely to have a significant effect on a European site.

This determination statement is intended to demonstrate that the Gamlingay Neighbourhood Plan is compatible with certain European Union obligations as required by the basic conditions, namely:

- 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; and
- Article 6(3) and (4) of the EU Habitats Directive and with Regulation 61 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended).

Gamlingay Parish Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council will publish this determination statement in accordance with the regulatory requirements.

## Determination Statement

This statement has been produced to ensure the Neighbourhood Plan will, when examined, comply with the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) in particular Regulation 32 and Regulation 15(1)e(ii) of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) (Amendment) Regulations 2015.

A neighbourhood plan is required to meet a number of basic conditions (which are set out in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990), one of which being it must not breach and must be otherwise compatible with EU and Human Rights obligations. This requires neighbourhood plans to fully consider the requirements of the SEA regulations<sup>1</sup> which transpose the EU's SEA Directive<sup>2</sup> into law and which requires those making plans that could impact on the environment to consider whether they are likely to have a significant effect or not.

Regulation 32 in the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) sets out an additional basic condition to those set out in primary legislation. Regulation 32 states: "The making of the neighbourhood plan is not likely to have a significant effect on a European site (as defined in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (d)) or a European offshore marine site (as defined in the Offshore Marine Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 2007 (e) ) (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects).

A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening Opinion was prepared by Place Services on behalf of South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC) for the Gamlingay Neighbourhood Plan. (See Appendix 1).

SCDC has consulted the statutory consultees (Historic England/Natural England/Environment Agency) on the Screening Report prepared by Essex Place Services and asked for their views on whether a SEA is required.

Consultation responses were received from the three statutory consultees. Their conclusions are summarised below, and their detailed comments are included in Appendix 2.

- Historic England: Given the potential significant effects (both positive and negative) upon the historic environment, Historic England concurs with the Screening Report's view that a Strategic Environmental Assessment will be required. (September 2019)
- Natural England: Natural England is satisfied with the conclusions of the SEA and HRA Screening Report that the Gamlingay draft Neighbourhood Plan is not predicted to have likely significant effects on any European sites, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects but that it should be screened in for its requirement of Strategic Environmental Assessment in line with the requirements of Directive 2001/42/EC. (September 2019)
- Environment Agency: Due to resource pressures they are no longer able to provide Local Planning Authorities with bespoke advice on screening opinions. They did attach a copy of their Planning Advice Guidance (PAG) document which contains basic information and links to the type of environmental issues they expect to be considered for development proposals. This document can be read in Appendix 2. (September 2019)

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<sup>1</sup> Known fully as The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.

<sup>2</sup> Known fully 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 SEA screening assessment considered that the Neighbourhood Plan would not have a significant effect on the environment in so far as the Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared for town and country planning purposes and sets a framework for future development consent. The policies of the Neighbourhood Plan can be considered to determine the use of small areas at local level commensurate with their status in determining local planning applications.

The Plan allocates land for development purposes; for 29 dwellings through a single housing allocation with planning permission, and also two Rural Business Development Areas outside the development framework. Both of these Rural Business Development Areas are large in the context of the existing settlement, however, do relate well to the existing built up areas by Mill Hill and Drove Road.

These sites do not have planning permission for the allocated uses and are not included within the District Council's adopted Local Plan as allocations. There is no identifiable planning history on either area relevant to the allocations in regard to use or extent. The degree to which the Plan sets a framework for projects through allocating resources is therefore considered relatively high. Assessment of these sites for their intended uses has not been undertaken at this point in time, neither has any exploration of alternative sites.

The Plan area is within the Impact Risk Zones (IRZs) of numerous SSSIs within the Plan area or otherwise in close proximity. The implications of this regarding the Drove Road Rural Business Development Area proposed in the Plan is that it would require consultation with Natural England for the following types of development, should they be forthcoming:

- Any residential development of 50 or more houses.
- Any development that could cause air pollution (including industrial/commercial processes).
- Large infrastructure such as warehousing / industry where net additional gross internal floor space is > 1,000m<sup>2</sup> or any development needing its own water supply.

Issues surrounding effects on biodiversity cannot therefore be ruled out in the absence of any robust evidence at the Plan level or any policy surrounding the possible effects on biodiversity from development at the Rural Business Development Areas within the draft Neighbourhood Plan at the time of writing.

The Drove Road Rural Business Development Area as allocated also includes land which includes the Grade II Listed '1 and 3, The Cinques', which may be affected by any B1 or B2 employment development or associated residential dwellings. The effects of the Drove Road Rural Business Development Area allocation on the Listed Building '1 and 3, The Cinques' are unknown as there is no clear identification of development type or form at this stage.

"Policy GAM4 – Protection and enhancement of local character includes that, 'Development (including housing will be supported where it respects the local character and historic and natural assets of the surrounding area, and takes every opportunity, through design and materials, to promote sustainability and reinforce local characteristics identified in the Gamlingay Village Design Guide (2019) and South Cambridgeshire District Design Guide.' However, irrespective of the robustness of Policy GAM4, negative effects on cultural heritage cannot be ruled out at this stage in the absence of any evidence to suggest that development at Drove Road would be acceptable."

The Gamlingay Neighbourhood Plan can therefore be screened in for its requirement of Strategic Environmental Assessment in line with the requirements of Directive 2001/42/EC.

The HRA screening indicated that the Gamlingay Neighbourhood Plan is not predicted to have likely significant effects on any European site, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects.

Based on the screening opinion and having considered the consultation responses from the statutory environmental bodies, Gamlingay Parish Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council determine that the Gamlingay Neighbourhood Plan will require a Strategic Environmental Assessment. The Councils also determine that the Neighbourhood Plan is not likely to result in significant effects on any European site and therefore there is no further assessment required under the Habitats Regulations 2017.

## Appendix 1: Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening for Gamlingay Neighbourhood Plan

As part of the process of making a Neighbourhood Plan, Gamlingay Parish Council has requested a screening opinion to see whether a Strategic Environmental Assessment is required. Such a requirement can be screened out if it is felt, based on the information available, that the Neighbourhood Plan would not have a likely significant environmental affect.

A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening Opinion was prepared by Place Services on behalf of South Cambridgeshire District Council for the Gamlingay Neighbourhood Plan.



# Gamlingay Draft Neighbourhood Plan 2019-2039

## Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) & Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening Report – September 2019





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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 The Purpose of this Report

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This screening report is an assessment of whether or not the contents of the Gamlingay draft Neighbourhood Plan (2019-2039) requires a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in accordance with the European Directive 2001/42/ EC and associated Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations. A SEA is required if the Neighbourhood Plan is deemed to have a likely significant effect on the environment.

This report will also screen to determine whether the draft Neighbourhood Plan requires a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) in accordance with Article 6(3) and (4) of the EU Habitats Directive and with Regulation 61 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended). A HRA is required when it is deemed that likely adverse significant effects may occur on protected Habitats (European) Sites as a result of the implementation of a plan/project.

## 1.2 The Gamlingay draft Neighbourhood Plan (2019-2039)

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The Neighbourhood Plan will set out planning policies for the Gamlingay Neighbourhood Plan area. Once formally adopted, a Neighbourhood Plan carries the same legal weight as Local Development Plans adopted up by the Local Planning Authority (LPA), in this case South Cambridgeshire District Council.

The Neighbourhood Plan states that the primary purpose of a Neighbourhood Plan is related to the use and development of land within the Parish and its role in determining planning applications within the Plan Area. The Plan's Vision is as follows:

*'We want Gamlingay to continue to thrive, respect and reflect the views of its community who value their Parish because it is an attractive, open, friendly, rural and comparatively safe place to live and work. We will continue to evolve and expand while retaining our unique and distinctive character and providing an outstanding quality of life for current and future generations of residents.'*

*We will do this by:*

- *Putting a thriving and prosperous community at the heart of our plan*
- *Promoting a distinctive and flourishing local economy*
- *Supporting measured, proportionate, timely and sustainable development to meet local requirements*
- *Endorsing policies that have a positive effect on the environment, including those that remove or mitigate climate change and reduce our carbon footprint*
- *Maintaining the high quality natural environment with its protected wildlife interests.'*



Additionally, a number of Objectives are devised for the Neighbourhood Plan. These are:

Objective
Deliver a housing growth strategy tailored to the identified needs and context of Gamlingay
Promote the development of housing and employment settings which protect and enrich the natural and built environment, and support active travel
Prioritise local distinctiveness in every element of change and growth
Strengthen and support economic activity; creating the right conditions where new and established businesses can flourish and provide local employment opportunities
Sustain and improve local facilities, in particular the provision of formal and informal green spaces, ensuring access for existing and new residents
Seek continuing improvements to transport and digital connectivity
Protect the local landscape setting and support nature conservation
Continue to involve local people in the process of plan-making, monitoring and delivery of development.

## 1.3 The South Cambridgeshire Local Plan

The adopted South Cambridgeshire Local Plan sets out the planning policies and land allocations to guide the future development of the District up to 2031. It includes policies on a wide range of topics such as housing, employment, services and facilities, and the natural environment.

### 1.3.1 Content regarding the Neighbourhood Plan area within the Local Plan

#### 1.3.1.1 The Settlement Hierarchy and Principle of Development

The Local Plan identifies Gamlingay as a 'Minor Rural Centre' within Policy S/9. Minor Rural Centres are generally less sustainable locations for new development than 'Rural Centres' however are identified as more sustainable than 'Group Villages' and 'Infill Villages' in the strategy for the rural area as they often perform a role in terms of providing services and facilities for a small rural hinterland.

The Local Plan states that,

*'within Minor Rural Centres there is scope in principle for larger scale windfall development within the village framework. This would allow larger villages with a reasonable level of services to provide services and facilities for surrounding smaller villages to achieve more development. However, the overall scale of development should be restricted in recognition of their more limited services compared to Rural Centres. A maximum scheme size of 30 dwellings is used as a guideline figure to indicate the upper limit of housing development likely to be suitable. Development will not be permitted on sites capable of accommodating scheme sizes significantly larger than 30 dwellings in Minor Rural Centres.'*

The Local Plan adds that,

*'sites for new housing development have been identified as extensions to Comberton,*



*Melbourn and Willingham and within Gamlingay and the development frameworks have been drawn to include those sites. The indicative scheme size does not apply to allocations forming part of the overall development strategy of the Local Plan.'*

Policy S/7 of the Local Plan, entitled 'Development Frameworks'. Development Frameworks define where policies for the built-up areas of settlements give way to policies for the countryside. The Policy supports development within such frameworks (including that of Gamlingay), and includes further information on proposals outside development frameworks for Neighbourhood Plans, stating that,

*'(2) Outside development frameworks, only allocations within Neighbourhood Plans that have come into force and development for agriculture, horticulture, forestry, outdoor recreation and other uses which need to be located in the countryside or where supported by other policies in this plan will be permitted.'*

### 1.3.1.2 Land Use Allocations

The Local Plan allocates land for development purposes within Gamlingay under Policy H/1. Policy H/1(f) outlines that 4.09ha of land is allocated at Green End Industrial Estate, Gamlingay for a mixed-use development including 90 dwellings. The development requirements for this Local Plan allocation are that future development is:

*'To be developed as a mixed use site, incorporating employment uses utilising not less than 25% of the site, providing light industrial, office, and/or general industrial employment (Use Class B1 and B2) compatible with a residential area.'*

The majority of this allocation has outline planning permission, which was granted in December 2016 (reference S/2068/15/OL). Planning permission was granted for approximately 75% of the allocation for the demolition of 5 dwellings and industrial and office units and the erection of up to 90 dwellings.

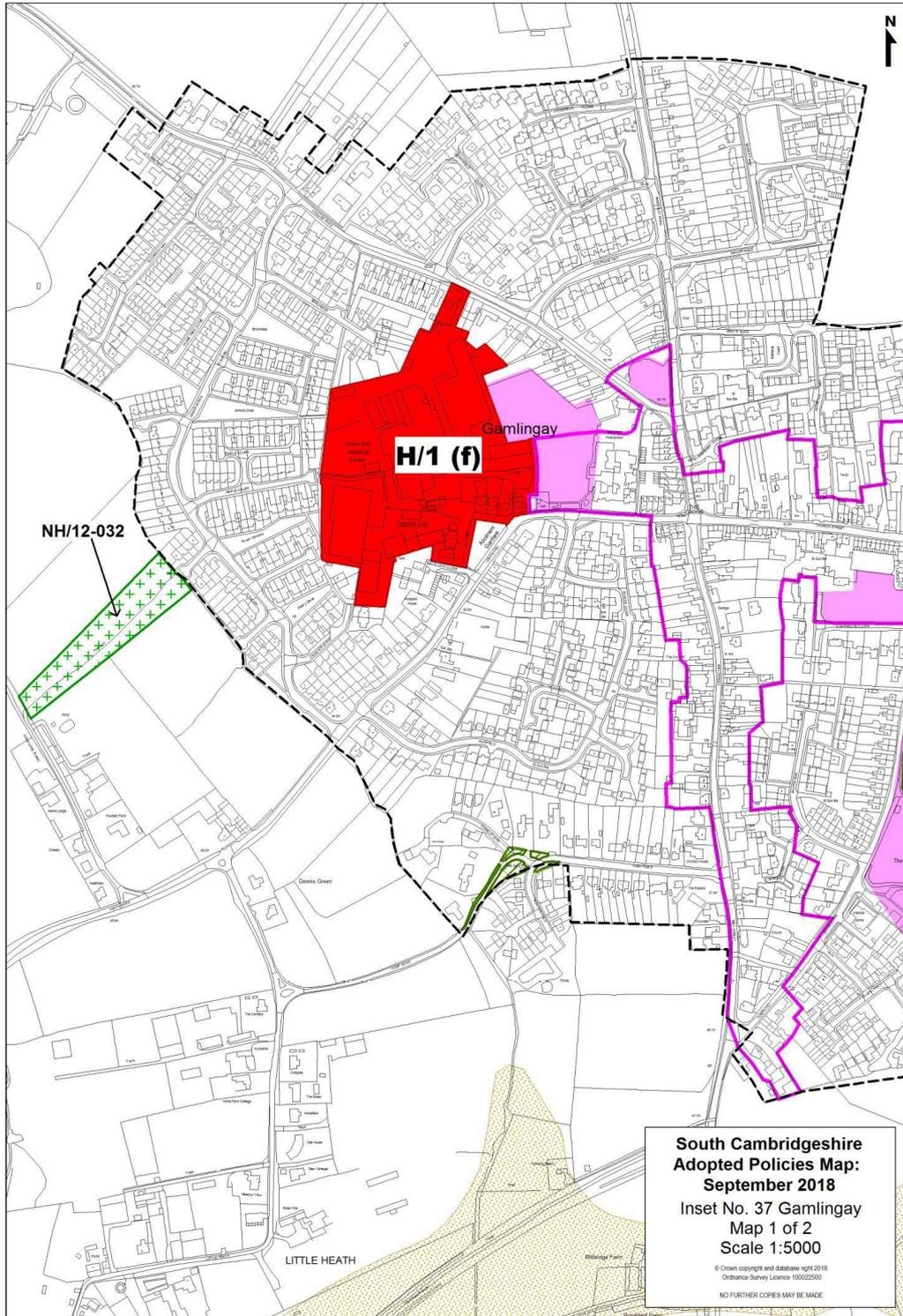
### 1.3.1.3 Local Green Space Sites

The NPPF introduces a new designation of Local Green Space, to identify and protect green areas of particular importance to a local community. The NPPF outlines that such designations should only be identified where the green space is in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves; where the green area is demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance (for example because of its beauty, historic significance, recreational value (including as a playing field), tranquillity or richness of its wildlife); and where the green area concerned is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land. The Local Plan identifies 'Log Field, Gamlingay' as a Local Green Space site (reference NH/12-032), with protection under Policy NH/12: Local Green Space. This Policy states,

*'Local Green Space identified on the Policies Map will be protected from development that would adversely impact on the character and particular local significance placed on such green areas which make them valued by their local community. Inappropriate development, as defined in the National Planning Policy Framework, would not be approved except in very special circumstances and in discussion with the local community.'*

This site, in addition to the Green End Industrial Estate allocation (H/1(f)) is shown in the following map.

**Figure 1: Map showing South Cambridgeshire Local Plan allocation and Local Green Space site in Gamlingay**



Source: South Cambridgeshire Local Plan 2018



## 2. Legislative Background

### 2.1 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

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 states that,

*‘Environmental assessment is an important tool for integrating environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of certain plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment.*

*(10) All plans and programmes which are prepared for a number of sectors and which set a framework for future development consent of projects listed in Annexes I and II to Council Directive 85/337/EEC of 27 June 1985 on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment(7), and all plans and programmes which have been determined to require assessment pursuant to Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild flora and fauna(8), are likely to have significant effects on the environment, and should as a rule be made subject to systematic environmental assessment. When they determine the use of small areas at local level or are minor modifications to the above plans or programmes, they should be assessed only where Member States determine that they are likely to have significant effects on the environment.*

*(11) Other plans and programmes which set the framework for future development consent of projects may not have significant effects on the environment in all cases and should be assessed only where Member States determine that they are likely to have such effects.’*

The Gamlingay Neighbourhood Plan may influence frameworks for future development, or become used ancillary to those plans and programmes that do set such a framework, and as such it has been determined that the principle of the Neighbourhood Plan should be screened for the necessary application of the SEA Directive.

The Report from the Commission to The Council, The European Parliament, The European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions states, on the application and effectiveness of the Directive on Strategic Environmental Assessment (Directive 2001/42/EC), that

*‘the following P&P, and modifications to them, are covered when prepared and/or adopted by an authority[2] and required pursuant to legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions:*

- *P&P prepared for certain sectors and which set the framework for future development consent in respect of projects under the Environmental Impact Assessment-EIA-Directive.*
- *P&P requiring an assessment under the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC).*
- *P&P setting the framework for development consent in respect of projects (not limited to those listed in the EIA Directive; see above) and determined by "screening" as being likely to have significant environmental effects.’*



This report represents this screening process in regard to the content and influence of the Gamlingay Neighbourhood Plan.

## 2.2 Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)

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Under the provisions of the EU Habitats Directive and translated into English law by the Habitats Regulations (*The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017*), a competent authority must carry out an assessment of whether a plan or project will significantly affect the integrity of any European Site (also referred to as Habitats Sites in the National Planning Policy Framework), in terms of impacting the site's conservation objectives.

HRA is the screening assessment of the impacts of a land use proposal against the conservation objectives of Habitats sites. Specifically, it is to ascertain whether or not a proposal (either alone or in combination with other proposals) would potentially damage the internationally designated features of that site. European sites are also known as Natura 2000 sites.

This HRA Screening Report has been undertaken in order to accompany the Gamlingay Neighbourhood Plan which is being produced by Gamlingay Parish Council in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.

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

In line with the Court judgement (CJEU People Over Wind v Coillte Teoranta C-323/17), mitigation measures cannot be taken into account when carrying out a screening assessment to decide whether a plan or project is likely to result in significant effects on a Habitats Site.

## 3. SEA Screening

### 3.1 When is SEA Required?

Planning Practice Guidance – Strategic environmental assessment requirements for neighbourhood plans (Paragraph: 026 Reference ID: 11-026-20140306) states that,

*‘In some limited circumstances, where a neighbourhood plan is likely to have significant environmental effects, it may require a strategic environmental assessment. Draft neighbourhood plan proposals should be assessed to determine whether the plan is likely to have significant environmental effects. This process is commonly referred to as a “screening” assessment and the requirements are set out in regulation 9 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.*

*If likely significant environmental effects are identified, an environmental report must be prepared in accordance with paragraphs (2) and (3) of regulation 12 of those Regulations.*

*One of the basic conditions that will be tested by the independent examiner is whether the making of the neighbourhood plan is compatible with European Union obligations (including under the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive).*

*To decide whether a draft neighbourhood plan might have significant environmental effects, it must be assessed (screened) at an early stage of the plan’s preparation according to the requirements set out in regulation 9 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004. These include a requirement to consult the environmental assessment consultation bodies.*

*Each consultation body will be able to advise on particular topics relevant to its specific area of expertise and responsibility, and the specific information that it holds.*

*Where it is determined that the plan is unlikely to have significant environmental effects (and, accordingly, does not require an environmental assessment), a statement of reasons for the determination should be prepared. A copy of the statement must be submitted with the neighbourhood plan proposal and made available to the independent examiner.’*

Articles 2 and 3 of the SEA Directive set out the circumstances in which an SEA is required. Table 1 sets out the assessment of whether the principle of the Gamlingay Neighbourhood Plan will require a full SEA.

Table 1: Exploring whether the Principle of the Plan would warrant SEA

Q	Criteria	Response	Outcome	Commentary
1	Is the Plan subject to preparation and/or adoption by a national, regional or local authority OR prepared by an authority for adoption through legislative procedure by Parliament or Government	Yes	Go to question 2	The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared for adoption through legislative procedure.

Q	Criteria	Response	Outcome	Commentary
2	<p>Is the Plan required by legislative, regulatory or <u>administrative provision</u></p> <p>Typical characteristics of "administrative provisions" are that they are publicly available, prepared in a formal way, probably involving consultation with interested parties. The administrative provision must have sufficient formality such that it counts as a "provision" and it must also use language that plainly requires rather than just encourages a Plan to be prepared.</p>	Yes	Go to question 3	The Neighbourhood Plan would be considered as falling within the category of an 'administrative provision'.
		No	DOES NOT REQUIRE SEA	
3	<p>Is the Plan 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 projects in Annexes I and II to the EIA Directive?</p>	Yes to both criteria	Go to question 5	The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared for town and country planning and sets a framework for future development consent
		No to either criteria	Go to question 4	
4	<p>Will the Plan, in view of its likely effect on sites, require an assessment under Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive?</p>	Yes	Go to question 5	The Plan's likely effect on sites and requirement for an assessment under Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive is explored in Section 4 of this Report.
		No	Go to question 6	
5	<p>Does the Plan determine the use of small areas at local level, OR is it a minor modification of a Plan likely to require assessment under the Habitats Directive?</p>	Yes to either criteria	Go to question 8	The policies of the Neighbourhood Plan can be considered to determine the use of small areas at local level commensurate with their status in determining local planning applications.
		No to both criteria	Go to question 7	
6	<p>Does the Plan set the framework for future development consent of projects (not just projects in the Annexes of the EIA Directive)?</p>	Yes	Go to question 8	The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared for town and country planning and sets a framework for future development consent.
		No	DOES NOT REQUIRE SEA	
7	<p>Is the Plans sole purpose to serve national defence or civil</p>	Yes to any criteria	DOES NOT REQUIRE SEA	The Neighbourhood Plan does not serve a purpose related to



Q	Criteria	Response	Outcome	Commentary
	emergency, OR is it a financial or budget Plan, OR is it co-financed by structural funds or EAGGF programmes 2000 to 2006/7	No to all criteria	REQUIRES SEA	national defence or civil emergency, a financial or budget Plan. The Neighbourhood Plan is not co-financed by structural funds or EAGGF programmes 2000 to 2006/7.
8	Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment?	Yes	REQUIRES SEA	Likely significant effects are explored in more detail in Section 3.3 of this Screening Report. The 'conclusions' section of the Report outlines whether the Neighbourhood Plan requires SEA or not due in regard to its effects on the environment.
		No	DOES NOT REQUIRE SEA	

The following section looks at the criteria for assessing the effects of the Neighbourhood Plan and the identified effects of the Neighbourhood Plan in line with the criteria. Crucially, it will determine whether there are any likely significant effects on the environment.

## 3.2 Criteria for Assessing the Effects of the Neighbourhood Development Plan

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Criteria for determining the likely significant effects on the environment, referred to in Article 3(5) of Directive 2001/42/EC are set out below.

### Annex II of SEA Directive 2001/42/EC – Significant Effects

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.



### 3.3 Likely Significant Effects on the Environment resulting from the Neighbourhood Plan

The following assessment will consider the likelihood of the Gamlingay Neighbourhood Plan (at the time of writing) to have significant effects on the environment. The table below will explore the likelihood of effects on the following required themes, as included within Annex I of the SEA Directive (2001/42/EC):

- Biodiversity;
- Population;
- Human health;
- Fauna;
- Flora;
- Soil;
- Water;
- Air;
- Climatic factors;
- Material assets;
- Cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage;
- Landscape; and
- The interrelationship between the above factors.

Table 2: Assessment of Likely Significant Effects on the Environment

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)	Likelihood and summary of significant effects
<p>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>	<p>The Plan sets out relevant policies which will be used to determine proposals for development within the Neighbourhood Plan area once adopted. The Plan includes a policy (GAM2 - Housing site allocation, West Road) which identifies a single Plan allocation for 29 dwellings. This allocation was granted outline planning permission (S/2367/16/OL) in 2017. A Reserved Matters application for 'the approval of matters reserved for Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale following outline planning permission S/1338/15/OL for up to 29 dwellings with open space and access' is currently out for consultation at the time of writing. The principle has been established for development at a total of 29 dwellings on this site.</p> <p>In addition, Policy GAM7 - Employment site allocation allocates several new employment locations (as 'Rural Business Development Areas') and protects other existing employment sites. The details of the new Rural Business Development Areas, as espoused in Policy GAM7 are:</p>



## Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)

### Likelihood and summary of significant effects

- A new Rural Business Development Area at Mill Hill (B1c, B2, B8)
- A new Rural Business Development Area at Drove Road (B1, B2) with associated residential dwellings where a viable business case exists (e.g. for security or unsocial working hours).

Both of these Rural Business Development Areas are large in the context of the existing settlement, and are detached from the 'village framework', however do relate well to the existing built up areas by Mill Hill and Drove Road.

The area allocated for employment at Mill Hill currently contains a mix of uses, including existing employment premises interspersed with residential properties and a care home. The area allocated for employment at Drove Road is predominantly agricultural, with residential clusters and also employment development to the west. Within this area lies the 'Gamlingay Cinqes', a 3ha nature reserve and County Wildlife Site. These sites do not have planning permission for the allocated uses and are not included within the District Council's adopted Local Plan as allocations. There is no identifiable planning history on either area relevant to the allocations in regard to use or extent. Assessment of these sites for their intended uses has not been undertaken at this point in time, neither has any exploration of alternative sites.

The degree to which the Plan sets a framework for projects through allocating resources is considered relatively high. This increases the likelihood of warranting the application of the SEA Directive in the form of a SEA Environmental Report from a procedural point of view, subject to the identification of any environmental effects elsewhere in this table.

The degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans or programmes including those in a hierarchy.

The Neighbourhood Plan provides policies for the Plan area, relevant to a local level only. The policies are in general conformity to that of the adopted South Cambridgeshire Local Plan. The Neighbourhood Plan allocates land for a total of 29 dwellings which is in conformity to the Local Plan's guideline figure of an upper limit of housing development likely to be suitable in Minor Rural Centres; the Local Plan states that *'development will not be permitted on sites capable of accommodating scheme sizes significantly larger than 30 dwellings in Minor Rural Centres.*

The Neighbourhood Plan however allocates land for development purposes within the Plan area that is not allocated within the adopted South Cambridgeshire Local Plan and does not have existing planning permission. This corresponds to the new Rural Business Centres at Mill Hill and Drove Road.

The Neighbourhood Plan, when/if 'made', will have weight in all planning decisions within the Plan area, including allocating land as a resource for development purposes. This in turn will influence future iterations of the Local Plan and planning policy in general in the local area to a relatively high degree.



### Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)

### Likelihood and summary of significant effects

The relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development.

Neighbourhood Plans are required to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The Neighbourhood Plan policies seek to ensure environmental considerations are taken into account. The Plan includes policies related (directly / indirectly) to ensuring environmental considerations will be integrated into any forthcoming development within the Plan area. These are:

- GAM4 – Protection and enhancement of local character
- GAM14 – Landscape and natural environment
- GAM15 – Gamlingay wood

Irrespective of the adequacy of the above policies, adopted Local Plan policies apply within the Neighbourhood Plan area, which have been subject to thorough assessment within the local Plan Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment. This ensures that environmental considerations, in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development, will be considered for all development proposals within the Neighbourhood Plan area.

Environmental problems relevant to the plan.

The Neighbourhood Plan reflects a small area and the Plan's policy content seeks to address environmental issues. The policy content of the adopted Local Plan will additionally apply to any proposals within the Neighbourhood Plan area. These policies have been subject to Sustainability Appraisal within the context of the Local Plan. The Plan and this Screening Report identify the following potential (direct / indirect) environmental problems or sources of potential problems relevant to the Neighbourhood Plan area:

- The Plan area contains the Gamlingay Woods SSSI to the north of the village framework area. Additionally, the Weaveley and Sand Woods SSSI lies close to the Plan area boundary to the north and the Potton Wood SSSI lies adjacent to the Plan area boundary to the south east.
- The Plan area is within various SSSI Impact Risk Zones (IRZs). Development proposals within IRZs are required to be consulted on with Natural England, should they be of a type or size that could warrant negative effects on the relevant SSSI.
- A number of Priority Habitats (from the Priority Habitat Inventory<sup>1</sup>) are scattered throughout the Plan area, with some adjacent to the existing development framework boundary. These include Broadleaved Woodland, Wood-pasture and Parkland, Lowland Fens, Lowland Meadows, Deciduous Woodland and Traditional Orchard with other areas of 'no main habitat but additional habitats present.'
- There are two protected road verges (for nature conservation interest) in the Plan area, at Gamlingay Long Road and West

<sup>1</sup> a spatial dataset that describes the geographic extent and location of Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006) Section 41 habitats of principal importance.



## Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)      Likelihood and summary of significant effects

Road.

- The Plan area contains a Grade II listed Registered Park and Garden (Great Heath). This asset is detached from the development framework and located to the west of the built up area of Gamlingay.
- Within the Plan area and the land allocated as 'the Drove Road Rural Business Development Area' lies the Gamlingay Cinques Common nature reserve and County Wildlife Site (CWS). Further County Wildlife Sites exist throughout the Plan area (Cambridge-Bedford disused railway (Hatley); Gamlingay (East) RSV (Road side Verge); Gamlingay Stocks Lane cemetery; Heath plantation - end of Little Heath; New Barn Grassland - adjacent to Cambridgeshire Lakes; West Road RSV; and Gamlingay Park, Heath Road.)
- There are approximately 62 Listed Buildings within the Plan area; the majority of these are within the Gamlingay Conservation Area.
- Of these Listed Buildings, there exists the Grade I listed Church of St Mary the Virgin, and the following Grade II\* listings within the Conservation Area:
  - The Emplins
  - Chapel adjoining Almhouses at East End
  - Almhouses
  - The Cock Inn
  - Havelock House
- Large parts of the Plan area are in groundwater Source Protection Zone 3 (Total Catchment).
- A swathe of land within Flood Risk Zones 3 and 2 exist within the Plan area associated with a tributary of the River Ouse to the south of the development framework boundary.
- The non-developed areas of the Plan area consist of various grade soils. Grade 1 Agricultural Land ('excellent') exists in a pocket of land adjoining the eastern part of the development framework. Grade 2 ('good-moderate') exists in the majority of the eastern part of the wider Plan area. Grade 3 ('good-moderate') makes up a large area of the west and south-west parts of the Plan area. Grade 4 soils ('poor') are associated with the areas of heath within the Plan area. Grade 1 Agricultural Land represents the best and most versatile soil within the wider District context and also the country.
- The Plan area falls mostly within the (landscape) National Character Area 90 Bedfordshire Greensand Ridge and partly (in eastern parts of the Plan area) within National Character Area 88 Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire Claylands).
- The Bedfordshire Greensand Ridge is a distinctive ridge with a



**Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)      Likelihood and summary of significant effects**

north-west-facing scarp slope, formed by the underlying sandstone geology which has shaped the landscape and industry of the Ridge. Its historic landscapes, including the farmland, parklands and historic architecture, combined with small settlements, greenbelt and woodlands ancient and modern, give parts of the NCA a more timeless feel than the Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire Claylands which surround it. There is a patchwork of semi-natural habitats throughout the NCA, including flood plain grazing marshes, lowland heathland and meadows and mixed deciduous woodland. The main pressures on the NCA are (or would result from) development, use of bland, non-local materials, increased congestion and increased traffic noise and light pollution.

- The Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire Claylands NCA is a broad, gently undulating, lowland plateau dissected by shallow river valleys that gradually widen as they approach The Fens NCA in the east. Tranquility within the NCA has declined, affected by visual intrusion, noise and light pollution from agriculture, settlement expansion and improvements in road infrastructure.
- To the east and south of the development framework boundary within the Plan area is a narrow arcing band of land that is within a Minerals Safeguarding Zone (MSA) for sand and gravel as identified the adopted Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Minerals and Waste Core Strategy (2011).

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).

The content of the Neighbourhood Plan is not in conflict with those relevant planning documents within the wider district and county area related to waste management or water protection.

The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects on the following factors:

The following impacts have been identified within this Screening Assessment:

Sustainability Theme

- Biodiversity

Although the Plan area lies within the Zone of Influence (ZOI) of Eversden and Wimpole Woods SAC, the HRA Screening element of this Report concludes that there would be no likely significant effects resulting from the Plan alone or in-combination with other plans and projects as there is no unconsented residential development proposed which would result in recreational impacts.

The Plan area is however also within the Impact Risk Zones (IRZs) of numerous SSSIs within the Plan area or otherwise in close proximity. The implications of this are that all new housing developments within the Plan area will require an assessment of recreational pressure on relevant SSSIs and measures to mitigate adverse impacts e.g. alternative open

**Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)**
**Likelihood and summary of significant effects**

space provision (as espoused by Natural England). The Plan includes only a single residential development for 29 dwellings which has outline planning permission.

The IRZs also indicate that development within the Drove Road Rural Business Development Area proposed in the Plan would require consultation with Natural England for the following types of development, should they be forthcoming:

- Any residential development of 50 or more houses.
- Any development that could cause air pollution (including industrial/commercial processes).
- Large infrastructure such as warehousing / industry where net additional gross internal floorspace is > 1,000m<sup>2</sup> or any development needing its own water supply.

Furthermore, the allocated Drove Road Rural Business Development Area encompasses / is adjacent on two sides to the Gamlingay Cinques nature reserve and County Wildlife Site (CWS).

Consultation with Natural England is considered a development management issue (in so far as consultation is required at that stage), and relevant policies exist within the adopted South Cambridgeshire Local Plan. However, issues surrounding effects on biodiversity cannot be ruled out in the absence of any robust evidence at the Plan level or any policy surrounding the possible effects on biodiversity from development at the Rural Business Development Areas within the draft Neighbourhood Plan at the time of writing.

- Population

It is considered that there would be no significant effects on population resulting from the Neighbourhood Plan. This is due to the small scale of the Plan area.

- Human health

There are no highlighted significant effects of the Neighbourhood Plan regarding human health that would warrant a strategic assessment through SEA. The Plan includes policies for the protection of green and open spaces that contribute to healthy lifestyles.

- Fauna

Aside from the effects highlighted above in regard to 'biodiversity', the 'on-site' impacts of the Neighbourhood Plan on fauna are not considered significant at the Plan level. It is possible that any number of developments that could be forthcoming within the Plan area could have negative impacts on protected species, however these cannot be considered strategically significant to the extent that Strategic Environmental Assessment would be warranted. Such issues are more appropriate to be considered on a case-by-case 'project level' basis at the development management stage and in accordance with relevant development management policies contained within the LPA's adopted Local Plan.



**Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)**

**Likelihood and summary of significant effects**

<p>- Flora</p>	<p>Numerous and various areas of Priority Habitat exist within the Plan Area. Gamlingay Cinques Common is a County Wildlife Site that is proposed within / adjacent to an allocated Rural Business Development Area at Drove Road; however Policy GAM14 - Landscape and natural environment, states that new development should seek to protect and, where possible, enhance wildlife value on the application site, surrounding sites and wildlife corridors identified by the Village Design Guide (2019). Additionally, South Cambridgeshire Local Plan policies apply. Aside from the effects highlighted above in regard to 'biodiversity', the 'on-site' impacts of the Neighbourhood Plan on flora are not considered significant at the Plan level.</p>
<p>- Soil</p>	<p>The Plan area contains Grade 2 ('excellent') Agricultural Land (ALC) / soil quality which represents the best and most versatile agricultural land within the wider District. The Plan does not propose any development within this area, and predominantly allocates land for development in areas identified as Grade 3 ('good – moderate') and Grade 4 ('poor') at the Drove Road Rural Business Development Area and the Mill Hill Rural Business Development Area respectively. There are no identified negative implications surrounding soil quality as a result of the Plan.</p>
<p>- Water</p>	<p>Large parts of the Plan area are within a groundwater Source Protection Zone 3 (Total Catchment). Source Protection Zones (SPZs) respond to sources such as wells, boreholes and springs used for public drinking water supply. These zones show the risk of contamination from any activities that might cause pollution in the area. The Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate land for residential development purposes that does not have planning permission (at which point considerations would have been made regarding water quality). Residential land uses are not considered to give rise to ground water pollutants (e.g. give rise to hazardous substances such as pesticides, oils, petrol and diesel, solvents, arsenic, mercury or chromium VI; or non-hazardous substances such as ammonia or nitrates) however this may be the case for any development that comes forward as a result of the Plan's allocated Rural Business Development Areas at Mill Hill and Drove Road. No policy within the draft Plan exists to ensure that water quality and any subsequent pollution is addressed.</p> <p>Nevertheless, pollution control policies at the LPA level also apply within the Neighbourhood Plan area to ensure that no negative effects on water quality should be experienced within Gamlingay.</p> <p>The HRA element of this Report concludes that although water quality is a major issue of concern for Portholme SAC, Gamlingay lies outside the Impact Risk Zone so it is considered that there is no pathway for development to result in water quality impacts.</p>
<p>- Air</p>	<p>There are no identified air or noise quality issues within the Plan area. Although consultation with Natural England is required for any development that could cause air pollution (including</p>



**Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)**

**Likelihood and summary of significant effects**

- Climatic factors	<p>industrial/commercial processes) in association with various IRZs of SSSIs in the north and north-eastern parts of the Plan area, consultation would be required at the planning application stage and is not considered a matter would warrant SEA, as a strategic undertaking, to be undertaken.</p> <p>No policies exist within the Plan that address flood risk issues, although it should be acknowledged that existing adopted Local Plan policies regarding flood risk apply in the Plan area.</p> <p>The Neighbourhood Plan area contains a relatively large area of Flood Risk Zones 3a associated with a tributary of the River Ouse to the south of the development framework. The Plan includes a Rural Business Development Area at Mill Hill that includes areas of Flood Risk Zone 3a associated with this tributary in the northern part of the allocation and also within south western parts. It is not considered that effects would be significant due to the type of development proposed being categorised as 'less vulnerable'<sup>2</sup> and there being no land within Flood Risk Zone 3b (functional floodplain). Such uses (as proposed within the Mill Hill allocation) are 'appropriate' in Flood Risk Zone 3a. Furthermore, Sequential Testing can be undertaken at the planning application stage if required.</p> <p>It is therefore considered that SEA would not be required; instead flood risk issues can be considered at the planning application stage.</p>
- Material assets	<p>The Plan area contains a swathe of land within a Minerals Safeguarding Area (MSA) for sand and gravel within the County Council's adopted Minerals and Waste Core Strategy (Proposals Map C) (2011). The Plan does not include any policies that conflict with the MSA or include any site allocations. This area of safeguarded land follows the tributary of the River Ouse and therefore the allocated Hill Mill Rural Business Development Area includes land within the MSA. This however is an issue that can be considered through any forthcoming planning application(s) and through consultation with Cambridgeshire County Council as the Minerals Planning Authority (MPA).</p> <p>Regarding other material assets, the content of the Neighbourhood Plan is not considered to have any significant effects due to the extent / size of the Neighbourhood Area. Such issues are more appropriate to be considered on a case-by-case basis at the development management stage and in accordance with relevant development management policies contained within the LPA's adopted Local Plan.</p>

<sup>2</sup> 'Less Vulnerable' development includes (relevant to the allocation): Buildings used for shops; financial, professional and other services; restaurants, cafes and hot food takeaways; offices; general industry, storage and distribution; non-residential institutions not included in the 'more vulnerable' class; and assembly and leisure; land and buildings used for agriculture and forestry.



## Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)

## Likelihood and summary of significant effects

### - Cultural heritage

The Plan area contains a Registered Park and Garden and a large amount of Listed Buildings (including one that is Grade I listed) within the Conservation Area. A residential allocation exists within the Plan for 29 dwellings at West Road and although this allocation is in close proximity to several Listed Buildings, it has outline planning permission. Effects on the historic environment will have been considered at the development management stage to date, or will be through the reserved matters application that is out for consultation at the time of writing.

The Drove Road Rural Business Development Area as allocated includes land which includes the Grade II Listed '1 and 3, The Cinques', which may be affected by any B1 or B2 employment development or associated residential dwellings as included within Policy GAM7 – Employment site allocation. The effects of the Drove Road Rural Business Development Area allocation on the Listed Building '1 and 3, The Cinques' are unknown as there is no clear identification of development type or form at this stage. Policy GAM4 – Protection and enhancement of local character however includes that, *'development (including housing) will be supported where it respects the local character and historic and natural assets of the surrounding area, and takes every opportunity, through design and materials, to promote sustainability and reinforce local characteristics identified in the Gamlingay Village Design Guide (2019) and South Cambridgeshire District Design Guide.'*

Irrespective of the robustness of Policy GAM4, policy also exists at the LPA level which additionally applies in the Plan area. Despite this however, negative effects on cultural heritage cannot be ruled out at this stage in the absence of any evidence to suggest that development at Drove Road would be acceptable.

### - Landscape

The Plan allocates land for development purposes at Mill Hill and Drove Road as Rural Business Development Areas. These two areas, although built-up, are outside the village framework. The type or form of development in specific areas is unknown at this stage, although GAM6 – New employment premises states that, *'the design of new business premises and any associated housing must reflect the local character of Gamlingay (defined by the Village Design Guide and District Design Guide), be at a scale appropriate for a rural setting and demonstrate high standards of environmental sustainability. In particular proposals should: include suitable landscaping treatments (e.g. in consideration of the Bedfordshire Greensand Ridge national character area and village edges).'* Furthermore, Policy GAM14 – Landscape and natural environment states that new development should, *'respect local landscape character as defined by the views and vistas in the Village Design Guide and Bedfordshire Greensand Ridge national character area heathland and acidic grassland landscapes.'*

In light of the policy stance regarding landscape character, and in consideration also of the requirements of development proposals in accordance with the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan, there are no significant strategic landscape effects identified within this Report that



Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)	Likelihood and summary of significant effects
	<p>would warrant the requirement for the application of the SEA Directive and the formulation of a SEA Environmental Report.</p>
<p>The cumulative nature of the effects.</p>	<p>In line with the above considerations that explore the possible individual effects of the Plan’s content, there is a possibility that cumulative effects on biodiversity, specifically those associated with employment development at both Rural Business Development Areas, may have a cumulative negative effect. As such, there is a risk that cumulative negative effects may occur that are considered to warrant the requirement for the application of the SEA Directive and the formulation of a SEA Environmental Report.</p>
<p>The trans boundary nature of the effects.</p>	<p>The adopted South Cambridgeshire Local Plan can be seen to support the protection and improvement of conditions relevant to those sustainability factors listed within the SEA Directive. The Neighbourhood Plan is not in conflict with these wider thematic policies. The HRA Screening element of this Report, which explores in-combination effects with other relevant plans and projects, also identifies no in-combination effects regarding Habitats (European) Sites.</p>
<p>The risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents).</p>	<p>There is limited risk to human health or the environment as a result of the Neighbourhood Plan. This is in consideration of the above screening requirements related to sustainability themes. The Neighbourhood Plan is primarily focused on housing and employment development (B2 and B8), and is unlikely to give rise to any accidents that can be considered to have a significant risk to human health or the environment.</p>
<p>The magnitude spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected).</p>	<p>The Neighbourhood Plan relates to the local level only. The allocations included within the Plan are of a relatively large scale within the context of Gamlingay however the magnitude and spatial extent is unlikely to be significant in a wider District context. Effects are not expected to be realised over a wide geographic area.</p>
<p>The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- special natural characteristics or cultural heritage</li> <li>- exceeded environmental quality standards</li> <li>- intensive land use</li> </ul>	<p>As highlighted above in the screening of the Plan per sustainability theme, the Neighbourhood Plan has been assessed as having a possible negative effect associated with biodiversity (various SSSIs within or in close proximity to the Plan area). These would warrant further assessment through SEA.</p>
<p>The effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, community or international protection status.</p>	<p>As highlighted above in the screening of the Plan per sustainability theme, the Neighbourhood Plan has been assessed as not having any significant effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, community or international protection status.</p>



## 4. HRA Screening

### 4.1 Habitat Regulations Assessment of Development Plans

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This section forms a plan level Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) as required by Regulation 63 of The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) Regulations 2017.

Under the provisions of the EU Habitats Directive and translated into English law by the Habitats Regulations (The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) Regulations 2017), a competent authority must carry out an assessment of whether a plan or project will significantly affect the integrity of any Habitats Site, in terms of impacting the site's conservation objectives.

The first stage of HRA is the screening assessment of the impacts of a land use proposal against the conservation objectives of Habitats (European) sites. Specifically, it is to ascertain whether or not a proposal (either alone or in combination with other proposals) would potentially damage the internationally designated features of that site. Habitats (European) sites are also known as Natura 2000 sites.

In line with the recent Court judgement (CJEU People Over Wind v Coillte Teoranta C-323/17), mitigation measures cannot be taken into account when carrying out a screening assessment to decide whether a plan or project is likely to result in significant effects on a Habitats Site.

This HRA Screening Report has been undertaken in order to support the Gamlingay Neighbourhood Plan which is being produced by Gamlingay Parish Council in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. The area covered by the Plan is shown in Appendix 1.

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

This section of this Report aims to:

- Identify the Habitats sites within 20km of Gamlingay Neighbourhood Plan area.
- Summarise the reasons for designation and Conservation Objectives for each site to be considered in this assessment.
- Screen the Gamlingay Neighbourhood Plan for its potential to impact upon a Habitats site.
- Assess the potential for in combination effects from other projects and plans in the area.
- Identify if there are any outstanding issues that need further investigation.

### 4.2 Recent Court Judgements and their consideration in this Report

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#### 4.2.1 CJEU People Over Wind v Coillte Teoranta C-323/17

As previously mentioned, in line with the recent Court judgement (CJEU People Over Wind v Coillte Teoranta C-323/17), mitigation measures cannot be taken into account when carrying out a screening assessment to decide whether a plan or project is likely to result in significant effects on a Habitats Site.



This HRA Screening Report does not therefore consider mitigation measures within the assessment of Likely Significant Effects resulting from the Gamlingay Neighbourhood Plan.

#### 4.2.2 CJEU Holohan C- 461/17

This recent Court judgement now imposes more detailed requirements on the competent authority at Appropriate Assessment stage:

1. [...] an 'Appropriate Assessment' must, on the one hand, catalogue the entirety of habitat types and species for which a site is protected, and, on the other, identify and examine both the implications of the proposed project for the species present on that site, and for which that site has not been listed, and the implications for habitat types and species to be found outside the boundaries of that site, provided that those implications are liable to affect the conservation objectives of the site.
2. [...] the competent authority is permitted to grant to a plan or project consent which leaves the developer free to determine subsequently certain parameters relating to the construction phase, such as the location of the construction compound and haul routes, only if that authority is certain that the development consent granted establishes conditions that are strict enough to guarantee that those parameters will not adversely affect the integrity of the site.
3. [...] where the competent authority rejects the findings in a scientific expert opinion recommending that additional information be obtained, the 'Appropriate Assessment' must include an explicit and detailed statement of reasons capable of dispelling all reasonable scientific doubt concerning the effects of the work envisaged on the site concerned.

Within this HRA Screening report, the assessment determines the requirement for whether an Appropriate Assessment is needed for the Gamlingay Neighbourhood Plan.

### 4.3 Habitats (European) Sites

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Habitats Sites is the term used in the NPPF (2019) to describe 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. European sites are the centrepiece of EU nature and biodiversity policy. It is an EU wide network of nature protection areas. They form an EU wide network of nature protection areas. The aim of the network is to assure the long-term survival of Europe's most valuable and threatened species and habitats.

The sites are designated under the European Union (EU) Birds Directive (Council Directive 79/409/EEC on the Conservation of Wild Birds) and the EU Habitats Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora).

The Birds Directive requires the establishment of Special Protection Areas (SPAs) for birds. The Habitats Directive similarly requires Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) to be designated for other species, and for habitats. Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar sites) are also considered as part of the Natura 2000 network. This is because all SPAs and SACs are comprised of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and all Ramsar sites in England are SSSIs. Together, SPAs, SACs and Ramsar Sites are considered as Habitats Sites in England (NPPF, 2019).

### 4.3.1 Explanation of SPAs, SACs and Ramsar Sites

#### Special Protection Areas (SPAs)

SPAs are areas which have been identified as being of international importance for the breeding, feeding, wintering or the migration of rare and vulnerable species of birds found within EU countries. Example: Ouse Washes is internationally important for wintering waterfowl. Legislation: EU Birds Directive.

#### Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)

SACs are areas designated to protect habitat types that are in danger of disappearance, have a small natural range, or are highly characteristic of the region; and to protect species that are endangered, vulnerable, rare, or endemic. Example: woodland habitat of Eversden and Wimpole Woods for the population of Barbastelle bats. Legislation: EU Habitats Directive.

#### Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar Sites)

Ramsar Sites are designated to protect the biological and physical features of wetlands, especially for waterfowl habitats. For example, Wicken Fen is an outstanding remnant of East Anglian peat fens and supports one species of British Red Data Book plant fen violet *Viola persicifolia* which survives at only two other sites in Britain. Ramsar sites often overlap with SACs and SPAs and UK planning policy determines that they should be accorded the same importance when developments are proposed. Legislation: Ramsar Convention (1971) – Wetlands of International Importance.

### 4.3.2 Habitats Sites to be considered

There are two Habitats sites which lie within 20 km of Gamlingay parish. These were identified by South Cambs Local Plan Sustainability Appraisal (SA) scoping report and are shown on the map in Appendix 2. The parish lies within the 10km Zone of Influence for Eversden and Wimpole Woods SAC as identified on MAGIC website ([www.magic.gov.uk](http://www.magic.gov.uk)) as Impact Risk Zones for consultation with Natural England. The types of development proposed by the Gamlingay Neighbourhood Development Plan do not trigger consultation with Natural England regarding potential impacts on any of these statutory sites.

Table 3: Habitats Sites within 20km of the development to be considered in this assessment

SPA	SAC	Ramsar
N/A	Eversden and Wimpole Woods SAC Portholme SAC	N/A

After consideration of the South Cambridgeshire District Council Local Plan SA Scoping (Appendix 11 HRA screening) (June 2012), it was concluded that no SSSIs with European designation shown in Table 3 need to be assessed further for 'likely significant effects' from this draft Neighbourhood Development Plan. There are therefore no Habitats Sites within scope of this HRA screening.



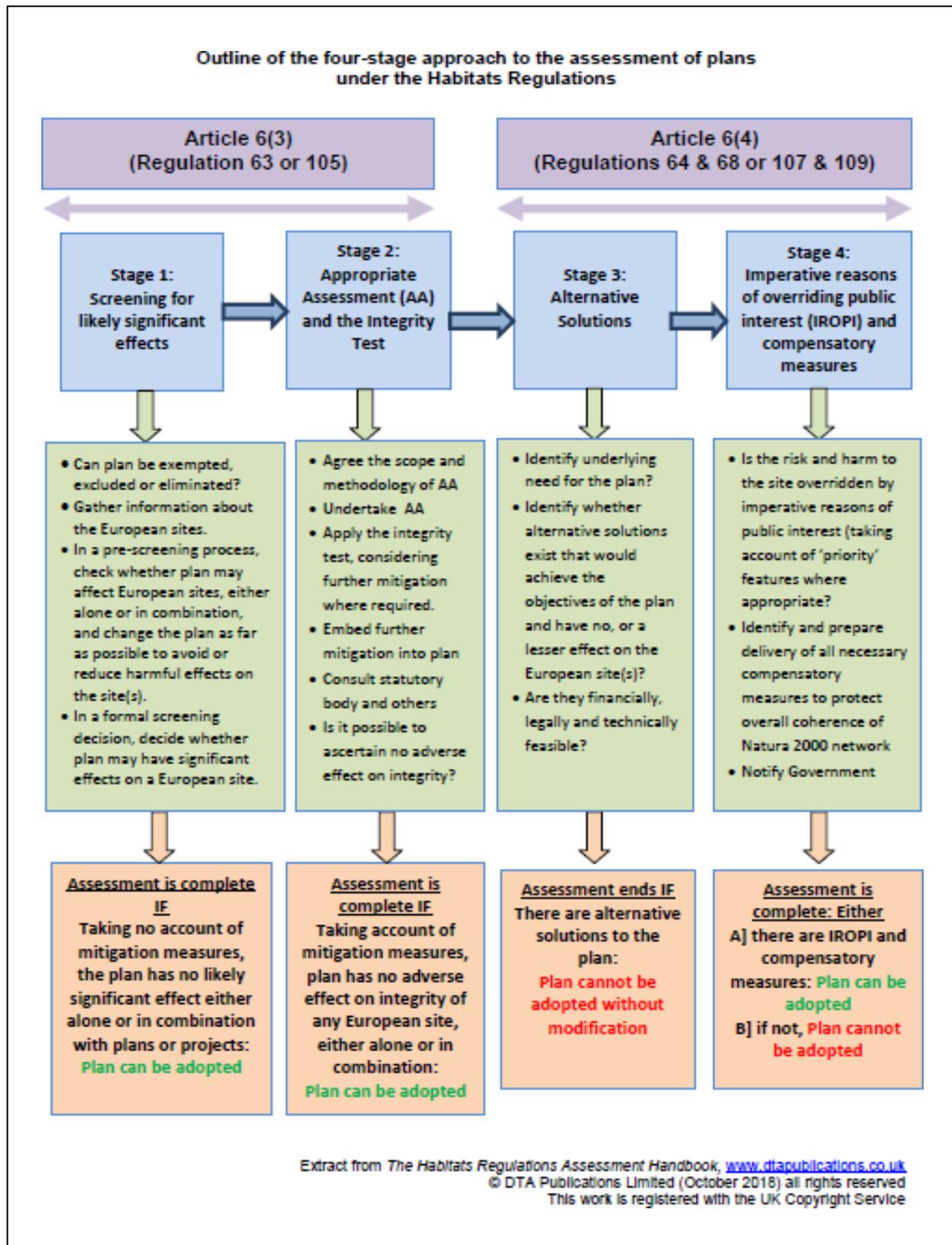
## 4.4 Method and Approach

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The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, state that submitted Plans need to be accompanied by a statement explaining how the proposed Plan meets the 'basic conditions' set out in Schedule 4B of the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act. These basic conditions include a requirement to demonstrate how the Plan is compatible with EU obligations, which includes the need to undertake a HRA screening report; this is necessary to ensure the making of the neighbourhood plan is not likely to have a significant effect on a Habitats (European) site or a Habitats (European) offshore marine site, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.

This document relates only to Stage 1 of the HRA process as set out in Figure 1 below.

Figure 2: Outline of the Four Stage Approach to the Assessment of Plans under the Habitats Regulations (taken from the DTA handbook).





### 4.4.1 Stage 1: HRA Screening

The screening stage identifies if any significant effects are likely because any policies or projects will have an impact on a Habitats Site. Table 4 identifies the different categories assigned to each policy in the plan: Category A identifies those policies or projects that are considered to have No Negative Effect. Category B identifies those policies or projects that will have No Likely Significant Effect. Category C identifies those policies or projects that might have Likely Significant Effect upon a Habitats Site either alone or in combination with other plans or projects. Section 4.5 considers each policy or projects and the results of the screening exercise recorded.

Table 4: Screening categorisation

<b>Category A : No negative effect</b>
Policies or projects that will not be likely to have any negative effect on a Habitats site.
<b>Category B : No Likely Significant Effect</b>
Policies or projects that could have an effect but would not be likely to have a <i>significant</i> negative effect on a Habitats site alone or in combination. This conclusion could only be reached if the effects, even in combination and taking the precautionary principle into account, are considered trivial.
<b>Category C Likely Significant Effect</b>
Policies or projects which are predicted to have a likely significant effect on a Habitats Site either alone or in combination with other plans and projects.

### 4.4.2 Potential impacts of Gamlingay Neighbourhood Plan on Habitats Sites

There is a wide range of impacts and these can be summarised as -

- Land take by developments;
- Impact on protected species found within but which travel outside the protected sites may be relevant where development could result in effects on qualifying interest species within the Habitats site, for example through the loss of feeding grounds for an identified species.
- Increased disturbance, for example from recreational use resulting from new housing development and / or improved access due to transport infrastructure projects;
- Changes in water availability, or water quality as a result of development and increased demands for water treatment, and changes in groundwater regimes due to increased impermeable areas;
- Changes in atmospheric pollution levels due to increased traffic, waste management facilities etc. Pollution discharges from developments such as industrial Developments, quarries and waste management facilities.

In line with the SA Scoping Report for South Cambridgeshire's Local Plan, each policy will be assessed against the criteria in the table below

Table 5: Assessment of potential impacts

Nature of potential impact	How the Gamlingay Neighbourhood Development Plan (alone or in combination with other plans and projects) could affect a Habitats site?	Why these effects are not considered significant?
Land take by development	Gamlingay parish is outside the boundaries of the Habitats Sites within scope of this HRA.	N/A
Impact on protected species outside the protected sites	<p>Development in Gamlingay parish could impact on habitats for Barbastelle bats, a qualifying feature of Eversden and Wimpole Woods SAC, as the Plan lies within the 10km Impact Risk Zone and this species requires minimal disturbance within 2 km of their roost. They can forage up to 20km from their roosts but more typically venture around 6-8km.</p> <p>Development in Gamlingay parish could potentially impact on foraging habitat for Barbastelle bats.</p> <p>Gamlingay lies outside the 10km Impact Risk Zone for Portholme SAC, a wetland site of international importance. It is the largest surviving traditionally managed lowland hay meadow in the UK, with an area of 104 ha of alluvial flood meadow (7% of the total UK resource). There has been a long history of favourable management and very little of the site has suffered from agricultural improvement, and so it demonstrates good conservation of structure and function. It supports a small population of fritillary <i>Fritillaria meleagris</i>.</p>	<p>The residential site allocation is outside the main area of importance for Barbastelle bats is shown on Map 1 in the Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Document adopted by South Cambridgeshire District Council in July 2009. This area reflects the landscape and habitat of known value to bats, and also where survey effort has been deployed up to 2009. The Plan is therefore not likely to result in significant effects on this Habitats Site and the allocated site already has planning consent.</p> <p>The Supplementary Advice issued by Natural England to assist with HRA screening of impacts lists the main issue with management is caused in years when the site has experienced severe and prolonged flooding during the winter and the nutrient enrichment associated with these prolonged flood events. The Site Improvement Plan (SIP) lists inappropriate water levels and water pollution as threats to the SAC interest features.</p> <p>Given the distance from the SAC, It is therefore considered unlikely for Gamlingay NP to result in any impacts on Portholme SAC.</p>
Recreational pressure and disturbance	There is public access to Eversden and Wimpole Woods SAC and Portholme SAC as it is a registered Common.	<p>Gamlingay parish is 6km from Eversden and Wimpole Woods SAC so beyond the distance that Natural England consider, in the absence of evidence that visitors are likely to travel to these sites for recreation.</p> <p>Gamlingay is outside the distance likely for people to travel for recreation to Portholme SAC.</p> <p>Both sites are carefully managed by the landowners to avoid impacts from recreational pressure and disturbance</p>

Nature of potential impact	How the Gamlingay Neighbourhood Development Plan (alone or in combination with other plans and projects) could affect a Habitats site?	Why these effects are not considered significant?
Water quantity and quality	Although water quality is a major issue of concern for Portholme SAC, Gamlingay lies outside the Impact Risk Zone so it is considered that there is no pathway for development to result in water quality impacts.	N/A.
Changes in pollution levels	As Gamlingay is outside the IRZs of the wetland SSSI within scope of this HRA, it is considered that there is no pathway for development to result in pollution impacts.	N/A

## 4.5 Results from HRA Screening of Draft Neighbourhood Plan Policies

Each of the policies in the Gamlingay draft Neighbourhood Plan was screened to identify whether they would have any impact on a Habitats Site.

Table 4: Assessment of potential impacts

Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites?	Recommendations
GAM1 - Housing	<p>In order to plan positively for housing growth in the Parish housing need will be reviewed every 5 years, in conjunction with the review of the Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>Preference will be given to smaller developments of 10-30 dwellings or less. However, all housing proposals must meet the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Be located within the development framework. Hamlets in the Parish of Gamlingay are not suitable locations for exception sites.</li> <li>- Provide a mix of homes, in particular 1-2-bedroom dwellings and bungalows.</li> <li>- Include properties designed as lifetime/adaptable homes.</li> </ul>	No, Category A	No specific recommendations

Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites?	Recommendations
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Be consistent with Gamlingay's strong and established character detailed in the Gamlingay Village Design Guide (2019).</li> <li>- Be in proximity to community services, accessible by footpath or cycleway within a 1,000m radius of the village centre.</li> </ul>		
GAM2 - Housing site allocation, West Road S/2367/16/OL, S/3868/18/RM	The development of a total of 29 dwellings off West Road is allocated in this plan to meet the housing needs of Gamlingay residents identified in the housing needs survey for the period 2019-24.	No, Category A	No specific recommendations
GAM3 - Protection of characteristic settlement pattern	Gamlingay village and its surrounding hamlets - Mill Hill, Little Heath, Great Heath and the Cinques form a settlement pattern unique to South Cambridgeshire. Development which erodes the undeveloped gaps between the village and hamlets (in particular the sensitive village edge identified in the Village Design Guide) will not be permitted.	No, Category A	No specific recommendations
GAM4 - Protection and enhancement of local character	<p>Development (including housing) will be supported where it respects the local character and historic and natural assets of the surrounding area, and takes every opportunity, through design and materials, to promote sustainability and reinforce local characteristics identified in the Gamlingay Village Design Guide (2019) and South Cambridgeshire District Design Guide.</p> <p>In particular, development proposals are expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Retain traditional barns within village core and outlying hamlets</li> <li>- Respect local landscape quality ensuring views and vistas are maintained wherever possible (see Appendix A).</li> <li>- To incorporate, where practicable and viable, features that improve environmental performance and reduce carbon emissions. These can include both energy efficiency and water efficiency measures, and green energy generation.</li> </ul>	No, Category A	No specific recommendations
GAM5 - Impact of local	Development that supports local employment opportunities will be supported as long as it can	No, Category A	No specific recommendations



Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites?	Recommendations
employment	<p>be demonstrated that there will be no adverse impact on the amenity or property of residents nearby, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- unsocial hours of operation,</li> <li>- noise impacts that are not fully mitigate</li> <li>- congestion of local roads or damage to buildings as a result of the number, size or weight of vehicles requiring site access.</li> </ul>		
GAM6 - New employment premises	<p>The design of new business premises and any associated housing must reflect the local character of Gamlingay (defined by the Village Design Guide and District Design Guide), be at a scale appropriate for a rural setting and demonstrate high standards of environmental sustainability.</p> <p>In particular proposals should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- include suitable landscaping treatments (e.g. in consideration of the Bedfordshire Greensand Ridge national character area and village edges).</li> <li>- incorporate renewable energy generation (e.g. geothermal, solar and wind power, water recycling).</li> <li>- include sufficient cycle parking and have access to proposed new shared use pedestrian and cycle routes (see policy GAM12).</li> <li>- contribute to the provision of new pedestrian and cycle infrastructure to and within the village in line with Gamlingay’s Cycle and Footpath Improvement Plan (see also GAM12).</li> </ul>	No, Category A	No specific recommendations
GAM7 - Employment site allocation	<p>In order to protect and promote employment opportunities in the Parish, new employment locations have been allocated outside the village framework and existing sites are approved for the following uses:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Applications will be approved for employment use on a new Rural Business Development Area at Mill Hill (B1c, B2, B8).</li> <li>- Development will be permitted for employment use on a new Rural</li> </ul>	No, Category A	No specific recommendations



Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites?	Recommendations
	<p>Business Development Area at Drove Road (B1, B2) and associated residential dwellings where a viable business case exists (e.g. for security or unsocial working hours).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Applications for improvement, enhancement and development of Station Road Industrial Site will be approved in order to retain local employment (B1c, B2 and B8), and applications will be approved for employment use (B1).</li> <li>- Green End Industrial Site will be safeguarded for employment use (B1, B2, B8) with applications being approved for improvement, enhancement and development within its boundaries.</li> </ul>		
GAM8 - Protection of community facilities	<p>New residential and business developments must address the impact that they are likely to have on community facilities. Proposals are expected to demonstrate how any impacts will be mitigated.</p> <p>Account should also be taken of the cumulative impacts of the new development with other schemes that have planning permission but have not been completed.</p> <p>The loss of shops, related commercial services or health, social, recreational and cultural facilities will be resisted unless it can be demonstrated that reasonable efforts have been made to secure their continued use for these purposes.</p>	No, Category A	No specific recommendations
GAM9 - Provision of new community facilities	<p>Residential or business developments exceeding 10 dwellings or 1000m<sup>2</sup> will be expected to contribute to the provision of new community facilities, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- the provision of new formal and informal open spaces on the west side of the village, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o relocating the Bowls Green facility with provision of water and electricity supply, and associated parking.</li> <li>o a new recreation field for formal sports play.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	No, Category A	No specific recommendations

Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites?	Recommendations
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ a new formal play area for children of all ages (in proximity to housing)</li> <li>○ creation of new circular walks.</li> <li>- investment in walking and cycling infrastructure.</li> </ul>		
GAM10 - Designation of the former First School playing fields as a Local Green Space	The former First School Playing fields (a registered community asset) are designated as a new Local Green Space. This will include relocating the Bowls Green facility from the Stocks Lane site, with provision of water, electricity and associated vehicle and cycle parking/pedestrian access.	No, Category A	No specific recommendations
GAM11 - Reuse of the former First School buildings, Green End	Development proposals for the reuse of the former school buildings and new buildings on the brownfield site will be supported for educational and community purposes. There is a particular demand for preschool care in the Parish to meet the needs of a growing population and following the closure of Sunshine Preschool (2017) and Eco Hub Private Nursery (2018).	No, Category A	No specific recommendations
GAM12 - Transport	<p>Development proposals should identify the level of traffic that they are likely to generate and the potential impact of this traffic on the safety of vulnerable road users, such as pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders. Impacts on parking and congestion within the development, village and the parish should also be identified. Innovative proposals to improve parking in the village will be welcomed.</p> <p>Development proposals within the Parish will be supported where they contribute to two (or more) of the following mitigation measures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Incorporating sufficient parking provision within the development envelope, avoiding the use of level surfaces which may compromise the comfort and safety of very young, older and less able pedestrians</li> <li>- Providing new footpaths where there is poor, or no existing provision within the village centre and supporting public transport where possible.</li> <li>- Significantly contribute to and/or provide</li> </ul>	No, Category A	No specific recommendations

Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites?	Recommendations
	<p>opportunities to walk and cycle including between Gamlingay village, Mill Hill, Little Heath, Great Heath, the Cinques and Drove Road, in line with Gamlingay's Cycle and Footpath Improvement Plan (see GAM6).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Significantly contribute to and/or provide new opportunities to walk and cycle between Gamlingay village centre and neighbouring parishes (consistent with Gamlingay's Cycle and Footpath Improvement Plan: Strategic Links)</li> <li>- Protect and improve existing rights of way network for the purpose of walking and horse riding.</li> </ul>		
GAM13 - Communications	Contributions to the provision of new/additional high-speed broadband infrastructure to serve the parish and improvements to mobile reception will be supported.	No, Category A	No specific recommendations
GAM14 - Landscape and natural environment	<p>New development should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Seek to protect and, where possible, enhance wildlife value on the application site, surrounding sites and wildlife corridors identified by the Village Design Guide (2019)</li> <li>- Respect local landscape character as defined by the views and vistas in the Village Design Guide (see Appendix A) and Bedfordshire Greensand Ridge national character area heathland and acidic grassland landscapes (see GAM4).</li> <li>- Protect green infrastructure and enhance Village Amenity Areas by supporting the creation of a network of formal and informal green spaces for sport and outdoor recreation (see policy GAM9)</li> </ul>	No, Category A	No specific recommendations
GAM15 - Gamlingay wood	A woodland cordon of 200m from the edge of Gamlingay Wood Site of Special Scientific Interest has been introduced (see map in Appendix D). Development within this cordon will not normally be supported. Only in exceptional circumstances, where there is no suitable alternative, will small scale development be considered within the cordon - if the development proposal can demonstrate that	No, Category A	No specific recommendations

Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites?	Recommendations
	there will be no adverse impacts on Gamlingay Wood and a net gain for biodiversity will be delivered.		

### 4.5.1 Recommendations

There are no specific recommendations to deliver for the policies in this draft Neighbourhood Plan as they have all been assigned to Category A. There is therefore no need to amend the policy text as they are not predicted to have a Likely Significant Effect on any Habitats site.

The in-combination effects from other plans and projects are considered in the following Section.

## 4.6 Other Plans and Projects: In-combination Effects

There are two relevant Plan level HRAs that have been carried out by South Cambs DC or other organisations and none have been found to have a likely significant effects on the Habitats sites within scope of this assessment.

The Water Cycle Strategy (WCS) for Major Growth Sites in and Around Cambridge is not in itself a relevant plan or project under the Habitats Regulations, but was prepared to support the delivery of the existing development strategy. Whilst it does not provide as assessment of new proposals for the Local Plan, its findings are relevant to support the assessment of the new plan. It focused on issues related to the water supply, surface drainage and wastewater sewerage associated with potential development sites, and also concluded no significant effects, and that protected sites could be screened out of further assessment.

In the context of this HRA, the relevant other plans to be considered are listed below in combination with Gamlingay Neighbourhood Plan HRA.

Table 6: Other plans or projects considered for in combination effects

Statutory Body	Title of HRA or Project	Findings of HRA or Project	Potential for in combination effects
South Cambridgeshire District Council	Habitat Regulations Assessment: Chapter 20 of South Cambs Local Plan SA Scoping Report (June 2012) and including the Draft Final Sustainability Report (2014) and Sustainability Appraisal Addendum (2015)	“The Local Plan for the district was subject to an HRA screening and found to have no likely significant impact on a Natura site or a Ramsar site.”	It is considered that in combination likely significant effects are not predicted.



Statutory Body	Title of HRA or Project	Findings of HRA or Project	Potential for in combination effects
Cambridge Southern Fringe Area Action Plan	Cambridge Southern Fringe Area Action Plan HRA (May2007)	"This AAP was subject to an HRA and found not to impact on a Natura site or a Ramsar site."	It is considered that in combination likely significant effects are not predicted.

## References

- Gamlingay civil parish Neighbourhood Development Plan 2017-2031 Pre-submission Draft Plan v4.1, Gamlingay Parish Council (February 2018)
- South Cambs District Council South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (September 2018)
- South Cambs District Council Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Document (adopted July 2009)
- South Cambs District Council Cambridge Southern Fringe Area Action Plan HRA (May 2007)
- Natural England Conservation objectives for European Sites: East of England Website: <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/category/6581547796791296#content>
- Tydlesley, D., and Chapman, C., (2013) The Habitats Regulations Assessment Handbook, (September 2019) edition UK: DTA Publications Limited



## 5. Conclusions

### 5.1 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

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The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared for town and country planning purposes and sets a framework for future development consent. The policies of the Neighbourhood Plan can be considered to determine the use of small areas at local level commensurate with their status in determining local planning applications.

The Plan allocates land for development purposes; for 29 dwellings through a single housing allocation with planning permission, and also two Rural Business Development Areas outside the development framework. Both of these Rural Business Development Areas are large in the context of the existing settlement, however do relate well to the existing built up areas by Mill Hill and Drove Road.

These sites do not have planning permission for the allocated uses and are not included within the District Council's adopted Local Plan as allocations. There is no identifiable planning history on either area relevant to the allocations in regard to use or extent. The degree to which the Plan sets a framework for projects through allocating resources is therefore considered relatively high. Assessment of these sites for their intended uses has not been undertaken at this point in time, neither has any exploration of alternative sites.

The Plan area is within the Impact Risk Zones (IRZs) of numerous SSSIs within the Plan area or otherwise in close proximity. The implications of this regarding the Drove Road Rural Business Development Area proposed in the Plan is that it would require consultation with Natural England for the following types of development, should they be forthcoming:

- Any residential development of 50 or more houses.
- Any development that could cause air pollution (including industrial/commercial processes).
- Large infrastructure such as warehousing / industry where net additional gross internal floorspace is > 1,000m<sup>2</sup> or any development needing its own water supply.

Issues surrounding effects on biodiversity cannot therefore be ruled out in the absence of any robust evidence at the Plan level or any policy surrounding the possible effects on biodiversity from development at the Rural Business Development Areas within the draft Neighbourhood Plan at the time of writing.

The Drove Road Rural Business Development Area as allocated also includes land which includes the Grade II Listed '1 and 3, The Cinques', which may be affected by any B1 or B2 employment development or associated residential dwellings. The effects of the Drove Road Rural Business Development Area allocation on the Listed Building '1 and 3, The Cinques' are unknown as there is no clear identification of development type or form at this stage.

Policy GAM4 – Protection and enhancement of local character includes that, *'development (including housing) will be supported where it respects the local character and historic and natural assets of the surrounding area, and takes every opportunity, through design and materials, to promote sustainability and reinforce local characteristics identified in the Gamlingay Village Design Guide (2019) and South Cambridgeshire District Design Guide.'* However, irrespective of the robustness of Policy GAM4, negative effects on cultural heritage cannot be ruled out at this stage in the absence of any evidence to suggest that development at Drove Road would be acceptable.

The Gamlingay Neighbourhood Plan can therefore be **screened in** for its requirement of Strategic Environmental Assessment in line with the requirements of Directive 2001/42/EC.



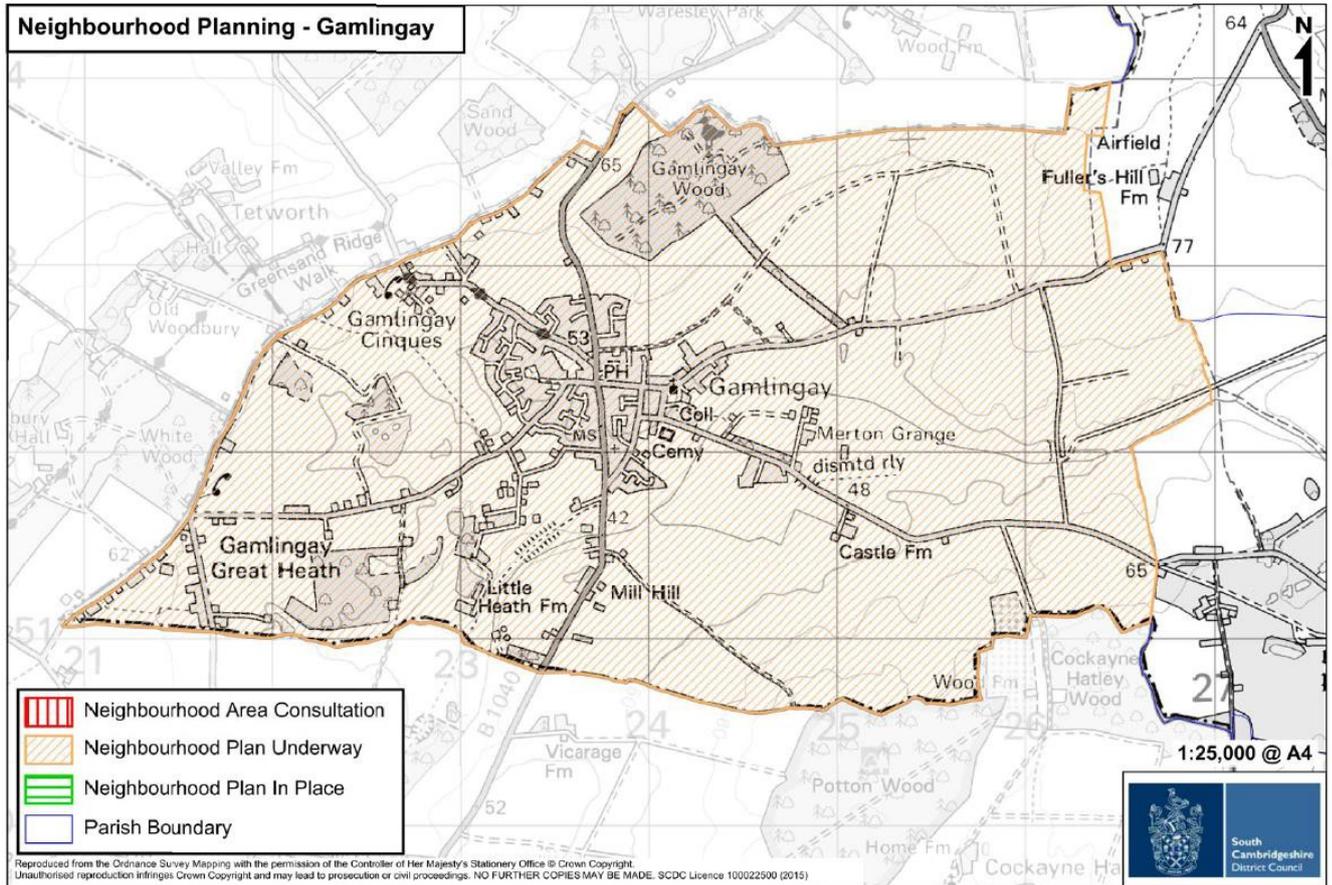
## 5.2 Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)

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Subject to Natural England's review, this HRA screening report indicates that the Gamlingay draft Neighbourhood Plan is not predicted to have likely significant effects on any Habitats site, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects. The requirement for the Plan to undertake further assessment under the Habitats Regulations 2017 is therefore **screened out**.

# Appendix 1

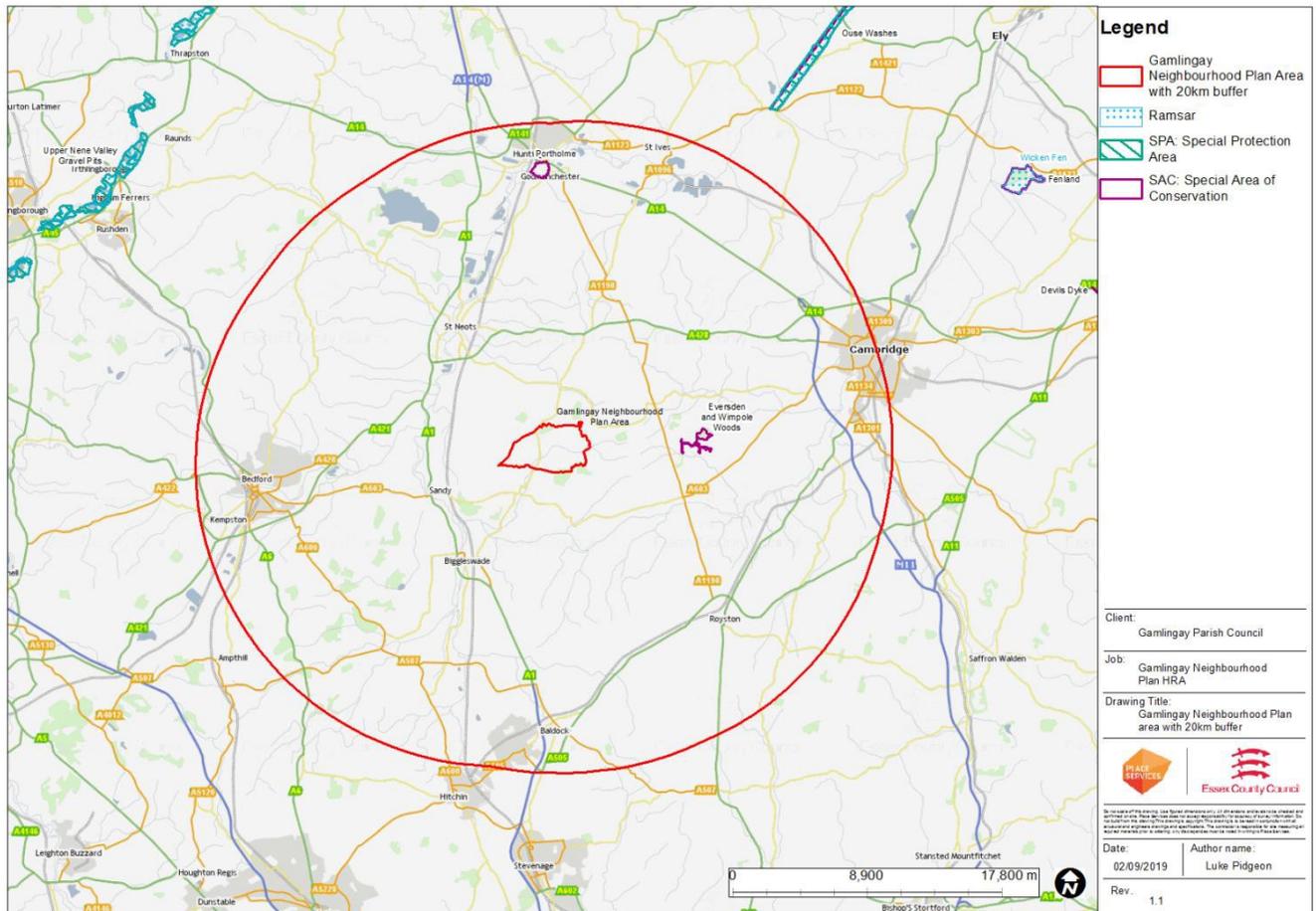
## The Gamlingay Neighbourhood Plan area



Source: South Cambridgeshire District Council, 2015

# Appendix 2

## Gamlingay NP Area and Locations of the Habitats sites within 20 km



Source: Place Services, 2019





## Place Services

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September 2019



Essex County Council

# Appendix 2: Consultation Responses from the Statutory Environmental Bodies

## Historic England

22 September 2019

Thank you for inviting Historic England to comment on the above 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 Gamlingay 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 proposes to allocate a site for 29 dwellings, but that this site has been granted outline planning permission already. We also note the Drove Road Rural Business Development Area includes Nos. 1-3 'The Cinques' and that there is no detail available, as yet, regarding the nature of any effects of the development on these heritage assets. We also note and concur with the Screening Report's comments that:

"Policy GAM4 – Protection and enhancement of local character includes that, 'development (including housing) will be supported where it respects the local character and historic and natural assets of the surrounding area, and takes every opportunity, through design and materials, to promote sustainability and reinforce local characteristics identified in the Gamlingay Village Design Guide (2019) and South Cambridgeshire District Design Guide.' However, irrespective of the robustness of Policy GAM4, negative effects on cultural heritage cannot be ruled out at this stage in the absence of any evidence to suggest that development at Drove Road would be acceptable."

Given the potential significant effects (both positive and negative) upon the historic environment, Historic England hence concurs with the Screening Report's view that a Strategic Environmental Assessment will be 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 dated 9th September 2019. 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.

Yours sincerely, Edward James  
Historic Places Advisor, East of England

## Natural England

23 September 2019

Thank you for your screening request dated 9<sup>th</sup> September 2019.

Natural England is satisfied with the conclusions of the SEA and HRA Screening Report that the Gamlingay draft Neighbourhood Plan is not predicted to have likely significant effects on any European sites, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects but that it should be screened in for its requirement of Strategic Environmental Assessment in line with the requirements of Directive 2001/42/EC.

The requirement for SEA is in on the basis of currently unknown effects of development through Plan allocations, including impacts to biodiversity including nearby designated sites. Whilst Natural England fully supports the inclusion of policies to protect the natural environment including GAM14 - Landscape and natural environment and GAM15 – Gamlingay Wood, we advise that these policies should require development to demonstrate no adverse impact to designated sites, including Eversden and Wimpole Woods SAC, SSSI barbastelle bat supporting habitat, and to deliver biodiversity net gain where possible, in accordance with the NPPF and the Defra 25 Year Environment Plan.

Yours sincerely

Jacqui Salt Consultations Team

## Environment Agency

11 September 2019

Thank you for your consultation. Environment Agency position.

Due to resource pressures we are no longer able to provide Local Planning Authorities with bespoke advice on screening opinions. If there is a specific issue that you require our expert advice on before issuing the screening opinion then please contact us with details and we will endeavour to assist you. We remain a statutory consultee for scoping opinions so please continue to submit these for our review and comments.

Please find attached is a copy of our Planning Advice Guidance (PAG) document which contains basic information and links to the type of environmental issues we expect to be considered for development proposals.

Yours faithfully

Mr. T.G. Waddams  
Planning Liaison