

Hook Neighbourhood Plan

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

Draft Screening Statement - Determination under Regulation 9 of the SEA Regulations 2004

Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)

Draft Screening Statement – Determination under Regulation 102 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010

5 July 2017

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Introduction

- 1.1. This draft Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) screening determination has been undertaken by Base Planning and Design Ltd on behalf of Hart District Council in their duty to determine whether the Hook Neighbourhood Plan requires SEA or HRA. This screening assessment is based on an 'Objectives and Policies Draft 0.5' dated December 2016 ('Draft Policies').
- 1.2. Regulation 9 (1) of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 requires authorities to determine whether or not a Strategic Environmental Assessment is required for certain plans, policies or programmes. This statement also sets out the District Council's determination as to whether Appropriate Assessment is required under Regulation 102 of the Conservation of Habitats & Species Regulations 2010.
- 1.3. Under the requirements of the European Union Directive 2001/42/EC (Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive) and Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations (2004), specific types of plans that set the framework for the future development consent of projects or which require Appropriate Assessment must be subject to an environmental assessment.
- 1.4. There are exceptions to this requirement for plans that determine the use of a small area at a local level and for minor modifications if it has been determined that the plan is unlikely to have significant environmental effects.
- 1.5. In accordance with the provisions of the SEA Directive and the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations (2004) (Regulation 9 (1)), the District Council must determine if a plan requires an environmental assessment. In accordance with Article 6 of the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) and Regulation 102 of the Conservation of Habitats & Species Regulations 2010 (as amended), the District Council is the competent authority for determining if a plan requires Appropriate Assessment.

Background to the Hook Neighbourhood Plan

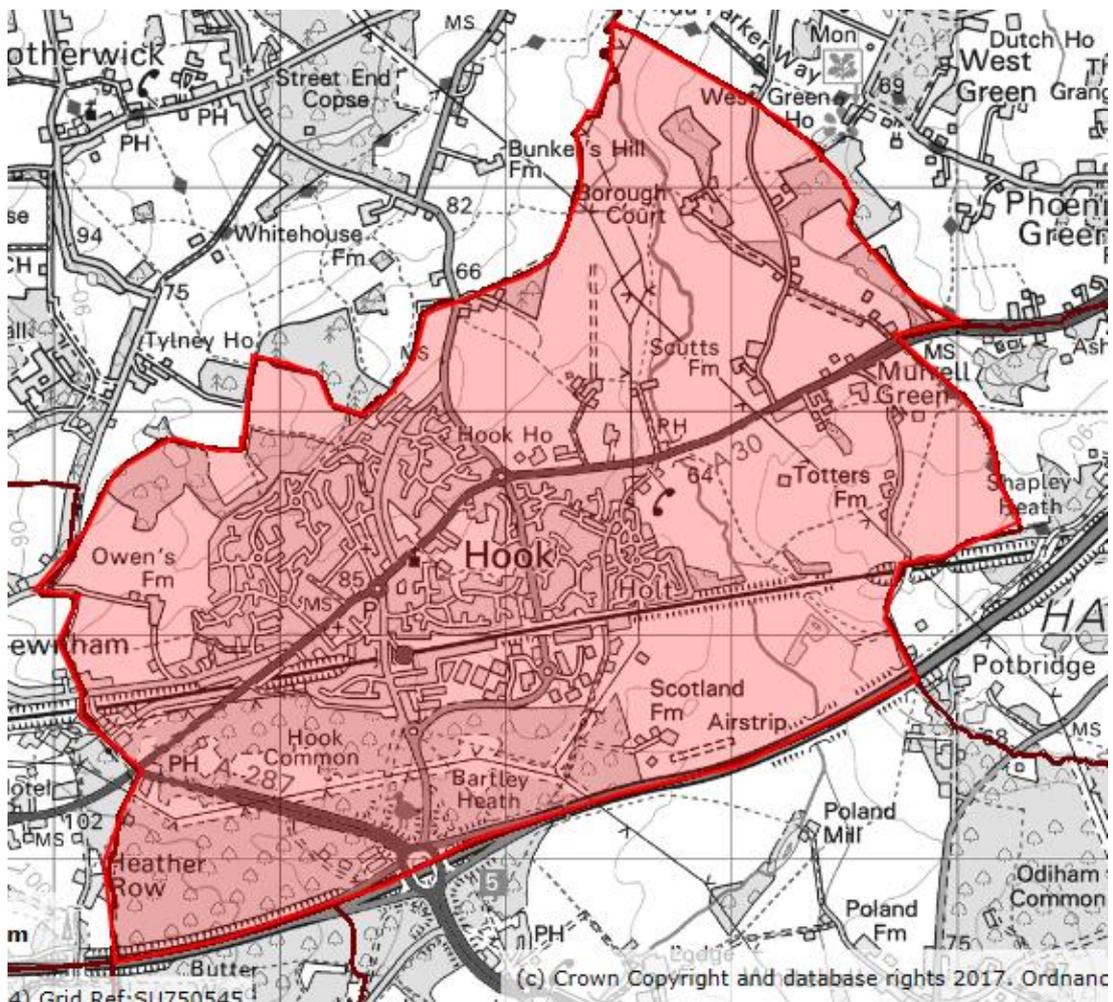
- 1.6. The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) make provision for Parish Councils or Neighbourhood Forums to prepare Neighbourhood Plans. Whilst not forming part of a local authority's Local Plan, Neighbourhood Plans do form part of the Development Plan for an area as set out in Section 38 of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended). As such, Neighbourhood Plans are a material consideration in taking planning decisions and can contain policies on a range of issues including the allocation of sites/land for development.
- 1.7. The proposed Hook Neighbourhood Plan covers all of the area within the jurisdiction of Hook Parish Council¹ and lies east of Basingstoke and west of Fleet in Hampshire. The plan area contains the settlement of Hook which is characterised by a mix of residential and commercial development including retail uses along Station Road and Bartley Wood Business Park to the south of Hook rail station. The settlement area contains Hartletts Park open space as well as Bassett's Mead Country Park on the eastern side of Hook. The settlement area also includes numerous areas of incidental amenity. The area outside of the settlement is predominantly rural in character

¹ Hook Parish Council – Covering Letter and Neighbourhood Plan Area Map and Survey 2012/13. Available at: <https://www.hart.gov.uk/hook>

characterised by open field patterns to the north interspersed with small stands of woodland and wooded areas to the south.

- 1.8. The M3 motorway lies just to the south of the settlement of Hook and forms the southern boundary of the Neighbourhood Plan area. The settlement of Hook also contains Hook rail station which is served by trains on the South West Main Line. A plan of the designated area is shown in Plan 1-1.

Plan 1-1: Map of the Designated Area for the Hook Neighbourhood Plan



- 1.9. There are several areas of woodland/copses which are designated as either ancient/semi ancient woodland or replanted ancient woodland. This includes, Gaines Wood and College, Shirlens, Borough Court and Dogtails Copse which are also covered by Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) status. The wooded area to the south of Hook forms part of the Hook Common & Bartley Heath Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) which is comprised of 3 units with the whole of units 1 & 2 and part of unit 3 within the Neighbourhood Plan area. All three units are in an unfavourable recovering status with no identified condition threat, which meets the PSA target of 95% to be within favourable or unfavourable recovering status.
- 1.10. The Hart Biodiversity Action Plan identifies priority habitats and species, a number of which fall within the Hook Neighbourhood Plan area including Woodlands (ancient semi-natural & pasture woodland/wooded common), Heathland, Unimproved

grassland and Wetlands (Freshwater, Fens & Flushes). Associated species include Stag Beetle, Silver Washed Fritillary, Skylark, Dartford Warbler, Woodlark and Nightjar. Species found in urban areas include bats, hedgehogs, House Sparrows and common amphibians. The Plan area also covers Bassett's Mead Meadow, Carleton's Gorse and Land adjacent to Bartley Heath which have been identified as sites which supports one or more notable species.

- 1.11. The Plan area is within the Lodden Catchment Biodiversity Opportunity Area (BOA) with targets and opportunities for wet woodlands, meadows, pastures, deciduous woodland, acid grassland and heaths.
- 1.12. From a heritage perspective, the Plan area contains several statutorily and locally listed buildings and structures, including the Grade II* Borough Court. Part of the registered park and garden at West Green Park also lies within the Plan area. There are no conservation areas in the Neighbourhood Plan area, but there is an area of significant archaeological features around the White Hart Hotel.
- 1.13. The Hook Neighbourhood Plan 'Draft Policies' sets out a vision statement for Hook as well as number of objectives. The vision is for Hook to continue to function as a village with a strong sense of community, social engagement and surrounded by unspoilt and easily accessible countryside...' Objectives for the Neighbourhood Plan are set out under a series of themes including:
 - Promote sense of community;
 - Environment;
 - Transportation & Parking;
 - Planning/Site Selection;
 - Housing Design;
 - Education, Wellbeing, Sport & Leisure; and
 - Business & Economy
- 1.14 The 'Draft Policies' document also contains a number of draft policies set out under the themes as listed above.
- 1.15 At the time of writing this assessment, Hart District Council has published a Draft Hart Local Plan 2011-2032. This document sets out a number of draft policies covering a variety of topic areas including the overall housing target for the district and where development will be located. Although in draft form at the Regulation 18² stage of consultation, the draft Local Plan gives an indication of the direction of travel for future allocations and spatial strategy. In terms of Hook, the Hart Draft Local Plan sets out a target of 87 net residential units for the neighbourhood area but does not identify specific sites, leaving these decisions to the Neighbourhood Plan. As such, it will be for the Neighbourhood Plan to allocate sites to meet the 87 dwelling target.

² Regulation 18 of the Town & Country Planning (Local Planning)(England) Regulations 2012 (as amended)

Sustainability Appraisal

- 1.16 Under separate legislation (the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and associated Regulations), a local authority is required to carry out a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) for their Local Plan documents. This considers the social and economic impacts of a plan as well as the environmental impacts. Neighbourhood Plans are not however covered by this requirement and as such a Sustainability Appraisal is not required.

Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) – Screening

- 1.17 The need to undertake an Appropriate Assessment as part of an HRA is set out within the EC Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC and transposed into British Law by Regulation 102 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended). The Appropriate Assessment stage of HRA is only required should the preliminary screening assessment not be able to rule out likely significant effects.
- 1.18 The European Habitats Directive requires that any plan or project likely to have a significant effect on a European site must be subject to an Appropriate Assessment. Schedule 2 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 sets out a general presumption that Neighbourhood Plans are not likely to have a significant effect on European sites. Schedule 2 also amends the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended) so as to apply its provisions to neighbourhood development orders and neighbourhood plans. It also inserts new regulation 78A which provides that a neighbourhood development order may not grant planning permission for development which is likely to have a significant effect on a European site.
- 1.19 Whilst Schedule 2 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 set out a general presumption that an HRA is unlikely to be required, it is still necessary to carry out a screening assessment.
- 1.20 The Habitats Directive states that any plan or project not connected to or necessary for a site's management, but likely to have significant effects thereon shall be subject to appropriate assessment. There are four distinct stages in HRA namely: -

Step 1: Screening – Identification of likely impacts on a European site either alone or in combination with other plans/projects and consideration of whether these are significant. This can include the consideration of avoidance measures.

Step 2: Appropriate Assessment – consideration of the impact on the integrity of the European Site whether alone or in combination with other plans or projects with respect to the sites structure, function and conservation objectives. Where there are significant effects, step 2 should consider potential mitigation measures.

Step 3: Assessment of Alternative Solutions – Assessing alternative ways of achieving the objectives of the plan/project which avoid impacts; and

Step 4: Assessment of Compensatory Measures – Identification of compensatory measures should impact not be avoided and no alternative solutions exist and an assessment of imperative reasons of overriding public interest (IROPI) deems that a project should proceed.

- 1.21 Should step 1 reveal that significant effects are likely or effect cannot be discounted because of uncertainty, then it is necessary to move onto step 2: Appropriate Assessment. If step 2 cannot rule out significant effect even with mitigation, then the process moves onto step 3 and finally step 4 if no alternative solutions arise.

Step 1 - Screening

- 1.22 There are four stages to consider in a screening exercise: -

Stage 1: Determining whether the plan/project is directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site;

Stage 2: Describing the plan/project and description of other plan/projects that have the potential for in-combination impacts;

Stage 3: Identifying potential effects on the European site(s); and

Stage 4: Assessing the significance of any effects

Stage 1

- 1.23 It can be determined that the Hook Neighbourhood Plan is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of a European site.

Stage 2

- 1.24 Information about the Neighbourhood Plan can be found in paragraphs 1.6 to 1.17 of this screening assessment. Tables 1-1 and 1-2 lists those other plans and projects, which may have in-combination impacts. In relation to Table 1-2, it should be noted that the Hart Draft Local Plan proposes a number of strategic allocations including, 1,800 residential units at Murrell Green, 1,500 at Hartland Village and 320 at Sun Park. However, at the time of writing this assessment, these sites are proposals only and have yet to be considered through the Local Plan examination process. As such, these sites have not been included in the list of in-combination projects.

Table 1-1: Other Key Plans/Projects

<p>Plan/ Project</p>	<p>National Planning Policy Framework (2012): High level national planning policy covering topics such as housing, economy, employment, retail as well as biodiversity, flood risk and heritage.</p> <p>South East Plan 2009: Saved Policy NRM6 sets out protection for the Thames Basin Heaths SPA.</p> <p>Hart Local Plan (Replacement) 1996-2006 and First Alterations: Sets policies for the consideration of development with most policies ‘saved’ from 2007 onwards.</p> <p>Other Local Authority Local Plans within 5km or adjoining Thames Basin Heaths SPA: Housing target for areas around SPA set at 132,560 in the revoked South East Plan. Whilst these figures are revoked, they serve as a guide until Local Plans have been fully established post revocation.</p> <p>Large Scale Projects within 7km or adjoining the Thames Basin Heaths SPA: Large scale projects within 7km are listed in Table 1-2, however housing numbers associated with these are subsumed in the consideration of ‘Other Local Authority Local Plans’ above.</p> <p>Thames Basin Heaths Joint Delivery Framework 2009: Sets out the agreed Framework regarding the approach and standards for avoiding significant effects on the Thames Basin Heaths SPA.</p> <p>Environment Agency, Thames River Basin District Management Plan (2015): Sets out actions to improve water quality, with the Neighbourhood Plan area falling within the river Loddon catchment. Future aims include improving River Whitewater structures and habitat to improve the status for fish in the River Whitewater and to encourage sustainable development for the water environment to aid climate change adaptation and mitigation.</p> <p>Environment Agency, Thames Catchment Flood Management Plan (2009): Aim is to promote more sustainable approaches to managing flood risk. Will be delivered through a combination of different approaches.</p> <p>Environment Agency, River Loddon Catchment Abstraction Management Strategy (2012): identifies the upper Loddon as having water available for licencing, but this is overridden by the flow requirements of the Thames, which changes the status to ‘Water not available for licensing’. However, groundwater licences which do not have a direct impact and immediate impact on river flow may be permitted all year.</p> <p>Environment Agency, Water Resources Strategy: Regional Action Plan for Thames Region (2009): Key priorities for Thames region include ensuring sufficient water resources are available, making water available in over-abstracted catchments and reducing demand.</p> <p>Hart Biodiversity Action Plan (2012): Action plan aims to conserve and enhance current resource and identify areas for biodiversity improvement. Includes 5 priority habitat types and associated species.</p>
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Table 1-2: Proposed/Committed Major Schemes within 7km of SPA

Project	Location	No. Dwellings
Princess Royal Barracks	Deepcut, Surrey	1,200
Aldershot Urban Extension	Aldershot, Hants	3,850
Bracknell Town Centre	Bracknell, Berks	1,000
Land at Amen Corner (south)	Binfield, Berks	725
Land North of Whitegrove	Warfield, Berks	2,200
Land at Transport Research Laboratory	Crowthorne, Berks	1,000
Arborfield Garrison	Arborfield, Berks	3,500
South of Wokingham	Wokingham, Berks	2,000
North of Wokingham	Wokingham, Berks	2,000
South of M4	Shinfield/Spencers Wood, Berks	3,500
Queen Elizabeth Barracks	Church Crookham, Hants	1,000
Total		21,975

Stage 3

- 1.25 Information regarding the European site(s) screened and the likely effects that may arise due to implementation of the Neighbourhood Plan can be found in Tables 1-3, 1-4 and 1-5. All other European Sites were screened out of this assessment at an early stage as it was considered that their distance from the Neighbourhood Plan area coupled with the nature and content of the proposed Neighbourhood Plan meant that there is no pathway or mechanism which would give rise to significant effect. This includes screening out the following protected areas, East Hampshire Hangers SAC (14km from Plan area) and Wealden Heaths Phase II SPA (16km from Plan area).

Table 1-3: Details of Thames Basin Heaths SPA and Potential Effects Thereon

European site:	Thames Basin Heaths Special Protection Area (SPA).
Site description:	The Thames Basin Heaths SPA was proposed in October 2000, and full SPA status was approved on 9 March 2005. It covers an area of some 8,274 ha, consisting of 13 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) scattered from Surrey, to Berkshire in the north, through to Hampshire in the west. The habitat consists of both dry and wet heathland, mire, oak, birch acid woodland, gorse scrub and acid grassland with areas of rotational conifer plantation.
Relevant international nature conservation features:	The SPA is of international importance as a habitat for heathland birds: nightjar (<i>Caprimulgus europaeus</i>), woodlark (<i>Lullula arborea</i>) and Dartford warbler (<i>Sylvia undata</i>). It is of European importance because the site qualifies under Article 4.1 of the Birds Directive (79/409/EEC) as it is used by 1% or more of the Great Britain population of a species listed in Annex I.
Environmental conditions which support the site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate management • Management of disturbance during breeding season (March to July) • Minimal air pollution • Absence or control of urbanisation effects, such as fires and introduction of invasive non-native species • Maintenance of appropriate water levels • Maintenance of water quality
Potential effects arising from the Neighbourhood Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indirect effects arising from disturbance due to recreational activity on the SPA and potential for direct urbanising impacts.

Table 1-4: Details of Thursley, Ash, Pirbright & Cobham Common SAC and Potential Effects Thereon

International site:	Thursley, Ash, Pirbright & Cobham Common Special Area of Conservation (SAC).
Site description:	The Thursley, Ash, Pirbright & Chobham Common SAC was proposed in January 1996 and designated in April 2005. It covers an area of some 5,138 ha and comprises 4 SSSI units

	and habitat containing predominantly dry and wet heaths with coniferous woodland, bogs, marshes and inland water bodies.
Relevant international nature conservation features:	<p>The SAC is of international importance for Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i> for which it is considered to be one of the best areas in the United Kingdom; and</p> <p>European dry heaths for which it is considered to be one of the best areas in the United Kingdom; and</p> <p>Depressions on peat substrates of the <i>Rhynchosporion</i> for which it is considered to be one of the best areas in the United Kingdom.</p>
Environmental Conditions which Support the Site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate management; • Managed recreational pressure; • Minimal air pollution; • Absence or control of urbanisation effects such as fires and introduction of invasive non-native species; • Maintenance of appropriate water levels; • Maintenance of water quality.
Potential Effects Arising from the Neighbourhood Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effect on provision of SANG and therefore indirect effect from recreational disturbance on the SPA and SAC.

Stage 4

1.26 The consideration of potential effects are set out in Table 1-5.

Table 1-5: Assessment of Potential Effects

Indirect effect from recreational disturbance and urbanisation.	<p>The likely effects of recreational disturbance have been summarised in the Underhill-Day study for Natural England and RSPB (2005); this provides a review of the urban effects on lowland heaths and their wildlife. The main issues relating to the conservation objectives and the integrity of the SPA/SAC as a whole are: fragmentation, disturbance, fires, cats, dogs (as a result of nest disturbance and enrichment), prevention of management, off-roading, vandalism and trampling.</p> <p>Natural England has advised that recreational pressure, as a result of increased residential development within 5km of the SPA/SAC, is having a significant adverse impact on the Annex I bird species. Woodlark and Nightjar are ground nesting and Dartford Warblers nest close to the ground. They are therefore sensitive to disturbance, particularly from dogs, but also from walkers, and cyclists etc. They</p>
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	<p>are, in addition, vulnerable to other effects of urbanisation, in particular predation by cats.</p> <p>Joint work involving Natural England and the authorities affected by the SPA/SAC have agreed a mechanism to avoid impacts to the SPA/SAC from recreational activities in the form of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) and Strategic Access Management & Monitoring (SAMM) and from the impacts of urbanisation by not allowing any net additional dwellings within 400m of the SPA/SAC.</p> <p>The 'Draft Policies' document dated December 2016 does not yet allocate any specific land or sites for net additional dwellings within 5km of the Thames Basin Heaths SPA or the Thursley, Ash, Pirbright & Cobham Common Special Area of Conservation SAC and no part of the plan area lies within 400m of the SPA/SAC. However the 'Draft Policies' document does include a potential section on site selection but with no details set out at this time. The Hart Draft Local Plan 2011-2032 allocates a housing target of 87 units to the neighbourhood planning area of Hook, but leaves the decision of which sites to allocate to the Hook Neighbourhood Plan. As such, there is potential for the 'Draft Policies' document to allocate sites within 5km of the SPA/SAC.</p> <p>Whilst in the neighbourhood plan document produced so far there are no specific allocations of land or sites, there is likely to be net additional dwellings coming forward over the plan period [in the region of 87 if allocation in the Draft Local Plan is progressed]. Saved Policy NRM6 of the South East Plan sets out the concept for SANG as avoidance measures for net additional dwellings within 5km of the SPA/SAC and large sites within 7km of the SPA/SAC as well as holding a presumption against net additional dwellings within 400m. Hart District Council has also adopted a SPA Interim Avoidance Strategy in 2010 which sets out the requirement for developments proposing net additional dwellings within 5km of the SPA/SAC to avoid impacts through the use of SANG and SAMM. Further, the Hart Draft Local Plan 2011-2032 also proposes draft policy NE1 which would continue the restrictive approach to the SPA/SAC as set out in Policy NRM6 and the Interim Avoidance Strategy.</p> <p>Whilst there is a potential pathway for indirect recreational impacts due to the likelihood of additional dwellings within 5km or large sites within 7km of the SPA/SAC, both saved Policy NRM6 of the South East Plan and Hart's Interim Avoidance Strategy set out the</p>
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	<p>requirement for avoidance measures as well as the presumption against net additional dwellings in the 400m zone, which is likely to be continued through proposed draft policy NE1. As such, should a scheme for net additional dwellings come forward or be allocated within the Neighbourhood Plan area there is already a mechanism in place to avoid impacts.</p> <p>Further, policy NRM6 of the South East Plan forms part of the Development Plan and is unlikely to be revoked until all local authorities affected by the SPA/SAC, including Hart District Council, have their own bespoke Local Plan policies in place. Any planning application proposing net additional dwellings within 5km or the 400m zone will therefore be determined against the development plan which includes Policy NRM6. However, in order that the Hook Neighbourhood Plan remains consistent with Policy NRM6 and the Interim Avoidance Strategy, a policy clearly setting out the approach to additional dwellings within the 5km zone of influence and the need for avoidance in the form of SANG and SAMM should be included for completeness prior to the adoption of draft policy NE1 of the Hart Local Plan 2011-2032. This should ensure that a decision maker is clear on how to react for any proposals for any net additional dwellings within the 5km of the SPA/SAC or large sites within 7km.</p> <p>As such, in-combination with other plans and projects it is considered, at the time of undertaking this assessment, that the Hook Neighbourhood Plan will not give rise to likely significant effects on the Thames Basin Heaths SPA or the Thursley, Ash, Pirbright and Chobham Common SAC either alone or in-combination provided it contains policy(s) which are consistent with the approach in Policy NRM6 of the South East Plan and the Hart Interim Avoidance Strategy.</p>
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- 1.27 It is the conclusion of this HRA that following a screening assessment it can be ascertained, in light of the information available at the time of assessment that the Hook Neighbourhood Plan **will not** give rise to significant effects on the Thames Basin Heaths SPA or Thursley, Ash, Pirbright and Chobham Common SAC either alone or in-combination with other plans and/or projects provided it contains policy(s) consistent with Policy NRM6 of the South East Plan and the Hart Interim Avoidance Strategy. Given the findings of the screening assessment it is considered that a full appropriate assessment is not required. However, in line with advice from Natural England, a further screening assessment should be undertaken once any specific site allocations are identified.

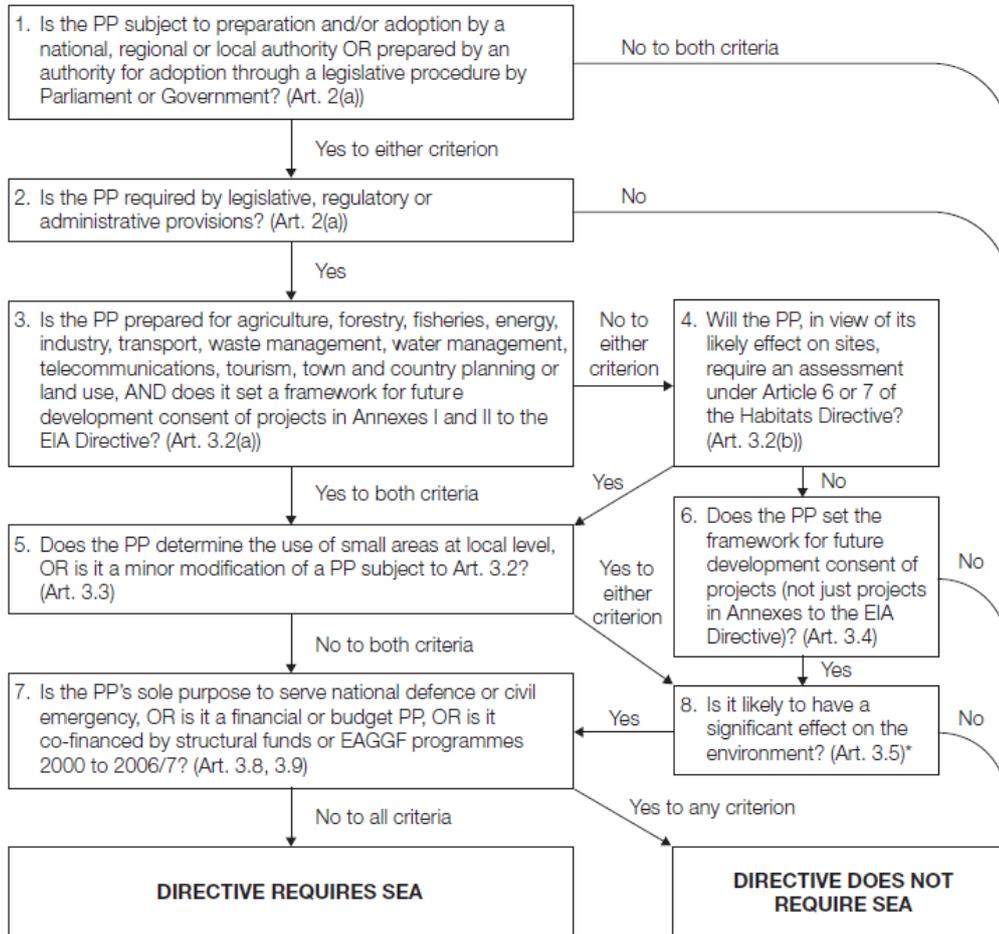
The SEA Screening Process

- 1.28 The process for determining whether or not an SEA is required is called 'screening'. For some types of plan or programme SEA is mandatory and includes the following:
- Plans which are prepared for town and country planning or land use and which set the framework for future development consent of projects listed in the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Directive; or
 - Plans which have been determined to require an assessment under the Habitats Directive (this has already been screened out as set out in paragraphs 1.19 to 1.29 of this screening assessment).
- 1.29 However, the main determining factor when considering whether a plan or programme requires SEA is whether it will have significant environmental effects.
- 1.30 Within 28 days of making its determination, the determining authority must publish a statement, such as this one, setting out its decision. If it is determined that an SEA is not required, the statement must include the reasons for this.
- 1.31 This Screening Report sets out the Council's draft determination under Regulation 9(1) of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 on whether or not SEA is required for the Hook Neighbourhood Plan. The District Council must consult with the three statutory bodies (Environment Agency, Historic England, Natural England) and take their views into account before issuing a final determination. This is based on a two-step approach, the first of which is to assess the plan against the flowchart as set out in government guidance *A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive*³. The flow chart is shown in Figure 1.

³ A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Process (2005) ODPM. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/strategic-environmental-assessment-directive-guidance>

Figure 1:

This diagram is intended as a guide to the criteria for application of the Directive to plans and programmes (PPs). It has no legal status.



*The Directive requires Member States to determine whether plans or programmes in this category are likely to have significant environmental effects. These determinations may be made on a case by case basis and/or by specifying types of plan or programme.

- 1.32 The second step is to consider whether the Hook Neighbourhood Plan will have significant environmental effects when considered against the criteria set out in Annex II of the Directive and Schedule I of the Regulations. The findings of step 1 and step 2 are shown in Tables 1-6 and 1-7.

Table 1-6: SEA Screening Step 1

Stage in Flowchart	Y/N	Reason
1. Is the plan/programme subject to preparation and/or adoption by a national, regional or local authority or prepared by an authority for adoption through a legislative procedure by parliament or Government? (Article 2(a))	Y	The provision to prepare and adopt Neighbourhood Plans is given by the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended). The Neighbourhood Plan will be prepared by Hook Parish Council and 'made' by Hart District Council. The preparation and adoption procedure is set out in the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 and The Neighbourhood Planning (referendums) Regulations 2012. Move to Stage 2
2. Is the plan/programme required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions? (Article 2(a))	N	There is no mandatory requirement to prepare and/or adopt Neighbourhood Plans. However, if the plan is 'made' it will form part of the Development Plan for Hart and therefore the possibility of significant effects should be considered. Move to Stage 3
3. Is the plan/programme 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? (Article 3.2(a))	Y	The Hook Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared for town & country planning and/or land use. The 'Draft Policies' document dated December 2016 does not contain sites or land for allocation at this point in time however it does offer the potential for sites to come forward. Whilst it will be for the neighbourhood plan process to identify sites, the Interim Sustainability Appraisal for the Hart Draft Local Plan 2011-2032 identifies a site known as the Hop Garden & West of Varndell Road, which may give rise to effects on

Stage in Flowchart	Y/N	Reason
		biodiversity (part of site is SINC) and urbanising effects on the gap between Hook and Newnham. As such, the plan has the potential to set the framework for future development consent of projects under Annexes I or II of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Directive. Move to Stage 5
4. Will the plan/programme, in view of its likely effect on sites, require an assessment under Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive? (Article 3.2(b))	N/A	Whilst not applicable, the HRA screening undertaken in paragraphs 1.19 to 1.29 of this assessment has determined that Appropriate Assessment is not required. However to ensure consistency within the Development Plan it has been recommended the Neighbourhood Plan contain a policy(s) to ensure a consistent approach with Policy NRM6 of the South East Plan and the Hart Interim Avoidance Strategy in relation to the Thames Basin Heaths SPA and Thursley, Ash, Pirbright and Chobham Common SAC.
5. Does the plan/programme determine the use of small areas at local level, OR is it a minor modification of a PP subject to Art. 3.2? (Article 3.3)	Y	The 'Draft Policies' document does not set out sites for allocation in the Hook Neighbourhood Plan, but it does suggest the intention to allocate sites and this is supported by the emerging Hart Local Plan which allocates 87 units to the Hook Neighbourhood Plan area. As such the Hook Neighbourhood Plan has the potential to determine the use of small areas at a local level. The plan is not a minor modification of an existing plan. Move to Stage 8
6. Does the plan/programme set the framework for future development consent of projects (not just projects in	N/A	Whilst not applicable, the 'Draft Policies' document for the Hook Neighbourhood Plan does not yet specifically allocate sites, but does

Stage in Flowchart	Y/N	Reason
Annexes to the EIA Directive)? (Article 3.4)		suggest the potential for sites to meet the potential allocation of 87 units as set out in the Hart Draft Local Plan 2011-2032. As such the plan has the potential to set the framework for projects outside of the EIA Directive.
7. Is the plan/programme's sole purpose to serve national defence or civil emergency, OR is it a financial or budget PP, OR is it co-financed by structural funds or EAGGF programmes 2000 to 2006/7? (Article 3.8, 3.9)	N	The Hook Neighbourhood Plan will not have the sole purpose to serve national defence or civil emergency and it will not be a financial or budgetary plan. Neither will it be co-financed by structural or EAGGF Programmes.
8. Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment? (Article 3.5)	Y	Effects on the environment and whether these are significant are considered in Table 1-7. If Significant Effects likely move to Stage 7

Table 1-7: SEA Screening Step 2

Criteria (from Annex II of SEA Directive and Schedule I of the Regulations)		Response
Characteristics of the plan or programme		Significant Effect?
(a) The degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources.	The Hook Neighbourhood Plan will set out policies against which development proposals in the Neighbourhood Plan area will be considered. The 'Draft Policies' document indicates a suite of policies under a number of themes ranging from promoting a sense of community, the environment, design, transport as well as business and the economy. The 'Draft Policies' document also sets out the potential to select sites for development which will be required to meet the potential housing target of 87 arising from the Hart Draft Local Plan 2011-2032. As such the Neighbourhood Plan has the potential to set the framework for projects which could be large enough to trigger an assessment under the EIA Directive.	Y
(b) The degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy.	The Neighbourhood Plan will form part of the Development Plan for Hart District Council and will sit alongside the saved policies from the Local Plan 1996-2006 (Replacement) and First Alterations and any subsequent Local Plan policies. The saved policies of the Local Plan will inform the preparation of the proposed Neighbourhood Plan policies. The plan will also be informed by emerging policies in the new Hart Local Plan. Whilst in preparing the new Local Plan, regard will be had to progress on emerging or adopted Neighbourhood Plans, it is the Local Plan that will identify the strategic approach to new development in the District.	N
(c) The relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations, in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development.	The 'Draft Policies' document indicates that the Neighbourhood Plan will propose policies to protect and enhance environmental assets or features such as ancient woodland, hedgerows as well as protecting and enhancing open space areas and promoting good design. As such, the plan should have positive effects on the built and natural environment including its local townscape character, heritage and with the protection for green infrastructure, local biodiversity	Y

Criteria (from Annex II of SEA Directive and Schedule I of the Regulations)	Response	
	interests such as designated sites, priority habitats and the Biodiversity Opportunity Area (BOA). However, the plan is likely to deliver a minimum number of 87 net additional residential units and as such may give rise to significant environmental effects. Whilst it will be for the neighbourhood plan process to identify sites, the Interim Sustainability Appraisal for the Hart Draft Local Plan 2011-2032 identifies a site known as the Hop Garden & West of Varndell Road, which may give rise to effects on biodiversity (part of site is SIN) and urbanising effects on the gap between Hook and Newnham.	
(d) Environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme.	Environmental problems include potential recreational or urbanising impacts to the Thames Basin Heaths SPA and Thursley, Ash, Pirbright & Chobham Common SAC. Paragraphs 1.19 to 1.29 of this assessment sets out the effects of the Neighbourhood Plan on the SPA/SAC in terms of recreational or urbanising effects and has determined no significant effects, provided the plan contains policies consistent with Policy NRM6 of the South East Plan and the Hart Interim Avoidance Strategy. Whilst the SSSI units in the Plan area are in unfavourable but recovering status and not therefore an environmental problem, The 'Draft Policies' take the approach of generally protecting Green Infrastructure assets and should therefore be generally positive.	N
(e) The relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of Community (EU) legislation on the environment (for example, plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection).	The 'Draft Policies' document indicates the Neighbourhood Plan will contain policies which seek to protect Green Infrastructure, the character of the area and achieve good design. As such, the Neighbourhood Plan could aid in the implementation of other EU legislation.	N
Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected		
(a) The probability, duration, frequency and	The 'Draft Policies' document does not indicate the allocation of specific sites, but	Y

Criteria (from Annex II of SEA Directive and Schedule I of the Regulations)	Response	
reversibility of the effects.	<p>the Hart Draft Local Plan 201-2032 allocates a target of 87 dwellings to the Neighbourhood Area of Hook and leaves it to the Neighbourhood Plan to allocate specific sites to meet the target. As such, the potential for development at locations within the plan area and their possible scale increases the probability of effects to arise. The frequency of effects in terms of developing sites is likely to be low but this depends on whether sites are developed in phases. Short term effects due to construction will be reversible but effects resulting from land use will be relatively permanent. Effects of protecting Green Infrastructure, biodiversity and design should have a generally positive effect, with a reasonably high degree of frequency, but effects could be reversible in the longer term, depending on future policy approaches beyond the plan period.</p>	
(b) The cumulative nature of the effects	<p>The Neighbourhood Plan proposes policies for the protection of Green Infrastructure, biodiversity, character of the area and design. These policy approaches when taken in combination with the SSSIs, Site of Importance for Nature Conservation designations, priority habitats in the Hart BAP and saved policies from the Hart Local Plan 1996-2006 (Replacement) and First Alterations as well as saved Policy NRM6 of the South East Plan and Hart's Interim Avoidance Strategy, should provide cumulative effects which are likely to be positive with respect to the character of the area, townscape, green infrastructure and biodiversity. The protection of green infrastructure in general may also give rise to positive synergistic effects for biodiversity. However, the potential for development in the plan area could, in combination with other developments give rise to cumulative effects on issues such as air quality, traffic generation and noise and as such significant effects cannot be discounted at this stage.</p>	Y

Criteria (from Annex II of SEA Directive and Schedule I of the Regulations)	Response	
(c) The transboundary nature of the effects	Given the geographic scope of the Neighbourhood Plan, it is considered that no transboundary effects will arise.	N
(d) The risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents)	None.	N
(e) The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)	The Neighbourhood Plan will cover the whole of the geographic area of Hook Parish Council in Hampshire. The area covered is around 1,765ha with a population at the time of the 2011 Census of 8,334 and 3,323 households. Given the scale and nature of the proposed Neighbourhood Plan, it is considered that effects may be significant.	Y
(f) The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to: i) Special natural characteristics or cultural heritage; ii) Exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values; iii) Intensive land-use.	Given the nature of the Neighbourhood Plan: i) The Neighbourhood Plan area contains one SSSI , but also Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation and listed buildings/structures. The area is a mixture of urban area within the settlement of Hook which does contain features such as open space, playing pitches, incidental amenity, but is predominantly rural outside of the settlement area with larger wooded and heathland areas to the south. The 'Draft Policies' document refers to objectives and policies for the protection of green infrastructure, biodiversity and securing good design which should generally have positive effects for the built and natural environment, although policy(s) to ensure consistency with Policy NRM6 of the South East Plan and the Hart Interim Avoidance Strategy should be included. However, as there is potential for policies to allocate sites, these positive effects could be reduced and significant effects arise, particularly with respect to SSSI units to the south of Hook. Whilst it will be for the neighbourhood plan process to identify sites the Interim Sustainability Appraisal for the Hart Draft Local Plan 2011-2032 identifies a site known as the Hop Garden & West of Varndell Road, which may give rise to effects on biodiversity	Y

Criteria (from Annex II of SEA Directive and Schedule I of the Regulations)	Response	
	(part of site is SINC) and urbanising effects on the gap between Hook and Newnham. ii) Hook Common & Bartley Heath SSSI is meeting PSA target of 95% of the SSSI in favourable or unfavourable recovering condition. Protection of green infrastructure and biodiversity should have a generally positive effect for the SSSI. iii) None identified, other than the urban nature of the settlement of Hook.	
(g) The effects on areas or landscapes which have recognised national, Community or international protection status.	The effects on the Thames Basin Heaths SPA and Thursley, Ash, Pirbright & Chobham Common SAC are dealt with in (d) above. In any event, an HRA screening assessment has determined no significant effects provided the plan contains policy(s) consistent with Policy NRM6 of the South Eats Plan and the Hart Interim Avoidance Strategy.	N
Conclusion	The Hook Neighbourhood Plan is likely to give rise to significant environmental effects and as such an SEA is required.	

- 1.33 On the basis of the Screening process it is determined that the Hook Neighbourhood Plan does require an SEA under the SEA Directive and Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations (2004). This is because: -
- The Hook Neighbourhood Plan could set the framework for future consents under the EIA Directive;
 - There are pathways or mechanisms for significant environmental effects to arise as the Neighbourhood Plan seeks to develop sites which are currently unspecified to meet the Hart Draft Local Plan 2011-2032 target of 87 dwellings.

Conclusions

- 1.34 From 10 May to 16 June 2017 a consultation on a Draft Screening was undertaken with Natural England, the Environment Agency and Historic England. Consultation responses are summarised below. On the basis of the information received, all respondents agreed with the conclusions regarding the need for an SEA. Natural England advised that if sites were to be allocated in the Plan then a further Habitat Regulation Screening will be required once these sites are identified. This Screening has been amended in the light of this comment.

Respondent	Summary of Comments
Environment Agency	<p>No comments on the HRA Screening.</p> <p>Identify that if any site allocations are proposed within Flood Zones 2 and 3 evidence on flood risk would be expected including evidence that sites pass the flood risk Sequential Test and assessment using a level 2 SFRA.</p> <p>Attention is drawn to the need for developments within or adjacent to the Whitewater to not cause further deterioration and to seek to improve the water quality based on the recommendations of the Thames RBMP. An assessment of the potential impacts of the Neighbourhood Plan on the Whitewater should be included in the SEA.</p> <p>If the two historic landfill sites in the Plan area are to be impacted by policies or sites considerations should be included in the SEA.</p>
Historic England	<p>Agree that SEA is merited as a result of the possibility of likely significant environmental effects within areas of interest to Historic England. If the Plan does not allocate sites then would be pleased to review this opinion.</p> <p>Pleased to see the use of the Hart Urban Characterisation and Density Study.</p>
Natural England	<p>Advise that if the NP does allocate sites for development then it will need to be screened again and is likely to require a Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) and a revised Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). The NP should be treated in combination with all relevant plans or projects. Subsequent clarification from NE identified that once specific sites are identified, a further Habitats Regulation Screening would be required. The NP should be treated in combination with all relevant plans or projects.</p> <p>Policy wording could go further regarding the delivery of net gains for nature.</p>