

# Screening Report for Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulation Assessment

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*Spring Boroughs Neighbourhood Plan*

March 2015

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Prepared on behalf of Spring Boroughs Voice Neighbourhood Forum by Planning Dept.  
Northampton Borough Council



# 1. Introduction

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1.1. This screening report is designed to determine if the emerging **Spring Boroughs Neighbourhood Development Plan (SBNP)** requires a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in accordance with the European Directive 2001/42/EC and associated Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004; and / or a Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) in accordance with Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive and with Regulation 61 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended). To meet the 'basic conditions', a Neighbourhood Plan must be prepared in a manner which is compatible with European Union obligations.

## Document Structure

1.2. Section 2 of this document provides an overview of the SBNP. Section 3 outlines the legislative background and regulations that require the need for this screening exercise for both SEA and HRA. Section 4 sets out the strategic policy context within which the SBNP has been prepared. Section 5 provides a screening assessment of the likely significant environmental effects of the SBNP and considers the need for a full SEA. Section 6 provides a screening assessment of the likely significant effects of the implementation of the SBNP and considers the need for a Habitats Regulation Assessment. Section 7 presents a summary of the screening report's findings.

## Strategic Environmental Assessment

1.3. Where a neighbourhood plan could have significant environmental effects, it may require a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA).

1.4. Whether a neighbourhood plan requires a strategic environmental assessment, and (if so) the level of detail needed, will depend on what is proposed in the draft neighbourhood plan. A strategic environmental assessment may be required, for example, where:

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

## Habitats Regulation Assessment

1.5. In the context of neighbourhood planning, a Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) is required where a Neighbourhood Plan is deemed likely to result in significant negative

effects occurring on protected European Sites (Natura 2000 sites), as a result of the plan's implementation. As a general 'rule of thumb' it is identified that sites with pathways within 10-15km of the plan/project boundary should be included with a HRA. The Upper Nene Gravel Pits SPA/RAMSAR is the only internationally designated sites within a 15km radius of the Spring Boroughs Neighbourhood Area boundary.

## 2. About the Spring Boroughs Neighbourhood Development Plan (Pre-Submission Version Reg. 14)

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- 2.1. Spring Boroughs Voice, the designated Neighbourhood Forum for the Spring Boroughs estate (Northampton) has published a pre-submission Neighbourhood Development Plan (or *Draft Neighbourhood Plan*) in accordance with Regulation 14 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.
- 2.2. The pre-submission SBNP enables consultation and engagement with the local community and other stakeholders and is available for public consultation from 23 March 2015 to 11 May 2015. The results of this consultation will directly inform the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan Proposal (Reg. 15). Once submitted, Northampton Borough Council will publish the plan proposal in accordance with Reg. 16.
- 2.3. The purpose of undertaking the screening assessment at this stage is to invite consultation bodies to inform the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan and ensure that national and EU obligations are met.
- 2.4. This screening report will be sent to the relevant Consultation Bodies and other technical stakeholders for comment alongside the pre-submission SBNP. As defined by Regulation 4 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, the Consultation Bodies are:
- Historic England (formerly English Heritage);
  - Natural England;
  - Environment Agency.

## Vision

2.5. The pre-submission SBNP sets out a draft vision and objectives, informed through early community engagement and consultation. The SBNP provides the following draft vision:

**Figure 1: A vision for Spring Boroughs**

### Vision

The Neighbourhood Plan will push Spring Boroughs up the league of desirable neighbourhoods in Northampton. The Plan will drive towards a Spring Boroughs, which is a vibrant neighbourhood with a balanced and diverse community. Spring Boroughs will be a great place to live and work close to the town centre and the Enterprise Zone, the new rail station and university, and will support Northampton's character, identity and cultural life.

Spring Boroughs will become known by people at all stages of their lives as one of the best parts of the town. Spring Boroughs will be known for its strong community, rich urban character, attractive streets and spaces. It will be safe and enjoyable to move around on foot, bike and be well connected to the rest of Northampton and beyond by public transport.

P20, Spring Boroughs Draft Neighbourhood Plan

## Objectives

2.6. To deliver the vision, the draft plan sets out the following objectives:

**Figure 2: Draft plan objectives**

### Objectives

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|--|--|
| <b>1 Housing</b>                         | - To create opportunities for new housing development, with a focus on bringing forward more affordable family-sized housing for residents of Spring Boroughs.   |
| <b>2 Play space and youth facilities</b> | - To create opportunities for a variety of new and improved youth and play facilities, which are both fun and safe, and cater for a range of age groups.   |
| <b>3 Community Facilities</b>            | - To create opportunities for the development of new and improved community facilities in the local area, which provide residents with opportunities for leisure and social activities, and facilitate greater interaction amongst local people, contributing to enhanced community relations. |
| <b>4 Heritage Gateway</b>                | - To protect and enhance the setting of the historic features located at the south of Spring Boroughs, and to create a gateway into Spring Boroughs which maximises the potential of these valuable heritage assets.   |
| <b>5 Transport</b>                       | - To improve pedestrian and cycle routes within Spring Boroughs, and promote greater connectivity between surrounding areas such as the town centre, train station and Enterprise Zone.  |
| <b>6 Community Safety</b>                | - To create a safe and secure neighbourhood and minimise opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour.  |
| <b>7 Environment</b>                     | - To create and support opportunities for improving the local environment, including promoting further community gardening and the improvement of key gateways into Spring Boroughs from surrounding areas.  |

## Draft policies

2.7. To implement the vision and objectives, the draft plan sets out *plan-wide* and *area-based* draft planning policies, the titles of which are listed below:

- OP1: Sustainable Development Principles;
- OP2: Family Housing;
- OP3: Children's play space and other green spaces;
- OP4: Community Facilities;
- OP5: Streets, Movement and Parking;
- AB Policy 1: North West Spring Boroughs;
- AB Policy 2: Central Spring Boroughs; and
- AB Policy 3: South Spring Boroughs.

2.8. The policies are considered in more detail in the screening assessment.

### 3. Legislative Background

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#### Basic conditions

3.1. A Neighbourhood Plan must meet the basic conditions set out in 8(2) of Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. This includes demonstrating that the Neighbourhood Plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with EU obligations such as:

- **Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 June 2001** on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment, transposed into UK law by The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004; and
- **Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora**, which was initially transposed into UK law by The Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994 with various amendments consolidated by The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010.

#### Requirement for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

3.2. The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 required Local Authorities to produce Sustainability Appraisals (SA) for all local development documents to meet the requirements of the SEA regulations and consequently the EU Directive on SEA. It is considered best practice to incorporate requirements of the SEA Directive into an SA.

3.3. Further guidance is provided by the National Planning Policy Framework (para. 165). However, the Planning Act 2008 amended the requirement to undertake a Sustainability Appraisal for Development Plan Documents (DPDs) only, but did not remove the requirement to produce a Strategic Environmental Assessment. A Neighbourhood Plan is not a development plan document, or *Local Plan*, meaning there is no legal requirement for a Neighbourhood Plan to have a Sustainability Appraisal. Para. 027 of the *National Planning Practice Guidance* (NPPG) notes that in some limited circumstances, where a Neighbourhood Plan is likely to have significant environmental effects a Neighbourhood Plan may require SEA undertaken in accordance with the SEA regulations.

3.4. A SEA screening assessment and criteria for establishing whether a full assessment is needed are set out in section 5. This report therefore seeks to fulfil its obligations by identifying if the SBNP requires SEA.

#### Requirement for Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA)

3.5. Reflecting the obligations of the Habitats Directive, the Habitats Regulations require that that an appropriate assessment of plans and programmes is carried out with regard to the conservation objectives of European Sites (Natura 2000 sites) (with reference to other plans and projects) to identify if any significant effect is likely for any European Site.



- 3.6. To fulfil the legal requirements to identify if likely significant effects will occur with the implementation of the UNP upon the European Sites (Natura 2000 sites) a screening assessment has been undertaken in chapter 5 of this report

## 4. Strategic Policy Context

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- 4.1. The basic conditions require Neighbourhood Plans to achieve general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority. The Development Plan for Northampton includes the *West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy* (JCS) and *Northampton Central Area Action Plan* (CAAP).
- 4.2. A review of the strategic policy context was prepared by Northampton Borough Council in October 2014. This review identified which policies of the development plan are considered to be *strategic* and concluded that most JCS policies and all CAAP policies are strategic. This review forms a part of the evidence base for the emerging SBNP.
- 4.3. The JCS was adopted by Northampton Borough Council in December 2014. The JCS sets out strategic policies to address strategic matters across the sub-region. In January 2013, Northampton Borough Council adopted the Northampton Central Area Action Plan (CAAP). The CAAP sets strategic policies to deliver the regeneration of Northampton's Central Area and town centre. The Spring Boroughs Neighbourhood Area is located within Northampton's Central Area and in close proximity to the town centre. Although adopted in advance, the CAAP was prepared in conformity with the emerging JCS.
- 4.4. The JCS includes a commitment to prepare a Local Plan "Part 2" for the Northampton Related Development Area. Northampton Borough Council has not formally commenced preparation of the Local Plan Part 2 at this time, and has therefore not been considered in this screening report.
- 4.5. In addition to the SBNP, there are two other Neighbourhood Development Plans currently in preparation within Northampton Borough – Duston Parish and Growing Together (which includes the estates of Blackthorn, Goldings, Lings and Lumbertubs). The Duston Neighbourhood Plan Proposal was submitted to Northampton Borough Council in February 2015. The Growing Together Neighbourhood Plan is expected to be published for pre-submission consultation in spring 2015. Those plans apply to their respective neighbourhoods only, and are not expected to affect the Spring Boroughs or the emerging Neighbourhood Plan. All emerging Neighbourhood Plans in Northampton are appraised through the SEA screening process.
- 4.6. The Northampton Local Plan 1997 (saved policies) has been largely replaced through the adoption of the JCS and CAAP. Remaining saved policies have limited status due to their age and lack of conformity with the NPPF, and will eventually be replaced by the NRDA Local Plan Part 2.

## **JCS Policy N1 – The Regeneration of Northampton; JCS Policy N11 – Supporting Areas of Community Regeneration**

- 4.7. Through policy N1, the JCS recognises the importance of addressing factors of deprivation in communities, including, to enabling the regeneration of Northampton as a whole.
- 4.8. To support the regeneration of estates including Spring Boroughs, JCS policy N11 commits Northampton Borough Council and other service providers to work in partnership with the community.

## **CAAP Policy 24 – Spring Boroughs**

- 4.9. Of particular relevance to the preparation of the SBNP is CAAP Policy 24: *Spring Boroughs*. Policy 24 sets out a strategic approach to the regeneration of Spring Boroughs, whilst recognising the importance of community engagement in its delivery. The “regeneration of Spring Boroughs” is a central theme of the CAAP and features in the plan’s vision. In addition, CAAP Strategic Objective 7 seeks to:

*Repopulate the Central Area: Substantially increasing the resident population through the redevelopment of redundant industrial areas and the regeneration of Spring Boroughs.*

*SO7, Northampton Central Area Action Plan (p25)*

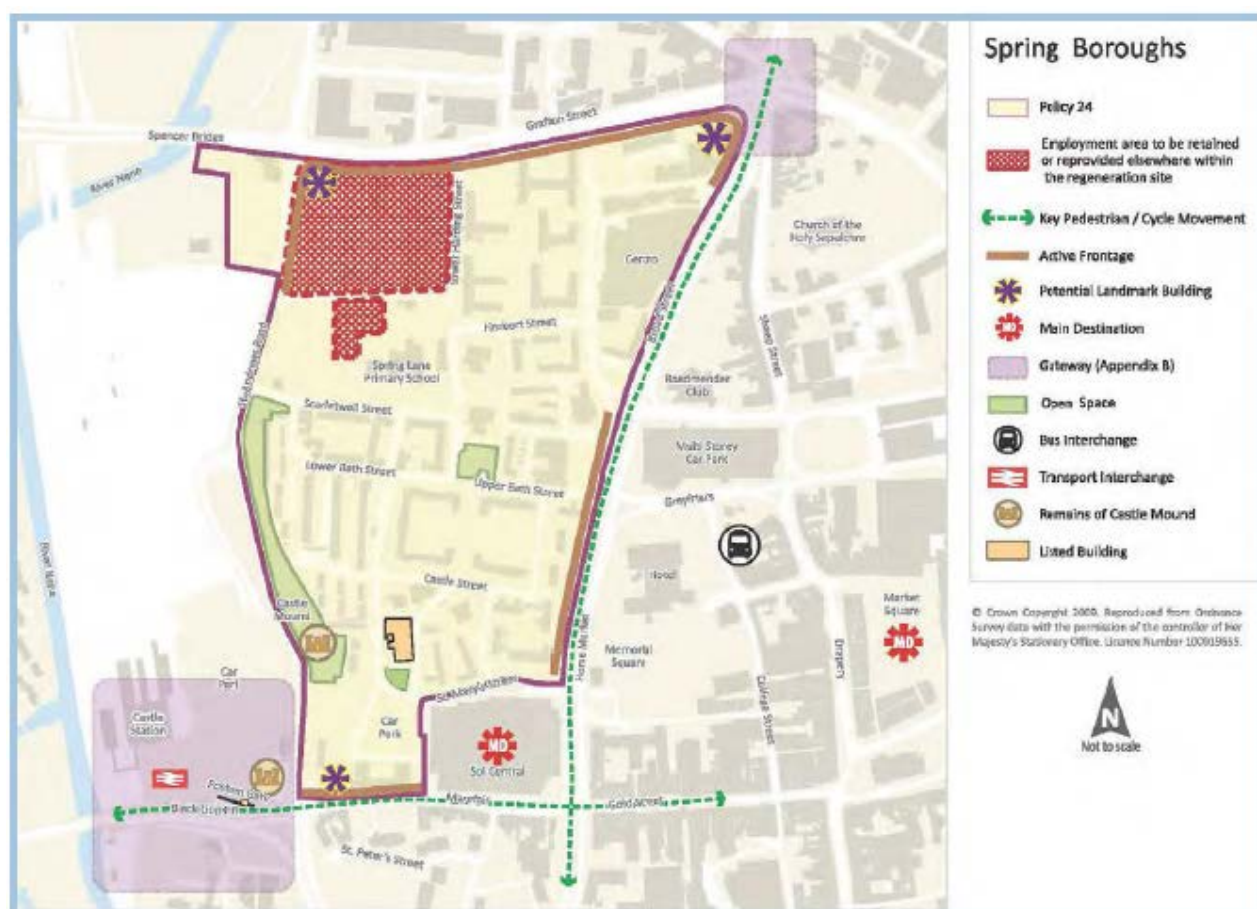
- 4.10. Spring Boroughs is the largest single residential area within the Central Area. The area contains a mixture of employment uses, a primary school, municipal car parks, a small amount of community facilities and local retailing. It also has one listed building and the Castle Mound, a remnant of the original Northampton Castle with associated archaeological remains. The Council is the main land / property owner in the area, owning the majority of the housing.
- 4.11. Spring Boroughs is recognised by Central Government as being one of the most deprived areas in the country. The area is in the top 5% nationally in terms of the Indices of Multiple Deprivation. Key issues are income deprivation, poor standards of education, lack of skills and training, crime, health problems and unemployment. The need to address the poor quality of the Council’s housing stock; together with proposals for the rest of the Central Area provide an opportunity for the Council and its partners to work together with the community to fundamentally reassess the future of Spring Boroughs. The policy sets the context for the regeneration of Spring Boroughs and recognises the importance of finding radical solutions that seek to break the cycle of multiple deprivation that occurs in the area. The CAAP recognises the important role that neighbourhood planning could play in enabling the regeneration of Spring Boroughs.
- 4.12. CAAP Policy 24 and supporting development principles are set out in figures 3 and 4.

**Figure 3: CAAP Policy 24 - Spring Boroughs**

**Policy 24: Spring Boroughs**

Spring Boroughs will be regenerated in a manner consistent with the development principles set out in Figure 6.7 'Policy 24: Spring Boroughs Development Principles' [see **Fig. 4 overleaf**] and the following priorities:

- Encouraging a more balanced community in terms of age, wealth, household size and reducing the turnover of residents; through to appropriate provision of housing management, housing types and tenures and access to necessary social and physical infrastructure.
- The potential to incorporate a wider range of uses within the area, particularly increased employment opportunities, taking into account its location as an edge-of-town centre site and Castle Station.
- Increase and improve the connectivity to the wider Central Area, particularly by direct pedestrian routes, for example, from Castle Station towards the Market Square.
- Make provision for an urban school site to cater for a 2 form entry primary school.
- Positively address the boundaries of the site with the adjoining major roads including the proposed change of Horsemarket to a boulevard.
- Enhance the setting of the Castle Mound and Grade II listed Castle Hill United Reform Church.

**Figure 4: Spring Boroughs Development Principles**

## Scope of SEA

- 4.13. Throughout their preparation, the JCS and CAAP were subject to a full Sustainability Appraisal which incorporated SEA. The SA/SEA assessed the extent to which the plans, when judged against reasonable alternatives help to achieve relevant environmental, economic and social objectives. In addition, the SA/SEA identified likely significant negative effects which could arise through implementation of the plans.
- 4.14. This SEA Screening Assessment does not seek to duplicate work which has previously been undertaken to inform the preparation of higher level documents (i.e. the JCS and CAAP). **This screening assessment therefore seeks to identify whether the implementation of the pre-submission Spring Boroughs Neighbourhood Plan is likely to have significant environmental effects that have not already been considered and dealt with through a sustainability appraisal of the CAAP and JCS.**
- 4.15. The table in appendix 1 assesses the pre-submission SBNP policies with the strategic policies of the CAAP to identify the extent to which the plan achieves general conformity with those strategic policies, having particular regard to those likely significant negative effects identified through SA/SEA of the CAAP and JCS.

## Summary of CAAP SA/SEA process and outcomes

- 4.16. The CAAP SA framework was developed on the basis of the information collected from a scoping exercise and used throughout the appraisal. The SA framework included SA questions and objectives relating to the following topics: air quality and noise; archaeology and cultural heritage; biodiversity, fauna and flora; crime and community safety; energy and climatic factors; health and well-being; labour market and economy; landscape and townscape; material assets; population; social deprivation; soil, geology and land use; waste; water; and education and training. The CAAP SA Objectives are provided for reference in appendix 2<sup>1</sup> and informed the assessment of the SBNP policies in appendix 1.
- 4.17. The strategic options were presented in the CAAP Issues and Options Paper and appraised with the aim of assisting in selection of the preferred approach. The Pre-submission Draft CAAP was also subject to the appraisal process and a SA report prepared. The policies of the CAAP were therefore informed by the SA process.
- 4.18. On adoption of the CAAP, Northampton Borough Council published a statement to notify of the plan's adoption and conclude the findings of the sustainability appraisal. Appendix 3 sets out the significant effects likely to arise through implementation of the CAAP.
- 4.19. Of the likely significant effects arising from the CAAP, of particular relevance to the emerging Spring Boroughs Neighbourhood Plan is the impact on air quality and noise, namely in terms of the adverse impact on the AQMAs in the vicinity, such as the Grafton Street/Broad Street AQMA. The emerging Spring Boroughs Neighbourhood Plan should therefore have particular regard to air quality and noise matters to ensure future development is sustainable.
- 4.20. As set out in *Chapter 7: Infrastructure, Delivery and Monitoring*, all CAAP policies will be monitored, thereby enabling the environmental effects to be accounted for and addressed.

## Summary of key findings JCS SA/SEA

- 4.21. In the summary, the Sustainability Appraisal of the JCS identified the following likely negative effects<sup>2</sup>:
- Effects on noise and air quality associated with Northampton South SUE, development within the Northampton urban area, and Junction 16 strategic and DIRFT employment sites.
  - Effects on cultural heritage associated with the SUEs at Northampton South of Brackmills, Northampton North of Whitehills, Northampton Upton Park, Northampton Upton

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<sup>1</sup> The CAAP was subject to SA which incorporated SEA therefore not all objectives or questions are necessarily relevant to the SEA of the neighbourhood plan.

<sup>2</sup> See *West Northamptonshire Core Strategy SA/SEA and HRA Adoption Statement*

Lodge/Norwood Farm, Daventry North East, and from development within the urban area at Northampton.

- Effects on biodiversity, flora and fauna at virtually all the SUEs, and the DIRFT strategic employment site.
- Effects on access to educational facilities for virtually all the SUEs and from development within the urban area of Northampton.
- Effects on health including access to health facilities at virtually all the SUEs and from development within the urban area of Northampton.
- Effects on employment land take-up and job creation of SUEs at Northampton North, Northampton Kings Heath SUE, Brackley East, Towcester South East, development within the urban area of Northampton, and at the two strategic employment sites.
- Effects on the landscape from development at virtually all the SUEs, the Junction 16 strategic employment site, and the significant positive effects identified from development in the urban area of Northampton.
- Effects on objectively assessed housing needs and community facilities and service provision at all the SUEs, and from development in the urban area of Northampton.
- Effects on loss of best and most versatile agricultural land at Northampton North SUE, and Daventry North East SUE, and effects on land stability at Daventry North East SUE.
- Effects on flood risk from development within the urban area of Northampton.

4.22. Of the likely significant negative effects identified, the following matters may be relevant to Spring Boroughs (as SB is located in Northampton's urban area) and should be considered through the preparation of the emerging plan:

- Noise and air quality;
- Cultural Heritage;
- Educational facilities;
- Health facilities;
- Employment land take-up and job creation;
- Landscape; and
- Flood risk.

4.23. Appendix 6 of the Joint Core Strategy presents a Monitoring and Implementation Framework, which will be used to record and assess the implementation of the Joint Core Strategy. That framework includes significant effects indicators, which were developed from the SA objectives and check the effects of policies designed to meet these objectives,

including whether the effects on the area are as intended (bringing a positive change), thereby enabling those environmental effects to be accounted for and addressed.



## 5. SEA Screening Assessment

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5.1. This section considers the likely significance of effects arising from the implementation of the SBNP through an assessment of the proposed policies, in the context of the SEA regulations.

5.2. In summary this assessment:

- Identifies the criteria for applying the SEA directive;
- Considers the findings of the SA/SEA of the Northampton Central Area Action Plan and West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy, paying particular regard to the any significant negative effects likely to arise through implementation of the plans;
- Assesses the pre-submission neighbourhood plan policies to identify if those policies achieve general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan to identify if the implementation of the SBNP will have significant environmental effects that have not already been considered and dealt with through a sustainability appraisal of the CAAP and JCS; and
- Concludes by determining whether the SBNP requires a full Strategic Environmental Assessment, having regard to the criteria of the SEA Directive.

### **Criteria for Assessing the Effects of the Spring Boroughs Neighbourhood Plan**

5.3. The criteria for determining the likely significance of effects referred to in Article 3(5) of Directive 2001/42/EC applied in assessing the SBNP are set out in fig. 5:

**Figure 5: Criteria for determining likely 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 trans-boundary 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.

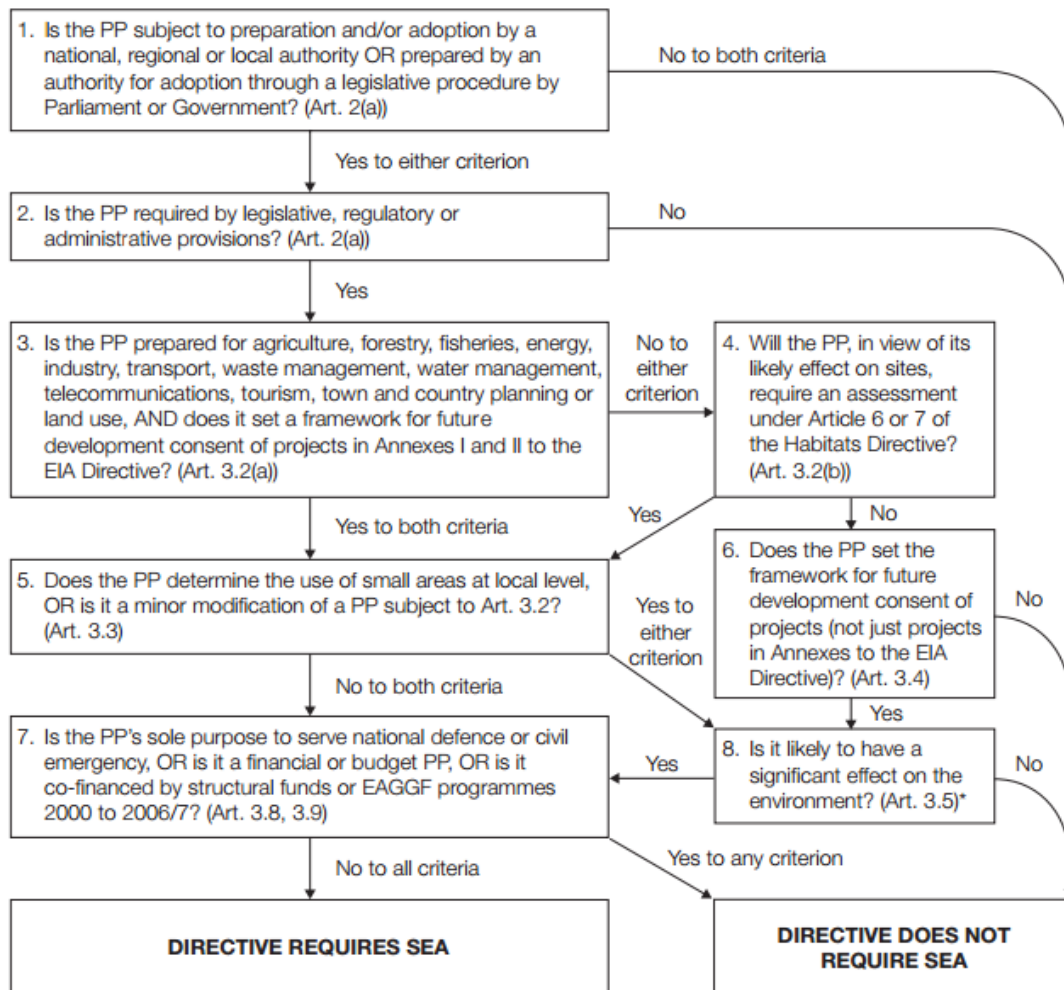
Source: Annex II of SEA Directive 2001/42/EC

### ***Application of the SEA Directive to Plans and Programmes***

- 5.4. The diagram in figure 6 sets out a number of key criteria in applying the SEA Directive to plans and programmes.

**Figure 6: Application of the SEA Directive to plans and programmes**

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.

5.5. The table in figure 7 provides an assessment of whether the SBNP will require a full Strategic Environmental Assessment. The questions below are drawn from the diagram (in fig.6) which sets out how the SEA Directive should be applied.

**Figure 7: Application of the SEA Directive**

Stage	Y/N	Reason
1. Is the PP (plan or 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? (Art. 2(a))	<b>Y</b>	The SBNP is being prepared by Spring Boroughs Voice (SBV) Neighbourhood Forum, and not by a national, regional or local authority. However, if the SBNP receives 50% or more votes in support at referendum, the Neighbourhood Plan will be 'made' by Northampton Borough Council.
2. Is the PP required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions? (Art. 2(a))	<b>?</b>	As a qualifying body, SBV has the right to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan on behalf of the local community. There is no legislative, regulatory or administrative requirement to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan. However if adopted, the SBNP would form part of the statutory development plan for the area, therefore it is considered necessary to answer the following questions to determine if SEA is required.
3. Is the PP 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? (Art 3.2(a))	<b>Y</b>	The SBNP is prepared for town and country planning purposes and may include policies which address issues surrounding energy, transport and telecommunications. The SBNP therefore sets out a framework for future development in Spring Boroughs.
4. Will the PP, in view of its likely effect on sites, require an assessment for future development under Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive? (Art. 3.2 (b))	<b>N/a</b>	Question not applicable in the context of the flowchart in Fig. 2. However a screening assessment for HRA has been undertaken in preparing this report to satisfy the requirements of the Habitats regulations, see section 5 of this report.
5. Does the PP Determine the use of small areas at local level, OR is it a minor modification of a PP subject to Art. 3.2? (Art. 3.3)	<b>Y</b>	The SBNP will include policies which will influence the use of small areas and sites at a local level. Specifically, the SBNP intends to influence housing and built environment, open spaces and recreation and community facilities.
6. Does the PP set the framework for future development consent of projects (not just projects in annexes to the EIA Directive)? (Art 3.4)	<b>Y</b>	Once adopted, planning applications will be determined against the policies set out in the SBNP.
7. Is the PP's sole purpose to serve the national defence or civil emergency, OR is it a financial or budget PP, OR is it co-financed by structural funds or EAGGF programmes 2000 to 2006/7? (Art 3.8, 3.9)	<b>N/a</b>	Question not applicable, see flowchart (Fig.6)
8. Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment? (Art. 3.5)	<b>N</b>	No likely significant negative effects on the environment have been identified; see screening assessment in Appendix 1.

## Screening Outcome

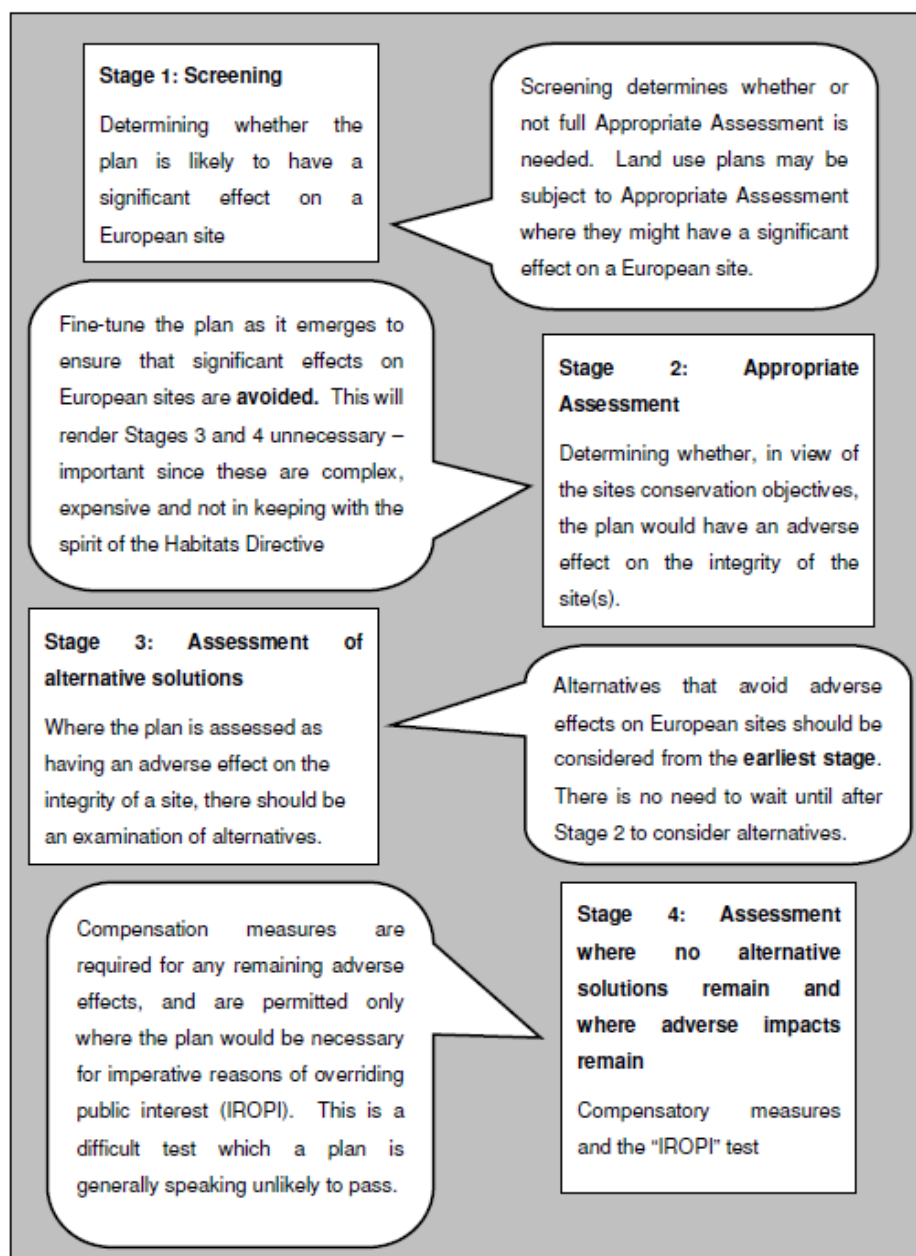
- 5.6. If successful at examination and supported at referendum, the SBNP will be made by Northampton Borough Council. The SBNP relates to Town and Country Planning and (once made) will be used in the determination of planning applications. The requirement for SEA therefore rests on whether the plan is likely to have significant effect on the environment (question 8; fig. 7).
- 5.7. The purpose of the assessment in appendix 1 is to identify any likely significant effects which could arise as a result of the implementation of the SBNP which have not already been considered and dealt with through sustainability appraisal of the CAAP. The assessment therefore explores the extent to which the draft policies of the SBNP (pre-submission version) achieve “general conformity” with the strategic policies of the CAAP (and therefore the WNJCS), whilst also having regard to SEA criteria and local environmental issues (sourced from the CAAP SA objectives – appendix 2).
- 5.8. Following the assessment it is considered that the emerging SBNP policies are likely to achieve general conformity with the strategic policies of the CAAP, with the exception of AB Policy 1. The apparent inconsistency between AB Policy 1 and the CAAP policies does not concern the principle of development in this location (residential development), but rather is a conflict between the requirement for a single tenure as opposed to a housing mix. Therefore, this matter is not expected to result in likely significant effects in terms of the SEA criteria.
- 5.9. Spring Boroughs is a largely residential estate (incorporating a range of other uses). The SBNP predominantly seeks to provide new housing and associated infrastructure. The CAAP seeks to provide up to 3,400 homes in Northampton’s Central Area, identifying Spring Boroughs as one such location for new residential development. Whilst it is difficult to quantify how many new homes may be delivered in Spring Boroughs (as proposals may include redevelopment of existing sites), any new housing is expected to contribute to achieving this total housing requirement and is not expected to result in this figure being exceeded to any significant extent.
- 5.10. Overall, the SBNP is expected to play a positive contribution in enabling sustainable development (and redevelopment) of the Neighbourhood Area. The CAAP SA/SEA identified air quality and noise issues arising as a result of the implementation of the plan. In preparing its policies, the SBNP should have particular regard to air quality and noise issues. However due to the extent of general conformity there is no reason to suggest that the implementation of the NP policy would result in likely significant effects in terms of air quality or noise, beyond those considered and dealt with by the CAAP.
- 5.11. In addition to noise and air quality, the JCS identifies likely significant negative effects which are potentially relevant to Spring Boroughs in respect of cultural heritage; educational facilities; health facilities; employment land take-up and job creation; landscape; and flood risk. Whilst the SBNP makes a positive contribution in regard of many of these factors, there is no evidence to suggest the implementation of the SBNP would result in likely significant negative effects.

- 5.12. From the assessment (appendix 1), no likely significant negative effects were identified in terms of the SEA criteria which have not already been considered and dealt with through a sustainability appraisal of the CAAP, and consequently the JCS. Applying the findings to question 8 (figure 7) (“Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment?”), **it is concluded that, the SBNP does not require a full SEA.**

## 6. HRA Screening

6.1. The purpose of screening at this stage of the plan-preparation is to identify whether any European Site might be exposed to likely significant effects as a result of implementation of the plan, and therefore determine whether further stages of the HRA process are required. The diagram (fig.8) outlines the HRA process:

**Figure 8: Stages of the HRA Process<sup>3</sup>**



6.2. European Sites include Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs). In identifying European Sites, a 15km radius has been applied to the Spring

<sup>3</sup> Appropriate Assessment Screening for the WNJCS, 2008. Treweek Environmental Consultants.

Boroughs Neighbourhood Area. A map showing the Spring Boroughs Neighbourhood Area and the location of European Sites is included in Appendix 4.

6.3. The Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA/Ramsar is the only designated site within a 15km radius of the Spring Boroughs Neighbourhood Area. The HRA screening assessment will therefore identify if the implementation of the SBNP will have likely significant effects on the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA.

6.4. The Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits was approved as a Special Protection Area in April 2011. The range of habitat and the varied topography of the lagoons provide valuable resting and feeding conditions for major concentrations of wintering water birds, especially ducks and waders. Some species also spend time feeding and roosting on surrounding agricultural land outside the SPA. In addition, the site has also been listed as a Wetland of International Importance under the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, especially as Wildfowl Habitat (the Ramsar Convention). This is because the site regularly supports 20,000 or more water birds and regularly supports 1% of the bird individuals of Mute Swan and Gadwall<sup>4</sup>. The conservation objectives for the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA are outlined in Table 3.

**Figure 9: SPA Conservation Objective<sup>5</sup>**

<b>Designation</b>	<b>Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA</b>
<b>Objective</b>	Avoid the deterioration of the habitats of the qualifying features, and the significant disturbance of the qualifying features, ensuring the integrity of the site is maintained and the site makes a full contribution to achieving the aims of the Birds Directive.
<b>Aims</b>	<p>Subject to natural change, to maintain or restore:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The extent and distribution of the habitats of the qualifying features;</li> <li>• The structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying features;</li> <li>• The supporting processes on which the habitats of the qualifying features rely;</li> <li>• The populations of the qualifying features;</li> <li>• The distribution of the qualifying features within the site. □</li> </ul>
<b>Qualifying Features</b>	<p>A021 <i>Botaurus stellaris</i>; Great bittern (Non-breeding)</p> <p>A051 <i>Anas strepera</i>; Gadwall (Non-breeding)</p> <p>A140 <i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>; European golden plover (Non-breeding)</p> <p>Waterbird assemblage □</p>

<sup>4</sup> Upper Nene Gravel Pits SPA Technical Paper, 2012. WNJPU.

<sup>5</sup> European Site Conservation Objectives for Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area, Natural England.



6.5. The integrity of the site depends on maintenance of extensive reed beds with a wet base and open channels suitable for Bittern, a high water table in winter, the maintenance of varied topography and water levels, and a continued variety of vegetation and prey species for the various bird species using the site. The site could be affected by any activity that may affect the hydrology, water quality, land management and intensity of site use as a recreational area. Appropriate Assessment<sup>6</sup> has identified inherent risks to the integrity of the site associated with significant levels of growth, the most likely 'vulnerabilities' include:

- a) **Increased visitor disturbance and recreational activities** due to growing populations near to the site. This could have negative effects on the bird populations at the site.
- b) **Altered water levels** because of increased abstraction to supply growing communities via Rutland Water. 90% of Rutland Water's supply is provided by the River Nene, which as shown above, is already over-licensed. Consistent water levels at the site are needed to maintain site integrity for the bird populations at the site.
- c) There is a risk of **reducing water quality and increasing water pollution**, from surface water run off containing high levels of pollutants from construction, domestic uses, and increased vehicle use. This would have a detrimental effect on invertebrate bird prey species.

6.6. An assessment of the likely significant effects of the emerging SBNP on the vulnerabilities identified for the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA is undertaken in appendix 2.

## In Combination Effects

6.7. Existing plans and proposals must be considered when assessing new plans or programmes for likely significant effects as they may create 'in combination' effects.

6.8. For reference the relevant plans or programmes which should be considered when reviewing in combination effects are listed below:

- West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy DPD;
- Northampton Central Area Action Plan;
- Northampton Local Plan (saved policies);
- Northamptonshire Local Transport Plan;
- Northamptonshire Minerals and Waste Development Framework Core Strategy;
- Locations for Waste and Minerals Development DPD;
- North Northamptonshire Core Spatial Strategy DPD;
- Bedford Core Strategy and Rural Issues Plan DPD;

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<sup>6</sup> Appropriate Assessment Screening for the WNJCS, 2008. Treweek Environmental Consultants.

- Milton Keynes Core Strategy DPD;
- Rugby Core Strategy DPD.

6.9.A HRA has been undertaken for the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy. The assessment did not identify any likely significant effects on any designated European Sites. The SBNP is not expected to significantly increase the quantum of development proposed by the JCS. The emerging policy options are expected to be in general conformity with the policies of the JCS. It is therefore concluded that no likely significant *and in combination* effects will occur due to the implementation of the SBNP.

## Screening Outcome

6.10. The assessment undertaken in appendix 1 considered the policies of the draft SBNP in the context of the three vulnerabilities. The assessment suggests that the implementation of the SBNP will not result in any likely significant effects, alone or in combination, upon the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA in regard to the vulnerabilities identified in section 6.5, which include increased visitor disturbance and recreational activities, altered water levels and/or reducing water quality and increasing water pollution. **It is therefore concluded that a full HRA is not required.**

## 7. Summary of outcomes from SEA & HRA Screening Assessment

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- 7.1. Spring Boroughs is located between Northampton town centre and the rail station. It is the largest single residential area within Northampton's Central Area.
- 7.2. The West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (JCS) sets out strategic policies across the sub-region and recognises the importance of the regeneration of Northampton, including through the regeneration of deprived communities including Spring Boroughs. The Northampton Central Area Action Plan (CAAP) was prepared in accordance with the JCS and provides additional strategic policies to inform the regeneration of the central area. The CAAP recognises the important role neighbourhood planning could play in enabling a greater degree of community engagement in the regeneration of Spring Boroughs. The JCS and CAAP therefore provide a comprehensive strategic policy framework which is intended to support the emerging SBNP, further empowering the community to shape new development in its area.
- 7.3. The SBNP sets out an ambitious approach to the redevelopment of the Neighbourhood Area, which reflects the local community's aspirations. The approach is broadly consistent with the JCS and the CAAP and (if 'made') will form an important part of the development plan, adding considerable detail to the existing strategic policy framework.
- 7.4. The purpose of the assessment undertaken in appendix 1 is to identify any likely significant effects which could arise as a result of the implementation of the SBNP which have not already been considered and dealt with through sustainability appraisal of the CAAP and consequently the JCS. The assessment therefore explores the extent to which the draft policies of the SBNP (pre-submission version) achieve "general conformity" with the strategic policies of the CAAP, whilst also having regard to SEA criteria and local environmental issues (sourced from the CAAP SA objectives).
- 7.5. It is considered that the emerging SBNP policies are likely to achieve general conformity with the strategic policies of the CAAP, with the exception of AB Policy 1. The emerging inconsistency between AB Policy 1 and the CAAP policies does not concern the principle of development in this location (residential development), but rather is a conflict between the requirement for a single tenure as opposed to a housing mix. Therefore, this matter is not expected to result in likely significant effects in terms of the SEA criteria or upon designated sites.
- 7.6. The SBNP is predominantly concerned with delivering new housing development and associated infrastructure in this predominantly residential neighbourhood. The CAAP seeks to provide up to 3,400 homes in Northampton's Central Area. Whilst it is difficult to quantify how many new homes may be delivered in Spring Boroughs (as proposals may include redevelopment of existing sites) any new housing is expected to contribute toward this requirement and is not expected to result in the housing requirement being

significantly exceeded. Overall, the SBNP is expected to play a positive contribution in enabling sustainable development (and redevelopment) of the Neighbourhood Area.

- 7.7. The CAAP SA/SEA identified air quality and noise issues arising as a result of the implementation of the plan. The JCS SA/SEA also identified a range of negative factors which could arise in Northampton's Urban Area. The effects of the implementation of both plans will be monitored and assessed. In preparing its policies, the SBNP may wish to have regard to air quality and noise issues, in particular, and other matters indicated by the JCS SA/SEA.
- 7.8. Due to the extent of general conformity between the policies of the SBNP and CAAP there is no reason to suggest that the implementation of the NP policy would result in likely significant effects beyond those considered and dealt with by the CAAP. Through the assessment, no likely significant negative effects were identified in terms of the SEA criteria which have not already been considered and dealt with through a sustainability appraisal of the CAAP and JCS.
- 7.9. The Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA is located within 15km of the Spring Boroughs Neighbourhood Area. The assessment considered whether the SBNP policies would be likely to result in significant effects on designated sites (i.e. the Upper Nene valley Gravel Pits SPA) in terms of the three "vulnerabilities" – increased visitor disturbance; altered water levels; and water quality and pollution. Located in Northampton's Central Area, the redevelopment of North West Spring Boroughs is not expected to increase visitor disturbance at those designated sites. WNJCS policies S10 and BN9 include criteria which all new developments must achieve to maximise water efficiency, improve water quality and reduce pollution. The assessment suggests that the implementation of the NP policy is not expected to result in likely effects on designated sites in respect of the three vulnerabilities.
- 7.10. From the assessment (appendix 1), no likely significant negative effects were identified in terms of the SEA criteria which have not already been considered and dealt with through a sustainability appraisal of the CAAP and the JCS. Applying the findings to question 8 (figure 7) ("Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment?"), it is concluded that, the SBNP does not require a full SEA.
- 7.11. The assessment also considered the policies of the draft SBNP in the context of the three vulnerabilities. The assessment suggests that the implementation of the SBNP will not result in any likely significant effects, alone or in combination, upon the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA in regard to the vulnerabilities identified in section 6.5, which include increased visitor disturbance and recreational activities, altered water levels and/or reducing water quality and increasing water pollution. It is therefore concluded that a full HRA is not required.
- 7.12. **In conclusion, this screening report finds that the SBNP does not require a full Strategic Environmental Assessment or Habitats Regulation Assessment.**

## Appendix 1: Assessment of general conformity of policies against the CAAP and the likely significant effects upon designated sites

Spring Boroughs Pre-submission Neighbourhood Plan Policy	Relevant CAAP policies	Extent to which policy conforms with CAAP policies and likely significant effects in regards to SEA criteria	Likely effects on designated sites in terms of the following ‘vulnerabilities’:  a) Increased visitor disturbance and recreational activities  b) Altered water levels  c) Reducing water quality and increasing water pollution
<b>Plan-wide policies</b>			
<p><b>OP1: Sustainable Development Principles</b></p> <p>A. Planning permission will be granted for development in Spring Boroughs at a scale and in locations that accord with policies set out in the Neighbourhood Plan and where it can be shown that the development would support the local community, by providing:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. New and affordable homes suitable for occupation by families in Spring Boroughs related to the local housing demand and needs of the community in terms of size, design, tenure and affordability.</li> <li>2. A high quality environment for residents, visitors, community groups and businesses.</li> <li>3. Infrastructure to support improved leisure, recreational and social facilities.</li> <li>4. Better connections to adjoining areas, overcoming the barriers of busy roads and creating more permeable routes.</li> <li>5. Security for occupiers and users through the use of design principles from “Secured by Design” according to known local issues and reference to the county wide Supplementary Planning Guidance – Planning Out Crime.</li> </ol> <p>B. Development should have regard to the principles set out in the Neighbourhood Plan and be located to ensure that it protects and enhances the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Amenity of nearby residents.</li> <li>2. Character and appearance of the local area in which it is located.</li> <li>3. Social, built, historic, cultural and natural heritage assets of the Spring Boroughs, especially linked to the castle sites and surroundings.</li> </ol>	<p><i>Presumption in favour of sustainable development policy;</i></p> <p><i>Policy 16: Central Area Living;</i></p> <p><i>Policy 24: Spring Boroughs.</i></p>	<p>This over-arching NP policy adds detail to the CAAP <i>Presumption in favour of sustainable development</i> policy by expressing the communities’ priorities for achieving sustainable development through a range of ‘sustainable development principles’.</p> <p>The NP policy achieves general conformity with <i>CAAP policy 24</i>, particularly through encouraging a more balanced community (though meeting housing needs; improving access to necessary social and physical infrastructure; incorporating a wider range of uses; and increasing and improving connectivity to the wider Central Area.</p> <p>Through enabling the development of new housing, the NP policy is considered to achieve general conformity with <i>CAAP Policy 16</i>. Policy 16 seeks to provide up to 3,400 homes in the Central Area. Whilst it is difficult to quantify how many new homes may be delivered in Spring Boroughs (as proposals may include redevelopment of existing housing) the net new housing provided is not expected to result in the housing requirement being exceed to any significant extent.</p> <p>With regard to the CAAP SA Objectives, the NP policy may positively contribute to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reducing the need to travel, reducing congestion and facilitating modal shift and making efficient use of land through enabling new residential development in this centrally located neighbourhood which is close to services, employment and public transport access points;</li> <li>• Improving community safety and fear of crime through requiring new development to achieve secure by design principles;</li> <li>• Conserve and enhance the quality, character and local</li> </ul>	<p>The policy sets criteria which new development should achieve, but does not in itself generate new development. The NP’s overall approach to new housing is not expected to exceed the housing requirement set out in Policy 16. In addition, other strategic policies set out criteria to conserve designated sites. For example, the <i>West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy’s</i> policy S10 – ‘Sustainable Development Principles’ requires all new developments to maximise water efficiency, promote sustainable drainage and minimise pollution from noise, air and run off.</p> <p>The policy is therefore not expected to result in likely effects on designated sites in terms of the three vulnerabilities.</p>

		<p>distinctiveness of the landscape and townscape;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that the housing stock and associated infrastructure meets the needs of the local people;</li> <li>• Develop and maintain a balanced and sustainable population by requiring the development of new family housing;</li> <li>• Reducing spatial inequalities through increasing the range of housing and improving access to services and infrastructure;</li> </ul> <p>The CAAP SA/SEA identified air quality and noise issues arising as a result of the implementation of the plan. Strategic policies (including the <i>West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy's Policy S10 – Sustainable Development Principles</i>; <i>Policy BN9 – Planning for Pollution Control</i>; and <i>Policy C2 – New developments</i>) provide criteria which all new developments must satisfy to maintain and improve air quality, improve energy efficiency and reduce the need to travel and promote modal shift. Due to the measures put in place by the CAAP and WNJCS, the implementation of the NP is not expected to result in significant likely effects in relation to air quality and noise.</p> <p>In terms of the SEA criteria, there are no likely significant negative effects expected to arise as a result of the implementation of the NP policy (that have not already been considered and dealt with through a sustainability appraisal of the CAAP and JCS).</p>	
<p><b>OP2: Family Housing</b></p> <p>A. Proposals for housing developments within Spring Boroughs will be supported subject to the following criteria</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proposals provide a range of dwelling types, sizes and tenures for a range of household types and sizes.</li> <li>• Proposals for affordable housing with private outside space will be particularly encouraged.</li> <li>• Proposals follow the design principles set out in Policy OP1 including using “Secured by Design” design principles.</li> </ul> <p>B. Appropriate provision of housing management, housing types and tenures will be supported.</p>	<p><i>Policy 16: Central Area Living;</i></p> <p><i>Policy 24: Spring Boroughs.</i></p>	<p>The NP achieves general conformity with the CAAP policy. The NP policy consistently identifies Spring Boroughs as a location for new residential development and seeks to create a mixed and balanced community through providing a range of dwelling types, sizes and tenures and appropriate provision of housing management.</p> <p>With regard to the CAAP SA objectives, the NP policy may develop and maintain a sustainable population structure through the development of new housing and improve community safety and reduce crime and the fear of crime through requiring Secured by Design Principles. In terms of the SEA criteria there are no likely significant negative effects expected to arise as a result of the implementation of the policy (that have not already been considered and dealt with through a sustainability appraisal of the CAAP and JCS).</p>	<p>The NP policy provides criteria which new housing development in Spring Boroughs must satisfy. The policy does not in itself generate new development and therefore it is concluded that the policy will not result in likely effects on designated sites in terms of the three vulnerabilities.</p>
<p><b>OP3: Children’s play space and other green spaces</b></p> <p>A. The neighbourhood plan will support and encourage new and enhanced fun and safe children’s play areas in the plan area</p> <p>B. The neighbourhood plan will encourage opportunities for improving the environment through</p>	<p><i>Policy 4: Green Infrastructure;</i></p> <p><i>Policy 24: Spring</i></p>	<p>The NP policy is considered to achieve general conformity with the CAAP policies, namely through improving access to necessary social and physical infrastructure – a requirement of Policy 24.</p> <p>The NP policy may also support Policy 4 through improving the environment at gateway locations. An area of land running n/s along St</p>	<p>The NP policy seeks to provide new play areas and improve the local environment in Spring Boroughs. The policy is not expected to result in likely effects on designated sites in terms of</p>

community gardening, particularly in the 'gateways' between Spring Boroughs and other areas.	<i>Boroughs.</i>	<p>Andrews Road is identified in the CAAP as green infrastructure and forms a boundary between Spring Boroughs and the wider central area. Whilst the particular 'gateway locations' are not identified in the NP policy, the St Andrews Road green space is included within the boundary of AB Policy 3 and is identified for the purpose of conserving the historic site of Northampton Castle.</p> <p>In terms of the CAAP SA objectives, the NP policy help to ensure the infrastructure needs of people are met and maintain and enhance the function of habitats and populations of species; and improve health and reduce health inequalities. There are no likely significant negative effects expected to arise as a result of the implementation of the policy (that have not already been considered and dealt with through a sustainability appraisal of the CAAP and JCS).</p>	the three vulnerabilities.
<p><b>OP4: Community Facilities</b></p> <p>The Neighbourhood Plan supports the delivery of community facilities and other infrastructure projects using sources of funds as appropriate, including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A community centre facility to serve the neighbourhood. In particular a new integrated (non-faith based) community building would be welcomed. This could be within the Collingwood Centre or a suitable alternative location.</li> <li>• A new healthcare facility to be located within the community building or a suitable alternative location.</li> </ul>	<i>Policy 24: Spring Boroughs.</i>	<p>The NP policy is considered to achieve general conformity with the CAAP policies, namely through improving access to necessary social and physical infrastructure – a requirement of Policy 24.</p> <p>The policy may positively contribute to providing infrastructure which meets the needs of the local people – as required by the CAAP SA objectives. With regard to the SEA criteria, the implementation of the NP policy is not expected to result in likely significant negative effects (that have not already been considered and dealt with through a sustainability appraisal of the CAAP and JCS).</p>	The NP policy seeks to provide new community facilities in Spring Boroughs. The policy is not expected to result in likely effects on designated sites in terms of the three vulnerabilities.
<p><b>OP5: Streets, Movement and Parking</b></p> <p>A. The Neighbourhood Plan will support proposals which</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase and improve the connectivity between Spring Boroughs and the wider area, particularly by direct, overlooked pedestrian routes provided they adhere to the principles set out in OP1 (5).</li> <li>• Positively address the boundaries of Spring Boroughs with adjoining major roads.</li> <li>• Increase and improve road connections, footpath and cycle routes within spring boroughs and between spring boroughs and the wider town centre, particularly to the town centre, enterprise zone and Grafton St Industrial Estate and from Castle Station towards the bus station and market square.</li> <li>• Reconfigure pedestrian routes within Spring Boroughs to 'design out' crime.</li> <li>• Increase kerbside parking for residents and local businesses within Spring Boroughs</li> </ul> <p>B. The neighbourhood plan will support the identification of residential streets to create 'home zones' with measures to reduce and slow traffic, improve safety and give priority to pedestrians over motor vehicles.</p>	<p><i>Policy 9: Pedestrian and Cycle Movement Framework;</i></p> <p><i>Policy 24: Spring Boroughs.</i></p>	<p>The NP policy achieves general conformity with the policies of the CAAP, namely through increasing and improving connectivity to the wider Central Area, as required by Policy 24. The policy adds detail to the pedestrian and cycle movement framework set out in Policy 9 which indicates a route through Spring Boroughs to connect the rail station and bus interchange to the wider Central Area.</p> <p>With regard to the CAAP SA objectives, the NP policy could positively contribute to reducing the need to travel, reducing congestion and facilitating modal shift; improving community safety and reducing crime and fear of crime; and improve accessed to services and facilities. There are no likely significant negative effects expected to arise as a result of the implementation of the policy (that have not already been considered and dealt with through a sustainability appraisal of the CAAP and JCS).</p>	The NP policy seeks to increase and improve connectivity between Spring Boroughs and the wider central area. The policy is not expected to result in likely effects on designated sites in terms of the three vulnerabilities.

<b>Area-wide policies</b>			
<p><b>AB Policy 1: (North West Spring Boroughs)</b></p> <p>Develop existing employment area in north west of plan area (Area 1) for high quality affordable housing</p> <p>The North West part of Spring Boroughs will be redeveloped as an area of high quality social housing to include affordable family homes with private outside space in order to give residents of Spring Boroughs, particularly families with children, a better quality of life. This area is currently in employment use and is designated for continued employment use in the Central Area Action Plan. However the neighbourhood plan would support proposals for housing in this area subject to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• fulfilling the criteria in Policy OP2 (Housing) and</li> <li>• employment land elsewhere.</li> </ul> <p>The future development of the area should include: Provision of a range of housing types and tenures, including three bedroom affordable family homes with private outside space.</p>	<p><i>Policy 15: Office and Business Use;</i></p> <p><i>Policy 16: Central Area Living;</i></p> <p><i>Policy 24: Spring Boroughs</i></p>	<p>The NP policy seeks to enable the redevelopment of an existing employment area for affordable housing, subject to providing employment land elsewhere. The NP policy recognises that land within the area is safeguarded for employment use by CAAP Policy 15. The NP policy implies that employment development is not prevented, but creates additional opportunities for residential development. As the NP seeks to compensate for the loss of employment land, the NP policy is considered to achieve general conformity in terms of employment provision.</p> <p>The NP policy is consistent with Policy 16 and Policy 24 in so far as it enables residential development within Spring Boroughs. It is unclear why the policy requires the area should be developed for affordable housing only, thereby excluding other residential tenures. This requirement is unlikely to achieve general conformity with Policy 16 and Policy 24 which require new residential development to be of a mix of tenures and seeks to encourage a more balanced community. As currently drafted, the policy may not meet the basic conditions, requiring some minor revision.</p> <p>The effect of the requirement for affordable tenure is unlikely to achieve general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan. However the NP policy is not expected to result in likely significant effects in respect of the SEA criteria (that have not already been considered and dealt with through a sustainability appraisal of the CAAP and JCS) as the specific conflict arising relates to tenure only and not the overall type of development.</p>	<p>The policy seeks to provide new residential development within Spring Boroughs. This aspiration is consistent with the CAAP which seeks to create opportunities for residential development in Spring Boroughs. The WNJCS requires all new developments to satisfy a range of Sustainable Development Principles and control pollution to maximise water efficiency and reduce pollution (WNJCS policies S10 &amp; BN9). Located in Northampton's Central Area, the redevelopment of North West Spring Boroughs is not expected to increase visitor disturbance at designated sites.</p>
<p><b>AB Policy 2: Central Spring Boroughs</b></p> <p>Develop central housing area of Spring Boroughs (Area 2) as new residential to include a high proportion of affordable housing suitable for families</p> <p>A. The central area of Spring Boroughs will be transformed into a safe and attractive residential neighbourhood with safe and legible routes within the neighbourhood and between the neighbourhood and the wider central area. The area will include a high proportion of affordable family housing with gardens. The neighbourhood plan would support proposals for either</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• comprehensive redevelopment of the area to rebalance the housing stock by providing more family housing , or</li> <li>• redevelopment of individual sites or collections of sites within the policy area to provide more family housing.</li> </ul> <p>B. Proposals for redevelopment would be supported, subject to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• fulfilling the criteria in Policy OP1 (Sustainable Development) and OP2 (Housing)</li> </ul>	<p><i>Policy 16: Central Area Living;</i></p> <p><i>Policy 24: Spring Boroughs</i></p>	<p>Central Spring Boroughs is predominantly in existing residential use, the vast majority of which is in an affordable tenure. It is therefore understandable why the NP policy seeks to deliver new development (which could include redevelopment of existing sites) which includes a high proportion of affordable housing.</p> <p>Ultimately, the strategic policy requirement for affordable housing is 35% on sites of 15 dwellings or more (see WNJCS Policy H2). The NP policy therefore includes an <i>aspiration</i> for a high proportion of affordable housing and not a <i>requirement</i>. The extent to which new development of affordable housing will be delivered in the area will depend on a number of factors – including the requirement to encourage a more balanced community, set out in CAAP policy 24. The policy is considered to achieve general conformity with the CAAP policies.</p> <p>With regard to the CAAP SA objective, the policy could play a positive role in developing and maintaining a balanced and sustainable population structure. There are no likely significant negative effects expected to arise as a result of the implementation of the NP policy (that have not already</p>	<p>Central Spring Boroughs is predominantly in existing residential use. The policy seeks to provide new residential development, which could include the redevelopment of existing sites. The NP policy is consistent with the CAAP which seeks to create opportunities for residential development in Spring Boroughs. The WNJCS requires all new developments to satisfy a range of Sustainable Development Principles and control pollution to maximise water efficiency and reduce pollution (WNJCS policies S10 &amp; BN9). Located in Northampton's Central Area, the redevelopment of North West Spring Boroughs is not expected to increase visitor disturbance</p>



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provision of a range of housing types and tenures, including three bedroom family homes with private outside space.</li> </ul>		been considered and dealt with through a sustainability appraisal of the CAAP and JCS).	at designated sites.
<p><b>AB Policy 3: South Spring Boroughs</b></p> <p>Protect and enhance southern part of Spring Boroughs (Area 3) as a heritage gateway</p> <p>A. A ‘heritage gateway’ will be created in the south of Spring Boroughs to give residents and visitors greater opportunities to benefit from heritage assets in the area. The neighbourhood plan will encourage proposals which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• protect heritage assets and enhance the setting of Northampton Castle and Mound, Grade 1 listed St Peters Church and Grade 11 listed Castle Hill United Reformed Church.</li> <li>• create a heritage and green space</li> <li>• allow safe use of routes between Marefair and Chalk Lane by encouraging walking and cycling</li> <li>• any housing provided will include a proportion of affordable family housing</li> <li>• provide a children’s play space</li> <li>• preserve the historic streets in Spring Boroughs</li> </ul> <p>The neighbourhood plan would support the creation of a Conservation Area, represented by Policy Area 3, to include the Saxon Palace site, St Peters Church, Hazelrigg House, Castle Mound and the site of Northampton Castle (to include the edge of the south bailey earthworks on Marefair and the finger of land stretching beyond Castle Mound to the Castle North Gate earthworks)</p>	<p><i>Policy 24: Spring Boroughs</i></p>	<p>The NP policy is likely to achieve general conformity with the CAAP. Through requiring a mix of housing; improving access to physical and social infrastructure; increasing and improving connectivity to the wider Central Area; and enhancing the setting of the Castle Mound and Grade II listed Castle Hill URC, the NP policy reflects a number of key requirements of CAAP Policy 24.</p> <p>The policy may positively contribute to the CAAP SA objectives through protecting the fabric of and setting and designated archaeological sites, ensuring the housing stock and associated infrastructure meets the needs of the local people and providing good access to services and facilities. With regard to the SEA criteria, there are no likely significant negative effects expected to arise as a result of the implementation of the NP policy (that have not already been considered and dealt with through a sustainability appraisal of the CAAP and JCS).</p>	<p>The policy seeks to deliver open space and new residential development in Spring Boroughs. Through enabling residential development and associated infrastructure i.e. open space/ children’s play space/ conservation of heritage assets, the WNJCS requires all new developments to satisfy a range of Sustainable Development Principles and control pollution to maximise water efficiency and reduce pollution (WNJCS policies S10 &amp; BN9). Located in Northampton’s Central Area, the redevelopment of North West Spring Boroughs is not expected to increase visitor disturbance at designated sites.</p>
<p><b>Conclusions and cumulative effects</b></p> <p><b>The West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (WNJCS) sets out strategic policies across the sub-region, including for the regeneration of Northampton’s Central Area. The Northampton Central Area Action Plan (CAAP) was prepared in accordance with the WNJCS and provides additional strategic policies to inform the regeneration of the central area. The WNJCS and CAAP therefore provide a comprehensive strategic policy framework. The SBNP sets out an ambitious approach to the redevelopment of the Neighbourhood Area, which reflects the local community’s aspirations and is broadly consistent with the CAAP. The purpose of the assessment is to identify any likely significant effects which could arise as a result of the implementation of the SBNP which have not already been considered and dealt with through sustainability appraisal of the CAAP and WNJCS. The assessment therefore explores the extent to which the draft policies of the SBNP (pre-submission version) achieve “general conformity” with the strategic policies of the CAAP (and therefore the WNJCS), whilst also having regard to SEA criteria and local environmental issues (sourced from the CAAP SA objectives). This assessment will inform the Council’s determination as to whether the SBNP requires a full SEA/HRA.</b></p> <p><b>It is considered that the emerging SBNP policies are likely to achieve general conformity with the strategic policies of the CAAP, with the exception of AB Policy 1. The apparent inconsistency between AB Policy 1 and the CAAP policies does not concern the principle of development in this location (residential development), but rather is a conflict between the requirement for a single tenure as opposed to a housing mix. Therefore, this matter is not expected to result in likely significant effects in terms of the SEA criteria or upon designated sites.</b></p> <p><b>The CAAP seeks to provide up to 3,400 homes in Northampton’s Central Area. Whilst it is difficult to quantify how many new homes may be delivered in Spring Boroughs (as proposals may include redevelopment of existing housing) any new housing is expected to contribute to achieving this requirement and is not expected to result in the housing requirement being exceeded to any significant extent. Overall, the SBNP is expected to play a positive contribution in enabling sustainable development (and redevelopment) of the Neighbourhood Area. The CAAP SA/SEA identified air quality and noise issues arising as a result of the implementation of the plan. However due to the extent of general conformity there is no reason to suggest that the implementation of the NP policy would result in likely significant effects in terms of air quality or noise, beyond those considered and dealt with by the CAAP. In preparing its policies, the SBNP should have particular regard to air quality and noise issues. Through the assessment, there were no likely significant negative effects identified in terms of the SEA criteria which have not already been considered and dealt with through a sustainability appraisal of the CAAP and JCS.</b></p>			

The Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA is located within 15km of the Spring Boroughs Neighbourhood Area. The assessment considered whether the NP policies would be likely to result in significant effects on designated sites (i.e. the Upper Nene valley Gravel Pits SPA) in terms of the three “vulnerabilities” – increased visitor disturbance; altered water levels; and water quality and pollution. Located in Northampton’s Central Area, the redevelopment of North West Spring Boroughs is not expected to increase visitor disturbance at those designated sites. WNJCS policies S10 and BN9 include criteria which all new developments must achieve to maximise water efficiency, improve water quality and reduce pollution. The assessment suggests that the implementation of the NP policy is not expected to result in likely effects on designated sites in respect of the three vulnerabilities.

## Appendix 2: CAAP SA Objectives

Topic	CAAP SA objective	SA questions. Will the plan lead to...
<b>Air Quality and Noise</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SA1: Reduce the need to travel, reduce the potential increase in congestion and facilitate modal shift.</li> <li>SA2: Avoid sensitive development within areas of high noise levels or poor air quality.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An increase in motor vehicle trips and increased dependence on car use?</li> <li>Sensitive location of new development in areas of high noise levels or poor air quality?</li> <li>Support for the objectives of local air quality action plans?</li> <li>Improvements in existing local public transport infrastructure or access to public transport?</li> <li>Worsening of existing traffic congestion hotspots or improvements to the current situation?</li> </ul>
<b>Archaeology and Cultural Heritage</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SA3: Protect the fabric and setting of designated and undesignated archaeological sites, monuments, structures and buildings, registered Historic Parks and gardens, registered battlefields, listed buildings and conservation areas.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development that affects listed buildings, conservation areas, scheduled ancient monuments, historic parks and gardens, and historic battlefields and/or their settings?</li> <li>Development being steered to where it can be accommodated in less sensitive areas?</li> <li>Increased awareness and encouragement of the enhancement of the archaeological resource and other aspects of heritage, such as, parks and open spaces, and areas with a particular historical or cultural association?</li> <li>Improvements in access to sites and areas of historical and cultural value?</li> <li>Opportunities for the enhancement of historic assets, townscapes and landscapes?</li> </ul>
<b>Biodiversity, Fauna and Flora</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SA4: Maintain and enhance the structure and function of habitats and populations of species, including those specifically protected.</li> <li>SA5: Increase the land area of UK Biodiversity Action Plan species and habitats within the area.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Avoidance of net loss, damage to, or fragmentation of designated and non-designated wildlife sites and populations of habitats and species?</li> <li>Avoidance of harm and enhanced opportunities for protected species and priority species within the Northamptonshire BAP?</li> <li>Opportunities for people to come into contact with robust wildlife places whilst encouraging respect for and raising awareness of the sensitivity of these sites?</li> <li>Development which includes the integration of ecological conditions and contributes to improvement in ecological connectivity in rural and urban areas?</li> </ul>
<b>Crime and Community Safety</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SA7: Improve community safety and reduce crime and the fear of crime.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Changes in crime levels, levels of Anti-Social Behaviour (vandalism, night-time economy, and disturbance) and fear of crime through improvements to the environment, layouts of streets and public space, passive surveillance, lighting etc?</li> <li>Leisure facilities for young people at the neighbourhood level including consideration of provision as part of large new residential developments?</li> <li>The creation of communities where people feel safe, particularly within Spring Borough's area of Castle Ward?</li> </ul>
<b>Energy and Climatic Factors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SA8: Support the provision of development projects and infrastructure which lead to energy efficient buildings, a reduction in carbon emissions and the provision of 'affordable warmth'. Limit the risk to people and properties from the effects of climate change.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Developments which are energy efficient in their design and construction?</li> <li>An increase in the local/on-site renewable energy generating capacity?</li> <li>A reduction in carbon emissions from energy use and transport?</li> <li>Encourage the consideration of climate change adaptation within planning and design?</li> </ul>
<b>Health and Well Being</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SA9: Improve health and reduce health inequalities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improvements to existing health services?</li> <li>Enhanced access to all health services?</li> <li>Healthier lifestyles?</li> </ul>
<b>Labour Market and Economy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SA10: Create high quality employment opportunities and develop a strong culture of enterprise and innovation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An adequate supply of land and skills to meet the requirements of key growth sectors and fully exploit locational/economic opportunities?</li> <li>Increased vitality of the town centre e.g. through promoting the town centre as a business and retail location?</li> <li>Encourage higher order employers into the Borough?</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve access to jobs for local people from all sectors of the community?</li> </ul>
<b>Landscape and Townscape</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SA11: Ensure that the quality, character and local distinctiveness of the landscape and townscape, and the features within them, are conserved and enhanced.</li> <li>SA12: Enhance the form and design of the built environment.</li> <li>SA13: To provide a strategic network of green infrastructure for West Northamptonshire, which will assist in the dispersal and natural migration of species and provide opportunities for linking communities to multi-functional green spaces.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The protection and enhancement of local distinctiveness and contribution to a sense of place (through the use of town design statements, parish plans, conservation area appraisal)?</li> <li>The amalgamation of plot sizes and / or loss of the historic street pattern?</li> <li>Design and construction methods which are sensitive to the local townscape / landscape character (e.g. detailed design codes, concept statements, masterplans and area action statements which raise the standard of design in new development and recognise local distinctiveness)?</li> <li>The provision of Green Infrastructure assets and networks (including green open space and river/canal corridors) and ensure that this is linked into new and existing developments, to improve the connectivity of green spaces and green networks and assist in the dispersal and natural migration of species?</li> </ul>
<b>Material Assets</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SA14: Ensure that the housing stock and associated infrastructure meets the needs of the local people.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sufficient housing (including affordable) and employment land to meet identified needs?</li> <li>Appropriate social, transport, waste and sewerage infrastructure?</li> <li>Adequate access to and maintenance of high quality, high value open space, sport and recreational facilities?</li> <li>A reduction in town centre retail vacancies?</li> </ul>
<b>Population</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SA15: To develop and maintain a balanced and sustainable population structure with good access to services and facilities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A well balanced and sustainable population growth and meet local needs locally wherever possible?</li> <li>Improved access to appropriate facilities, employment and the countryside particularly by public transport, for all sectors of the community?</li> </ul>
<b>Social Deprivation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SA16: To reduce spatial inequalities in social opportunities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development which addresses levels of social inclusiveness within the Central Area, particularly with respect to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Access to local services in Improved provision of key services including healthcare and education?</li> <li>- Access to affordable housing?</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Soil, Geology and Land Use</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SA17: Reduce land contamination.</li> <li>SA18: Make the most efficient use of land.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appropriate Brownfield development and encourage the reclamation and re-use of contaminated land?</li> <li>Appropriate site investigation and risk assessment, appropriate remediation and the safe disposal of contaminated land?</li> <li>Sustainable housing densities?</li> </ul>
<b>Waste</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SA19: Reduce waste generation and disposal, increase reuse and recycling and achieve the sustainable management of waste.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A reduction in the amount of waste generated by development and land use change?</li> <li>Development which uses re-cycled materials and makes provision for recycling / composting in all new development?</li> </ul>
<b>Water</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SA20: Maintain and continue to improve the quality of ground and river water.</li> <li>SA21: Reduce the risk of flooding.</li> <li>SA22: Improve efficiency of water use.</li> <li>SA23: N/A (not within plan area)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development where adequate water supply, foul drainage, sewage treatment facilities and surface water drainage is available?</li> <li>Water efficient design and reduction in water consumption?</li> <li>Development which corresponds with EA flood risk and alleviation advice especially as regards building on the floodplain?</li> <li>Development likely to affect the water quality and the ecological status of groundwater and surface water?</li> <li>Will it help to promote access to waterways and support Green Infrastructure initiatives?</li> <li>Will the plan lead to development which incorporates sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) where appropriate including their long term maintenance, to ensure that there is no increase (and if possible a reduction overall) in flood risk?</li> </ul>
<b>Education and training</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>SA24: Increase opportunities to participate in lifelong learning through the provision of appropriate infrastructure and facilitating access to opportunities.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adequate educational infrastructure associated with new residential developments. New or improved education and training facilities well located in relation to walking, cycling and public transport routes.</li> </ul>

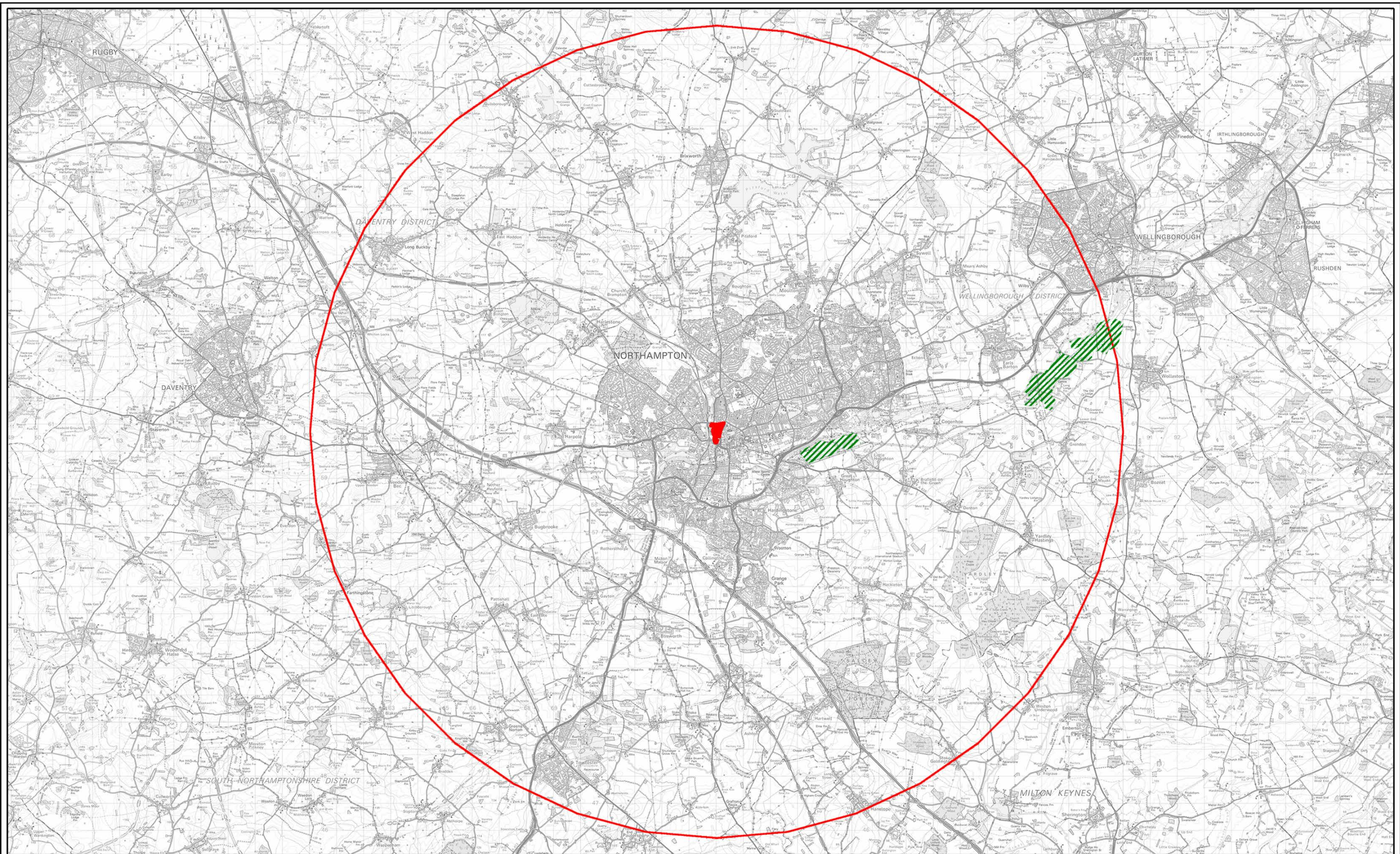
**Appendix 3: Significant effects arising from implementation of the CAAP (from SA/SEA)**

Policy	Significant positive effect on...	Significant negative effect on...
Vision	Social deprivation	
Presumption in favour of sustainable development	Labour market & economy; Material assets; Social deprivation; Soil, geology & land use; Education and training	
Policy 1 Design excellence	Archaeology & cultural heritage; Crime and community safety; Landscape & townscape	
Policy 2 Tall Buildings	Archaeology & cultural heritage; Landscape & townscape; Population; Soil, geology and land use	
Policy 3 Public Realm	Material assets	
Policy 4 Green Infrastructure	Energy & climatic factors; landscape & townscape	
Policy 5 Flood risk	Biodiversity, fauna and flora; Energy & climatic factors; Landscape & townscape	
Policies 6 to 10 Transport	Labour market and economy; Landscape & townscape; Material assets	
Policies 11 to 12 Boundary and PSA	Labour market and economy	
Policies 13 and 14 Retail	Labour market and economy; Landscape & townscape; Population; Social Deprivation	
Policy 15 Office and Business Uses	Material assets	
Policy 16 Central Area Living	Population; Social Deprivation; Soil; Geology and land-use	Air quality and noise, the policy is likely to have an adverse impact on the AQMAs in the vicinity of Great Russell Street and Bridge Street
Policy 17 Grosvenor Centre	Air quality and noise; Archaeology & cultural heritage; Crime and community safety; Health & well-being; Labour market & economy; Landscape & townscape; Material assets; Population; Social deprivation	
Policy 18 Abington Street East	Archaeology & cultural heritage; Labour market and economy	
Policy 19 Castle Station	Air quality and noise; Archaeology & cultural heritage; Labour market and economy; Landscape & townscape; Material assets	

Policy 20 St John's	Labour market and economy; Landscape & townscape; Material assets; Population	Air quality and noise, the policy is likely to have an adverse impact on the AQMAs in the vicinity of St John's Church
Policy 21 Angel Street	Archaeology & cultural heritage; Labour market and economy; Landscape & townscape; Material assets; Population	
Policy 22 Bridge Street	Labour market and economy; Material assets; Population	
Policy 23 Upper Mounts / Great Russell Street	Archaeology & cultural heritage; Health and well-being; Labour market and economy; Landscape & townscape; Material assets; Population	Air quality and noise, the policy is likely to have an adverse impact on the AQMAs in the vicinity of St Michael's Road AQMA
<b>Policy 24 Spring Boroughs</b>	<b>Archaeology &amp; cultural heritage; Health and well-being; Labour market and economy; Landscape &amp; townscape; Material assets; Population</b>	<b>Air quality and noise, the policy is likely to have an adverse impact on the AQMAs in the vicinity of the Grafton Street/Broad Street AQMA</b>
Policy 25 to 30 The Waterside Policies	Biodiversity, fauna and flora; Health and well-being; Labour market and economy; Landscape & townscape; Material assets; Population; Water; Education and training	
Policy 31 Market Square	Crime and community safety; Health and well-being; Labour market and economy; Landscape & townscape; Material assets; Population; Social deprivation	
Policy 32 Drapery	Archaeology & cultural heritage; Landscape & townscape; Population; Social deprivation	
Policy 33 Freeschool Street	Archaeology & cultural heritage; Health and well-being; Labour market and economy; Landscape & townscape; Material assets; Population; Social deprivation	
Policy 34 Former Royal Mail Sorting Office	Archaeology & cultural heritage; Biodiversity, fauna and flora; Health and well-being; Landscape & townscape; Material assets; population; Social deprivation	Air quality and noise, the policy is likely to have an adverse impact on the AQMAs in the vicinity of the Barrack Road AQMA
Policy 35 Telephone Exchange	Biodiversity, fauna and flora; Landscape & townscape; Material assets; Population; Social deprivation	
Policy 36 Infrastructure delivery	Air quality and noise; Labour market and economy; Material assets; Population	

**Appendix 4: Map showing Spring Boroughs Neighbourhood Area and designated sites**





**NORTHAMPTON**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

## Spring Boroughs: Special Protection Areas within 15km radius

not to scale  
23 March 2015



Special Protection Areas

(There are no Special Areas of Conservation within this area)