



Screening Statement

Determination of the need for a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

Draft Chapel and Hill Chorlton, Maer and Aston, and Whitmore Neighbourhood Plan

June 2018

Screening Statement

Determination of the need for a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in accordance with the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 and European Directive 2001/42/EC for the Draft Chapel and Hill Chorlton, Maer and Aston, and Whitmore Neighbourhood Plan

1. Introduction

This Screening Report is designed to determine whether or not the content of the Chapel and Hill Chorlton, Maer and Aston, and Whitmore Neighbourhood Plan 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.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is the process by which environmental considerations are required to be fully integrated into the preparation of plans and programmes prior to their final adoption. SEA is a tool used internationally to improve the environmental performance of plans so that they can better contribute to sustainable development.

Establishing whether a Neighbourhood Plan takes into account SEA is an important legal requirement. The Independent Examiner subsequently appointed to consider the Chapel and Hill Chorlton, Maer and Aston, and Whitmore Neighbourhood Plan will check that it meets the 'Basic Conditions' set out in the national Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). One of the Basic Conditions is whether the Neighbourhood Plan is compatible with European obligations. This includes the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive. This directive is transposed into UK law by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations (2004). A Neighbourhood Plan must be compatible with European Union obligations, as incorporated into UK law, in order to be legally compliant.

In meeting these obligations, the national PPG sets out that an initial screening stage is required to establish whether a Plan is likely to have significant environmental effects. As the "responsible body" this report sets out Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council's conclusions in respect of the emerging policies for the Chapel and Hill Chorlton, Maer and Aston, and Whitmore Neighbourhood Plan.

2. Legislative Background

In accordance with the SEA Directive and the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations (2004) (Regulation 9(1)), the Council must determine if a plan requires an environmental assessment. This process is commonly referred to as a "screening" assessment. Where the Council determines that Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is not required, then the Council must, under Regulation 9(3), prepare a statement setting out the reasons for this determination. Where it is determined that proposals in a Neighbourhood Plan are likely to have significant environmental effects, the Neighbourhood Plan may require a SEA. Draft Neighbourhood Plan proposals should then

be assessed to identify, describe and evaluate the likely significant environmental effects as prescribed in regulation 12 (2)& (3) of the above legislation.

In accordance with Regulation 9 of the SEA Regulations 2004, Chapel and Hill Chorlton, Maer and Aston and Whitmore Parish Council (the qualifying body) has requested Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council (NULBC), as the responsible authority, to consider whether an environmental assessment of the emerging Neighbourhood Plan is required due to significant environmental effects.

Whether a Neighbourhood Plan requires an SEA, and if so, the level of detail needed, will depend on what is proposed in the Neighbourhood Plan. The national Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) suggests that an SEA may be required, where:

- 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; and
- 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.

It remains the responsibility of the Local Planning Authority to ensure that all the regulations appropriate to the nature and scope of a Neighbourhood Plan proposal submitted to it have been met in order for the proposal to progress. However, it remains the qualifying body's responsibility to make every effort to ensure the resultant draft Neighbourhood Plan that it submits to the Local Planning Authority:

- Meets each of the basic conditions;
- Has been prepared in accordance with the correct process and all those required to be consulted have been;
- Is accompanied by all the required documents.

3. Chapel and Hill Chorlton, Maer and Aston, and Whitmore Neighbourhood Plan

The Neighbourhood Plan for Chapel and Hill Chorlton, Maer and Aston, and Whitmore presents an overarching aim, followed by a subset of visions and aims; together with a range of generic land use policies that seek to encourage appropriate and sustainable development whilst protecting the rural character of the three parishes across the neighbourhood plan area. The key topics covered by policies are summarised below:

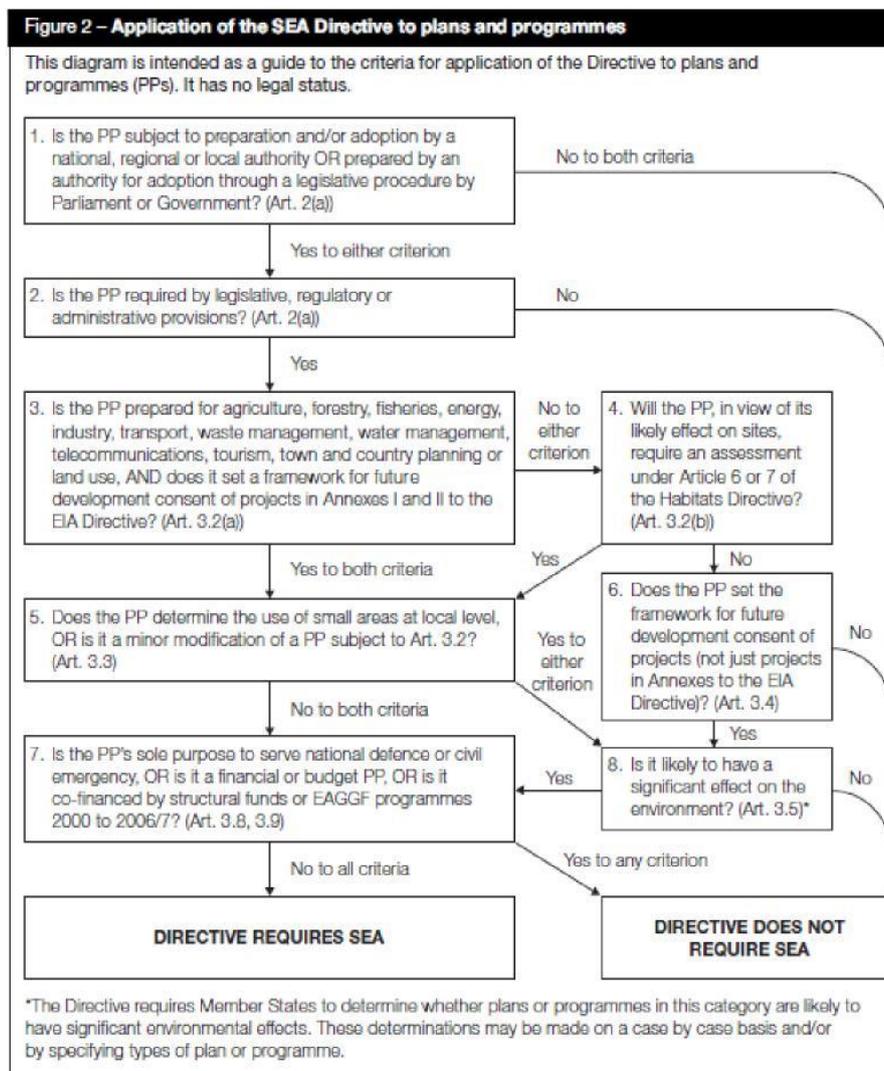
- **Biodiversity and the Environment**
 - NE1: Natural Environment
 - NE2: Sustainable Drainage
- **Community Facilities**
 - COM1: Community Facilities
 - COM2: Local Green Space
 - COM3: Developer Contributions
- **Design, Character and Built Heritage**
 - DC1: Local Heritage
 - DC2: Sustainable Design
 - DC3: Public Realm and Car Parking
 - DC4: Connectivity and Spaces
 - DC5: Street Lighting and Illuminated Signage
 - DC6: Housing Standards
 - DC7: Renewable Energy

- **Economy and Business**
 - EB1: High-Speed Connectivity and Telecommunications
 - EB2: Commercial and Tourism Development
- **Housing Growth**
 - HG1: New Housing
 - HG2: Housing Mix
 - HG3: Local Play, Sports and Recreational Facilities

4. Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening

The process for determining whether or not an SEA is required is called screening. The SEA screening is a two stage process. The first part considers the Neighbourhood Plan against the SEA assessment flow chart set out in the national guidance ‘A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive’ (see Figure 1 and Table 1).

Figure 1. Application of the SEA Directive to plans and programmes. Flow Chart from ‘A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive’.



Source:

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

The second part of the assessment is required in order to answer specific questions contained in the above (Figure 1), specifically question 8 and considers whether the Neighbourhood Plan is likely to have a significant effect on the environment, using criteria drawn from the EU SEA Directive 2001/42/EC (Annex II) and Schedule 1 of the UK Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (See Figure 2 and Table's 2 and 3).

Figure 2. Criteria for determining the likely significance effects to the environment.

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 and Schedule 1 of the UK Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes 2004.

The regulations state that before making a determination the three statutory consultation bodies must be consulted: The Environment Agency, Natural England and Historic England. Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council's assessment and response in determining whether the emerging Chapel and Hill Chorlton, Maer and Aston, and Whitmore Neighbourhood plan requires an SEA is presented in Table's 1, 2 and 3.

5. Assessment and Screening of the draft Chapel and Hill Chorlton, Maer and Aston, And Whitmore Neighbourhood Plan

Table 1: Part 1 SEA screening. Application of the SEA Directive to plans and programmes

Establish the Need for SEA		
Stage	Yes / No	Reason
1	Yes	<p>The preparation and adoption of the Neighbourhood Plan is allowed under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Localism Act 2011. The Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared by the parish council (as the "relevant body") and will be "made" by Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council as the Local Authority subject to passing an independent examination and community referendum. The preparation of Neighbourhood Plans is subject to the following regulations: The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, the Neighbourhood Planning (referendums) Regulations 2012, and the Neighbourhood Planning (General) (Amendment) Regulations 2015.</p> <p>GO TO STAGE 2</p>
2	Yes / No	<p>Whilst the Neighbourhood Plan is not a requirement of the Town and Country Planning Act as amended by the Localism Act 2011, it will be "made" and eventually form part of the Development Plan for the Borough of Newcastle-under-Lyme. It is therefore important that the screening process considers whether it is likely to have a significant environmental effect and hence whether an SEA is required under the SEA Directive.</p> <p>The strategic framework for development is set by the adopted Joint Core Spatial Strategy and the emerging Joint Local Plan. The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to align and be in general conformity with these.</p> <p>GO TO STAGE 3</p>

3	<p>Is the Neighbourhood Plan prepared for agriculture, forestry fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism, town and country planning or land use, and does it set a framework for future development consent of projects in Annexes I and II to the EIA Directive? (Art. 3.2 (a))</p>	Yes	<p>The draft Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared for town and country planning, and land use purposes for the parishes of Chapel and Hill Chorlton, Maer and Aston, and Whitmore.</p> <p>The draft Neighbourhood Plan has proposed to amend the village envelope boundary to accommodate existing sites with planning approval for housing development.</p> <p>Development management type policies are included in the draft Neighbourhood Plan to encourage good design, protect/enhance the rural built, historic and natural environment; enhance green infrastructure, community services and facilities; and local transport infrastructure.</p> <p>GO TO STAGE 4</p>
4	<p>Will the Neighbourhood Plan, 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))</p>	Not Applicable	<p>This Neighbourhood Plan will be screened separately on the need for Habitats Regulations Assessment.</p>
5	<p>Does the Neighbourhood Plan 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)</p>	No	<p>The draft Neighbourhood Plan does not propose any site allocations for future development across the area, therefore it does not determine at what specific locations certain land uses will take place.</p> <p>GO TO STAGE 6</p>
6	<p>Does the Neighbourhood Plan set the framework for future development consent of projects (not just projects in Annexes to the EIA Directive)? (Art. 3.4)</p>	Yes	<p>Once the Neighbourhood Plan is made it will form part of the statutory Development Plan and will be used by Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council to assist in the determination of planning applications. The intention is that the Neighbourhood Plan will provide a land use policy framework for future development at a local level.</p> <p>GO TO STAGE 8</p>
7	<p>Is the Neighbourhood Plan's sole purpose to serve the national defence or civil emergency, OR it a financial or budget PP, or it is co-financed by structural funds or EAGGF programmes 2000 to 2006/7? (Art. 3.8, 3.9)</p>	No	<p>Not Applicable</p>
8	<p>Is it likely to have a significant effect on the</p>	Not Applicable	<p>Assessment and responses regarding this matter are presented in Table's 2 and 3</p>

environment? (Art 3.5)	SEE TABLE 2 AND 3
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Table 2. Part 2a SEA Screening: II Application of Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects of a Neighbourhood Plan (SEA Directive Article 3(5) Annex II).

(1) Characteristics of the plan and programmes, having regard, in particular, to;		
SEA Directive Criteria Annex II	Response	Likely environmental effect?
The degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size, and operating conditions or by allocating resources;	<p>The draft Neighbourhood Plan would, if made, form part of the statutory Development Plan and will contribute to the local planning policy framework.</p> <p>The Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate sites for development, thereby providing no specific details of developable areas, scale and location of future development (apart from existing sites with planning approvals). However, Policy 'HG1: New Housing', seeks to encourage housing development within the proposed village envelope boundary through small scale infill, and not encroach into the open countryside beyond the proposed village envelope.</p> <p>Generic development management type policies (i.e. COM2: Local Green Space, COM3: Developer Contributions, DC2: Sustainable Design, DC7: Renewable Energy, HG2 Housing Mix, COM1: Community Facilities, DC1: Local Heritage) will help determine the outcome of future development proposals, and achieve the Neighbourhood Plan's overall aim of protecting the rural character whilst allowing appropriate and sustainable development.</p>	Unlikely
The degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy;	<p>The Neighbourhood Plan is required to be in conformity with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and at this stage the policies of the Joint Core Strategy and 'saved' Local Plan 2011 policies. The Neighbourhood Plan should not significantly influence other plans and programmes, but may have a limited degree of influence over the formation of the future strategic policies.</p> <p>The Neighbourhood Plan will be made alongside the emerging higher order Local Plan and form part of the Development Plan. The Neighbourhood Plan will provide supplementary information to the Development Plan on a local scale.</p>	No
The relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental conditions in	The draft Neighbourhood Plan includes development management themed policies seeking to ensure appropriate and sustainable development within the rural settlements, with particular focus on protecting/enhancing existing environmental,	Yes, positive but reinforcing existing policies

<p>particular view to promoting sustainable development;</p>	<p>historical and heritage assets (i.e. policies NE1: Natural Environment, COM1: Community Facilities, DC1: Local Heritage, DC2: Sustainable Design, and HG1: New Housing).</p> <p>Development would be subject to the policies in the NPPF, as well as the Joint Core Strategy and 'saved' Local Plan 2011 policies. The Neighbourhood Plan attempts to demonstrate its policy conformity with local / national aims and policies. The Neighbourhood Plan's vision, aims and policies have been developed in consideration of the three dimensions (economic, social and environmental) to sustainable development as described in the NPPF.</p>	
<p>Environmental Problems relevant to the plan or programme;</p>	<p>Within the natural environment there is one national designation, Maer Pool Site of Specific Scientific Interest (SSSI), and twenty-one locally designated sites consisting of seventeen Local Wildlife Sites (LWS), three Biodiversity Alert Sites (BAS) and one Site of Biological Importance (SBI). There are eighteen Ancient Woodland designations (see Appendix 1 for map of environmental designations across the plan area). These environmental assets are located outside the proposed village envelope of Baldwin's Gate where there are sites with existing planning permissions for housing development. The majority of the built environment, and sites with existing planning permission for future development are mainly focussed in and around the village settlement of Baldwin's Gate (Whitmore Parish).</p> <p>Maer Pool (SSSI) is located approximately 1.8km south of Baldwin's Gate. Map contours show topography height increasing in a southerly direction. Maer Pool is separated from Baldwin's Gate by a hill. Any potential effects through runoff would be unlikely.</p> <p>Whitmore Wood is an Ancient Woodland and Site of Biological Importance, located approximately 1.5km north of Baldwin's Gate. Map contours show the village settlement and woodland partially separated by a hill. Any potential effects through runoff would be unlikely.</p> <p>Chorlton Moss Site of Biological Importance consists of a raised peat bog, and is located approximately 0.5km south-east of Baldwin's Gate. Map contours show the topography at an even level between the village settlement and the Local Wildlife Site. Future development could impose some / minor impacts to the peat bog if not given any consideration or mitigation. However, the</p>	<p>No</p>

	<p>Neighbourhood Plan is not proposing any sites for development.</p> <p>Maer Hills Biodiversity Alert Site is located approximately 1km west of Baldwin's Gate. Map contours show that Maer Hills is situated on higher ground in comparison to the village settlement. Any potential effects through runoff would be unlikely.</p> <p>Within the built environment there are sixty-four Listed Buildings, with one Grade I, seven Grade II* and fifty-six Grade II. Additionally there are two Scheduled Monuments, one Registered Park and Garden, five Locally Listed Structures and three Conservation Areas (Maer, Whitmore and Butterson). Many of the historic/heritage assets are located beyond the village envelope of Baldwin's Gate within the open countryside or Green Belt. The village envelope of Baldwin's Gate contains Locally Important and Listed Buildings (See Appendix 2 for map of historic assets across the plan area). The amendment to the village envelope boundary to accommodate the two existing sites with planning approval (113 dwellings collectively) would not cause significant effects to the character of the built and natural environment.</p> <p>Additionally the draft Neighbourhood Plan presents specific policies seeking to preserve/enhance and prevent harm/degrading of environmental, ecological, historical and heritage features contributing to the special rural character of Chapel and Hill Chorlton, Maer and Aston, and Whitmore (i.e. Policies NE1: Natural Environment, COM1: Community Facilities, DC1: Local Heritage, DC2: Sustainable Design, and HG1: New Housing).</p> <p>Development would be subject to the policies in the NPPF, as well as the Joint Core Strategy and 'saved' Local Plan 2011 policies in relation to protecting/enhancing the natural/built/historic environment. The Neighbourhood Plan attempts to demonstrate its policy conformity with local / national aims and policies to conserve, protect and enhance the environment.</p>	
<p>The relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of (European) community legislation on the environment (for example, plans and programmes linked</p>	<p>The draft Neighbourhood Plan presents a policy to ensure that adequate on site drainage and water management measures are provided, whether they are improvements of existing measures, or entirely new measures to avoid flood risk on new developments or elsewhere across the plan area (i.e. NE2: Sustainable Drainage).</p> <p>The implementation of community legislation is unlikely to be significantly compromised by the</p>	<p>No</p>

to waste management or water protection;	Neighbourhood Plan.	
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Table 3. Part 2b SEA Screening: II Application of Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects of a neighbourhood Plan (SEA Directive Article 3(5) Annex II)

(2) Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to;		
SEA Directive Criteria Annex II	Response	Likely environmental effect?
The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects;	<p>The draft Neighbourhood plan proposes the amendment of the Baldwin's Gate village envelope boundary to allow appropriate development, and encapsulate additional sites with existing planning consents outside but adjoining the boundary. These sites have not been allocated through the Neighbourhood Plan. There are currently 315 dwellings within the village envelope. The proposed boundary amendment would encapsulate an additional 113 dwellings (two sites with existing planning approval (16/00676/REM: 109 dwellings, and 15/00294/REM: 4 dwellings), bringing the total number to 428 dwellings. The long term effects from future development (not allocated through the Neighbourhood Plan) are likely to be the loss of agricultural land graded between 2 and 3, increases in traffic movement, waste production and carbon emissions. The draft Neighbourhood Plan policies does consider these themes, and aims to mitigate the impacts from future development (i.e. Policies NE2: Sustainable Drainage DC2: Sustainable Design and DC7: Renewable Energy).</p> <p>Potential long term and irreversible effects are likely to be a result of changes in land use arising from future developments for housing and building/structures associated with community recreational/leisure use. The draft Neighbourhood Plan discourages some changes in land use (i.e. Policies COM2: Local Green Space and DC1: Local Heritage) and seeks to mitigate the effects from future development (i.e. Policies COM1: Community Facilities, COM3: Developer Contributions, DC2: Sustainable Design and HG1: New Housing).</p>	No
The cumulative nature of	The draft Neighbourhood Plan proposes to	No

<p>the effects;</p>	<p>amend the Baldwin's Gate village envelope boundary to accommodate two sites with planning approval for an additional 113 dwellings. The plan has included a policy entitled HG1: New Housing, which seeks to encourage small-scale infill development within the village envelope of Baldwin's Gate, and discourage housing development encroaching into the open countryside and local green spaces (policy COM2. Local Green Space).</p> <p>Future development may result in some cumulative impacts on the environment through the increase of vehicular usage, movements, surface water flooding and waste production. However, sites for development have not been allocated through the Neighbourhood Plan. As a result it is difficult to predict any potential cumulative impacts across the neighbourhood plan area in the future.</p> <p>Based on the Neighbourhood Plan's land use policies, with limited/no further development proposed through the Joint Core Strategy, and the emerging Joint Local Plan, the cumulative effects are unlikely to be significant to Chapel and Hill Chorlton, Maer and Aston, and Whitmore.</p>	
<p>The trans-boundary nature of the effects;</p>	<p>Future development in the Neighbourhood Plan area may impose some / minor impacts to the surrounding parishes in terms of increasing traffic and carbon emissions. However, the Neighbourhood Plan provides policies to mitigate this for future development (i.e. policies COM3: Developer Contributions, DC3: Public Realm and Car Parking and DC6: Housing Standards). Overall the impacts beyond the parish are unlikely to be significant as the Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate sites for development, and the existing Joint Core Strategy seeks to protect rural villages and provide no additional development.</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>The risk to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents);</p>	<p>The Neighbourhood Plan is unlikely to pose any significant risks to human health or the environment. The draft Neighbourhood Plan presents development management type policies seeking to improve human health by encouraging future housing development to accommodate a range of people (i.e. policy HG2: Housing Mix), and</p>	<p>No</p>

	preserve/enhance existing services, facilities and local assets (i.e. policies COM2: Local Green Space, COM3: Developer Contributions, DC4: Connectivity and Space, HG3: Local Play, Sports and Recreational Facilities and NE1: Natural Environment). Impacts to the environmental quality of Local Wildlife Sites are unlikely to be significant.	
The magnitude and the spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected);	The Neighbourhood Plan area is approximately 4290 hectares in size and covers the parishes of Chapel and Hill Chorlton, Maer and Whitmore. According to Census 2011, the total population for the Neighbourhood Plan area is 2468, with 425 in Chapel and Hill Chorlton, 489 in Maer and 1554 in Whitmore. The Neighbourhood Plan does not present any site allocations for development, but proposes to amend the village envelope boundary at Baldwin's Gate (Whitmore parish) to take into account existing planning permissions for housing development abutting the existing outer boundary. As a result, there would be a minor increase in population within the village settlement, but impacts would not be significant.	No
The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to: I. Special natural characteristics or cultural heritage; II. Exceed environmental quality standards or limit values III. Intensive land use	I. The neighbourhood plan area has a number of natural and historic assets. These include Ancient Woodland, Scheduled Ancient Monuments, a Registered Park and Garden, Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings and Locally Important Buildings. The Neighbourhood Plan presents policies to enhance / protect these assets when considering future development (i.e. policies NE1: Natural Environment, COM1: Community Facilities, COM2: Local Green Space, DC1: Local Heritage and HG1: New Housing). Many of the special environmental characteristics are located beyond the existing residential settlements and proposed village envelope of Baldwin's Gate, and would not likely to be vulnerable to significant impacts from development. The existing residential settings, including the proposed village envelope at Baldwin's Gate has a number of Listed Buildings and Local Important Buildings. Future development could have some / minor impacts to the cultural and historical environment. However, the overall	No

	<p>impacts are unlikely to be significant.</p> <p>II. The Neighbourhood Plan is unlikely to result in exceedance of environmental quality standards, such as those relating to air, water and soil quality. The Neighbourhood Plan presents policies to maintain and enhance environmental quality standards (i.e. policy COM2: Local Green Space and DC7: Renewable Energy).</p> <p>III. The Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate sites for future development, and therefore unlikely to bring forward development of an extent that would result in a significant intensification of local land use.</p>	<p>No</p> <p>No</p>
<p>The effect on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protected status;</p>	<p>There are no designated landscapes within or near the Neighbourhood Plan area.</p> <p>The Neighbourhood Plan area is categorised by the following saved policies for the Newcastle-under-Lyme Local Plan 2011: Landscape Enhancement, Landscape Maintenance and Landscape Restoration. Collectively these seek to preserve and enhance the quality and character of the landscape across the plan area.</p>	<p>No</p>

6. Screening Outcome

Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council has concluded that the emerging Chapel and Hill Chorlton, Maer and Aston, and Whitmore Neighbourhood Plan is not likely to have any significant environmental effects, and accordingly will not require a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). The main reasons for this conclusion are:

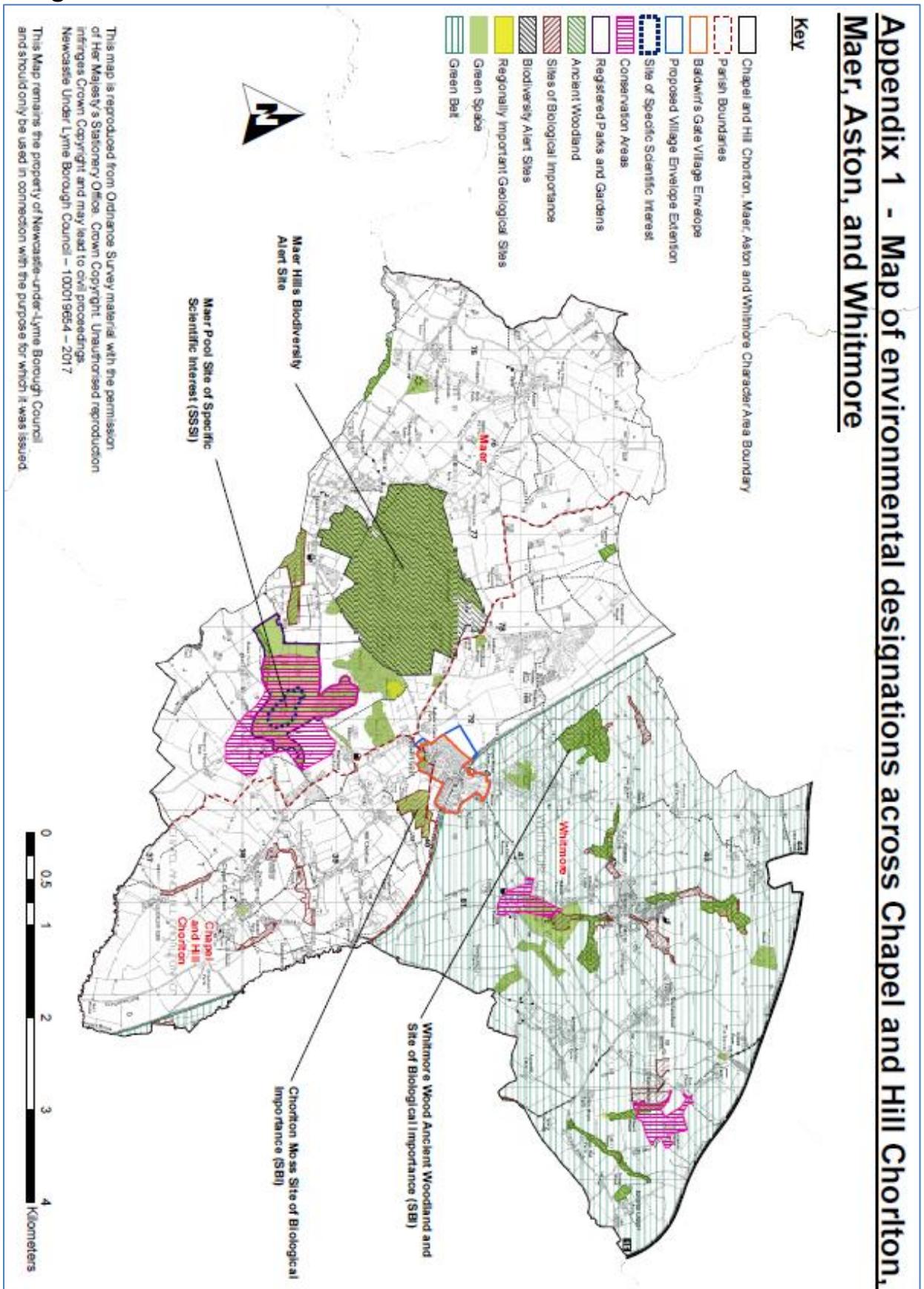
- The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to align with the adopted Development Plan (Joint Core Strategy and 'saved' Local Plan 2011 Policies. Additionally the Neighbourhood Plan is subjected to a Habitats Regulations screening opinion;
- The Neighbourhood Plan does not provide any site allocations for development. As a result, it is difficult to foresee any specific environmental effects.
- The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to avoid or minimise the environmental effects of future developments. It presents development management themed policies to conserve, protect and enhance environmental, historical, cultural and heritage assets for determining development proposals;
- The Neighbourhood Plan is unlikely to have significant affects to any designated sites, or lead to other environmental effects;
- The spatial extent and the magnitude of the population affected are not considered significant for the purpose of the SEA;

The statutory consultees, Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England have been consulted. They concur with the opinion of Newcastle-under-Lyme

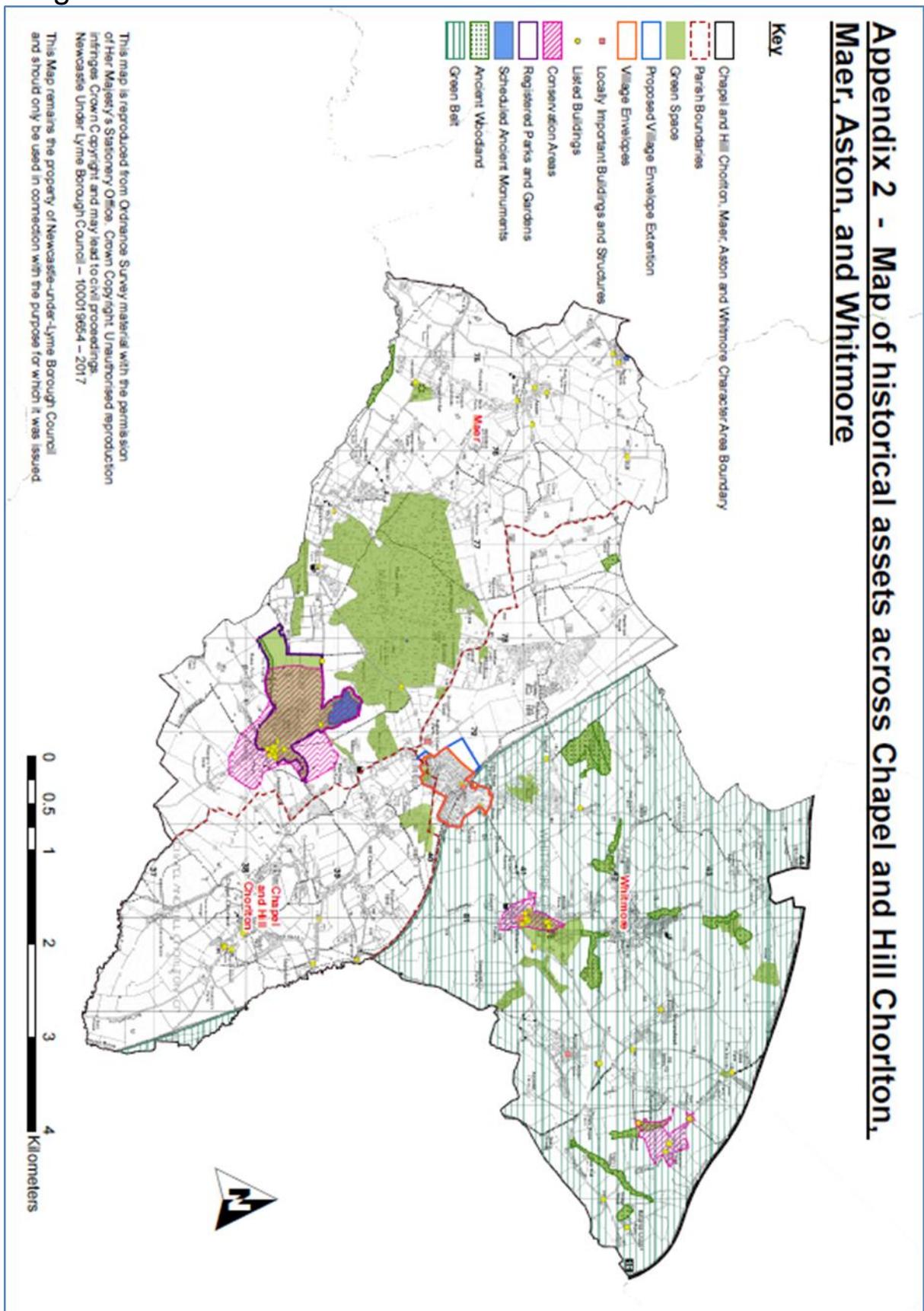
Borough Council that a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is not required, therefore no significant changes have been made to this screening report. Copies of their responses have been included as Appendix 3.

In addition to the screening of Neighbourhood Plans in relation to SEA, there is a need to assess the likelihood of the plan having an adverse impact on internationally designated wildlife sites. The Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) is required by the European Habitats Directive, and screening has been undertaken separately.

Appendix 1 – Map of environmental designations across the Neighbourhood Plan area



Appendix 2 – Map of historical assets across the Neighbourhood Plan Area



Appendix 3 – Responses from Statutory Consultees

HISTORIC ENGLAND RESPONSE

Ms Janet Belfield
Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council
Neighbourhood Planning
Civic Offices, Merrial Street
Newcastle-under-Lyme
Staffordshire
ST5 2AG

Direct Dial: 0121 625 6887

Our ref: PL00408024

1 June 2018

Dear Ms Belfield

CHAPEL AND HILL, CHORLTON, MAER AND ASTON AND WHITMORE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN- SEA AND HRA SCREENING

Thank you for your consultation and the invitation to comment on the SEA and HRA Screening Document for the above Neighbourhood Plan.

For the purposes of consultations on SEA Screening Opinions, Historic England confines its advice to the question, “Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment?” in respect of our area of concern, cultural heritage.

Our comments are based on the information supplied with the screening request. On the basis of the information supplied and in the context of the criteria set out in Schedule 1 of the Environmental Assessment Regulations [Annex II of the ‘SEA’ Directive], Historic England concurs with your view that the preparation of a Strategic Environmental Assessment is not required. Regarding HRA Historic England does not disagree with your conclusions but would defer to the opinions of the other statutory consultees.

The views of the other statutory consultation bodies should be taken into account before the overall decision on the need for a SEA is made. If a decision is made to undertake a SEA, please note that Historic England has published guidance on Sustainability Appraisal / Strategic Environmental Assessment and the Historic Environment that is relevant to both local and neighbourhood planning and available at: <https://www.historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/sustainability-appraisal-and-strategic-environmental-assessment-advice-note-8/>

I trust the above comments will be of help in taking forward the Neighbourhood Plan.

Yours sincerely,

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Peter Boland

Historic Places Advisor

peter.boland@HistoricEngland.org.uk

cc:

NATURAL ENGLAND RESPONSE

Date: 12 June 2018

Our ref: 246577

Your ref: N/a



Newcastle under Lyme Borough Council

For attention of Janet Belfield

BY EMAIL ONLY

Customer Services
Hornbeam House
Crewe Business Park
Electra Way
Crewe
Cheshire
CW1 6GJ
T 0300 060 3900

Dear Janet

Planning consultation: Neighbourhood development plan areas Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening Reports for the Chapel and Hill Chorlton; Maer and Aston; and Whitmore Neighbourhood Plan

Thank you for your consultation on the above dated 10 May 2018 which was received by Natural England on the same day. I am sorry for the delay responding.

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

Strategic Environmental Assessment – Screening

We welcome the production of this SEA Screening report. Natural England notes and concurs with the screening outcome i.e. that no SEA is required.

Further guidance on deciding whether the proposals are likely to have significant environmental effects and the requirements for consulting Natural England on SEA are set out in the National Planning Practice Guidance at:

<http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/blog/guidance/strategic-environmental-assessment-and-sustainability-appraisal/sustainability-appraisal-requirements-for-neighbourhood-plans/>

Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening

Natural England notes the screening process applied to this Neighbourhood plan. We agree with the Council's conclusion of no likely significant effect upon the named European designated sites:

- Midland Meres and Mosses Phase 2 Ramsar site (Cop Mere).
- Midland Meres and Mosses Phase 1 Ramsar site (nearest site Betley Mere)
- Midland Meres and Mosses Phase 2 Ramsar site (Black Firs & Cranberry Bog).

- Midlands Meres and Mosses Phase 2 Ramsar site (nearest site Oakhanger Moss)
- West Midlands Mosses SAC (nearest site Wybunbury Moss)

We would be happy to comment further should the need arise but if in the meantime you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact us.

For any queries relating to the specific advice in this letter only please contact me on 020 802 60939. For any new consultations, or to provide further information on this consultation please send your correspondence to consultations@naturalengland.org.uk.

Yours sincerely

Antony Muller
Lead Adviser – West Midlands Planning for a Better Environment Team

ENVIRONMENT AGENCY RESPONSE

Ms Janet Belfield
Newcastle Under Lyme Borough Council
Planning Services Department
Civic Offices
Merrial Street
Newcastle
Staffordshire
ST5 2AG

Our ref: UT/2006/000035/SE-04/SC1-L01

Your ref: SEA/HRA Screening

Date: 06 June 2018

Dear Ms Belfield

SEA Screening Request for Chapel and Hill Chorlton; Maer and Aston; and Whitmore Neighbourhood Plan

Thank you for your email which was received on 11 May 2018.

As requested we have reviewed the Screening Assessment prepared in support of the Chapel and Hill Chorlton; Maer and Aston; and Whitmore Neighbourhood Plan. Having reviewed the proposals we do not consider there to be any significant environmental impacts as a result of this plan, therefore, we concur with the conclusions of the report and do not require a SEA/SA to be undertaken in support of the plan.

We note the presence of the floodplain within the neighbourhood boundary, however as this does not affect the settlement boundary we have no concerns. We are happy to see details associated with the main rivers that flow through the site boundary have been included in the Draft Neighbourhood Plan submitted. We also note the presence of historic landfills within the settlement boundary, however we do not consider there to be significant environmental risk associated with this.

Yours sincerely

Ms Anne-Marie McLaughlin

Planning Advisor

Direct dial 020 3025 4111

Direct e-mail anne-marie.mclaughlin@environment-agency.gov.uk

Environment Agency

9, Sentinel House Wellington Crescent, Fradley Park, Lichfield, WS13 8RR.

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End