



**New Buckenham Neighbourhood Plan  
Strategic Environmental Assessment  
Screening Report  
March 2021**

# Strategic Environmental Assessment: Screening Report

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# 1. Introduction

1.1. 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.

1.2. Establishing whether a Neighbourhood Plan has been subject to a SEA is an important legal requirement. The independent Examiner appointed to consider the New Buckenham Neighbourhood Plan (NBNP) will check that it meets the 'Basic Conditions' set out in national Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)<sup>1</sup>. One of the Basic Conditions is whether the NBNP is compatible with European Union obligations.

1.3. This screening report is designed to determine whether or not the contents of the NBNP require a SEA in accordance with the European Directive 2001/42/EC and the associated Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations (2004)<sup>2</sup>.

1.4. The legislative background, which is set out in section 2, outlines the regulations that require the need for this screening exercise.

1.5. The policies of the NBNP are set out in section 3.

1.6. To assess whether a SEA is required, a screening process must be undertaken based on a standard set of criteria. This must be subject to consultation with the statutory consultees of the Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England. In addition to this Norfolk County Council were consulted.

1.7. The results of the screening process must be detailed in a Screening Report and made available to the public.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/blog/guidance/neighbourhood-planning/the-basic-conditions-that-a-draft-neighbourhood-plan-or-order-must-meet-if-it-is-to-proceed-to-referendum/>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2004/1633/contents/made>

## 2. Legislative Background

2.1. The basis for SEA legislation is European Union Directive 2001/42/EC<sup>3</sup> which requires a Strategic Environmental Assessment to be undertaken for certain types of plans or programmes that would have a significant environmental effect. This was transposed into English law by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, commonly referred to as the SEA Regulations.

2.2. In accordance with the provisions of the SEA Directive and the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations (2004) (Regulation 9(1)), Breckland Council must determine if a plan requires an environmental assessment. Where the Council determines that SEA is not required, then the Council must, under Regulation 9(3), prepare a statement setting out the reasons for this determination.

2.3. In accordance with Regulation 9 of the SEA Regulations 2004, New Buckenham Parish Council (the qualifying body) has requested Breckland Council, as the responsible authority, to consider whether an environmental assessment of the emerging Neighbourhood Plan is required due to significant environmental effects.

2.4. Whether a neighbourhood plan requires a SEA, and if so, the level of detail needed, will depend on what is proposed in the draft neighbourhood plan (see PPG Paragraph 046). The PPG suggests that SEA 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; 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 (LP).

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<sup>3</sup> <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32001L0042>

### 3. New Buckenham Neighbourhood Plan Designations and Policies

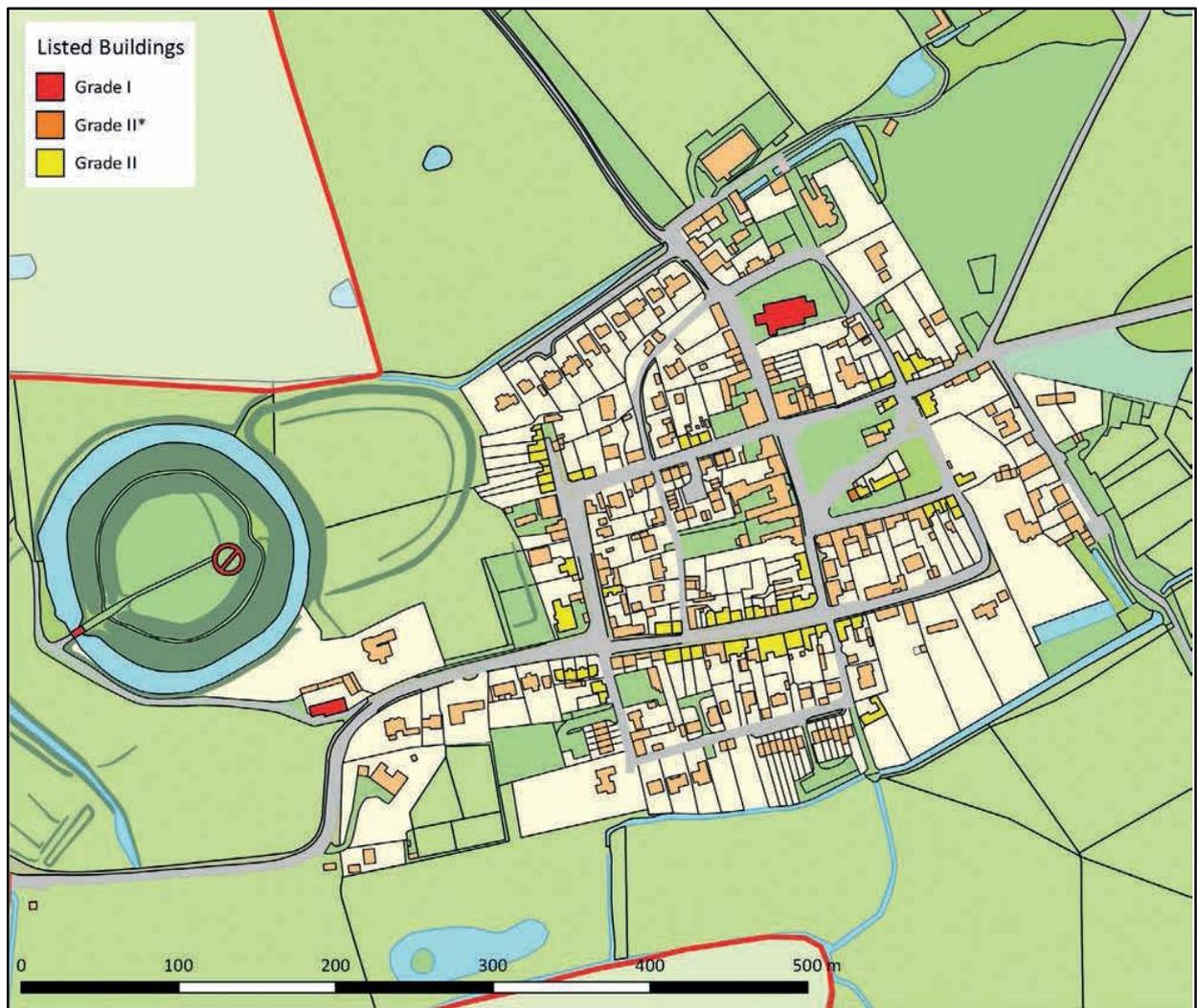
3.1. NBNP is at the pre-submission consultation stage (Reg.14). The information provided for the SEA Screening Opinion Request, identifies that:

In terms of environmental assets, the Neighbourhood Plan area does not encompass any Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (the nearest AONB is the Norfolk Coast over 40km away) or National Parks (the Broads over 20km away). There are also no Special Area of Conservation, Special Protection Area or Ramsar Sites within the Parish, with more detailed screening of the potential effects of the NBNP on these areas undertaken through a parallel HRA<sup>4</sup> screening. There is one Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) within the parish, New Buckenham Common SSSI. The parish has two County Wildlife Sites wholly within, or partially within, its boundaries with another four sites within 2km. This information is summarised in the table below.

Environmental assets	Designation	Details
Internationally designated sites	Special Area of Conservation (SAC)	None within the NP area
	Special Protection Areas (SPA)	None within the NP area
	Ramsar wetlands	None within the NP area
	Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)	New Buckenham Common SSSI – within boundary
	Registered Ancient Woodland	None within the NP area
Local sites	County Wildlife Sites (CWS)	New Buckenham Common and New Buckenham Common North
	Geodiversity Sites	None within the NP area
	Roadside Nature Reserves (RNR)	None within the NP area
Common land	Registered Common Land	The Common (Ref 41029) The Marketplace (Ref 41242)
	Registered Village Green	None within the NP area
Public Rights of Way (PRoW)	Public Footpaths, bridleways and Restricted byways	FP 1,3,5,6,14 and 15 cross the neighbourhood plan area with others around the area. A map is provided within the neighbourhood plan.
	Norfolk Trails	None within the NP area
Agricultural Land	Grades 1-5	Areas of Grade 2 and 3.

<sup>4</sup> HRA Screening Assessment, September 2020 (Capita) has been prepared and consulted upon with Natural England.

Flooding	Flood Zones	Area of Flood zone 2 and 3 along watercourses.
Heritage Assets	Scheduled Monuments Listed Buildings Conservation Areas	2 Scheduled Monuments Listed Buildings - 3 Grade 1 - 1 Grade 2* - 42 Grade 2 1 Conservation Area



**Figure 1: Listed Buildings and Scheduled Monuments. New Buckenham Neighbourhood Plan**

Scheduled Monument and Listed Building data © Historic England copyright and/or database right 2018

3.2. The NBNP policies (Reg.14) to be considered in the SEA Screening Opinion are:

<b>LANDSCAPE AND HERITAGE</b>
<b>POLICY LH 1 Change of use and extensions to historic buildings</b>
2.2.11. The Parish Council should support planning applications that seek to retain and revitalise historic buildings involving alterations or change of use, where sufficient information is provided to demonstrate their potential positive impact on the local context of social, environment or business <sup>15</sup> .
<b>POLICY LH 2 New buildings</b>
2.2.12. Planning applications should demonstrate a positive effect upon the historic character and fabric of the village <sup>16</sup> . Building design and materials, whether traditional or contemporary, should be of good quality and not be harmful to neighbouring properties and the village's built and natural landscape. This can be demonstrated through submission of a range of drawings as shown in the technical guidance in Appendix 1.
<b>POLICY LH 3 New development and layout of the village</b>
2.2.13. All development proposals should demonstrate an awareness of and respect for the historic boundaries of the village, including the line of the town ditch, the medieval street grid and individual tenement plots <sup>17</sup> .
<b>POLICY LH 4 New development and open countryside setting</b>
2.2.14. Development must maintain and, where possible, enhance the special quality of the open countryside setting of the village, especially the relationship between the Castle and the planned settlement, as originally designed <sup>18</sup> . Notable views that illustrate the village's countryside setting should not be unacceptably compromised. Such views are shown in Figure 5.
<b>COUNTRYSIDE AND ENVIRONMENT</b>
<b>POLICY CE 1 Developments and natural environment</b>
2.3.17. All new developments and major alteration of existing properties should demonstrate that building work will at least maintain, and if possible enhance, biodiversity and protect wildlife habitats and networks. Such proposals should not impact adversely on areas used for recreation. Developers should be encouraged to submit a green space and landscaping strategy along with the planning application. 2.3.18. New development that makes a positive contribution to the existing network of green infrastructure or provides an increase in the amount of publicly available green spaces should be supported subject to other policies in this Plan.
<b>POLICY CE 2 Designation of local green spaces</b>
2.3.19. This Neighbourhood Plan confirms the following sites as Local Green Spaces <sup>31</sup> as shown in Figure 7. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li style="display: inline-block; width: 45%;">• Market Place</li> <li style="display: inline-block; width: 45%;">• Cuffer Lane (Tas Valley Way)</li> <li style="display: inline-block; width: 45%;">• St Martin's Church graveyard and boundaries</li> <li style="display: inline-block; width: 45%;">• Village Hall playing field</li> <li style="display: inline-block; width: 45%;">• Cemetery and boundaries</li> <li style="display: inline-block; width: 45%;">• Cricket ground and surroundings</li> <li style="display: inline-block; width: 45%;">• Allotments</li> </ul>
2.3.20. Proposals for development in a designated Local Green Space should be only supported if it helps the public better use that land for recreation.
<b>POLICY CE 3 Loss and restitution of important habitats</b>
2.3.21. Planning permission should be refused for development that results in the loss or deterioration of important habitats, particularly the Castle and the Common. Trees and hedgerows should be protected and conserved unless their long-term survival is

compromised by their physical condition or there are exceptional overriding benefits in accepting their loss.

2.3.22. Restitution and improvement of green habitats should include, wherever appropriate, the new planting of deciduous trees and species-rich hedgerows.

2.3.23. Development work to provide essential infrastructure will be seriously considered where the benefits clearly outweigh any harm and there are no reasonable alternative sites available.

**POLICY CE 4 Green living plan requirement**

2.3.24. Proposals for new residential development, whether new build or major conversions, will be required to submit a Green Living Plan with planning applications in order to contribute to a coordinated approach to sustainable living in New Buckenham. Items for inclusion in the Green Living Plan are provided in Appendix 2: Green Policies checklist.

**DARK SKIES AND LIGHT POLLUTION**

**POLICY DS 1 Keeping dark areas dark**

2.4.4. Development must not detract from the unlit environment of the Plan area. External lighting for security and floodlighting must be designed to be deflected downwards and mostly switched off no later than midnight.

**POLICY DS 2 Outside lighting**

2.4.5. Permanent lighting for a development associated with any activity, including leisure, recreation and business, should be demonstrated to be essential. It should be managed in such a way that reduces light pollution, energy usage, impact on wildlife, annoyance to local residents and visual impact on the local character of the area.

2.4.6. Outside lighting design and use should be compatible with the existing Dark Sky Policies adopted by Norfolk County Council<sup>35</sup>.

**Amendment required to policy:** As Norfolk County Council do not have a current Dark Sky Policy, this referencing will need to be removed.

**POLICY DS 3 Minimum requirements for new external lighting**

2.4.7. Where any new lighting is considered necessary in public areas for public safety reasons, it must be fully shielded and enclosed in full cut-off flat glass fitments; directed downwards; not tilted; switched on only when needed rather than on all night; and be white light low-energy lamps such as LED technology.

**POLICY DS 4 Lighting away from built areas**

2.4.8. Commercial or agricultural premises outside the village’s built area must avoid continuous bright lighting.

**HOUSING AND BUILDING**

**POLICY HB 1 Housing types**

2.5.16. A mix of housing types and densities that reflects local needs and demographic changes should be supported, subject to other policies in this Plan. The development of smaller, less expensive dwellings is particularly encouraged especially if the quality of their design and materials is high.

**POLICY HB 2 Housing and car parking**

2.5.17. The Parish Council’s approach to parking will take into account the parking requirements of existing residents and visitors, and will look more favourably on proposals that provide off-street parking.

<b>POLICY HB 3 Change of use of commercial and business premises</b>
2.5.18. Proposals that result in the loss of commercial and business premises that currently provide a service to the local community, such as pubs and shops and other commercial premises, will be required to demonstrate that either the use is no longer viable or the proposed use would provide an alternative community benefit.
<b>POLICY HB 4 Design of new building</b>
2.5.19. Proposals for new development should demonstrate how they respond to their settings. Drawings should clearly show the relationship of a proposed development to neighbouring buildings, perhaps the whole street if applicable, and the surrounding landscape. Details of building design is covered in Appendix 1.
2.5.20. Improvements to the public areas in and around the village will be encouraged and supported. New development should contribute to enhancement work such as the provision of street trees, improved shop fronts, high quality surface materials, provision of cycle parking, and the avoidance of street clutter and barriers to pedestrian movement.
<b>POLICY HB 5 Low impact access routes</b>
2.5.21. A new development proposal should demonstrate how it relates to existing pedestrian and cycle routes. Any opportunities available should be taken to provide new or improve existing, convenient, safe and direct links for pedestrians and cyclists to local facilities and surrounding local centres and countryside.
<b>POLICY HB 6 Encouraging sustainable development</b>
2.5.22. New development which incorporates energy efficiency measures and sustainable energy generation technologies will be encouraged, subject to other policies in this Plan. Careful consideration should be given to the impact on heritage assets and buildings of local merit. Provision should be considered for accommodating electric vehicles.
<b>POLICY HB 7 Green living plan requirement</b>
2.5.23. Developers should submit a Green Living Plan with planning applications in order to contribute to a coordinated approach to sustainable living in New Buckenham. Items for inclusion in the Green Living Plan are provided in the Appendix 2: Green Living Plan checklist.
<b>POLICY HB 8 Boundaries</b>
2.5.24. Developments should consider green rather than hard boundaries, ideally of mixed species native hedging. If hard boundaries are essential, they should be of good quality brick and flint rather than fence panels, provision always being made for allowing movement of small wildlife such as hedgehogs.
<b>POLICY HB 9 Utilities and signage</b>
2.5.25. In new developments and alterations, there should be no overhead wires, poles, or masts. Signage should be kept to an absolute minimum.
<b>TRAFFIC AND PARKING</b>
<b>POLICY TP 1 Highway developments</b>
2.6.15. All development involving a public highway link should, as appropriate, incorporate shared walking, parking and road surface characteristics similar to most of the rest of the village.
<b>POLICY TP 2 Flashing speed signs</b>
2.6.16. An extra flashing speed sign is to be installed <sup>48</sup> . The cost would be in the region of £3,500–£4,000, paid for using Parish Partnership schemes, an initiative created to enable local communities to apply for match funding to deliver additional highway projects.

<b>POLICY TP 3 Boundary gateways</b>
2.6.17. Village boundary 'gateways' are to be installed at either end of the village <sup>49</sup> .
<b>POLICY TP 4 Car park</b>
2.6.18. The Parish Council's car park near the play area should be enlarged, ensuring a sustainable drainage system as appropriate.
<b>BUSINESS AND TOURISM</b>
<b>POLICY BT 1 Communications infrastructure</b>
2.7.10. The Parish Council will support proposals to provide access to a super-fast broadband network to serve the village and other properties in the local countryside. Within the village, new overhead wires will be resisted. Outside the village any above-ground network installations, if essential, should be sympathetically chosen and designed to reflect the character of the local area.
<b>POLICY BT 2 Better communications for individual homes business</b>
2.7.11. Applications for new development must contain a 'Connectivity Statement' to demonstrate easy connection to telecommunication and broadband services without overground wires.
<b>POLICY BT 3 Support for business and tourism development</b>
2.7.12. Business and tourism development initiatives should be supported, subject to other policies in this Plan, where they can be shown to make improvements to the economy, environment and landscape, and well-being of the village. Where planning permission is required, development that does not demonstrate any such benefit to the village will be refused.
<b>RECREATION, HEALTH AND CULTURE</b>
<b>POLICY RHC 1 Social interaction and community life</b>
2.8.7. Development related to community use including changes of use or alterations to permitted opening hours where express planning permission is required, will be supported subject to other policies in this Plan.
<b>POLICY RHC 2 Local facilities</b>
2.8.8. Proposals will be supported that allow local facilities to be developed and modernised in a sustainable way for the benefit of the community subject to other policies in this Plan. <sup>51</sup>
<b>POLICY RHC 3 Reducing impact of loss of facilities</b>
2.8.9. Development of existing community facilities will be supported where they will enhance their community function subject to other policies in this Plan. 2.8.10. Development resulting in the loss of an existing community amenity will only be permitted where there is an adequate facility nearby, or all reasonable efforts have been made to preserve the facility but it has become unviable for community use. 2.8.11. Where it is demonstrated that an existing community use is not viable, preference will be given to the change of use or redevelopment to alternative community uses before other uses are considered where express planning permission is required.

*Neighbourhood Plan Footnotes [N.B. This is out of date and will need amending\*]*

15 Breckland Emerging\* Local Plan Policy COM 01

16 See Appendix 1

17 Breckland Emerging\* Local Plan Policy COM 01

18 Breckland Emerging\* Local Plan Policy COM 01

31 Breckland Emerging\* Local Plan 5.53

*35 Parish Councils are invited to use CPRE Norfolk's Standard Light Pollution Clause in considering applications*

*48 This could be a VAS (Vehicle Activated Sign) similar to the one on the Turnpike, placed at the Castle Hill end of the village, although a SAM2 (movable speed sign) might be more effective as it can be designed to our specifications and can also be moved between two or three different locations.*

*49 A simple made-for-purpose structure is the least expensive, possibly with associated permissible planting. This could be installed through partnership funding, the continuation of which is in doubt, the cost to the village being around £4000 for both B1113 ends of the village.*

*51 Breckland Local Plan COM 04*

3.3. The NBNP will not allocate land that is in or above that identified within the Breckland Local Plan.

## 4. SEA Screening

4.1. The process for determining whether or not a SEA is required is called 'screening'. In order to screen, it is necessary to determine if a plan will have significant environmental effects using the criteria set out in Annex II of the SEA Directive and Schedule I of the SEA Regulations. A determination cannot be made until the three statutory consultation bodies have been consulted: The Environment Agency, Natural England and Historic England.

4.2. Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects referred to in Article 3(5) of Directive 2001/42/EC are set out in Table 1 below:

**Table 1: Criteria for Determining the Likely Significance of Effects.**

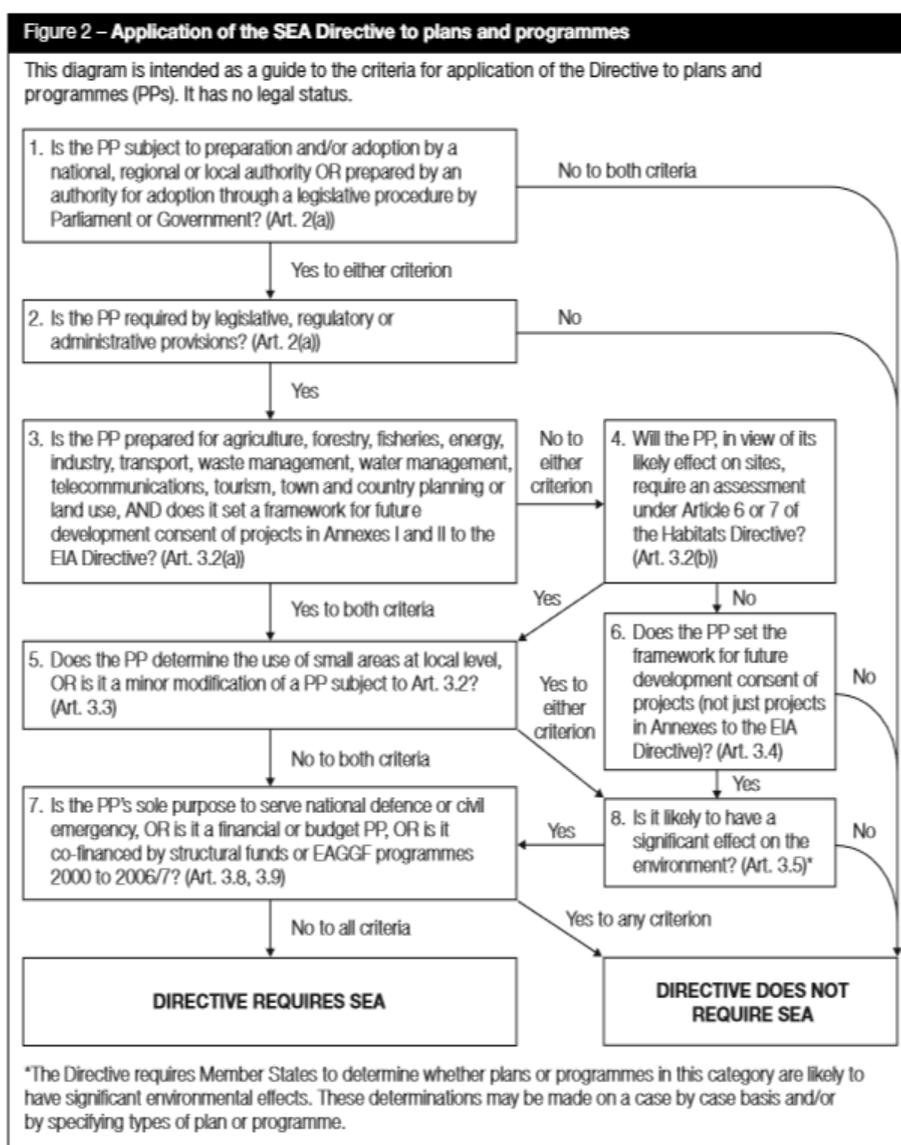
1. The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular, to
  - the degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources,
  - the degree to which 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 11 of SEA Directive 2001/42/EC

## 5. Assessment

5.1. The SEA screening is a two-stage process. The first part considers the Neighbourhood Plan against the SEA assessment criteria set out in the national guidance, 'A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive'<sup>5</sup>. The second part of the assessment considers whether the NP is likely to have a significant effect on the environment, using criteria drawn from Schedule 1 of the EU SEA Directive and the UK Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004<sup>6</sup>.

5.2. Figure 2 below sets out how the SEA Directive should be applied with steps 1 to 5 encompassed within Stage 1 of the SEA screening process and step 8 undertaken through Stage 2.



Source: Annex 11 of SEA Directive

<sup>5</sup> [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/7657/practicalguidesea.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/7657/practicalguidesea.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> [http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2004/1633/pdfs/ukxi\\_20041633\\_en.pdf](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2004/1633/pdfs/ukxi_20041633_en.pdf)

**SEA Screening Stage 1: SEA Directive Article 2(a), 3.2(a), 3.2(b) 3.3, 3.4, 3.8 and 3.9**

**Table 2: Application of the SEA Directive to the New Buckenham Neighbourhood Plan**

**Assessment 1: Establishing the need for SEA**

STAGE	Y/N	REASON
1. Is the Neighbourhood Plan (NP) 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))	Y	The preparation and making of the NP is permitted under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Localism Act 2011. The NP is being prepared by New Buckenham Parish Council (as the “relevant bodies”) and will be “made” (adopted) by Breckland Council as the Local Authority subject to passing an independent examination and community referendum. The preparation of the NP is subject to the following regulations: The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) and the Neighbourhood Planning (Referendums) Regulations 2012.
2. Is the NP required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions? (Art.2(a))	N	Whilst the NP is not a requirement of the Town and Country Planning Act as amended by the Localism Act 2011, it will be “made” and form part of the Development Plan for the District. These are directed by legislative processes and it is important that the screening process considers whether it is likely to have significant environmental effects and hence whether SEA is required under the Directive.
3. Is the NP 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))	N	A NP can include these policy areas and could provide, at a Neighbourhood Area level, the framework for development that would fall within Annex II of the EIA Directive. Developments that fall within Annex I are ‘excluded’ development for NPs (as set out in Section 61(k) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)). The NP sets out a framework for town and country planning and land use within the parish of New Buckenham. The strategic framework for development is set by the adopted Breckland LP. The NP seeks to align and be in general conformity with this. The NP does not anticipate being the tool to manage development of the scale and nature envisaged by Annex I and Annex II of the EIA Directive.
4. Will the NP, 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))	Y	A NP could potentially have impacts on sites covered by the Habitats Regulations. A Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) Screening Report (2013) and the Assessment of the Breckland LP at Submission stage (2017) were carried out as part of the Local Plans preparation. A HRA screening assessment on the New Buckenham Neighbourhood Plan has also been undertaken (September

		2020). This concludes there are no likely significant effects on Habitat Sites covered by the Habitats Regulations arising from the NBNP (based on the draft currently prepared).
5. Does the NP determine the use of small areas at local level, or is it a minor modification of a PP subject to Art 3.2? (Art3.3)	Y	A NP can determine the use of small areas at a local level. The NP proposes to include policies relating to the management of sustainable development. The NBNP does not specifically allocate land for additional housing or other growth but does propose the extension of the parish car park.
6. Does the NP set the framework for future development consent of Projects (not just projects in Annexes to the EIA Directive)? (Art 3.4)	Y	Once 'made', a NP forms part of the statutory Development Plan and will be used in the determination of planning applications in the Neighbourhood Area. Therefore, it sets the framework for future developments at a local level.
Is the NP sole purpose to serve national defence or civil emergency, or is it financial or budget PP, or is it co-financed by structural funds or EAGGF programmes 2000 to 2006/7? (Art.3.8,3.9)	N	The NP does not deal with these categories.
8. Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment	N	The NP seeks general conformity with the strategic policies of the "adopted" LP. There is no specific development proposed through the plan, nor is land allocated for development through the plan. Whilst there are no internationally designated within the boundary there is one SSSI and several heritage assets within its boundaries. It is therefore considered that the plan would not have a significant effect on heritage assets, landscape, biodiversity interests or areas of flood risk.

5.3 The Environment Agency, Natural England and Historic England were consulted on the requirement for SEA for the NBNP. The responses received are attached in Appendix 1.

**SEA Screening Stage 2: SEA Directive Article 3(5) Annex II – Application of Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects of a Neighbourhood Plan**

5.4 Table 3 below sets out the assessment against the Strategic Environmental Assessment criteria for the NP. This is to determine whether the implementation of the Neighbourhood Plan will have a significant effect on the environment. This criteria against which the screening is carried out are taken directly from Annex II of the European Union Directive 2001/42/EC (also known as the SEA Directive), as required by Article 3(4).

**Table 3: SEA Screening Stage 2 - Assessment of the Likelihood of Significant Effects on the Environment**

Criteria in Annex 11 of the SEA Directive	Response	Is there a significant effect?
<b>(1) Characteristics of the plan and programmes, having regard, in particular, to:</b>		
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 strategic framework for development is set by the adopted Breckland LP. The NBNP seeks to align and be in general conformity with this.	No
The degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans or programmes including those in a hierarchy;	Once “made” the NBNP would be implemented alongside the LP and form part of the District’s Development Plan. The NBNP will expand upon some of the emerging LP policies, providing additional information at a local scale.	No
The relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development;	Any development that comes forward through the NBNP will be subject to the environmental considerations of the adopted LP. These policies have been subject to sustainability appraisal and are in place to ensure that sustainable development is achieved.	No
Environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme;	There are not considered to be any significant environmental problems which are specific to the area, above and beyond those considered and addressed in the LP. The NBNP includes policies which provide additional environmental protection. The NBNP has also been subject to a ‘Screening’, which concluded there are no likely significant effects on Habitat Sites covered by the Habitats Regulations.	No

The relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of community legislation on the environment (e.g. plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection).	The implementation of community legislation is unlikely to be significantly compromised by the NBNP.	No
<b>(2) Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to:</b>		
The probability, duration, frequency, and reversibility of the effects;	The NP is a long-term plan up to 2036. The NP does not seek to allocate sites for growth but supplements LP policy with local matters of importance for consideration. .	No
The cumulative nature of the effects;	No growth is proposed through the Neighbourhood Plan as such no cumulative effects arise in combination with the adopted LP to introduce significant environmental effects.	No
The transboundary nature of the effects;	The impacts beyond the NBNP area are unlikely to be significant.	No
The risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents);	The nature of the proposals establishing local criteria for consideration of development proposals within the NBNP is not likely to produce any significant effects.	No
The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected);	The NP covers the Parish of New Buckenham, and a small part of the adjacent Old Buckenham parish, with a population of 449 (2017 mid-year estimate). The spatial extent and the magnitude of the population affected are not considered significant for the purpose of the SEA.	No
The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to: i) Special natural characteristics or cultural heritage; ii) Exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values iii) Intensive land use	i) The NP area and adjacent areas contains nationally designated sites. It includes designations which reflect the cultural and heritage value of the area such as listed buildings and conservation area. The NP will however conform to the strategic policies of the adopted LP, which provides protection to these environmental characteristics to ensure that they are not vulnerable to significant impacts from development. ii) The NP is unlikely to result in exceedance of environmental quality standards, such as those relating to air, water, and soil quality. iii) The NP is unlikely to bring forward development of an extent that would result in a significant intensification of local land Use.	No  No  No

<p>The effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.</p>	<p>The NP Area does include landscape designations. However, the NP is not proposing development, so it is considered that the environmental effects on these designations has been considered through the adopted LP.</p>	<p>No</p>
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## 6. Conclusion

6.1. The assessment shown above identifies that, based on the information available to date, there are unlikely to be any significant environmental effects from the implementation of the proposals in the emerging NBNP.

6.2. The Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England, as well as Norfolk County Council, have responded to the Screening Opinion request and their responses are contained in Appendix 1. They all agree with the findings of this report.

6.3. In light of the above assessment, Breckland Council has concluded that the emerging NBNP is not likely to have a significant environmental effect and accordingly will not require a full Strategic Environmental Assessment. The main reasons for this conclusion are:

- The NBNP does not allocate any sites for development that have not already been appraised through the sustainability appraisal of the Breckland Local Plan
- Whilst the NBNP area does contain sensitive environmental assets the impact of the NBNP would not result in any significant environmental effects beyond those already assessed as part of the preparation of the Breckland Local Plan.
- The proposed policies in the NBNP seek to avoid or minimise environmental effects when determining development proposals and are unlikely to result in any additional environmental impacts.

6.4. This report is based on the Screening Opinion request on the Regulation 14 version of the NBNP. Should the contents of the plan subsequently differ from this version, there may be a requirement to revisit this Screening Opinion.

6.5. A copy of this report will be available online on the Breckland Council Neighbourhood Plan website and for inspection at Breckland Council Offices, Elizabeth House, Wolpole Loke, Dereham, Norfolk, NR19 1EE.

## APPENDIX 1 - Responses from Statutory Consultees

**From:** James, Edward <Edward.James@HistoricEngland.org.uk>

**Sent:** 17 November 2020 19:23

**To:** Heinrich, Susan <Susan.Heinrich@breckland.gov.uk>

**Cc:** EastPlanningPolicy <eastplanningpolicy@HistoricEngland.org.uk>

**Subject:** RE: Request for SEA screening of the New Buckenham Neighbourhood Plan

Dear Susan,

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

The Screening Report indicates that Breckland Council considers that the plan will not have any significant effects on the historic environment. We note that the plan does not propose to allocate any sites for development, and merely supplements the policy Breckland District Council Local Plan.

On the basis of the information supplied, including the schedule of policies provided between pages 6 and 8, and in the context of the criteria set out in Schedule 1 of the Environmental Assessment Regulations [Annex II of 'SEA' Directive], Historic England concurs with Breckland District Council that the preparation of a Strategic Environmental Assessment is not required.

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

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

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

Historic England strongly advises that the conservation and archaeological staff of the relevant local authorities are closely involved throughout the preparation of the plan and its assessment. They are best placed to advise on; local historic environment issues and priorities, including access to data held in the Historic Environment Record (HER), how the allocation, policy or proposal can be tailored to minimise potential adverse impacts on the historic environment; the

nature and design of any required mitigation measures; and opportunities for securing wider benefits for the future conservation and management of heritage assets.

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

Kind regards,

Edward

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Edward James  
Historic Places Adviser - East of England  
Historic England



**Historic England**

Brooklands | 24 Brooklands Avenue | Cambridge | CB2 8BU  
[www.historicengland.org.uk](http://www.historicengland.org.uk)

Twitter: @HE\_EoE

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**From:** Benn, Neville <neville.benn@environment-agency.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 18 November 2020 06:11  
**To:** Heinrich, Susan <Susan.Heinrich@breckland.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** RE: Request for SEA screening of the New Buckenham Neighbourhood Plan

Dear Susan

We agree with the conclusions that have been reached.

Kind regards

**Neville Benn**  
Senior Planning Advisor  
Sustainable Places  
East Anglia Area (West)

✉ Environment Agency, Bromholme Lane, Brampton, Huntingdon, Cambs. PE28 4NE  
💻 [neville.benn@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:neville.benn@environment-agency.gov.uk)

Date: 24 November 2020  
Our ref: 334570  
Your ref: New Buckenham Neighbourhood Plan



Susan Heinrich  
Breckland Council  
Susan.Heinrich@breckland.gov.uk

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

**BY EMAIL ONLY**

Dear Susan Heinrich

## **New Buckenham Neighbourhood Plan SEA Screening & HRA Screening Report**

Thank you for your consultation on the above dated 17 November 2020 which was received by Natural England on 17 November 2020

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

### **Screening Request: Strategic Environmental Assessment**

It is our advice, on the basis of the material supplied with the consultation, that, in so far as our strategic environmental interests (including but not limited to statutory designated sites, landscapes and protected species, geology and soils) are concerned, that there are unlikely to be significant environmental effects from the proposed plan.

### **Neighbourhood Plan**

Guidance on the assessment of Neighbourhood Plans, in light of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (as amended), is contained within the [National Planning Practice Guidance](#). The guidance highlights three triggers that may require the production of an SEA, for instance 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.

We have checked our records and based on the information provided, we can confirm that in our view the proposals contained within the plan will not have significant effects on sensitive sites that Natural England has a statutory duty to protect.

We are not aware of significant populations of protected species which are likely to be affected by the policies / proposals within the plan. It remains the case, however, that the responsible authority should provide information supporting this screening decision, sufficient to assess whether protected species are likely to be affected.

Notwithstanding this advice, Natural England does not routinely maintain locally specific data on all potential environmental assets. As a result the responsible authority should raise environmental issues that we have not identified on local or national biodiversity action plan species and/or habitats, local wildlife sites or local landscape character, with its own ecological and/or landscape advisers, local record centre, recording society or wildlife body on the local landscape and biodiversity receptors that may be affected by this plan, before determining whether an SA/SEA is necessary.

Please note that Natural England reserves the right to provide further comments on the environmental assessment of the plan beyond this SEA/SA screening stage, should the responsible authority seek our views on the scoping or environmental report stages. This includes any third party appeal against any screening decision you may make.

### **Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening**

Natural England agrees with the report's conclusions that the New Buckenham Neighbourhood Plan would not be likely to result in a significant effect on any European Site, either alone or in combination and therefore no further assessment work would be required.

For any new consultations, or to provide further information on this consultation please send your correspondences to [consultations@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:consultations@naturalengland.org.uk)

Yours sincerely

Dominic Rogers Consultations Team

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**From:** Chamberlain, Naomi <naomi.chamberlain@norfolk.gov.uk>  
**Sent:** 03 February 2021 16:06  
**To:** Heinrich, Susan <Susan.Heinrich@breckland.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** FW: FW: New Buckenham NP SEA - Screening Report

Hi Susan

Amended response as discussed, I would suggest only including the following in your report.

**Norfolk County Council's view is that a full Strategic Environmental Assessment is not required for this neighbourhood plan.**

Best wishes,

Naomi

**Naomi Chamberlain, Planner**  
Community & Environmental Services  
County Hall, Norwich, NR1 2DH



**Norfolk** County Council

