



New Forest District Council Local Plan

Ringwood Neighbourhood Plan

**Screening Statement on the determination of the need
for a Strategic Environmental Assessment /
Habitat Regulations Assessment for
the emerging Ringwood Neighbourhood Plan**

December 2022

Introduction

- 1.1 The whole parish of Ringwood was formally designated and confirmed by this council as a 'Neighbourhood Area' on 3 February 2021. As the parish includes land within both the District Council and National Park Authority (NPA) to the east and south-east of the town, this designation was also confirmed separately by the NPA.
- 1.2 This screening report is used to determine whether or not the emerging Ringwood Neighbourhood Development Plan requires a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and/or Habitats Regulations Assessment. This is in accordance with the European Directive 2001/42/EC ('SEA Directive') and associated Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 ('SEA Regulations'). These require an SEA to be undertaken on any land use plan or programme 'which sets the framework for future development consent of projects'. In relation to the Habitats Regulations Assessment this is derived from European Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and Wild Flora ('Habitats Directive') and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 ('Habitat Regulations'), as amended.
- 1.3 There are exceptions to this requirement for plans 'which determine the use of a small area at local level' or which only propose 'minor modifications to a plan', if it is determined that the plan is unlikely to have significant environmental effects.

The Screening Process

- 1.4 The key to the screening decision is the determination of whether the Plan is likely to have significant environmental effects, using the criteria set out in Annex II of the Directive and Schedule 1 of the 2004 Regulations. These criteria are set out in the table in Appendix 1, together with the response in relation to the Ringwood Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP).
- 1.5 The extract from 'A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive' in Appendix 1 provides a flow diagram to demonstrate the SEA screening process. This process has been set out and followed in Table 1 (Appendix 1) to ascertain whether a Strategic Environmental Assessment is required for the Ringwood NDP.
- 1.6 Also part of the screening process is the Habitat Regulations Assessment Screening, which can be found in Appendix 2, and the assessment of likely significance of effects on the environment, which can be found in Table 2. This screening will determine whether an Appropriate Assessment of the Neighbourhood Plan is required.

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- 1.7 On 28 March 2022 Ringwood Town Council formally wrote to New Forest District Council (as the 'responsible authority' under the relevant Regulations) to request a formal screening opinion on the requirement for a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and/or a Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) of the emerging Neighbourhood Plan. A similar request was also made to New Forest National Park Authority regarding the area of the designated Neighbourhood Area that falls within the National Park Authority's planning remit.
- 1.8 Following this request the District Council advised in May 2022 that an SEA and HRA of the emerging Ringwood Neighbourhood Plan would be required. This was on the basis that the Neighbourhood Plan was considering the allocation of sites and was also likely to contain policies that may affect sensitive natural or built heritage assets (e.g. international nature conservation sites designated in the New Forest area).
- 1.9 Further work by Ringwood Town Council resulted in refinements to the content of the emerging Neighbourhood Plan (NP) and the Town Council wrote to New Forest District Council (and also to the National Park Authority) on 27 October 2022 to seek a revised SEA and HRA screening opinion. A draft list of policies was provided which has amended the scope of the NP and these indicate that no sites are to be allocated in the NP and no policies are being drafted that would adversely affect the sensitive natural or built heritage assets. In addition, no other significant environmental effects are anticipated that have not already been considered through SEA/HRA appraisal in the New Forest District Council adopted Local Plan (2020).
- 1.10 Given the above, to assess whether an SEA is required, the screening process was repeated and undertaken based on the same standard set of criteria. This was subject to consultation with Historic England, the Environment Agency and Natural England. In accordance with the relevant legislation, the results of the screening process must be detailed in a Screening Statement, and made available to the public.
- 1.11 In issuing this screening opinion the District Council has had regard to advice in the Government's National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) resource. The NPPG guidance on 'Strategic Environmental Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal' confirms that whether a Neighbourhood Plan proposal requires a strategic environmental assessment will depend on what is proposed. An SEA may be required, for example, where:
 - (i) a neighbourhood plan allocates sites for development;
 - (ii) the neighbourhood area contains sensitive natural or heritage assets that may be affected by the proposals in the plan; or
 - (iii) the neighbourhood plan is likely to have significant environmental effects that have not already been considered and dealt with through a sustainability appraisal of the local plan or other strategic policies.
- 1.12 A determination under Regulation 9 of the SEA Regulations is required as to whether the emerging Ringwood Neighbourhood Plan is likely to have significant effects on the environment. The screening requirements set out in Regulation 9 and Schedule 1 of the SEA Regulations includes two sets of characteristics for determining the likely significance of effects on the environment. See Appendix 2 (Table 2) for an assessment of the likely significance of effects on the environment.

Conclusions

- 1.13 This screening opinion has been informed by the intended Neighbourhood Plan policy list prepared by Ringwood Town Council in October 2022 and discussions between the Town Council, the National Park Authority and New Forest District Council.
- 1.14 Following the receipt of further information from Ringwood Town Council; that the NP will not contain policies that will affect sensitive natural or built heritage assets; and the fact that the Plan is not giving consideration to the allocation of sites for development; **it is concluded that the Neighbourhood Plan does not require an environmental report (Strategic Environmental Assessment)**. In addition, the intended policy coverage of the Neighbourhood Plan includes several policies specifically intended to protect the natural and built environment of the Neighbourhood Area, supporting the delivery of sustainable development. Appendix 1 of this report contains further information on this opinion.
- 1.15 In terms of the requirement for HRA, the draft policies list supplied by the Town Council in October 2022 indicates the focus of the Plan will be on supporting the role of the town centre, conserving local built heritage assets, creating a green infrastructure and local nature recovery strategy and adapting to climate change. The focus on Ringwood town centre is consistent with policies in the adopted New Forest District Local Plan (2020), and in addition the strategic local plan policies for the National Park and District planning areas have already been subject to full HRA and, where necessary, appropriate assessment. The Ringwood Neighbourhood Plan will not increase the quantum of development from that set out in the adopted development plan. **It is therefore concluded that an HRA of the emerging Ringwood Neighbourhood Plan is not required.** Appendix 2 of this report sets out the detail for this opinion.

Appendix 1 – Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) screening opinion

Extract from ‘A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive’, DCLG (2005)

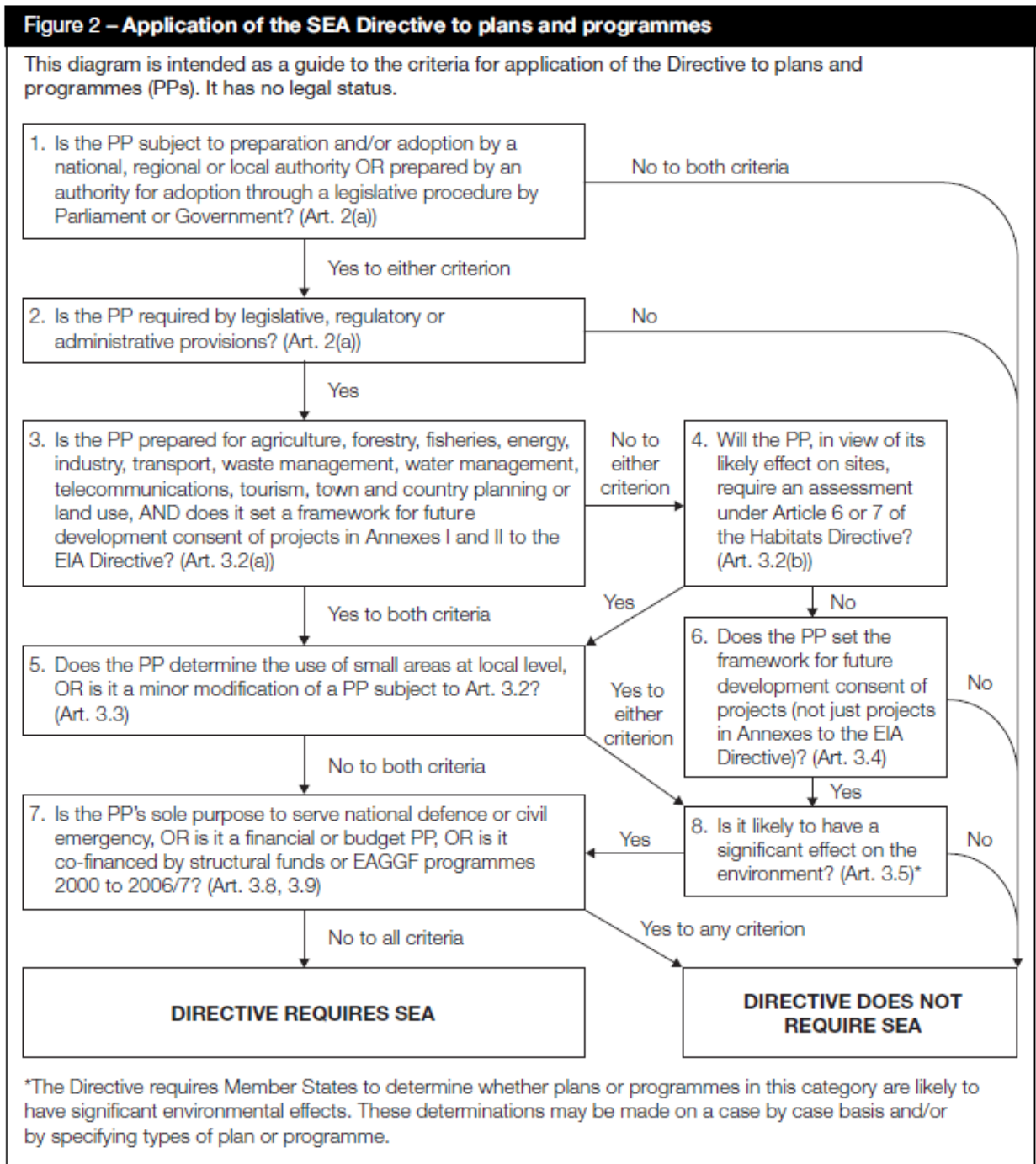


Table 1: Application of the SEA Directive to the Ringwood Neighbourhood Plan (December 2022)

Stage	Yes / No	Explanation
1. Is the Neighbourhood Plan 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))	Yes	<p>The preparation of and adoption of the Neighbourhood Development Plan is allowed under the Localism Act 2011. The Neighbourhood Plan will be prepared by Ringwood Town Council (as the “relevant body”) and will be “made” by New Forest District Council as the local authority. The preparation of the Ringwood Neighbourhood Plan is subject to the following regulations (as amended):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012; • Neighbourhood Planning (referendums) Regulations 2012; • Neighbourhood Planning (General) (Amendment) Regulations 2015.
2. Is the NP required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions? (Art. 2(a))	Yes	<p>Whilst the Neighbourhood Development Plan is not a requirement and is optional under the Localism Act 2011, it will, if “made”, form part of the Development Plan for the District. It is therefore important that the screening process considers whether it is likely to have significant environmental effects and hence whether SEA is required under the Directive.</p>
3. 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 (see Appendix 2) to the EIA Directive? (Art 3.2(a))	No	<p>The Ringwood Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared for the purposes of town & country / land use planning and will set out a framework for future development consents as part of the statutory development plan covering Ringwood.</p> <p>The Town Council has confirmed that the Neighbourhood Plan is now unlikely to allocate additional sites for development. In addition, the Town Council confirmed that Plan policies for the town centre will focus on managing development on small areas of land. The sites are located within the settlement boundary of Ringwood and are consistent with adopted policies in the overarching New Forest District Local Plan (2020), which itself went through the full SEA process. On that basis it is considered that the Neighbourhood Plan does <u>not</u> set a framework for future development consent of a scale referred to in Article 4(2) of the EIA Directive (listed at Annex II of the Directive).</p>
4. 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))	No	<p>The designated Ringwood Neighbourhood Area includes a range of protected habitats within and adjacent to the Plan Area. Confirmation has been received from Ringwood Town Council that the NP is unlikely to allocate sites for development; contain policies that may affect sensitive designated sites; or have other environmental effects not already assessed through the NPA or NFDC Plan-making processes. On that basis it is concluded that the NP is unlikely to have a detrimental impact on site integrity. The Habitat Regulations Assessment Screening</p>

		Opinion contained in Appendix 2 provides more detail on this.
5. 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)	Yes	The Ringwood Neighbourhood Plan may determine the use of sites at a wider than small area / local level. Ringwood Town Council has confirmed that the NP policies for the town centre area seek to manage future development on small areas at a local level. This would be within the strategic context established by existing development plan policies (the adopted NFDC Local Plan, 2020).
6. 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)	Yes	If adopted, the Ringwood Neighbourhood Plan will include policies to provide a framework to guide future development within the Parish. The Plan will form part of the statutory 'development plan' for the parish and in accordance with Section 38(6) of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act will be the starting point for planning decisions on development proposals.
7. Is the Neighbourhood Plan'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)	No	N/A
8. Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment? (Art. 3.5)	Yes	Ringwood Town Council has confirmed that the Plan is unlikely to allocate sites for development; or contain policies that may detrimentally impact the natural and built environment of the Neighbourhood Area. This, allied to the fact that the strategic planning policies for the area contained within the adopted National Park Authority and New Forest District Council local plans have already gone through the full SEA process, means it is concluded that the Neighbourhood Plan does <u>not</u> require a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA).

Appendix 2 - Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) screening opinion

Opinion for Ringwood Neighbourhood Development Plan (December 2022)

Introduction

1. The Local Authority is the “competent authority” under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010, and needs to ensure that Neighbourhood Plans have been assessed through the Habitats Regulations process. This looks at the potential for significant impacts on nature conservation sites that are of European importance, also referred to as Natura 2000.

2. This Screening Assessment relates to a Neighbourhood Development Plan that will be in general conformity with the strategic policies within the development plan (the higher level plan for town and country planning and land use). This Screening Assessment uses emerging work on the Habitats Regulations Assessment of New Forest District Council’s emerging Local Plan Review as its basis for assessment. From this, the Local Authority will determine whether the Ringwood Neighbourhood Development Plan is likely to result in significant impacts on Natura 2000 sites either alone or in combination with other plans and policies and, therefore, whether an ‘Appropriate Assessment’ is required.

Legislative Basis

3. Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive provides that:

“Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the [European] site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall be subject to appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site’s conservation objectives. In the light of the conclusions of the assessment of the implications for the site and subject to the provisions of paragraph 4, the competent national authorities shall agree to the plan or project only after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned and, if appropriate, after having obtained the opinion of the general public.”

Assessment

4. A Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) was prepared for the Local Plan Review 2016-2036 Part 1. Following further consultations with Natural England and other bodies, the development set out in the New Forest District Local Plan Review will likely lead to significant effects on European sites, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans.

5. The latest HRA of the Local Plan Review was undertaken by consultants (Land Use Consultants) and assesses the potential effects of the Local Plan on one or more European sites, including Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) as well as Ramsar sites¹. HRA found that effective avoidance & reduction measures (through adopted policies and those put forward) have been secured. Therefore the Local Plan Part 1 will not have an adverse effect on the integrity of any European site, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects.

6. A Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) was also undertaken for the New Forest National Park Local Plan Review (2016-2036). This assessment was undertaken in consultation with Natural England and other bodies. The HRA work on the National Park Local Plan concluded that significant impacts on the integrity of the Natura 2000 sites within and adjacent to the National Park could not be ruled out. This conclusion recognised the in-combination effects caused by the

¹ Habitats Regulations Assessment of New Forest District Local Plan Part 1 June 2018

development plans prepared for areas surrounding the National Park. The main areas where potential impacts on the integrity of the Natura 2000 sites in the New Forest are highlighted in the response to point 2(a) in Table 2 below.

7. It is concluded that the emerging Ringwood Neighbourhood Plan does require a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA). This is based on the range of designated habitats within and adjacent to the Ringwood Neighbourhood Area and the recognition in published HRA work of their sensitivities to the impacts of development. The HRA work for the New Forest District Council Local Plan for example, identified the potential impacts of recreational pressure on the integrity of the New Forest's Natura 2000 sites from any development within the National Park. In addition, more recently Natural England has confirmed the need for new development within the River Avon catchment to be 'phosphate neutral' and updated guidance on this matter was published in March 2022. The Ringwood Neighbourhood Area is also close to parts of the designated Dorset Heathlands sites and therefore future HRA work will need to consider potential impacts on these designations to the south west of the Neighbourhood Area.

Statutory Consultees

8. The District Council's initial SEA and HRA Screening Opinion of November 2022 was sent to Natural England, Environment Agency and Historic England on 4th November 2022 - as statutory consultation bodies under Regulation 9 of the SEA Regulations. The draft screening opinion was also shared with the National Park Authority before it was finalised. The National Park Authority will be responding to a similar screening request from Ringwood Town Council relating to the area of the parish that lies within the National Park. Set out below is a summary of the responses received on the Council's draft SEA and HRA screening opinion:

Historic England (comments received 17th November 2022)

9. *'We are happy to confirm that, with the removal of the intention to allocate sites for development, we agree with the Council's view that the plan does not merit Strategic Environmental Assessment because of any potential likely significant environmental effects within areas of interest to Historic England, which is confined to the plan's potential effects for the historic environment, including the conservation of heritage assets. Historic England is not a statutory authority in respect of the Habitats Regulations, and we do not wish to comment on the HRA screening'.*

Environment Agency (comments received 2nd December 2022)

10. *'You have confirmed that there will no development coming forward as part of this plan. Therefore, having taken this into account, we do not consider there will be any Significant Environmental Impacts associated with this plan, therefore it is our view that a SEA will not be required. Should the Local Authority determine that a Neighbourhood Plan does require SEA, we must be consulted on the scope to ensure our key environmental issues are addressed'.*

Natural England

11. No comments were received within the 4-week consultation.

Conclusion

12. Table 2 of this report sets out an assessment as to whether the Ringwood Neighbourhood Plan is likely to have significant effects on the environment. This assessment is based on the requirements of Regulation 9 and Schedule 1 of the SEA Regulations and recognises the statutory nature of the Neighbourhood Plan; its likely scope; and the value and vulnerability of the area (including national and internationally protected landscapes and habitats).

13. **The screening process undertaken by the District Council concludes that a Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) is not required for the emerging Ringwood Neighbourhood Plan.** This conclusion is consistent with the legislative framework placed on other statutory development plans that have been prepared by the local planning authorities for the area which have gone through the SEA and HRA process.

Table 2 - Assessment of the likely significance of effects on the environment (SEA) – based on Schedule 1 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004

1. Characteristics of the plan, having regard to:	
(a) the degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources;	The Ringwood NDP would, if adopted, form part of the Statutory Development Plan and as such does contribute to the framework for future development consent of projects. However, the Plan will sit within the wider framework set by the National Planning Policy Framework, the strategic policies of the New Forest District Local Plan Part 1: Planning Strategy 2016-2036 (adopted 2020) and Local Plan Part 2 Sites and Development Management (2014). The NP must be in general conformity with the policies in the adopted development plan. It therefore cannot provide for development that significantly exceeds, at a strategic level, the intentions of the adopted development plan. Significant environmental impacts are therefore unlikely.
(b) the degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy;	The Ringwood NDP (when adopted) must be in conformity with the National Planning Policy Framework. The policies within the document must also conform with the Council's strategic policies and complement the adopted Local Plan 2016-2036.
(c) the relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development;	The policy list provided by Ringwood Town Council for the emerging Neighbourhood Plan confirms that the Plan will look to conserve local built heritage assets (including a Design Code), create a green infrastructure and local nature recovery network, deliver zero carbon buildings and help adaptation to climate change. These policies should have a positive environmental impact and help deliver sustainable development in the designated Neighbourhood Area. Neighbourhood Development Plans are required by legislation to help achieve sustainable development. This is one of the basic conditions against which the Plan will be tested at examination. Significant adverse environmental impacts are therefore considered unlikely
(d) environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme; and	There are a number of international nature conservation designations near to the Neighbourhood Area. In particular the following habitat designations being either within the Neighbourhood Area, or in close proximity to it: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - River Avon SAC - Avon Valley SPA - Avon Valley Ramsar - Dorset Heathlands SAC - Dorset Heathlands SPA - Dorset Heathlands Ramsar - The New Forest SAC - New Forest SPA - The New Forest Ramsar

	<p>- National SSSI designations (including the River Avon System SSSI, the Avon Valley (Bickton to Christchurch) SSSI and the New Forest SSSI)</p> <p>Parts of the Ringwood Neighbourhood Area are also affected by flooding. Ringwood Town Council has confirmed that the Neighbourhood Plan is now unlikely to allocate any additional sites for development. The adopted National Park Authority and New Forest District Council Local Plans were informed by the New Forest Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and no additional sites are due to be allocated. Significant environmental impacts are considered unlikely.</p>
<p>(e) the relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (for example, plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection).</p>	<p>The Ringwood NDP is not directly relevant to any of these.</p>
<p>2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to:</p>	
<p>(a) the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects;</p>	<p>The revised policy list submitted in October 2022 confirms that the Plan will look to conserve local built heritage assets (including a Design Code), create a green infrastructure and local nature recovery network, deliver zero carbon buildings and help adaptation to climate change. These policies should have a positive environmental impact and help deliver sustainable development in the designated Neighbourhood Area. The strategic planning policies for the area contained within the adopted National Park Authority and New Forest District Council local plans have already gone through the full Sustainability Appraisal/SEA process, setting out how key sustainability issues may be affected by the local plan policies.</p> <p>The New Forest District Council Local Plan Habitats Regulations Assessment work (undertaken by LUC) identified the following potential effects from development either within the National Park, or in combination with development proposed in surrounding areas that require consideration against the revised scope of the Ringwood Neighbourhood Plan (October 2022):</p> <p>Direct loss or physical damage due to construction:- The Ringwood Neighbourhood Area includes part of the internationally designated New Forest Ramsar, SPA and SAC; and parts of the Avon Valley SPA and Ramsar. The HRA work for the District Council Local Plan identified the potential effects of direct loss of or physical damage to designated habitats or habitats on which designated species rely or direct mortality of designated species. In addition, the HRA work identified the potential for development to result in loss of habitat which lies outside European site boundaries but which is used by the qualifying bird populations of Avon Valley</p>

SPA and Ramsar site; Dorset Heathlands SPA; and the New Forest SPA. Ringwood Town Council has confirmed that the NP is not likely to allocate additional development sites and therefore the consideration of direct loss of designated sites from housing site allocations has already been assessed through the HRAs of the adopted New Forest National Park Authority and New Forest District Council local plans.

Disturbance and other urban edge effects from construction or occupation of buildings:- It is not possible to rule out the potential for urban edge effects such as pet predation from new residential development within 400 metres of New Forest SPA; or from effects such as noise pollution or light pollution from all types of built development. The Ringwood Neighbourhood Area includes part of the New Forest SPA and areas of land within the east of the parish are located within 400 metres of the SPA. It should be highlighted that these urban edge impacts relate to the lowland heathland areas of the New Forest SPA and Dorset Heathlands and are not generic across all designated SPAs. In relation to urban edge impacts on the Avon Valley/River Avon designation, Natural England have not raised issues e.g. a 400m zone does not currently apply. The NP is unlikely to allocate additional development sites to those contained within the New Forest District Council Local Plan (2020) and therefore urban edge impacts have already been assessed through the HRA of the NFDC Local Plan. NFDC deems that the Ringwood Neighbourhood Plan will not increase these pressures.

Recreational pressure:- The District Council's Local Plan HRA work concluded in relation to recreational impacts that, prior to mitigation, likely significant effects in-combination could not be ruled out for any residential development or visitor accommodation within New Forest National Park on the New Forest SAC and SPA. The Ringwood Neighbourhood Area includes significant areas of land within the National Park and is therefore affected by this issue. The District Council adopted an updated '[Mitigation for Recreational Impacts On New Forest European Sites](#)' SPD in 2021 which provides details on how the recreational impacts of new development within the New Forest District can be mitigated. The NP does not intend to allocate additional sites; therefore any sites that come forward will be consistent with the provision of the adopted development plans for the area – there are established mitigation schemes in place to address recreational impacts associated with the scale of planned development.

Changes in water quality:- The District Council's Local Plan HRA work identified the European sites vulnerable to a deterioration in water quality as: River Avon SAC; Avon Valley SPA & Ramsar site; Dorset Heathlands SAC & Ramsar site; the New Forest SAC & Ramsar site; Solent & Isle of Wight Lagoons SAC; Solent Maritime SAC; Solent & Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar site. The most relevant of these for the Ringwood Neighbourhood Plan work is the Avon Valley/River Avon designations and the impacts arising from increased levels of phosphates. Although new development only makes a small contribution to the issue, [Natural England's updated methodology and budget calculator](#) (March 2022) confirms new development in the Avon catchment must be 'phosphate-neutral'. The NP does not intend to allocate additional development sites and so the overall scale and spatial distribution of new development in the area has been considered through the plan-making

	process.
(b) the cumulative nature of the effects;	HRA work undertaken for the District Council's Local Plan 2016 – 2036 highlighted the cumulative, in-combination impacts of development around the New Forest's Natura 2000 sites as potentially significant. These impacts included increased recreational pressures on the New Forest designations and (more recently) impacts on water quality on the River Avon designations arising from increased levels of phosphates. The Ringwood Neighbourhood Plan is not proposing to increase the scale of development from that assessed as part of the local plan-making processes. Significant adverse environmental impacts are therefore considered unlikely.
(c) the transboundary nature of the effects;	The effects of the Plan are unlikely to have transboundary impacts (i.e. other Member States).
(d) the risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents);	There are no significant risks to human health or the environment.
(e) the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected);	The Designated Area covers a medium sized town (Ringwood) with a total parish area of approximately 30 square kilometre and a combined population of approximately 15,000 residents. The revised scope of the NP means that it is unlikely to enable a greater scale of development from that already assessed through the local plan-making process.
(f) the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to: (i) special natural characteristics or cultural heritage; (ii) exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values; or (iii) intensive land-use; and	There are a number of international nature conservation sites within and immediately adjacent to the Ringwood Neighbourhood Area. These sites are vulnerable to a variety of impacts, as set out in the assessment against criteria 2(a) above. The Ringwood Neighbourhood Area also contains a range of built environment assets (designated and non-designated), including a number of listed buildings and the Ringwood Conservation Area, focused on the core of the town. The Ringwood Neighbourhood Plan is likely to include policies that seek to conserve local built heritage assets and the creation of a local nature recovery network. These should help protect the natural and built environment of the designated Neighbourhood Area. Adverse environmental impacts are considered unlikely.
(g) the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.	As indicated above there are a range of designated habitats within or adjacent to the Ringwood Neighbourhood Area that are protected at national and international level.