

Batchworth Neighbourhood Plan



Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) & Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening Report

September 2022





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1. Introduction

1.1 The Purpose of this Report

This screening report is an assessment of whether or not the contents of the Batchworth 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. A SEA is required if the Neighbourhood Plan is deemed to have a likely significant effect on the environment.

This report will also screen to determine whether the Neighbourhood Plan requires a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) in accordance with Regulation 61 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). An HRA screening report is required when it is deemed that likely adverse significant effects may occur on protected Habitats (European) Sites as a result of the implementation of a plan or project.

1.2 The Batchworth Neighbourhood Plan

The Neighbourhood Plan will set out planning policies for the Batchworth Neighbourhood Plan area. Once formally adopted, a Neighbourhood Plan carries the same legal weight as Local Development Plans adopted by the Local Planning Authority (LPA), in this case Three Rivers District Council.

The Neighbourhood Plan includes a Vision, which expresses the community's aspirations for the plan area. This Vision is included within the Plan as follows:

'The richness of natural assets in Batchworth will be strengthened, building its reputation as the "Green and Blue Town". This will be reflected both in the protection and enhancement of open spaces, wetland areas and riparian environment, biodiversity and wildlife habits, but also through measures that deliver high standards of sustainability in new and existing buildings, and the way that we move around.

Infrastructure that supports walking and cycling, particularly for shorter, everyday journeys, will be provided, facilitating safe and sustainable access for all residents and visitors.

A wide range of recreational and community facilities will help make Batchworth a thriving and healthy place to live, learn, work and play for everyone, of all ages and abilities.

Through public realm improvements and business-friendly policy, local centres and employment areas at Money Hill, Tolpits and Rickmansworth Town Centre will be bolstered to create flexible, socially inclusive, economic and social hubs that respond to modern-day life and working patterns.

New residential development will embed high environmental standards and quality of design, and be delivered alongside appropriate infrastructure. Individual character areas, from Rickmansworth Town and Money Hill to MoorPark and Eastbury, will retain their distinctive identities, preserving existing built and natural heritage whilst encouraging innovative and sustainable design.'

A number of economic, social and environmental objectives have been devised for the Neighbourhood Plan. These are:

- Objective 1: To enhance the richness and experience of green and blue assets in the area.
- Objective 2: To sensitively respond to the challenges of and future proofing Batchworth against the impacts of climate change.
- Objective 3: To strengthen community cohesion and inclusiveness by making Batchworth an attractive place for all to live and work in.
- Objective 4: To promote high quality design that helps build a sense of place, responding to the character and identity of individual areas in Batchworth.
- Objective 5: To improve access and movement for all.

1.3 The Three Rivers District Council Local Plan

The adopted Local Plan consists of three main documents: a Core Strategy Development Plan Document Development Plan Document (DPD), a Development Management Policies DPD and a Site Allocations Local Development Document (LDD). The content of these relevant to Batchworth is outlined in the corresponding sub-sections.

1.3.1 The Core Strategy DPD (2011)

The adopted Three Rivers Core Strategy contains the current strategic planning policy for the District and thus Batchworth. The Core Strategy 2011 includes a number of policies related to a strategy for growth in the District, the delivery of growth and the provision of infrastructure. A Sustainability Appraisal was carried out for the Core Strategy.

The Core Strategy categorises the various settlements within the Neighbourhood Plan area as follows:

- Rickmansworth – Principal Town
- Eastbury – Secondary Centre
- Moor Park – Secondary Centre

The Core Strategy's Spatial Strategy identifies that new development will be directed towards previously developed land (including surplus employment land) and appropriate infilling opportunities within the urban areas of the Principal Town (Rickmansworth) and Key Centres, as the most sustainable locations in the District. More limited new development will take place on previously developed land (including surplus employment land) and

appropriate infilling opportunities within the Secondary Centres, recognising that such settlements are not generally as sustainable as the Principal Town and 'Key Centres' however do provide some access to services and facilities and are generally close to larger settlements. Some growth will help to sustain the vitality and viability of these settlements.

Policy PSP1 – Development in the Principal Town (Rickmansworth) sets out that the Town will provide approximately 15% of the District's housing requirements of the Local Plan period. It also establishes Rickmansworth as being the focus for town centre uses and employment and economic development. Furthermore, the following improvements are identified as required within the Town:

- Improvements to rail services and rail links at Rickmansworth Station primarily through the Croxley Rail Link;
- Provision of a strategic cycle route between Rickmansworth Town Centre and Chorleywood and Maple Cross with links into the National Cycle Network and Colne Valley Trail;
- Improvements to parking and cycle facilities at Rickmansworth Station;
- Improved bus services between Rickmansworth Town Centre and surrounding centres;
- Road safety improvements to Park Road (A412) and Chorleywood Road (A404) by the Royal Masonic School;
- The extension of cemetery facilities at the site in Woodcock Hill to increase capacity;
- Maintain and improve biodiversity, recreational access and watersports facilities at Rickmansworth Aquadrome in accordance with the management plan and master plan; and
- Expansion of existing schools and/or provision of new schools meet identified needs in the Rickmansworth area.

Policy PSP3 - Development in Secondary Centres (Kings Langley, Carpenders Park, Eastbury, Maple Cross, Moor Park, Oxhey Hall) sets out that such settlements shall provide approximately 25% of the District's residential growth needs whilst also maintaining and enhancing employment opportunities. Improvements specific to Eastbury and Moor Park include:

- Improvement of parking and cycling facilities at Kings Langley, Moor Park and Carpenders Park stations; and
- Expansion of existing schools and/or provision of new schools meet identified needs in the Secondary Centres.

1.3.2 The Development Management Policies DPD (2013)

The Development Management Policies Local Development Document (LDD) sets out the

criteria against which all planning applications in the District will be considered, including those settlements and the countryside areas of Batchworth. The Council considers these policies will enable the long term vision for Three Rivers set out in the Core Strategy.

1.3.3 The Site Allocations LDD (2014)

The Site Allocations LDD supports the delivery of the Core Strategy. It allocates specific sites to meet needs for housing, employment, education, shopping and open spaces in Three Rivers. The LDD allocates land for development purposes within Rickmansworth across eight sites at a combined quantum of approximately 183 dwellings. The LDD also allocates one site in Eastbury for 30 dwellings. No potential residential allocations are included within Moor Park.

1.4 The Emerging Three Rivers Local Plan

Three Rivers District Council is preparing a new Local Plan that will set out a vision and policy framework for the future levels of growth within the District up until 2038.

At the time of writing, the Local Plan is at the 'Regulation 18 Preferred Policy Options' stage, which includes sites for potential allocation. A consultation on the 'Local Plan Regulation 18 Preferred Policy Options and Sites for Potential Allocation' documents ran from June 2021 to August 2021.

The emerging Local Plan seeks a continuation of the Settlement Hierarchy as adopted, and the broad spatial / distribution strategy of growth as the adopted Core Strategy. The emerging Local Plan proposes potential development allocations, expressed as options within Rickmansworth, Eastbury and Moor Park. In Rickmansworth 11 sites have been proposed, and a further five are identified within Eastbury and Moor Park.

2. Legislative Background

2.1 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 June 2001 on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment states that,

‘Environmental assessment is an important tool for integrating environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of certain plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment.

(10) All plans and programmes which are prepared for a number of sectors and which set a framework for future development consent of projects listed in Annexes I and II to Council Directive 85/337/EEC of 27 June 1985 on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment(7), and all plans and programmes which have been determined to require assessment pursuant to Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild flora and fauna(8), are likely to have significant effects on the environment, and should as a rule be made subject to systematic environmental assessment. When they determine the use of small areas at local level or are minor modifications to the above plans or programmes, they should be assessed only where Member States determine that they are likely to have significant effects on the environment.

(11) Other plans and programmes which set the framework for future development consent of projects may not have significant effects on the environment in all cases and should be assessed only where Member States determine that they are likely to have such effects.’

The Batchworth Neighbourhood Plan may influence frameworks for future development or become used ancillary to those plans and programmes that do set such a framework, and as such it has been determined that the principle of the Neighbourhood Plan should be screened for the necessary application of the SEA Directive.

The Report from the Commission to The Council, The European Parliament, The European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions states, on the application and effectiveness of the Directive on Strategic Environmental Assessment (Directive 2001/42/EC), that ‘the following Plan & Programme (P&P), and modifications to them, are covered when prepared and/or adopted by an authority and required pursuant to legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions:

- P&P prepared for certain sectors and which set the framework for future development consent in respect of projects under the Environmental Impact Assessment-EIA-Directive.
- P&P requiring an assessment under the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC).
- P&P setting the framework for development consent in respect of projects (not

limited to those listed in the EIA Directive; see above) and determined by "screening" as being likely to have significant environmental effects.'

This report represents this screening process in regard to the content and influence of the Batchworth Neighbourhood Plan.

2.2 Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)

Under the provisions of the Habitats Regulations (The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, as amended), a competent authority must carry out an assessment of whether a plan or project will significantly affect the integrity of any European Site (also referred to as Habitats sites in the National Planning Policy Framework), in terms of impacting the site's conservation objectives.

The first stage of HRA is the screening assessment of the impacts of a land use proposal against the conservation objectives of Habitats sites. Specifically, it is to ascertain whether or not a proposal (either alone or in combination with other proposals) would potentially damage the internationally designated features of that site. European sites are also known as Natura 2000 sites.

This HRA Screening Report has been undertaken in order to accompany the Batchworth Neighbourhood Plan in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.

The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, state that submitted Plans need to be accompanied by a statement explaining how the proposed Plan meets the 'basic conditions' set out in Schedule 4B of the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act. These basic conditions include a requirement to demonstrate how the Plan is compatible with certain obligations, which includes the need to undertake an HRA.

In line with the Court judgement (CJEU People Over Wind v Coillte Teoranta C-323/17), mitigation measures cannot be taken into account when carrying out a screening assessment to decide whether a plan or project is likely to result in significant effects on a Habitats site.

On 23 June 2016, the United Kingdom (UK) held a referendum and voted to leave the European Union (EU). On 26 June 2018, The European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018 received Royal Assent and the UK left the EU. The European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018 made sure that UK laws continue to operate following the UK's exit. Relevant EU Directives have been transposed into UK law and those are unchanged until amended by Parliament. The requirements for HRA under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) remain in place with minor changes being affected by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Amendment (EU Exit) Regulations 2019. Parliament is however at liberty to introduce future changes to the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) since, after 31 December 2020, the UK will no longer be bound by the EU Habitats and Wild Birds Directives.

At the present time the position, under section 6(3) EU (Withdrawal) Act 2018 (as amended), is that the courts in the UK, with the sole exception of the Supreme Court, will continue to be bound by HRA judgements handed down by the CJEU and by domestic courts prior to 31 December 2020 when interpreting the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). This is the case as long as the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) remain unmodified by Parliament.

There is currently a legal requirement for HRA screening of Plans *prior to being adopted* so any additional plans or projects which might reasonably interact with the Batchworth Neighbourhood Plan will be considered before post consultation.

3. SEA Screening

3.1 When is SEA Required?

Planning Practice Guidance – Strategic environmental assessment requirements for neighbourhood plans (Paragraph: 026 Reference ID: 11-026-20140306) states that,

‘In some limited circumstances, where a neighbourhood plan is likely to have significant environmental effects, it may require a strategic environmental assessment. Draft neighbourhood plan proposals should be assessed to determine whether the plan is likely to have significant environmental effects. This process is commonly referred to as a “screening” assessment and the requirements are set out in regulation 9 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.

If likely significant environmental effects are identified, an environmental report must be prepared in accordance with paragraphs (2) and (3) of regulation 12 of those Regulations.

One of the basic conditions that will be tested by the independent examiner is whether the making of the neighbourhood plan is compatible with European Union obligations (including under the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive).

To decide whether a draft neighbourhood plan might have significant environmental effects, it must be assessed (screened) at an early stage of the plan’s preparation according to the requirements set out in regulation 9 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004. These include a requirement to consult the environmental assessment consultation bodies.

Each consultation body will be able to advise on particular topics relevant to its specific area of expertise and responsibility, and the specific information that it holds.

Where it is determined that the plan is unlikely to have significant environmental effects (and, accordingly, does not require an environmental assessment), a statement of reasons for the determination should be prepared. A copy of the statement must be submitted with the neighbourhood plan proposal and made available to the independent examiner.’

Articles 2 and 3 of the SEA Directive set out the circumstances in which a SEA is required. Table 1 sets out the assessment of whether the principle of the Batchworth Neighbourhood Plan will require a full SEA.

Table 1: Exploring whether the Principle of the Plan would warrant SEA

Question 1: Is the Plan subject to preparation and/or adoption by a national, regional or local authority OR prepared by an authority for adoption through legislative procedure by Parliament or Government?

Yes - The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared for adoption through legislative procedure.

Question 2: Is the Plan required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provision? (Typical characteristics of "administrative provisions" are that they are publicly available, prepared in a formal way, probably involving consultation with interested parties. The administrative provision must have sufficient formality such that it counts as a "provision" and it must also use language that plainly requires rather than just encourages a Plan to be prepared.)

Yes - The Neighbourhood Plan would be considered as falling within the category of an 'administrative provision'.

Question 3: Is the 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?

Yes to both criteria - The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared for town and country planning and sets a framework for future development consent.

Question 4: Will the Plan, in view of its likely effect on sites, require an assessment under Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive?

The Neighbourhood Plan's likely effect on sites and requirement for an assessment under Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive is explored in Section 4 of this Report.

Question 5: Does the Plan determine the use of small areas at local level, OR is it a minor modification of a Plan likely to require assessment under the Habitats Directive?

Yes to one of the criteria - the policies of the Neighbourhood Plan can be considered to determine the use of small areas at local level commensurate with their status in determining local planning applications.

Question 6: Does the Plan set the framework for future development consent of projects (not just projects in the Annexes of the EIA Directive)?

Yes - the Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared for town and country planning and sets a framework for future development consent.

Question 7: Is the Plans sole purpose to serve national defence or civil emergency, or is it a financial or budget Plan, or is it co -financed by structural funds or European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF) programmes 2000 to 2006/7?

The Neighbourhood Plan does not serve a purpose related to national defence or civil emergency, a financial or budget Plan. The Neighbourhood Plan is not co-financed by structural funds or EAGGF programmes 2000 to 2006/7.

Question 8: Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment?

Likely significant effects are explored in more detail in Section 3.3 of this Screening Report. The 'conclusions' section of the Report outlines whether the Neighbourhood Plan requires SEA or not due in regard to its effects on the environment.

The following section looks at the criteria for assessing the effects of the Neighbourhood Plan and the identified effects of the Neighbourhood Plan in line with the criteria. Crucially, it will determine whether there are any likely significant effects on the environment.

3.2 Criteria for Assessing the Effects of the Neighbourhood Plan

Criteria for determining the likely significant effects on the environment, referred to in Article 3(5) of Directive 2001/42/EC are set out below.

Annex II of SEA Directive 2001/42/EC – Significant Effects

1. The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular, to

- the degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources,
- the degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy,
- the relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development,

Annex II of SEA Directive 2001/42/EC – Significant Effects

- 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 transboundary 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.

3.3 Likely Significant Effects resulting from the Neighbourhood Plan

The following assessment will consider the likelihood of the Batchworth Neighbourhood Plan (at the time of writing) to have significant effects on the environment. The table below will explore the likelihood of effects on the following required themes, as included within Annex I of the SEA Directive (2001/42/EC):

- Biodiversity;
- Population;
- Human health;
- Fauna;
- Flora;
- Soil;
- Water;
- Air;
- Climatic factors;
- Material assets;
- Cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage;
- Landscape; and
- The interrelationship between the above factors.

Table 2: Assessment of Likely Significant Effects on the Environment

| Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive) | Likelihood and summary of significant effects |
|--|---|
| <p>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> | <p>The Plan sets out relevant policies which will be used to determine proposals for development within the Neighbourhood Plan area once adopted.</p> <p>A Neighbourhood Plan must demonstrate conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan and once brought into force, the policies it contains take precedence over existing non-strategic policies only in the Local Plan for that Neighbourhood Plan area. The principle of development is established for both Rickmansworth as the ‘Principal Town’ in the District, as well as Eastbury and Moor Park, both ‘Secondary Centres’ within the adopted Three Rivers Local Plan’s settlement hierarchy. The emerging Three Rivers Local Plan similarly allows for development to come forward in the Principal Town and Secondary Centres however does not identify a dwelling threshold applicable for the Neighbourhood Plan area. The Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate any land for development purposes, however includes numerous ‘Projects’ that identify aspirations regarding improvements</p> |

| Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive) | Likelihood and summary of significant effects |
|---|---|
| | <p>and development schemes. These projects, as contained within the Plan, are not considered to be commitments of the Plan and are considered separate from policy content. The Plan acknowledges this position, stating that they respond to ‘items that the community are seeking, but that cannot be delivered through planning policy.’</p> <p>Irrespective of the Neighbourhood Plan policies’ compliance with those of the Local Plan, which will be considered between the Parish Council and the Local Planning Authority in finalising the Neighbourhood Plan and through the independent examination of the Neighbourhood Plan, it is considered that the degree to which the Neighbourhood Plan sets a framework for development is low. This is primarily due to the Neighbourhood Plan not allocating land for development.</p> |
| <p>The degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans or programmes including those in a hierarchy.</p> | <p>The Neighbourhood Plan, when/if ‘made’, will have weight in all planning decisions within the plan area. The Neighbourhood Plan provides policies for the Plan area, relevant to a local level only. The Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate land for development purposes. It is assumed that allocations within the Neighbourhood Plan area will be included within the emerging Three Rivers Local Plan. These allocations would be required, if ‘made’ in advance of the adoption of the Local Plan, to accord with the policy requirements of the Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>There is a possibility that the Neighbourhood Plan policies could affect the viability of any such allocations that may be forthcoming through the Local Plan process, particularly those related to design (Policy BW DE1), renewable energy technologies (Policy BW CC1), affordable housing thresholds and First Homes discounts (Policy BW CO1), and E-Vehicle infrastructure (Policy BW AM2) which are not replicated within the emerging Local Plan’s preferred policy position at the most recent Regulation 18 stage (at the time of writing). Nevertheless, the wording of the Neighbourhood Plan policies express ‘support’ only for such initiatives in some</p> |

| Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive) | Likelihood and summary of significant effects |
|---|---|
| | <p>circumstances.</p> <p>In consideration of the above, the degree to which the plan influences other plans or programmes is considered relatively low in the context of the Neighbourhood Plan area. This is primarily related to the Plan’s position of not allocating land for development purposes.</p> |
| <p>The relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development.</p> | <p>Neighbourhood Plans are required to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The Neighbourhood Plan policies seek to ensure environmental considerations are taken into account. The Neighbourhood Plan includes policies related (directly / indirectly) to ensuring environmental considerations will be integrated into any forthcoming development within the Plan area. These are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy BW GB1: Biodiversity • Policy BW GB2: Colne Valley Regional Park • Policy BW CC2: Renewables • Policy BW CC3: Sustainable drainage • Policy BW DE1: High quality design <p>Irrespective of the adequacy of the above policies, adopted Local Plan policies apply within the Neighbourhood Plan area, which have been subject to thorough assessment within the Local Plan Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment. This ensures that environmental considerations, in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development, will be considered for all development proposals within the Neighbourhood Plan area.</p> |
| <p>Environmental problems relevant to the plan area</p> | <p>The Neighbourhood Plan reflects a small area and the Plan’s policy content seeks to address environmental issues. The policy content of the adopted Local Plan will additionally apply to any proposals within the Neighbourhood Plan area. Local Plan policies have been subject to Sustainability Appraisal (SA) within the context of the Local Plan. The Neighbourhood Plan and this Screening Report identify the following potential</p> |

| Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive) | Likelihood and summary of significant effects |
|--|---|
| | <p>(direct / indirect) environmental problems or sources of potential problems relevant to the Neighbourhood Plan area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Plan area contains part of the Croxley Common Moor Site of Specific Scientific Interest (SSSI) to the east of Rickmansworth. This SSSI is currently in an ‘unfavourable – recovering’ condition. • The Plan area is within the Impact Risk Zone (IRZs) of this and other SSSIs. Development proposals within IRZs are required to be consulted on with Natural England, should they be of a type or size that could warrant negative effects on the relevant SSSI. • A number of Priority habitats (from the Priority Habitat Inventory¹) are scattered throughout the Plan area. These include coastal and floodplain grazing marsh, refined coastal and floodplain grazing marsh, good quality semi-improved grassland, lowland heathland, lowland fens, ancient woodland, ancient replanted woodland, deciduous woodland, broadleaved woodland, mixed mainly conifer woodland, traditional orchards, open mosaic habitat, and woodpasture and parkland BAP Priority Habitat. • The Plan area includes two Local Nature Reserves (LNRs): Withey Beds LNR in Moor End and the Aquadome LNR to the west of Rickmansworth. • The Colne Valley Regional Park extends from Rickmansworth south along the River Colne. • There are two Scheduled Monuments in the Plan area: The Manor of the More, and a Roman villa on Moor Park golf course. • There are approximately 95 listed buildings within the Plan area, most of which are Grade II. • Of these listed buildings, there exists the Grade II* |

¹ a spatial dataset that describes the geographic extent and location of Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006) Section 41 habitats of principal importance.

| Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive) | Likelihood and summary of significant effects |
|--|--|
| | <p>listed Tithe Barn at Croxley Hall Farm, and the Grade I listed Moor Park and Orangery/Stable Block.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are two Conservation Areas within the Plan area; one related to parts of the historic core of Rickmansworth, and another associated with residential areas of Moor Park. • Moor Park, within the central part of the plan area, is a Grade II* listed Registered Park and Garden. • The entirety of the plan area is within various Source Protection Zones (SPZs). SPZs are defined around large and public potable groundwater abstraction sites. The purpose of SPZs is to provide additional protection to safeguard drinking water quality through constraining the proximity of an activity that may impact upon a drinking water abstraction. Within the Neighbourhood Plan area, there lie areas of Zone I (Inner Protection Zone), Zone II (Outer Protection Zone) and Zone III (Total Catchment). • In addition, approximately half of the plan area is within either a 'high' or 'medium-high' Groundwater Vulnerability area. This indicates the vulnerability of groundwater to a pollutant discharged at ground level based on hydrological, geological, hydrogeological and soil properties. • A large amount of land within Flood Risk Zones 3 and 2 exists within the Neighbourhood Plan area around Rickmansworth. This is associated with the River Colne and the River Chess which converge to the north west of the town. • A similar stretch of land within Flood Risk Zones 3 and 2 exists adjacent to the railway line through Moor End in the east of the Plan area. This is associated with a tributary of the River Colne. • The non-developed areas of the Plan area, and those also not in non-agricultural use, are Grade 3 ('good to moderate') soils. Grade 2 soil represents |

| Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive) | Likelihood and summary of significant effects |
|--|--|
| | <p>the best and most versatile soil within the wider District context.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The entirety of the non-developed parts of the Plan area are designated as within the Metropolitan Green Belt (MGB). • The Plan area is located within Thames Valley National Character Area (NCA). • This NCA is characterised as having numerous hydrological features providing unity to an area which otherwise lacks homogeneity; these features include the River Thames and its tributaries, streams, lakes, canals and open waterbodies (the result of restored gravel workings). • Although densely populated and developed, pockets of woodland, open grassland, parkland, wetlands and intimate meadows provide escape and tranquillity, and include a variety of habitats supporting important populations of many species, notably stag beetle, shoveler, gadwall and other invertebrates and wildfowl. |
| <p>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).</p> | <p>The content of the Neighbourhood Plan is not in conflict with those relevant planning documents within the wider district and county area related to waste management or water protection.</p> |
| <p>The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects on the following factors:</p> | <p>The following impacts have been identified within this Screening Assessment:</p> |

| Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive) | Likelihood and summary of significant effects |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Biodiversity | <p>The Plan includes Policy BW GB1: Biodiversity, Policy BW GB2: Colne Valley Regional Park, and Policy BW GB3: Access to green and blue infrastructure which set out protection objectives and priorities for biodiversity improvements in the Plan area and the impact of development proposals on the local environment, such as securing biodiversity net gain.</p> <p>The Plan area includes a small part of an SSSI, and is within the IRZs of this and other SSSIs not within the Plan area. Any planning applications coming forward within the plan area may require consultation with Natural England should they be of a size or type that meets specific conditions. Nevertheless, the Plan does not allocate any land for development purposes that could potentially conflict with any such requirements.</p> <p>The HRA element of this Screening Report, due to the content of the Plan, there will be no likely significant effects on the designated features of Habitats sites either alone or in-combination with other plans and projects.</p> <p>In consideration of all of the above effects on biodiversity that would require the full application of the SEA Directive (a SEA Environmental Report) can be screened out.</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Population | <p>It is considered that there would be no significant effects on population resulting from the Neighbourhood Plan. This is due to the small scale of the plan area.</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health | <p>The Neighbourhood Plan includes Policy BW GB4: Local Green Space Designations which designates existing green spaces and seeks their protection. This can be seen to support the principles of improving health and wellbeing in the plan area.</p> <p>There are therefore no significant effects resulting from the Neighbourhood Plan regarding human health that would warrant a strategic assessment through SEA.</p> |

| Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive) | Likelihood and summary of significant effects |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fauna | <p>There are no direct impacts resulting from the Neighbourhood Plan on fauna that are considered significant at the Plan level. The Plan seeks the protection and enhancement of biodiversity at key sites and does not propose any development that could lead to the direct deterioration of habitats.</p> <p>Possible effects on fauna (outside those associated with Habitats Sites) cannot be considered strategically significant to the extent that Strategic Environmental Assessment would be warranted. Such issues are more appropriate to be considered on a case-by-case ‘project level’ basis at the development management stage and in accordance with relevant development management policies contained within the LPA’s adopted Local Plan.</p> <p>Effects on fauna from the content of the Neighbourhood Plan can therefore be screened out.</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flora | <p>Numerous and various areas of Priority Habitat exist within the plan area. The Plan seeks to protect and enhance existing biodiversity assets in the Neighbourhood Plan area.</p> <p>In addition to the Plan’s policies that seek the protection and enhancement of flora, the Three Rivers Local Plan policies apply relevant to such matters and the minimisation of effects. As a result, no effects are expected to result from the Neighbourhood Plan regarding flora.</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Soil | <p>The non-developed areas of the Neighbourhood Plan area consist of predominantly Grade 3 (‘good to moderate’) soils. The Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate land for development purposes, and encourages the use of previously developed land in the first instance. There are no identified negative implications surrounding soil quality as a result of the Neighbourhood Plan.</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water | <p>Land within Source Protection Zones I, II and III makes up the</p> |

| Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive) | Likelihood and summary of significant effects |
|--|--|
| | <p>entirety of the Plan area. Source Protection Zones (SPZs) respond to sources such as wells, boreholes and springs used for public drinking water supply. These zones show the risk of contamination from any activities that might cause pollution in the area.</p> <p>The Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate any land for development purposes and as such no uses are considered to give rise to ground water pollutants (e.g. give rise to hazardous substances such as pesticides, oils, petrol and diesel, solvents, arsenic, mercury or chromium VI; or non-hazardous substances such as ammonia or nitrates).</p> <p>The HRA element of this Screening Report identifies that the Plan area lies outside the Impact Risk Zone for water sensitive Habitat sites within the scope of this assessment. No likely significant effects are therefore expected, with changes in water quantity and quality having been screened out when considered from the Plan either alone or in combination with other plans and projects.</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Air | <p>Although consultation with Natural England is required for any development that could cause air pollution (regarding industrial/agricultural development) in association with the IRZs of SSSIs in parts of the Plan area, no allocations are included within the Plan. If speculative development does come forward within the Plan period, consultation would be required at the planning application stage and is not considered a matter would warrant SEA, as a strategic process, to be undertaken.</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Climatic factors | <p>The Plan includes Policy BW CC3: Sustainable Drainage, which seeks sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) to be incorporated into all developments proposals, where applicable, and where the sequential and exception tests have been applied.</p> <p>The Neighbourhood Plan area contains a relatively large area of Flood Risk Zone 3 associated with the Rivers Colne and Chess, which is in close proximity to the built up area of</p> |

| Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive) | Likelihood and summary of significant effects |
|--|---|
| | <p>Rickmansworth. No development allocations are proposed within the Plan and it is considered that Policy BW CC3 is sufficient in conjunction with adopted Local Plan policies to ensure that any effects are avoided in the first instance and mitigated where that is not possible.</p> <p>It is therefore considered that SEA would not be required regarding matters of flood risk and any speculative development coming forward within the Neighbourhood Plan area in the Plan period can be considered at the planning application stage.</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Material assets | <p>The Plan area does not contain land within a Minerals Consultation Area (MCA) within the County Council’s adopted Minerals Local Plan. The Plan area similarly does not contain any existing or allocated sites for waste management facilities within the County Council’s adopted Waste Local Plan.</p> <p>Regarding other material assets, the content of the Neighbourhood Plan is not considered to have any significant effects due to the extent / size of the Plan area. Such issues are more appropriate to be considered on a case-by-case basis at the development management stage and in accordance with relevant development management policies contained within the LPA’s adopted Local Plan.</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural heritage | <p>The Plan area contains numerous Listed Buildings, as well two Conservation Areas a Registered Park and Garden, and two Scheduled Monuments. The Plan does not allocate land for development purposes that could have any effects on these listings or their settings. The Plan does not include any specific thematic policy regarding heritage or the historic environment, however this is a recurrent theme throughout the Plan’s various design-based policies. Further, the ‘Batchworth Design Code’ developed ancillary to the Plan, includes more detail on what constitutes a suitable development proposal in regard to cultural heritage.</p> <p>Irrespective of the adequacy of the Plan’s policy in the conservation and enhancement of the Plan area’s heritage</p> |

| Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive) | Likelihood and summary of significant effects |
|--|---|
| | <p>assets and their settings, policy regarding the protection and enhancement of the Historic Environment also exists at the LPA level which additionally applies in the Plan area. The effects on heritage are, as a result, considered a development management issue in the context of the Plan and its content. There are not considered to be any elements of the Plan that would give rise to significant effects on the historic environment at the strategic level that would require the full application of the SEA Directive.</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landscape | <p>The parish is within a sensitive landscape, in regard to the protection objectives of the Thames Valley National Character Area (NCA). The plan area contains numerous features synonymous with this NCA and furthermore undeveloped areas within the Plan area are entirely within the Metropolitan Green Belt. The Plan does not allocate any land for development purposes and includes Policy BW DE1: High quality design, which seeks positive landscape features from development.</p> <p>In light of the Plan not allocating land for development purposes and in consideration also of the requirements of development proposals in accordance with the Three Rivers Local Plan, there are no significant strategic landscape effects identified within this Report that would warrant the requirement for the application of the SEA Directive and the formulation of a SEA Environmental Report.</p> |
| <p>The cumulative nature of the effects.</p> | <p>The Plan does not allocate any land for development purposes and therefore any negative cumulative effects can be ruled out.</p> |
| <p>The trans boundary nature of the effects.</p> | <p>The adopted Three Rivers Local Plan can be seen to support the protection and improvement of conditions relevant to those sustainability factors listed within the SEA Directive. The Neighbourhood Plan is broadly aligned with the principles of those wider thematic environmental policies. The HRA Screening element of this Report, which explores in-</p> |

| Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive) | Likelihood and summary of significant effects |
|---|--|
| | combination effects with other relevant plans and projects, also identifies no in-combination effects regarding Habitats (European) Sites. |
| The risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents). | It is considered that there is no risk to human health or the environment as a result of the Neighbourhood Plan. This is in consideration of the above screening requirements related to sustainability themes. The Neighbourhood Plan is unlikely to give rise to any accidents that can be considered to have a significant risk to human health or the environment. |
| The magnitude spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected). | The Neighbourhood Plan relates to the local level only. The magnitude and spatial extent of the Plan's content is therefore not considered significant in a wider District context. No effects are highlighted within this SEA screening at either the local or wider geographic area. |
| <p>The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • special natural characteristics or cultural heritage • exceeded environmental quality standards • intensive land use | As highlighted above in the screening of the Neighbourhood Plan per sustainability theme, the Neighbourhood Plan has not been assessed as having negative effects associated with environmental themes. |
| The effects on areas or landscapes which have | As highlighted above in the screening of the Plan per sustainability theme, the Neighbourhood Plan has not been |



| Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive) | Likelihood and summary of significant effects |
|--|---|
| a recognised national, community or international protection status. | assessed as having any significant effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, community or international protection status. |

4. HRA Screening

4.1 Habitat Regulations Assessment of Development Plans

This section forms a plan level Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) as required by Regulation 63 of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended).

This section of this Report aims to:

- Identify the Habitats sites within 20km of Batchworth Neighbourhood Plan area.
- Summarise the reasons for designation and Conservation Objectives for each site to be considered in this assessment.
- Screen the Batchworth Neighbourhood Plan for its potential to impact upon a Habitats site.
- Assess the potential for in combination effects from other projects and plans in the area.
- Identify if there are any outstanding issues that need further investigation.

4.2 Court Judgements and their consideration in this Report

4.2.1 CJEU People Over Wind v Coillte Teoranta C-323/17

As previously mentioned, in line with the Court judgement (CJEU People Over Wind v Coillte Teoranta C-323/17), mitigation measures cannot be taken into account when carrying out a screening assessment to decide whether a plan or project is likely to result in significant effects on a Habitats site.

This HRA Screening Report does not therefore consider mitigation measures within the assessment of Likely Significant Effects resulting from the Batchworth Neighbourhood Plan.

4.2.2 CJEU Holohan C- 461/17

This Court judgement now imposes more detailed requirements on the competent authority at Appropriate Assessment stage:

1. [...] an 'Appropriate Assessment' must, on the one hand, catalogue the entirety of habitat types and species for which a site is protected, and, on the other, identify and examine both the implications of the proposed project for the species present on that site, and for which that site has not been listed, and the implications for habitat types and species to be found outside the boundaries of that site, provided that those implications are liable to affect the conservation objectives of the site.
2. [...] the competent authority is permitted to grant to a plan or project consent which leaves the developer free to determine subsequently certain parameters

relating to the construction phase, such as the location of the construction compound and haul routes, only if that authority is certain that the development consent granted establishes conditions that are strict enough to guarantee that those parameters will not adversely affect the integrity of the site.

3. [...] where the competent authority rejects the findings in a scientific expert opinion recommending that additional information be obtained, the 'Appropriate Assessment' must include an explicit and detailed statement of reasons capable of dispelling all reasonable scientific doubt concerning the effects of the work envisaged on the site concerned.

Within this Stage 1 HRA Screening report, the assessment determines the requirement whether or not a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment is needed for the Batchworth Neighbourhood Plan.

4.3 Habitats (European) Sites

Habitats sites is the term used in the (revised) NPPF (2021) to describe any site which would be included within the definition at Regulation 8 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) for the purpose of those regulations. These now form part of the UK national network of sites for nature protection. The aim of the network is to assure the long-term survival of UK's most valuable and threatened species and habitats.

All Special Protection Areas (SPAs) are designated for birds and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) are designated for other species, and for Habitats. Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar sites) are also part of the National Network of sites. This is because all SPAs and SACs are comprised of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and all Ramsar sites in England are SSSIs. Together, SPAs, SACs and Ramsar Sites make up the Habitats sites in England. The following offers a description and explanation of SPAs, SACs and Ramsar Sites.

4.3.1 Explanation of SPAs, SACs and Ramsar Sites

Special Protection Areas (SPAs)

SPAs are areas which have been identified as being of international importance for the breeding, feeding, wintering or the migration of rare and vulnerable species of birds. Example: South West London Waterbodies is internationally important for wintering waterfowl. Legislation: Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended).

Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)

SACs are areas designated to protect habitat types that are in danger of disappearance, have a small natural range, or are highly characteristic of the region; and to protect species that are endangered, vulnerable, rare, or endemic. Example: Burnham Beeches is an extensive area of former beech wood-pasture with many old pollards and associated beech

and oak high forest. Surveys have shown that it is one of the richest sites for saproxylic invertebrates in the UK, including 14 Red Data Book species. It also retains nationally important epiphytic communities, including the moss *Zygodon forsteri*. Legislation: Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended).

Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar Sites)

Ramsar Sites are designated to protect the biological and physical features of wetlands, especially for waterfowl habitats. For example, South West London Waterbodies which comprises a number of reservoirs and former gravel pits in the Thames Valley and support internationally important numbers of Gadwall and Shoveler Ramsar sites often overlap with SACs and SPAs and UK planning policy determines that they should be accorded the same importance when developments are proposed. Legislation: Ramsar Convention (1971) – Wetlands of International Importance and Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended).

4.3.2 Habitats Sites to be considered

There are five Habitats sites which lie within 20 km of the Batchworth Neighbourhood Plan area. This is shown in Table 3 and in Appendix 2.

Table 3: Habitats Sites within 20km to be considered in this assessment

| |
|-------------------------------|
| SPA |
| South West London Waterbodies |
| SAC |
| Burnham Beeches |
| Windsor Forest and Great Park |
| Chilterns Beechwoods |
| Ramsar |
| South West London Waterbodies |

Consideration was given to potential impact pathways, Impact Risk Zones (IRZ) for the underpinning SSSIs for the Habitats sites listed in Table 3 and Zones of Influence (ZOI) as confirmed on MAGIC website www.magic.gov.uk and Batchworth parish lies outside the 5.6

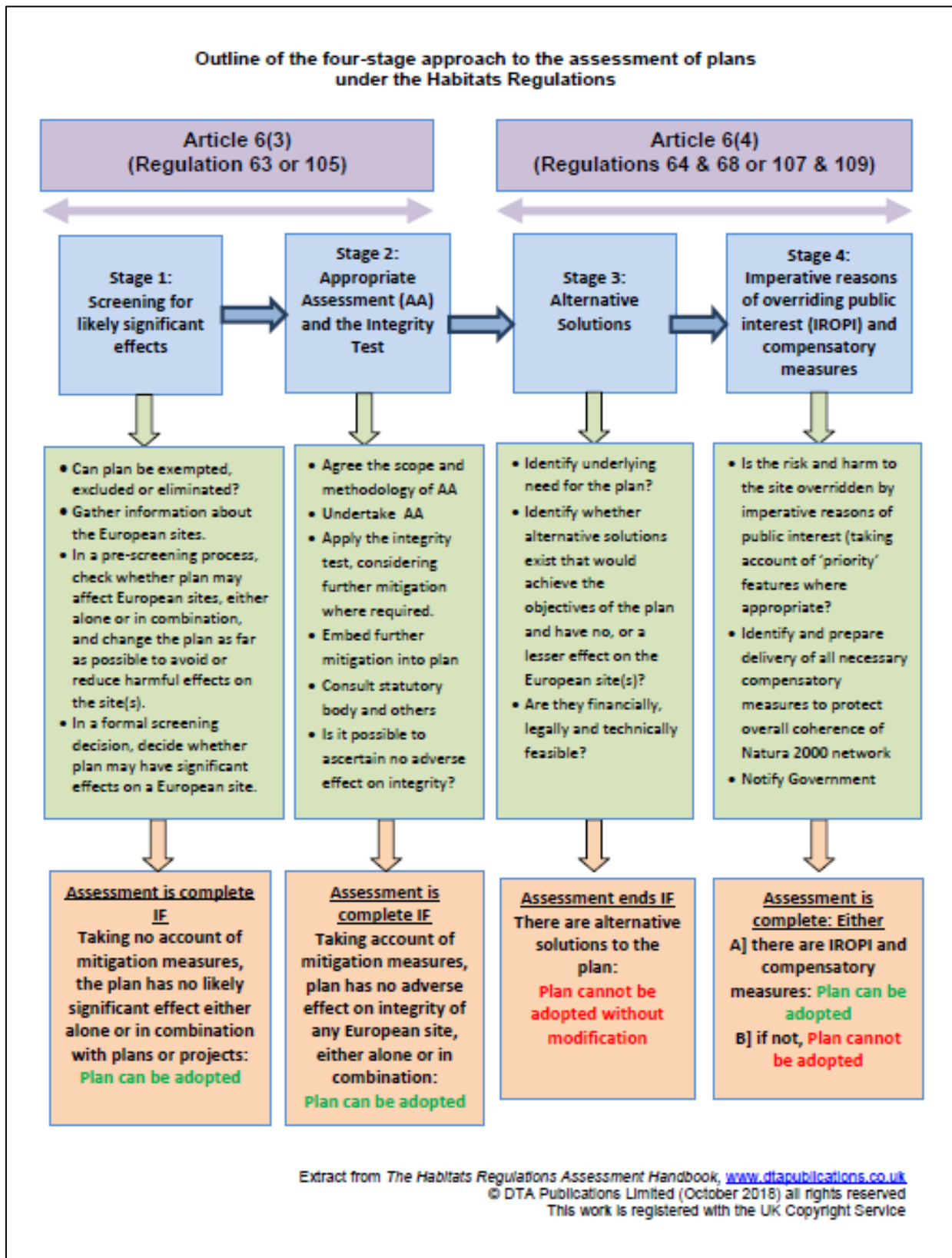
km ZOI for Burnham Beeches SSSI and within the 12.6km ZOI for Chilterns Beechwoods SAC for predicted recreational impacts.

On a precautionary principle, it is concluded that there is no likely impact on any of the Habitats sites within scope resulting from the Batchworth Neighbourhood Plan.

4.4 Method and Approach

The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 state that submitted Plans need to be accompanied by a statement explaining how the proposed Plan meets the 'basic conditions' set out in Schedule 4B of the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act. These basic conditions include a requirement to demonstrate how the Plan is compatible with EU obligations, which includes the need to undertake a HRA screening report; this is necessary to ensure the making of the neighbourhood plan is not likely to have a significant effect on a Habitats (European) site or a Habitats (European) offshore marine site, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects. This document relates only to Stage 1 of the HRA process as set out in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Outline of the Four Stage Approach to the Assessment of Plans under the Habitats Regulations (taken from the DTA handbook).



4.4.1 Stage 1: HRA Screening

The screening stage identifies if any significant effects are likely because any policies or projects will have an impact on a Habitats site. Table 4 identifies the different categories assigned to each policy in the plan: Category A identifies those policies or projects that are considered to have No Negative Effect. Category B identifies those policies or projects that will have No Likely Significant Effect. Category C identifies those policies or projects that might have Likely Significant Effect upon a Habitats site either alone or in combination with other plans or projects. Section 4.5 considers each policy or projects and the results of the screening exercise recorded.

Each of the policies in the Batchworth Neighbourhood Plan has been screened to identify whether they would have any effect on a Habitats site and allocated to a category as shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Screening categorisation

| |
|--|
| <p>Category A: No negative effect</p> <p>Policies or projects that will not be likely to have any negative effect on a Habitats site.</p> |
| <p>Category B: No Likely Significant Effect</p> <p>Policies or projects that could have an effect but would not be likely to have a <i>significant</i> negative effect on a Habitats site alone or in combination. This conclusion could only be reached if the effects, even in combination and taking the precautionary principle into account, are considered trivial.</p> |
| <p>Category C: Likely Significant Effect</p> <p>Policies or projects which are predicted to have a likely significant effect on a Habitats site either alone or in combination with other plans and projects and require revision or further assessment (Appropriate Assessment).</p> |

4.4.2 Potential impacts of Batchworth Neighbourhood Plan on Habitats Sites

There are a wide range of potential impacts on Habitats Sites that could arise from development plans. These can be summarised as -

- Land take by development;
- Impact on protected species found within but which travel outside the protected sites may be relevant where development could result in effects on qualifying interest species within the Habitats site, for example through the loss of feeding

grounds for an identified species.

- Increased disturbance, for example from recreational use resulting from new housing development and / or improved access due to transport infrastructure projects;
- Changes in water availability, or water quality as a result of development and increased demands for waste water treatment, and changes in groundwater regimes due to increased impermeable areas;
- Changes in atmospheric pollution levels due to increased traffic, waste management facilities etc. Pollution discharges from developments such as industrial developments, quarries and waste management facilities.

Each policy will be assessed against the criteria in the table below.

Table 4: Assessment of potential impacts on Habitats Sites

| Nature of potential impact | How the Batchworth Neighbourhood Plan (alone or in combination with other plans and projects) could affect a Habitats site | Why these effects are not considered significant |
|---|--|---|
| Land take by development | The Batchworth Neighbourhood Plan area is outside the boundaries of the Habitats sites within scope of this HRA screening. | No likely significant effects are expected, as no development will be allocated on designated land. It is therefore, considered that impacts from land take by development can be screened out when considered from the Plan either alone or in combination with other plans and projects. |
| Impact on protected species outside the protected sites | The Batchworth Neighbourhood Plan area lies outside the 5.6 km IRZ for Burnham Beeches SSSI which underpins the SAC designation. | There is no risk of impacts on protected species outside of the protected sites. It is therefore considered that this impact pathway will not result in likely significant effects upon Habitats sites from the Neighbourhood Plan. Therefore, impacts on protected species outside the protected sites from the Neighbourhood Plan (either alone or in combination with |

| Nature of potential impact | How the Batchworth Neighbourhood Plan (alone or in combination with other plans and projects) could affect a Habitats site | Why these effects are not considered significant |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| | | other plans and projects) on the Habitats sites can be screened out from further assessment. |
| Recreational pressure and disturbance | The Batchworth Neighbourhood Plan area lies outside the 5.6km Zone of Influence for Burnham Beeches SAC and 12.6km ZOI for Chiltern Beechwoods for predicted recreational impacts on. | The Batchworth Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate land for development, so impacts from recreation arising from the NP are screened out when considered from the Plan either alone or in combination with other plans and projects. |
| Water quantity and quality | The Batchworth Neighbourhood Plan area lies outside the IRZ for water sensitive Habitat sites within the scope of this assessment. | No likely significant effects are expected so changes in water quantity and quality have been screened out when considered from the Plan either alone or in combination with other plans and projects. |
| Changes in pollution levels | The Batchworth Neighbourhood Plan area lies outside the IRZ for pollution levels for sensitive Habitat sites and there are none within the scope of this assessment. | No likely significant effects are expected, so changes in air pollution have been screened out when considered from the Plan either alone or in combination with other plans. |

4.5 Results from HRA Screening of Neighbourhood Plan Policies

Each of the policies in the Batchworth Neighbourhood Plan was screened in turn to identify whether they would have any impact on a Habitats site and the result of this exercise is recorded in Table 5.

Table 5: Assessment of potential impacts from the Plan policies

| Policy Number | Policy Wording | Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites? | Recommendations |
|------------------------------------|---|--|------------------------------------|
| <p>Policy BW GB1: Biodiversity</p> | <p>1. Development proposals must manage impacts on biodiversity and secure a minimum net biodiversity gain of 10% on-site, as demonstrated through use of the most up-to-date version of the Natural England biodiversity metric (or any successor document to this) and submission of a biodiversity net gain plan submitted as part of planning application material. This should be informed by current site conditions and with any proposed habitat creation being appropriate to local context. This applies to all developments, including smaller sites, which should make use of the Small Sites Toolkit published by Natural England as part of the biodiversity metric. The management plan should show how biodiversity net gains shall be managed in perpetuity.</p> <p>2. Where measures are proposed off-site these should be located as close as possible to the development site. The applicant will need to demonstrate these are deliverable and is expected to liaise with HERC to identify suitable locations in close proximity to the proposal site which would benefit from biodiversity net gain. Off-site measures should be in place before construction</p> | <p>No, Category A</p> | <p>No specific recommendations</p> |

| Policy Number | Policy Wording | Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites? | Recommendations |
|---------------|--|--|-----------------|
| | <p>commences.</p> <p>3. Applicants are encouraged to include existing trees and hedgerows in their layouts, incorporating them within green areas, open spaces and alongside walking and cycling routes, referring to principles contained in the Batchworth Design Guidance and Codes.</p> <p>4. Where new green infrastructure is to be provided, it is expected that this will provide permeability for wildlife through and around development. This should be functional as wildlife habitat in its own right not just as a link between habitats. The width of wildlife corridors should be proportionate to the requirements of target species. These should allow for movement of nocturnal wildlife, with the impact of lighting and glare minimised.</p> <p>5. Where landscaping is to be provided, it is expected that native species appropriate to the area will be used wherever possible. Landscape design should help create distinctive places.</p> <p>6. Where there is unavoidable loss or damage to habitats, sites or features because of exceptional circumstances, mitigation and compensation will be required.</p> <p>7. All applicants will be expected to</p> | | |

| Policy Number | Policy Wording | Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites? | Recommendations |
|--|--|--|------------------------------------|
| | <p>seek the advice of the ecological advisors to the local planning authority wherever proposals affect or have the potential to affect the natural environment and nature conservation assets, including valued landscapes and habitats.</p> | | |
| <p>Policy BW GB2: Colne Valley Regional Park</p> | <p>1. Proposals for development within or adjacent to the Colne Valley Regional Park should make a positive contribution towards the enhancement of and improvements to the Park in line with the Colne Valley Green Infrastructure Strategy and the North Colne area strategy contained within this. Development should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Maintain and enhance the environment and landscape character of the Park, including waterbodies and water quality. b) Conserve and enhance biodiversity, including potential for connecting habitats. c) Contribute towards biodiversity net gain and carbon sequestering through new woodland, hedgerows, species rich grassland or restoration of wetland areas where appropriate. d) Support access for leisure and recreation that promotes movement by foot or bicycle. | <p>No, Category A</p> | <p>No specific recommendations</p> |

| Policy Number | Policy Wording | Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites? | Recommendations |
|---|---|--|------------------------------------|
| <p>Policy BW GB3: Access to green and blue infrastructure</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All development should take opportunities afforded by site location to improve access to green and blue infrastructure for pedestrians and cyclists. 2. Wherever possible, such routes should connect, extend or improve existing conditions, allowing for continuous and direct access. 3. The design of routes should be appropriate to context and the environmental character of the area, as referenced in the Batchworth Design Code. 4. Routes should be suitable for use in all weather conditions, be well signed and clearly defined. | <p>No, Category A</p> | <p>No specific recommendations</p> |
| <p>Policy BW GB4: Local Green Space Designations</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The following are designated as Local Green Spaces, as identified on Figure XX (INSERT REF): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Rickmansworth Park ii. Bowls Club and Northway Garden iii. Bury Gardens iv. Scotsbridge Playing Fields and Sports Club v. Fortune Common vi. Riverside Drive vii. Ebury Road Allotments | <p>No, Category A</p> | <p>No specific recommendations</p> |

| Policy Number | Policy Wording | Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites? | Recommendations |
|---|---|--|------------------------------------|
| | <p>viii. Eastbury Recreation Ground</p> <p>ix. Grove Green on Batchworth Lane next to Grove Farm Park</p> <p>x. Greenbroom Spring and The Grove Woods</p> <p>xi. Batchworth Allotments.</p> <p>2. Planning applications for development on the Locally Designated Green Spaces will not be permitted unless they perform a supplementary and supporting function to the green space and the use of that space and comply with the wider policies set out in the Development Plan, including that set out in Policy BW GB1 of the Batchworth Neighbourhood Plan. Initiatives which seek to increase biodiversity on the above Local Green Spaces will generally be supported.</p> <p>3. Designation as Local Green Space does not infer any maintenance regimes or burdens over and above those already in place</p> | | |
| <p>Policy BW CC1: Sustainable Design and Construction</p> | <p>1. The design and standard of any new development should aim to meet a high level of sustainable design and construction and be optimised for water and energy efficiency, targeting zero carbon emissions. Encouragement is given to development that accords</p> | <p>No, Category A</p> | <p>No specific recommendations</p> |

| Policy Number | Policy Wording | Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites? | Recommendations |
|---------------|--|--|-----------------|
| | <p>with Hertfordshire Building Future’s Sustainable Design Toolkit.</p> <p>2. Proposed schemes that follow the Sustainable Design principles set out in the Batchworth Design Code and which make optimal use of land through good design will be supported:</p> <p>a) Subject to topography, layout and good urban design principles, buildings should be orientated to maximise solar gain where appropriate to site topography and creating a consistent building frontage to the street.</p> <p>b) Solar access along the south facade of the building should be maximised, with appropriate shading elements and cross ventilation employed in new and existing buildings.</p> <p>c) Renewable energy technologies should be integrated within the development, including, as appropriate, ground source and air source heat pumps, photovoltaics, solar panels and other technologies. Wherever used, such technology should be designed to reflect the character and materials present with the immediate area, and, as appropriate, follow criteria outlined in Policy BW CC2.</p> <p>d) The use of low embodied carbon materials, assessed through a Life Cycle Assessment,</p> | | |

| Policy Number | Policy Wording | Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites? | Recommendations |
|--|--|--|------------------------------------|
| | <p>should be prioritised.</p> <p>3. Innovative approaches to the construction of low carbon homes, including construction to Passivhaus standards, is strongly encouraged where development also complies with other policies of the Development Plan.</p> <p>4. Proposals for refurbishments and or the retrofitting of existing buildings will be required to take a low carbon approach, reducing embodied carbon and optimising the energy efficiency of the building, reducing heat loss and installing energy saving measures and renewable energy sources. Any alteration to an existing building must be carefully considered to ensure that potential adverse impacts are adequately mitigated.</p> | | |
| <p>Policy BW CC2: Renewables</p> | <p>1. Proposals for large-scale renewable energy developments will be subject to Policy DM5 of the Local Plan (or subsequent review of this).</p> <p>2. Proposals for individual and micro-scale community led initiatives, involving the generation of energy from hydro-electricity, solar photovoltaic and other technologies, as appropriate, will be supported subject to criteria in Policy DM5 of the Local Plan and</p> | <p>No, Category A</p> | <p>No specific recommendations</p> |

| Policy Number | Policy Wording | Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites? | Recommendations |
|--|---|--|--|
| | <p>where;</p> <p>a) the siting and scale of the proposed development is appropriate to its setting and position in the wider landscape, referring to the qualities and characteristics of the built and natural environment set out in the Batchworth Design Guidance and Codes; and</p> <p>b) the proposed development does not have an unacceptable impact on a feature of natural or biodiversity importance.</p> <p>3. Proposals for energy generation from the river and canal network will be subject to assessment of potential impacts on flood risk, water levels, navigation and wetland wildlife. Consultation with and the gaining of any necessary licences or permits from the Environment Agency will be required.</p> | | |
| <p>Policy BW CC3: Sustainable drainage</p> | <p>1. Where development is proposed in an area at risk of flooding having first satisfied the sequential and exception tests, mitigation measures giving priority to the use of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) must be included:</p> <p>2. Where SuDS are proposed as part of any development:</p> <p>a) The design of SuDS should</p> | <p>No, Category A</p> | <p>No specific recommendations</p> |

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| | <p>reflect best practice guidance established in the LFRMS and follow the SuDS hierarchy as set out in the LLFA Summary Guidance for Developers.</p> <p>b) Where practicable, SuDs should be designed to be multi-functional and deliver benefits for wildlife, amenity and landscape.</p> <p>c) Swales and attenuation ponds should be designed so that water features and plants are visible from the surrounding area and avoid unattractive and over-engineered boundary treatments. Attenuation ponds on slopes should be avoided if they need deep embankments or bunding.</p> <p>d) Buffer strips of at least 8m to be provided alongside watercourses in line with guidance from the Environment Agency should be designed to maximise natural flood management and minimise erosion through planting.</p> <p>e) Where it is proposed to provide SuDS within the public realm these should be designed as an integral part of the green infrastructure and street network, responding positively to the character of the area. Where hard landscaping is needed the use of porous materials should be maximised to enable infiltration</p> | | |

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| <p>Policy BW CC4: Paving of front gardens</p> | <p>1. Where it is proposed to pave over front gardens and the submission of a planning application is required, all proposals should:</p> <p>a) Seek to maximise the retained area of lawn and vegetation.</p> <p>b) Incorporate Sustainable Urban Drainage Schemes (SuDS).</p> <p>c) Not direct run-off straight into the drainage system (both to avoid adding to flood risk and to ensure pollutants do not enter the main river system).</p> <p>d) Include new planting of non-invasive tree and shrub species.</p> <p>2. Where necessary to gain vehicular access to allow off-street parking, planning permission must be sought for the installation of dropped kerbs and cross-overs. These will only be supported where appropriate on-site drainage is provided, using permeable surfaces, and where surface run-off rates do not increase those currently experienced</p> | <p>No, Category A</p> | <p>No specific recommendations</p> |
| <p>Policy BW CO1: Housing type, tenure and mix</p> | <p>1. On developments of ten or more homes, 45% of those homes (or any subsequent target introduced through a review of the Local Plan) must comprise affordable housing.</p> <p>2. Provision of affordable homes</p> | <p>No, Category A</p> | <p>No specific recommendations</p> |

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| | <p>should be split such that 70% takes the form of rented tenures, including social and affordable rent, while the remaining 30% comprises affordable routes to home ownership.</p> <p>3. All qualifying developments in Batchworth are required to provide First Homes at a discount of 50%.</p> <p>4. All affordable homes, including First Homes, should be designed such that they are tenure-blind (i.e.: they should be integrated into the design of the overall proposed development and be of an equal quality in terms of design and use of materials compared to the market housing element).</p> <p>5. Subject to viability, new development should contribute towards delivery of the following mix of housing sizes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1-bedroom homes: 15% • 2-bedroom homes: 32% • 3-bedroom homes: 53% <p>6. Any proposals for homes of 4 bedrooms or more will need to be supported by information that demonstrates how this is meeting local need.</p> <p>7. Proposals for development that meets the need of the ageing population (specialist housing) will</p> | | |

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| | <p>be supported. Where proposed, approximately 44% of the homes shall comprise extra care housing, with 66% comprising sheltered housing. Of these, 45% shall comprise affordable specialist accommodation.</p> <p>8. Where specialist housing is proposed it should be located within easy access of shops, facilities and public transport services. Housing should be well integrated within the wider neighbourhood and be designed in accordance with the HAPPI principles.</p> <p>9. Support will be given to proposals for new homes that are designed to be adaptable to meet future accommodation needs of occupiers at different stages of their lifecycle.</p> | | |
| <p>Policy BW CO2: Rickmansworth town centre uses</p> | <p>1. Proposals for major development in the town centre (as defined in Figure 20) should incorporate a mix of uses consistent with the role, function and character of Rickmansworth town centre.</p> <p>a) Suitable town centre uses include those in Classes E, F and C of the Use Classes Order.</p> <p>b) Business and retail uses should be focused within the main retail area (as defined in Figure 20).</p> | <p>No, Category A</p> | <p>No specific recommendations</p> |

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| | <p>Where residential uses are proposed in these areas they should be on the upper floors of a mixed-use scheme, with ground floors comprising retail or other complementary uses. Outside of these areas residential uses may be appropriate at ground floor level.</p> <p>c) Mixed-use schemes should be carefully designed to avoid noise and odour conflicts between uses.</p> <p>d) Temporary proposals for the use of vacant buildings within Use Classes E and F, including ‘pop-up’s, are encouraged.</p> <p>e) Proposals for development in the town centre involving streets and spaces that enhance the attractiveness of the public realm and which improve the quality of the pedestrian environment will be supported.</p> | | |
| <p>Policy BW CO3: Rickmansworth library and civic area</p> | <p>1. Development of the library site and civic area (as defined in the Local Plan) will be supported where it meets the following criteria:</p> <p>a) Provides a mix-use building incorporating a retained or reprovided library space.</p> <p>b) Space for other community uses can be included on the ground</p> | <p>No, Category A</p> | <p>No specific recommendations</p> |

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| | <p>floor.</p> <p>c) Office and residential use may be appropriate but should be provided on upper floors.</p> <p>d) The height of the building reflects the prevailing height of adjacent buildings.</p> <p>e) A plaza is created, linking the library, civic offices and Watersmeet Theatre.</p> <p>f) New street tree planting and street furniture is provided, along with improved pedestrian crossings to the library and new plaza.</p> | | |
| <p>Policy BW CO4: Rickmansworth town centre design principles</p> | <p>1. Proposals for new development in Rickmansworth Town Centre should complement the special character of the centre, reflected in the height and massing of buildings, as well as the materials used, building styles and roof heights. The qualities and character of the town centre are set out in the Batchworth Design code, which should be used to inform development proposals. Support will be given to those proposals which meet the design criteria below and take the opportunity to improve character as identified in the Design Code:</p> <p>a) Create clear and consistent building lines with active frontages at ground floor level, following</p> | <p>No, Category A</p> | <p>No specific recommendations</p> |

| Policy Number | Policy Wording | Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites? | Recommendations |
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| | <p>established building lines where they exist.</p> <p>b) Provide the principal points of access to buildings on the main street or public space onto which it fronts.</p> <p>c) Provide for clear, direct and well-overlooked pedestrian routes through or around the development site, connecting with the existing route network.</p> <p>d) Clearly define areas of public and private realm through well-defined building lines and enclosure of private space. Blank walls and exposed back land areas, including car parking and servicing areas, should be screened from view, preferably through the wrapping of these with active development edges, or with other solutions such as provision of green walls that improve the quality of the townscape.</p> <p>e) Avoid the creation of ‘superblocks’, allowing for the subdivision of land into different parcels which can come forward for change and development over time.</p> <p>f) Corner buildings should be well articulated and blank gable ends avoided.</p> <p>g) Respect the prevailing building height. Where building heights vary</p> | | |

| Policy Number | Policy Wording | Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites? | Recommendations |
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| | <p>this change should be subtle and step up or down as appropriate between adjacent buildings.</p> <p>h) Incorporate generous floor to ceiling heights, particularly at ground floor level, to allow for flexibility and change of use over time.</p> <p>i) Support improvements to the quality of the public realm in the town centre, including improved walking and cycling routes and crossings.</p> <p>2. Where relevant, applications for new development will be required to respect the ability for markets and other outdoor events to operate in the town centre.</p> | | |
| <p>Policy BW CO5: Moneyhill and Moor Park Local Centres</p> | <p>1. Uses that support everyday activity are appropriate in Moneyhill and Moor Park Local centres:</p> <p>a) Use classes E and F are appropriate uses and should be located on the ground floor.</p> <p>b) Ground floor uses should create an active frontage to the street, with main entrances located along and opening onto this.</p> <p>c) Residential use (Class C3) will be appropriate on upper floors, subject to being complementary with the ground floor use. Office</p> | <p>No, Category A</p> | <p>No specific recommendations</p> |

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| | <p>uses may also be appropriate on upper floors. All uses on upper floors should include windows and balconies that look out across the street and create variety and interest.</p> <p>2. Proposals for the provision of new community facilities will also be supported.</p> <p>3. Where new development is proposed it should:</p> <p>a) Create a strong and consistent building line that relates well to adjacent building.</p> <p>b) Include generous floor to ceiling heights at ground floor level that allow for change and flexibility over time.</p> <p>c) Be generally consistent with the prevailing heights of adjacent buildings.</p> <p>4. Proposals for development should relate well to the street and, wherever possible, contribute to wider public realm improvements and supporting initiatives that improve the quality of the pedestrian environment. Proposals for uses that spill-out onto the street will be supported where there is sufficient space to allow this without causing obstruction to pedestrians.</p> | | |

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| <p>Policy BW CO6: Employment</p> | <p>1. Development proposals that provide small-scale retail, office and research and development employment opportunities, (Classes E(g)(i), E(g)(ii), E(g)(iii)), particularly on flexible terms to support small and medium sized businesses, will be supported. This could either be through the following:</p> <p>a) conversion of existing buildings across the Neighbourhood Plan area, subject to the impact of provision on the highway network and parking; or</p> <p>b) provision of new buildings or conversion of existing buildings within the extent of the built-up area.</p> <p>2. The design of any new development will need to respond positively to the defining characteristics of the area within which it is located and reflect the associated principles set out in the Batchworth Design Code that are applicable to that area. Proposals that create new employment opportunities will be supported where:</p> <p>a) Their size, materials and design respects the immediate surroundings which they are to be located whilst enhancing the location to make it attractive for</p> | <p>No, Category A</p> | <p>No specific recommendations</p> |

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| | <p>new businesses;</p> <p>b) They are well integrated with and complement existing businesses;</p> <p>c) They do not have significant impact on the local environment and the amenities of adjacent residential properties or other land uses;</p> <p>d) They do not result in a material increase in large and heavy vehicle traffic on non-strategic routes; and</p> <p>e) Where appropriate, they enable active travel through delivery of new walking and cycling routes.</p> <p>3. Development proposals for flexible workspaces that are designed to accommodate local green ventures will also generally be supported.</p> <p>4. Within the Tolpits area, support will be given to proposals that reconfigure or provide new or replacement premises that better address Croxley Moor and provide access to the Ebury Way Public Right of Way. Proposals for an accessible hub within the Tolpits Lane area providing a café, shop and or meeting room will be supported.</p> <p>5. Development proposals located within the Tolpits Lane area must contribute towards improving</p> | | |

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| | public transport and active travel options. | | |
| Policy BW CO7: design principles for B2-B8 Employment uses | <p>1. Where appropriate, proposals for B2-B8 led employment schemes should reflect the following principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Buildings should front onto the edge of the development plot. b) The most active uses should be located on the ground floor, fronting the street. c) Service yards and loading spaces should be located to the rear of buildings. Such areas should be shared, making more efficient use of space, particularly on smaller sites. d) Multiple points of access should be provided to service yards to support operational needs and provide flexibility for future change. e) Vehicular routes to and through employment areas should be designed to minimise HGV movements, connecting with the strategic road network in as efficient away as possible. f) Public spaces and meeting places for employees should be well integrated into the development, including useable and attractive green spaces that are accessible by foot and well | No, Category A | No specific recommendations |

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| | <p>overlooked.</p> <p>2. Landscaping should provide a buffer to industrial uses which might impact on the surrounding landscape or adjacent development.</p> | | |
| <p>Policy BW DE1: High quality design</p> | <p>1. New development in the Batchworth Neighbourhood Plan area shall:</p> <p>a) Be based upon a design-led approach to development underpinned by good practice principles and reflecting a thorough site appraisal.</p> <p>b) Respond positively to guidance and principles established in the Batchworth Design Guidance and Codes, including but not limited to prevailing building heights, materials, development frontages, plot widths, boundary treatments and street enclosure. Proposals that depart from this will need fully justifying.</p> <p>c) Demonstrate how schemes respond to local character and, wherever possible, contribute towards improvements to character, as indicated in the Batchworth Design Guidance and Codes.</p> <p>d) Include new green and public space as appropriate.</p> | <p>No, Category A</p> | <p>No specific recommendations</p> |

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| | <p>e) Help create places that are easily navigable, where local landmarks and landscape features aid wayfinding.</p> <p>f) Incorporate a well connected and legible network of streets that aids safe walking and cycling.</p> <p>g) Retain the quality and openness of the public realm and accessibility through the area by avoiding the creation of ‘gated developments’</p> <p>h) Clearly define public and private areas, creating development blocks with active street frontages that aid natural surveillance.</p> <p>i) Sensitively incorporates waste and recycling storage within limited visual impact on the appearance of the street.</p> <p>j) Incorporate street planting where appropriate, prioritising the use of native species.</p> <p>k) Provide parking on-plot and set-back from the main building line to reduce the visual dominance of parking. Where provided on-street, rows of parking bays shall be aligned with the footpath and interspersed with street trees and areas of planting.</p> <p>l) Take opportunities to improve access to green spaces, rivers and canals, including new routes</p> | | |

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| | <p>alongside these where appropriate that have active development frontages.</p> <p>m) Retain the sense of openness and separation between Moor Park and Rickmansworth, avoiding the coalescence of those places.</p> <p>2. Innovative schemes that respond to and reinterpret local design cues, and which demonstrate an imaginative sense of place whilst respecting surrounding context, are welcome.</p> <p>3. All development proposals should be informed by the Batchworth Design Guidance and Codes and make reference to principles established in Building for a Healthy Life.</p> | | |
| <p>Policy BW DE2: Gateways</p> | <p>1. Proposals for development at gateway locations will be supported where they strengthen the sense of arrival through:</p> <p>a) Provision of public space that enables orientation and which supports social use and interaction as part of the network of public spaces in the area.</p> <p>b) Alignment and connectivity with existing walking and cycling routes, including new and or improved crossing points.</p> <p>c) Improved wayfinding through</p> | <p>No, Category A</p> | <p>No specific recommendations</p> |

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| | <p>provision of a legible development structure, signage, planting and public art.</p> <p>d) Integrating and enhancing existing features of value, both natural and built.</p> | | |
| <p>Policy BW AM1: Active and healthy travel</p> | <p>1. Proposals for major residential and commercial development are expected to include plans which make clear how they satisfy the following active travel criteria:</p> <p>a) Provide new walking and cycling routes that are direct, safe and convenient to use and designed for use by people of all ages and abilities.</p> <p>b) Demonstrate how such proposals will integrate satisfactorily into existing adjacent walking and cycling networks, without reduction of capacity or safety of those routes.</p> <p>c) Provide development layouts with active frontages which allow for the natural surveillance of routes through overlooking.</p> <p>d) Reflect best practice principles for active travel design with the design of new cycle routes as appropriate to the site, incorporating the guidance set out in DfT Cycle Infrastructure Design LTN 1/20, or successor guidance. The Batchwoth Design Guide and</p> | <p>No, Category A</p> | <p>No specific recommendations</p> |

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| | <p>Codes, and principles established in Building for a Health Life, shall also be utilised by applicants to inform the design of safe, attractive and effective active travel infrastructure.</p> <p>2. Proposals for residential development shall provide secure cycle storage assigned to the dwelling and located within or immediately adjacent to the property, fully enclosed and at ground-level. Proposals for flats should include communal areas for cycle storage.</p> <p>3. Proposals for commercial, leisure and community uses should support and enable active travel through inclusion of safe, secure, dry and convenient cycle parking and changing facilities where appropriate.</p> <p>4. New streets provided within areas of growth and development must be designed to balance the needs of competing users and avoid conflicts between motor vehicles, bus users, pedestrians and cyclists.</p> | | |
| <p>Policy BW AM2: E-Vehicles, technology and micro mobility</p> | <p>1. Proposals for communal e-vehicle charging points within the public realm for shared, personal and micro-mobility transport solutions are welcome.</p> <p>2. Where proposed, such</p> | <p>No, Category A</p> | <p>No specific recommendations</p> |

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| | <p>infrastructure should be located sensitively to ensure that there are no harmful impacts upon pedestrian circulation or the immediate appearance of the street scene and wider townscape. Infrastructure should be designed to minimise visual clutter, hindrance and hazard to pedestrians and other street users.</p> <p>3. Wherever possible, public EV charging infrastructure, such as cabling, should be provided in such a way that it can be expanded in the future to provide additional charging points and be upgraded to incorporate faster charging technology.</p> <p>4. Proposals for e-vehicle infrastructure and or mobility hubs will be supported in the following locations, subject to compliance with wider policies in the Development Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. The Civic Hib / Library area. ii. All public car parks, including the Aquadrome. iii. Secure cycle ‘e-hubs’ at the entrance to Eastbury Recreation Ground and the Berry Lane car park. <p>5. All new homes shall be fitted with e-vehicle charging points.</p> | | |

4.5.1 Recommendations

There are no recommendations for the policies in this Neighbourhood Plan as they have all been assigned to Category A. There will therefore be no need for any residential development subsequently coming forward under this Plan to be subject to a project level HRA. As such there is no requirement for this Plan to progress to Appropriate Assessment.

As the parish of Batchwood lies outside the individual Zones of Influence for the Habitats sites within scope, there are no predicted effects from the Plan alone and no residual effects to consider in combination with other plans and projects.

There is therefore no need to identify any relevant plans or projects likely to result in a significant effect on Habitats sites.

In the context of this HRA, there are no relevant plans or projects to be considered in combination with Batchwood Neighbourhood Plan.

5. Conclusions

5.1 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared for town and country planning purposes and sets a framework for future development consent. The policies of the Neighbourhood Plan can be considered to determine the use of small areas at local level commensurate with their status in determining local planning applications.

Planning Practice Guidance on SEA of Neighbourhood Plans indicates that a strategic environmental assessment may be required, for example, where a neighbourhood plan allocates sites for development; the neighbourhood area contains sensitive natural or heritage assets that may be affected by the proposals in the plan; or 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.

The Plan does not allocate any land for development purposes and seeks to strengthen the protection and enhancement of assets at the local level and in a local context.

In consideration of the findings of this Screening Report, the Batchworth Neighbourhood Plan can be **screened out** for its requirement of Strategic Environmental Assessment in line with the requirements of Directive 2001/42/EC.

5.2 Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)

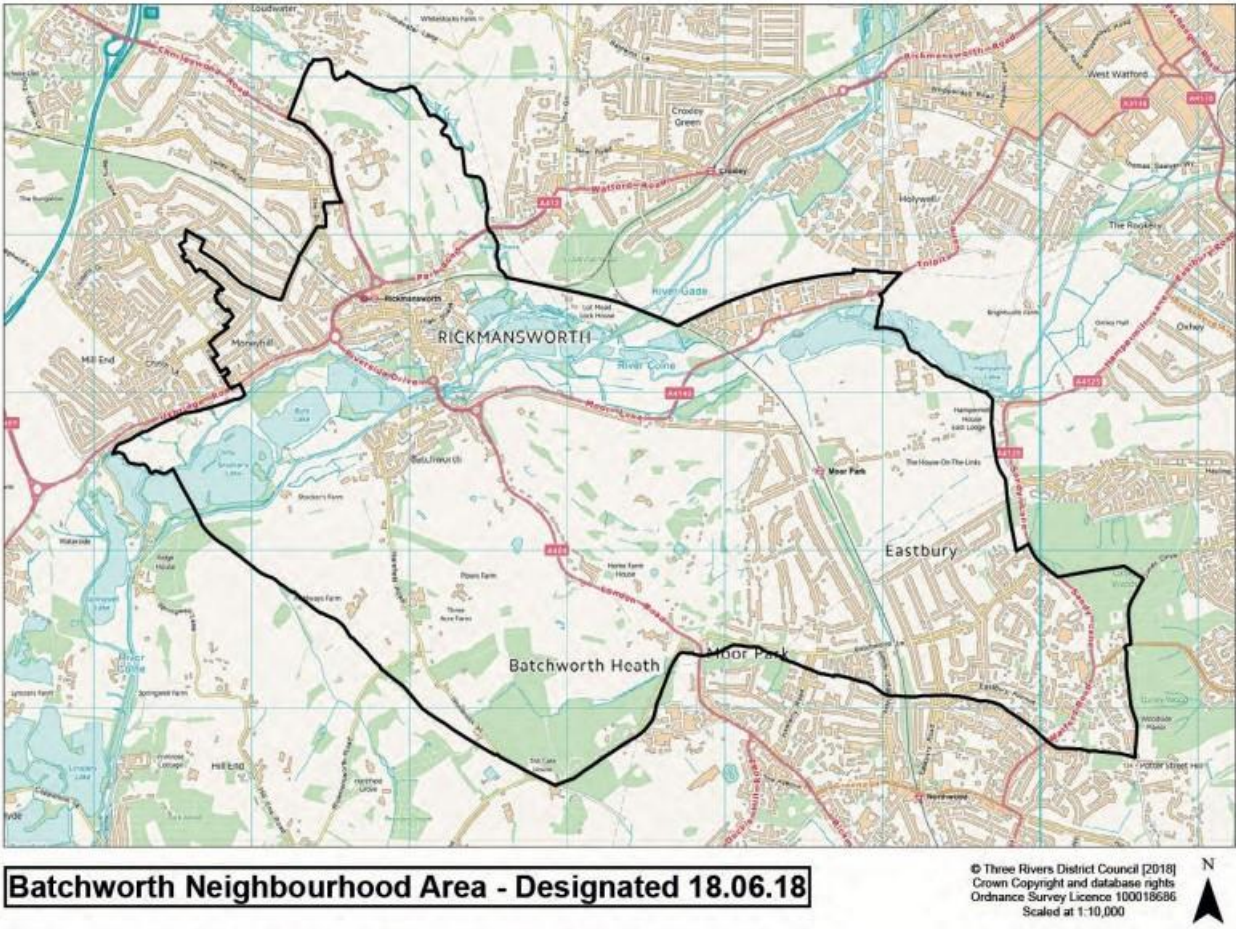
Subject to Natural England's review, this HRA Screening Report, indicates that, without mitigation embedded, the Batchworth Neighbourhood Plan is not predicted to have Likely Significant Effect on the designated features of a Habitats site, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects. The requirement for the Plan to undertake further assessment under the Conservation of Habitats and Regulations 2017 (as amended) is therefore **screened out**.

6. References

- Batchworth Neighbourhood Plan (March 2022)
- Burnham Beeches Special Area of Conservation Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Strategy SPD (Buckinghamshire Council, November 2020)
- Three Rivers District Council DPD (adopted 2011)
- Tydlesley, D., and Chapman, C., (2013) The Habitats Regulations Assessment Handbook, (April 2022) edition UK: DTA Publications Limited

Appendix 1

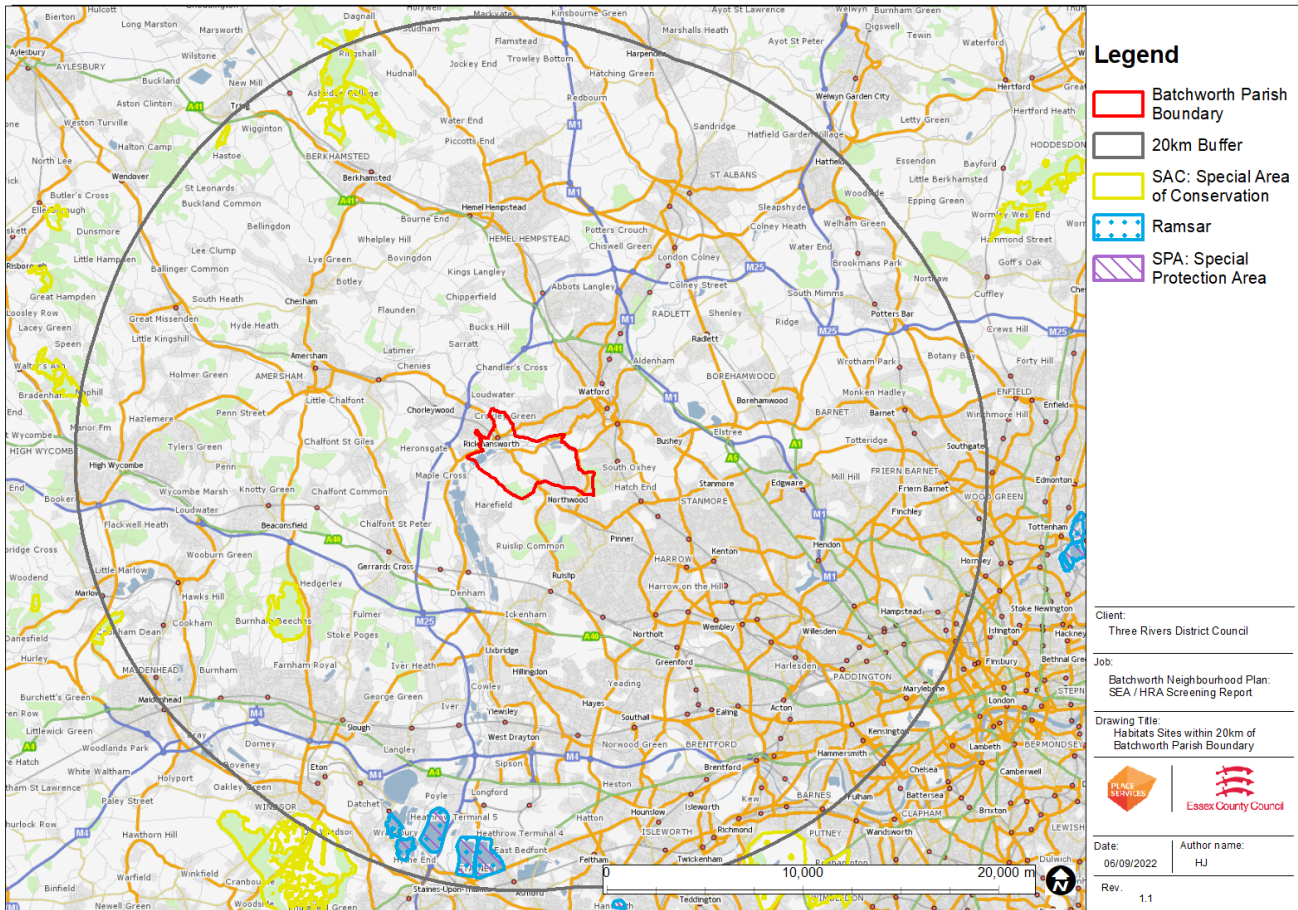
The Batchworth Neighbourhood Plan area



Source: Batchworth Neighbourhood Plan

Appendix 2

Batchworth Parish and Locations of the Habitats Sites within 20 km



Source: Place Services, 2022



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