

**Thaxted Parish
Council**

**Uttlesford District
Council**

Thaxted Neighbourhood Plan

**Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)
Screening Determination Statement (under
Regulation 9 and 11 of the Environmental
Assessment of Plans and Programmes 2004)**

April 2018

Executive Summary

This statement provides the determination (under Regulation 9 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (SEA Regulations)) that the draft Thaxted Neighbourhood Plan is unlikely to result in significant environmental effects and therefore does not require a Strategic Environmental Assessment. This statement also includes the reasons for this determination (in line with Regulation 11 of the SEA Regulations).

In addition this statement determines that the making of the draft Thaxted Neighbourhood Plan is unlikely to result in significant effects on any European sites and consequently the plan does not require Habitat Regulation Assessment.

This determination statement is also intended to demonstrate that the Thaxted Neighbourhood Plan is compatible with certain European Union obligations as required by the basic conditions, namely:

- 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; and
- Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora

This determination has been made on 13 April 2018. Within 28 days of this determination, Uttlesford District Council will publish this determination statement in accordance with its regulatory requirements (as per Regulation 11 of the SEA Regulations). The statutory consultees will be sent a copy of this statement and copy of the statement will be available for inspection at the Council's website at <https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/Thaxtednp>. It will also be available on request at: Uttlesford District Council, Council Offices, London Road, Saffron Walden, Essex, CB11 4ER.

If you require any further information, then please contact Demetria Macdonald by email at dmacdonald@uttlesford.gov.uk.

Determination Statement (including reasons for the determination)

This statement has been produced to ensure the Neighbourhood Plan will, when examined, comply with the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) in particular Regulation 32 and Regulation 15(1) e (ii) of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) (Amendment) Regulations 2015.

A neighbourhood plan is required to meet a number of basic conditions (which are set out in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990), one of which being it must not breach and must be otherwise compatible with EU and Human Rights obligations. This requires neighbourhood plans to fully consider the requirements of the SEA regulations¹ which transpose the EU's SEA Directive² into law and which requires those making plans that could impact on the environment to consider whether they are likely to have a significant effect or not.

Regulation 32 in the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) sets out an additional basic condition to those set out in primary legislation. Regulation 32 states: *“The making of the neighbourhood plan is not likely to have a significant effect on a European site (as defined in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (d)) or a European offshore marine site (as defined in the Offshore Marine Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 2007 (e)) (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects).*

A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) preliminary Screening Opinion was prepared by Uttlesford District Council for the Thaxted Neighbourhood Plan. This opinion, see Appendix 1 to this report, was made available to the statutory environmental bodies (Natural England, Historic England and Environment Agency) for comment starting on 23rd January 2018.

Consultation responses were received from the three statutory consultees. Their conclusions are summarised below, and their detailed comments are included in **Appendix 2**.

- **Historic England:** The Screening Report indicates that the Council considers that the Thaxted Neighbourhood Plan will not result in any significant effects upon cultural heritage in the area of the plan. We note from a review of the Regulation 14 draft of the Thaxted Neighbourhood Plan that it is proposed to allocate 3 small sites for development. We would query, therefore, the use of 'not applicable' in answer to question 5 of the table in section 2.3. As the plan intends to allocate three small areas for housing, we consider that the answer here should be 'yes', which then leads to question 8.

Notwithstanding that discrepancy, on the basis of the information supplied, and in the context of the criteria set out in Schedule 1 of the Environmental Assessment Regulations [Annex II of 'SEA' Directive], Historic England concurs with the Council that the preparation of a Strategic Environmental Assessment is not required.

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

¹ Known fully as The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.

² Known fully as Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 June 2001 on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment.

We should like to stress that this opinion is based on the information provided by you with your correspondence dated 22 January 2018. To avoid any doubt, this does not reflect our obligation to provide further advice on later stages of the SA/SEA process and, potentially, object to specific proposals which may subsequently arise (either as a result of this consultation or in later versions of the plan/guidance) where we consider that, despite the SA/SEA, these would have an adverse effect upon the environment.

- Natural England: Natural England are in agreement with the conclusions reached that there are no likely significant effects from the Plan that require further assessment.

Please be aware that Natural England is working alongside Uttlesford District Council and the National Trust in carrying out research into the visitor patterns and impacts to Hatfield Forest SSSI / NNR. This work will help to establish a "zone of influence" within which new housing will be expected to contribute towards mitigation for recreational impacts. Whilst this work is yet to report, we note that the Neighbourhood Plan proposes some housing development which may fall within this zone of influence, and may be required to contribute mitigation towards these aims. This may take the form of a financial contribution. We will be working with the Council to ensure its Local Plan integrates these requirements, with which the Neighbourhood Plan will need to align.

- Environment Agency: Thank you for your consultation received on 22 January. We have reviewed the screening report, as submitted and can confirm that we do not disagree with the conclusion reached within the report.

The screening report indicates that there are no significant impacts that will be a result from the Thaxted Neighbourhood Plan.

The SEA screening assessment considers, in summary, that the Neighbourhood Plan would not have a significant effect on the environment in so far as:

- the maximum extent of development outside the existing development limits that could come forward as part of the Neighbourhood Plan is an area of approximately 1.78ha or 26 dwellings on the edge of Thaxted village and a smaller area of land approximately 0.31ha within the village development limits;
- the limit of development alongside strong policy criteria regarding the impacts of the built form on the landscape and existing heritage assets means that the impact is not considered significant; and
- there are no environmental considerations within the Neighbourhood Plan area that are considered likely to be significantly harmed as a result of the scale of possible development resulting from the three housing allocations and expansion of the Thaxted Surgery.

Further details are set out in Appendix 1 to this report.

The assessment concludes that the Neighbourhood Plan is not likely to have significant environmental effects and consequently that a strategic environmental assessment is not required.

The HRA screening concludes that the Thaxted Neighbourhood Plan is not predicted to have likely significant effects on any European site, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects.

Based on the preliminary screening opinion prepared by Uttlesford in January 2018 and having considered the consultation responses from the statutory environmental bodies, Uttlesford District Council determines that the Thaxted Neighbourhood Plan is unlikely to result in significant environmental effects and therefore does not require a strategic environmental assessment. The Council also determines that the Neighbourhood Plan is not likely to result in significant effects on any European site.

Appendix 1

Neighbourhood Plan for Thaxted Parish Council

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) & Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA): Screening Report – 22 January 2018

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Appendix 1: Thaxted site check report on Magic map for SSSI impact zone

1. Introduction

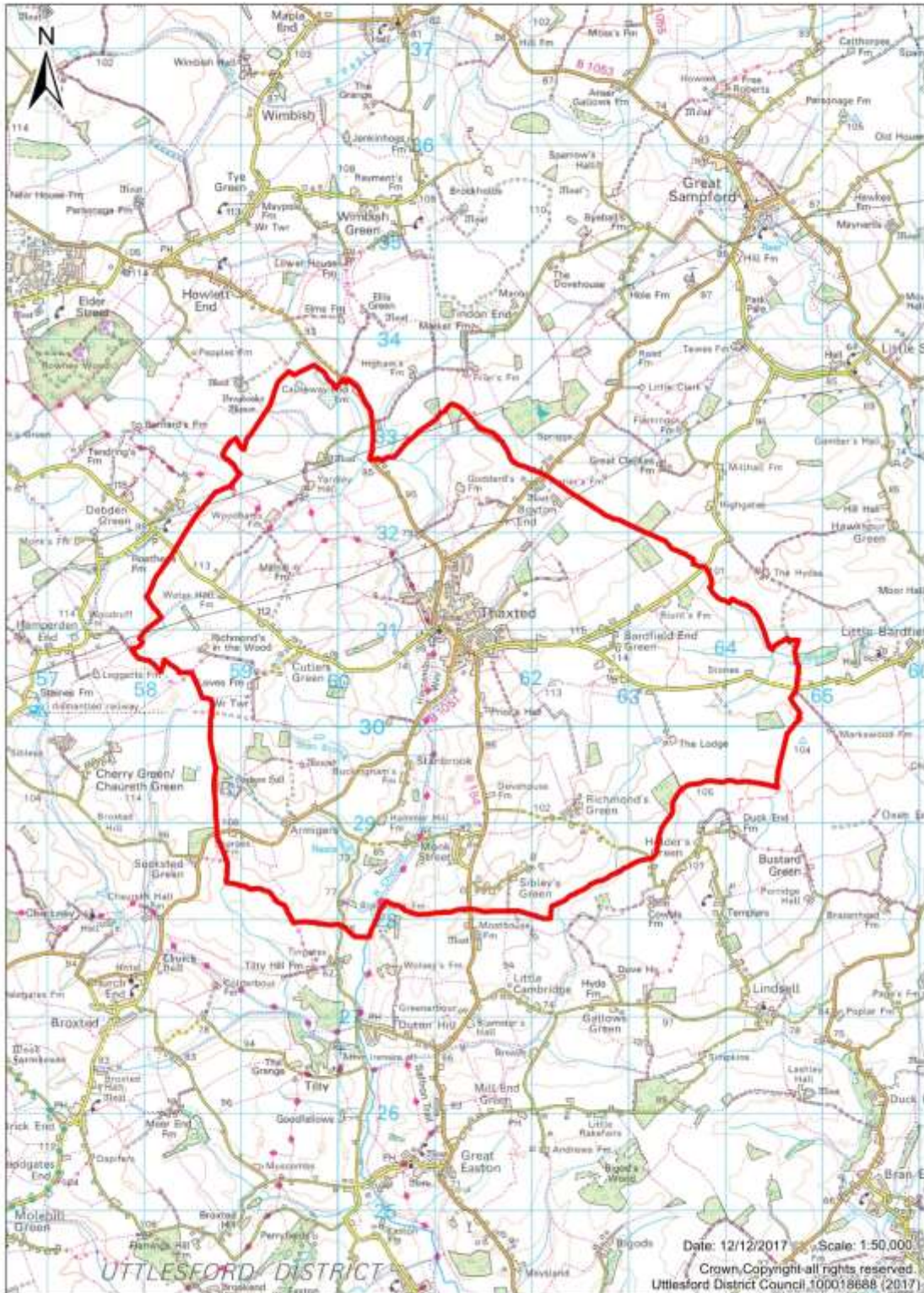
- 1.1 The purpose of this document is to help determine whether or not the draft Thaxted Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) requires a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in accordance with the European Directive 2001/42/EC and associated Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.
- 1.2 Uttlesford District Council (UDC) is required to consult the statutory bodies, the Environment Agency, Natural England and English Heritage prior to reaching a screening determination and will use this report as a basis for this consultation.
- 1.3 Schedule 2 to the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) states the following basic condition applies to neighbourhood plans.
- “The making of the neighbourhood development plan is not likely to have a significant effect on a European site (as defined in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (d) or a European offshore marine site (as defined in the Offshore Marine Conservation (Natural Habitats, & c.) Regulations 2007 (e)) either alone or in combination with other plans or projects).”*
- 1.4 The purpose of this document is also to ascertain whether the draft Thaxted Neighbourhood Plan is likely to have a significant effect on a European site (either alone or in combination with others plans or projects). If it does then the neighbourhood plan will not succeed at examination.
- 1.5 The Thaxted NP is currently at formal consultation stage in line with Regulation 14 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) and is available to view at <https://www.thaxtednp.com/>

Introduction to Thaxted

- 1.6 Thaxted Parish is located in north-west Essex in Uttlesford District Council. Thaxted is approximately 6 miles to the south – east of Saffron Walden and about the same distance to the north of Great Dunmow. The B184 road serves to connect Thaxted with both Saffron Walden and Great Dunmow. Stansted Airport is approximately six away and is approached through Broxton on the B1051. Thaxted Parish adjoins the parishes of Wimbish, Little Sampford, Little Bardfield, Lindsell, Great Easton, Tilty, Broxton and Debden. The parish comprises Thaxted village at its core and a number of hamlets principally, Stanbrook, Cutler’s Green, Bardfield End Green, Richmond’s Green, Sibley’s Green and Monk Street.
- 1.7 The Thaxted Neighbourhood Plan Area (See Figure 1) was designated on 10 December, 2015. The total population of the area is approximately 3,000 and is characterised by a slightly older population than the national average. The largest em-

ployers in the parish are the primary school, doctor's surgery, petrol filling station and Haigh's sand and gravel company. Most of the local work is self-employment in retail, catering and agriculture. The tourism industry is an important sector in Thaxted and with enhancement of the quality of visitor experience there is potential for growth. Most of the residents commute to surrounding towns to work.

Figure 1: Thaxted Neighbourhood Plan Area



Thaxted Parish has 215 listed buildings. Of these 148 are located within the Thaxted Conservation Area. Thaxted is one of the finest small medieval towns in the country. It is dominated by its 14/15th century church which stands at the top of the hill with

houses dating from the Middle Ages flowing in almost unbroken rows down from its heart. Thaxted is very important in the context of national heritage.

1.9 The Thaxted NDP includes the following vision:

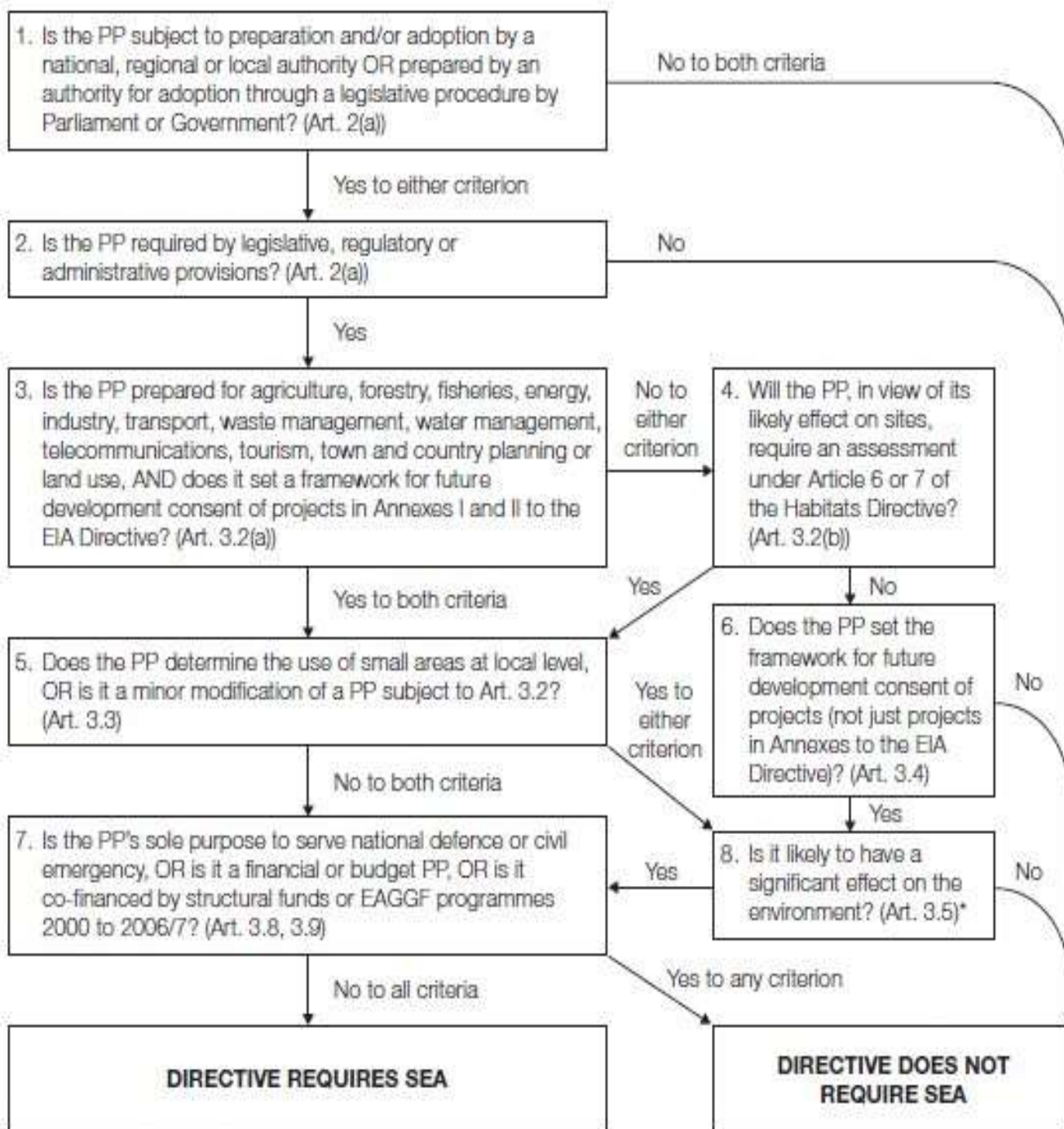
- a. The future of Thaxted will be secured for future generations by protecting the Medieval buildings at its heart and ensuring that the rural landscape is not despoiled. We will encourage change and alteration only when it enhances the Conservation Area and resist development that is harmful. Protection of our heritage is fundamental to our vision of Thaxted in 2033.
- b. We will improve the infrastructure and facilities for Thaxted residents with sympathetic and careful development. We will also improve the experience of tourists thus encouraging more visitors and boosting the local economy.
- c. There will be modest and appropriate growth in the housing stock, but care will be taken over the form, scale and location of development based on proper understanding of this historic place. New housing development will take account of the needs of the local people. The choice of houses will improve and there will be more opportunities for people to be able to stay in Thaxted through all the stages of their lives.
- d. Residents will also benefit from improved community facilities and increased capacity at the school and doctor's surgery.
- e. There will be restrictions on heavy traffic going through Thaxted, thus protecting fragile historic buildings and improving the safety of the air quality for residents. All remedial and development projects will be sustainable.
- f. Over this period, Thaxted's historic heritage and setting will be preserved for the generations to come. Its reputation as a centre for culture and history will grow and the local economic base will be strengthened.
- g. The sense of community and common purpose will be enhanced by the opportunities offered by new recreational facilities and a new communal space where Thaxted people can meet. It will be a town for the old and young.
- h. This is our vision for Thaxted. It is a holistic ambition. The policies in the Neighbourhood Plan document can help us achieve it in part but for the full realisation of Thaxted's potential and the protection of Thaxted's heritage will require consistent, determined and vigorous efforts by the council and community.

2. Legislative Background to SEA

- 2.1 The basis for Strategic Environmental Assessments legislation is European Directive 2001/42/EC which was transposed into English law by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, often referred to as the “*SEA Regulations*”. Detailed guidance of these regulations can be found in the Government publication “A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive” (ODPM 2005) available to view at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/strategic-environmental-assessment-directive-guidance>
- 2.2 The Government publication “A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive” (ODPM 2005) includes a useful table intended as a guide to the circumstances where the SEA directive applies to plans and programmes. This is reproduced below:

Figure 2 – Application of the SEA Directive to plans and programmes

This diagram is intended as a guide to the criteria for application of the Directive to plans and programmes (PPs). It has no legal status.



*The Directive requires Member States to determine whether plans or programmes in this category are likely to have significant environmental effects. These determinations may be made on a case by case basis and/or by specifying types of plan or programme.

2.3 The table below uses the diagram above to help determine whether or not the SEA directive applies to the Thaxted Neighbourhood Plan.

Stage	Response	Outcome	Comment
1. Is the NP subject to preparation and/or adoption by a national, regional or local authority OR prepared by an authority for adoption through a legislative procedure by Parliament or Government? (Art. 2(a))	Yes	Go to question 2	The preparation and adoption of the NP is allowed under The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Localism Act 2011. The NP is being prepared by Thaxted Parish Council (as the "relevant body") and will be "made" by Uttlesford District Council as the local authority. The preparation of NPs is subject to the following regulations: The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 and The Neighbourhood Planning (referendums) Regulations 2012
2. Is the NP required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions? (Art. 2(a))	Yes	Go to question 3	Whilst the Neighbourhood Plan is not a requirement and is optional under the provisions of The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Localism Act 2011, it will, if "made", form part of the statutory Development Plan for the District.
	No	NO SEA required	
3. Is the NP prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism, town and country planning or land use, AND does it set a framework for future development consent of projects in Annexes I and II (see Appendix 2) to the EIA Directive? (Art 3.2(a))	Yes to both	Go to question 5	The Neighbourhood Plan does not set the framework for future development consent of projects in Annexes I and II to the EIA Directive (see Appendix 2 for list).
	No to either	Go to question 4	
4. Will the NP, in view of its likely effect on sites, require an assessment for future development under Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive? (Art. 3.2 (b))	Yes	Go to question 5	See separate assessment.
	No	Go to question 6.	

Stage	Response	Outcome	Comment
5. Does the NP determine the use of small areas at local level, OR is it a minor modification of a PP subject to Art. 3.2? (Art. 3.3)	Yes to either	Go to question 8	Not applicable.
	No to both	Go to question 7.	
6. Does the NP set the framework for future development consent of projects (not just projects in annexes to the EIA Directive)? (Art 3.4)	Yes	Go to question 8	The Neighbourhood Plan is to be used for determining future planning applications.
	No	Does not require SEA	
7. Is the NP's sole purpose to serve the national defence or civil emergency, OR is it a financial or budget PP, OR is it co-financed by structural funds or EAGGF programmes 2000 to 2006/7? (Art 3.8, 3.9)	Yes to any criteria	Does not require SEA	Not applicable
	No to all criteria	Requires SEA	
8. Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment? (Art 3.5)	Yes	Requires SEA	Likely significant effects are explored in more detail in section 3 of this report.
	No	Does not require SEA	

2.4 The table above tells us that an environmental assessment of the Thaxted Neighbourhood Plan is only required if it is likely to have a significant effect on the environment.

3. Criteria for determining likely significance of effects on the environment

- 3.1 When determining whether a NDP requires SEA, the SEA Regulations require that the criteria set out in Schedule 1 of the SEA Regulations be considered. These are the criteria “for determining the likely significance of effects on the environment”. These criteria are split into two categories: those relating to the characteristics of the plan and those relating to the characteristics of the effects and area likely to be affected. These are set out below.

Plan characteristics

- the degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources
- the degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy
- the relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development
- environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme
- the relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of [European] Community legislation on the environment (for example, plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection).

Characteristics of the effects and the plan area

- 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 (for example, 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

- 3.2 In order to identify any likely significant environmental effects, the table below considers the characteristics of the Thaxted NDP (this is one of the categories of criteria the SEA Regulations stipulate should be considered); the characteristics of the effects and the plan area likely to be affected (these are the other two categories of criteria that should be considered).

Table 1: Criteria for determining the likely significance of environmental effects	Thaxted NDP
Plan Characteristics	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources 	<p>The Thaxted NDP would, if adopted (“made”), form part of the Statutory Development Plan and as such will contribute to the Framework for future development consent of projects. However, plan will sit within the wider framework set by the National Planning policy Framework (NPPF), the strategic policies of the Uttlesford District Council Local Plan (2005) and the emerging Local Plan 2011 -2033. Draft Thaxted NDP includes the following policies:</p> <p>Heritage and Conservation (Policies HC1 to HC9) Policies HC1 to HC9 seeks to conserve, improve and enhance Thaxted’s built heritage covering both listed and non-listed buildings, respecting setting and significance of heritage assets, ensuring use of appropriate signage/street furniture and preserving the character and appearance of the defined local village centre retention of shop fronts, protection of retail uses as well as protection of open spaces through designation of Local Green Spaces.</p> <p>Landscape and the Countryside (Policies LSC1 to LSC8) Policies LSC1 to LSC8 seeks to protect the countryside through limiting development beyond Development Limits to areas identified as having “medium capacity for change” in the Landscape Character Assessment Report (Liz Lake Associates) except for small scale development in exceptional circumstances. Protection of the countryside for its intrinsic character and beauty and for its value as productive agricultural land, recreational use and biodiversity as well enhancement of the surrounding landscape setting where possible is sought. Small scale projects (alterations and extensions of a scale commensurate with type and scale of existing building) and replacement buildings of comparable scale will be supported in exceptional circumstances as well as in Outlying settlements. The protection and enhancement of landscape features as well as improvement of the integrity of the landscape will be sought from development proposals.</p> <p>Housing and Design (Policies HD1 to HD11) Policies HD1 to HD11 seek to support small scale sustainable new housing development within the village centre. A housing mix will reflect the identified local housing needs. Small scale affordable housing schemes on rural exception sites will be permitted.</p>

Table 1: Criteria for determining the likely significance of environmental effects	Thaxted NDP
	<p>The Neighbourhood Plan includes three site allocations. The sites were selected following a process of considering all available sites (utilising the district Council’s recent SHLAA work), the District Council’s own site assessment work, together with the findings of further locally specific reports including the Thaxted Landscape Character Assessment and the Thaxted Heritage Assessment. The three draft site allocations are:</p> <p><u>Claypits Buildings Site</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a brownfield site abutting the existing Thaxted village development limits. Draft policy states that the site is <i>“allocated for housing development provided that the design and layout respect the sensitivities of the site as identified above and in the Central Area Assessment. Access, the preservation of views of the church, landscaping and the setting of Claypits Farmhouse are particularly significant factors in determining any application, as is the housing mix.”</i> The supporting text indicates that the site is suitable for no more than 15 units and states that 50% of the units must be 1 and 2 bedroom units. <p><u>Levett’s Farm</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a small site abutting the existing Thaxted village development limits allocation for up to 3 units. Draft policy states <i>“This site is allocated for the development of three detached units in place of these former farm buildings provided the design satisfactorily respects the amenity of existing neighbouring properties.”</i> <p><u>Rescu Site</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a small site abutting the existing Thaxted village development limits. Draft policy states, <i>“The land to the rear of the Little Maypole is allocated for the development of up to four dwellings subject to building heights being no more than one and a half storeys high. Dwellings should be sensitively arranged so as not to adversely impact on the amenity of neighbouring property. An exception to Policy HD3 in terms of the requirement for small units may be appropriate. A critical factor in any application will also be the provision of mature landscape to protect views across from the Chelmer Valley.”</i>

Table 1: Criteria for determining the likely significance of environmental effects	Thaxted NDP
	<p>In addition to the site allocations, the draft Plan identifies further opportunities for development on the following sites:</p> <p><u>Coach Park, Bardfield Road Site</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Site is within the Thaxted development limits and adjacent to the allocated Claypits Buildings site. The draft policy HD8 states: <i>“Support would be given for limited infrastructure development on the Coach Park site provided that satisfactory arrangements can be made for continued coach parking. The site should however, ideally be developed on a comprehensive basis with Claypits Buildings and could provide access to it.”</i> <p><u>Brethren Meeting Hall</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Site is within the Thaxted development limits. The draft policy HD9 states: <i>“In the event that the existing owners of the Brethren Meeting Hall wish to sell this site support will be given for its redevelopment for housing. It is anticipated that the scheme would not involve buildings of more than two storeys in height and will fully reflect the Conservation Area status of the site in terms of design and finishes. Unit numbers will depend on layout and mix but it is anticipated that 6-7 two bedroom units might be possible subject to the provision of adequate car parking</i> <p><u>Land fronting Bardfield Road adjacent to Levetts Farm</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Site is existing site adjacent to Thaxted development limits. The draft policy HD10 states: <i>“Support would be given to the development of up to four one or two bedroom affordable units on the land between Levetts Farm and the old water works site subject to the design respecting the amenity of the existing neighbouring properties. Provision would need to be made for a building for the local Scout group either onsite or elsewhere in the village.”</i> <p>Tourism and the Economy (Policies TLE1 to TLE4) Draft policies TLE1 to TLE4 are intended to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enhance tourism through supporting the retail and catering offer; • supporting works to key historic buildings for the improvement of visitor experience;

Table 1: Criteria for determining the likely significance of environmental effects	Thaxted NDP
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support small scale development which contributes to the local economy without generating addition HGV movements through the village; • resist development that adversely impacts on residential amenity; and • permitting conversion of redundant buildings to alternative B1 uses on demonstration of specific need whilst not adversely impacting neighbouring residential property, landscape quality and the local road network. <p>Infrastructure (Policies IFS1 to IFS8) Policies IFS1 to IFS8 seeks to provide infrastructure to cope with population growth. The following infrastructure provisions are proposed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provision of enough primary school places to cater for anticipated pupils from new housing development; • prevention of bussing children elsewhere; • support the expansion of primary school without damaging the original character of the original Victorian buildings; • support for the expansion of Thaxted surgery subject to the Conservation Area and setting of Christopher Cottage not being harmed as well as provision of adequate car parking for staff and visitors; • appropriate footpath access in all new housing whilst maintaining amenity value of existing footpaths; • preservation and maintenance of the Recreational Ground as open space for sports and public recreation; • support for the redevelopment of the Church Hall and adjacent allotments for a new community hall with associated parking space;
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy 	<p>A Neighbourhood Development Plan must be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the Development Plan for the District and it does not influence other plans.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in 	<p>National policy requires a presumption in favour of sustainable development which should be seen as a golden thread through the plan-making including the Thaxted NDP. Before the NDP can be made it will need to be tested against the basic conditions. This includes a requirement</p>

Table 1: Criteria for determining the likely significance of environmental effects	Thaxted NDP
particular with a view to promoting sustainable development	to contribute towards the achievement of sustainable development.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme 	<p>Environmental issues relevant to the Thaxted NDP area set out below theme by theme:</p> <p>Biodiversity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As shown on Figure 2 there are no European sites within or close to the NP area. The closest European site is the Lee Valley SPA site which is over 26 km away. Two other European Sites i.e. Eversden & Wimpole Woods SAC to the north west and the Blackwater Estuary SAC, SPA, Ramsar site to the south east) are both 30km away from the Thaxted NDP boundary. A search on www.magic.gov.uk as shown on Figure 3 shows that the NP area including Thaxted village falls within the Impact Risk Zone of one SSSI i.e. West Wood Little Sampford SSSI. The impact zone is applicable to the following development type category: airports, helipads and other aviation proposals; pig and poultry units, slurry lagoons >200m² & manure stores 250t., any compositing proposal with more than 75,000 tonnes maximum annual operation throughput including open window compositing in-vessel compositing, anaerobic digestion, other waste management; General combustion processes >20MW energy output including energy waste incineration, other incineration, landfill gas generation plant, pyrolysis/gasification, anaerobic digestion, sewage treatment works other incineration/combustion; Landfill including inert landfill, non-hazardous landfill and any compositing proposal with more than 75,000 tonnes maximum annual operational throughput including open window compositing, anaerobic digestion, other waste management. Oil & gas exploration/extraction. There are no local nature reserves within the NP area. The plan area has a variety of flora and fauna as set out below. <p>Population:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The total population in Thaxted is approximately 3,000. The age profile indicates a slightly older population than the national average. Thaxted has a

Table 1: Criteria for determining the likely significance of environmental effects	Thaxted NDP
	<p>comparatively older population than Uttlesford District Council.</p> <p>Human health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No notable health issues. The parish is currently serviced by a single GP surgery which needs to be expanded to provide additional facilities as well as room for additional staff to cope with the patients as well as allow the Thaxted Doctors to continue with teaching and research on the premises. <p>Flora</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A variety is recorded on www.magic.gov.uk including: areas of ancient woodland, ancient replanted woodland, deciduous woodland, coastal and floodplain grazing marsh, High and Lower Spatial Priority Woodland Habitat Network. High Spatial Priority and Lower Spatial Priority Woodland Improvement, deciduous woodland, traditional orchards, wood pasture and parkland. <p>Fauna</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Farmland and Grassland Assemblage Birds including Grey Partridge, Turtle Dove and yellow Wagtail are recorded for The Bird Conservation Targeting Project www.magic.gov.uk. <p>Soil</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No noted issues. The NP area contains Grade 2 (very good) and Grade 3 (good to moderate) agricultural land /soil quality. <p>Water</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The majority of the rivers and tributaries, Chelmer and Ter catchments, are defined as “Moderate” for overall risk for Water Framework Directive purposes. The legislation states two key points with regards to these classifications: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> There should be no deterioration in classification (e.g. a quality element should not fall from High to Good) All watercourses must achieve an overall Good classification (referred to as good ecological status/potential) by 2027

Table 1: Criteria for determining the likely significance of environmental effects	Thaxted NDP
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As recorded on www.magic.gov.uk, the whole of the NP plan area falls within Surface Water Nitrate Issues Priority (Medium Priority). The whole NP area is also a Surface Water Pesticide Issues (Medium Priority) zone as well as a Phosphate Issues Priority (Medium Priority) zone. • As recorded on www.magic.gov.uk, the whole of the NP plan area falls within a Nitrate Vulnerable Zone for surface water as reviewed in 2017. Nitrate Vulnerable Zones (NVZs) are areas designated as being at risk from agricultural nitrate pollution. The designations are made in accordance with the Nitrate Pollution Prevention Regulations 2015. Surface Waters are defined within the Nitrates Directive as polluted if they contain or could contain, if preventative action is not taken, nitrate concentrations greater than 50mg/l. • From 2011-2015 the whole NDP area was a Catchment Sensitive Farming Priority Area but it is currently classified as a Former Catchment Sensitive Farming Priority Area. • Alongside a large part of Essex, the NP area falls within a drinking water safeguard zone for surface water. Drinking Water Safeguard Zones (Surface Water) are catchment areas that influence the water quality for their respective Drinking Water Protected Area (Surface Water), which are at risk of failing the drinking water protection objectives. These non-statutory Safeguard Zones are where action to address water contamination will be targeted, so that extra treatment by water companies can be avoided. Safeguard Zones are a joint initiative between the Environment Agency and water companies. Safeguard Zones are one of the main tools for delivering the drinking water protection objectives of the Water Framework Directive. <p>Air</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No noted issues.

Table 1: Criteria for determining the likely significance of environmental effects	Thaxted NDP
	<p>Climatic factors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The NP area is largely within fluvial Flood Zone 1. The River Chelmer marks corridors of Flood Zone 2 and 3. Thaxted is defined as a Tier 3 surface water flood risk area in the Local Flood Risk Management Strategy. Flow paths are defined by topography and existing watercourses. There are areas of ponding within the village (Updated Flood Map for Surface Water). Groundwater flood risk is very low. <p>Cultural heritage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are 215 listed buildings within the plan area including seven Grade 1 and a further eight Grade II* listed There is a conservation area within Thaxted Conservation Area which contains a concentration of 148 listed buildings <p>The Heritage Assessment relating to the emerging Thaxted Neighbourhood Plan provides more detail on cultural heritage in the plan area.</p> <p>Landscape:</p> <p>The study area falls within National Character Area (NCA) 86 - Suffolk and North Essex Clayland as defined by Natural England. At a local level, Thaxted is characterised in the Braintree, Brentwood, Chelmsford, Maldon and Uttlesford Landscape Character Assessments. In October 2005 these Councils jointly commissioned comprehensive Landscape Character Assessments of their respective areas. Thaxted falls within Landscape Character Area (LCA) B8 - Thaxted Farmland Plateau, the key characteristics of which are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Gently rolling plateau, almost flat in some areas, incised by the River Pant and the River Chelmer”; “Broken hedgerows evident; absence of hedgerows due to agricultural intensification”; “Expansive views on open roads at higher elevations”; “Settlements dispersed across the landscape”; “Rich architectural detail in the historic market town of Thaxted, with vernacular of col-

Table 1: Criteria for determining the likely significance of environmental effects	Thaxted NDP
	<p>our washed plaster, half-timber, thatch and pegtile roofs and some decorative pargetting; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Stansted flight paths have severely altered tranquillity in this area”. <p>The following landscape planning guidelines are recommended for LCA B8:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Conserve the open views”; • “Conserve the traditional dispersed settlement pattern and generally undeveloped character”; • “Ensure that any new development responds to historic settlement pattern, especially scale and density, and that it is of an appropriate scale, form, design and materials and uses colours that respond to landscape setting and landscape character. Such development should be well integrated with the surrounding landscape;” • “Encourage the appropriate use of colour as well as tree planting to mitigate the visually intrusive effects of large modern farm buildings”; and • “Conserve open views to historic buildings and local landmarks such as Thaxted church, which is visible from other adjacent character areas as well”.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of [European] Community legislation on the environment (for example, plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection). 	<p>There are no conflicts between the Thaxted NDP and statutory plans linked to waste, water etc.</p>
Effects and area characteristics	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects 	<p>The following likely impacts of the draft plan have been identified theme by theme:</p> <p>Biodiversity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Part of the NP area falls within the Impact Risk Zone of the West Wood Little Sampford SSSI. For planning proposals falling within the SSSI impact zones, there is a requirement to assess the impact on SSSI/SPAs/SACs and Ramsar sites. For this SSSI, however Natural England only require to be consulted on planning proposals

Table 1: Criteria for determining the likely significance of environmental effects	Thaxted NDP
	<p>involving;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – airports, helipads and other aviation proposals; – pig and poultry units, slurry lagoons larger than 750 sq. metres and manure stores greater than 3500 t; and – any discharge of water or liquid water of more than 20m³/day to ground (i.e. to seep away) or to surface water, such as a beck or stream (NB this does not include discharges to main sewer which are unlikely to pose a risk at this location). <p>Therefore there cannot be considered to be likely significant effects on nationally designated sites within the plan area.</p> <p>Population The plan works within the context of the Local Plan in that development will be focused within the existing settlement boundaries designated as development limits in the adopted and emerging Local Plan.</p> <p>Human Health The parish has an ageing population and an older age profile than at district or county level. This has implications regarding demand on local health services. Currently there is a GP offering a pharmacy service. The GP practice serves approximately 7,500 patients and is only 384 square metres and operating at near capacity. The Surgery's future needs will be for premises of 700 square metres as a minimum. Expansion of the Thaxted Surgery into its existing car park will contribute to the future health needs of the population.</p> <p>Fauna The impacts of the NP on fauna are not considered significant at plan level. It is possible that individual development proposals could come forward in line with NP policies which will have adverse impacts on some species. These are not likely to be significant enough to trigger strategic environmental assessment. Furthermore, both the NP and Local Plan include policies which would require any impacts on biodiversity to be assessed and where needed</p>

Table 1: Criteria for determining the likely significance of environmental effects	Thaxted NDP
	<p>mitigated.</p> <p>Flora The impacts of the NP on flora are not considered significant at plan level. The development proposed in the NP is unlikely to harm sites in the plan area with existing notable features of flora (areas of woodland, traditional orchards, wood pasture and parkland (identified as England Biodiversity Action Plan priority habitat), good quality semi improved grassland or young woodland or area of floodplain grazing land). It is possible that individual development proposals could come forward in line with NP policies which will have adverse impacts on flora. These are not likely to be significant enough to trigger strategic environmental assessment. Furthermore, both the NP and Local Plan include policies which would require any impacts on biodiversity to be assessed and where needed mitigated.</p> <p>Soil The NP area contains Grade 2 (Very Good) and Grade 3 (moderate to good) agricultural land/soil quality. The Claypits Farm and Levetts Farm are both brownfield sites and their potential redevelopment will not contribute to the loss of agricultural land. The Rescu Site is a very small site located adjacent to the village development limits and is at the rear of Little Maypole Housing making agricultural use highly unlikely. The land fronting Bardfield Road adjacent to Levetts Farm is a narrow strip that is currently used as allotment gardens and is unlikely to be used for farming purposes. The other two sites i.e. the Coach Park Bardfield Road and Brethren Meeting Hall are located within the development limits. Overall the proposed site allocations would not amount to a significant loss of agricultural land outside the village development limits.</p> <p>Water The whole of the NP plan area falls within a Nitrate Vulnerable Zone for ground water and surface water as reviewed in 2017. Nitrate Vulnerable Zones (NVZs) are areas designated as being at risk from agricultural nitrate pollution. The NP supports small scale residential developments in addition to that set out in the Local Plan. Housing development will not expose the area to further agricultural nitrate pollution.</p>

Table 1: Criteria for determining the likely significance of environmental effects	Thaxted NDP
	<p>Neither is the residential development likely to impact upon the drinking water safeguard zone for surface water which the parish falls within.</p> <p>Air There will be limited impacts on air quality as a result of the residential development proposed in the NP. The plan recognises the problems caused by an increase in the size of HGV serving or passing through the village as well as safety concerns at the Newbiggen Street/Sampford Road Junction. These problems will be addressed with highways and will result in the reduction of air pollution</p> <p>Climatic Factors <i>There is no fluvial flood risk in Thaxted. Thaxted is identified as a Tier 3 surface water flood risk area in the LFRMS (Local Flood Risk Management Strategy). Flow paths are defined by topography and existing watercourses. There are areas of ponding within the village based on the updated Flood Map for Surface Water (uFMfSW) published by the Environment Agency. Currently there is no Surface Water Management Plan (SWMP) covering Uttlesford District. The risk of groundwater flooding is considered very low (<25% chance of emergence)(Areas Susceptible to Groundwater Flooding - AStGWF).(Source:- Uttlesford Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (JBA Consulting May 2016).</i></p> <p>Cultural Heritage The NP area has a rich cultural heritage. This is well documented in the Thaxted Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Proposals (2012) as well as the Heritage Settings Appraisal Report (Grover Lewis) and Landscape Character Assessment Report (Liz Lake Associates) that have been undertaken to inform the plan development. The Grover Lewis Report divided land surrounding Thaxted into seven sectors and considered the impact of development within each sector. The conclusion is that if development is limited to an area within the extent of the development limits then sensitivities of setting and views would be addressed. The following best describe the Thaxted village character area:</p>

Table 1: Criteria for determining the likely significance of environmental effects	Thaxted NDP
	<p>Key Characteristics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thaxted’s remarkable retention of its historic core; • Dominance of the 14th/15th century church standing at the top of the hill; • The windmill; • Collective whole, still historically complete and little has been done to despoil it; • Almost unbroken rows of houses dating from the Middle Ages; • Landscape setting with river valleys, mature river plantations. Historic field patterns and undulating agricultural land; • Colourful street scenes; • Intricate and interesting roof-scape of red tiles, red brick chimney stacks and chimneys; • An intimate scale within the historic core resulting from the fine grain and consistent building line; • Buildings and private curtilages are well managed, creating an overall perception of a well-maintained townscape; <p>Positive aspects of character which should be sustained, reinforced or enhanced:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intricate, distinctive yet diverse vernacular of the area; • Generally high level of management and maintenance of buildings and private green space; • Limited and palette of street furniture which is reflective of the historic character of the village; • High level of preservation of historic fabric in the core of the village; • Bolford Street, Park Street and Dunmow Road identified as offering a ‘high’ or ‘very high’ degree of inter-visibility between the Conservation Area and countryside setting; • A diversity of traditional construction materials, particularly within the Thaxted conservation area, including various façade treatments of vernacular timber framed buildings contribute to local distinctiveness; • Church of John the Baptist and the windmill form local landmarks; • Seven open spaces both within the village identified as positively contributing to the character of the village; and • The generally narrow streets and tight building lines create a sense of enclosure in the historic core.

Table 1: Criteria for determining the likely significance of environmental effects	Thaxted NDP
	<p>Identified issues which could be addressed through new development or active management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shop fronts and signage is not always sensitive to the historic character of the building or setting of the village; • High volumes of traffic especially HGV passing through and parked cars are a particular issue on the local road network; and • On-street parking along Newbiggen Street and other cobbled streets detracts from the setting of the historic core. • Inappropriate shop fronts and signage • Non-traditional colour schemes on buildings which jar with their neighbours and which are inappropriate in a historic context; • Some elements of street furniture e.g. planters, street lighting, litter bins etc.; and • A few instances of inappropriate alterations especially to fenestration. <p>Elements which are particularly sensitive to change:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large scale housing development on land surrounding the village centre would adversely affect the setting of both the Conservation Area and key heritage assets; and • The rural edges of the village are sensitive to urban expansion. <p>The policies in the NP are informed by the findings of the Heritage Assessment relating to the emerging Thaxted Neighbourhood Plan and the Landscape Character Assessment by Liz Lake Associates. However, any proposed development other than for exceptional sites will be not be permitted in Local Parish Landscape Character Areas (LPLCAs) where capacity for change is stated as 'low' or 'medium-low' and within viewing corridors identified as having scores of 4 or 5 for sensitivity or significance.</p> <p>As a whole the policies in the NP provide useful added context so that more strategic policies set in the Local Plan regarding heritage can be implemented more rigorously at the local level within the NP area. The maximum extent of development outside the existing settlement limits that could come forward as part of the NP will be small scale. The limit of new development alongside strong policy criteria regarding the impacts of the built form on existing heritage assets means that impact is not considered significant.</p>

Table 1: Criteria for determining the likely significance of environmental effects	Thaxted NDP
	<p>Landscape Development other than small scale projects of an exceptional nature shall be limited to the village development limits. The limit of new development alongside strong policy criteria regarding the impacts of the built form on landscape and edge of settlement character means that impact is not considered significant.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the cumulative nature of the effects 	<p>The NP will sit alongside the Local Plan to provide a development management framework for new proposals in the NP area. The parish itself is not identified as a focus for future growth. Having a primary school and some local services, the village is identified as a Type A village acting as a local service centre and only suitable for a scale of development that reinforces its role as a local centre. The cumulative impacts of the NP are not considered to be significant.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents) 	<p>There are no potential risks to human health or the environment as a direct result of the development management framework proposed in the NDP area.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected) 	<p>The population of the parish is currently around 3,000. Whilst the NP shapes future development and identifies five locations where additional residential development could come forward, the overall extent of development is broadly in line with the growth that would occur in the parish without the NDP being in place. There are no significant effects as a result of the NDP.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:- <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – special natural characteristics or cultural heritage – exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values – intensive land-use 	<p>As set out above the NDP has been assessed as not having any significant effects on natural characteristics, cultural heritage, environmental quality standards or intensive land use.</p>

Table 1: Criteria for determining the likely significance of environmental effects	Thaxted NDP
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status 	<p>As set out above, the NP has been assessed as not having any significant effects on landscape which have a recognised national, community or international protection status.</p>

4. SEA Conclusions

- 4.1 As a result of the assessment in Section 4, it is considered there are no likely significant environmental effects resulting from the Thaxted NDP. However this is a preliminary view reached prior to consulting the statutory consultees: Historic England, Natural England and the Environment Agency.

5. Legislative Background to HRA

- 5.1 The application of Habitats Regulation Assessment to land use plans is a requirement of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (the Habitats Regulations); the UK's transposition of European Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (widely referred to as the Habitats Directive). Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive requires that any plan (or project) which is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of a European site (also known as a Natura 2000 site), but would be likely to have a significant effect on such a site, either individually or in combination with other plans and projects, shall be subject to an 'appropriate assessment' of its implications for the European site in view of the site's conservation objectives. The plan-making body shall agree to the plan only after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned.
- 5.2 European sites provide ecological infrastructure for the protection of rare, endangered or vulnerable natural habitats of exceptional importance within the European Union. These sites consist of Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), designated under the Habitats Directive and Special Protection Areas (SPAs), designated under European Union Directive 2009/147/EC *on the conservation of wild birds* (the Birds Directive). The government also expects authorities to treat Ramsar sites, designated under the Convention of Wetlands of International Importance, UNESCO 1971, as if they are European sites.
- 5.3 Meanwhile, Schedule 2 to the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) states the following basic condition applies to neighbourhood plans.
- "The making of the neighbourhood development plan is not likely to have a significant effect on a European site (as defined in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (d) or a European offshore marine site (as defined in the Offshore Marine Conservation (Natural Habitats, & c.) Regulations 2007 (e)) either alone or in combination with other plans or projects)."*
- 5.4 This means that any neighbourhood plan that triggers the need for an appropriate assessment (by virtue of it being likely to have a significant effect on a European site) will actually not meet the basic conditions that it is being tested against at the neighbourhood plan examination.

6. HRA Screening for the Thaxted NDP

6.1 This section of the report:

- Considers whether there are any European sites which could potentially be affected by the Thaxted NP.

6.2 Natura 2000 Sites

Natura 2000 is central to the EU nature and biodiversity policy and forms an EU wide network of nature protection areas. The aim of the network is to ensure the long-term survival of Europe's most valuable and threatened species and habitats.

The sites are designated under the European Union (EU) Birds Directive (Council Directive 79/409/EEC on the Conservation of Wild Birds) and the EU Habitats Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora).

The Birds Directive requires the establishment of Special Protection Areas (SPAs) for birds. Similarly the Habitats Directive requires Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) to be designated for other species, and for habitats. Ramsar sites (Wetlands of International Importance) are also part of the Natura 2000 network. SPAs and SACs comprise Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and all Ramsar sites in England are SSSIs. The Natura Network in England is comprises SPAs, SACs and Ramsar sites.

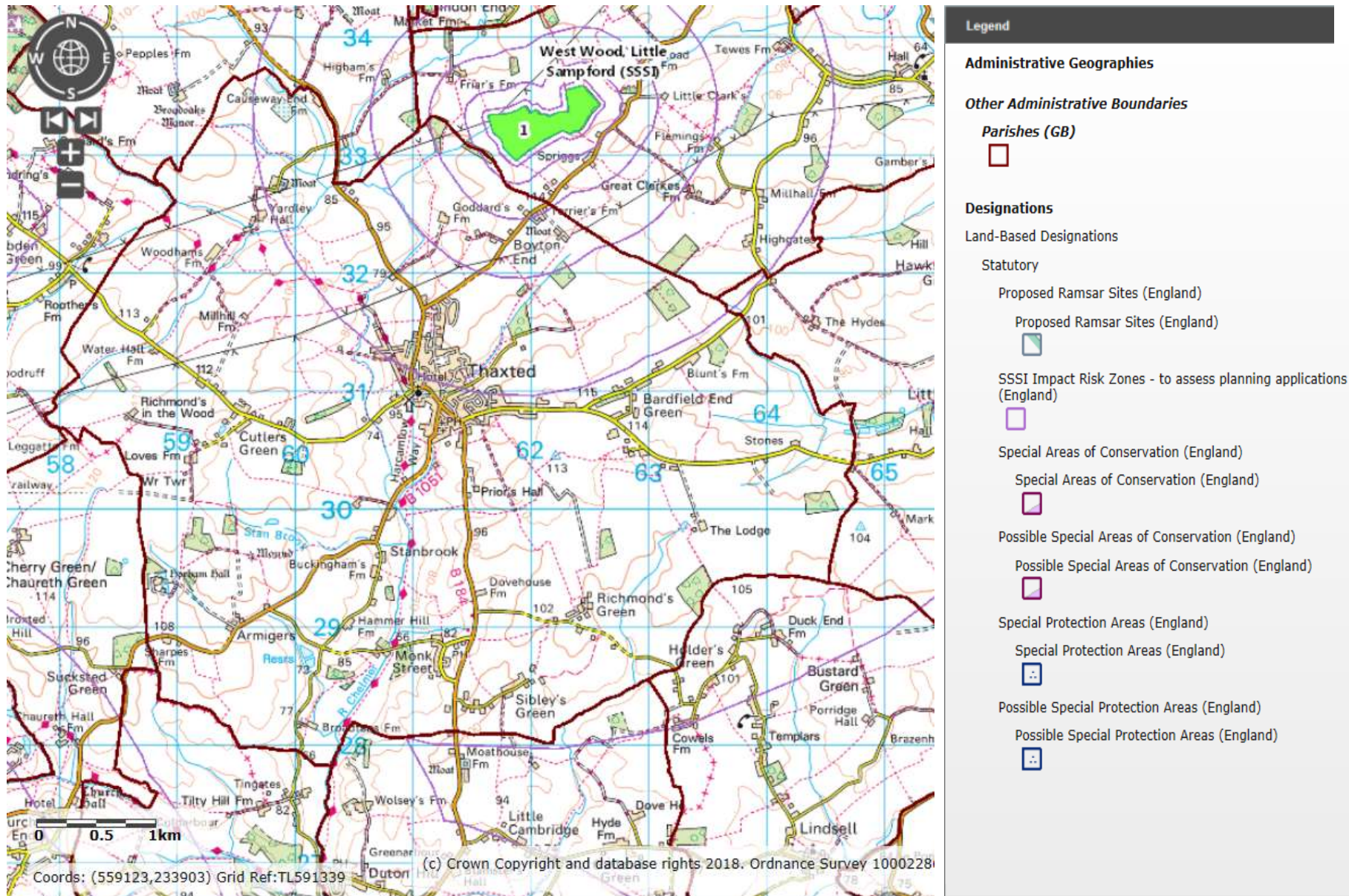
6.2.1 European Sites to be considered

As shown on Figure 2 below, there are no European sites which lie within or close to the Thaxted NP area. The closest site is the Lee Valley SPA site which is located 26 km to the south west of the Thaxted Neighbourhood area. The two other European sites, Eversden & Wimpole Woods SAC is located 30km to the north west and the Blackwater Estuary SPA, SCA and Ramsar site is also located 30km to the south east of Thaxted Neighbourhood Plan Area. Other Local Plan HRA reports have identified zones of influence which determine the distance at which new development may result in changes in recreational use and therefore where mitigation is necessary. Based on evidence such as visitor surveys the zone of influence for the Blackwater Estuary SPA, SCA and Ramsar has been determined as 8km. Therefore at 30km the NP area is well beyond this zone of influence. Eversden & Wimpole Woods SAC to the north-west and Lee Valley SPA to the south-west are located 30 km and 26 km respectively from Thaxted. *“Based on best practice guidance on Habitats Regulations Assessment suggestion that all European sites within the area of coverage for the plan together with all those within a 10km buffer zone should be considered in the first instance as potential receptors In addition to these, other European sites further than 10km from the area of coverage of a plan may also be affected due to their specific environmental sensitivities.”* (Habitats Regulations Assessment for the Lee Valley Park Development Framework by UE Associates page 9). Both Eversden and Wimpole Woods SCA and Lee Valley Spa are over 20 km from Thaxted NP and are therefore unlikely to be subject to potential impacts from the NP.

6.2.2 Sites of Special Scientific Interest to be considered

A search on www.magic.gov.uk has also been undertaken. This confirms that the Thaxted parish does not fall within the Impact Risk Zone for development categories proposed by the plan. It shows that the NP area including Thaxted village falls within the Impact Risk Zone of a single SSSI i.e. the West Wood Little Sampford (SSSI). The impact zone is applicable to the following development type categories: airports, helipads and other aviation; pig and poultry units and any discharge of water or liquid waste of more than 20m³/day to ground (i.e. to seep away) or to surface water, such as a beck or stream and planning applications for quarries, including: new proposals, Review of Minerals Permissions (ROMP), extensions, variations to conditions etc. and Oil & gas exploration/extraction. The map extract (Figure 3) from www.magic.gov.uk is shown below and the corresponding details accompanying the SSSI impact zone layer is shown in Appendix 1 to this document.

Figure 3: Extract from www.magic.gov.uk showing SSSI impact zone for Thaxted Parish



7. Conclusions

7.1 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

The Thaxted Neighbourhood Plan (NP) has been prepared for town and country purposes and sets a framework for future development. The policies in the Plan determine the use of small areas at a plan level commensurate with their status in local planning application determination. Identified development opportunities have been considered in the context of landscape impact and development will be limited to small scale within the development limits and in the outlying settlements. The Thaxted NP has also identified specific sites as important wildlife habitats and worthy of protection. The recently completed Heritage Settings Appraisal, Landscape Character Assessment and a Wild Thaxted Bioblitz Report .have been undertaken and have informed the policies in the plan. Design Principles in the NP (Chapter 6 Housing and Design paragraph 6.9) require that all development proposals preserve and enhance the distinctive built environment and character of the village of Thaxted. The NP requires that, *“All development proposals must take full account of the Landscape Character assessment, the Heritage Setting Assessment and the Central Area Assessment to ensure that harm is not caused to the setting of individual heritage assets, the historic core of the village, the surrounding countryside and historic views in and out of the village.”* As a result of the SEA assessment set out in this report, it is considered there are no likely significant environment effects resulting from the Thaxted Neighbourhood Plan. This is a preliminary view reached prior to consulting the statutory consultees: Historic England, Natural England and the Environment Agency.

7.2 HRA Screening

The Neighbourhood Plan HRA Screening Assessment concludes that there are no European sites which need to be assessed for likely significant effects as a result of the Thaxted NP.

Subject to Natural England’s review, This HRA screening report indicates that the Thaxted Neighbourhood Plan is not predicted to have likely significant effects on any European site, either in isolation or in combination with other plans and projects. This is a preliminary view reached prior to consulting the statutory consultee: Natural England.

Appendix 1: Thaxted Site Check Report on Magic Map for SSSI Impact Zone

January 04 2018

Site Check Report generated on Thu Jan 04 2018

You selected the location: Centroid Grid Ref: TL613308

The following features have been found in your search area:

SSSI Impact Risk Zones - to assess planning applications for likely impacts on SSSIs/SACs/SPAs & Ramsar sites (England)

<p>1</p> <p>OES PLANNING PROPOSAL FALL INTO ONE OR MORE OF THE CATEGORIES BELOW?</p> <p>All Planning Applications Infrastructure</p> <p>Wind & Solar Energy Minerals, Oil & Gas Rural Non Residential Residential Rural Residential Air Pollution</p> <p>Combustion</p> <p>Waste</p> <p>Composting</p> <p>Discharges Water Supply</p> <p>Notes GUIDANCE – How to use the Impact Risk Zones</p>	<p>2. IF YES, CHECK THE CORRESPONDING DESCRIPTION(S) BELOW. LPA SHOULD CONSULT NATURAL ENGLAND ON LIKE-LY RISKS FROM THE FOLLOWING:</p> <p>Airports, helipads and other aviation proposals.</p> <p>Any industrial/agricultural development that could cause AIR POLLUTION (incl: industrial processes, pig & poultry units, slurry lagoons > 200m² & manure stores > 250t). General combustion processes >20MW energy input incl: energy from waste incineration, other incineration, landfill gas generation plant, pyrolysis/gasification, anaerobic digestion, sewage treatment works, other incineration/ combustion. Landfill. incl: inert landfill, non-hazardous landfill, hazardous landfill.</p> <p>Any composting proposal with more than 75000 tonnes maximum annual operational throughput. (incl: open windrow composting, in-vessel composting, anaerobic digestion, other waste management.</p> <p><u>/Metadata for magic/SSSI IRZ User Guidance MAGIC.pdf</u></p>
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<p>1. DOES PLANNING PROPOSAL FALL INTO ONE OR MORE OF THE CATEGORIES BELOW?</p> <p>All Planning Applications Infrastructure</p> <p>Wind & Solar Energy Minerals, Oil & Gas Rural Non Residential Residential Rural Residential Air Pollution</p> <p>Combustion Waste Composting Discharges Water Supply</p> <p>Notes GUIDANCE – How to use the Impact Risk Zones</p>	<p>2. IF YES, CHECK THE CORRESPONDING DESCRIPTION(S) BELOW. LPA SHOULD CONSULT NATURAL ENGLAND ON LIKELY RISKS FROM THE FOLLOWING:</p> <p>Airports, helipads and other aviation proposals.</p> <p>Pig & poultry units, slurry lagoons > 750m² & manure stores > 3500t.</p> <p><u>/Metadata for magic/SSSI IRZ User Guidance MAGIC.pdf</u></p>
<p>1. DOES PLANNING PROPOSAL FALL INTO ONE OR MORE OF THE CATEGORIES BELOW?</p> <p>All Planning Applications Infrastructure</p> <p>Wind & Solar Energy Minerals, Oil & Gas Rural Non Residential Residential Rural Residential Air Pollution</p> <p>Combustion</p>	<p>2. IF YES, CHECK THE CORRESPONDING DESCRIPTION(S) BELOW. LPA SHOULD CONSULT NATURAL ENGLAND ON LIKELY RISKS FROM THE FOLLOWING:</p> <p>Airports, helipads and other aviation proposals.</p> <p>Any industrial/agricultural development that could cause AIR POLLUTION (incl: industrial processes, pig & poultry units, slurry lagoons > 200m² & manure stores > 250t). General combustion processes >20MW energy input. incl: energy from waste incineration, other incineration, landfill gas generation plant, pyrolysis/gasification, anaerobic digestion, sewage treatment works, other incineration/ combustion.</p>

<p>Waste</p> <p>Composting</p> <p>Discharges</p> <p>Water Supply</p> <p>Notes</p> <p>GUIDANCE – How to use the Impact Risk Zones</p>	<p>Landfill. incl: inert landfill, non-hazardous landfill, hazardous landfill.</p> <p>Any composting proposal with more than 500 tonnes maximum annual operational throughput. incl: open windrow composting, in-vessel composting, anaerobic digestion, other waste management.</p> <p><u>/Metadata for magic/SSSI IRZ User Guidance MAGIC.pdf</u></p>
<p>1. DOES PLANNING PROPOSAL FALL INTO ONE OR MORE OF THE CATEGORIES BELOW?</p> <p>All Planning Applications</p> <p>Infrastructure</p> <p>Wind & Solar Energy</p> <p>Minerals, Oil & Gas</p> <p>Rural Non Residential</p> <p>Residential</p> <p>Rural Residential</p> <p>Air Pollution</p> <p>Combustion</p> <p>Waste</p> <p>Composting</p> <p>Discharges</p> <p>Water Supply</p> <p>Notes</p> <p>GUIDANCE – How to use the Impact Risk Zones</p>	<p>2. IF YES, CHECK THE CORRESPONDING DESCRIPTION(S) BELOW. LPA SHOULD CONSULT NATURAL ENGLAND ON LIKELY RISKS FROM THE FOLLOWING:</p> <p>Airports, helipads and other aviation proposals.</p> <p>Oil & gas exploration/extraction.</p> <p>Any development that could cause AIR POLLUTION (incl: industrial/commercial processes, pig & poultry units, slurry lagoons/manure stores).</p> <p>All general combustion processes. incl: energy from waste incineration, other incineration, landfill gas generation plant, pyrolysis/gasification, anaerobic digestion, sewage treatment works, other incineration/ combustion.</p> <p>Mechanical and biological waste treatment, inert landfill, non-hazardous landfill, hazardous landfill, household civic amenity recycling facilities construction, demolition and excavation waste, other waste management.</p> <p>Any composting proposal. incl: open windrow composting, in-vessel composting, anaerobic digestion, other waste management.</p> <p><u>/Metadata for magic/SSSI IRZ User Guidance MAGIC.pdf</u></p>

<p>1. DOES PLANNING PROPOSAL FALL INTO ONE OR MORE OF THE CATEGORIES BELOW?</p> <p>All Planning Applications Infrastructure</p> <p>Wind & Solar Energy Minerals, Oil & Gas</p> <p>Rural Non Residential Residential Rural Residential Air Pollution</p> <p>Combustion</p> <p>Waste</p> <p>Composting</p> <p>Discharges Water Supply</p> <p>Notes GUIDANCE – How to use the Impact Risk Zones</p>	<p>2. IF YES, CHECK THE CORRESPONDING DESCRIPTION(S) BELOW. LPA SHOULD CONSULT NATURAL ENGLAND ON LIKELY RISKS FROM THE FOLLOWING:</p> <p>Pipelines, pylons and overhead cables. Any transport proposal including road, rail and by water (excluding routine maintenance). Airports, helipads and other aviation proposals.</p> <p>Planning applications for quarries, including: new proposals, Review of Minerals Permissions (ROMP), extensions, variations to conditions etc. Oil & gas exploration/extraction.</p> <p>Any development that could cause AIR POLLUTION or DUST either in its construction or operation (incl: industrial/commercial processes, pig & poultry units, slurry lagoons/manure stores).</p> <p>All general combustion processes. incl: energy from waste incineration, other incineration, landfill gas generation plant, pyrolysis/gasification, anaerobic digestion, sewage treatment works, other incineration/ combustion.</p> <p>Mechanical and biological waste treatment, inert landfill, non-hazardous landfill, hazardous landfill, household civic amenity recycling facilities construction, demolition and excavation waste, other waste management.</p> <p>Any composting proposal. incl: open windrow composting, in-vessel composting, anaerobic digestion, other waste management.</p> <p><u>/Metadata for magic/SSSI IRZ User Guidance MAGIC.pdf</u></p>
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Site Check Report: Report generated on Thu Jan 04 2018
 You selected the location: Centroid Grid Ref: TL613308
 The following features have been found in your search area:

Parishes (GB)

Name Description Administrative Regions Hectares	Thaxted CP Civil Parish or Community ESSEX_COUNTY 2537.121
Name Description Administrative Regions Hectares	Debden CP Civil Parish or Community ESSEX_COUNTY 1643.483
Name Description Administrative Regions Hectares	Broxted CP Civil Parish or Community ESSEX_COUNTY 1118.862
Name Description Administrative Regions Hectares	Great Easton CP Civil Parish or Community ESSEX_COUNTY 1036.389
Name Description Administrative Regions Hectares	Little Bardfield CP Civil Parish or Community ESSEX_COUNTY 867.796
Name Description Administrative Regions Hectares	Wimbish CP Civil Parish or Community ESSEX_COUNTY 1989.789
Name Description Administrative Regions Hectares	Little Sampford CP Civil Parish or Community ESSEX_COUNTY 1343.433
Name Description Administrative Regions Hectares	Tilty CP Civil Parish or Community ESSEX_COUNTY 481.601
Name Description Administrative Regions Hectares	Lindsell CP Civil Parish or Community ESSEX_COUNTY 802.47

Ramsar Sites (England) - points No Features found	
Ramsar Sites (England) No Features found	
Proposed Ramsar Sites (England) - points No Features found	
Proposed Ramsar Sites (England) No Features found	
Sites of Special Scientific Interest Units (England) - points No Features found	
Sites of Special Scientific Interest Units (England) No Features found	
Sites of Special Scientific Interest (England) - points No Features found	
Sites of Special Scientific Interest (England) No Features found	
Special Areas of Conservation (England) - points No Features found	
Special Areas of Conservation (England) No Features found	
Possible Special Areas of Conservation (England) - points No Features found	
Possible Special Areas of Conservation (England) No Features found	
Special Protection Areas (England) - points No Features found	
Special Protection Areas (England) No Features found	
Possible Special Protection Areas (England) - points No Features found	
Possible Special Protection Areas (England) No Features found	

Appendix 2: Consultation Responses from the Statutory Environmental Bodies



Ms Demetria Macdonald
Uttlesford District Council
Council Offices London Road
Saffron Walden
Essex
CB11 4ER

Our ref: AE/2018/122611/01-L01
Your ref:

Date: 06 March 2018

Dear Ms Macdonald

SEA SCREENING REPORT - THAXTED

Thank you for your consultation received on 22 January. We have reviewed the screening report, as submitted and can confirm that we do not disagree with the conclusion reached within the report.

The screening report indicates that there are no significant impacts that will be a result from the Thaxted Neighbourhood Plan.

We trust this information is useful.

Yours faithfully,

Miss Natalie Kermath
Planning Advisor

Direct dial 02077 141064
Direct e-mail natalie.kermath@environment-agency.gov.uk



EAST OF ENGLAND OFFICE

Ms Demetria Macdonald
Uttlesford District Council
Council Offices
London Road
Saffron Walden
Essex
CB11 4ER

Direct Dial:

Our ref: PL00293682

20 February 2018

Dear Ms Macdonald

Thank you for your email of 22 January 2018 regarding the above consultation. As the Government's adviser on the historic environment Historic England is keen to ensure that the protection of the historic environment is fully taken into account at all stages and levels of the local planning process. Therefore we welcome this opportunity to review the Screening Report for the draft Thaxted Neighbourhood Plan. For the purposes of this consultation, Historic England will confine its advice to the question, "Is it (the Thaxted Neighbourhood Plan) likely to have a significant effect on the historic environment?". Our comments are based on the information supplied with the Screening Report.

The Screening Report indicates that the Council considers that the Thaxted Neighbourhood Plan will not result in any significant effects upon cultural heritage in the area of the plan. We note from a review of the Regulation 14 draft of the Thaxted Neighbourhood Plan that it is proposed to allocate 3 small sites for development. We would query, therefore, the use of 'not applicable' in answer to question 5 of the table in section 2.3. As the plan intends to allocate three small areas for housing, we consider that the answer here should be 'yes', which then leads to question 8.

Notwithstanding that discrepancy, on the basis of the information supplied, and in the context of the criteria set out in Schedule 1 of the Environmental Assessment Regulations [Annex II of 'SEA' Directive], Historic England concurs with the Council that the preparation of a Strategic Environmental Assessment is not required.

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

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

We should like to stress that this opinion is based on the information provided by you with your correspondence dated 22 January 2018. To avoid any doubt, this does not reflect our obligation to provide further advice on later stages of the SA/SEA process



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HistoricEngland.org.uk



Historic England is subject to the Freedom of Information Act, 2000 (FOIA) and Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (EIR). All information held by the organization will be accessible in response to an information request, unless one of the exemptions in the FOIA or EIR applies.



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and, potentially, object to specific proposals which may subsequently arise (either as a result of this consultation or in later versions of the plan/guidance) where we consider that, despite the SA/SEA, these would have an adverse effect upon the environment.

Historic England strongly advises that the conservation and archaeological staff of the relevant local authorities (Uttlesford District Council and Essex County Council) are closely involved throughout the preparation of the plan and its assessment. They are best placed to advise on; local historic environment issues and priorities, including access to data held in the Historic Environment Record (HER), how the allocation, policy or proposal can be tailored to minimise potential adverse impacts on the historic environment; the nature and design of any required mitigation measures; and opportunities for securing wider benefits for the future conservation and management of heritage assets.

Yours sincerely,

Edward James
Historic Places Advisor, East of England



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NATURAL ENGLAND (E-Mail sent 27/02/2018 at 13:26)

Dear Demetria,

Apologies for not being able to respond by your deadline of 20th February for the Thaxted Neighbourhood Plan SEA and HRA consultation. Natural England are in agreement with the conclusions reached that there are no likely significant effects from the Plan that require further assessment.

Please be aware that Natural England is working alongside Uttlesford District Council and the National Trust in carrying out research into the visitor patterns and impacts to Hatfield Forest SSSI / NNR. This work will help to establish a "zone of influence" within which new housing will be expected to contribute towards mitigation for recreational impacts. Whilst this work is yet to report, we note that the Neighbourhood Plan proposes some housing development which may fall within this zone of influence, and may be required to contribute mitigation towards these aims. This may take the form of a financial contribution. We will be working with the Council to ensure its Local Plan integrates these requirements, with which the Neighbourhood Plan will need to align.

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Regards,

Kate

Kate Ginn

Lead Adviser (Area 8: Essex, Hertfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Bedfordshire, Northants)

Mail Hub, Natural England, County Hall, Spetchley Road, Worcester WR5 2NP

Please note that I don't work on Fridays.

Natural England offers two chargeable services - the Discretionary Advice Service (DAS), which provides pre-application and post-consent advice on planning/licensing proposals to developers and consultants, and the Pre-submission Screening Service (PSS) for European Protected Species mitigation licence applications. These services help applicants take appropriate account of environmental considerations at an early stage of project development, reduce uncertainty, the risk of delay and added cost at a later stage, whilst securing good results for the natural environment.

www.gov.uk/natural-england

We are here to secure a healthy natural environment for people to enjoy, where wildlife is protected and England's traditional landscapes are safeguarded for future generations.

In an effort to reduce Natural England's carbon footprint, I will, wherever possible, avoid travelling to meetings and attend via audio conferencing.

Natural England is accredited to the Cabinet Office Customer Service Excellence Standard.
