




Walkern Neighbourhood Plan Examination

Reponses to Questions of clarification from the Examiner to the Parish Council and EHDC



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 EastHertsDC

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01279 655261

1. In relation to Policy 2:

- a) The policy refers to six important views and vistas, but seven are then identified in the policy and in Appendix D. Is this simply a typographical error?**

Parish Council Response:

Yes, this is just a typographical error. We added an additional view late in the day. The POLICY 2 should read 'Seven important views...'

- b) Reference is made in the policy to the River Beane Valley as providing a strategic gap, but am I correct in my interpretation that the Plan does not seek to designate such a gap? Please explain the language used.**

Parish Council Response:

It wasn't our intention to designate a strategic gap, although in hindsight it could have been something to consider. The East Herts Green Belt Review does not recognise the importance of gaps between towns and villages in the green belt. The wording in POLICY 2 was intended to stress the importance of the gap, which the Beane Valley represents, between Walkern and Stevenage. The strategic gap between these two settlements is also referred to in paragraph 5.29. If the use of 'strategic' is confusing, it could be replaced in both cases with 'important'.

- 2. Paragraph 5.17 would seem to sit more comfortably alongside Policy 3. Would the Parish Council agree?**

Parish Council Response:

Yes, we would be happy for the paragraph 5.17 to become paragraph 5.16 and move to a new position immediately before POLICY 3.

3. In relation to Policy 5:

- a) The policy refers to eight local wildlife sites. It indicates all eight are shown on the Policies Map (Appendix C), but I don't think this is the case. Please could this be checked and advise me accordingly and provide an amended map if some are missing or there are additional sites shown.**
- b) Reference is made in the policy to Appendix G. One site, St. Johns Wood is referred to in the appendix as "St Johns Wood and Lords Wood"; is this the same site (it seems to be two different sites on the map) and should the policy refer to Lords Wood too if they are different sites?**
- c) Appendix G also refers to two other sites which are not referred to in the policy (Squitmore Spring and Plantation and Walkern Road Verge). Should these two sites be removed from Appendix G?**

Parish Council Response:

Apologies for the confusion caused with Wildlife Sites. The source map and index have been attached for your reference. The following comments explain the inconsistencies and the changes that will need to be made:

- Remove site 23/004 Squitmore Spring and Plantation and site 30/027 Walkern Road Verge from Appendix G – they are not in Walkern Parish.
- Cobles Spring and The Bushes are known locally as two separate woods but are classified by the Wildlife Trust as site 22/049. The Policy Map wrongly names part of this site as Cobles Wood and this should be amended to Coble's Spring. The two sites should be combined in POLICY 5 as Coble's Spring and The Bushes.
- Baron's Grove site 30/015 is wrongly shown on the Policy Map as Baron's Wood and should be amended.
- Bassus Green Road Verges site 23/005 is marked light green on the Policy Map but are not specifically named. The Policy Map should be amended to name the site.

- Box Wood is shown on the Policy Map. This site 22/006 also includes Pryor's Wood, which is outside the Parish of Walkern.
- St John's Wood and Lords Wood are both shown on the Policy Map although the site 23/003 is St John's Wood and Lord's Wood. Part of Lord's Wood is outside the Parish of Walkern. Locally they are known as two separate woods.
- Walman's Wood site 31/009 is shown on the Policy Map as is The Warren site 22/047.

4. Policy 8 refers to land south of Froghall Lane and the appeal decision, APP/J1915/W/15/3127807:

- a) Please advise me of the latest planning position in relation to this site.**
- b) Please advise me of the relationship between any extant permission and the Tibbalds Framework.**
- c) Please confirm there are no issues arising from the inclusion of the Tibbalds Framework as an appendix (i.e. correct permissions been sought etc.)**

East Herts District Council Response:

- a)** The outline planning permission is extant as there are two reserved matters applications that were submitted within the timeframe of the permission. Both applications were reported to Development Management Committee on the 31st January 2018, both applications were subsequently approved.
- b)** The Tibbalds Framework was presented by the Council at appeal and was considered by the Planning Inspector but was not included as an approved plan and there is no condition relating to it. The Inspector stated that the Tibbalds scheme did not form part of the application.
- c)** I don't think there will be any issue providing that it is clear that it is the principles of the Tibbalds Framework and it is not prescriptive. The two reserved matters applications have taken the principles of the Tibbalds Framework into consideration,

but detailed assessment of the constraints of the site, such as flooding has pushed the built form off the southern boundary. So perhaps if there was a caveat with reference to the Tibbalds Framework being provided as a guide.

5. Policy 12 uses the phrase “aesthetically pleasing” in relation to building materials and I consider this may give rise to a variety of interpretations and so does not provide the necessary clarity. Is there another form of words that the Parish Council might wish to suggest?

Parish Council Response:

The point is taken about the subjectivity of ‘aesthetically pleasing’. Would ‘attractive in appearance’ be acceptable? Alternatively the bullet point could read

- ‘Building materials should respect or enhance their environment and be characteristic of traditional village properties’

6. In relation to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Report, please confirm:

- a) The dates of the consultation with the statutory consultees**
- b) Whether any responses were received and if so provide copies of those responses**

East Herts District Council Response:

The 3 statutory consultees received a written invitation to comment on the Walkern Neighbourhood Plan on 30th June 2017. Responses from Historic England, the Environment Agency and Natural England are all included within Appendix A. Also provided is the previous document that the Environment Agency refers to in their email response.

7. Please confirm whether the Plan area a) falls within any European site(s) and if so which one(s) and b) if the Plan area does not fall within an European site, whether it falls within any zones or within proximity of any European site(s) and if so which one(s).

East Herts District Council Response:

The Plan area does not fall within any European Sites, or within close proximity to any. There are 3 European sites that lie within East Herts, all of these are situated to the south of the District.

8. a) Please confirm the date of the Habitats Screening Decision, b) the version of the draft Plan the screening related to and c) whether any consultation was carried out on the Screening Decision and if so, please provide details.

East Herts District Council Response:

The Habitats Screening Decision was made by the Council on the 25th August 2017, the full report is included at Appendix B. The Council was engaged on SEA/HRA matters throughout the Neighbourhood Plan process, with the final screening decision relating to the Submission version of the Walkern Neighbourhood Plan. There was no consultation carried out on the decision itself.

9. Please could EHDC provide a copy of the site location plan (appendix 1) referred to in the representation from Planning Potential on behalf of Welbeck Land. Although the page has been copied, it is blank.

East Herts District Council Response:

The site location plan was not provided through the original representation, however the location plan has been provided by Planning Potential on 31/01/2018. The site location plan can be found at Appendix C.

10.A representation from Mr. Cooke refers to land east of Gresley Way. Please could a map be provided of the land/site referred to and/or confirmation given by EHDC as to whether any of this land falls within the Plan area? If any of the land does fall within the Plan are, please set out the latest planning status etc. of the site.

East Herts District Council Response:

There is currently no planning application for the site referred to, this site is the East of Stevenage site allocation (Policy EOS1) included within the emerging East Herts District Plan (Pg. 151). A map of the site showing it within the context of the Walkern Neighbourhood Plan area is attached at Appendix D. It is confirmed that a small area to the north of the site is within the Walkern NP Area.

11.Please provide a copy of, or link to, the report on Walkern Housing Needs Survey. Community Development Action Hertfordshire, February 2017.

East Herts District Council Response:

A copy of the Walkern Housing Needs Survey has been attached to the accompanying email.

Appendix A: SEA Statutory Consultees Responses

Environment Agency Response:

creating a better place



Heidi Broady
47 Pembridge Gardens
Stevenage
Hertfordshire
SG2 8BF

Date: 17 February 2016

Dear Mark

Walkern Neighbourhood Plan 2013 – 2033: Pre Submission Plan Consultation.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to provide our comments on the draft Walkern Neighbourhood Plan. We have reviewed the summary document of the plan.

We do not have many comments to make as many of the wider environmental issues concerning the Environment Agency will be covered within East Herts District Council's Local Plan. However, we have the below points to make which may strengthen your plan in its protection of the local natural environment.

Flood Risk

Walkern includes areas of Flood Zone 2, 3a and 3b, associated with the floodplain of the River Beane. Flood Zone 2 is defined by Table 1 of the National Planning Practice Guidance, Flood Risk and Coastal Change (Section 25) as having a medium probability of flooding (1 in 1000 year), Flood Zone 3a as having a high probability of flooding (1 in 100 year), and Flood Zone 3b as having the highest probability of flooding (1 in 20 year).

Development should be kept out of these areas where possible. In particular, no development should take place within Flood Zone 3b. We would object in principle to any planning applications in the future that propose such development, unless for either water compatible or essential development. This is due to the role of Flood Zone 3b as the functional floodplain, with the purpose of safely storing floodwater during times of flooding.

For any new development in Flood Zones 2 and 3, a Sequential Test should be undertaken in order for the development to be considered appropriate in this location. Should the site pass the Sequential Test, a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) will need to be submitted with a planning application, in line with paragraph 103 of the NPPF. The FRA must demonstrate that the development is safe without increasing flood risk elsewhere, and where possible reduces flood risk overall.

A specific flood risk policy within the neighbourhood plan would aid in ensuring flood risk is considered with any new development within Walkern.

Buffer zone to the River Beane

The River Beane, which is classified as a main river, runs through the neighbourhood area of Walkern. It is encouraging to see the plan refer specifically to protecting the river Beane and its associated habitat. However, this could be made stronger through

Environment Agency
Apollo Court, 2 Bishops Sq Business park, Hatfield, Herts, AL10 9EX.



a policy specifying that any scheme adjacent to the Beane should be designed with a naturalised buffer zone of at least 10 metres from the top of the bank of the brook in order to protect and enhance the conservation value of the watercourse and ensure access for flood defence maintenance. This requirement is in line with East Herts' 2016 Pre-Submission Local Plan policy.

All buffer zones should be managed for the benefit of biodiversity, e.g. by the planting of locally appropriate, UK native species, and we would expect the buffer zone to be otherwise 'undisturbed' by development, and left free from buildings, hard landscaping, fencing, footpaths or other development. This buffer zone would also help to provide vital space for flood waters, provide improved habitat for local biodiversity, and would also help to provide attractive amenity space on the site.

With any development alongside watercourses, consideration should also be given to the requirements of the Water Framework Directive (WFD), which includes causing no overall deterioration in water quality or the ecological status of any waterbody. The plan could specifically refer to the WFD.

You should also be aware that any development within eight metres of the Beane may also require a permit under the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2010 from the Environment Agency. This permit is separate to and in addition to any planning permission granted, and any development taking place within this proximity of the watercourse without a permit could be breaking the law.

If you have any queries about this response, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Thomas Campbell
Sustainable Places Planning Advisor

Direct dial: 0208 474 7633



E-mail: HNL.SustainablePlaces@environment-agency.gov.uk

FW: RE: WALKERN PARISH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN - STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (SEA) SCREENING REQUEST

Sime Claire

Sent: Thu 10/08/2017 16:47

To: Pavey George

 Message  RE 170110BA07 Summary Document - Walkern Neighbourhood Draft Plan (173 KB)

From: HNL Sustainable Places [<mailto:HNL.SustainablePlaces@environment-agency.gov.uk>]
Sent: 25 July 2017 09:43
To: Taylor Carol-Anne
Cc: Sime Claire
Subject: RE: RE: WALKERN PARISH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN - STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (SEA) SCREENING REQUEST

Hello Carol-Anne,

Thank you for your emails. We sent a response to the draft Walkern Neighbourhood Plan in February this year, which I have re-attached to this email. We would have no further comments to make in addition to this.

You have also consulted us on Standon Neighbourhood Plan which I can provide our comments for by the end of the week.

I hope this helps.

Kind regards,

Tom Campbell
Planning Advisor
Sustainable Places Team
Environment Agency – Hertfordshire and North London

✉ Apollo Court, 2 Bishops Square Business Park, St. Albans Road West, Hatfield, Herts, AL10 9EX
☎ Internal - 47633
☎ External - 0208 474 7633
✉ email – HNL.SustainablePlaces@environment-agency.gov.uk

Natural England Response:

Date: 10th August 2017
Our ref: 219644 Walkern NP SEA Screening
Your ref:

Claire Sime,
Service Manager (Planning Policy),
East Herts Council, Wallfields,
Pegs Lane, Hertford,
SG13 8EQ
By email only: claire.sime@eastherts.gov.uk



Customer Services
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CW1 6GU

T 0300 080 3900

Dear Claire Sime,

Walkern Parish Neighbourhood Plan: Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulation Assessment Screening

Thank you for your consultation on the above dated the 30th June 2017 which was received by email on the same date.

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

Strategic Environmental Assessment

Where Neighbourhood Plans could have significant environmental effects, they may require a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) under the Environment Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004. Further guidance on deciding whether the proposals are likely to have significant environmental effects and the requirements for consulting Natural England on SEA are set out in the National Planning Practice Guidance at:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/strategic-environmental-assessment-and-sustainability-appraisal#strategic-environmental-assessment-requirements-for-neighbourhood-plans>

Natural England welcomes the production of an SEA Screening Report and is satisfied that a conclusion that an SEA is not required is appropriate.

Habitat Regulations Assessment

Where a Neighbourhood Plan could potentially lead to significant environmental effects it will be necessary to screen the Plan in relation to the Habitats and Species Regulations (2010), as amended (the 'Habitats Regulations'). One of the basic conditions that will be tested at Examination is whether the making of the plan is compatible with European obligations and this includes requirements relating to the Habitats Directive.

In relation to the Habitats Regulations, a Neighbourhood Plan cannot progress if the likelihood of significant effects on any European Site, either alone (or in combination with other plans and projects) cannot be ruled out (see Schedule 2, The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012). Therefore measures may need to be incorporated into the Neighbourhood Plan to ensure that any likely significant effects are avoided in order to secure compliance with the Regulations. A screening exercise should be undertaken if there is any doubt about the possible effects of the Plan on European protected sites. This will be particularly important if a Neighbourhood Plan is to progress before a Local Plan has been adopted and/or the

Neighbourhood Plan proposes development which has not be assessed and/or included in the Habitats Regulations Assessment for the Local Plan.

Natural England welcomes the consideration given to the Habitats Regulations. We are satisfied that the conclusion of the Local Planning Authority (as competent authority) that there are no likely significant effects on European sites is appropriate, and therefore advise that **further Habitats Regulations Assessment is not required.**

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

For any queries relating to the specific advice in this letter only please contact Jamie Melvin on 020 802 61025. For any new consultations, or to provide further information on this consultation please send your correspondences to consultations@naturalengland.org.uk.

We really value your feedback to help us improve the service we offer. We have attached a feedback form to this letter and welcome any comments you might have about our service.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Jamie Melvin
Planning Lead Adviser – West Anglia Team

Historic England Response:



Historic England

EAST OF ENGLAND OFFICE

Ms Carol-Anne Taylor
East Herts District Council
Wallfields
Pegs Lane
Hertford
Hertfordshire
SG13 8EQ

Direct Dial: 01223 582746

Our ref: PL00123252

27 July 2017

Dear Ms Taylor

RE: Walkern Neighbourhood Plan SEA Consultation

Thank you for your email of 30th June 2017, and the enclosed Screening Report for the above document, authored by the Govresources Ltd on behalf of Walkern Parish Council. For the purposes of this consultation, Historic England will confine its advice to the question, "Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment?" in respect of our area of concern, the historic environment. Our comments are based on the information supplied with the Screening Opinion.

The Plan documentation is accompanied by a request for a formal Screening Opinion from Historic England in compliance the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004. The Screening Report prepared by your Forum does not conclude that Strategic Environmental Assessment is required, but the emphasis contained within its assessment is that it should not be. We note that the Plan appears to propose no site allocations that would have significant environmental effects upon the historic environment, and as such we consider that in this regard Strategic Environmental Assessment is not required.

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 considers that the preparation of a Strategic Environmental Assessment is not required.

The views of the other 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 letter dated 30th June 2017. To avoid any doubt, this does not reflect our obligation to provide further advice on later stages of the SEA process and, potentially,



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

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 SEA, these would have an adverse effect upon the historic environment.

Historic England strongly advises that the conservation and archaeological staff of East Hertfordshire District Council and Hertfordshire 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; how the 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
Edward.James@HistoricEngland.org.uk

cc: Claire Sime, Service Manager (Planning Policy), East Hertfordshire District Council



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Appendix B: SEA Screening Report Walkern

EAST HERTS COUNCIL

NON-KEY DECISION -

REPORT BY THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

WALKERN NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2017-2033 – STRATEGIC
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT AND APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT
SCREENING REPORT

WARD(S) AFFECTED: WALKERN

Purpose/Summary of Report

- The purpose of this report is to determine whether or not a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and/or a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) of the emerging Walkern Neighbourhood Plan is required.
- The report concludes that the Neighbourhood Plan does not require either a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) or a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) because the Plan is not likely to have any significant environmental effects.

<u>RECOMMENDATION FOR DECISION: that Walkern Council be advised that:</u>	
(A)	In accordance with Regulation 9 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, the District Council, as the responsible authority, has determined that an environmental assessment of the emerging Walkern Neighbourhood Plan is not required as it is unlikely to have significant environmental effects. In making this determination, the District Council has had regard to Schedule 1 of the Regulations and has carried out

	consultation with the consultation bodies; and
(B)	The emerging Walkern Neighbourhood Plan is unlikely to have a significant effect upon a Natura 2000 designation and therefore does not require an HRA.

1.0 Background

- 1.1 In order for a neighbourhood plan to meet the Basic Conditions to proceed to Referendum, the Local Planning Authority must determine whether a neighbourhood plan requires a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), and/or a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA). This report determines whether the Walkern Neighbourhood Plan requires either.

SEA Legislative Background

- 1.2 The European Directive 2001/42/EC requires a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA Directive) to be carried out for certain plans and programmes to assess their effects on the environment. This Directive was transposed in law by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.
- 1.3 Neighbourhood Plans fall within the scope of this legislation. They are a plan as defined by Article 3(2) of the SEA regulations and Regulation 5 paragraph 2 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.
- 1.4 Under Article 3(2) of the SEA Directive and Regulation 5 paragraph 6 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is only required for documents that determine land use in small areas at the local level where it is considered that they are likely to have 'significant environmental effects'. This is carried out through a screening determination.
- 1.5 The role of a screening exercise is to determine whether the effect of the implementation of a plan or programme is likely to have a significant effect on the environment.

HRA Legislative Background

- 1.6 The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended in 2012) transpose the requirements of the European Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC into UK law. The Habitats Directive and Regulations afford protection to plants, animals and habitats that are rare and vulnerable in a European context.
- 1.7 Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) is a systematic process through which the performance of a plan or project can be assessed for its likely impact on the integrity of a European Site. European Sites, also referred to as Natura 2000 sites, consist of Special Protection Areas (SPA), Special Areas of Conservation (SAC); Potential Special Protection Areas and candidate Special Areas of Conservation (pSPA and cSAC); and listed or proposed Ramsar sites.
- 1.8 Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive states: 'Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans and projects, shall be subject to appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site's conservation objectives'.
- 1.9 The first stage of HRA is to screen a plan or programme to identify if there are likely to be any significant effects on Natura 2000 sites. This will indicate whether a full Appropriate Assessment is required.

2.0 Report

SEA

- 2.1 To decide whether a draft neighbourhood plan might have significant environmental effects, its scope needs to be assessed against the criteria set out in Schedule 1 to the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.
- 2.2 The local planning authority is required to put in place a process to provide a screening opinion to the qualifying body (in this case, Walkern Parish Council) on whether the proposed neighbourhood

plan will require a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). The qualifying body should work with the local planning authority to ensure that the authority has the information that it needs to provide a screening opinion.

- 2.3 When deciding on whether proposals are likely to have significant environmental effects, the local planning authority is required to consult Historic England, Natural England and the Environment Agency (the 'statutory consultees').
- 2.4 Walkern Neighbourhood Plan Group and Walkern Parish Council (the qualifying body) has produced a draft Neighbourhood Plan covering Walkern. The draft Neighbourhood Plan contains policies on:
- Sustainable Development;
 - Views, Vistas and Landscape;
 - Conservation and Heritage;
 - Open Space and Local Green Space;
 - Biodiversity;
 - Green Infrastructure;
 - Froghall Lane – framework policy;
 - Housing Development and Design;
 - Employment and Business
 - Traffic and Transport;
 - Facilities and Services.
- 2.5 The Neighbourhood Plan includes a framework policy for land south of Froghall Lane, which received outline planning permission in February 2016. No other land allocations for development have been put forward in this Neighbourhood Plan.
- 2.6 Walkern Neighbourhood Plan Group and Walkern Parish Council have prepared a Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Report for the Neighbourhood Plan. The assessment of the Neighbourhood Plan concludes that if there are any significant environmental effects, then these will be positive effects. A copy of the Strategic Environmental Assessment Report is included, for information, at **Essential Reference Paper 'B'**.
- 2.7 The Environment Agency, Natural England and Historic England have all been consulted on the draft Neighbourhood Plan and

Screening Report and have confirmed that an SEA is not required for the Neighbourhood Plan. Their responses are attached at **Essential Reference Paper ‘C’**.

- 2.8 Having regard to Schedule 1 of the Regulations and following consultation with the statutory consultees it is concluded that an environmental assessment of the emerging Neighbourhood Plan is not required as it is unlikely to have significant environmental effects.

HRA

- 2.9 The Local Authority is the ‘competent authority’ under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010, and needs to ensure that Neighbourhood Plans have been assessed through the Habitat Regulations process. This looks at the potential for significant impacts on nature conservation sites that are of European importance, also referred to as Natura 2000.
- 2.10 There are three key Natura 2000 sites that lie partly within East Hertfordshire – Lee Valley SPA; Lee Valley Ramsar site; and Wormley-Hoddesdonpark Woods SAC (although there are also sites in neighbouring authorities, namely Epping Forest SAC). Because Neighbourhood Plans must conform with the development plan for the area (in this case, the East Herts Local Plan 2007 and the emerging East Herts District Plan), which have both been subject to an HRA, the key issue will be whether the Neighbourhood Plan will potentially result in an impact not previously considered.
- 2.11 The HRA on the Local Plan 2007 concluded:

‘The European Sites of nature conservation interest in the district are valued features that have local importance as well as wider significance. The Local Plan Second Review attaches a correspondingly high level of protection to these sites from inappropriate development.

Policy ENV12 [of the Local Plan 2007] establishes a robust approach to the protection of European Sites that reflects the Habitats Directive and will help maintain the importance of these sites through the life of the Plan. While there are several proposals in the Local Plan in proximity to these sites, the requirements imposed through Policy

ENV12 ensure that none of the proposals are likely to result in a significant effect on a European site.'

- 2.12 The HRA on the District Plan similarly concludes that the Plan will not result in a likely significant effect, either alone or in combination, upon any European sites. In particular Policy NE1 of the District Plan provides for the protection of internationally designated sites.
- 2.13 Given the conclusions of the HRA on the Local Plan 2007 and the fact that the Neighbourhood Plan does not include any land allocations it is concluded that an HRA on the Neighbourhood Plan is not required.
- 3.0 Implications/Consultations
- 3.1 Information on any corporate issues and consultation associated with this report can be found within **Essential Reference Paper 'A'**.

Background Papers

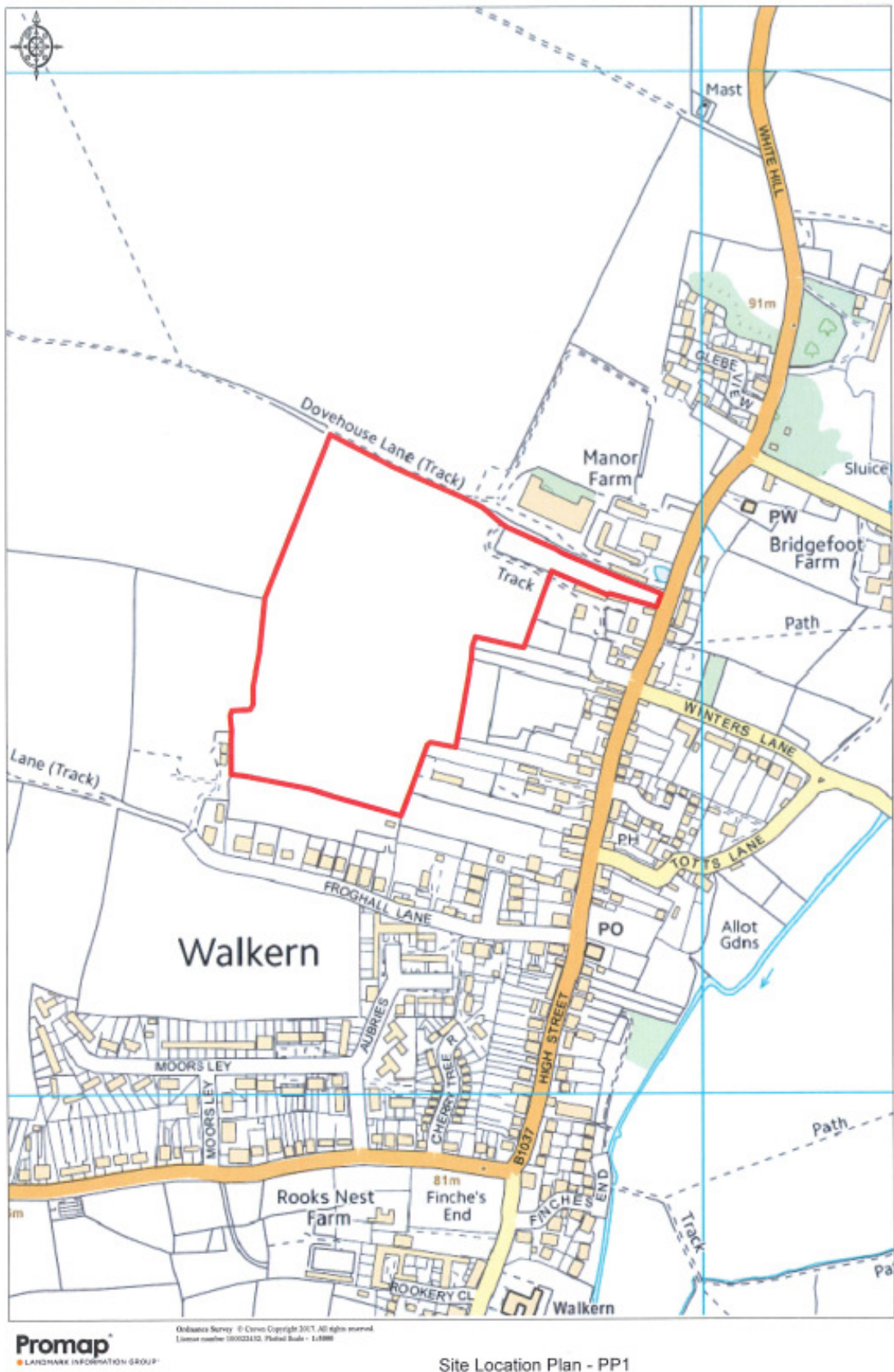
Walkern Neighbourhood Plan 2017 - 2033 – the Neighbourhood Plan is available online at: www.eastherts.gov.uk/neighbourhoodplanning

Contact Member: Councillor L Haysey – Leader of the Council
linda.haysey@eastherts.gov.uk

Contact Officer: Kevin Steptoe – Head of Planning and Building Control
01992 531407
kevin.steptoe@eastherts.gov.uk

Report Author: Claire Sime – Service Manager (Planning Policy)
claire.sime@eastherts.gov.uk

Appendix C: Site Location Plan



Appendix D: Walkern NP Area and Policy EOS1

