



East  
Northamptonshire  
Council

# Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) screening for Neighbourhood Plans and Neighbourhood Development Orders

**European Directive 2001/42/EC “on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment”**

## **Introduction to Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)**

Neighbourhood Development Orders (NDOs) and Neighbourhood Plans have legal status as statutory development plan documents (DPDs). Since 2004, there has been a legal requirement for DPDs to be assessed against the requirements of European Directive 2001/42/EC; also known as the “Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive”. The objective for SEA is “*to provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes with a view to promoting sustainable development*” (SEA Directive, Article 1).

The SEA Directive was incorporated into national law through [The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004](#) (SI 2004 No 1633).

## **National guidance regarding SEA**

The government guidance document, “[A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive](#)” (ODPM, September 2005) explains the process of screening for SEA. Screening is the first stage in the SEA process; i.e. testing whether or not SEA is required in the case of a Neighbourhood Plan or NDO.

The guidance explains the types of plans etc which are covered by European Directive 2001/42/EC (the “SEA Directive”). It explains that Land use and spatial plans (including Neighbourhood Plans/ NDOs) would **normally** be subject to SEA. Critically, however, the guidance also states that: “*Plans and programmes...which determine the use of small areas at local level, or which are minor modifications to [existing] plans and programmes...only require SEA if they are judged likely to have **significant** environmental effects*” (Appendix 1). In many cases, Neighbourhood Plans/ NDOs will fall into this category. It is therefore essential that a robust screening exercise is undertaken for each Neighbourhood Plan/ NDO.

## Local planning authority support to Town/ Parish Councils or Neighbourhood Forums in undertaking SEA

The [Neighbourhood Planning Protocol](#) (2013) explains the support that East Northamptonshire Council (ENC) can offer to the relevant Town Council(s), Parish Council(s) or Neighbourhood Forums in respect of SEA:

- Provide advice on any relevant European and National legislation (in this case, the SEA Directive);
- Carry out screening to identify any need for SEA (note: where consultants have been employed to prepare the Neighbourhood Plan they will be expected to undertake these);
- However, ENC will **not** be able to actually undertake the SEA if this is required following screening.

This toolkit is intended to be used by officers of ENC in undertaking SEA screening, or in checking SEA screening reports which have been prepared by consultants. Relevant Town Council(s), Parish Council(s) or Neighbourhood Forums may also use the toolkit to carry out their own SEA screening, if they so wish.

### Undertaking SEA screening

The SEA guidance explains that for Neighbourhood Plans/ NDOs screening is a two stage process:

1. Generic application of the SEA directive
2. SEA Directive Article 3(5) Annex II – Application of criteria for determining the likely significance of effects

This toolkit contains two forms, in respect of stages 1 and 2 respectively:

1. For SEA Screening Stage 1, the form considers Neighbourhood Plans and NDOs generically against the SEA Assessment criteria specified in the national guidance (“[A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive](#)”, Figure 2), to determine whether each would require full SEA.
2. Where it is determined that there is potential for a Neighbourhood Plan/ NDO to have a significant effect on the environment, then it is necessary to progress to Stage 2 in the SEA Screening process. This involves testing the relevant Neighbourhood Plan/ NDO against the relevant criteria for determining the likely significance of environmental effects, as specified in SEA Directive Article 3(5) Annex II.

**Please note that only the parts of this form which are highlighted in red will need to be completed.**

## SEA Screening Stage 1: Application of SEA Directive in the case of Neighbourhood Plans/ Neighbourhood Development Orders (NDOs)

SEA Assessment criteria	Commentary	N'hood Plan Outcome (Y/N)	NDO Outcome (Y/N)
1. Is a Neighbourhood Plan/ NDO 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?	<i>A local planning authority has a statutory obligation to adopt or "make" a Neighbourhood Plan or NDO once it has successfully gone through the relevant statutory preparation stages, culminating in a local referendum. At this stage, a Neighbourhood Plan becomes part of the statutory development plan for the relevant local authority area. To this extent, the Neighbourhood Planning/ NDO process is directed by/ through a legislative procedure.</i>	Y	Y
2. Is a Neighbourhood Plan/ NDO required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions?	<i>The preparation of Neighbourhood Plans/ NDOs is not mandatory; i.e. a Town/ Parish Council or Neighbourhood Forum can chose whether or not to undertake either of these. However, if the relevant body decides to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan/ NDO, that Town/ Parish Council or Neighbourhood Forum is required to follow the set regulatory and administrative procedures.</i>	N	N
3. Is a Neighbourhood Plan/ NDO prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism, town and country planning or land use, AND does it set a framework for future development consent of projects in Annexes I and II to the EIA Directive?	<i>A Neighbourhood Plan/ NDO must relate to town and country, spatial and/ or land use planning. Once made, it will form part of the statutory framework ("development plan") for the determination of planning applications. Neighbourhood Plans/ NDOs both, therefore, set specific frameworks for future development consents.</i>	Y	Y

<p>4. Will a Neighbourhood Plan/ NDO in view of its likely effect on sites, require an assessment under Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive?</p>	<p><i>The <a href="#">North Northamptonshire Neighbourhood Planning Toolkit</a> (December 2012) explains that Neighbourhood Plans/ NDOs may also need to be subject to a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) if there might be an impact on the Nene Valley Special Protection Area (SPA)/ Ramsar site<sup>1</sup>. This will depend upon the location and/ or scope of the emerging Neighbourhood Plan/ NDO. Separate HRA screening will be required, although it must be assumed that in the event that a full HRA is deemed necessary, any Neighbourhood Plan/ NDO must also be subject to full SEA.</i></p>	<p>?</p>	<p>?</p>
<p>5. Does a Neighbourhood Plan/ NDO determine the use of small areas at local level, OR is it a minor modification of an existing plan/ programme?</p>	<p><i>In many cases a Neighbourhood Plan will set out detailed, localised policies to reflect local aspirations, concerns or issues. However, Neighbourhood Plans may seek to take on a more challenging role, through making site specific land use allocations.</i></p>	<p>?</p>	<p>N/a</p>
	<p><i>An NDO involves the relaxation or extension of “permitted development rights” (“General Permitted Development Order”) for a small, localised area. Invariably it will involve minor changes to national legislation (the regulatory framework) in a local context, so would therefore represent a minor modification to an existing programme (i.e. national permitted development rights)</i></p>	<p>N/a</p>	<p>N</p>
<p>6. Is a Neighbourhood Plan/ NDO likely to have a significant effect on the environment?</p>	<p><i>The relevant criteria for determining whether Neighbourhood Plans/ NDOs are likely to have a significant environmental effect are set out in Article 3(5) Annex II of the SEA Directive.</i></p>		

<sup>1</sup> Full details of the extent of the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA/ Ramsar site are available through East Northamptonshire Council's [LocalView](#) mapping system (also known as “In My Area”)  
East Northamptonshire Council  
SEA screening form

	<p><i>Any potential environmental effects of a Neighbourhood Plan will largely depend upon two factors; location and/ or proposed scope. Stage 2 of this screening assessment will determine whether or not a Neighbourhood Plan will lead to any significant effects on the environment and, therefore, whether that Neighbourhood Plan will need to be accompanied by a full SEA.</i></p>	<p><b>?</b></p>	<p><b>N/a</b></p>
	<p><i>By definition, an NDO involves a limited relaxation of “permitted development rights for a small, localised area. Accordingly, it cannot reasonably be argued that an NDO would have a significant effect on the environment.</i></p>	<p><b>N/a</b></p>	<p><b>N</b></p>

# SEA Screening Stage 1: Conclusions

## Would a Neighbourhood Plan require SEA?

These assessment criteria reveal that as a starting point in preparing a Neighbourhood Plan there **must** be a presumption that SEA will be required, unless it can be satisfactorily and objectively demonstrated that the scope of the Plan will **not**:

- Require an assessment under Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive (**Q4**, above), whereby if a full HRA is deemed necessary, any Neighbourhood Plan/ NDO must also be subject to full SEA;
- Will only determine the use of small areas at local level – i.e. involves minor/ small scale land allocations/ designations, or detailed, locally distinctive design criteria (**Q5**, above);
- Have a significant effect on the environment (**Q6**, above).

## Would an NDO require SEA?

It is not considered that an NDO would normally require SEA given that, by definition, this will function as a local modification to the [Town and Country Planning \(General Permitted Development\) Order 1995](#) (GPDO), as amended. The GPDO itself relates exclusively to minor/ small scale developments. Any local modification to the GPDO put forward through a NDO could, similarly, only relate to small/ minor developments. Accordingly, this would not require SEA unless, in exceptional circumstances, a full HRA was deemed necessary.



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

The SEA Directive (Article 3(5)) requires the relevant body (i.e. East Northamptonshire Council; and/ or the relevant Town/ Parish Council or Neighbourhood Forum) to: “ensure that plans and programmes [i.e. their Neighbourhood Plan] with likely significant effects on the environment are covered by this Directive”. In other words, the proposed scope and/ or range of themes, topics and/ or policies that a Neighbourhood Plan is intended to cover will form the basis for determining whether a full SEA will be required. Stage 2 of the SEA screening process will determine whether the emerging Neighbourhood Plan would:

- Only determine the use of small areas at local level – i.e. involves minor/ small scale land allocations/ designations, or detailed, locally distinctive design criteria [whereby a full SEA would **not** be required]; or
- Be likely to have a significant effect on the environment [whereby a full SEA **would** be required]?

	SEA Directive (Annex II)	Commentary	Conclusion – significant environmental impact? [Y/N]
1	<b>Characteristics of Neighbourhood Plan</b>		
A	Degree to which this sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources	<i>[How to assess if “significant” – Consider emerging vision/ scope – i.e. what policies/ proposals are intended to be included within the Neighbourhood Plan]</i>	?
	[Site allocations for development]	N - There are no specific sites allocated for housing as predicted requirements should be met by windfall and infill within the existing settlement boundary as is the case with existing plans.	N

		A policy that aims to determine where any rural exception sites for affordable housing or housing sites to meet new imposed government targets would be located seeks to ensure such sites would be sustainable and small scale with minor impacts. Therefore SEA not considered necessary	
	[Design policies/ standards/ codes]	Y - The plan includes a site criteria policy and a design code derived from the existing Village Design Statement to ensure high quality design of sites and buildings that respect the existing character of the village. These policies also set environmental and habitat standards. Assessed to have minor positive impact compared to existing situation	N
	[Landscape protection/ enhancement policies]	Y - The plan includes designations of some landscape features to provide protection against development. Assessed to have no impact on existing situation but positive impact if the protection mitigates damage to landscapes in future	N
	[Protected land designations]	Y - Proposed Local Green Space designations for some areas of land that were previously designated as "Important Open Space" in policy EN20 of the East Northants Council Local Plan Part 2 - Rural North, Oundle and Thrapston Plan (RNOTP). Some additional area of land have also been designated as Important Local Open Space (such as the remains of the abandoned settlement of Southorpe) in order to record their importance to the community and to resist or mitigate development that would have a negative effect on them. Assessed to have minor positive impact compared to existing situation	N
	[Linkages/ green infrastructure proposals]	Y - The plan seeks to enhance the use of local linkages by supporting the Northamptonshire Greenway as outlined in other existing or emerging plans. This should increase access	N

		<p>to the local natural environment but also increase use of sustainable transport (cycling). Assessed to have no change of impact from existing plans and minor positive impact if project completed.</p> <p>A further aspiration to provide a set of heritage and nature trails around the village and parish would increase public access to habitats but only along existing footpaths and byways. Assessed to have minor impact</p>	
	[Community facilities] etc	<p>Y - The plan seeks to protect the allotments as an existing open space and aspires to improve the village hall to provide a community benefit.</p> <p>Development that required to use land occupied by any community facility would require replacement in full on a new accessible site.</p> <p>Assessed to have minor positive impact</p>	N
B	Degree to which this influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy	<p><i>Neighbourhood Plans are locally driven and will, inevitably, cover a small, defined locality/ neighbourhood. In practice, Neighbourhood Plans will provide detailed policy, land-use or development management direction at the smallest defined ("neighbourhood") level. These are "bottom up" development plan documents/ policy tools; so by definition must have regard to, and be in general conformity with, "higher level" policies/ programmes, but will not, by themselves, influence other more strategic policies/ programmes.</i></p>	N
C	Relevance for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable	<p><i>The "basic conditions" require that Neighbourhood Plans must "have regard" to sustainable development. For a Plan to be deemed sound, an Examiner must be satisfied that the</i></p>	N

	development	<i>effective implementation of a Neighbourhood Plan would give rise to sustainable developments.</i>	
D	Environmental problems relevant to the Neighbourhood Plan	<i>[Consider what net environmental impacts would arise from the effective implementation of the Neighbourhood Plan]</i>	?
	[Is it proposed that the emerging Neighbourhood Plan will allocate land for development?]	N - There is no land allocated for development in this plan. The existing settlement boundary will be retained together with proposals for developments outside this boundary resisted except for rural exception sites for affordable local homes evidenced by local need or imposed housing sites due to national policy changes - a set of criteria by which such sites would be evaluated aims to preserve the character of the village and its environment. The effect of these policies would be to prevent or mitigate environmental impacts to a minor level.	N
	[Is it proposed that the emerging Neighbourhood Plan contain detailed design policies/ standards?]	Y - A Design Code based on the guidance in the existing Village Design Statement is included in this plan to govern the design of sites and the buildings within them to ensure the local character and environment are conserved and enhanced. The effect of these policies should be to prevent or mitigate environmental impacts to a minor level.	N
	[Is it proposed that the emerging Plan will identify "high quality" green/ open spaces/ green infrastructure which may require protection by way of a Neighbourhood Plan policy?]	Y- A number of areas will be identified for designation as Local Green Space and these should then be protected from the impact of development. A further set of locally important spaces will be recorded with the aim of protecting these from development or mitigating the impact of development on them so that the community continues to benefit from them.	

	[Is it proposed that the emerging Plan will identify other zonal safeguarding/ protection policies; e.g. retail frontages, employment areas or community hubs?]	<p>Y - To the west of the A605 there are two areas that could be developed for business or leisure use.</p> <p>The plan views this area as a possible Economic Development Zone.</p> <p>The Mill has been a retail space but is now empty, it is a listed building but has a variety of potential uses.</p> <p>The Petrol Station area has a redundant light industrial building and a redundant retail/restaurant space (The ex Little Chef building). This area surrounding the redundant buildings is untidy and unkempt.</p> <p>The plan seeks to support use of redundant buildings business in both areas but also sets protections so that the environment and habitat are preserved or enhanced.</p> <p>The protection of the environment and views from and to the Mill are features of the plan.</p> <p>The improvement of the area around the Petrol Station is also supported by these policies.</p> <p>The policies are assessed to have a minor positive impact.</p>	N
	[Are there any other environmental issues that may arise from the adoption and implementation of the emerging Neighbourhood Plan?]	N - The plan itself aims to improve the environment by encouraging sustainable development. It cannot comment on Minerals or Highways matters that are far more likely to have an environmental impact on this area.	
E	Relevance for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (e.g. plans and programmes linked to waste-management or water protection)	<i>Strategies relating to waste disposal or water protection are mostly dealt with by Northamptonshire County Council. East Northamptonshire Council itself has a number of strategies in place, relating to waste collection and environmental protection. Community Plans may identify specific local environmental concerns or issues, but these are generally not</i>	N

		<i>issues which could be addressed through a Neighbourhood Plan.</i>	
<b>2</b>	<b>Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected</b>		
F	Probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of any effects	<i>A Neighbourhood Plan will relate to specific, small scale issues of either ensuring that any development coming forward will deliver the maximum local benefits. Likewise, in most cases a Neighbourhood Plan will address specific local development management issues, complementing the higher level strategic policy framework already established through the adopted Local Plan and national policies (NPPF). Neighbourhood Plans are intended to have a specifically “local” focus, and are not intended to replace the requirement for Local Planning Authorities (individual, or working in partnership with neighbouring, Local Planning Authorities) to produce a Local Plan. As such, any development policies/ proposals likely to have significant environmental effects would, by definition, need to be addressed through the Local Plan.</i>	<b>N</b>
G	Cumulative nature of any effects	<i>Development of such a magnitude/ quantum to cumulatively lead to effects of such significance that SEA would be required would, by definition, be of a “strategic” nature. Therefore, such development could not be appropriate to be brought forward through a Neighbourhood Plan.</i>	<b>N</b>
H	Transboundary nature of any effects	<i>Neighbourhood Plans are required to relate to discrete administrative areas. By definition, “transboundary” issues are “strategic” matters; therefore beyond the scope of a Neighbourhood Plan. Instead, the Local Plan is the correct forum for addressing any “trans-boundary” issues relating to spatial planning.</i>	<b>N</b>

I	Risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents)	<i>Strategies relating to waste disposal or water protection are mostly dealt with by Northamptonshire County Council. East Northamptonshire Council itself has a number of strategies in place, relating to waste collection and environmental protection. Community Plans may identify specific local environmental concerns or issues, but these are almost certainly not issues which could be addressed through a Neighbourhood Plan.</i>	<b>N</b>
J	Magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)	<i>Neighbourhood Plans, by definition, will cover small geographical areas. The NPPF (paragraphs 184-185) requires that these should set out specific <b>non-strategic</b> development plan policies to address specific local issues. Therefore, development of a sufficient scale and extent to fall within the requirements of the SEA directive would, by definition, not be appropriate to be included within a Neighbourhood Plan.</i>	<b>N</b>
K	Value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected	<i>[e.g. due to special natural characteristics or cultural heritage; exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values; intensive land-use]</i>	
	[What statutory natural or built environment designations are situated within designated Neighbourhood Area?]	<p><b>There are 29 listed buildings in Warmington:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. CHURCH OF ST MARY THE VIRGIN, CHURCH STREET, Warmington Grade 1 (1191333)</li> <li>2. MANOR HOUSE, CHAPEL STREET, Warmington, East Northamptonshire, Northamptonshire Grade: II* (1191298)</li> <li>3. 2, CHAPEL STREET, Warmington Grade: II (1040206)</li> <li>4. OUTBUILDING APPROXIMATELY 15 METRES SOUTH EAST OF MANOR HOUSE Grade: II (1040207)</li> <li>5. GRANARY APPROXIMATELY 15 METRES EAST OF MANOR HOUSE Grade: II (1040208)</li> <li>6. CARTSHEDS APPROXIMATELY 10 METRES NORTH OF MANOR HOUSE Grade: II (1040209)</li> </ol>	

		<p>7. BASE OF CHURCHYARD CROSS APPROXIMATELY 15 METRES NORTH EAST OF CHANCEL OF CHURCH OF ST MARY THE VIRGIN Grade: II (1040210)</p> <p>8. THE MALT HOUSE AND ATTACHED OUTBUILDINGS, CHURCH STREET, Warmington Grade: II (1040211)</p> <p>9. STABLES AND ATTACHED OUTBUILDINGS APPROXIMATELY 20 METRES EAST OF ELMS FARMHOUSE, CHURCH STREET, Warmington Grade: II (1040212)</p> <p>10. GLEBE HOUSE, 3, HAUTOY LANE, Warmington Grade: II (1067747 )</p> <p>11. ASHDOWN FARMHOUSE, LITTLE GREEN, Warmington Grade: II (1067751)</p> <p>12. OUTBUILDING APPROXIMATELY 10 METRES NORTH EAST OF EAGLETHORPE FARMHOUSE, Warmington Grade: II (1067779)</p> <p>13. GRANARY AND ATTACHED BARN APPROXIMATELY 20 METRES NORTH WEST OF EAGLETHORPE FARMHOUSE, EAGLETHORPE, Warmington Grade: II (1067780)</p> <p>14. DOVECOTE APPROXIMATELY 70 METRES NORTH WEST OF EAGLETHORPE FARMHOUSE, Warmington Grade: II (1067783)</p> <p>15. WARMINGTON MILL, EAGLETHORPE, Warmington Grade: II (1067785)</p> <p>16. THE OLD HAUTOY, HAUTOY LANE, Warmington, Grade: II (1067787)</p> <p>17. BARN AND ATTACHED CARTSHED APPROXIMATELY 50 METRES NORTH EAST OF MANOR HOUSE, CHAPEL STREET, Warmington Grade: II (1191312)</p> <p>18. 31 AND 35, CHAPEL STREET, Warmington Grade: II</p>	
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		<p>(1191320)</p> <p>19. 59, CHURCH STREET, Warmington Grade: II (1191355)</p> <p>20. ELMS FARMHOUSE, CHURCH STREET, Warmington (1191404)</p> <p>21. EAGLETHORPE FARMHOUSE, EAGLETHORPE, Warmington Grade: II (1293365)</p> <p>22. CHEST TOMB APPROXIMATELY 5 METRES NORTH WEST OF TOWER OF CHURCH OF ST MARY THE VIRGIN Warmington Grade: II (1293371)</p> <p>23. THE OLD RECTORY, HAUTBOY LANE, Warmington Grade: II (1356559)</p> <p>24. HOME FARM COTTAGE, PETERBOROUGH ROAD, Warmington Grade: II (1356561)</p> <p>25. LONG LANE FARM, TAYLORS GREEN, Warmington Grade: II (1356563)</p> <p>26. THE HOLLIES, 39, CHAPEL STREET, Warmington Grade: II (1371955)</p> <p>27. 22, CHURCH STREET, Warmington Grade: II (1371956)</p> <p>28. EAGLETHORPE HOUSE, 4, EAGLETHORPE, Warmington Grade: II (1371957)</p> <p>29. WARMINGTON WAR MEMORIAL CHURCHYARD OF ST MARY'S CHURCH, CHURCH STREET, WARMINGTON Grade: II (1426146)</p> <p>30. ELTON HALL PARK and GARDENS Grade II* (1000346) This spans both Warmington and Elton Parishes - the buildings are in ELTON, part of the PARK is in Warmington</p> <p>There are 2 scheduled monuments in Warmington:</p> <p>1. FOTHERINGHAY BRIDGE (1003642) - this forms the parish</p>	
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		<p>boundary with FOTHERINGHAY the boundary is halfway across the bridge</p> <p>2.LITTLE GREEN MOATED SITE (1015807)</p> <p>There are no national natural environment designations within the parish.</p> <p>East Northants Council are in the process of appraising the designation of the village core as a Conservation Area.</p>	
	[What other (non-statutory) natural or built environment designations are situated within designated Neighbourhood Area?]	The remains of the abandoned settlement of Southorpe along Taylors Green to the south of the village is a locally recognised and important heritage asset. It is proposed to record this in the plan as an Important Local Open Space	
L	Effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status	<i>The presence of a statutory natural or built environmental designation (e.g. SSSI, Scheduled Ancient Monument) in close proximity to a potential Neighbourhood Plan site/ area specific designation may be argued to act as a trigger for a “significant effect”; therefore a requirement for a full SEA to be undertaken. Natural England direction regarding Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) “buffer zones” provide an appropriate specification for where full SEA will be required; i.e. if HRA is deemed necessary, then full SEA will also be required. Potential development proposals which should be subject to EIA screening should be regarded as having a significant environmental impact and, therefore, would require SEA.</i>	?
		<i>A statutory designation covering any site, area or landscape would effectively preclude most development. The exception to this may be development within the curtilage of, or likely to</i>	?

		<i>affect the setting of listed buildings (“designated heritage assets”) and/ or conservation areas. In this case potential Neighbourhood Plan policies may require full SEA.</i>	
	[Potential site allocations for development]	There are no site allocations identified, the site criteria provides protection against development that would have an adverse effect on the setting of a designated asset..	N
	[Potential design policies/ standards/ codes]	The Design Code is to ensure that development near to heritage assets enhances or conserves the setting	N
	[Linkages/ green infrastructure proposals]	The proposed Greenway passes by the Mill which is a listed Grade II building. This would have no effect on its setting but would increase access to it.	N
	[Community facilities] etc	No proposals for community facilities would affect the setting of a listed building	N

## **SEA Screening conclusion – Will a full Strategic Environmental Assessment be required, in accordance with the SEA Directive; i.e. is the proposed Neighbourhood Plan likely to have a significant effect on the environment?**

The need to ensure compliance with statutory legislation, including European Union Directives, is one of the major challenges associated with Neighbourhood Planning. The requirements of the SEA Directive are potentially far-reaching, but many aspects of this may not be applicable in the case of Neighbourhood Plans, given their “non-strategic”/ locally based context.

Already, it must be recognised that, in all but exceptional circumstances, a Neighbourhood Development Order (NDO) would **not** require the preparation and submission of a formal SEA. Instead, completion of this Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening pro-forma would be sufficient to comply with the requirements of the SEA Directive.

In the case of a Neighbourhood Plan, it will be necessary for the relevant “responsible body” (i.e. local planning authority, Town Council, Parish Council or Neighbourhood Forum/ Parish Meeting) to complete questions **A, D, K and L** (highlighted **red**) within Part 2 of this pro-forma. Following this, the person(s) preparing this SEA screening assessment will need to briefly summarise these findings and come to a conclusion as to whether the emerging Neighbourhood Plan would have a **significant** environmental impact so, therefore, whether a full SEA would be needed to accompany the Neighbourhood Plan.

<b>SEA SCREENING CONCLUSION – WILL A FULL STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT BE REQUIRED?</b>
<b>The proposed plan allocates no sites for development and preserves the settlement boundary as it exists. The possibility of future legislative changes is considered in the plan with the aim of ensuring that any sites allocated in future would be small scale and should enhance and conserve the existing village character. The plan thus has no direct environmental impact and should have a restraining effect on any future environmental impact resulting from a change of higher level policy. The plan may result in a minor beneficial effect in preserving local green and open spaces and ensuring that future development is sustainable.</b>
<b>Will a full SEA be required [Y/N]?N</b>

## The next stages

If it is concluded that the emerging Neighbourhood Plan will **not** require a full SEA, then it will be necessary to publish the completed pro-forma, using the relevant Neighbourhood Planning forum (e.g. local website, East Northamptonshire Council website). Following this, no further action will be required.

If it is concluded that the emerging Neighbourhood Plan **is** likely to have a significant effect on the environment, it will be necessary to follow the various stages in the process. These are explained in full detail in the government guidance, "[A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive](#)" (ODPM, September 2005). While this guidance pre-dates Neighbourhood Plans, it remains a relevant and useful document and is provides the definitive government guidance.

In the event that a full SEA is deemed necessary, it is advised that the responsible body should contact East Northamptonshire and/or their appointed consultant (in the event that a consultant has been employed to prepare the Neighbourhood Plan). It is likely that a specialist consultant would be needed to prepare the necessary SEA documentation.