Habitats Regulations Assessment for Corby Borough Council Part 2 Local Plan

Corby Borough Council

Project number: 60562112

June 2018
Quality information

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Revision History

<table>
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<th>Revision</th>
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<tr>
<td>00</td>
<td>18th May 2018</td>
<td>Draft for Comment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>21st May 2018</td>
<td>Update with client comments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>02</td>
<td>29th June 2018</td>
<td>Update with new version of Local Plan</td>
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1. Introduction

Background to the Project

1.1 AECOM has been appointed by the Corby Borough Council (“the Council”) to assist in undertaking a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) of the potential effects of Part 2 of the Local Plan. The objective of the assessment was to identify any aspects of the emerging Part 2 of the Local Plan that would have the potential to cause a likely significant effect on Natura 2000 or European sites (Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Ramsar sites), either in isolation or in combination with other plans and projects. An overarching North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy sets out the vision and key policies for future development of the borough up to 2031, with Part 2 of the Local Plan containing locally specific policies and guidance for Corby Borough until 2031. The Joint Core Strategy was adopted in July 2016.

1.2 The HRA of the Joint Core Strategy established a 3km zone from the closest European site; the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA and Ramsar site, within which a net increase in dwellings could affect the integrity of the SPA ‘in combination’ without mitigation. As the administrative boundary of Corby is approximately 9km from the SPA, there will be no new dwellings within the 3km zone. Therefore it is not necessary for this strategic ‘in combination’ issue to be reinvestigated and the HRA for the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy and the SPA Mitigation Strategy can continue to be relied upon.

1.3 Therefore this report does not seek to reinvestigate the recreational pressure issue at a strategic level, nor does it seek to assess potential allocated sites that already have planning permission.

Legislation

1.4 The need for Appropriate Assessment is set out within Article 6 of the EC Habitats Directive 1992, and interpreted into British law by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. The ultimate aim of the Directive is to “maintain or restore, at favourable conservation status, natural habitats and species of wild fauna and flora of Community interest” (Habitats Directive, Article 2(2)). This aim relates to habitats and species, not the European sites themselves, although the sites have a significant role in delivering favourable conservation status.

1.5 The Habitats Directive applies the ‘Precautionary Principle’1 to European sites. Plans and projects can only be permitted having ascertained that there will be no adverse effect on the integrity of the European site(s) in question. Plans and projects with predicted adverse impacts on European sites may still be permitted if there are no alternatives to them and there are Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest (IROPI) as to why they should go ahead. In such cases, compensation would be necessary to ensure the overall integrity of the site network.

1.6 In order to ascertain whether or not site integrity will be affected, an Appropriate Assessment should be undertaken of the plan or project in question:

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1 The Precautionary Principle, which is referenced in Article 191 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, has been defined by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO, 2005) as: “When human activities may lead to morally unacceptable harm [to the environment] that is scientifically plausible but uncertain, actions shall be taken to avoid or diminish that harm. The judgement of plausibility should be grounded in scientific analysis”.

Prepared for: Corby Borough Council AECOM
Box 1: The legislative basis for Appropriate Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Habitats Directive 1992</th>
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<tr>
<td>Article 6 (3) states that:</td>
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<tr>
<td>“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 or projects, shall be subject to appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site’s conservation objectives.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Regulations state that:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“A competent authority, before deciding to … give any consent for a plan or project which is likely to have a significant effect on a European site … shall make an appropriate assessment of the implications for the site in view of that sites conservation objectives… The authority shall agree to the plan or project only after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the European site”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1.7 Over time the phrase ‘Habitats Regulations Assessment’ (HRA) has come into wide currency to describe the overall process set out in the Habitats Directive from screening through to Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest (IROPI). This has arisen in order to distinguish the process from the individual stage described in the law as an ‘Appropriate Assessment’. Throughout this report we use the term Habitats Regulations Assessment for the overall process and restrict the use of Appropriate Assessment to the specific stage of that name.

1.8 In Spring 2018 the ‘Sweetman’ European Court of Justice ruling² reversed a decade of UK case law by determining that ‘mitigation’ (i.e. measures that are specifically introduced to avoid or reduce a significant effect that would otherwise arise) should *not* be taken into account when forming a view on likely significant effects. Mitigation should instead only be taken into account at the ‘appropriate assessment’ stage.

Scope of the Project

1.9 There is no pre-defined guidance that dictates the physical scope of a HRA of a Local Plan. Therefore, in considering the physical scope of the assessment we were guided primarily by the identified impact pathways rather than by arbitrary ‘zones’. Current guidance suggests that the following European sites be included in the scope of assessment:

- All sites within the Corby Borough boundary; and
- Other sites shown to be linked to development within the Borough boundary through a known ‘pathway’ (discussed below).

1.10 Briefly defined, pathways are routes by which a change in activity within the Local Plan area can lead to an effect upon a European site. In terms of the second category of European site listed above, MHCLG guidance states that the AA should be ‘proportionate to the geographical scope of the [plan policy]’ and that ‘an AA need not be done in any more detail, or using more resources, than is useful for its purpose’ (CLG, 2006, p.6).

1.11 There is a single European site which is approximately 9km from Corby Borough Council - the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA and Ramsar site.

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² People Over Wind and Sweetman v Coillte Teoranta (C-323/17)
This Report

1.12 Chapter 2 of this report explains the process by which the HRA has been carried out. Chapter 3 details background on the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA/Ramsar site including features of designation, environmental vulnerabilities and conservation objectives. Chapter 4 explores the relevant pathways of impact resulting from the draft policies and site allocations of the Local Plan Part 2 and their potential to lead to adverse effects on the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA and Ramsar site. Chapter 4 also discusses the screening exercise undertaken in Appendix B. The key findings are summarised in Chapter 5.

2. Methodology

Introduction

2.1 The HRA has been carried out in the continuing absence of formal central Government guidance, although general EC guidance on HRA does exist. The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) released a consultation paper on the Appropriate Assessment of Plans in 2006 (hereafter referred to as guidance). As yet, no further formal guidance has emerged. However, Natural England has produced its own internal guidance as has the RSPB. Both of these have been referred to alongside the guidance outlined in paragraph 1.4 and 1.5 in undertaking this HRA.

2.2 Figure 1 below outlines the stages of HRA according to current draft MHCLG guidance. The stages are essentially iterative, being revisited as necessary in response to more detailed information, recommendations and any relevant changes to the plan until no significant adverse effects remain.

Evidence Gathering – collecting information on relevant European sites, their conservation objectives and characteristics and other plans or projects.

HRA Task 1: Likely Significant Effects (‘screening’) identifying whether a plan is ‘likely to have a significant effect’ on a European site

HRA Task 2: Appropriate Assessment Ascertaining the effect on site integrity – assessing the effects of the plan on the conservation objectives of any European sites ‘screened in’ during HRA Task 1

HRA Task 3: Mitigation measures and alternative solutions – where adverse effects are identified at HRA Task 2, the plan should be altered until adverse effects are cancelled out fully

Figure 1: Four Stage Approach to Habitats Regulations Assessment. Source CLG, 2006.

HRA Task 1 – Test of Likely Significant Effects (ToLSE)

2.3 Following evidence gathering, the first stage of any Habitats Regulations Assessment is a Test of Likely Significant Effect (ToLSE) test - essentially a risk assessment to decide whether the full subsequent stage known as Appropriate Assessment is required. The essential question is:

"Is the Plan, either alone or in combination with other relevant projects and plans, likely to result in a significant effect upon European sites?"

2.4 The objective is to 'screen out' those plans and projects that can, without any detailed appraisal, be said to be unlikely to result in significant adverse effects upon European sites, usually because there is no mechanism for an adverse interaction with European sites.

Appropriate Assessment (HRA Task 2) and Mitigation (HRA Task 3)

2.5 With regard to those European sites where it is considered not possible to ‘screen out’ the policies and allocations provided by LPP2 without detailed appraisal, it is necessary to progress to the later ‘Appropriate Assessment’ stage to explore the adverse effects and devise mitigation.

2.6 The steps involved are detailed in Box 2.

Box 2: The steps involved in Appropriate Assessment

1. Explore the reasons for the European designation of these sites.
2. Explore the environmental conditions required to maintain the integrity of the selected sites and become familiar with the current trends in these environmental processes.
3. Gain a full understanding of the plan and its policies and consider each policy within the context of the environmental processes – would the policy lead to an impact on any identified process?
4. Decide if the identified impact will lead to an adverse effect on integrity.
5. Identify other plans and projects that might affect these sites in combination with the Plan and decide whether there are any adverse effects that might not result from the Plan in isolation but will do so “in combination”.
6. Develop policy mechanisms to enable the delivery of measures to avoid the effect entirely, or if not possible, to mitigate the impact sufficiently that the effect on the European site is rendered effectively inconsequential.

2.7 In evaluating significance, AECOM have relied on our professional judgement as well as the results of previous stakeholder consultation and existing strategic supporting documents regarding development impacts on the European sites considered within this assessment.

2.8 The level of detail in land use plans concerning developments that will be permitted under the plans is rarely sufficient to enable the fullest possible investigation of adverse effects, as this would effectively require developments to have a planning application level of detail before they could be allocated in a plan as being acceptable in principle. Therefore, we have again taken a precautionary approach (in the absence of more precise data) assuming as the default position that if an adverse effect cannot be confidently ruled out, avoidance or mitigation measures must be provided. This is in line with the MHCLG guidance and Court rulings that the level of detail of the assessment, whilst meeting the relevant requirements of the Conservation Regulations, should be ‘appropriate’ to the level of plan or project that it addresses. This ‘tiering’ of assessment is summarised in Box 3.
2.9 When discussing ‘mitigation’ for a Local Plan document, one is concerned primarily with the policy framework to enable the delivery of such mitigation rather than the details of the mitigation measures themselves since the Local Plan document is a high-level policy document.

Confirming Other Plans and Projects That May Act ‘In Combination’

2.10 It is a requirement of the Regulations that the impacts of any land use plan being assessed are not considered in isolation but in combination with other plans and projects that may also be affecting the European site(s) in question.

2.11 In considering the potential for regional housing development on European sites the primary consideration is the impact of visitor numbers – i.e. recreational pressure and urbanisation.

2.12 When undertaking this part of the assessment it is essential to bear in mind the principal intention behind the legislation i.e. to ensure that those projects or plans (which in themselves may have minor impacts) are not simply dismissed on that basis, but are evaluated for any cumulative contribution they may make to an overall significant effect. In practice, in combination assessment is therefore of greatest relevance when the plan would otherwise be screened out because its individual contribution is inconsequential.

Physical Scope of the HRA

2.13 There are no standard criteria for determining the ultimate physical scope of an HRA. Rather, the source-pathway-receptor model should be used to determine whether there is any potential pathway connecting development to any European sites. In the case of North Northamptonshire it was determined at an early stage that for an initial coarse screen, a single European site should be looked at:

- Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA and Ramsar Site

2.14 This was based upon a 10km zone of search around Borough boundaries, and included housing and employment development sites. These were therefore the subject of the initial screening exercise (Appendix B). It should be noted that the presence of a conceivable pathway linking the Borough to a European site does not mean that likely significant effects will occur.
3. Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA and Ramsar Site

Introduction

3.1 Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits is partially located approximately 9km from Corby Borough Council. It is also located within East Northamptonshire, Northamptonshire and South Northamptonshire. The European site is approximately 35km in length and approximately 1360ha in size. The site comprises a chain of extant and extinct gravel pits that follow alluvial deposits along the River Nene. It is dominated by a mix of shallow and deeper inland waterbodies, with associated marginal vegetation, improved grassland and nationally scarce wet broad-leaved deciduous woodland dominated by white willow *Salix alba* with crack willow *S. fragilis* and occasionally ash *Fraxinus excelsior*, Osier *S. viminalis* and grey willow *S. cinerea*. The site contains internationally important populations of non-breeding wintering waterbirds that have been found in numbers in excess of 20,000 individuals.

Features of European Interest

3.2 The site is designated as an SPA for its wintering population of:

- Eurasian bittern *Botaurus stellaris* (Europe - non breeding) 2% of the GB population 5-year peak mean 1999/2000 – 2003/04

- European golden plover *Pluvialis apricaria* [North-western Europe - non breeding] 2.3% of the GB population 5-year peak mean 1999/2000 – 2003/04

3.3 The site is designated as an SPA as it regularly supports:

- Gadwall *Anas strepera* (North-western Europe – non breeding) 2% of the population 5-year peak mean 1999/2000 – 2003/2004


3.4 The site is designated as a Ramsar site under the following criterion for the following:

- Criterion 5: in the non-breeding season, the site regularly supports 23,821 individual waterbirds (5 year peak mean 1999/2000 – 2003/04);

- Criterion 6: because it regularly supports 1% of the individuals in the populations of the following species or subspecies of waterbird in any season:
  - Mute swan *Cygnus olor*: 629 wintering individuals (5 year peak mean 1999/2000 – 2003/04) approximately 1.7% of British population; and,
  - Gadwall *Anas strepera*: 773 wintering individuals (5 year peak mean 1999/2000 – 2003/04) approximately 2.0% of the north-west Europe population (breeding).

Conservation Objectives

3.5 ‘With regard to the SPA and the individual species and/or assemblage of species for which the site has been classified (the ‘Qualifying Features’ listed below), and subject to natural change;

3.6 Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the aims of the Wild Birds Directive, by maintaining or restoring;

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4 Features of European Interest are the features for which a European site is selected. They include habitats listed on Annex 1 of the Habitats Directive, species listed on Annex II of the EC Habitats Directive and populations of bird species for which a site is designated under the EC Birds Directive.

5 Natural England (2014). European Site Conservation Objectives for Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area Site Code: UK9020296
Key Environmental Vulnerabilities

3.7 The key environmental vulnerabilities for the site are:

- Significant disturbance to wintering birds as a result of activities connected with ongoing urban development;
- Increased disturbance to wintering birds by increasing numbers of public with dogs using the public rights of way. Demand for access and formal/ informal recreational activities within the Nene Valley are increasing. In addition the area is used for recreational activities such as water sports and fishing;
- Habitat succession from short grassland to rank grassland, scrub / woodland due to lack of grazing;
- Invasive non-native species are present within the site such as water pennywort *Hydrocotyle ranunculoides*, Nuttall's Pondweed *Elodea nuttallii* and New Zealand pigmyweed *Crassula helmsii*;
- Maintenance of water quality and water quantity;
- Freshwater fisheries; and
- Change in land management.
4. Likely Significant Effects

Introduction

This section identifies the potential pathways of impact of the Corby Borough Council Part 2 of the Local Plan and identifies policies and site allocations that have the potential to result in likely significant effects upon the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA/Ramsar site. The screening assessment of Policies identified within the Corby Borough Council Part 2 of the Local Plan can be found in Appendix B, Table 1. The screening assessment of Site Allocations identified within the Corby Borough Council Part 2 of the Local Plan can be found in Appendix B, Table 2. The locations of the Site Allocations are illustrated in Appendix A, Figure A1.

Pathways Considered

4.1 The following impact pathways are considered:

- Disturbance to Birds by Increased Recreation Activities; and
- Loss of Land Outside European Site Boundaries.

Disturbance to Birds by Increased Recreation Activities

4.2 Concern regarding the effects of disturbance on birds in particular, stems from the fact that they are expending energy unnecessarily and the time they spend responding to disturbance is time that is not spent feeding\(^6\). Disturbance therefore risks increasing energetic output while reducing energetic input, which can adversely affect the ‘condition’ and ultimately survival of the birds. In addition, displacement of birds from one feeding site to others can increase the pressure on the resources available within the remaining sites, as they have to sustain a greater number of birds.\(^7\) Winter activity can cause important disturbance, especially as birds are particularly vulnerable at this time of year due to food shortages.

4.3 Following the submission of the draft North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy HRA in 2012, Natural England recommended a visitor access survey of the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits designated site be undertaken. The Visitor Access Study\(^8\) undertaken in winter 2012 and spring 2013 interviewed 939 individuals. 98% of the interviewees were on a short visit from home. The most common activity undertaken by visitors to the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits was dog walking (48% of interviewees) with 636 dogs recorded on site. Walking was the next most common activity (36% of interviewees), followed by bird watching.

4.4 The survey found that the median distance travelled by a visitor from a home postcode to a survey point location within the designated site was 3.2km (mean 5.85km ± 0.31) with ¾ (75%) of visitors living within 7.5km of the survey point within the designated site. There was no statistically significant seasonal difference between the distances travelled between spring and winter. Following discussions with Natural England, the Joint Planning Unit and following consideration of the Visitor Access Study, it was decided that the zone from which a significant quantum of recreational pressure to the designated sites originated was 3km. As such, it was determined that any new residential development within 3km of the SPA/Ramsar site could result in an in-combination likely significant effects as a result of increases in recreational activities within the sites.

4.5 The Borough of Corby and all allocated sites within the Corby Borough Council Part 2 of the Local Plan are located more than 9km from the SPA/Ramsar site, and therefore outside of the 3km zone defined within the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy HRA. As such it can be concluded that there will be no likely significant effects upon the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA/Ramsar site as a result of increased recreation activities resulting from the Corby Borough Council Part 2 of the Local Plan, and this can be screened out of the assessment.

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Loss of Land Outside European Site Boundaries

4.6 The boundaries of European sites are defined to encompass as much as possible of the key land areas essential to the maintenance of populations of species of European importance. However, for migratory or otherwise highly mobile species it is not possible to encompass all the areas of land necessary for the maintenance of the population within the site boundary. In these instances, areas outside the European site boundary require preservation.

4.7 Following the HRA of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy, it was determined that previously undeveloped farmland sites (2ha or larger) within 4km of the designated site could support designated bird features such as golden plover and should be subject to wintering bird survey (if the land within the site is suitable) as part of a planning application, to confirm presence of an important population (i.e. the land supports more than 1% of population golden plover for which the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA/Ramsar site is designated). Scheme promoters should consult Natural England to agree the need for, and scope of, surveys. If the proposed development site does host an important population, then avoidance or mitigation measures will be needed to ensure no adverse effects on integrity of the SPA.

4.8 The Borough of Corby and all allocated sites within the Corby Borough Council Part 2 of the Local Plan are located more than 9km from the SPA/Ramsar site, and therefore outside of the 4km zone defined within the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy HRA. As such it can be concluded that there will be no likely significant effects upon the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA/Ramsar site as a result of a loss of land outside European site boundaries resulting from the Corby Borough Council Part 2 of the Local Plan, and this can be screened out of the assessment.

In Combination Effects

4.9 The North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy sets out the vision and key policies for future development in the Boroughs of Corby, Kettering, Wellingborough and East Northamptonshire.

4.10 Of these, the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA and Ramsar site is situated within the Boroughs of Wellingborough and East Northamptonshire. Therefore, policies within Part 2 of the Local Plan for these two boroughs may have an effect on the SPA/Ramsar site. Policies within the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy that relate to these boroughs may also have an effect on the SPA/Ramsar site.

4.11 However, all allocated sites within the Corby Borough Council Part 2 of the Local Plan are located more than 9km from the SPA/Ramsar site, and are therefore outside of the 3km and 4km zones defined within the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy HRA. Therefore there will be no likely significant effects upon the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA/Ramsar site, and subsequently no effects in combination with other plans or policies.
5. Conclusions

5.1 The North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy HRA defined a 3km zone from the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA/Ramsar site within which development could result in increased recreational activity within the SPA/Ramsar. The North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy HRA also defined a 4km zone from the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA/Ramsar site within which development on previously undeveloped farmland could impact designated bird features associated with the SPA/Ramsar site.

5.2 As the Borough of Corby and all allocated sites within the Corby Borough Council Part 2 of the Local Plan are located more than 9km from the SPA/Ramsar site, it is possible to conclude that no likely significant effects will arise from the Local Plan Part 2, alone or in combination with other plans and projects.
Appendix A Figure
Appendix B Screening Tables

Where the Screening Outcome column is coloured green, there are no impact pathways linking the policy or site allocation to the Upper Nene valley Gravel Pits SPA and Ramsar site and as such are not assessed further within this document. Where the Screening Outcome column is coloured orange, impact pathways potentially exist linking the policy or site allocation to the Upper Nene valley Gravel Pits SPA and Ramsar site. These have potential to result in likely significant effects impacting upon the integrity of the site. It is these policies and site allocations and associated impact pathways that are the subject of the discussions and recommendations within the HRA.

Table 1. Screening of Draft Policies

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Policy</th>
<th>Detail</th>
<th>Screening Outcome</th>
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<tr>
<td>Policy 1 - Open Space, Sport and Recreation</td>
<td>Open spaces, sports and recreational facilities will be protected, and where possible enhanced. Improvements of existing facilities and spaces, including their openness and character and their accessibility and linkages will be encouraged. New housing development will be required to provide new or improved open space, sport and recreational facilities in accordance with the latest Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities Assessment (or similar subsequent document). New open spaces, sports and recreational facilities should be linked to the widerInfrastructure network, where possible, as they play an important role in creating social cohesion, encouraging and promoting healthier and more active lifestyles.</td>
<td>No HRA implications. This policy provides protection to open spaces, sports and recreational facilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy 2 – Telecommunications</td>
<td>1) Proposals for communications infrastructure which either require planning permission or prior approval, including masts, boxes, satellite dishes and underground cables and services, will only be permitted where its meets the other relevant policies of the Local Plan, and in the case of overground equipment: a. It is located on an existing site, building, mast or other structure; or b. Where a new site is required, evidence is submitted which demonstrates that the applicant has explored the possibility of erecting on existing sites, buildings, masts and other structures. 2) Where justified under 1a) or b) above, the siting and appearance of the proposed</td>
<td>No HRA implications. This policy outlines proposals for communications infrastructure.</td>
</tr>
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### Policy 3 – Local Green Space

Planning permission will not be granted except in very special circumstances for development which adversely affects a designated Local Green Space either within the Part 2 Local Plan or an approved Neighbourhood Plan, particularly regarding the characteristics underpinning its designation, such as beauty, historic importance, recreational value, tranquillity or richness of wildlife.

#### Policy 4 – Green Corridors

All development must be designed to protect and enhance the existing green infrastructure corridor network as identified on the Policies Map. These will be protected and enhanced by:

- ensuring that new development will not compromise the integrity of the existing green infrastructure corridor network
- ensuring new development provides appropriate connections to the existing green corridors
- ensuring that wherever possible new open space connects to or is provided within the green infrastructure corridor network
- prioritising investment in enhancement of open space, sport and recreation within the green infrastructure corridor network; and
- using developer contributions to facilitate improvements to their quality

### Policy 5 – Employment Land Provision

#### Non Strategic Sites

The following non-strategic sites in Corby, as identified on the policies map, are allocated to enhance the local development offer for new employment development:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ref</th>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Size (hectares)</th>
<th>Employment Uses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E5</td>
<td>Land off Courier Road</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>B1, B2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E6</td>
<td>Land at Pearson Training Academy</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>B1, B2, B8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Development should be in accordance with the specified use class. To ensure Borough-wide development requirement can be met, these sites will be protected from alternative forms of development.

**Long-term Land Reserve**

The following sites have been assessed and safeguarded for employment as a long-term land reserve, to be developed beyond the plan period. Whilst these sites have no current evidence of demand, depending on how the market progresses during the plan period they have market potential in the long term. This long-term land reserve comprises:

<table>
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<th>Ref</th>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Size (hectares)</th>
<th>Employment Uses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E9</td>
<td>Tripark*</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>B1, B2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E10</td>
<td>Saxon 26</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>B1, B2, B8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Includes two parcels of land

**Policy 6 – Established Industrial Estates**

Proposals for employment uses (B1; B2 and B8) and for modernising and/or enhancing the physical environment and infrastructure within established industrial estates will be supported.

Ancillary services, including (but not limited to) cafes/canteens, convenience shopping, crèches, financial services, leisure /sports uses, meeting and conference facilities will be supported where they:
- are small scale; and
- primarily support the needs of the industrial areas; and
- enhance the attraction and sustainability of the area for investment, including where proposals will lead to site decontamination.

The policy relates to the following established industrial estates as identified on the Policies Map:

No HRA implications.

These sites are at least 9km from the Upper Nene Valley SPA and Ramsar site, outside of the 3km and 4km zones defined in the NNJCS. Therefore there are no impact pathways present and this policy is screened out.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy</th>
<th>Detail</th>
<th>Screening Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Policy 7 – Non Employment Uses (non-B) in Established Industrial Estates** | Proposals which involve non-employment uses (other than ancillary uses in accordance with Policy 7) within the established industrial estates as defined on the Policies Maps will be permitted where they satisfy the following:  
- they will not have a negative impact on the character of the industrial estate and its role as an industrial and business location by, in isolation or in combination with other completed or committed development, prejudicing the maintenance of the overall balance of B uses within the area;  
- they will not prejudice the current and future operations of adjoining businesses;  
- if the proposal involves vacant buildings, there is clear and robust evidence of prolonged marketing with registered commercial agents at a reasonable price to demonstrate that there is no realistic prospect for continued employment use;  
- if the existing land or premises has environmental or amenity problems, there is clear evidence that these problems cannot be overcome, or the land or premises is not capable of adaptation for business or industrial use. | No HRA implications.  
This policy defines permitted proposals and does not allocate specific sites. |
| **Policy 8 – “Bad Neighbour” Uses** | The Corby Sewage Treatment Works is a ‘bad neighbour’ and proximity to the Works, and the potential smell and associated nuisance, will be a material consideration in dealing with planning applications for development within 400m of the boundaries of the Works.  
Intensive livestock units may also be ‘bad neighbours’ and the adverse effect of such units will be a material consideration in determining planning applications within 400m. | No HRA implications.  
This policy states a material consideration in planning applications with relation to ‘bad neighbours’. There are no impact pathways present. |
| **Policy 9 – Delivering** | The sites listed in the table below, and which are shown on the Policies Map, are allocated for | No HRA implications. |
**Policy** | **Detail** | **Screening Outcome**
---|---|---
**Housing** | housing development. Each allocation is supported by site-specific policies H1 to H10 and TC1 to provide further detailed guidance on the development of these sites. These site specific policies also form part of this policy. | These sites are at least 9km from the Upper Nene Valley SPA and Ramsar site, outside of the 3km and 4km zones defined in the NNJCS. Therefore there are no impact pathways present and this policy is screened out. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ref</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Indicative Capacity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H1</td>
<td>Builders Yard, Rockingham Road</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H2</td>
<td>Garage Court, Lindisfarne Road</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H3</td>
<td>Garage Court, Swale Close</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H4</td>
<td>Maple House, Canada Square</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H5</td>
<td>Former Our Lady Pope John School, Tower Hill Road</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H6</td>
<td>Land at Station Road</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H7</td>
<td>Western Land at Pen Green</td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H8</td>
<td>Land Off Elizabeth Street</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H9</td>
<td>Pluto, Gainsborough Road</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H10</td>
<td>Cheltenham Road</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TC1</td>
<td>Parkland Gateway</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Policy 10 – Specialist housing and older people’s accommodation** Residential developments of 50 or more dwellings, or 1.4 hectares or more site area, will be encouraged to include a proportion of the housing to meet the needs of older households. The precise proportion, type and tenure mix will take into account:

- evidence of local need;
- the scale and location of the site; and
- the viability of the development

Retirement housing, supported housing and care homes will be supported provided that retirement housing and supported housing schemes has embedded the North Northamptonshire HAPPI principles into the design as set out in the Place Shaping Supplementary Planning Document.

No HRA implications. This policy defines the mix of housing required, and does not allocate specific sites.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy</th>
<th>Detail</th>
<th>Screening Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Policy 11 – Self Build and Custom Housing</td>
<td>Proposals for 'granny annexes' in the form of extensions, additions or separate buildings for occupation by elderly or disabled dependant relatives of the household occupying the existing dwelling, will be considered sympathetically. Where planning permission for self-contained accommodation is granted an appropriate agreement restricting occupation will be sought.</td>
<td>No HRA implications. This policy defines the need for self-build or custom built properties and does not allocate specific sites.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy 12 – Residential Gardens</td>
<td>Proposals for new dwellings on plots formed from parts of gardens of existing dwellings in built-up areas will only be permitted where there would be no adverse effects on the amenity and privacy of existing dwellings and where adequate and safe vehicular access is available. Proposals in the form of 'tandem' development will not be permitted.</td>
<td>No HRA implications. This policy outlines the requirements for proposals for new dwellings on gardens and does not allocate specific sites.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy 13 – Restraint Villages</td>
<td>Development within the Restraint Villages of East Carlton and Rockingham will be strictly managed. Development will normally be restricted to the re-use or conversion of suitable buildings. Any locally arising needs from these settlements should be met through Neighbourhood Plans or the Community Right to Build.</td>
<td>No HRA implications. This policy defines development restrictions within East Carlton and Rockingham, and does not allocate specific sites.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy 14 – Settlement</td>
<td>The settlement boundaries set out on the Policies Map will be used to interpret whether sites are within or adjoining the settlement boundary. Land outside the boundaries is defined as</td>
<td>No HRA implications.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Policy | Detail | Screening Outcome
--- | --- | ---
Boundaries | open countryside. | This policy defines settlement boundaries. No HRA implications.

**Policy 15 – Retail Network and Hierarchy**

In accordance with the objectives of the NPPF and other policies within the Local Plan, town centre uses will be directed towards the Borough’s town centres. In addition, proposals for new retail uses will be directed to the Primary Shopping Area within the town centres.

Within Corby Borough, the hierarchy of town centres is identified as follows:

**Main Town Centre**
- Corby Town Centre

**District Centre**
- Danesholme
- Oakley Vale
- Priors Hall Park (proposed)
- Pytchley Court
- Western Corby Extension (proposed)

**Local Centre**
- Corby Old Village
- Farmstead Road
- Greenhill Rise
- Little Stanion (proposed)
- Oakley Vale Phase 8 & 9 (proposed)
- Studfall Avenue
- Weldon Park (proposed)
- Weldon Village Centre

The hierarchy set out above will be used for the application of the sequential and impact tests set out in the NPPF to the assessment of town centre uses that are proposed outside the...
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy</th>
<th>Detail</th>
<th>Screening Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>defined town centre areas (other than small scale rural development and the creation of local centres to meet the day to day needs of residents in the Sustainable Urban Extensions).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Policy 16 – Spatial Strategy for Corby Town Centre | Development proposals in Corby Town Centre should seek to make a positive contribution to the implementation of the Spatial Strategy for Corby Town Centre Regeneration – Concept Plan as set out in Figure 6. Specific objectives are as follows:  
• Opportunities should be identified and implemented to improve connectivity, particularly to the east, including the railway station and Old Village area  
• Opportunities should be identified and implemented to enhance the entrance to the railway station  
• Opportunities should be identified and implemented to strengthen the relationship between Hazelwood and the built form of the town centre  
• Opportunities should be identified and implemented to strengthen the relationship between West Glebe and Coronation Park to create linked green space  
• Opportunities should be identified and implemented to improve public transport provision, in particular to serve the railway station and enhance evening and Sunday service provision to meet the increased demand as a result of the improved retail and leisure offer  
Opportunities should be identified and implemented to continue to improve the quality, character and pedestrian experience along George Street. | No HRA implications.  
This policy relates to Corby Town Centre proposals. There are no impact pathways present. |
| Policy 17 – Regeneration Strategy for Corby Town Centre | Corby Town Centre will continue to succeed as a sustainable centre for retail, business, recreation, leisure and culture and will support its high projected population growth. This will be delivered via a regeneration strategy for the town centre covering the following objectives:  
• Preserving the retail functionality of Corby Town Centre so that it remains a competitive shopping destination  
• Encouraging the use of innovative and contemporary design solutions where it would complement the existing town centre.  
• Encouraging new buildings and spaces in close proximity to the neighbouring woodland at Hazelwood to establish a stronger relationship between both the natural and built environments.  
• Encouraging new development in Corby Town Centre to accommodate a more diverse | No HRA implications.  
This policy defines the objectives for Corby Town Centre and does not allocate specific sites. There are no impact pathways present. |
### Policy 18 – Corby Town Centre Key Redevelopment Opportunities

The following sites have been identified as the main locations for new development growth within Corby Town Centre and are allocated for mixed use redevelopment. Schemes coming forward on these sites must contribute towards the provision of the 7,800m² minimum increase of net comparison shopping floorspace required by Policy 12 of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ref</th>
<th>Site</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TC1</td>
<td>Parkland Gateway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TC2</td>
<td>Oasis Retail Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TC3</td>
<td>Everest Lane</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each allocation is supported by site-specific policies TC1 to TC3 to provide further detailed guidance on the development of these sites. These site specific policies also form part of this policy.

#### Screening Outcome

No HRA implications.

The sites within this policy are at least 9km from the Upper Nene Valley SPA, outside of the 3km and 4km zones defined in the NNJCS. Therefore, no impact pathways are present and this policy is screened out.

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### Policy 19 – Primary Shopping Area

The Primary Shopping Areas for the town centres in the Borough are defined on the Policies Map. The Primary Shopping Areas will be used for the interpretation of the sequential test for main town centre uses apart from retail.

#### Screening Outcome

No HRA implications.

This policy explains Primary Shopping Areas. There are no impact pathways present.

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### Policy 20 – Town Centre Shopping

Primary frontages are likely to include a high proportion of retail uses which may include food, drink, clothing and household goods. Secondary frontages provide greater opportunities for a
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy</th>
<th>Detail</th>
<th>Screening Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frontages</td>
<td>diversity of uses such as restaurants, cinemas and businesses. - In the Borough's primary shopping frontages, proposals for A class retail uses (A1, A2, A3, A4 and A5 Use Classes) will be supported. Proposals for non-A class uses will be supported providing that the proposal does not lead to the predominance of A class uses becoming critically undermined. - In the Borough's secondary shopping frontages, proposals for all main town centre uses will be supported. For both primary and secondary shopping frontages within the town centres, the re-use or conversion of upper storeys will be encouraged.</td>
<td>This is a development management policy relating to primary and secondary frontages. There are no impact pathways present.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy 21 – Primary Shopping Frontages within the Main Town Centre</td>
<td>In Corby Town Centre's primary shopping frontages, proposals for non-A1 uses will be supported provided that: a) they would not undermine the predominance of A1 uses in the town centre, by reducing their proportion below 50% or; b) it would not represent a significant severance in the identified cluster of A1 uses present within Corby Town Centre's primary shopping area, focused around the following streets: i. Corporation Street/New Post Office Square ii. Willow Place/Queens Square</td>
<td>No HRA implications. This is a development management policy relating to primary shopping frontages. There are no impact pathways present.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy 22 – Neighbourhood Centres with other retail areas</td>
<td>Neighbourhood Centres, as well as small scale shopping precincts and small shop rows within the Borough which do not fall into the retail hierarchy still provide an important role for the neighbourhoods they serve. Within these locations, proposals for change of use from retail (A class uses) will only be supported when it can be demonstrated that they are: a) no longer viable b) no longer required by the community they serve; or c) the existing use is to be reinstated elsewhere within an alternative or improved unit.</td>
<td>No HRA implications. This is a development management policy relating to a change of use of small scale retail areas. There are no impact pathways present.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy 23 – Local Retail Impact Threshold</td>
<td>Applications for retail and leisure development outside of a defined centre shown on the Policies map, which are not in accordance with the Local Plan, will require an impact assessment when the proposed development is over the following floorspace thresholds;</td>
<td>No HRA implications. This is a development control policy that outlines the threshold for which</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Policy
a) For Corby Town Centre – 400m² (net floorspace)
b) For district centres and local centres – 130m² (net floorspace)

The Council will take into consideration the cumulative impact of the sub-division of retail units or extensions for existing floorspace. In the latter case, the impact assessment will be required based upon the total floorspace, not the extension alone.

The retail impact assessment will not apply to the following types of development:
- small scale rural development
- retail and leisure development within defined neighbourhood centres
- the creation of local centres to meet the day to day needs of residents in the Sustainable Urban Extensions

Table 2. Screening Sites identified in Policy 5, 9 and 18

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Anticipated dwelling capacity</th>
<th>Screening Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Housing allocations within Policy 9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H1 - Builders Yard, Rockingham Road</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>No HRA implications Located more than 4km from the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA/ Ramsar site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H2 - Garage Court, Lindisfarne Road</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>No HRA implications Located more than 4km from the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA/ Ramsar site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H3 - Garage Court, Swale Close</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>No HRA implications Located more than 4km from the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA/ Ramsar site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H4 - Maple House, Canada Square</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>No HRA implications Located more than 4km from the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA/ Ramsar site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H5 - Former Our Lady Pope John School, Tower Hill Road</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>No HRA implications Located more than 4km from the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA/ Ramsar site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H6 - Land at Station Road</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>No HRA implications Located more than 4km from the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA/ Ramsar site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Number</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Implications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H7 – Western Land at Pen Green</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>No HRA implications. Located more than 4km from the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA/ Ramsar site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H8 – Land Off Elizabeth Street</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>No HRA implications. Located more than 4km from the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA/ Ramsar site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H9 – Pluto, Gainsborough Road</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>No HRA implications. Located more than 4km from the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA/ Ramsar site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H10 – Cheltenham Road</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>No HRA implications. Located more than 4km from the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA/ Ramsar site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TC1 – Parkland Gateway</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>No HRA implications. Located more than 4km from the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA/ Ramsar site.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Employment land provision within Policy 5**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Number</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Implications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E5 - Land off Courier Road</td>
<td></td>
<td>No HRA implications. Located more than 4km from the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA/ Ramsar site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E6 - Land at Pearson Training Academy</td>
<td></td>
<td>No HRA implications. Located more than 4km from the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA/ Ramsar site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E7 - Princewood Road</td>
<td></td>
<td>No HRA implications. Located more than 4km from the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA/ Ramsar site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E8 - St Luke’s Road, St James Industrial Estate</td>
<td></td>
<td>No HRA implications. Located more than 4km from the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA/ Ramsar site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E9 - Tripark*</td>
<td></td>
<td>No HRA implications. Located more than 4km from the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA/ Ramsar site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E10 - Saxon 26</td>
<td></td>
<td>No HRA implications. Located more than 4km from the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA/ Ramsar site.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Corby Town Centre key redevelopment opportunity sites within Policy 18**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Number</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Implications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TC1 - Parkland Gateway</td>
<td></td>
<td>No HRA implications. Located more than 4km from the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA/ Ramsar site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TC2 - Oasis Retail Park</td>
<td></td>
<td>No HRA implications. Located more than 4km from the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA/ Ramsar site.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TC3 - Everest Lane</td>
<td></td>
<td>No HRA implications. Located more than 4km from the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA/ Ramsar site.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>