

Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulations Assessment of the Long Marston Neighbourhood Development Plan

SEA and HRA Screening Document

May 2022



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Acronyms & Abbreviations

A&E	Accident & Emergency
ALC	Agricultural Land Classification
AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
BMV	Best and Most Versatile
BUAB	Built-Up Area Boundary
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EU	European Union
GP	General Practice
HIA	Heritage Impact Assessment
HRA	Habitats Regulations Assessment
IRZ	Impact Risk Zone
LWS	Local Wildlife Site
ODPM	Office of the Deputy Prime Minister
NCA	National Character Area
NP	Neighbourhood Plan
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
PP	Policy or Programme
PPG	Planning Practice Guidance
PRoW	Public Right of Way
RPG	Registered Park and Garden
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SAP	Site Allocation Plan
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SHLAA	Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment
SoA	Stratford-on-Avon
SM	Scheduled Monument
SPA	Special Protection Area
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
SuDS	Sustainable urban Drainage System

1 Introduction

1.1 This report

- 1.1.1 This screening report has been prepared to determine whether the Long Marston Neighbourhood Plan (NP) should be subject to a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), in accordance with the European Directive 2001/42/EC¹ (SEA Directive) and the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004² (SEA Regulations).
- 1.1.2 This report screens the draft Long Marston Neighbourhood Plan 2011 to 2031³ (Pre-submission Version 2.1).

1.2 Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 1.2.1 The basis for Strategic Environmental Assessment legislation is European Directive 2001/42/EC; this has now been brought into UK law. This was originally transposed into English law by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (SEA Regulations). Detailed guidance of these regulations can be found in the Government publication 'A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive'⁴ and Paragraph 009 of the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) 'Neighbourhood Planning' section⁵.
- 1.2.2 Under the requirements of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, certain types of plans that set the framework for the consent of future development projects must be subject to an environmental assessment.

1.3 The Long Marston Neighbourhood Plan

- 1.3.1 The creation of neighbourhood development plans started with the Government's Localism Act 2011. The Act set out a series of measures to shift power away from central government and towards local people. One of the Localism Act's key components is the neighbourhood development plan; a new tier in planning policy which enables local people to shape the development of the community in which they live.

¹ SEA Directive. Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32001L0042&from=en> [Date Accessed: 24/02/22]

² The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004. Available at: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2004/1633/contents/made> [Date Accessed: 24/02/22]

³ Long Marston Parish Council (2022) Long Marston Neighbourhood Plan 2011-2031 Pre-Submission Version 2.1.

⁴ ODPM (2005) A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/7657/practicalguidesea.pdf [Date Accessed: 04/04/22]

⁵ MHCLG (2020) Guidance: Neighbourhood Planning. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/neighbourhood-planning--2> [Date Accessed: 04/04/22]

- 1.3.2 In January 2017, Stratford-on-Avon District Council formally approved the boundary of the designated Neighbourhood Area of Long Marston (see **Figure 1.1**). A group of local residents formed a steering committee in 2018 to develop the NP.
- 1.3.3 The Long Marston NP does not cover the whole area of Long Marston Parish (see **Figure 1.2**). Outside the designated neighbourhood area, the north of the parish is occupied by the future Long Marston Airfield development and the south of the parish is occupied by the Meon Vale development. As these developments are managed through a separate planning process as strategic sites under the Stratford-on-Avon Core Strategy, it was agreed with Stratford-on-Avon District Council that it was not appropriate for these sites to be included within the neighborhood development area for the purposes of the Long Marston NP.
- 1.3.4 The NP⁶ offers a picture of the Long Marston village and a vision for the twenty year period between 2011 and 2031. The NP's vision for 2031 is in context with the objectives and policies of the NP and is as follows:
- 1.3.5 *"The vision of this Neighbourhood Plan is that Long Marston Parish continues to be a desirable place to live through conservation and enhancement of its natural environment, quiet rural character, and strong sense of community"*.
- 1.3.6 The NP presents a total of 19 planning policies. A summary of the NP's policies are listed at **Appendix A**. The NP policies are in context with the following five themes:
- Landscape and Natural Environment;
 - Community;
 - Infrastructure;
 - Heritage and Archaeological Assets; and
 - Development.

1.4 Consultation

- 1.4.1 The NP is subject to public consultation, which provides an opportunity for the public and local organisations to comment on it. After consultation, responses are taken into account and used to prepare a 'submission draft' of the NP.
- 1.4.2 The submission version of the NP is then subject to inspection by the Independent Examiner. If the Independent Examiner approves the NP it will then be subject to a local referendum. If 50% or more of people voting in the referendum support the NP, then the NP will be adopted, will gain statutory status and will become part of the Development Plan for Stratford-on-Avon District, alongside the Core Strategy.

⁶ Long Marston Parish Council (2022) Long Marston Neighbourhood Plan 2011 – 2031 Draft Version 2.1.

1.5 Meeting the Basic Conditions

1.5.1 Only a draft neighbourhood Plan or Order that meets each of a set of basic conditions can be put to a referendum and be made. The basic conditions are set out in paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990⁷ as applied to neighbourhood plans by section 38A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. The basic conditions are:

- a. having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State it is appropriate to make the order (or neighbourhood plan).
- b. having special regard to the desirability of preserving any listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest that it possesses, it is appropriate to make the order. This applies only to Orders.
- c. having special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of any conservation area, it is appropriate to make the order. This applies only to Orders.
- d. the making of the order (or neighbourhood plan) contributes to the achievement of sustainable development.
- e. the making of the order (or neighbourhood plan) is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority (or any part of that area).
- f. the making of the order (or neighbourhood plan) does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations as incorporated into UK law.
- g. prescribed conditions are met in relation to the Order (or plan) and prescribed matters have been complied with in connection with the proposal for the order (or neighbourhood plan).

1.5.2 When considering whether a policy is in general conformity a qualifying body, independent examiner, or local planning authority, should consider the following:

- whether the neighbourhood plan policy or development proposal supports and upholds the general principle that the strategic policy is concerned with;
- the degree, if any, of conflict between the draft neighbourhood plan policy or development proposal and the strategic policy;
- whether the draft neighbourhood plan policy or development proposal provides an additional level of detail and/or a distinct local approach to that set out in the strategic policy without undermining that policy; and
- the rationale for the approach taken in the draft neighbourhood plan or Order and the evidence to justify that approach.

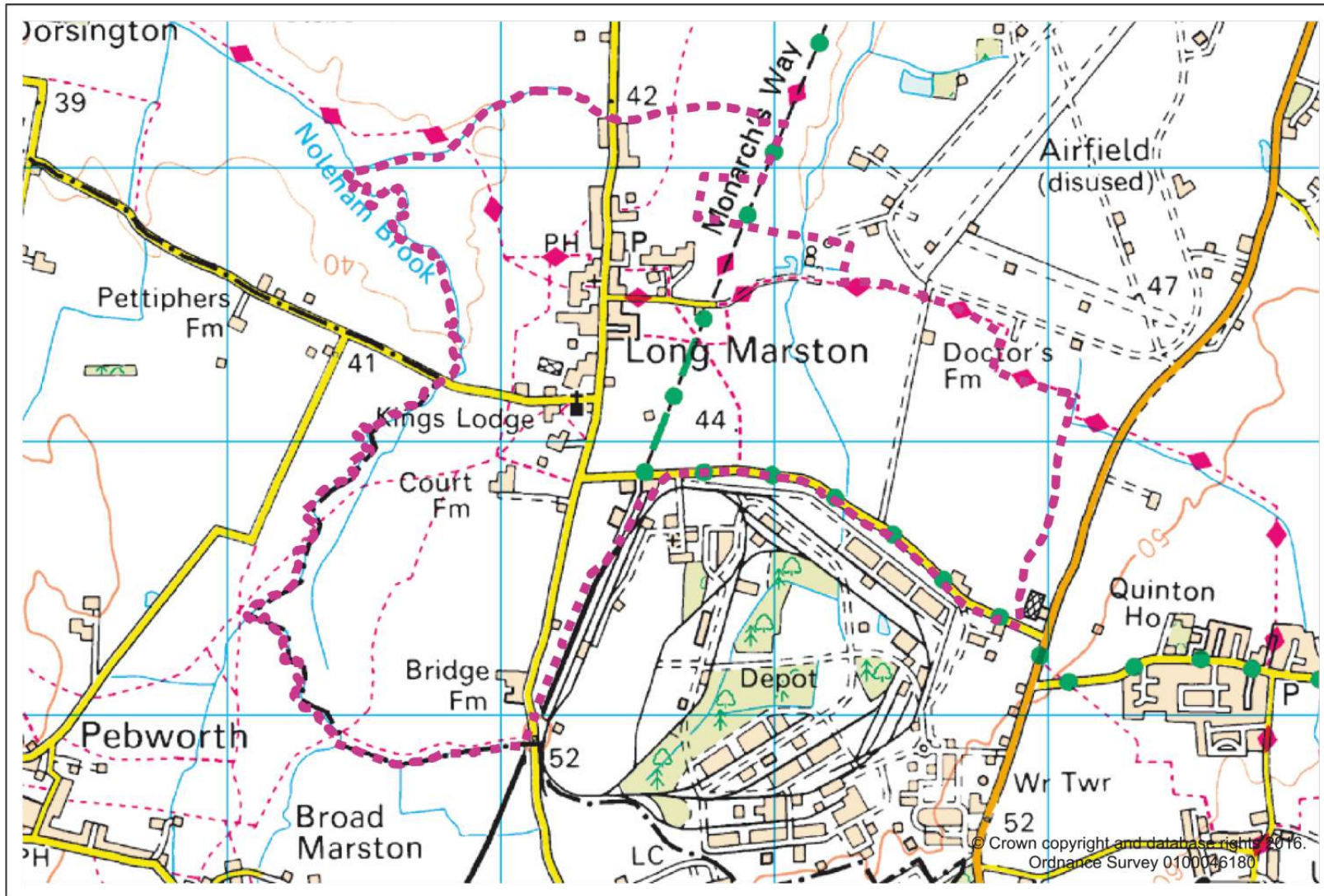
⁷ Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/20/schedule/9/enacted> [Date Accessed: 30/03/22]

- 1.5.3 The NP must therefore be general conformity with the development plan (Core Strategy⁸) and have appropriate regard to existing policy and guidance, including the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)⁹ and related Planning Practice Guidance advice¹⁰.

⁸ Stratford District Council (2016) Stratford-on-Avon Core Strategy 2011 to 2031. Available at: <https://www.stratford.gov.uk/planning-regeneration/core-strategy.cfm> [Date Accessed: 30/03/22]

⁹ MHCLG (2019) National Planning Policy Framework. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2> [Date Accessed: 30/03/22]

¹⁰ MHCLG (2019) Planning Practice Guidance. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance> [Date Accessed: 30/03/22]



Marston Sicca Neighbourhood Plan Boundary

Figure 1.1: Long Marston (Marston Sicca) Neighbourhood Plan Boundary (Source: Long Marston NP)

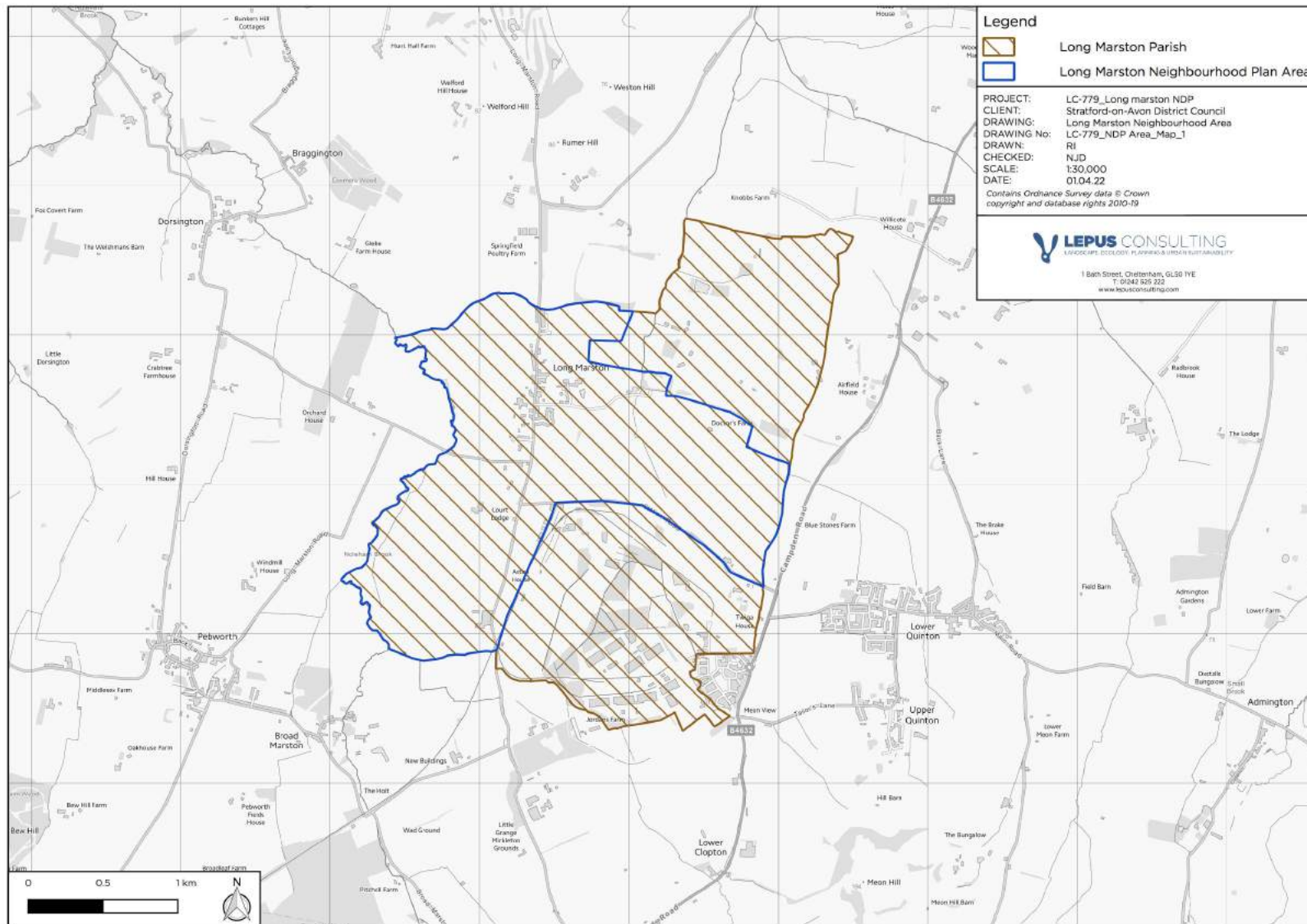


Figure 1.2: Long Marston Parish Area and the Neighbourhood Plan Area.

1.6 Long Marston Neighbourhood Area

- 1.6.1 The Long Marston Neighbourhood Area comprises the historic village of Long Marston and surrounding arable fields. Long Marston is situated to the south west of Stratford-on-Avon District, in Warwickshire, and is approximately 7km south west of Stratford-upon-Avon, 11km north east of Evesham and 29km north west of Banbury.
- 1.6.2 The majority of the neighbourhood area is rural in nature, located in close proximity to the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) (recently renamed as the Cotswolds National Landscape). There are no major roads passing through the neighbourhood area, but a number of minor roads including 'Welford Road' which passes north to south through Long Marston village, and 'Station Road' which passes along the south east boundary of the neighbourhood area, and provides access to Lower Quinton Village. There is a railway line within the parish boundary which enters from the south and passes along the edge of Meon Vale Business Park, however this railway line has been decommissioned. There are no active railway lines within the parish or neighbourhood area, with the nearest main line station being Honeybourne Railway Station, located approximately 3.7km south west of the village.
- 1.6.3 The Parish of Long Marston has an estimated population of 646 as of 2019¹¹. Some of the facilities in the neighbourhood area include a village shop, post office, public house, village hall and a church.

1.7 Relationship with the Core Strategy

- 1.7.1 The NP is a land use plan, prepared for town and country planning purposes. It sets out a framework for future development consents within the neighbourhood area. Once adopted, the NP will form part of the development plan for the district, alongside the Core Strategy and supplementary planning documents.
- 1.7.2 NPs are smaller in geographic scale than Core Strategies and Local Plans and serve to add further detailed policies and proposals to these documents. The Long Marston NP and the Stratford-on-Avon District Core Strategy will form part of the development plan for the area once the NP is 'made'.
- 1.7.3 Paragraph 13 of the NPPF¹² states that "*Neighbourhood plans should support the delivery of strategic policies contained in local plans or spatial development strategies; and should shape and direct development that is outside of these strategic policies*".

¹¹ Office for national statistics (2019) Parish population estimates. Available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/adhocs/12324parishpopulationestimatesformid2001tomid2019basedonbestfittingofoutputareastoparishes> [Date Accessed: 30/03/22]

¹² MHCLG (2021) National Planning Policy Framework. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2> [Date Accessed: 30/03/22]

- 1.7.4 The NP sets out in Policies Dev 3 and Dev 4 that new developments in the neighbourhood area outside of the defined Built-Up Area Boundary (BUAB), classed as countryside, will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances. The BUAB is shown in **Figure 1.3**, as proposed within the Stratford-on-Avon Site Allocations Plan (SAP) Preferred Options of October 2020¹³.

¹³ Stratford-on-Avon District Council (2020) Site Allocations Plan Regulation 18 Preferred Options Consultation – October 2020. Available at: <https://www.stratford.gov.uk/doc/209801/name/Composite%20version%20v3.pdf> [Date Accessed: 24/02/22]

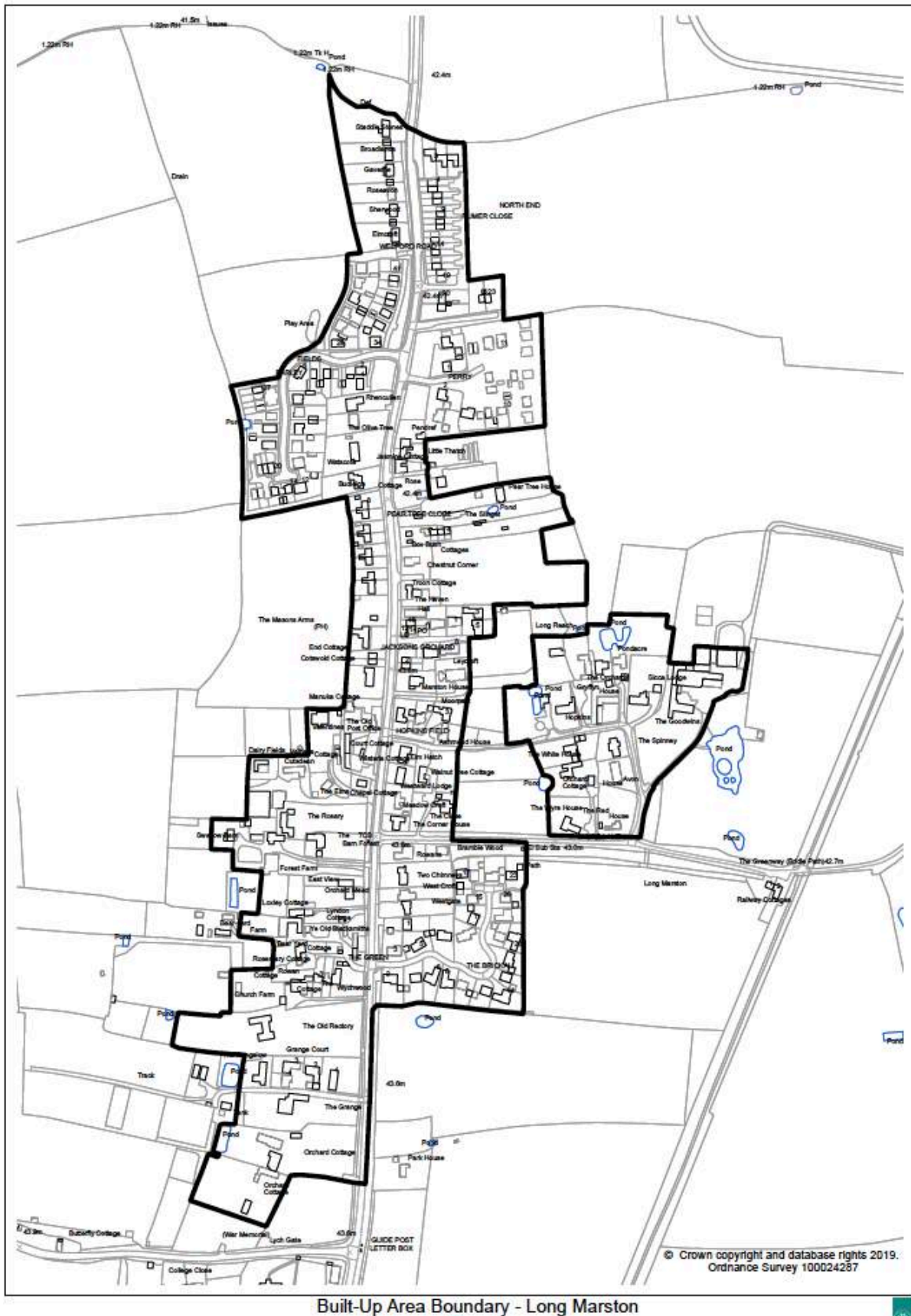


Figure 1.3: Built Up Area Boundary for Long Marston as proposed within the Stratford-on-Avon SAP (2020)

1.7.5 Three reserve sites for Long Marston Parish, which also fall within the Long Marston Neighbourhood Area, were identified within the Stratford-on-Avon SAP¹⁴. One reserve site of these three, Site A within **Figure 1.4**, shown in more detail in **Figure 1.5**, has been identified as the preferred reserve site as a possible location for the development of up to eight dwellings, as outlined in NP Policy Dev 6, should Stratford-on-Avon District Council require additional sites to be brought forward to meet the 5-year housing needs. This reserve site, allocated as LMAR 09 within the SAP, has been selected by the Parish Council¹⁵, following an evaluation process taking into consideration the findings of the SAP evidence base including the assessment of land parcels within the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)¹⁶.

¹⁴ Stratford-on-Avon District Council (2020) Site Allocations Plan Regulation 18 Preferred Options Consultation – October 2020. Available at: <https://www.stratford.gov.uk/doc/209801/name/Composite%20version%20v3.pdf> [Date Accessed: 30/03/22]

¹⁵ Long Marston Parish Council (2022) Long Marston Neighbourhood Plan 2011 – 2031 Draft Version 2.1 (21st March 2022). Paragraph 8.6.1 concludes: “*This potential site is outside the BUAB but within the confines of the village. Small scale development of this site would be supported provided it complies with Dev 7.*”

¹⁶ Stratford-on-Avon District Council (2020) SHLAA 2020 – SHLAA Schedules and Maps: Mappleborough Green – Shipston. Available at: <https://www.stratford.gov.uk/planning-building/shlaa.cfm> [Date Accessed: 30/03/22]

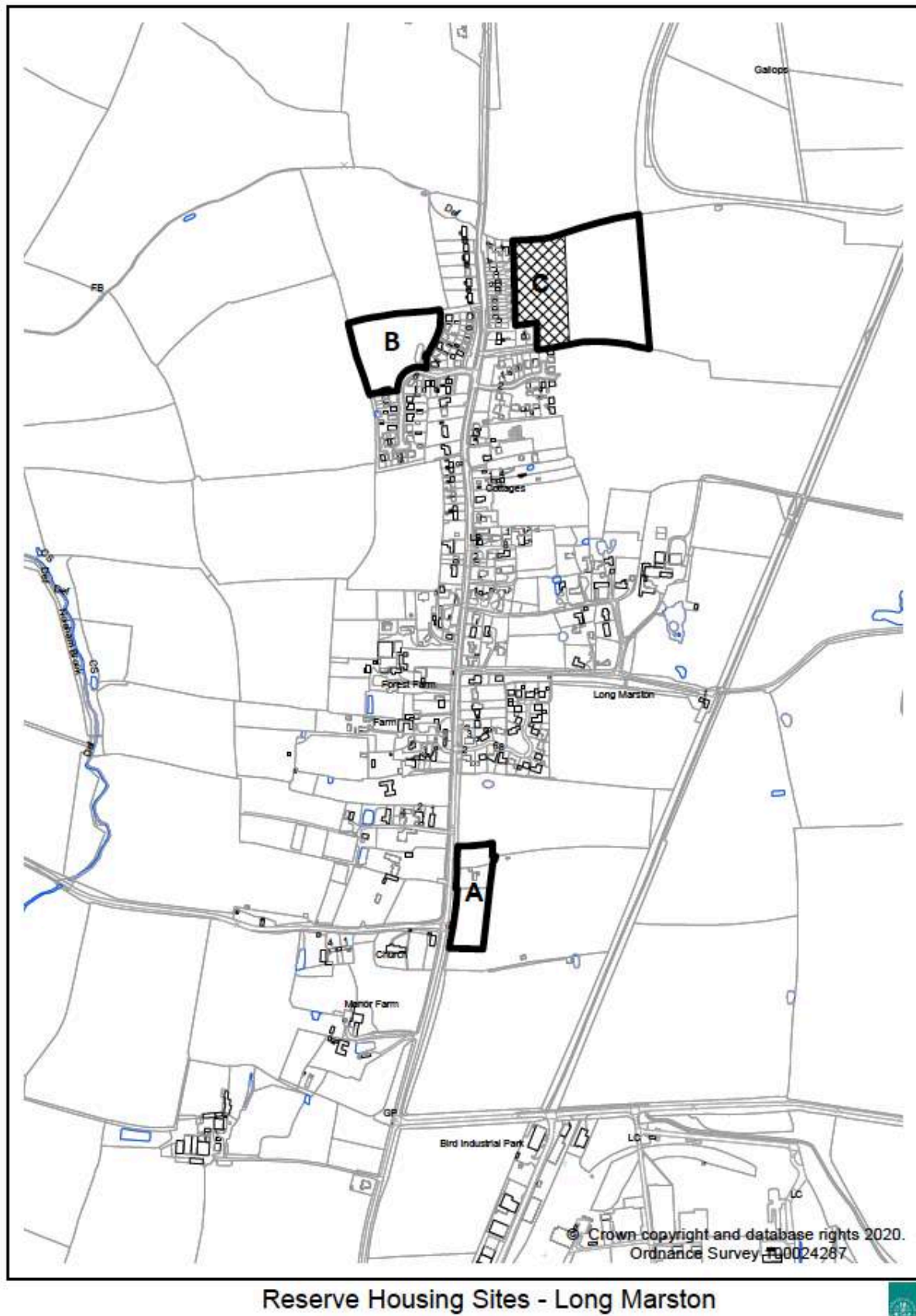


Figure 1.4: Reserve Housing Sites for Long Marston (Source: SoA SAP 2020)

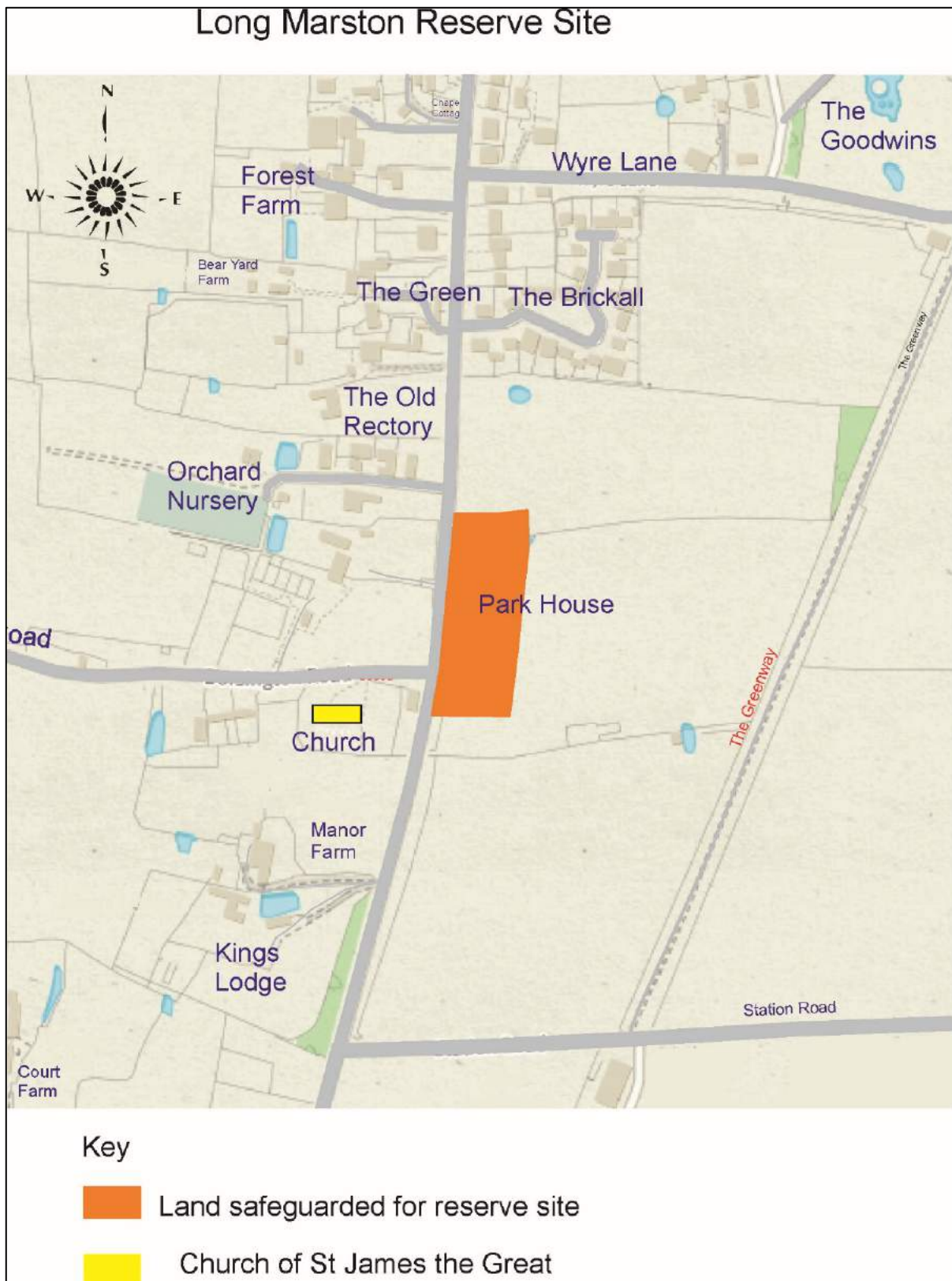


Figure 1.5: Location of the Reserve Housing Site A (source: Long Marston NP)

2 The Screening Process

2.1 Strategic Environmental Assessment screening

- 2.1.1 SEA seeks to ensure that environmental considerations are part of the process of preparing certain plans and programmes. Its purpose 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. It helps to ensure that, in accordance with the Regulations, an environmental assessment is carried out of certain plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment.
- 2.1.2 The process for determining whether or not an SEA is required is called ‘screening’. In order to screen, it is necessary to determine if a plan is likely to have significant environmental effects using the criteria set out in Schedule I of the SEA Regulations. A determination cannot be made until the three statutory consultation bodies have been consulted: the Environment Agency, Natural England and Historic England.
- 2.1.3 Within 28 days of its determination, the local planning authority, by virtue of its legal responsibility for neighbourhood development plans, must publish a statement, setting out its decision. If the authority determines that an SEA is not required, the statement must include the reasons for this.

2.2 The screening process

- 2.2.1 **Figure 2.1** presents a diagram prepared by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) (2005). This shows the application of the SEA process to plans and programmes. The sequential approach in the flow diagram can be used to screen the Long Marston NP.
- 2.2.2 **Table 2.1** uses the questions presented in **Figure 2.1** to establish whether there is a need for SEA for the Long Marston NP.

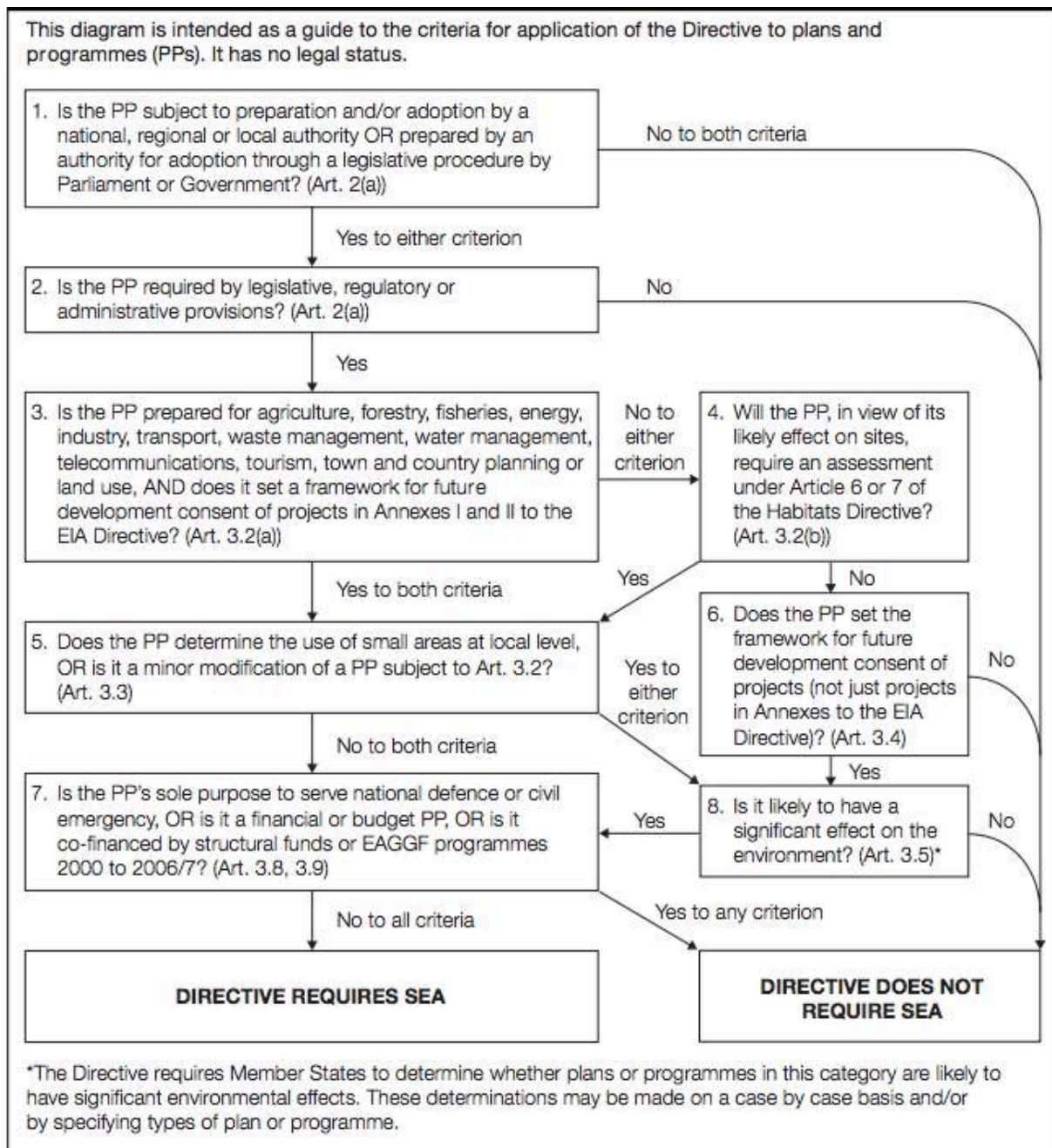


Figure 2.1: Application of the SEA Directive to plans and programmes (source: Office of the Deputy Prime Minister)

Table 2.1: Establishing whether there is a need for SEA

Stage	Y/N	Reason
Is the PP (plan or programme) subject to preparation and/or adoption by a national, regional or local authority OR prepared by an authority for adoption through a legislative procedure by Parliament or Government? (Art. 2(a))	Yes	The plan constitutes an NP, which will be subject to independent examination and brought into legal force if it receives 50% or more affirmative votes at referendum. The NP would form part of the statutory development plan for Stratford-on-Avon District.
Is the PP required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions? (Art. 2(a))	No	Communities and neighbourhoods have a right to produce an NP, however it is not required by legislative, regulatory or administrative bodies. If the NP is adopted it would become part of the statutory development plan for Stratford-on-Avon District, meaning it should continue to be screened under the SEA Directive.
Is the PP 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? (Art 3.2(a))	No	The NP is a land-use plan and sets the framework for future development consents within Long Marston Parish (Neighbourhood Area). However, the NP is unlikely to set a framework for consent of projects in Annex 1 of the EIA Directive.
Will the PP, in view of its likely effect on sites, require an assessment for future development under Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive? (Art. 3.2 (b))	No	See Chapter 3 and Chapter 4 .
Does the PP set the framework for future development consent of projects (not just projects in Annexes to the EIA Directive)? (Art 3.4)	Yes	The NP does set the framework for future development consent of projects.
Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment? (Art. 3.5)	No	See Section 2.5 – 2.12 and Chapter 4 .
Is the PP's sole purpose to serve national defence or civil emergency, OR is it a financial budget PP, OR is it co-financed by structural funds or EAGGD programmes 2000 to 2006/7? (Art 3.8, 3.9)	No	Not applicable.

2.3 Relevance to the SEA Directive

2.3.1 Question 8 within the ODPM guidance (see **Figure 2.1**) refers to whether the NP would have a significant effect on the environment. The criteria from Annex II of the SEA Directive and Schedule 1 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 can be used to consider the relevance of the Plan to the SEA Directive. **Sections 2.5 – 2.12** consider the likely environmental effects of the plan.

Table 2.2: Long Marston NP and the SEA Directive

Criteria (from Annex II of SEA Directive and Schedule I of Regulations)	Response
The characteristics of plans and programmes	
(a) the degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources	The NP is prepared for town and country planning purposes and will form a part of the development management framework for Long Marston Parish (Neighbourhood Area) once made.
(b) the degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy	The NP must be in general conformity with the strategic planning policies set out in the Stratford-on-Avon District Core Strategy 2011 – 2031 and the National Planning Policy Framework. The NP forms part of the statutory development plan for Stratford-on-Avon District.
(c) the relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development	There are opportunities to integrate environmental considerations within the Long Marston NP. The NP contains policies that aim to improve facilities and services, as well as preserving the character of the Long Marston Neighbourhood Area whilst maximising sustainability benefits and protecting the natural environment (see Appendix A).
(d) environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme	No environmental issues were identified relevant to the plan.
(e) the relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (for example, plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection)	The NP is a land use plan and sets the framework for future development consents within the Long Marston Neighbourhood Area. It also sets out policies which planning applications within the NP area will need to adhere to.
Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected	
(a) the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects	The NP is not expected to result in any significant environmental effects.
(b) the cumulative nature of the effects	The NP is not considered to have any cumulative effects and is not thought to contribute to cumulative

Criteria (from Annex II of SEA Directive and Schedule I of Regulations)	Response
	impacts in combination with the Stratford-on-Avon District Core Strategy.
(c) the transboundary nature of the effects	The NP is not expected to give rise to any significant transboundary environmental effects.
(d) the risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents)	There are no anticipated risks of the NP on human health.
(e) the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)	The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects outlined in (a) are not thought to extend further than the Plan area.
(f) the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to: (i) special natural characteristics or cultural heritage (ii) exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values (iii) intensive land-use	It is considered unlikely that the NP would adversely impact the special natural characteristics or cultural heritage features within the Long Marston Neighbourhood Area. The NP would not be expected to cause exceedances of environmental standards or lead to intensive land use.
(g) the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status	The NP is unlikely to result in any adverse impacts on protected landscapes.

2.4 Determination of likely significant effects

2.4.1 A summary of baseline conditions and an assessment of the potential effects of the NP against each of the topics set out in Annex I (f) of the SEA Directive is presented in the following sections. The NP policies are set out in **Appendix A** and consultation comments (once received following consultation) will be set out in **Appendix B**.

2.5 Biodiversity, flora and fauna

- 2.5.1 The closest Habitats site to Long Marston village is Bredon Hill, a Special Area of Conservation (SAC), located approximately 17km south west of the neighbourhood area. Habitats sites are discussed further in **Chapter 3**.
- 2.5.2 There are no Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) within the neighbourhood area. The nearest is 'Welford Field' SSSI located approximately 3.7km to the north, 'Racecourse Meadow' SSSI 5.2km to the north east and 'Campden Tunnel Gravel Pit' SSSI located approximately 6km to the south.
- 2.5.3 The neighbourhood area is located within SSSI Impact Risk Zones (IRZs) which do not indicate residential and non-residential development as a particular threat to surrounding SSSIs.
- 2.5.4 There are no nationally designated biodiversity sites within, or in close proximity to, the neighbourhood area. However, nearby ancient woodlands include 'Mickleton Wood' and 'Old Coppice', located approximately 3.7km and 4.3km respectively, to the south east of the neighbourhood area, as shown on **Figure 2.2**.
- 2.5.5 There are six Local Wildlife Sites (LWSs) located within the neighbourhood area: 'North End Orchard' LWS; 'Long Marston Meadow' LWS; 'Church Meadow' LWS; a small section of 'Long Marston Disused Airfield and Doctors Farm' LWS; 'The Greenway, Dismantled Railway' LWS; and 'River Avon and Tributaries' LWS which follows the western boundary of the neighbourhood area. Additionally, there are several areas of priority habitat within the area including deciduous woodland and traditional orchard. There are no Local Geological Sites in the neighbourhood area.
- 2.5.6 The objective of NP Policy L&E 1 is to *"conserve the natural environment and the quiet rural character of the Neighbourhood Area"* and seeks to ensure that any future development will not be supported by the NP unless it protects and enhances Long Marston's flora and fauna, including wildlife habitats and corridors. Policy L&E 1 particularly emphasises protection of aquatic habitats.
- 2.5.7 Furthermore, Policy Dev 1 seeks to ensure that any development proposals *"avoid the loss of trees and native hedgerows and include the replanting of native trees and hedgerows where appropriate"* which would help to ensure the conservation and enhancement of non-designated biodiversity features and ecological networks.
- 2.5.8 Reserve Site A does not coincide with any designated biodiversity assets and would not be expected to have a significant impact on biodiversity within the neighbourhood area upon development.
- 2.5.9 Due to the requirements of policies set out above and in the Core Strategy, the Long Marston NP would not be expected to lead to any likely significant effects on the biodiversity, flora and fauna within the Plan area.

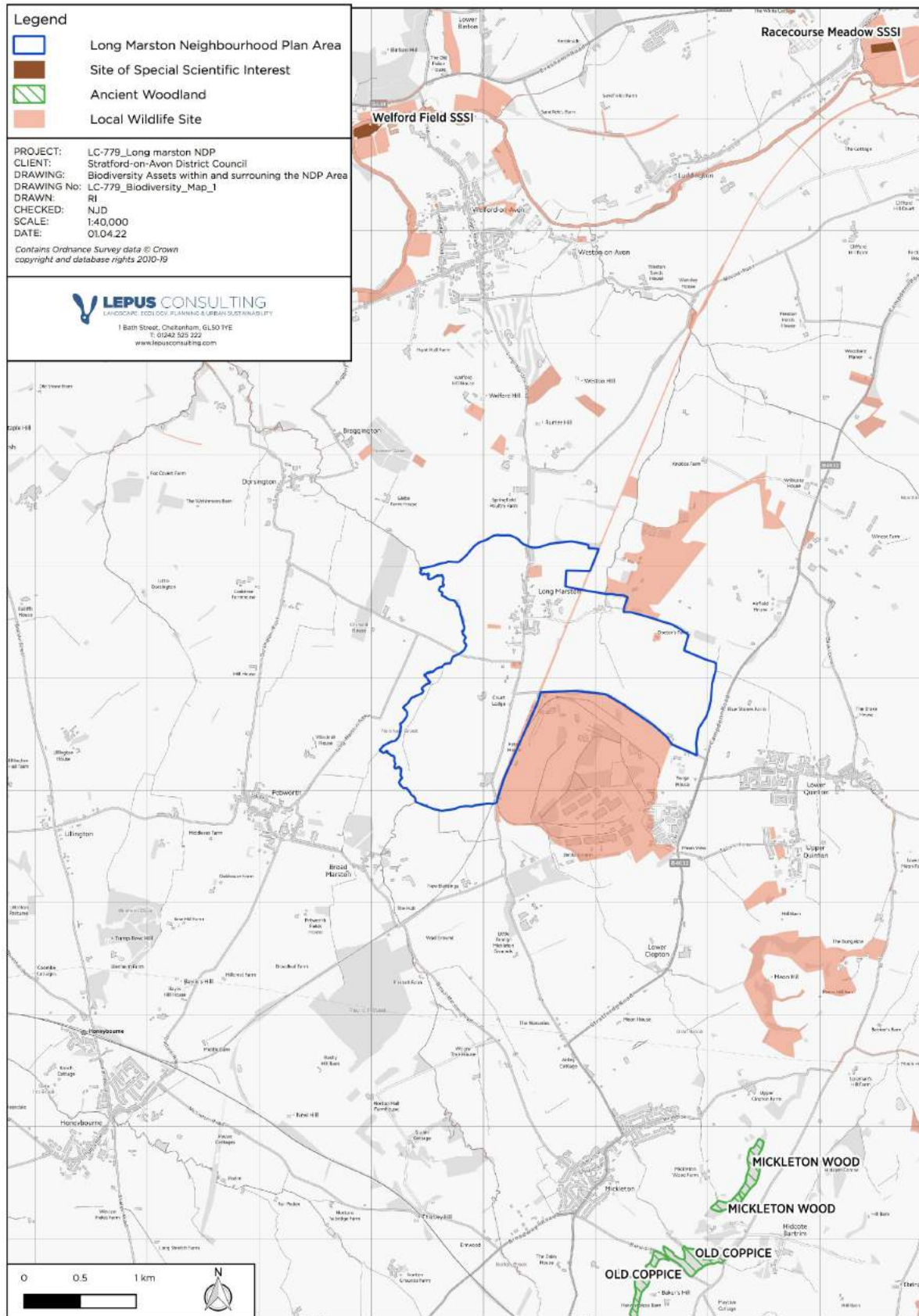


Figure 2.2: Biodiversity assets in and around Long Marston Neighbourhood Area (Source: Natural England and Stratford-on-Avon District Council)

2.6 Population and human health

- 2.6.1 Local shops and services within the neighbourhood area include Long Marston Post Office and village shop 'The Poppin Village Store'. Community facilities include Church of St James the Great, the Mason's Arms public house and a village hall.
- 2.6.2 The nearest primary school to the Long Marston Neighbourhood Area is Quinton Primary School, located approximately 2.7km away from the village centre. The nearest secondary schools can be found in Stratford-upon-Avon, approximately 7.5km to the north east.
- 2.6.3 The nearest GP surgery, Meon Medical Centre, is situated approximately 1km from Long Marston Neighbourhood Area and the nearest leisure centre is Meon Vale Leisure Centre, located approximately 450m south of the neighbourhood area boundary. The nearest hospital with an A&E department is Alexandra Hospital, located approximately 17.8km north west of the neighbourhood area.
- 2.6.4 NP Policy L&E 2 seeks to protect existing green infrastructure and wildlife corridors from development. The policy proposes that the 'green finger' between Wyre Lane and Old Brewery Field in the neighbourhood area must be protected from development as it serves as a natural wildlife habitat and *"breaks the line of the buildings, providing a peaceful and picturesque setting for walkers"*. Protecting access to open spaces such as this would be expected to help encourage active lifestyles and exercise, whilst also having benefits to residents' mental health.
- 2.6.5 Policy L&E 4 of the NP is in relation to the protection of local footpaths, cycleways and bridleways. The policy demonstrates that the NP will not support proposals which adversely impact walking and cycling routes nor if they do not encourage new walking and cycling opportunities within the area. This policy would therefore be expected to improve connectivity and promote community integration and well-being, and have a positive impact on the population.
- 2.6.6 There is no large-scale employment or business development within the neighbourhood area, therefore the policies within the NP are likely to have a negligible impact on economic development. Policy Inf 1 seeks to ensure that any proposals for commercial development are of an appropriate scale for the local economic needs.
- 2.6.7 NP Policy Com 1 aims to protect and enhance community facilities and assets, such as those discussed within paragraph 2.6.1, through resisting proposals which result in the loss of these facilities and supporting those which would enhance, improve or create new facilities.
- 2.6.8 NP Policy Dev 4 seeks to ensure that *"developments should provide a suitable mix of size and type of homes to ensure the housing needs of people with a local connection are met, including affordable housing"*. This policy would likely lead to resident wellbeing through meeting housing needs.
- 2.6.9 Reserve Site A would be expected to have good access to local facilities, such as Quinton Primary School and Meon Medical Centre, as well as good access to the surrounding countryside and PRoW network. However, due to the rural location of Long Marston, potential future residents may be reliant on private car use as opposed to more sustainable means of travel to access facilities located outside of the neighbourhood area.

- 2.6.10 Overall, the NP is not expected to lead to any adverse likely significant effects on the local population or human health.

2.7 Transport and accessibility

- 2.7.1 Whilst not an Annex 1(f) topic in itself, transport and accessibility interacts with a number of the topics such as population and human health, material assets and climatic factors.
- 2.7.2 Bus service 27 serves the neighbourhood area, passing through Long Marston village along Welford Road, along the Stratford-upon-Avon to Pebworth route. The nearest train station to Long Marston is Honeybourne Station, located approximately 3.7km to the south west. From here, residents can journey to Birmingham, London and Manchester.
- 2.7.3 Welford Road passes through the neighbourhood area from north to south and Dorsington Road and Station Road passes through the area from west to east. These roads link up with the strategic road network, including the A3400 and A422, with the closest motorway being the M40 at Junction 15, situated approximately 15.5km to the north east of the neighbourhood area. Residents would be expected to have suitable access via the road network to Worcester, Coventry, Banbury and nationally.
- 2.7.4 Appendix A of the NP includes a community project seeking to complete a full report on traffic in order to increase pedestrian safety due to speeding on Welford Road.
- 2.7.5 Policy L&E 4 of the NP states that developments should “*not adversely affect existing walking and cycling routes. Those that fail to encourage appropriate new walking and cycling opportunities will not be supported*”. Policy Dev 6 requires any proposals for development at Reserve Site A to “*extend footway along eastern side of Long Marston Road*”. Any future development proposals, including the development of Reserve Site A, would therefore be expected to encourage active travel in the local area, although there is likely to be some reliance on car use due to the rural location of the neighbourhood area.
- 2.7.6 Policy Dev 5 seeks to ensure that new developments provide adequate parking facilities, including provision for electric vehicle charging points.
- 2.7.7 The NP and Core Strategy policies would be expected to help prevent adverse impacts in regard to transport and accessibility occurring due to future development within the neighbourhood area. Overall, the NP is not expected to lead to any likely significant effects on transport or accessibility.

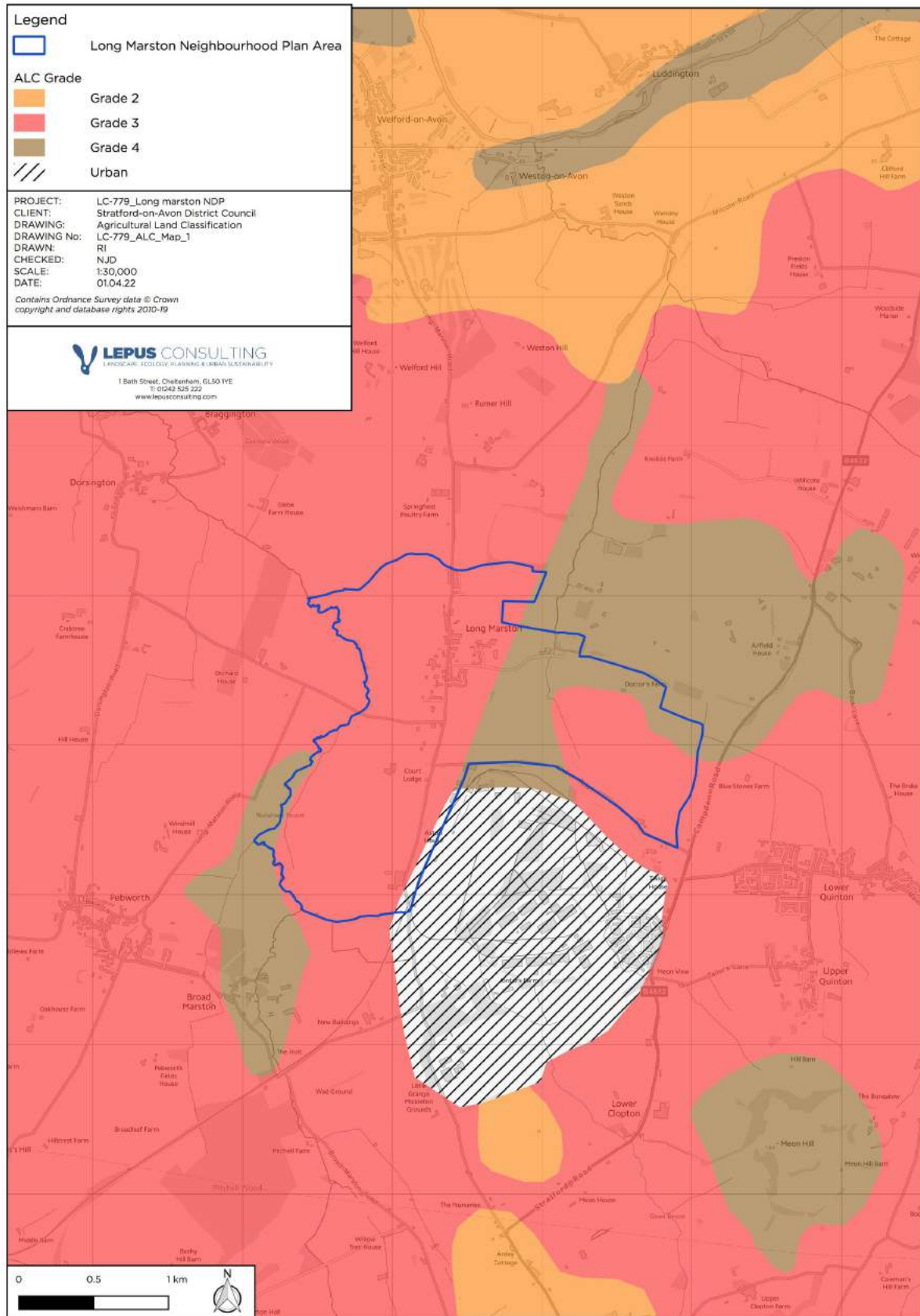
2.8 Soil, water and air

- 2.8.1 A large proportion of Long Marston Neighbourhood Area is situated on Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) Grade 3 land (see **Figure 2.3**). An area to the north east and a small areas to the south west of the area are located upon Grade 4 ALC land (poor quality agricultural land), and a small proportion of the area in the south east is classed as 'Urban'. Reserve Site A is situated upon ALC Grade 3 land, and as such, the development of this site could result potentially in the loss of 'best and most versatile' (BMV) agricultural land, if this land is found to be Subgrade 3a¹⁷.
- 2.8.2 Policy AS.10 of the Stratford-on-Avon Core Strategy seeks to prioritise "*the re-use of brownfield land*", supporting the redevelopment of brownfield land within the identified BUAB (see **Figure 1.2**) in line with the criteria set out in the policy. This would be expected to help reduce the volume of greenfield land lost due to development and protect BMV land in the neighbourhood area.
- 2.8.3 As the neighbourhood area contains no major roads or Air Quality Management Areas, air quality within the area is expected to be generally good.
- 2.8.4 No major rivers pass through the neighbourhood area, however 'Noleham Brook' flows along the western boundary, and the 'Marchfont Brook' flows through the neighbourhood area, located to the east of Long Marston Village, flowing south to north. There are areas of Flood Zones 2 and 3 within the area, alongside these watercourses (see **Figure 2.4**). There are also areas of high surface water flood risk associated with these watercourses, as well as significant extents of low, medium and high surface water flood risk particularly in the east and west of the neighbourhood area, along roads and field boundaries (see **Figure 2.5**).
- 2.8.5 Reserve Site A is located wholly within Flood Zone 1. However, a small proportion of the site coincides with land identified to be at high, medium and low risk surface water flooding.
- 2.8.6 In conformity with Policy CS.4 of Stratford-on-Avon's Core Strategy and the NPPF, development proposals must follow guidelines set out in relation to the water environment and management of flood risk within the neighbourhood area in order to address fluvial and pluvial flooding issues. Future development must not exacerbate flood risk in surrounding areas and, where appropriate, should be supported by a site-specific flood risk assessment.
- 2.8.7 Policy Inf 3 of the NP regards flooding in the neighbourhood area and will only support development proposals "*if they satisfactorily address the risk of pluvial flooding, do not increase the risk of flooding, and where existing flood risks are identified, are supported by a site-specific flood risk assessment*". The policy also outlines further criteria required to ensure new developments do not exacerbate flood risk, such as through the use of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS), in accordance with the Core Strategy.

¹⁷ Natural England (2009) Agricultural Land Classification: protecting the best and most versatile agricultural land. Available at: <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/35012> [Date Accessed: 30/03/22]

- 2.8.8 It is recommended that the NP seeks to support the Water Framework Directive (WFD) and objectives from the Severn River Basin Management Plan¹⁸ including the requirement for all waterbodies to meet 'Good Ecological Status or Potential' by 2027.
- 2.8.9 Overall, the NP is not expected to have any significant effects on soil, water or air in the neighbourhood area.

¹⁸ DEFRA and Environment Agency (2015) Severn river basin district river basin management plan. Available at:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/severn-river-basin-district-river-basin-management-plan> [Date Accessed: 05/04/22]



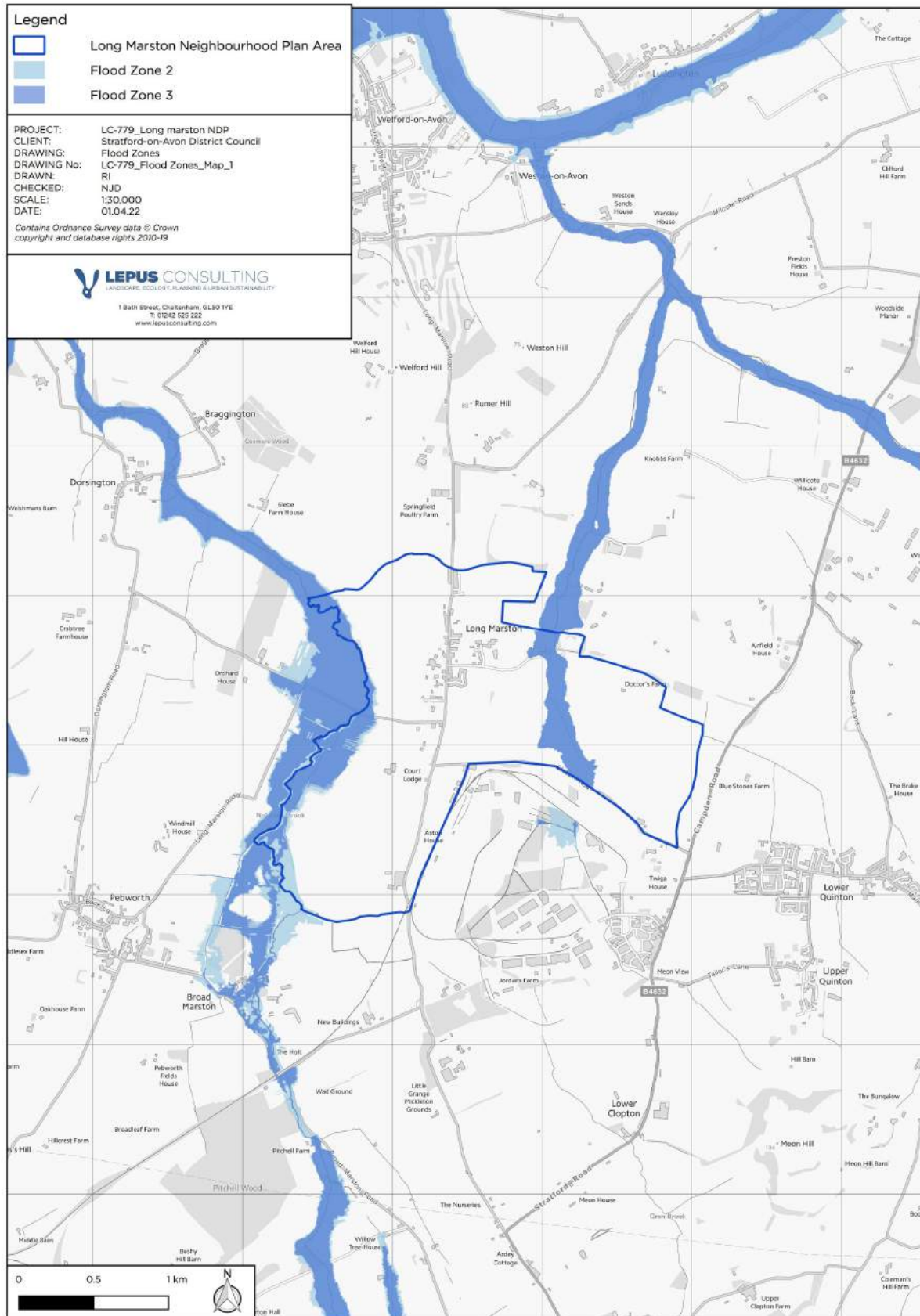
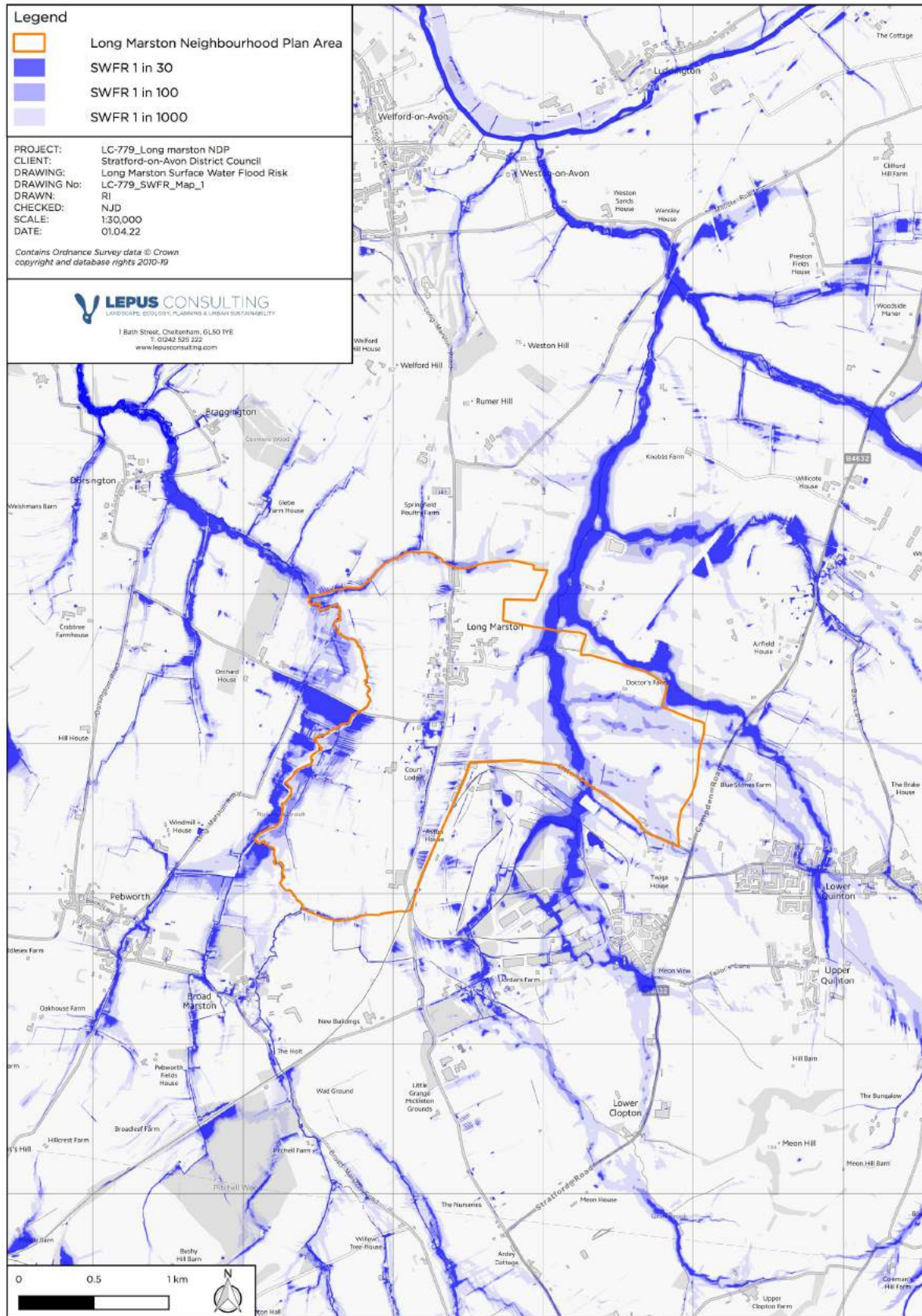


Figure 2.4: Flood Zones in and around Long Marston Neighbourhood Area (source: Environment Agency)



2.9 Climatic factors

- 2.9.1 In conformity with the Core Strategy Policy CS.2, development proposals (including those for Reserve Site A) must demonstrate climate change mitigation and adaptation measures, including designs that reduce carbon emissions and promote renewable energy schemes. Policy CS.3 of the Core Strategy states that *“small-scale community led initiatives for renewable and low carbon energy will be encouraged by the Council”*.
- 2.9.2 NP Policy L&E 5 regards the climate emergency which was declared by Stratford-on-Avon Council in July 2019, and how Long Marston Parish Council can *“positively address climate change”*. The policy seeks to ensure that any development and design proposals *“demonstrate an awareness of the Government target of zero carbon emissions by 2050”* and includes criteria for new development to meet, such as provision of electric vehicle charging points and energy efficient buildings. Additionally, the policy supports development of renewable energy infrastructure, which would have positive impacts on the neighbourhood area’s contribution to reducing reliance on fossil fuels and the mitigation of climate change.
- 2.9.3 The NP also includes policy criteria for the implementation of water management initiatives to help reduce the risk of local flooding and adapt to future extreme weather events, contributing to climate change adaptation. This includes requirements for development proposals to implement SuDS, through Policies L&E 5 and Inf 3. Additionally, Policy Inf 3 supports proposals *“if they satisfactorily address the risk of pluvial flooding, do not increase the risk of flooding, and where existing flood risks are identified, are supported by a site-specific flood risk assessment”*. Therefore, development in line with this policy which promotes sustainable use and management of water would be supported by the NP.
- 2.9.4 Policy Inf 5 aims to support development proposals which demonstrate how walking and cycling opportunities have been prioritised and provided for safe access. These measures could potentially help to promote active travel and decrease the number of petrol or diesel powered vehicles on local roads, reducing carbon emissions and improving local air quality.
- 2.9.5 Furthermore, NP Policy LS&E 2 seeks to protect existing green infrastructure and wildlife corridors within the neighbourhood area, and supports proposals which seek to enhance the neighbourhood area’s ‘green finger’ land. Enhanced green infrastructure provision can have multiple benefits including mitigation of extreme temperatures and flooding, which would be expected to contribute towards mitigating climate change.
- 2.9.6 These policies would be likely to have a positive impact on combatting climate change. Overall, the NP is not expected to lead to any likely significant effects on climate change.

2.10 Material assets

- 2.10.1 The material assets topic considers social, physical and environmental infrastructure. This sub-section should be read alongside ‘Population and human health’, which details health and social infrastructure implications of the NP; ‘Climatic factors’, which considers transport infrastructure in terms of sustainable transport; ‘Soil, water and air’, which considers water infrastructure and agricultural land classification; and the ‘Biodiversity, flora and fauna’ sub-section, which considers environmental infrastructure.

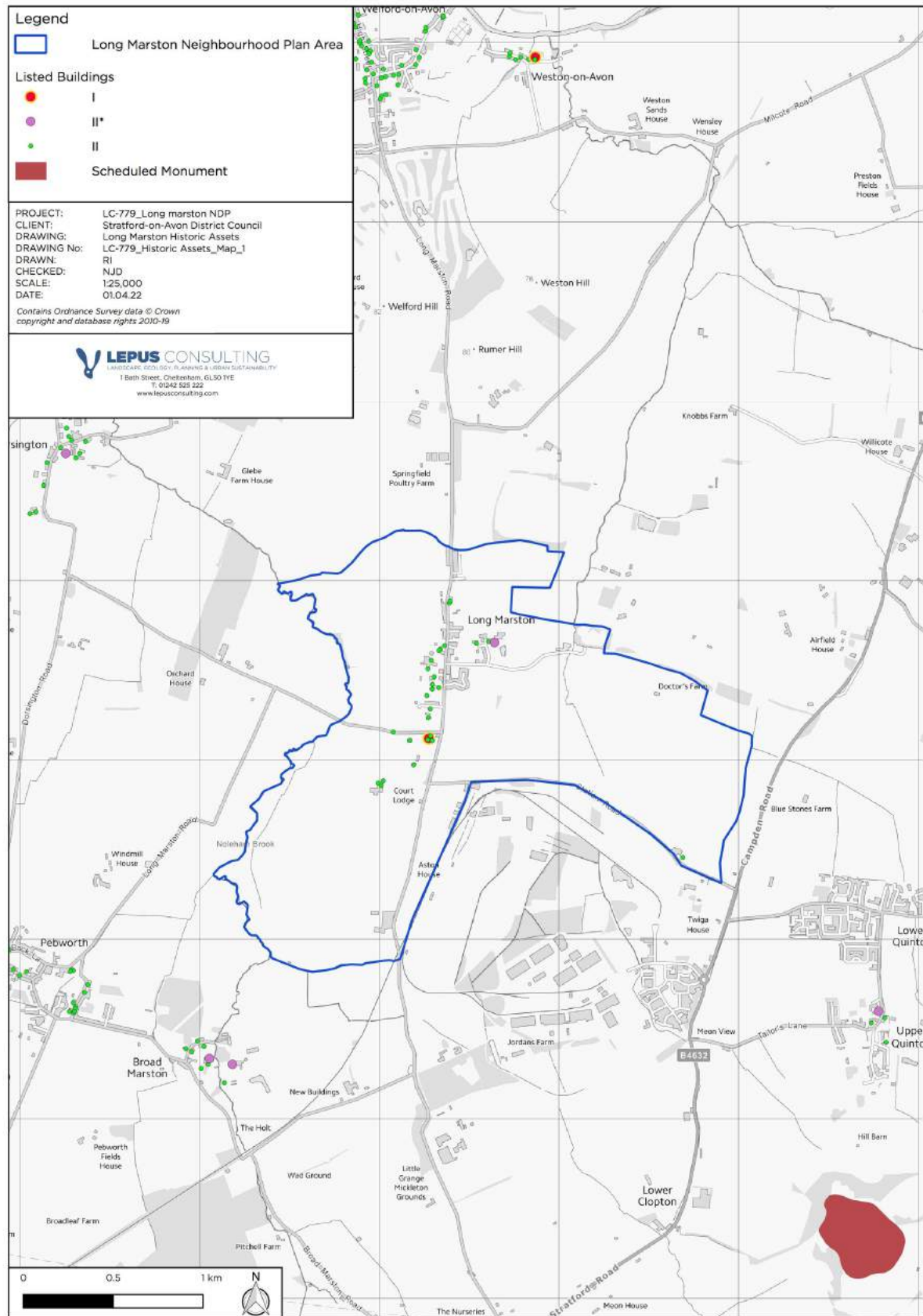
- 2.10.2 Local shops and services in the neighbourhood area include Long Marston Post Office and village shop, as well as the public house 'The Mason's Arms'. Other local employment includes farming and agricultural businesses, and nearby employment sites include Meon Vale Business Park, located approximately 700m south east of the area. Current and future residents are expected to have access to a range of employment opportunities.
- 2.10.3 Policy Inf 1 seeks to maintain and improve existing infrastructure to meet community needs and provides criteria for commercial development proposals to adhere to in order to be supported. The policy requires proposals to be of a scale appropriate to the rural character of the neighbourhood area, and supports diversification of rural businesses. If achieved, this would be likely to have a positive impact on the local economy, encouraging residents to shop locally and providing local job opportunities.
- 2.10.4 Furthermore, NP Policy Inf 6 requires new commercial and residential development to provide high speed broadband connectivity, which may help to facilitate home working and small businesses, allowing a range of employment opportunities for new and future residents.
- 2.10.5 It is considered unlikely that the NP would have significant adverse impacts on material assets within Long Marston Neighbourhood Area.

2.11 Cultural heritage

- 2.11.1 There is one Grade I Listed Building, 'Church of St James', located in the centre of the neighbourhood area, and there is one Grade II* Listed Building, 'The Goodwins', located to the north east of the area. There are 26 Grade II Listed Buildings within the area, concentrated within the main settlement of Long Marston (see **Figure 2.6**).
- 2.11.2 Reserve Site A is situated on previously undeveloped land and therefore development at this site could potentially affect views of or from nearby Listed Buildings, such as the Grade I Listed Building 'Church of St James' and Grade II Listed Buildings 'The Grange' and 'Orchard Cottages'.
- 2.11.3 There are no other designated heritage assets within the neighbourhood area, however, 'Multivallate hillfort on Meon Hill' Scheduled Monument (SM) is located approximately 1.9km south east of the area (see **Figure 2.6**).
- 2.11.4 The Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) for Reserve Site A (LMAR09)¹⁹ states that *"it is unlikely that development of the proposed site would detrimentally impact the significance of the church. The rural setting would be altered slightly by development on the land, but given the orientation and separation distance involved, the impact on the significance of the heritage asset would be insubstantial"*. Therefore, significant impacts on the setting of the Grade I Listed Building are not expected upon development of Reserve Site A.

¹⁹ Stratford-on-Avon District Council (2020) Sites Allocation Plan – Heritage Impacts Assessment – LMAR.09. Available at: <https://www.stratford.gov.uk/doc/209823/name/Long%20Marston%20HIA%20s.pdf> [Date Accessed: 06/04/22]

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- 2.11.5 Additionally, the HIA concludes that the Grade II Listed Buildings in close proximity to the reserve site, 'The Grange' and 'Orchard Cottages', could have 'less than substantial harm' on the 'rural backdrop' of these assets upon development of Reserve Site A, and that careful planning and design may help to mitigate these impacts.
- 2.11.6 In relation to non-designated heritage assets, Reserve Site A is noted to have historical evidence of Ridge and Furrow features, however the HIA states that it is "*likely that previous activity on the site has already caused a significant level of harm and as such the scale of future development would be less than substantial to this heritage asset which has already been damaged*". Additionally, the site lies on the peripheries of the archaeological asset 'Medieval Shrunken Village', where the location and noted disruption of the site, as well as suitable archaeological evaluation of the site before development, would help to ensure that the development of Reserve Site A would not be likely to cause substantial harm to the asset, according to the HIA.
- 2.11.7 NP Policy HA 1 seeks to "*protect and preserve historic environment and the setting of heritage assets which help to give the village its character so that they can be enjoyed for future generations*". The policy sets out various criteria for development proposals to adhere to, including the conservation and enhancement of the designated and non-designated historic environment, such as ridge and furrow features and archaeological assets. NP Policy Dev 6 regards Reserve Site A, and states that any future development proposals at this site should provide an updated landscape sensitivity assessment including "*specific attention to the adjacent heritage asset, Church of St James the Great*".
- 2.11.8 These policies would help to ensure that future development within the neighbourhood area, including at Reserve Site A, is considerate of heritage features in relation to their settings, and contributes positively towards the local historic character.
- 2.11.9 Overall, the NP is not expected to lead to any likely significant effects on cultural heritage.



2.12 Landscape

- 2.12.1 Long Marston Neighbourhood Area is wholly located within the ‘Severn and Avon Vales’ National Character Area (NCA)²⁰. A key characteristic of this landscape includes “*a diverse range of flat and gently undulating landscapes strongly influenced and united by the Severn and Avon rivers which meet at Tewkesbury*”.
- 2.12.2 The Cotswolds AONB is located approximately 900m south east of the Long Marston Neighbourhood Area, as shown in **Figure 2.7**. Reserve Site A is located 2.1km north west of the AONB. Any future development in close proximity to the AONB should seek to conserve and enhance the special qualities of the AONB, in line with the requirements of the Cotswolds AONB Management Plan²¹.
- 2.12.3 A Landscape Sensitivity Study has determined the sensitivity of land to housing and commercial development around Long Marston²² (see **Figures 2.8** and **2.9**). Although land adjacent to the site boundary of Reserve Site A is located within zone ‘LM01’, which is identified as being at ‘medium’ sensitivity to housing development and is described as a “*mature landscape with prominent wet meadow features*”, the reserve site itself is located outside of the Landscape Sensitivity Study area. NP Policy Dev 6 states that upon the demonstration of an identified housing and the ‘early release’ of Reserve Site A, any future planning applications involving the site should include an “*updated landscape sensitivity assessment*”.
- 2.12.4 Reserve Site A is partially developed and is adjacent to ‘Welford Road’. Land surrounding Reserve Site A in zone LM01 is described as having “*some potential to accommodate the relevant type of development in some situations without significant character change or adverse effects*” in the Landscape Sensitivity Study. Although the site falls outside of this identified zone, it is unlikely that the land within the reserve site has a greater sensitivity to housing development than the surrounding land. Although there is some potential for impacts on the local landscape, these impacts are unlikely to be significant.

Recommendation: It is suggested that NP Policy Dev 6 recommends a Landscape and Visual Appraisal to be undertaken as part of any future planning application for Reserve Site A to help inform any required mitigation.

²⁰ Natural England (2014) National Character Area profile: 106. Severn and Avon Vales. Available at: <https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/1831421?map=true&category=587130> [Date Accessed: 31/03/22]

²¹ Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan 2018-2023. Available at: <https://www.cotswoldsaonb.org.uk/planning/cotswolds-aonb-management-plan/> [Date Accessed: 31/03/22]

²² White Consultants (2012) Landscape Sensitivity Assessment of Local Service Villages (Ilmington – Long Marston) Available at: <https://www.stratford.gov.uk/doc/205842/name/Landscape%20Sensitivity%20Assessment%20LSVs%20Ilmington%20Long%20Marston.pdf> [Date Accessed: 31/03/22]

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- 2.12.5 The NP further sets out several policies which would be expected to conserve and enhance the character and tranquillity of the neighbourhood area. For example, Policy L&E 3 regards the local landscape and seeks to preserve, enhance and protect views into, out of, and within the village and includes criteria to ensure future development proposals protect identified valued landscapes. NP Policy Dev 1 seeks to ensure developments “*protect, and where possible, enhance the landscape of the village*”, and Policy Dev 2 aims to support proposals which implement “*high-quality design and incorporate appropriate landscaping*”, and provides criteria to help ensure the character of the village is respected. Additionally, Policy Dev 3 of the NP aims to preserve the separate identity of Long Marston and seek to resist developments proposed for outside of the BUAB, unless they meet the criteria set out within NP Policy Dev 2. Policy Dev 6 would help to ensure that development proposals retain mature trees, potentially including those which would help to screen the western boundary of Reserve Site A.
- 2.12.6 Overall, the NP is not expected to lead to any likely significant effects on landscape.

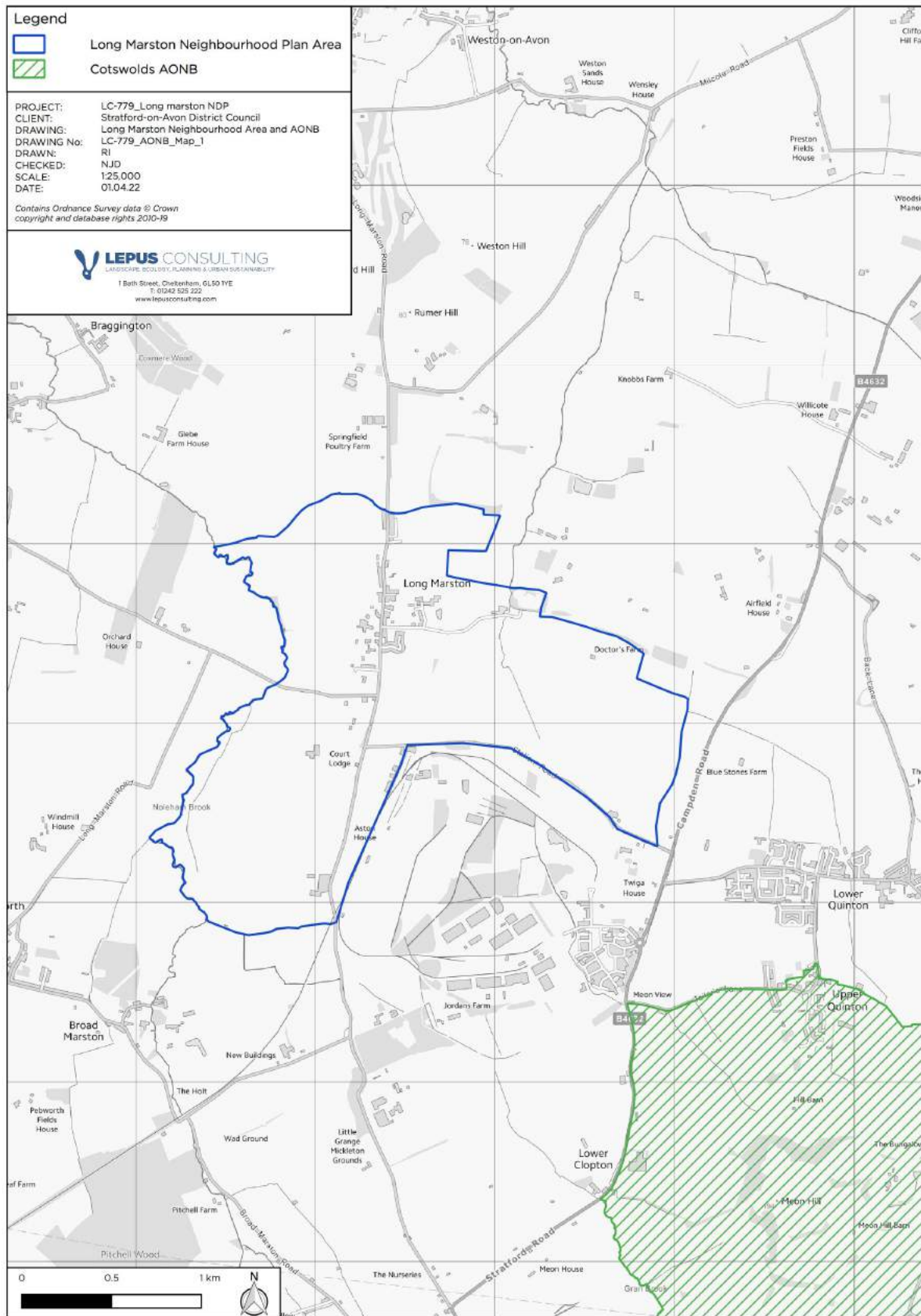


Figure 2.7: Location of the Cotswolds AONB in relation to the Long Marston Neighbourhood Area (source: Natural England)

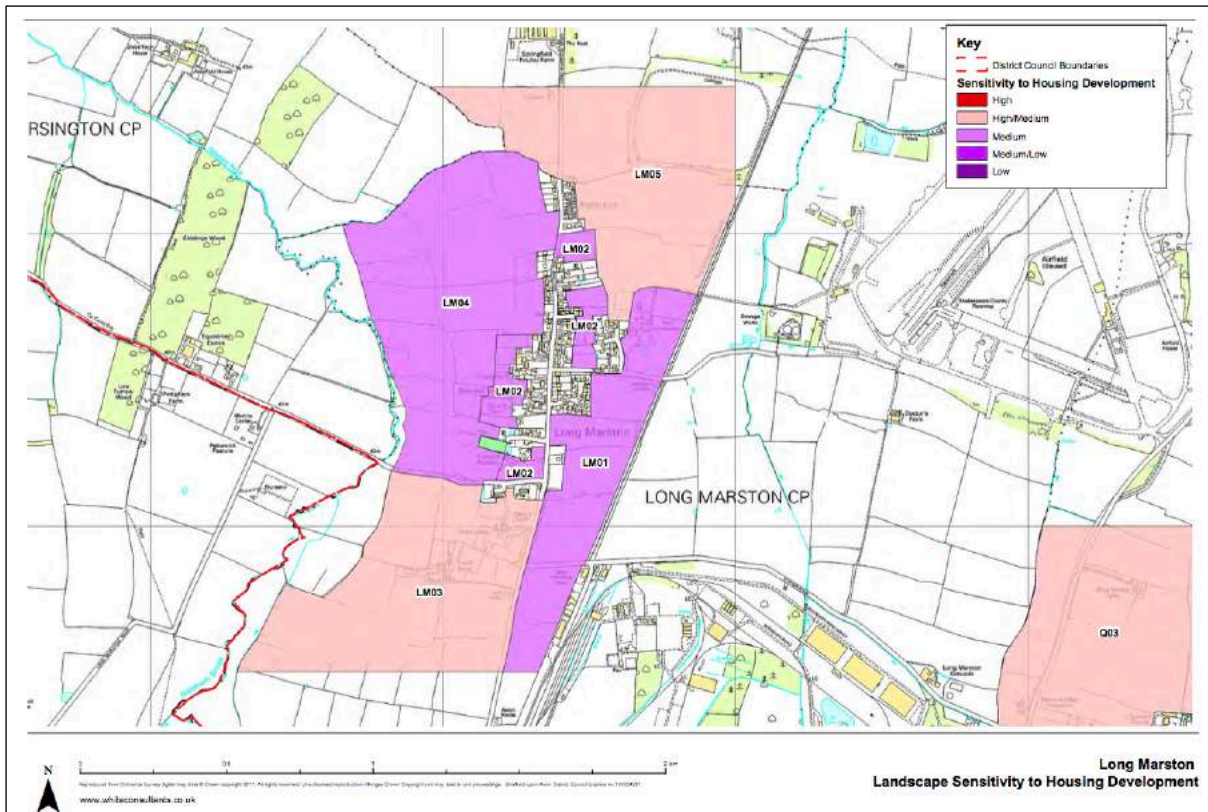


Figure 2.8: Landscape Sensitivity to Housing Development in Long Marston (source: White Consultants)

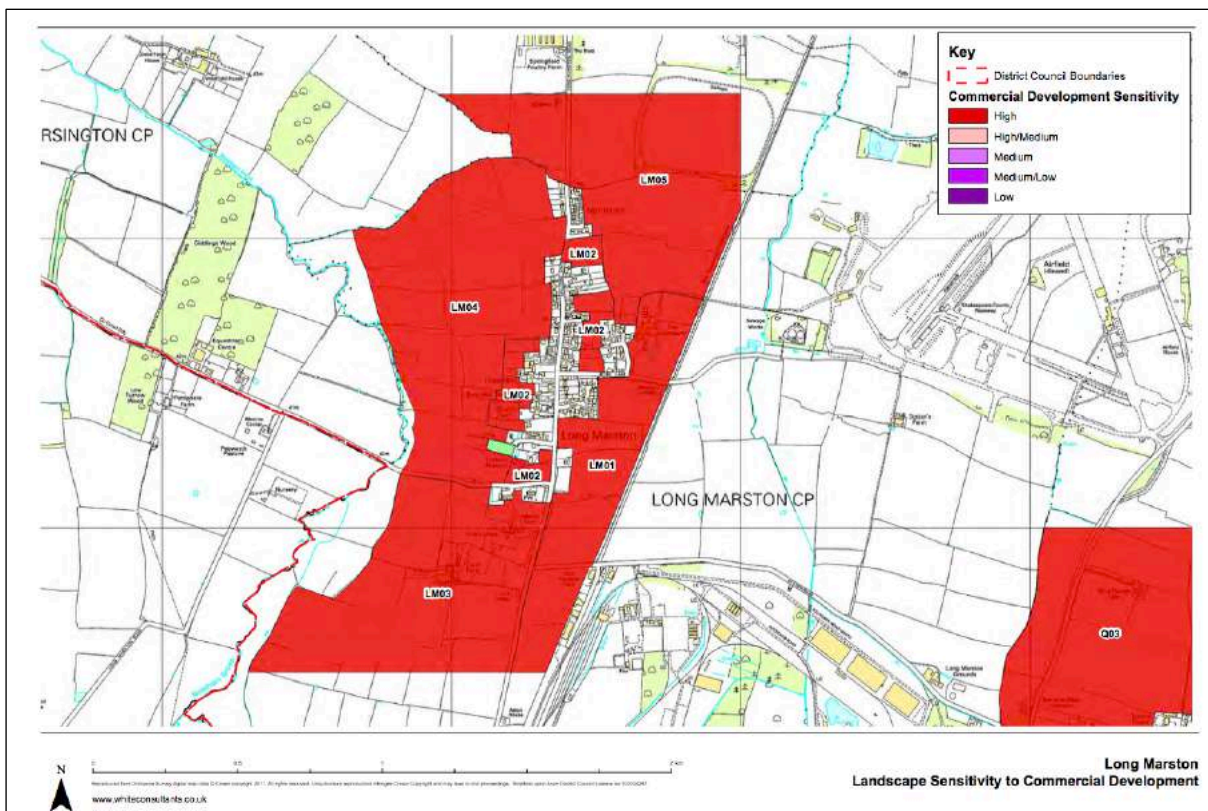


Figure 2.9: Landscape Sensitivity to Commercial Development in Long Marston (source: White Consultants)

3 HRA Screening Process

3.1 Habitats Regulations Assessment screening

- 3.1.1 HRA screening is a requirement of Regulation 105 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017²³.
- 3.1.2 HRA considers the potential adverse impacts of plans and projects on designated Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), classified Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and listed Ramsar sites. This is in accordance with the Habitats Directive²⁴ and the Birds Directive²⁵. SACs, SPAs and Ramsar sites are collectively known as the Natura 2000 network.
- 3.1.3 Should a development, plan or project be considered likely to have a significant impact on a Natura 2000 site, the HRA proceeds to an Appropriate Assessment. If likely significant effects cannot be avoided, mitigated or compensated to the extent that the conservation status of the EU site will not be undermined, the HRA proceeds to Imperative Reasons of Overriding Interest (IROPI).

3.2 Determination of likely significant effects

- 3.2.1 The nearest Natura 2000 site to the Long Marston Neighbourhood Area is Bredon Hill SAC, located approximately 17km south west of the Neighbourhood Area. No development is currently proposed within the NP. No impact pathways have been identified between the NP and this SAC, and due to the nature of the policies contained within the Core Strategy, there is unlikely to be any impact on this SAC. Based on the available information, a significant impact of the NP on any Natura 2000 site can therefore be objectively ruled out at this stage.

²³ Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. Available at: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2017/1012/regulation/105/made> [Date Accessed: 31/03/22]

²⁴ EU Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora. Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A31992L0043> [Date Accessed: 31/03/22]

²⁵ EU Council Directive 2009/147/EC on the Conservation of wild birds. Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32009L0147> [Date Accessed: 31/03/22]

4 Conclusions

4.1 SEA Screening outcome

4.1.1 This screening report has explored the potential effects of the proposed Pre-Submission Long Marston NP with a view to determining whether an environmental assessment is required under the SEA Directive.

4.1.2 In accordance with topics cited in Annex 1(f) of the SEA directive, significant effects on the environment are considered to be unlikely to occur as a result of the NP.

4.1.3 It is recommended that the Long Marston NP should **not** be screened into the SEA process.

4.2 HRA Screening outcome

4.2.1 This screening report has explored the potential effects of the proposed Long Marston NP with a view to determining whether a habitats regulations assessment is required.

4.2.2 It is recommended that the Long Marston NP should **not** be screened into the HRA process.

4.3 Consultation

4.3.1 This report has been subject to consultations with Natural England, Environment Agency and Historic England. Their comments are presented in **Appendix B**.

Appendix A: Long Marston NP Policies

Policy Reference	Policy Name
Landscape and the Natural Environment	
Policy L&E 1	Conservation and Environmental Sustainability
Policy L&E 2	Protection of Existing Green Infrastructure and Wildlife Corridors
Policy L&E 3	Valued Landscapes, Vistas and Skylines
Policy L&E 4	Maintaining Footpaths and Access to the Countryside
Policy L&E 5	Climate Emergency
Community	
Policy Com 1	Protecting Community Facilities and Assets
Policy Com 2	Proposed New Community Building
Infrastructure	
Policy Inf 1	Business and Employment
Policy Inf 2	Foul Water Drainage
Policy Inf 3	Flooding – Pluvial Flooding
Policy Inf 5	Community Safety
Policy Inf 6	Communications
Policy HA 1	Heritage and Archaeological Assets
Development	
Policy Dev 1	Maintaining the Rural Character
Policy Dev 2	Ensuring Appropriate High-Quality Development
Policy Dev 3	Preserving the Separate Identity of Long Marston
Policy Dev 4	Housing for Local People
Policy Dev 5	Car Parking
Policy Dev 6	Future Housing

Appendix B: Consultation Responses



Our ref: PL00771346
22 April 2022

Dear [REDACTED]

LONG MARSTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN- SEA AND HRA SCREENING

Thank you for your consultation and the invitation to comment on the SEA and HRA Screening Document for the above Neighbourhood Plan.

For the purposes of consultations on SEA Screening Opinions, Historic England confines its advice to the question, "Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment?" in respect of our area of concern, cultural heritage.

Our comments are based on the information supplied with the screening request. 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 the 'SEA' Directive], Historic England concurs with your view that the preparation of a Strategic Environmental Assessment is not required.

Regarding HRA Historic England does not disagree with your conclusions but would defer to the opinions of the other statutory consultees.

The views of the other statutory consultation bodies should be taken into account before the overall decision on the need for a SEA is made. If a decision is made to undertake a SEA, please note that Historic England has published guidance on Sustainability Appraisal / Strategic Environmental Assessment and the Historic Environment that is relevant to both local and neighbourhood planning and available at: [<https://www.historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/sustainability-appraisal-and-strategic-environmental-assessment-advice-note-8/>](https://www.historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/sustainability-appraisal-and-strategic-environmental-assessment-advice-note-8/)

I trust the above comments will be of help in taking forward the Neighbourhood Plan.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Historic Places Advisor
[REDACTED]



THE FOUNDRY 82 GRANVILLE STREET BIRMINGHAM B1 2LH

Telephone 0121 625 6888
HistoricEngland.org.uk



Date: 26 April 2022
Our ref: 388619
Your ref: Long Marston Neighbourhood Plan



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Crewe Business Park
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Cheshire
CW1 6GJ

T 0300 060 3900

██████████
██████████
BY EMAIL ONLY
██

Dear ██████████

Long Marston Neighbourhood Plan – SEA & HRA Screening

Thank you for your consultation on the above dated and received by Natural England on 07 April 2022.

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.

Screening Request: Strategic Environmental Assessment

It is our advice, on the basis of the material supplied with the consultation, that, in so far as our strategic environmental interests (including but not limited to statutory designated sites, landscapes and protected species, geology and soils) are concerned, that there are unlikely to be significant environmental effects from the proposed plan.

Neighbourhood Plan

Guidance on the assessment of Neighbourhood Plans, in light of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (as amended), is contained within the [National Planning Practice Guidance](#). The guidance highlights three triggers that may require the production of an SEA, for instance where:

- a neighbourhood plan allocates sites for development
- the neighbourhood area contains sensitive natural or heritage assets that may be affected by the proposals in the plan
- the neighbourhood plan may have significant environmental effects that have not already been considered and dealt with through a sustainability appraisal of the Local Plan.

We have checked our records and based on the information provided, we can confirm that in our view the proposals contained within the plan will not have significant effects on sensitive sites that Natural England has a statutory duty to protect.

We are not aware of significant populations of protected species which are likely to be affected by the policies / proposals within the plan. It remains the case, however, that the responsible authority should provide information supporting this screening decision, sufficient to assess whether protected species are likely to be affected.

Notwithstanding this advice, Natural England does not routinely maintain locally specific data on all potential environmental assets. As a result the responsible authority should raise environmental issues that we have not identified on local or national biodiversity action plan species and/or habitats, local wildlife sites or local landscape character, with its own ecological and/or landscape advisers, local

record centre, recording society or wildlife body on the local landscape and biodiversity receptors that may be affected by this plan, before determining whether an SA/SEA is necessary.

Please note that Natural England reserves the right to provide further comments on the environmental assessment of the plan beyond this SEA/SA screening stage, should the responsible authority seek our views on the scoping or environmental report stages. This includes any third party appeal against any screening decision you may make.

Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening

Natural England agrees with the report's conclusions that the Long Marston Neighbourhood Plan would not be likely to result in a significant effect on any European Site, either alone or in combination and therefore no further assessment work would be required.

For any new consultations, or to provide further information on this consultation please send your correspondences to consultations@naturalengland.org.uk.

Yours sincerely


Consultations Team

Ecological Services

Green Infrastructure

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

Landscape Character Assessment

Habitats Regulations Assessment

Strategic Environmental Assessment

Sustainability Appraisal



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