

Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulations Assessment of the Long Itchington, Bascote and Bascote Heath Neighbourhood Plan

SEA and HRA Screening Document

July 2020



LEPUS CONSULTING
LANDSCAPE, ECOLOGY, PLANNING & URBAN SUSTAINABILITY

Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulations Assessment of the Long Itchington, Bascote & Bascote Heath Neighbourhood Plan

SEA and HRA Screening Document

LC-630	Document Control Box
Client	Stratford-on-Avon District Council
Report Title	Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulations Assessment of the Long Itchington, Bascote & Bascote Heath Neighbourhood Plan: SEA and HRA Screening Document
Filename	LC-630_Long_Itchington_Screening_7_100720CW.docx
Date	July 2020
Author	CW
Reviewed	LB
Approved	ND

About this report & notes for readers

Lepus Consulting Ltd (Lepus) has prepared this report for the use of Stratford-on-Avon District Council. There are a number of limitations that should be borne in mind when considering the results and conclusions of this report. No party should alter or change this report whatsoever without written permission from Lepus.

© Lepus Consulting Ltd

The conclusions below are based on the best available information, including information that is publicly available. No attempt to verify these secondary data sources has been made and they have been assumed to be accurate as published.

This report was prepared between April and July 2020 and is subject to and limited by the information available during this time. This report has been prepared with reasonable skill,

care and diligence within the terms of the contract with the client. Lepus Consulting accepts no responsibility to the client and third parties of any matters outside the scope of this report. Third parties to whom this report or any part thereof is made known rely upon the report at their own risk.

Client comments can be sent to Lepus using the following address.

1 Bath Street,
Cheltenham
Gloucestershire
GL50 1YE

Telephone: 01242 525222

E-mail: enquiries@lepusconsulting.com

www.lepusconsulting.com

Contents

1	Introduction.....	1
1.1	This report.....	1
1.2	Strategic Environmental Assessment.....	2
1.3	Habitat Regulations Assessment.....	2
1.4	The Long Itchington Neighbourhood Plan.....	4
1.5	The Parish of Long Itchington.....	8
1.6	Relationship with the Core Strategy.....	9
2	The Screening Process.....	10
2.1	Strategic Environmental Assessment screening.....	10
2.2	The screening process.....	10
2.3	Relevance to the SEA Directive.....	13
2.4	Determination of likely significant effects.....	14
2.5	Biodiversity, flora and fauna.....	15
2.6	Population and human health.....	18
2.7	Transport and accessibility.....	19
2.8	Soil, water and air.....	20
2.9	Climatic factors.....	25
2.10	Material assets.....	26
2.11	Cultural heritage.....	26
2.12	Landscape.....	30
3	HRA Screening Process.....	34
3.1	Habitats Regulations Assessment screening.....	34
3.2	Determination of likely significant effects.....	34
4	Conclusions.....	35
4.1	SEA Screening outcome.....	35
4.2	HRA Screening outcome.....	35
4.3	Consultation.....	35
	Appendix A: Long Itchington NP Policies.....	36
	Appendix B: Consultation Responses.....	37

List of Figures

Figure 1.1: Long Itchington Parish Boundary (source: Long Itchington NP).....	5
Figure 1.2: Long Itchington Built-Up Area Boundary (source: Long Itchington NP).....	6
Figure 2.1: Application of the SEA Directive to plans and programmes.....	11
Figure 2.2: The SSSIs and corresponding Impact Risk Zones around Long Itchington Parish (source: Natural England).....	16
Figure 2.3: Local Wildlife Sites (LWSs) located in and around Long Itchington Parish (source: Stratford-on-Avon Council).....	17
Figure 2.4: Agricultural Land Classification of Long Itchington (source: Natural England).....	22
Figure 2.5: Flood Zones in and around Long Itchington Parish (source: Environment Agency).....	23
Figure 2.6: The extent of surface water flood risk within Long Itchington Parish (source: Environment Agency).....	24
Figure 2.7: Listed Buildings located in and around Long Itchington Parish (source: Historic England).	28
Figure 2.8: Long Itchington Conservation Area (source: Stratford-on-Avon District Council).	29
Figure 2.9: Valued landscape and views within Long Itchington (source: Long Itchington NP)	31
Figure 2.10: Long Itchington landscape sensitivity to housing development (source: White Consultants).....	32
Figure 2.11: Long Itchington landscape sensitivity to commercial development (source: White Consultants).....	33

List of Tables

Table 2.1: Establishing whether there is a need for SEA.....	12
Table 2.2: Long Itchington NP and the SEA Directive.....	13

Acronyms

A&E	Accident and Emergency
ALC	Agricultural Land Classification
AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
BMV	Best and most versatile
BUAB	Built-Up Area Boundary
C of E	Church of England
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EU	European Union
GP	General Practitioner
HRA	Habitats Regulations Assessment
IROPI	Imperative Reasons of Overriding Interest
IRZ	Impact Risk Zone
LWS	Local Wildlife Site
NCA	National Character Area
NHS	National Health Service
NP	Neighbourhood Plan
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
ODPM	Office of the Deputy Prime Minister
PP	Plan or Programme
PPG	Planning Policy Guidance
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SPA	Special Protection Area
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest
SuDS	Sustainable Drainage System

1 Introduction

1.1 This report

- 1.1.1 This screening report has been prepared to determine whether the Long Itchington Neighbourhood Plan 2011 – 2031 (hereafter referred to as the NP) should be subject to a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), in accordance with the European Directive 2001/42/EC (SEA Directive)¹ and the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (SEA Regulations)². This report also informs the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) of the NP in accordance with European Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (the Habitats Directive)³ and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (the Habitats Regulations)⁴.
- 1.1.2 This report screens the Long Itchington, Bascote and Bascote Heath Neighbourhood Plan, March 2020⁵.

¹ SEA Directive. Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32001L0042&from=en> [Date Accessed: 14/04/20]

² SEA Regulations. Available at: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2004/1633/contents/made> [Date Accessed: 14/04/20]

³ Official Journal of the European Communities (1992). Council Directive 92 /43 /EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora.

⁴ Habitats Regulations. Available at: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2017/1012/contents/made> [Date Accessed: 14/04/20]

⁵ Long Itchington Parish Council (2020) Long Itchington, Bascote and Bascote Heath Neighbourhood Plan, March 2020

1.2 Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 1.2.1 The basis for SEA legislation is European Directive 2001/42/EC. This was 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'⁶ and the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) 'Strategic environmental assessment requirements for neighbourhood plans' section⁷.
- 1.2.2 Under the requirements of the European Directive 2001/42/EC and the SEA Regulations, certain types of plans that set the framework for the consent of future development projects must be subject to an environmental assessment.

1.3 Habitat Regulations Assessment

- 1.3.1 HRA is the process by which potential effects of a plan or project on the conservation objectives of European sites designated under the Habitats⁸ and Birds⁹ Directives are assessed. These sites form a system of internationally important sites throughout Europe known collectively as the 'Natura 2000 Network'.

⁶ ODPM (2005) A Practical Guide to Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/7657/practicalguidesea.pdf [Date Accessed: 14/04/20]

⁷ MHCLG (2019) Planning Practice Guidance: Strategic environmental assessment and sustainability appraisal. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/strategic-environmental-assessment-and-sustainability-appraisal#strategic-environmental-assessment-requirements-for-neighbourhood-plans> [Date Accessed: 14/04/20]

⁸ Official Journal of the European Communities (1992). Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora.

⁹ Official Journal of the European Communities (2009). Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds.

-
- 1.3.2 European sites provide valuable ecological infrastructure for the protection of rare, endangered and/or vulnerable natural habitats and species of exceptional importance within the European Union (EU). These sites consist of Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), designated under European Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (the Habitats Directive), and Special Protection Areas (SPAs), classified under European Directive 2009/147/EC on the conservation of wild birds (the Birds Directive). Additionally, paragraph 176 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)¹⁰ requires that sites listed under the Ramsar Convention (The Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, especially as Waterfowl Habitat) are to be given the same protection as fully designated European sites.
- 1.3.3 The application of HRA to land use plans is a requirement of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), the UK's transposition of European Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (the Habitats Directive).
- 1.3.4 A Neighbourhood Development Plan provides a framework for deciding applications for project consents and influences decision makers on the outcome of applications for project consents. HRA applies to plans and projects, including all Neighbourhood Development Plans in England and Wales. The Habitats Regulations (paragraph 106) require that *"a qualifying body which submits a proposal for a neighbourhood development plan must provide such information as the competent authority may reasonably require for the purposes of the assessment under regulation 105 or to enable it to determine whether that assessment is required"*.

¹⁰ MHCLG (2019) National Planning Policy Framework. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2> [Date Accessed: 14/04/20]

1.4 The Long Itchington Neighbourhood Plan

- 1.4.1 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 Plan (NP); a new tier in planning policy which enables local people to shape the development of the community in which they live.
- 1.4.2 On 7th October 2014, Stratford-on-Avon District Council formally approved the boundary of the designated neighbourhood area of Long Itchington (see **Figure 1.1**).
- 1.4.3 The NP offers a picture of the Parish and a vision for the 20-year period between 2011 and 2031. The vision within the NP is to *"improve and protect the quality of life for all local people and meet their housing, education, enterprise and employment, leisure and cultural needs"*.
- 1.4.4 The NP has designated a Built-Up Area Boundary (BUAB) for Long Itchington village (see **Figure 1.2**).

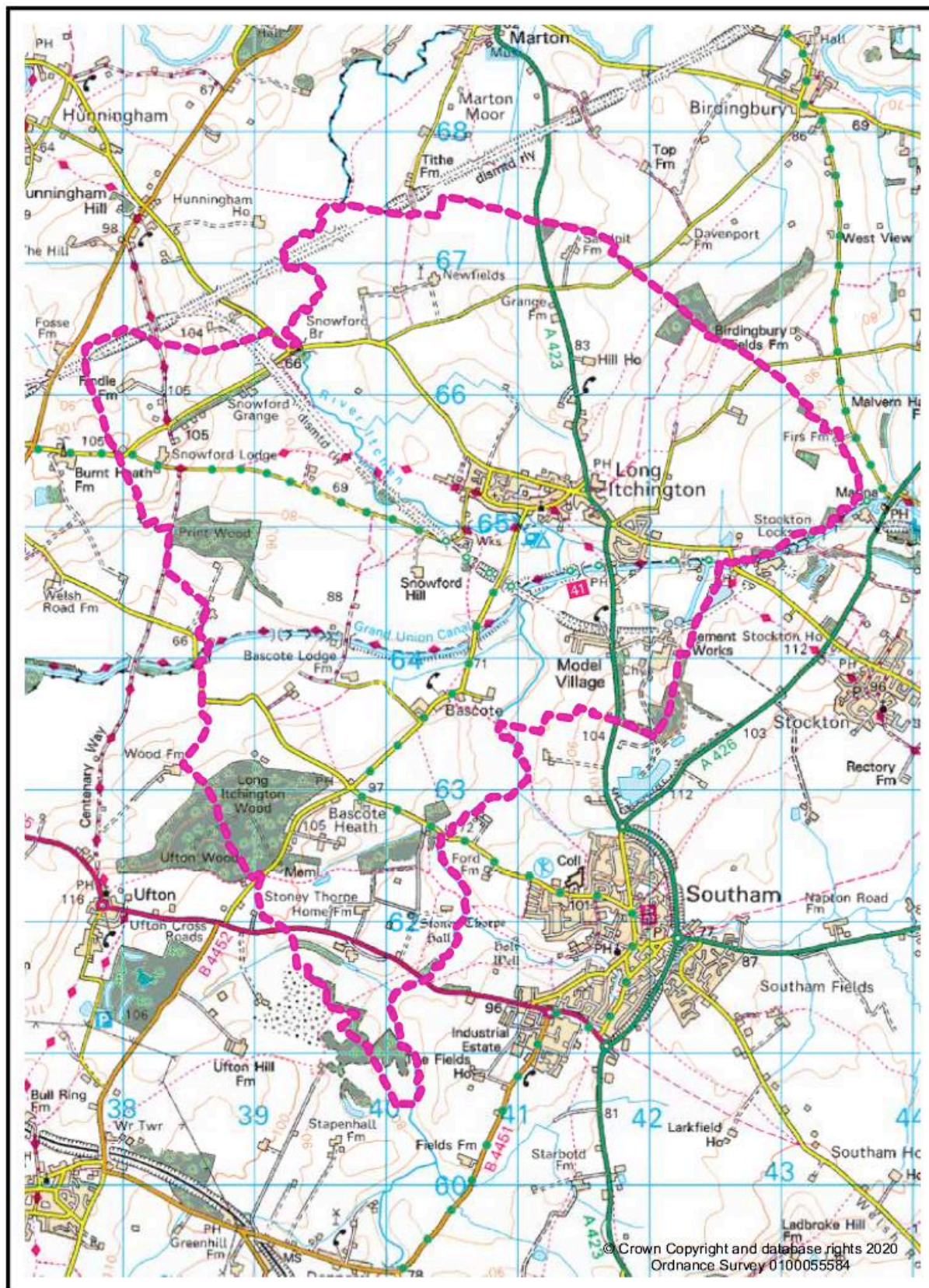


Figure 1.1: Long Itchington Parish Boundary (source: Long Itchington NP)

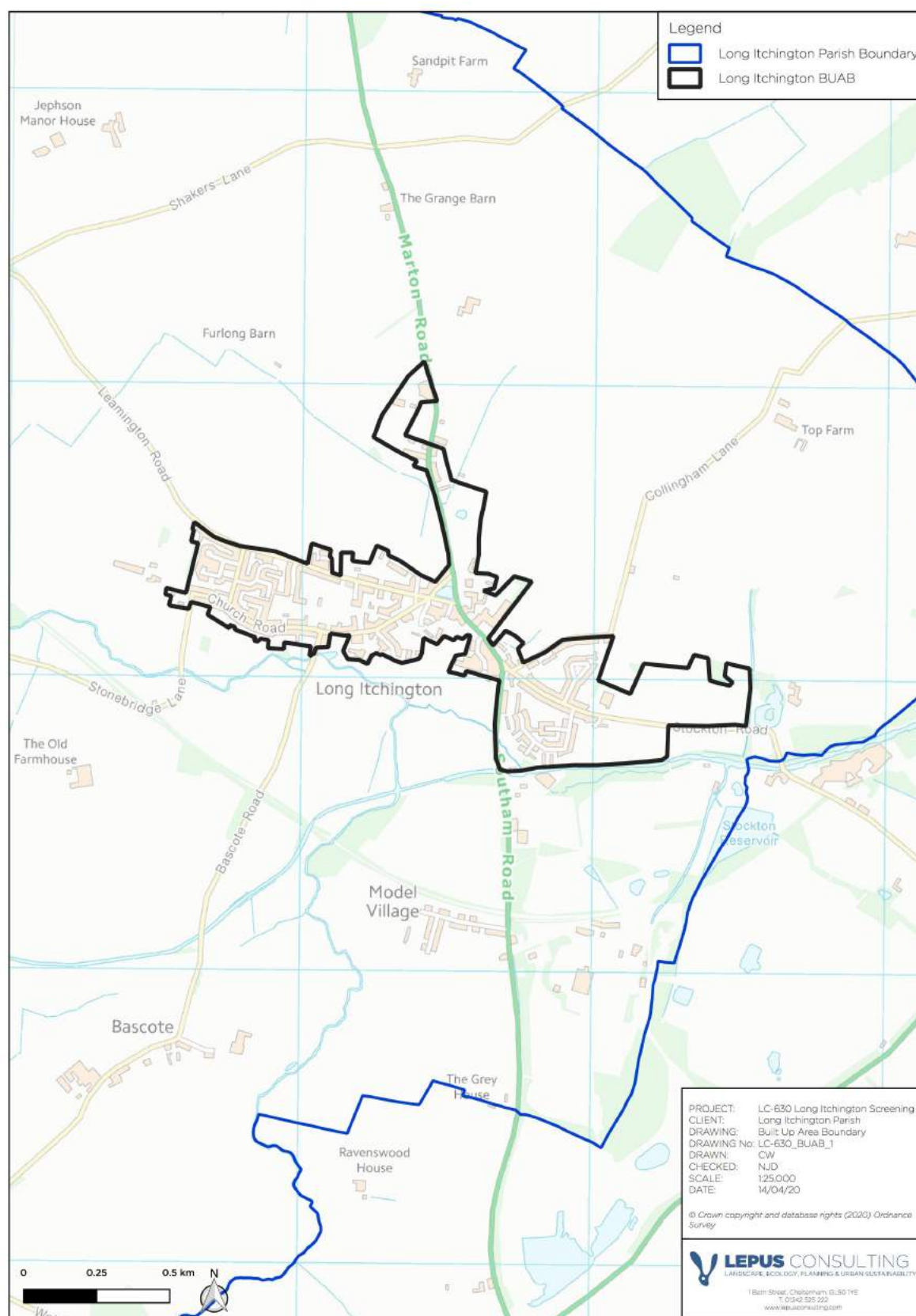


Figure 1.2: Long Itchington Built-Up Area Boundary (source: Long Itchington NP)

-
- 1.4.5 The NP must also have regard to existing policy, including:
- The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)¹¹ and related Planning Practice Guidance advice¹²; and
 - Policies within the Stratford-on-Avon District Core Strategy¹³.
- 1.4.6 A full list of the NP policies is presented in **Appendix A**. These are associated with the NP's key principals as follows:
- Housing;
 - Built Environment;
 - Employment and Business;
 - Natural Environment;
 - Community; and
 - Sport, Leisure and Recreation.

Consultation

- 1.4.7 The NP is subject to public consultation, which provides an opportunity for the public and local organisations to comment on the NP. Statutory consultees will also be invited to comment. After consultation, responses will be taken into account and used to prepare a 'submission draft' of the NP.
- 1.4.8 The submission version of the NP is then subject to examination 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, gain statutory status and become part of the Development Plan for Stratford-on-Avon District, alongside the Core Strategy.

¹¹ MHCLG (2019) National Planning Policy Framework. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2> [Date Accessed: 14/04/20]

¹² MHCLG (2018) Planning Practice Guidance. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance> [Date Accessed: 14/04/20]

¹³ 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: 14/04/20]

1.5 The Parish of Long Itchington

- 1.5.1 Long Itchington is a Civil Parish located in the Stratford-on-Avon District of Warwickshire. The Parish comprises approximately 1,969 hectares of primarily rural landscape. The Parish is located to north of Southam, and approximately 6km east of Leamington Spa, 11km south west of Rugby, 13km south east of Coventry and 20km north east of Banbury. According to the 2011 Census, the Parish had a population of 2,013.
- 1.5.2 Long Itchington village is the main settlement within the Parish, but there are also smaller settlements including Model Village, Bascote and Bascote Heath. Model Village was developed to house the workers of the nearby cement works, now the Cemex site. This site now contains a large industrial complex, with areas of quarry extraction.
- 1.5.3 Long Itchington is named after the River Itchen which passes through the village. The A423 passes through the centre of the Parish and Long Itchington village. The Grand Union Canal runs east-west through the Parish. The disused railway line between Leamington Spa and Weedon, which crosses the Parish, has been converted into part of the Sustrans cycle routes 41 and 48. In addition to the cycle paths, there are approximately 12 miles of public footpaths and bridleways throughout the Parish, including the canal towpath.
- 1.5.4 A section of the future HS2 route is expected to pass through the south of the Parish. The current proposed route is anticipated to impact road access to Leamington Spa.
- 1.5.5 Long Itchington is classified as a Category 1 Local Service Village in Stratford-on-Avon District Council's Core Strategy¹⁴.

¹⁴ 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: 14/04/20]

1.6 Relationship with the Core Strategy

- 1.6.1 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 Long Itchington Parish. As noted above, once adopted, the NP will form part of the Development Plan for the District, alongside the Core Strategy and other development plan documents and supplementary planning documents.
- 1.6.2 The NP sets out a series of policies that, once made, will be used to guide development and help to determine future planning applications. This important legal position means that the NP has to have regard to national planning policy and needs to be in 'general conformity' with the strategic planning policies set out in the Stratford-on-Avon District Core Strategy 2011-2031.
- 1.6.3 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 Itchington NP and the Stratford-on-Avon District Core Strategy will form part of the development plan for the area once the NP is 'made'.
- 1.6.4 Paragraph 13 of the NPPF¹⁵ 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"*.
- 1.6.5 Should the NP be significantly refined in the future, a re-screening of any significant amendments should be undertaken for the purposes of the SEA and HRA screening processes.

¹⁵ MHCLG (2019) National Planning Policy Framework. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2> [Date Accessed: 14/04/20]

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. The objective of the SEA Directive is to provide for a high level of environmental protection 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 Directive, an environmental assessment is carried out for 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 will have significant environmental effects using the criteria set out in Annex II of the SEA Directive and 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 NPs, must publish a statement, setting out its decision. If they determine that an SEA is not required, the statement must include the reasons for this.

2.2 The screening process

2.2.1 The Localism Act 2011 requires NPs to be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the adopted development plan for the local area. In this instance, the NP must be in general conformity with the Stratford-on-Avon District Core Strategy 2011-2031.

2.2.2 Paragraph 009 of the PPG 'Neighbourhood Planning' section states:

"A draft neighbourhood plan or Order must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan in force if it is to meet the basic condition".

2.2.3 **Figure 2.1** presents a diagram prepared by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM). This shows the application of the SEA process to plans and programmes. The sequential approach in the flow diagram has been used to screen the Long Itchington NP.

2.2.4 **Table 2.1** uses the questions presented in **Figure 2.1** to establish whether there is a need for SEA of the Long Itchington NP.

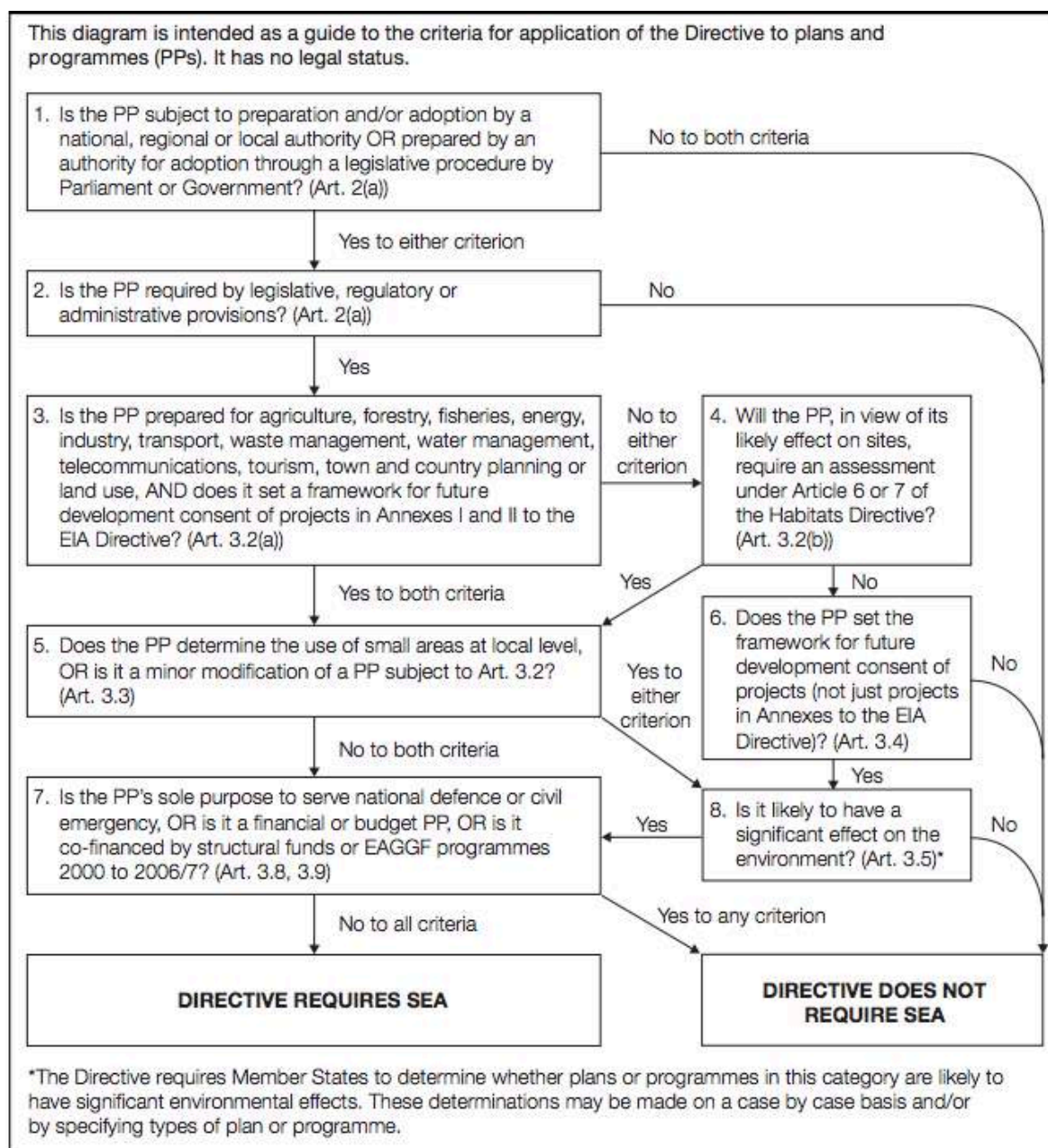


Figure 2.1: Application of the SEA Directive to plans and programmes¹⁶.

¹⁶ 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: 14/04/20]

Table 2.1: *Establishing whether there is a need for SEA.*

Questions raised in Figure 2.1	Y/N	Reason
Q1: 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 will form part of the statutory development plan for Stratford-on-Avon District.
Q2: 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 will become part of the statutory development plan for Stratford-on-Avon District, meaning it should continue to be screened under the SEA Directive.
Q3: 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))	Yes	The NP is a land use plan and sets the framework for future development consents within the Long Itchington Neighbourhood Area. The NP is unlikely to set a framework for consent of projects in Annex I projects but could set the framework for Annex II projects of the EIA Directive.
Q4: 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 .
Q5: Does the PP determine the use of small areas at local level OR is it a minor modification of a PP subject to Article 3.2? (Art 3.3)	Yes	The NP is a land use plan and sets the framework for future development consents within the Long Itchington Neighbourhood Area.
Q6: 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.
Q7: 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	The NP is not the type of plan listed in question 7.
Q8: Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment? (Art. 3.5)	No	See Section 2.5 – 2.12 and Chapter 4 .

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 is likely to 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 Itchington 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 Itchington Parish 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	The NP contains policies that aim to conserve important aspects of the built and natural environment, as well as conserving and enhancing heritage assets and valued landscapes and views (see Appendix A).
(d) environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme	No environmental problems 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 Itchington NP 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 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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (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 will adversely impact the special natural characteristics or cultural heritage features within the Neighbourhood Area. The NP is 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**.

2.5 Biodiversity, flora and fauna

- 2.5.1 There are no European designated biodiversity sites located within 20km of Long Itchington Parish. The nearest European site is 'Ensor's Pool' SAC, located approximately 23.3km to the north of the Parish. European sites are discussed further in **Chapter 3**.
- 2.5.2 The 'Long Itchington and Ufton Woods' Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) is located partly within the Parish to south west (see **Figure 2.2**). 'Stockton Railway Cutting and Quarry' SSSI is located approximately 230m east of the Parish. The Long Itchington BUAB is located within an SSSI Impact Risk Zone (IRZ) which indicates that residential and non-residential development would not be expected to result in adverse impacts on surrounding SSSIs.
- 2.5.3 'Stockton Railway Cutting' LNR is located approximately 250m to the east of Long Itchington Parish, 'Ufton Fields' LNR is located approximately 550m to the south west and 'Hall Farm Meadow, Hunningham' LNR is located approximately 1.5km to the north west.
- 2.5.4 There are several stands of ancient woodland within the Parish, including 'Print Wood', 'Long Itchington Wood', 'Thorpe Rough' and 'Debdale Wood and Spinney'.
- 2.5.5 'Lias Line' Local Wildlife Site (LWS) crosses the Parish from north west to south east. 'Rugby-Leamington Disused Railway' LWS and 'Rugby Leamington Disused Railway Leamington Extension' LWS pass through the Parish to the north. Other LWSs located within the Parish include 'Long Itchington Quarry' LWS, 'Stockton Reservoir' LWS and 'Stockton Locks Quarry' LWS. Areas of deciduous woodland priority habitat primarily coincide with these LWSs.
- 2.5.6 Policy NE3 of the NP helps to ensure that development proposed within the Parish protects, and where possible, enhances the natural environment. This includes the retention of natural watercourses and their wider corridors and the use of appropriate habitat buffers. The policy states that *"development will not be supported that would adversely affect or put the sustainability of these features at risk"*.
- 2.5.7 Overall, the Long Itchington NP is not expected to lead to any likely significant effects on the biodiversity, flora and fauna within the Plan area.

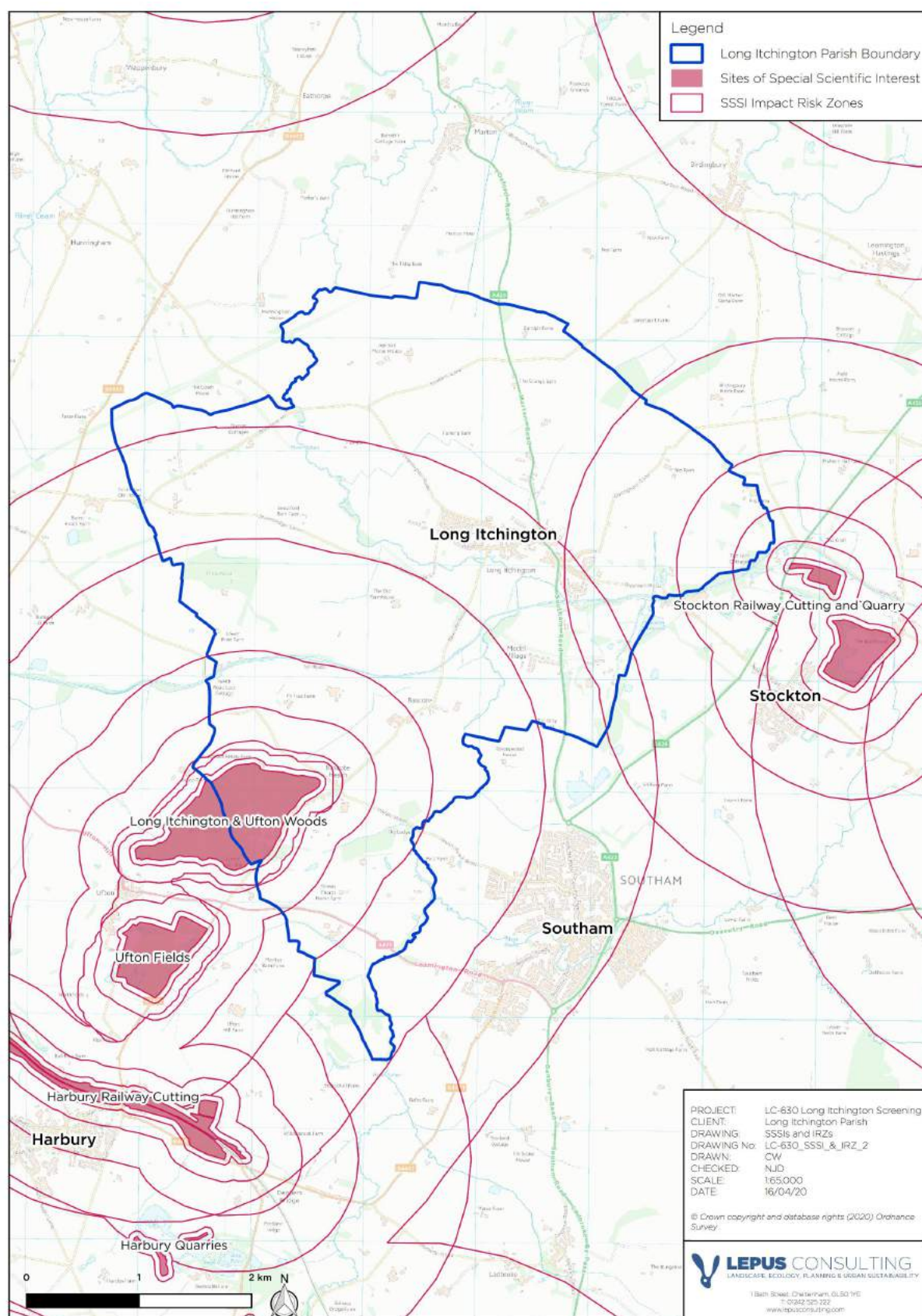


Figure 2.2: The SSSIs and corresponding Impact Risk Zones around Long Itchington Parish (source: Natural England)

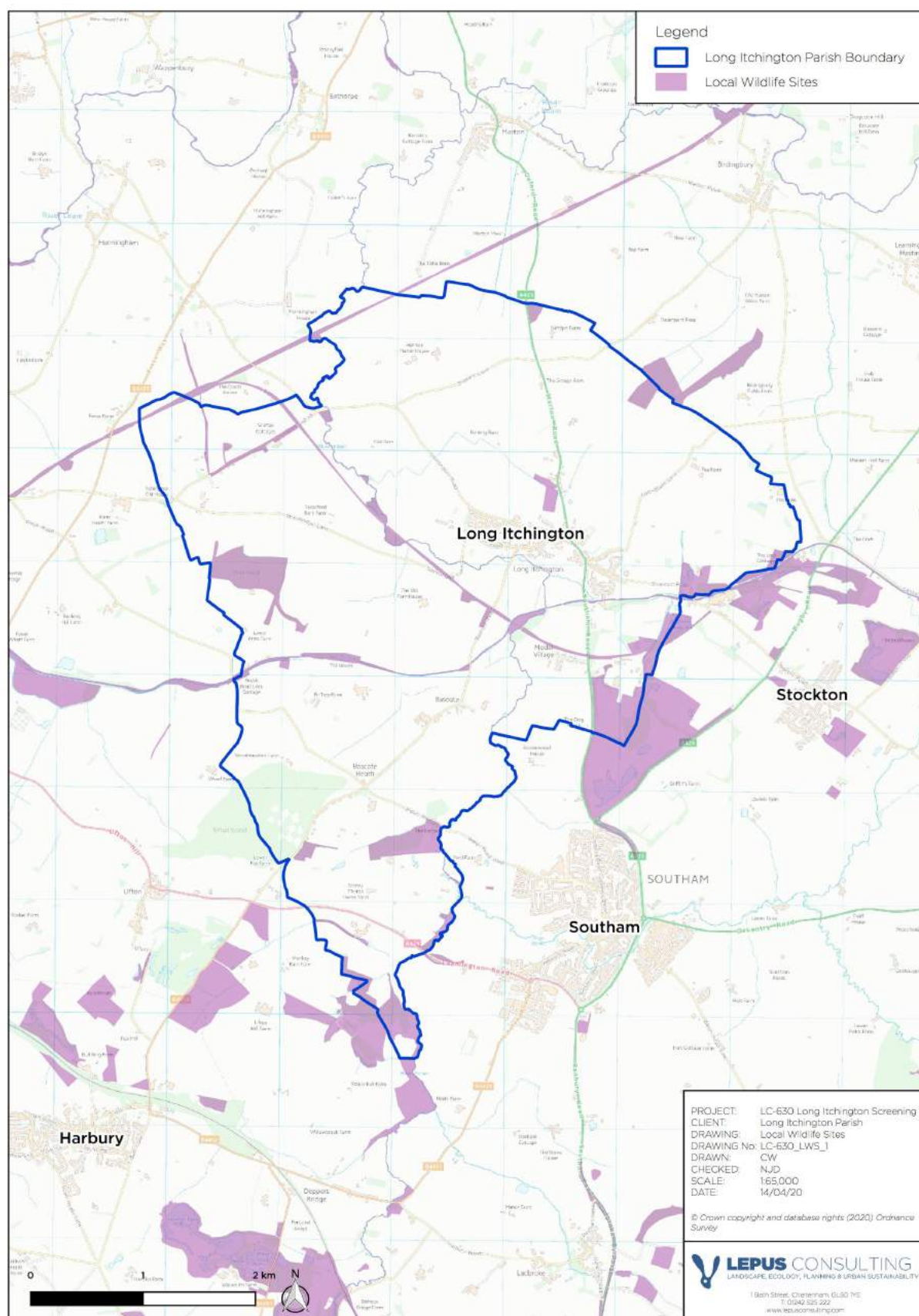


Figure 2.3: Local Wildlife Sites (LWSs) located in and around Long Itchington Parish (source: Stratford-on-Avon Council)

2.6 Population and human health

- 2.6.1 Long Itchington C of E Primary School is located to the east of Long Itchington village. The nearest secondary school to the Parish is Southam College, located less than 1km to the east of the Parish boundary. Convenience stores within the Parish include Co-operative Food and F&M Stores, both located in Long Itchington.
- 2.6.2 Some of the community assets within Long Itchington include Holy Trinity C of E Church, Long Itchington Community Centre, Long Itchington Congregational Church and Long Itchington Tennis and Cricket Club. Other community assets include Long Itchington Diner, Water Margin Chinese Takeaway, Dallas Burston Hotel and Polo Ground, plus several B&Bs and public houses. Policies C1 and C2 aim to protect existing community facilities and support the development of appropriate new community facilities within the Parish, which bring benefits to the local economy. The policies also help to ensure that residents are located within a sustainable distance to essential services, and as a consequence, reduce the need to travel by car.
- 2.6.3 To the south of the Parish in Southam situates many key services, including Southam GP Surgery and Southam Leisure Centre. Warwick Hospital, located approximately 9km to the west of Long Itchington, is the closest hospital with an A&E department.
- 2.6.4 Sustrans Routes 41 and 48 pass through the Parish, providing cycle links to Southam, Leamington Spa and Rugby. These cycle routes, along with the numerous public footpaths and bridleways situated within the Parish, can be expected to help local residents achieve active and healthy lifestyles. In addition, 16 Local Green Spaces have been designated under Policy NE2 of the NP. Policies SLR1, SLR2 and SLR3 aim to ensure residents within Long Itchington have good access to a range of outdoor activities, such as sports grounds, children's play areas and allotments. Access to these facilities is expected to help encourage active lifestyles and exercise, whilst also having benefits to residents' mental health.

-
- 2.6.5 Policy H1 aims to ensure that future development within the Parish is located within the identified BUAB (see **Figure 1.2**). Proposed development outside of the BUAB is considered to be in the open countryside and is controlled by Policy AS.10 *Countryside and Villages* of the Core Strategy. By directing development towards the BUAB, it is likely that new residents to the Parish will be located in sustainable proximity to existing services, including schools and food stores.
- 2.6.6 Policies H2, H3, H4 and H5 aim to ensure that future development within the Parish is of a suitable mix and tenure to meet the identified needs of local residents, including affordable housing and custom-build plots.
- 2.6.7 Policy EB1 supports the development or expansion of local employment opportunities, provided that development is in accordance with other policies set out in the NP. Policy EB2 also supports the development of tourism, which can be expected to provide local employment opportunities and benefits to the local economy.
- 2.6.8 Overall, the NP is not expected to lead to any 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 interact with a number of the topics such as population and human health, material assets and climatic factors.
- 2.7.2 There is one bus service which serves the Parish, with routes to Leamington Spa and Rugby. There are no railway stations within the Parish, with the closest station being Leamington Spa Station, located approximately 6.6km to the west. Other railways stations nearby include Coventry and Rugby with services to London.
- 2.7.3 The A423 passes through the Parish from the north to south. A small section of the A425 passes through the Parish to the south, and the A426 passes to the east of the Parish boundary. Junction 12 of the M40 is located approximately 6.3km south west of the Parish and Junction 1 of the M45 is approximately 6.3km north east of the Parish. From these roads, residents will have good access via the road network to Coventry, Banbury, Warwick, Daventry and nationally.

-
- 2.7.4 Policy CS.26 of the Stratford-on-Avon Core Strategy makes provision for *“contributions towards local public transport services and support for community transport initiatives”*.
- 2.7.5 Policy BE4 of the NP requires new developments to include secure cycle storage and promote sustainable transport within the Neighbourhood Area. Policy NE5 of the NP aims to ensure development proposals are designed to minimise or mitigate potential air and noise pollution, with particular focus on traffic-related pollution.
- 2.7.6 The NP and Core Strategy policies are expected to help prevent adverse impacts in regard to transport and accessibility occurring due to future development within Long Itchington. 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 The majority of Long Itchington Parish is situated on ALC Grade 3 land (see **Figure 2.4**). Areas to the north of the Parish are situated on ALC Grade 2 land, with some areas primarily associated with the River Itchen on Grade 4 ALC land. The majority of the BUAB is situated on Grade 3 ALC land. Future development within the BUAB could potentially result in the loss of some of the local area’s best and most versatile (BMV) land.
- 2.8.2 The A423 passes through the Parish and through the BUAB. As a result, development within a small proportion of the BUAB is likely to be located within 200m of this main road¹⁷.
- 2.8.3 The River Itchen and Grand Union Canal pass through the Parish. There are large areas of Flood Zone 2 and 3 associated with the River Itchen, and a small area to the south west of the BUAB is within these two flood zones (see **Figure 2.5**). In addition, surface water flood risk is present across most of the Plan area, with large areas at high risk of surface water flooding to the south of Long Itchington village (see **Figure 2.6**).

¹⁷ The Department for Transport (DfT) in their Transport Analysis Guidance (TAG) consider that, *“beyond 200m, the contribution of vehicle emissions from the roadside to local pollution levels is not significant”* Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/transport-analysis-guidance-webtag> [Date Accessed: 14/04/20]

- 2.8.4 Policy NE4 of the NP sets out the requirement for future development within Long Itchington to not increase flood risk and be accompanied by a site-specific flood risk assessment. Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) should be incorporated into development where appropriate. Policy NE5 helps to ensure that development proposals are designed to minimise or mitigate potential air, noise and water pollution.
- 2.8.5 Overall, the NP is not expected to lead to any likely significant effects on soil, air or water resources of the Neighbourhood Area.

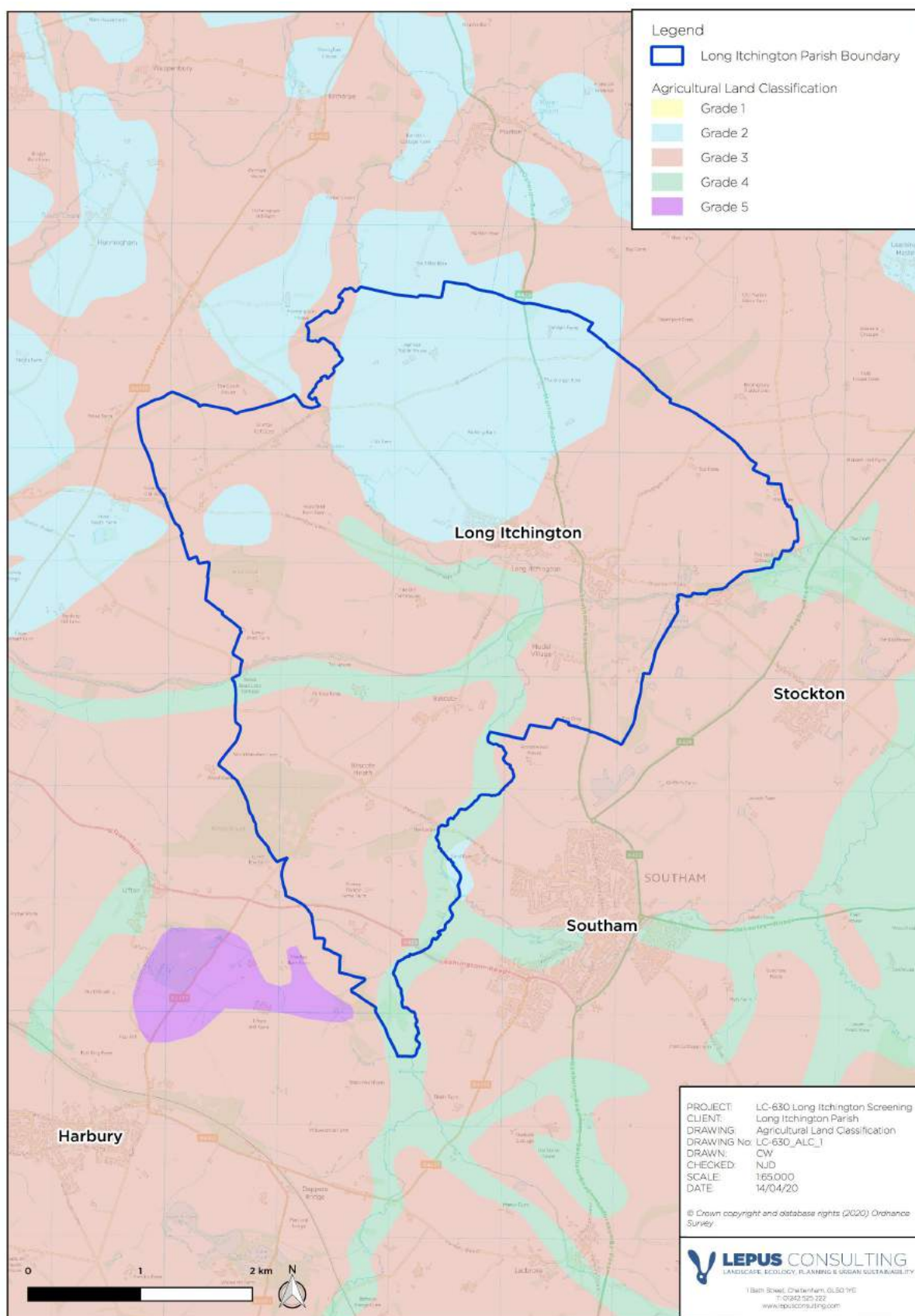


Figure 2.4: Agricultural Land Classification of Long Itchington (source: Natural England)



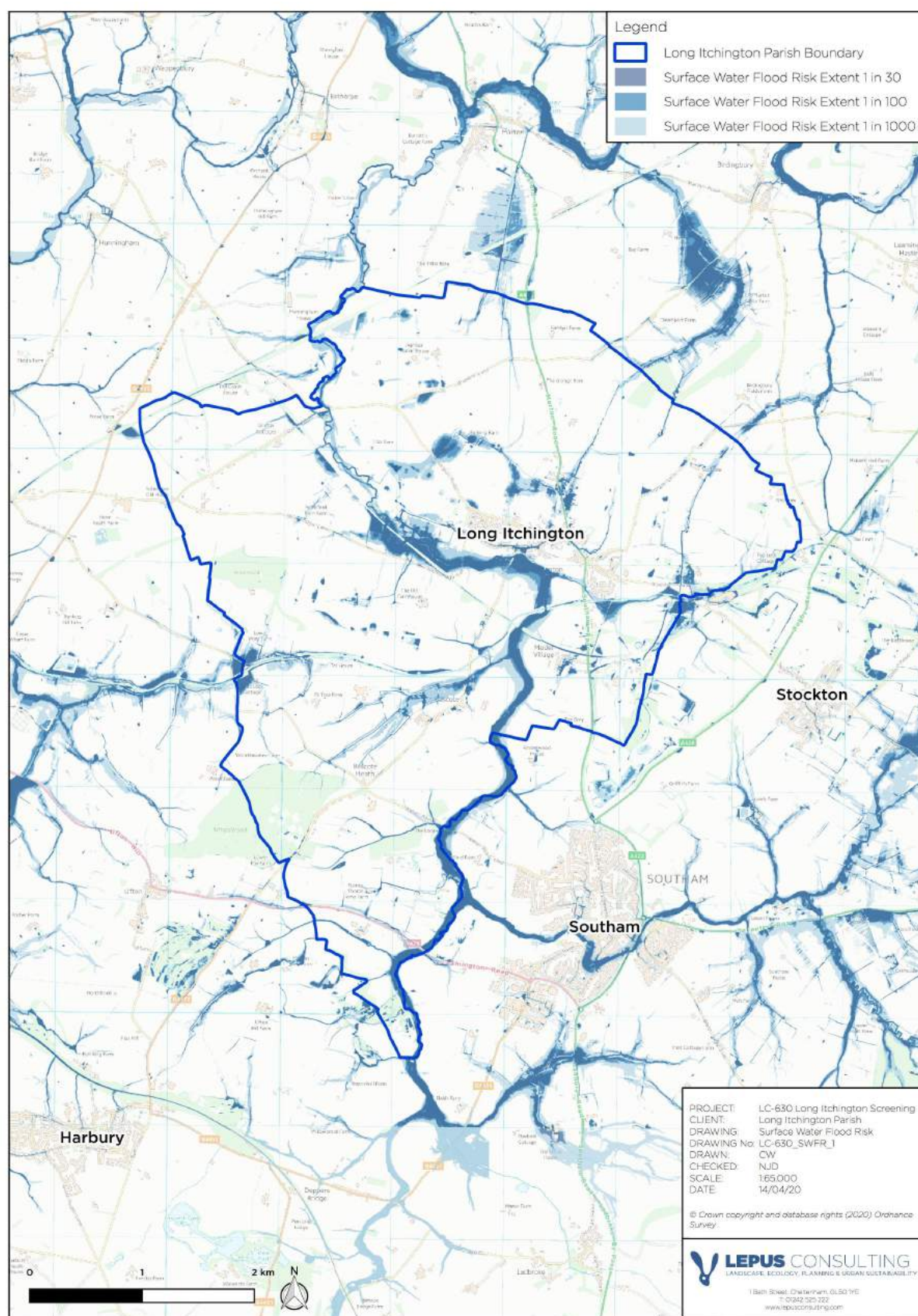


Figure 2.6: The extent of surface water flood risk within Long Itchington Parish (source: Environment Agency)

2.9 Climatic factors

- 2.9.1 In conformity with the Core Strategy Policy CS.2, development proposals must demonstrate climate change mitigation and adaptation measures, including designs that reduce carbon emissions and promote renewable energy schemes.
- 2.9.2 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*”. Policy NE6 of the NP aims to ensure future development within Long Itchington incorporates on-site renewable or low carbon producing technologies, “*with the aim of meeting at least 10% of the development’s energy demands*”. This can be expected to help to ensure that measures are taken to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and minimise the Parish’s contribution towards the causes of climate change.
- 2.9.3 Residents within Long Itchington currently have limited access to sustainable transport options, and as such, residents are reliant on car travel for access to many services, facilities and employment (see **Section 2.7**).
- 2.9.4 Policy CS.26 of the Core Strategy promotes local public transport stating that “*development will only be permitted if the necessary mitigation is provided against any unacceptable transport impacts which arise directly from that development*”. NP Policy BE4 supports the provision of cycle storage within new developments and promotes sustainable transport within the Neighbourhood Area. These policies could potentially help to encourage a modal shift away from personal car use.
- 2.9.5 These policies are likely to have a positive impact on the Parish’s commitment to combat 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 Policies EB1, EB3 and EB4 of the NP are likely to help improve local employment opportunities, by facilitating tourism and supporting the expansion of new and existing businesses within the Parish. These policies could potentially help to reduce the number of residents commuting out-of-Parish for employment, and therefore, be likely to reduce the number of private car journeys. In addition, Policy EB2 is expected to have a positive impact on the local economy by encouraging tourism in the local area.
- 2.10.3 Policy EB5 aims to improve or provide public services, "*including access to high quality digital communications*". This policy is likely to help ensure that all future development has appropriate connection to high-speed broadband. This will benefit residents choosing to work from home, as well as local businesses. In addition, the need to travel would be reduced, providing benefits to local air quality associated with reduced transport-related emissions.
- 2.10.4 Overall, the NP is not expected to lead to any likely significant effects on material assets within the Neighbourhood Area.

2.11 Cultural heritage

- 2.11.1 There are three Grade II* Listed Buildings and 28 Grade II Listed Buildings within Long Itchington Parish (see **Figure 2.7**). Long Itchington Conservation Area covers the majority of Long Itchington village (see **Figure 2.8**). The majority of the Listed Buildings within the Parish are located within Long Itchington Conservation Area.

-
- 2.11.2 Policy H1 of the NP states that future development will be located within the BUAB. As a result, it is likely that future development will be located near to the designated Listed Buildings and potentially within the Long Itchington Conservation Area.
- 2.11.3 Policy BE2 aims to ensure that future development within the Parish is of scale, form, layout and design consistent with the rural setting and surroundings. In addition, Policy BE4 aims to ensure future development is of high-quality design. These policies can be expected to help to prevent future development resulting in adverse impacts on surrounding heritage assets.
- 2.11.4 Policy BE6 – Conservation of Heritage Assets – seeks to conserve and enhance heritage assets within the Plan area, including assets of archaeological interest. This policy also emphasises the importance of historic character within the Long Itchington Conservation Area, and as such, development which does not conserve or enhance the character or appearance in this area will not be supported.
- 2.11.5 Consequently, although future development is likely to be located in close proximity to heritage assets within Long Itchington, the policies set out in the NP can be expected to prevent development resulting in adverse impacts on the historic environment. Overall, the NP is not expected to lead to any likely significant effects on cultural heritage.



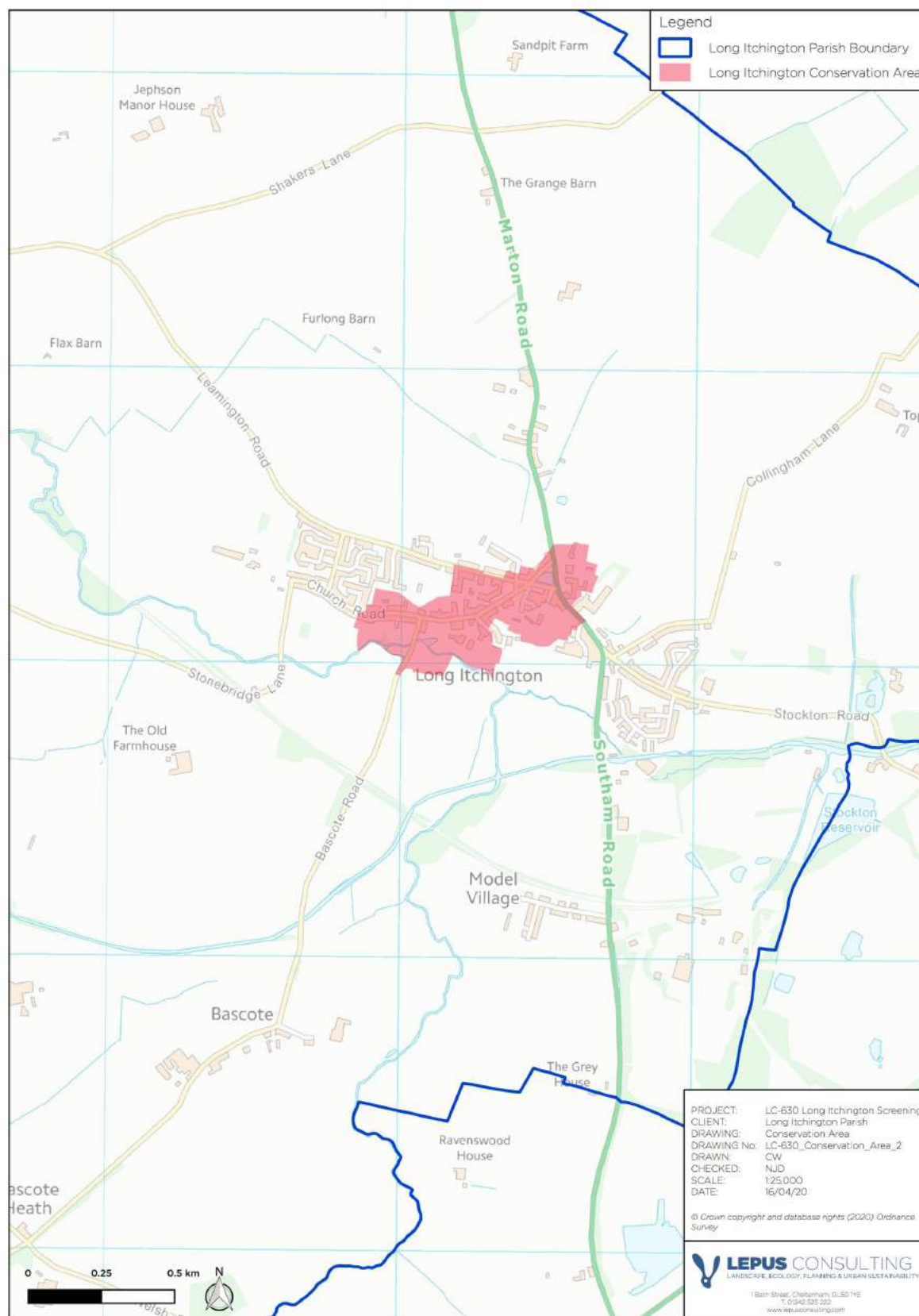


Figure 2.8: Long Itchington Conservation Area (source: Stratford-on-Avon District Council).

2.12 Landscape

- 2.12.1 The entire Long Itchington Parish is located within the 'Dunsmore and Feldon' National Character Area (NCA)¹⁸. A key characteristic of this landscape includes *"the sense of a predominantly quiet, rural landscape heightened by its close proximity to several urban area, with a gently undulating landscape of low hills, heathland plateaux and clay vales separated by the occasional upstanding escarpment"*.
- 2.12.2 The Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is located approximately 11.6km to the south of the Parish. There are three Country Parks located in close proximity to the Parish: 'Newbold Comyn' Country Park to west of the Parish; 'Ryton Pools' Country Park to north; and 'Draycote Water' Country Park to north west.
- 2.12.3 Long Itchington NP identifies the protection of valued landscapes as an important factor for many residents, with 83% of respondents to a local survey saying that views of the countryside were 'extremely' or 'very' important. **Figure 2.9** presents the valued landscape and views identified within the Parish. Policy NE1 of the NP should help to ensure that development proposals integrate with the existing landscape setting and aim to conserve and enhance the local landscape character. This policy seeks to safeguard the important landscapes and views shown in **Figure 2.9**.
- 2.12.4 A Landscape Sensitivity Study has determined the sensitivity of land to housing and commercial development around Long Itchington village¹⁹ (see **Figures 2.10** and **2.11**). The BUAB primarily follows the urban area identified within the Landscape Sensitivity Study, however, two areas of the BUAB have been identified as land cover parcels and assessed for their sensitivity to future development.

¹⁸ Natural England (2014) National Character Area profile: 96. Dunsmore and Feldon. Available at: <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/4878893332824064> [Date Accessed: 15/04/20]

¹⁹ 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: 15/04/20]

- 2.12.5 LI01 to the east of the village is identified as being of 'medium' sensitivity to housing development and 'high/medium' sensitivity to commercial development. The Landscape Sensitivity Study states that *"the land south of Stockton Road may be possibly developed"* for residential use but *"there are no/very limited opportunities for commercial development"*.
- 2.12.6 LI03 to the north of the village is identified as being of 'medium' sensitivity to housing development and 'high' sensitivity to commercial development. The Landscape Sensitivity Study states that the area *"is generally in poor condition"* and that *"there is potential for housing development in the southernmost three fields"*. In addition, *"commercial development is considered inappropriate in this scale of landscape"*.
- 2.12.7 Policies BE2 and BE4 aim to ensure future development within the Parish is of a suitable design, in-keeping with the existing landscape character. These policies are expected to help reduce potential negative impact on the local landscape as a result of proposed development and can be expected to help ensure inappropriate development identified within the Landscape Sensitivity Study is not supported. As a result, future development proposals are likely to be in-keeping with the existing surroundings. Overall, the NP is not expected to lead to any likely significant effects on landscape.

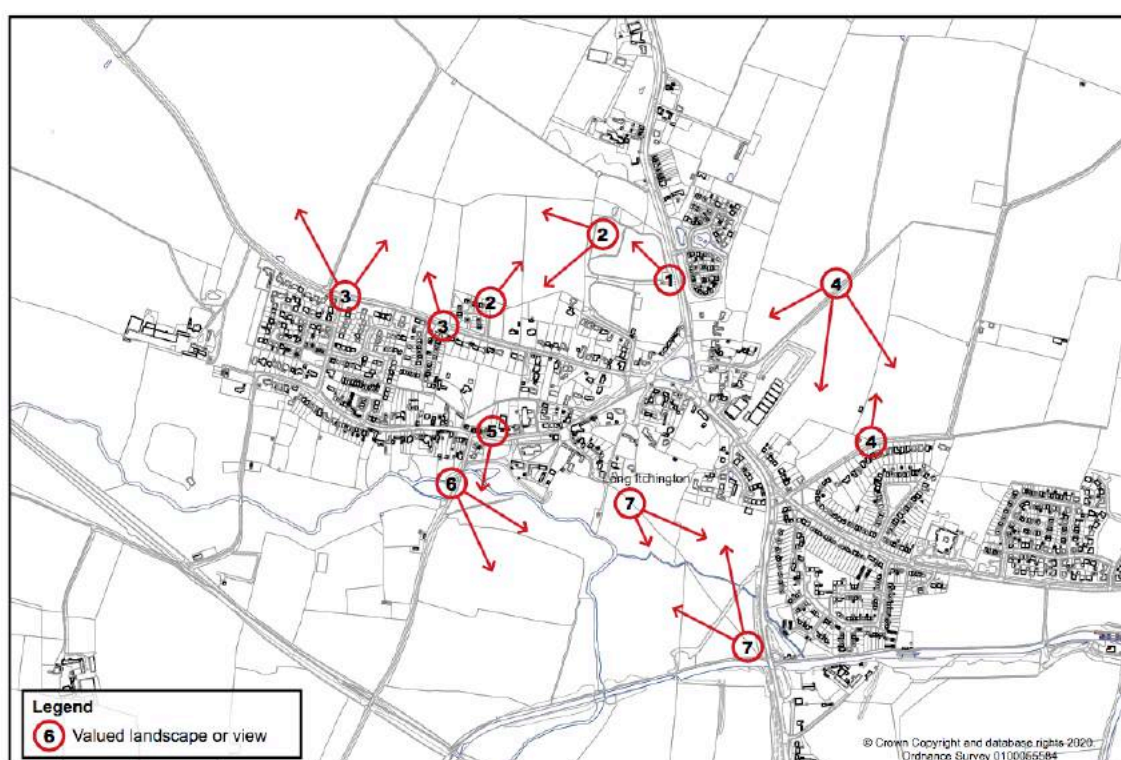


Figure 2.9: Valued landscape and views within Long Itchington (source: Long Itchington NP)





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 2017²⁰. HRA considers the potential adverse impacts of plans and projects on designated SACs, classified SPAs and listed Ramsar sites. This is in accordance with the Habitats Directive²¹ and the Birds Directive²². SACs, SPAs and Ramsar sites are collectively known as the Natura 2000 network.

3.1.2 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 Long Itchington Parish is 'Ensor's Pool' SAC, located approximately 23.3km north of the Parish. Due to this distance, there is unlikely to be any adverse impact on this Natura 2000 site. 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. This decision has been taken in accordance with 'The Conservation of Habitats and Species and Planning (Various Amendments) (England and Wales) Regulations 2018'²³.

²⁰ Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. Available at: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2017/1012/regulation/105/made> [Date Accessed: 15/04/20]

²¹ 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/PDF/?uri=CELEX:31992L0043&from=EN> [Date Accessed: 15/04/20]

²² EU Council Directive 2009/147/EC on the Conservation of wild birds. Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32009L0147&from=EN> [Date Accessed: 15/04/20]

²³ Available at: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2018/1307/contents/made>

4 Conclusions

4.1 SEA Screening outcome

4.1.1 This screening report has explored the potential effects of the proposed Long Itchington 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 Itchington 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 Itchington NP with a view to determining whether a HRA is required.

4.2.2 It is recommended that the Long Itchington 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, the Environment Agency and Historic England. Their comments are incorporated into this report and presented in full in **Appendix B**.

Appendix A: Long Itchington NP Policies

Policy Number	Policy Name
Housing	
Policy H1	Housing Supply and Development
Policy H2	Re-development of Previously Developed Land
Policy H3	Affordable Housing
Policy H4	Development of Private Garden Land
Policy H5	Housing Stock Diversity
Built Environment	
Policy BE1	New Development
Policy BE2	Scale, Form and Design
Policy BE3	Impact of Development
Policy BE4	Design Standards
Policy BE5	Alternative Use of Land and Buildings
Policy BE6	Preservation of Heritage Assets
Policy BE7	Designing Out Crime and Anti-Social Behaviour
Employment and Business	
Policy EB1	Development of Land and Buildings for Business Use
Policy EB2	Tourism
Policy EB3	Change of Use of Employment/ Business Land and Buildings
Policy EB4	Change of Use of Agricultural Buildings to Commercial or Residential Use
Policy EB5	Infrastructure
Natural Environment	
Policy NE1	Valued Landscapes and Views
Policy NE2	Local Green Spaces
Policy NE3	Wildlife Habitats and Biodiversity
Policy NE4	Flooding and Water Management
Policy NE5	Environmental Pollution
Policy NE6	Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency
Community	
Policy C1	Protection of Existing Community Facilities
Policy C2	Support for New Community Facilities
Sport, Leisure and Recreation	
Policy SLR1	Sports Grounds and Children's Play Areas
Policy SLR2	Access to Countryside
Policy SLR3	Allotment Gardens

Appendix B: Consultation Responses

LONG ITCHINGTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN SEA AND HRA SCREENING CONSULTATION

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/>

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

Yours sincerely,

[Redacted Signature]

Historic Places Adviser | West Midlands
Historic England | The Axis
10 Holliday Street | Birmingham B1 1TF

Tel: [Redacted Phone Number]

www.HistoricEngland.org.uk | [@HistoricEngland](https://twitter.com/HistoricEngland)



Date: 14 May 2020
Our ref: 316652
Your ref: LC-630



[Redacted]
Lepus Consulting Ltd
[Redacted]

Hornbeam House
Crewe Business Park
Electra Way
Crewe
Cheshire
CW1 6GJ

T 0300 060 3900

BY EMAIL ONLY

Dear [Redacted]

Long Itchington NP SEA and HRA Screening

Thank you for your consultation on the above dated 27 April 2020

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.

Natural England is a statutory consultee in neighbourhood planning and must be consulted on draft neighbourhood development plans by the Parish/Town Councils or Neighbourhood Forums where they consider our interests would be affected by the proposals made.

Natural England does not have any specific comments on this draft neighbourhood plan.

However, we refer you to the attached annex which covers the issues and opportunities that should be considered when preparing a Neighbourhood Plan.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening

Natural England considers that, based on the material supplied with the consultation, in so far as our strategic environmental interests are concerned, significant environmental effects resulting from the neighbourhood plan are unlikely. We therefore agree with the conclusion of the SEA screening report that a Strategic Environmental Assessment would not be required.

Further guidance on deciding whether the proposals are likely to have significant environmental effects and the requirements for consulting Natural England on SEA are set out in the [National Planning Practice Guidance](#).

Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening

Natural England agrees with the report's conclusions that the Long Itchington 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 further consultations on your plan, please contact: consultations@naturalengland.org.uk.

Yours sincerely

[Redacted]
Consultations Team

Annex 1 - Neighbourhood planning and the natural environment: information, issues and opportunities

Natural environment information sources

The [Magic](http://magic.defra.gov.uk/)¹ website will provide you with much of the nationally held natural environment data for your plan area. The most relevant layers for you to consider are: **Agricultural Land Classification, Ancient Woodland, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Local Nature Reserves, National Parks (England), National Trails, Priority Habitat Inventory, public rights of way (on the Ordnance Survey base map) and Sites of Special Scientific Interest (including their impact risk zones)**. Local environmental record centres may hold a range of additional information on the natural environment. A list of local record centres is available [here](#)².

Priority habitats are those habitats of particular importance for nature conservation, and the list of them can be found [here](#)³. Most of these will be mapped either as **Sites of Special Scientific Interest**, on the Magic website or as **Local Wildlife Sites**. Your local planning authority should be able to supply you with the locations of Local Wildlife Sites.

National Character Areas (NCAs) divide England into 159 distinct natural areas. Each character area is defined by a unique combination of landscape, biodiversity, geodiversity and cultural and economic activity. NCA profiles contain descriptions of the area and statements of environmental opportunity, which may be useful to inform proposals in your plan. NCA information can be found [here](#)⁴.

There may also be a local **landscape character assessment** covering your area. This is a tool to help understand the character and local distinctiveness of the landscape and identify the features that give it a sense of place. It can help to inform, plan and manage change in the area. Your local planning authority should be able to help you access these if you can't find them online.

If your neighbourhood planning area is within or adjacent to a **National Park** or **Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)**, the relevant National Park/AONB Management Plan for the area will set out useful information about the protected landscape. You can access the plans on from the relevant National Park Authority or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty website.

General mapped information on **soil types** and **Agricultural Land Classification** is available (under 'landscape') on the [Magic](http://magic.defra.gov.uk/)⁵ website and also from the [LandIS website](http://www.landis.org.uk/index.cfm)⁶, which contains more information about obtaining soil data.

Natural environment issues to consider

The [National Planning Policy Framework](#)⁷ sets out national planning policy on protecting and enhancing the natural environment. [Planning Practice Guidance](#)⁸ sets out supporting guidance.

Your local planning authority should be able to provide you with further advice on the potential impacts of your plan or order on the natural environment and the need for any environmental assessments.

¹ <http://magic.defra.gov.uk/>

² <http://www.nbn-nfbr.org.uk/nfbr.php>

³ <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140711133551/http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/conservation/biodiversity/protectandmanage/habsandspeciesimportance.aspx>

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-character-area-profiles-data-for-local-decision-making>

⁵ <http://magic.defra.gov.uk/>

⁶ <http://www.landis.org.uk/index.cfm>

⁷ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/807247/NPPF_Feb_2019_revised.pdf

⁸ <http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/blog/guidance/natural-environment/>

Landscape

Your plans or orders may present opportunities to protect and enhance locally valued landscapes. You may want to consider identifying distinctive local landscape features or characteristics such as ponds, woodland or dry stone walls and think about how any new development proposals can respect and enhance local landscape character and distinctiveness.

If you are proposing development within or close to a protected landscape (National Park or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) or other sensitive location, we recommend that you carry out a landscape assessment of the proposal. Landscape assessments can help you to choose the most appropriate sites for development and help to avoid or minimise impacts of development on the landscape through careful siting, design and landscaping.

Wildlife habitats

Some proposals can have adverse impacts on designated wildlife sites or other priority habitats (listed [here](#)⁹), such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest or [Ancient woodland](#)¹⁰. If there are likely to be any adverse impacts you'll need to think about how such impacts can be avoided, mitigated or, as a last resort, compensated for.

Priority and protected species

You'll also want to consider whether any proposals might affect priority species (listed [here](#)¹¹) or protected species. To help you do this, Natural England has produced advice [here](#)¹² to help understand the impact of particular developments on protected species.

Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land

Soil is a finite resource that fulfils many important functions and services for society. It is a growing medium for food, timber and other crops, a store for carbon and water, a reservoir of biodiversity and a buffer against pollution. If you are proposing development, you should seek to use areas of poorer quality agricultural land in preference to that of a higher quality in line with National Planning Policy Framework para 171. For more information, see our publication [Agricultural Land Classification: protecting the best and most versatile agricultural land](#)¹³.

Improving your natural environment

Your plan or order can offer exciting opportunities to enhance your local environment. If you are setting out policies on new development or proposing sites for development, you may wish to consider identifying what environmental features you want to be retained or enhanced or new features you would like to see created as part of any new development. Examples might include:

- Providing a new footpath through the new development to link into existing rights of way.
- Restoring a neglected hedgerow.
- Creating a new pond as an attractive feature on the site.
- Planting trees characteristic to the local area to make a positive contribution to the local landscape.
- Using native plants in landscaping schemes for better nectar and seed sources for bees and birds.
- Incorporating swift boxes or bat boxes into the design of new buildings.
- Think about how lighting can be best managed to encourage wildlife.
- Adding a green roof to new buildings.

⁹<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140711133551/http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/conservation/biodiversity/protectandmanage/habsandspeciesimportance.aspx>

¹⁰ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/ancient-woodland-and-veteran-trees-protection-surveys-licences>

¹¹ <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140711133551/http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/conservation/biodiversity/protectandmanage/habsandspeciesimportance.aspx>


¹² <https://www.gov.uk/protected-species-and-sites-how-to-review-planning-proposals>

¹³ <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/35012>

You may also want to consider enhancing your local area in other ways, for example by:

- Setting out in your plan how you would like to implement elements of a wider Green Infrastructure Strategy (if one exists) in your community.
- Assessing needs for accessible greenspace and setting out proposals to address any deficiencies or enhance provision.
- Identifying green areas of particular importance for special protection through Local Green Space designation (see [Planning Practice Guidance on this](#) ¹⁴).
- Managing existing (and new) public spaces to be more wildlife friendly (e.g. by sowing wild flower strips in less used parts of parks, changing hedge cutting timings and frequency).
- Planting additional street trees.
- Identifying any improvements to the existing public right of way network, e.g. cutting back hedges, improving the surface, clearing litter or installing kissing gates) or extending the network to create missing links.
- Restoring neglected environmental features (e.g. coppicing a prominent hedge that is in poor condition, or clearing away an eyesore).

¹⁴ <http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/blog/guidance/open-space-sports-and-recreation-facilities-public-rights-of-way-and-local-green-space/local-green-space-designation/>


Lepus Consulting Ltd
1 Bath Street
Cheltenham
GL50 1YE

Our ref: UT/2007/101490/SE-
34/DS1-L01
Your ref:
Date: 10 July 2020

Dear Madam

Long Itchington, Bascote and Bascote Heath Neighbourhood Plan SEA and HRA Screening

Thank you for referring the above Neighbourhood Development Plan submission for comment which was received on 27 April 2020. We apologise for the delay in our response and hope the following comments will be taken into account.

As requested we have reviewed the Screening Assessment prepared in support of the Long Itchington Neighbourhood Plan (NP). Having reviewed the proposals we do not consider there to be significant environmental impacts as a result of this plan, therefore, we concur with the conclusions of the report and do not required an SEA or HRA to be undertaken in support of the plan. We advise however the consultation is undertaken with Natural England amongst other statutory bodies prior to making the final decision.

We note the presence of floodplain from the River Itchen and ordinary watercourses, and historical landfill sites within the Neighbourhood Plan boundary which should be considered when drafting policies for the NP.

The NP should propose local policies to safeguard land at risk from fluvial flooding and the provision of sustainable management of surface water from both allocated and future windfall sites. The local policies should seek to enhance the policies in Stratford-on-Avon District Council's Core Strategy 2011 to 2031, in particular Policy CS.4 Water Environment and Flood Risk.

The River Itchen flows through the town within the NP boundary and is designated as a main river. There are significant areas of floodplain associated with this river, most of which is Flood Zone 3 (high probability). There are also smaller ordinary watercourses and any proposals that are considered during the NP process should take account of this.

We note, there is an area benefitting from a flood defence in the centre of Long Itchington (properties around Church Road) and therefore, policies to ensure the protection of this asset should be included within the NP (Policy NE4 – Flooding and

Environment Agency
9, Sentinel House Wellington Crescent, Fradley Park, Lichfield, WS13 8RR.
Customer services line: 03708 506 506
www.gov.uk/environment-agency

Cont/d..

Water Management).

All proposals for new development must demonstrate that existing flood risk will not be increased elsewhere (downstream), ideally by managing surface water on site and limiting runoff to the greenfield rate or better. The use of sustainable drainage systems and permeable surfaces will be encouraged where appropriate. Consideration should also be given to the impact of new development on both existing and future flood risk. Where appropriate, development should include measures that mitigate and adapt to climate change.

In line with National Planning Policy we would wish to see all new development, directed away from those areas at highest flood risk, i.e. towards Flood Zone 1. In addition all new development, including infill development and small scale development, should incorporate sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) to reduce flood risk and manage surface water and to ensure that runoff does not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere. Planning applications for development within the NP area must be accompanied by site-specific flood risk assessments in line with the requirements of national policy and advice. These should take account of the latest climate change allowances.

In addition to the comments above, we note the Water Framework Directive (WFD) and objectives from the Severn River Basin Management Plan have not been included as part of the evidence base within Section 5.4 (Natural Environment).

The River Itchen (conf R Stowe to conf R Leam - GB109054044110) is classified as having 'Moderate Ecological Status or Potential' and under the WFD there is a requirement for all waterbodies to meet 'Good Ecological Status or Potential' by 2027. The NP should support the WFD to secure water quality improvements where possible and align with Stratford-on-Avon District Council's Core Strategy 2011 to 2031, in particular Policy CS.4 Water Environment and Flood Risk.

We recommend that Warwickshire County Council as the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) are consulted on this Plan. The LLFA are responsible for managing flood risk from local sources including ordinary watercourses, groundwater and surface water. If you have any queries contact me on the details below.

If you have any queries contact me on the details below.

Yours faithfully

[Redacted]
Senior Planning Advisor

Direct dial [Redacted]

Direct e-mail [Redacted]

Ecological Services
Green Infrastructure
Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment
Landscape Character Assessment
Habitats Regulations Assessment
Strategic Environmental Assessment
Sustainability Appraisal



© Lepus Consulting Ltd
1 Bath Street Cheltenham GL50 1YE
T: 01242 525222
E: enquiries@lepusconsulting.com
W: www.lepusconsulting.com
CHELTENHAM



Lepus Consulting
1 Bath Street
Cheltenham
Gloucestershire GL50 1YE

t: 01242 525222
w: www.lepusconsulting.com
e: enquiries@lepusconsulting.com