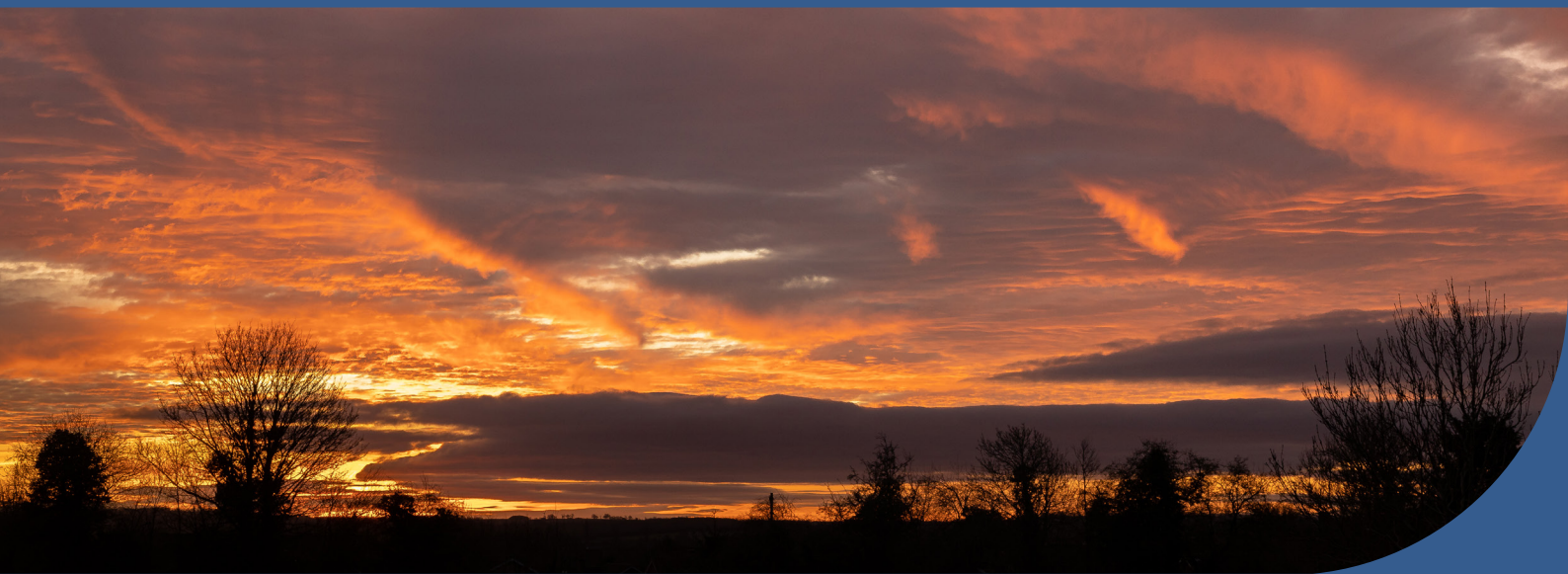


Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulations Assessment of the Southam Neighbourhood Plan

SEA and HRA Screening Document

January 2021



LEPUS CONSULTING
LANDSCAPE, ECOLOGY, PLANNING & URBAN SUSTAINABILITY

Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulations Assessment of the Southam Neighbourhood Plan

SEA and HRA Screening Document

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Acronyms

ALC	Agricultural Land Classification
AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
BUAB	Built-Up Area Boundary
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EU	European Union
GP	General Practice
HRA	Habitats Regulations Assessment
IROI	Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest
IRZ	Impact Risk Zone
LWS	Local Wildlife Site
ODPM	Office of the Deputy Prime Minister
NCA	National Character Area
NP	Neighbourhood Plan
NHS	National Health Service
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
PP	Policy or Programme
PPG	Planning Policy Guidance
PRoW	Public Right of Way
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
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 Southam Neighbourhood Plan 2019 to 2032 (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 Version 24082020 of the Southam Neighbourhood Plan 2011 to 2031

1.2 Strategic Environmental Assessment

1.2.1 The basis for Strategic Environmental Assessment 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'³ and Paragraph 009 of the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) 'Neighbourhood Planning' section⁴.

1.2.2 Under the requirements of the European Directive 2001/42/EC and 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 SEA Directive. Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32001L0042&from=en> [Date Accessed: 12/11/20]

² The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004. Available at: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2004/1633/contents/made> [Date Accessed: 12/11/20]

³ 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: 12/11/20]

⁴ MHCLG (2020) Guidance: Neighbourhood Planning. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/neighbourhood-planning--2> [Date Accessed: 12/11/20]

1.3 The Southam Neighbourhood Development 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.
- 1.3.2 On 1st December 2014, Stratford-on-Avon District Council formally approved the boundary of the designated neighbourhood area of Southam (see **Figure 1.1**). In 2016, a group of local residents formed a steering committee to develop the NP.
- 1.3.3 The NP offers a picture of the parish and a vision for the twenty year period between 2011 and 2031. The NP's core vision is to ensure that *"Southam will be a desirable place to live, being a sustainable rural community where people feel happy to live and work safely with plentiful opportunities for sport and recreation. The environment, community services, economic growth, cultural development and infrastructure of the neighbourhood will be protected and enhanced for future generations"*.
- 1.3.4 The Plan must also have appropriate regard to existing policy, including:
- The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)⁵ and related Planning Practice Guidance advice⁶; and
 - Policies within the Stratford-on-Avon District Core Strategy⁷.

⁵ MHCLG (2019) National Planning Policy Framework. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2> [Date Accessed: 12/11/20]

⁶ MHCLG (2019) Planning Practice Guidance. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance> [Date Accessed: 12/11/20]

⁷ 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: 12/11/20]

1.3.5 A summary of the NP's policies are listed at **Appendix A**. The NP policies are associated with the NP's strategic objectives as follows:

- Conserve and develop local green spaces (environment);
- Reflect and enhance Southam qualities;
- Enhance the public realm;
- Meeting the housing need;
- Refine the housing mix;
- Reduce carbon and resource demand;
- Safe walking and cycling;
- Parking and traffic;
- Flood strategy;
- Encourage a vibrant commercial centre; and
- Conserve Southam's heritage.

Consultation

1.3.6 The NP is subject to public consultation, which provides an opportunity for the public and local organisations to comment on the NP. After consultation, responses are taken into account and used to prepare a 'submission draft' of the NP.

1.3.7 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.

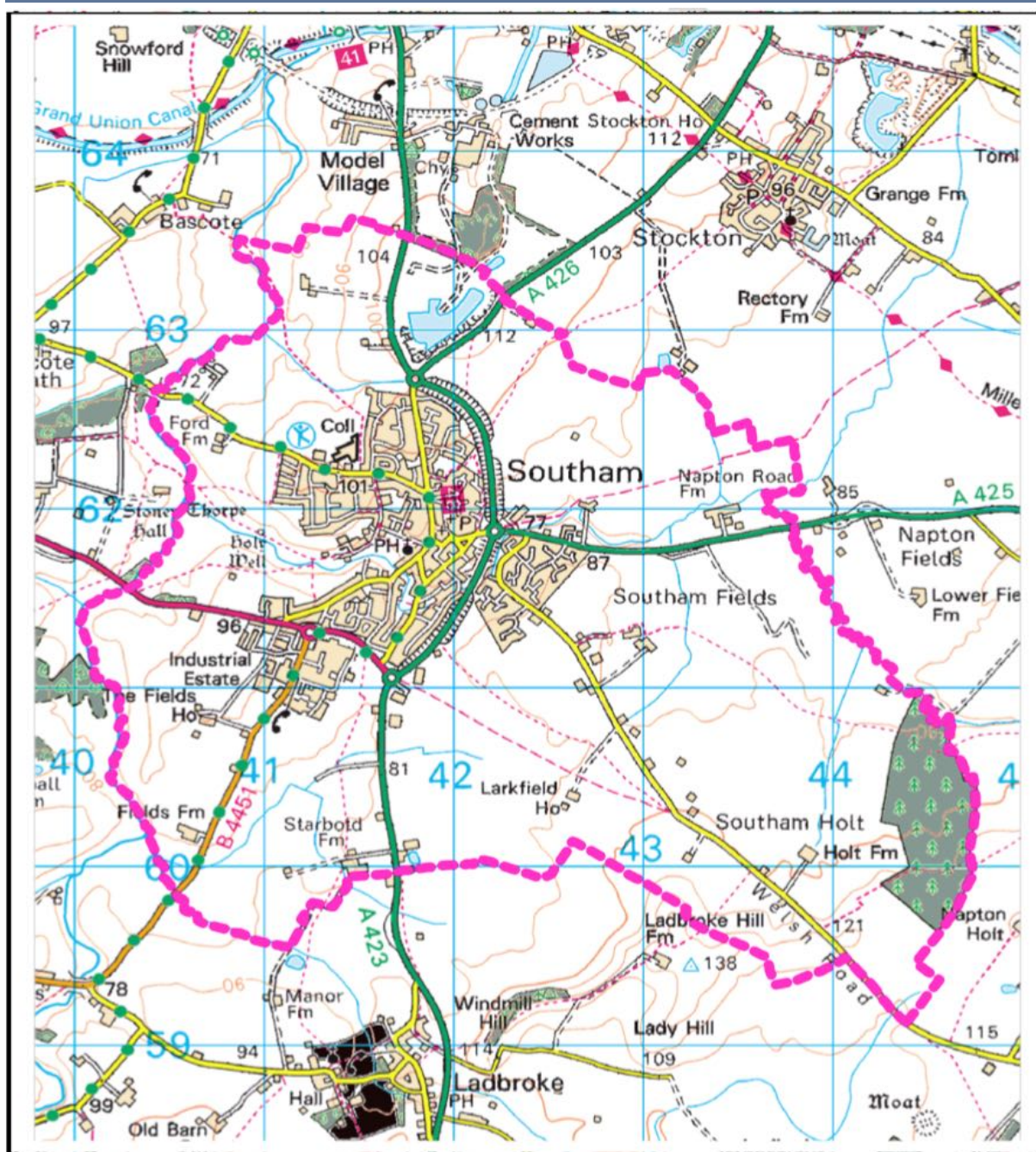


Figure 1.1: Southam Parish Boundary (source: Southam NP)

1.4 The Parish of Southam

- 1.4.1 Southam Parish is located to the north east of the Stratford-on-Avon district, in Warwickshire. The market town of Southam is located approximately 11km south east of Royal Leamington Spa and Warwick, 19km south of Coventry, and 23km north of Banbury.
- 1.4.2 The A423 passes through the centre of the parish and the western border of the parish follows the River Itchen. In addition, the River Stowe passes through the town from east to west.
- 1.4.3 The parish has an estimated population of 7,098⁸ as of 2019. Some of the facilities in the parish include Tesco Superstore, Southam Surgery, Southam Primary School and Southam College.

1.5 Relationship with the Core Strategy

- 1.5.1 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 Southam 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.
- 1.5.2 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 it 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.
- 1.5.3 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 Southam NP and the Stratford-on-Avon District Core Strategy will form part of the development plan for the area once the NP is 'made'.

⁸ Office for national statistics (2019) Population estimates. Available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/> [Date Accessed: 13/11/20]

-
- 1.5.4 Paragraph 13 of the NPPF⁹ 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”*.
- 1.5.5 The NP does not allocate any land for residential development. Policy AS.7 of the Stratford-on-Avon Cores Strategy sets out requirements of development within Southam (see **Box 1.1**). There are three sites allocated within Southam set out in the Core Strategy: ‘SOU1: West of Banbury Road’; SOU2: West of Coventry Road’; and SOU3: South of Daventry Road’. These three allocations can be seen in **Figure 1.2**.

⁹ MHCLG (2019) National Planning Policy Framework. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2> [Date Accessed: 12/11/20]

Box 1.1: Policy AS.7 of the Core Strategy

Southam

The Council will apply the following principles in considering development proposals and other initiatives relating to the Southam area. It will assess the extent to which each of these principles is applicable to an individual development proposal. Developers will be expected to contribute to the achievement of these principles where it is appropriate and reasonable for them to do so, taking into account the provisions of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

A. Environmental

1. Enhance the character of Southam as a historic market town.
2. Improve the function and appearance of the recreation ground off Market Hill.
3. Investigate the scope for pedestrianisation and traffic management measures in parts of the town centre.
4. Enhance green infrastructure to support the function and use of the River Stowe and River Itchen as natural river corridors which provide multi-functional benefits.
5. Improve the green infrastructure network to enhance linkages to and between important biodiversity and geodiversity features in the town's hinterland, such as Ufton Fields SSSI and Long Itchington and Ufton Woods SSSI.
6. Minimise and mitigate the impacts of activities at the former Southam Cement Works and associated quarry.
7. Support the restoration of the disused quarry alongside the A426 to provide a high quality area for leisure and recreation, whilst supporting biodiversity and nature conservation interests.
8. Mitigate the impact of the proposed High Speed Two railway on the landscape, properties and proposed development in the local area.
8. Protect and enhance the Holy Well and its setting.
9. Create flood storage upstream of Southam to alleviate flooding in the town.
10. Investigate river restoration opportunities at the confluence of the River Stowe with the River Itchen to promote fish passage and improve migratory opportunities.

B. Social

1. Provide a new community hub in the town centre, to include a library and one-stop shop facility.
2. Provide additional parks, gardens and amenity greenspace given the shortfall against the standard set out in Policy CS.25 Healthy Communities.
3. Provide additional play spaces for children and young people given the shortfall against the standard set out in Policy CS.25 Healthy Communities.
4. Provide additional pitches for mini football and junior rugby given the shortfall identified in the town.
5. Improve pedestrian and cycling links to the town centre.
5. Improve countryside walks that are accessible from the town, particularly along the Stowe Valley.
6. Develop a traffic free cycle link to National Cycle Network Route 41 between Leamington Spa and Rugby, and the Grand Union Canal to the north of the town.
7. Investigate the scope to designate additional land along the Stowe valley to the west of the town as public open space.

C. Economic

1. Strengthen the role of Southam town centre as a focus of shops and services and tourism activity.
2. Provide a museum in the town to display local historical artefacts, including the Cardall Collection.
3. Support the role and provision of heritage and tourism attractions, including the canal corridor and Civil War links.
4. Retain the remainder of Holywell Business Park for employment use.

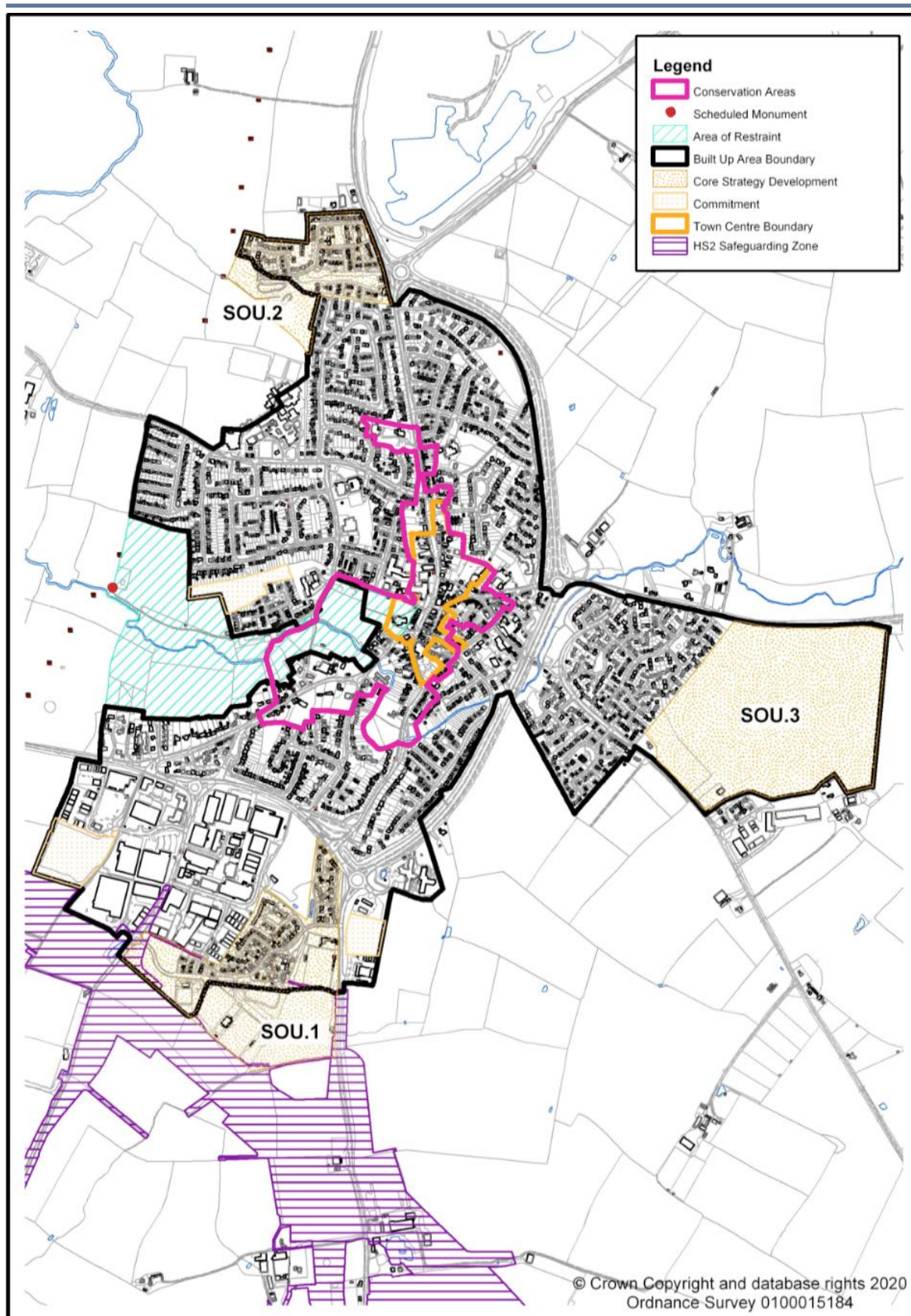


Figure 1.2: Southam policies map showing allocations around the settlement which have been made in the adopted Stratford-on-Avon Core Strategy 2011-2031 (source: Southam NP)

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. The objective of the Directive 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 Directive, 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 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 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 The Localism Act 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 Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) 'Neighbourhood Planning' section states:

"Where a neighbourhood plan is brought forward before an up-to-date Local Plan is in place the qualifying body and the local planning authority should discuss and aim to agree the relationship between policies in:

- *the emerging neighbourhood plan*
- *the emerging Local Plan*
- *the adopted development plan*

with appropriate regard to national policy and guidance”.

2.2.3 **Figure 2.1** presents a diagram prepared by the 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 Southam NP.

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

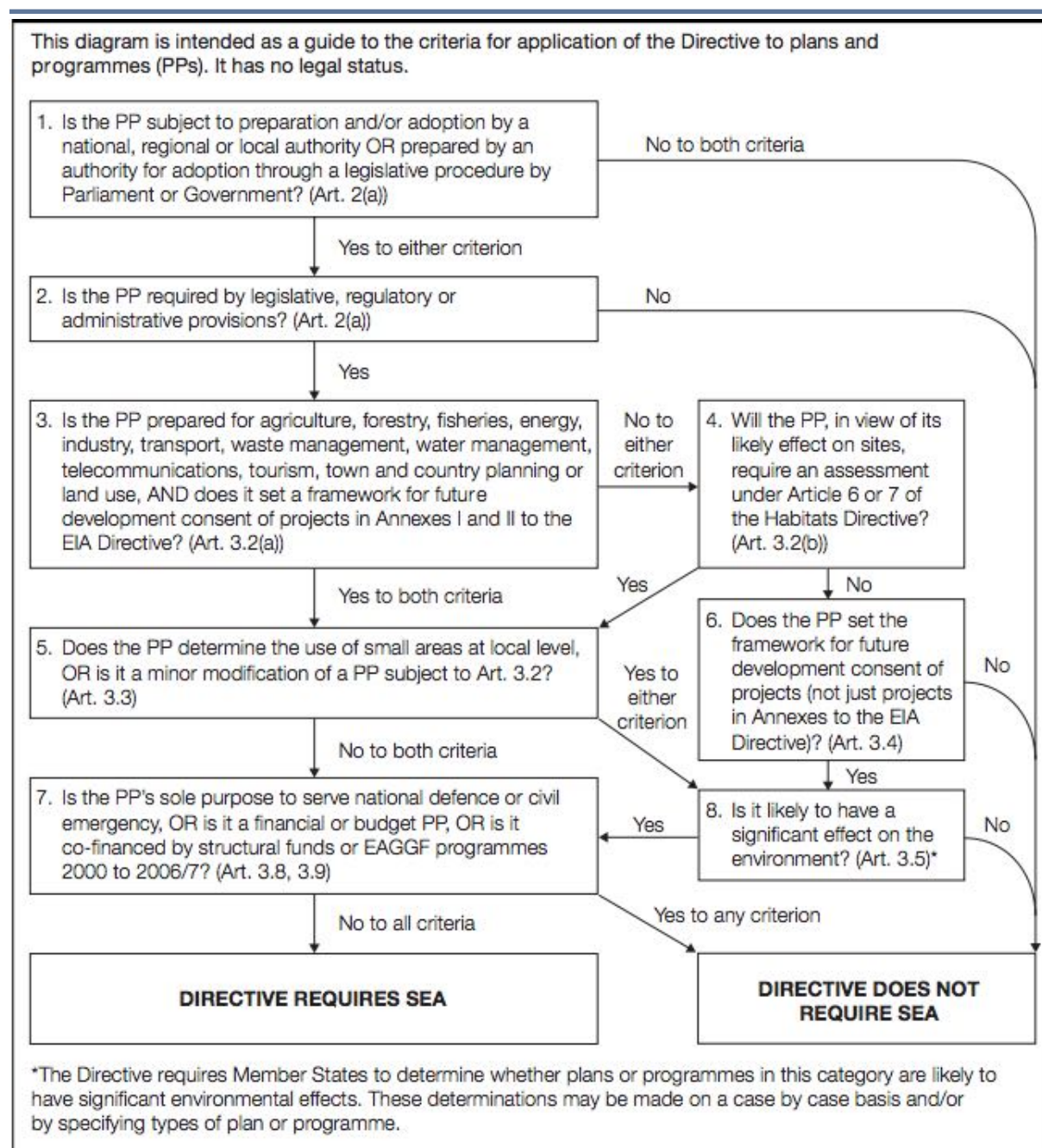


Figure 2.1: Application of the SEA Directive to plans and programmes (source: Office of the Deputy Prime Minister)

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 Southam Parish. 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: Southam 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 Southam 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	There are opportunities to integrate environmental considerations within the Southam NP. The NP contains policies that aim to conserve important aspects of the neighbourhood including the natural green spaces, valued landscape and historic assets (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 Southam Neighbourhood Area. It also sets out policies which planning applications within the NP area will need to adhere to.

Criteria (from Annex II of SEA Directive and Schedule I of Regulations)	Response
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 would adversely impact the special natural characteristics or cultural heritage features within the 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 NP aspirations are set out in **Appendix B**.

2.5 Biodiversity, flora and fauna

- 2.5.1 There are no European designated biodiversity sites located within 20km of Southam Parish. The nearest European designated site is 'Ensor's Pool' Special Area of Conservation (SAC), located approximately 27.3km north of Southam Parish. European sites are discussed further in **Chapter 3**.
- 2.5.2 There are no Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) within the parish. The nearest SSSI to the parish is 'Long Itchington & Ufton Woods', located approximately 1km to the north west. Other nearby SSSIs include 'Napton Hill Quarry', 'Ufton Fields', 'Harbury Railway Cutting' and 'Stockton Railway Cutting and Quarry' (see **Figure 2.2**). The entirety of the parish is within an 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 There are no Local Nature Reserves in the parish, however, there are several Local Wildlife Sites (LWSs): 'Long Itchington Quarry'; 'Southam Bypass Cutting'; 'Southam Meadow South'; 'Hill Farm Wood'; 'Mature Elm' and 'Salt Spring'. There are also two Local Geological Sites within the parish: 'Southam Cement Quarry' and 'Southam by-pass Cutting' (see **Figure 2.3**).
- 2.5.4 The Southam NP does not have a policy on the protection and enhancement of local biodiversity. Policy AS.7 of the Core Strategy seeks to ensure development within Southam enhance the green infrastructure network *"to enhance linkages to and between important biodiversity and geodiversity features in the town's hinterland, such as Ufton Fields SSSI and Long Itchington and Ufton Woods SSSI"*. Policy CS.6 of the Core Strategy also seeks to ensure proposals minimise impacts on *"local designations such as Local Wildlife Sites and Local Nature Reserves"* or safeguard features of geological interest.
- 2.5.5 Due to the requirements of policies set out in the Core Strategy, and as the NP does not allocate any sites for development, the Southam NP would not be expected to lead to any likely significant effects on the biodiversity, flora and fauna within the Plan area.

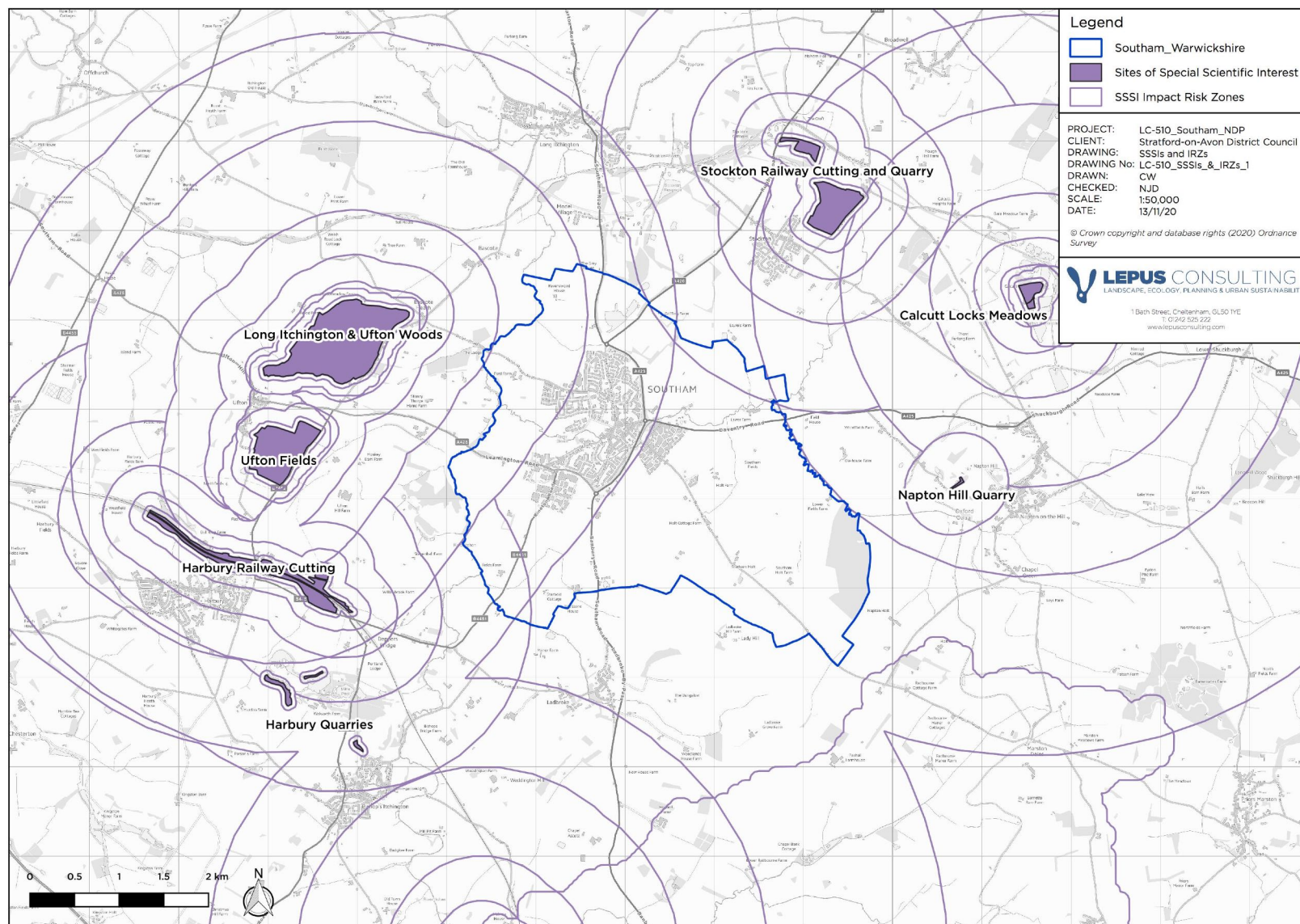


Figure 2.2: The SSSIs and corresponding Impact Risk Zones in and around Southam Parish (source: Natural England)

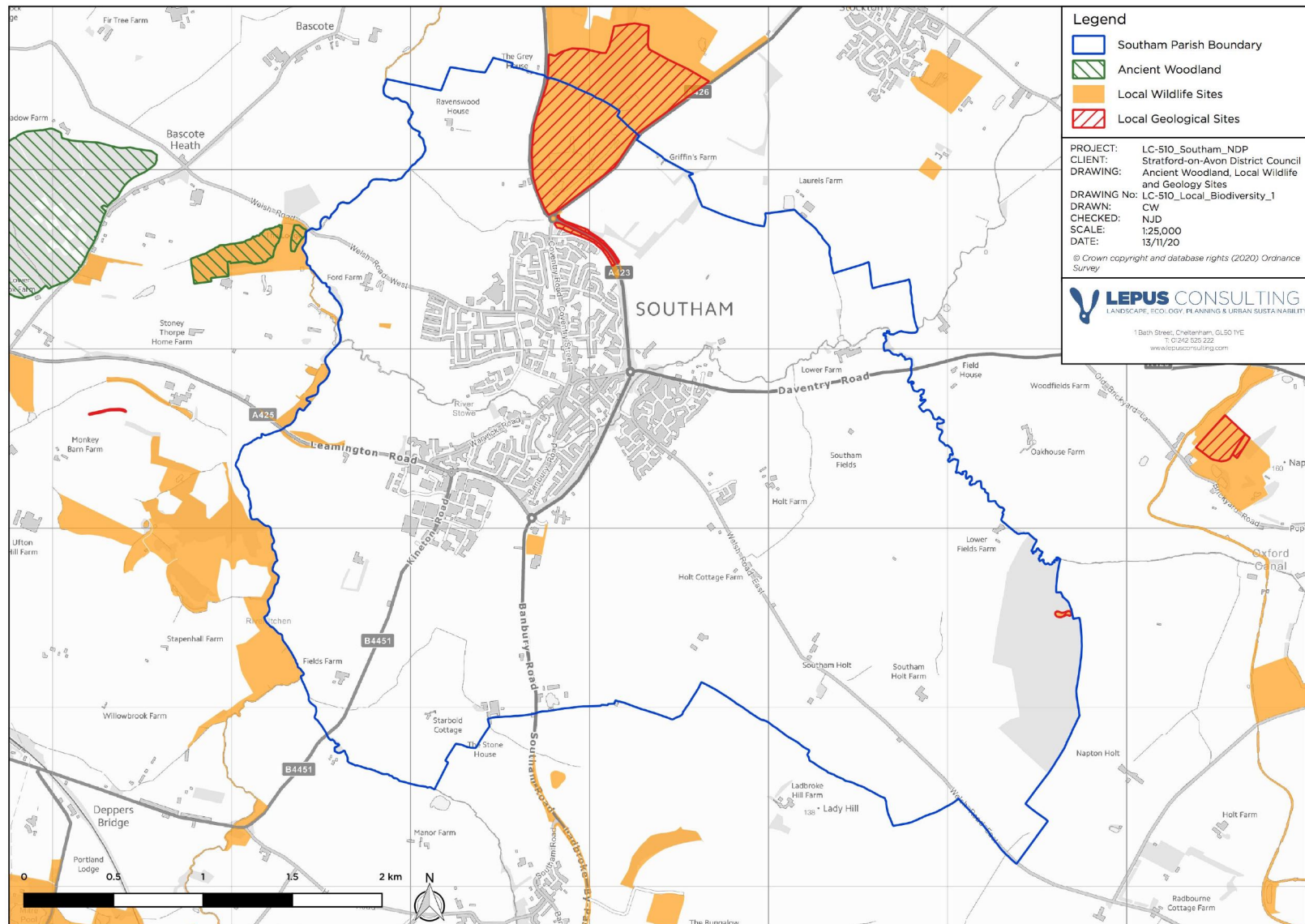


Figure 2.3: Local biodiversity designations in and around Southam Parish (source: Natural England and Stratford-on-Avon District Council)

2.6 Population and human health

- 2.6.1 Southam Primary School and Southam College are both located to the north of Southam town. Convenience stores within the parish include Tesco Superstore and Co-operative Food, as well as Shell and BP garages.
- 2.6.2 Community facilities with Southam Parish include the Grange Hall, The Graham Adams Centre, Southam Community Church, Southam Library and Information Centre, Courtyard Vets, Southam Rugby Football Ground and Warwick House Wedding Venue. Public houses in the parish include The Bowling Green, The Crown Inn, The Olde Mint and The Black Dog. Most of these services are located in the town centre.
- 2.6.3 Southam GP Surgery is located to the south east of the town and Southam Leisure Centre is located to the north west of the town. Warwick Hospital, located approximately 12.6km to the west of Southam, is the closest hospital with an A&E department.
- 2.6.4 A total of 15 Local Green Spaces have been designated under Policy 01 of the NP. The policy seeks to conserve and develop green spaces in the parish for the enjoyment of current and new residents. Access to these spaces would be expected to help encourage active lifestyles and exercise, whilst also having benefits to residents' mental health.
- 2.6.5 Policies 07 and 08 seek to ensure a range of residential development is delivered within the parish, including self-build units, affordable housing and bungalows. Policy 06 also seeks to ensure residential development is located in close proximity to amenities. These policies would be likely to ensure that future development within the parish is of a suitable mix and tenure to meet the identified needs of local residents.
- 2.6.6 Objective 10 of the NP is *"to conserve and encourage footfall in the town (especially at weekends), to improve the social and commercial viability of the high street and discourage anti-social behaviour"*. This would be expected to have benefits to community cohesion and encourage residents to live active lifestyles. In addition, Policy 05 seeks to create safe and secure environment and design out crime. This would be expected to reduce the fear of crime and have a positive impact on the population.

- 2.6.7 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

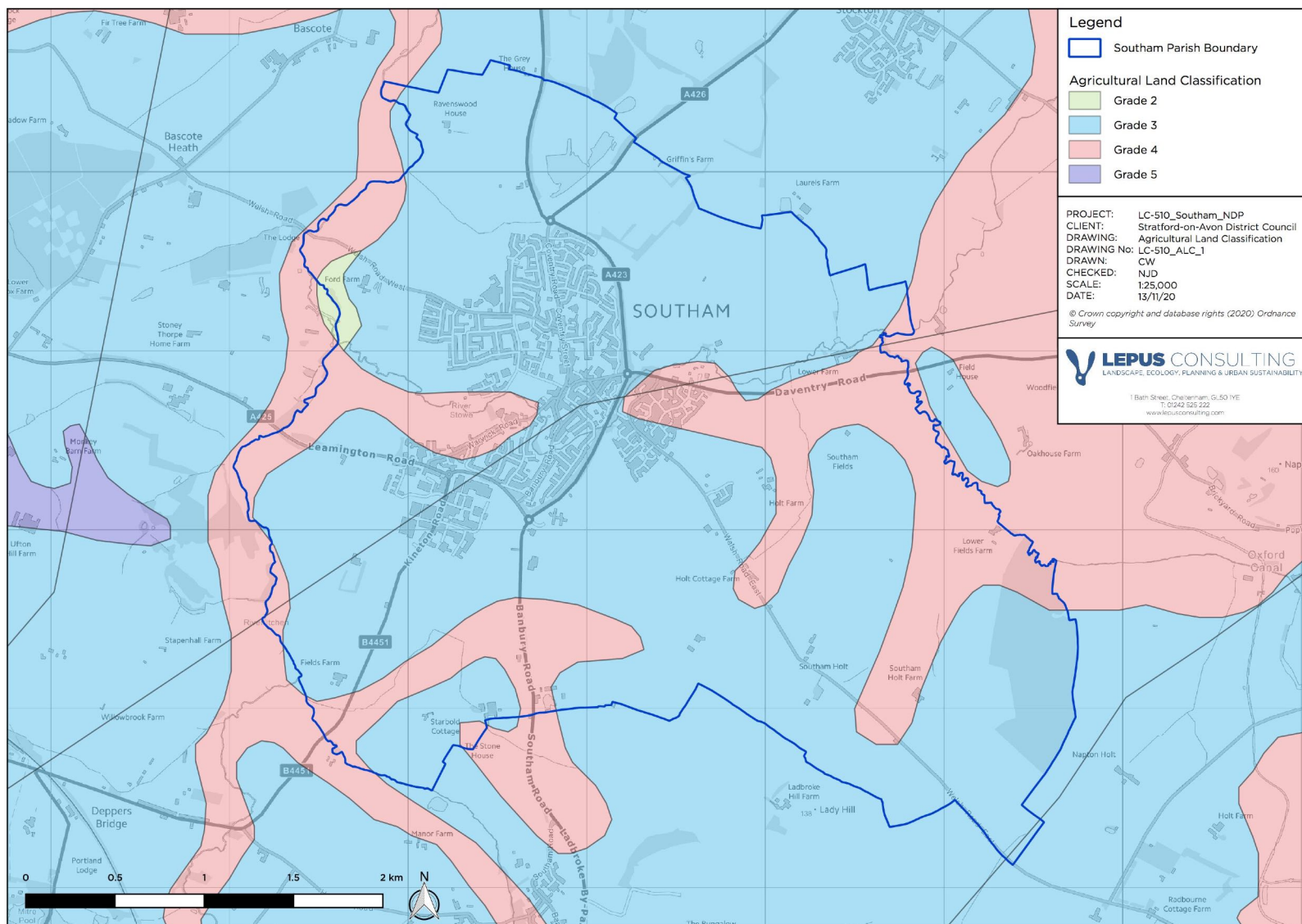
- 2.7.1 Whilst not an Annex 1(f) topic in itself, transport and accessibility interacts with a number of the topics such as population and human health, material assets and climatic factors.
- 2.7.2 There are several bus services which pass through Southam town centre with routes to Leamington Spa, Rugby and Napton on the Hill. There are no railway stations within the parish. The nearest station to Southam is Leamington Spa Station located approximately 10km to the north west. From here, residents can journey to Stratford-on-Avon, Birmingham, London and Manchester.
- 2.7.3 The A423 passes through the parish from north to south and the A425 passes through from east to west. Junction 12 of the M40 is located approximately 8km south west of Southam and Junction 1 of the M45 is approximately 11km to the north. From these roads, residents will have good access via the road network to Coventry, Banbury, Warwick, Rugby 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 13 of the NP seeks to ensure future development within the parish provides safe pathways and cycleways within and around the site. Proposals should also encourage walking and cycling over car use.
- 2.7.6 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 Southam. 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 Southam Parish is situated on ALC Grade 3 land (see **Figure 2.4**). Some areas to the east, west and south west of the parish have been identified as Grade 4 ALC.

-
- 2.8.2 Policy 03 of the NP, 'Use of Brownfield Land', supports the redevelopment of brownfield land within the identified Built-Up Area Boundary (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 'best and most versatile' land in the parish.
- 2.8.3 As the A423 and A425 pass through Southam town centre, any future development within 200m of one of these main roads could potentially expose residents to higher levels of air pollution¹⁰.
- 2.8.4 The River Stowe passes through the town and the River Itchen follows the western boundary of the parish. There are large areas of Flood Zone 2 and 3 associated with these two rivers (see **Figure 2.5**). There are also areas of high surface water flood risk associated with these two watercourses, in addition to large areas of low, medium and high surface water flood risk located to the south west of the parish (see **Figure 2.6**).
- 2.8.5 Objective 9 of the NP is *"to reduce the number of properties being flooded on a regular basis to zero"* and Policy 15 seeks to support development if the proposal addresses fluvial and pluvial flooding issues, does not exacerbate flood risk in surrounding areas and, where appropriate, is supported by a site-specific flood risk assessment.
- 2.8.6 Policy 10 of the NP focuses on water conservation, and supports the provision of rainwater harvesting and recycling of grey water within developments, as well as the integration of sustainable urban drainage systems (SuDS).

¹⁰ The Department for Transport (DfT) in their Transport Analysis Guidance (TAG) consider that, *"beyond 200m from the link centre, the contribution of vehicle emissions to local pollution levels is not significant"* Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/transport-analysis-guidance-webtag> [Date Accessed: 16/11/20]



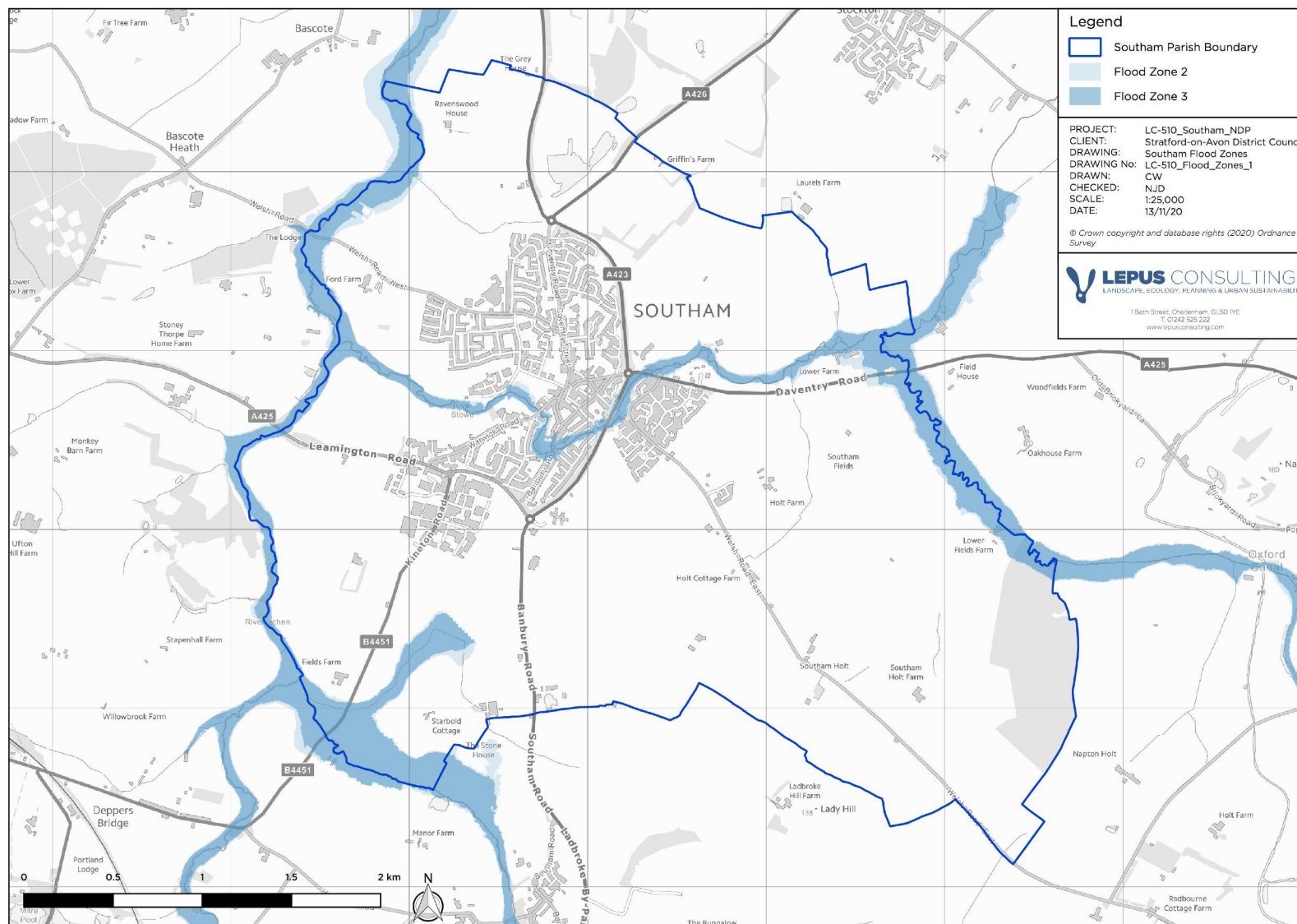
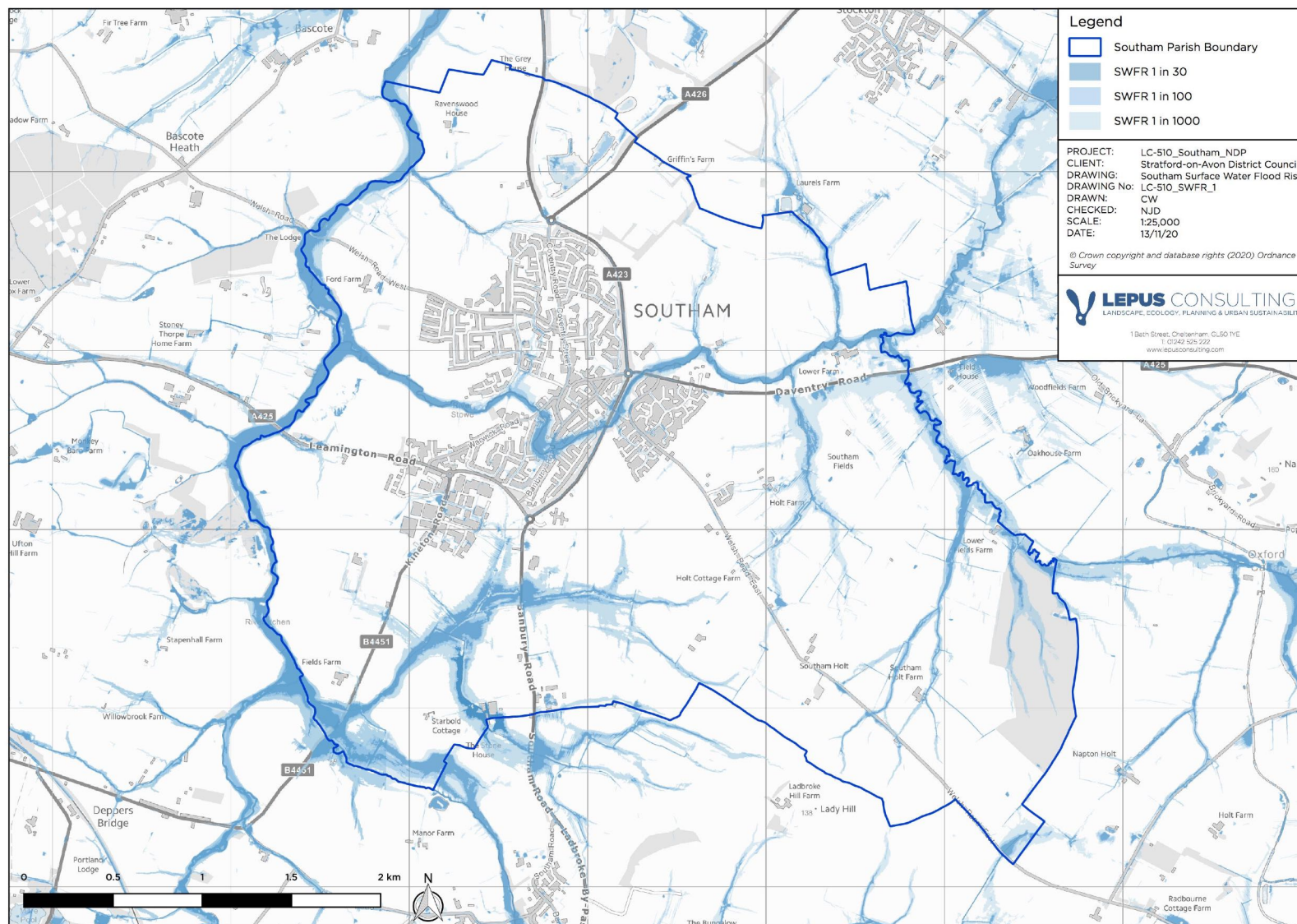


Figure 2.5: Flood Zones in and around Southam Parish (source: Environment Agency)



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. 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 The NP seeks to support development which would help to reduce the impacts of climate change and reducing carbon emissions. Objective 6 of the NP is *"to reduce Southam's carbon footprint and demand on water, energy and sewerage services with aim for all new builds to be carbon neutral by 2031"*.
- 2.9.3 Policy 09, 'Environmental Sustainability', aims to support plans for renewable technology, including solar panels and heat pumps, and seeking to ensure new or renovated buildings are energy efficient and *"contribute to the achievement of sustainable development"*. Policy 11 seeks to ensure future developments are suitable for the provision of electric car charging points and promotes walking and cycling over personal car use. This will help to decrease the number of petrol or diesel powered vehicles on local roads, reducing carbon emissions and improving local air quality.
- 2.9.4 These policies would be 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

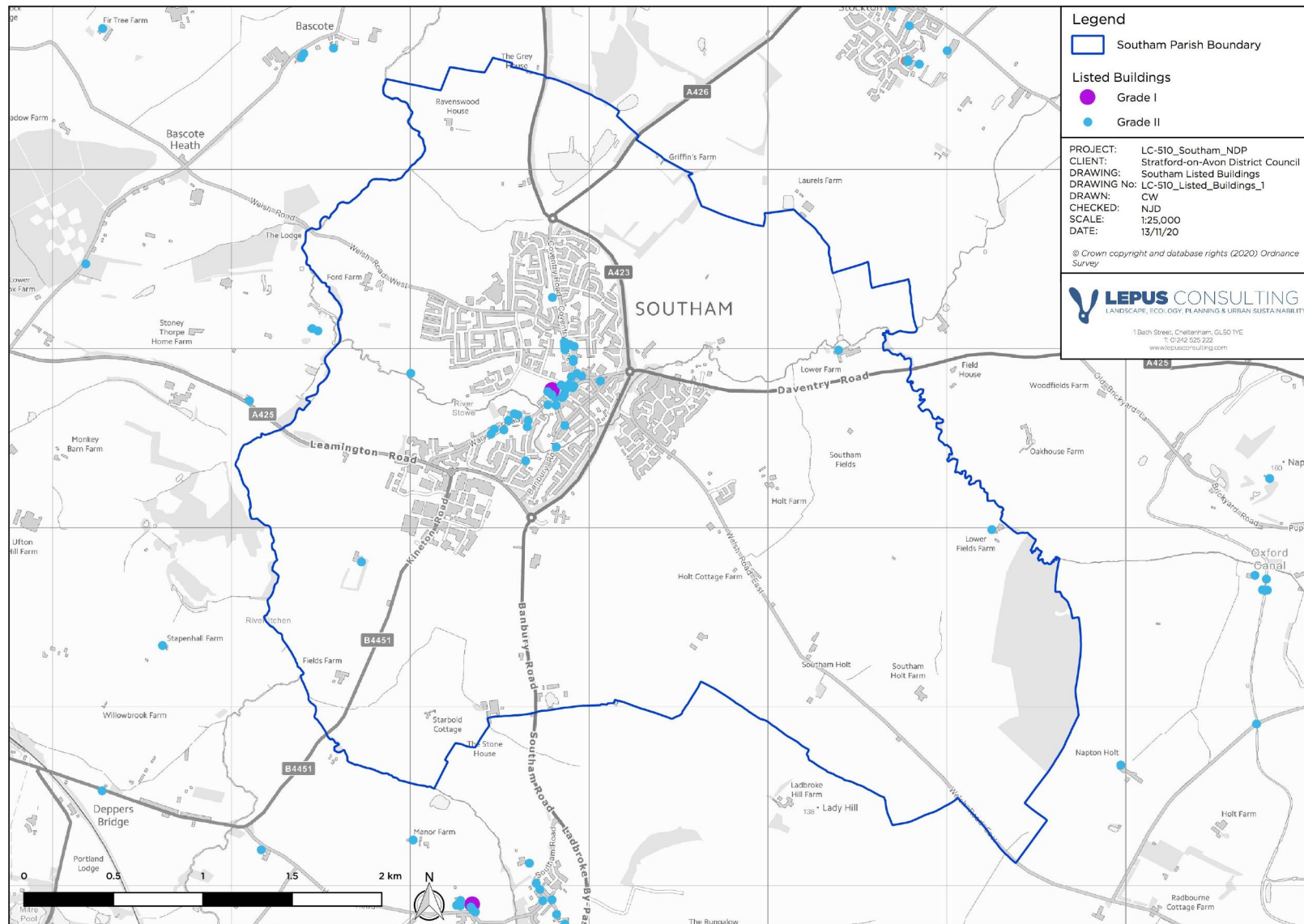
- 2.10.1 The material assets topic considers social, physical and environmental infrastructure. This sub-section should be read alongside 'Population and human health', which details health and social infrastructure implications of the NP; 'Climatic factors', which considers transport infrastructure 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 There are a wide range of shops and businesses within the parish, including Stealth Racing, LoveBallet Dance Company, Tarsus Hotel and Restaurant and Avondale Veterinary Centres. Residents are expected to have good access to a range of employment opportunities.
- 2.10.3 Objective 10 of the NP seeks *“to improve the social and commercial viability of the high street”*. 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 It is recommended that further policies are included in the Plan which support the development of new businesses and seek to boost the local economy. Nevertheless, it is considered unlikely that the NP would have significant adverse impacts on material assets within Southam Parish.

2.11 Cultural heritage

- 2.11.1 There is one Grade I Listed Building, ‘Church of St James’, located in the centre of Southam town (see **Figure 2.7**). There are 39 Grade II Listed Buildings, including ‘Napton Road Farmhouse’, ‘Congregational Church’ and ‘The Crown Inn’. Southam Conservation Area is located in the centre of Southam town (see **Figure 2.8**) and most of the Listed Buildings are coincident with the Conservation Area. Southam Conservation Area is also identified on Historic England’s ‘heritage at risk’ register, in a *“deteriorating”* and *“poor”* condition¹¹.
- 2.11.2 Policy 04 of the NP helps to ensure development proposals *“conserve or enhance the character of the Southam Conservation Area”* and would not harm the special characters of the Conservation Area. Objective 11 of the NP is *“to conserve and enhance Southam’s rich heritage and history for future generations”*. Policy 04 and Objective 11 would be likely to help ensure future development within the parish is considerate of heritage features, including the Listed Buildings and Southam Conservation Area.
- 2.11.3 Overall, the NP is not expected to lead to any likely significant effects on cultural heritage.

¹¹ Historic England (2020) Southam – Stratford-on-Avon. Available at: <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/heritage-at-risk/search-register/list-entry/6270> [Date Accessed: 16/11/20]



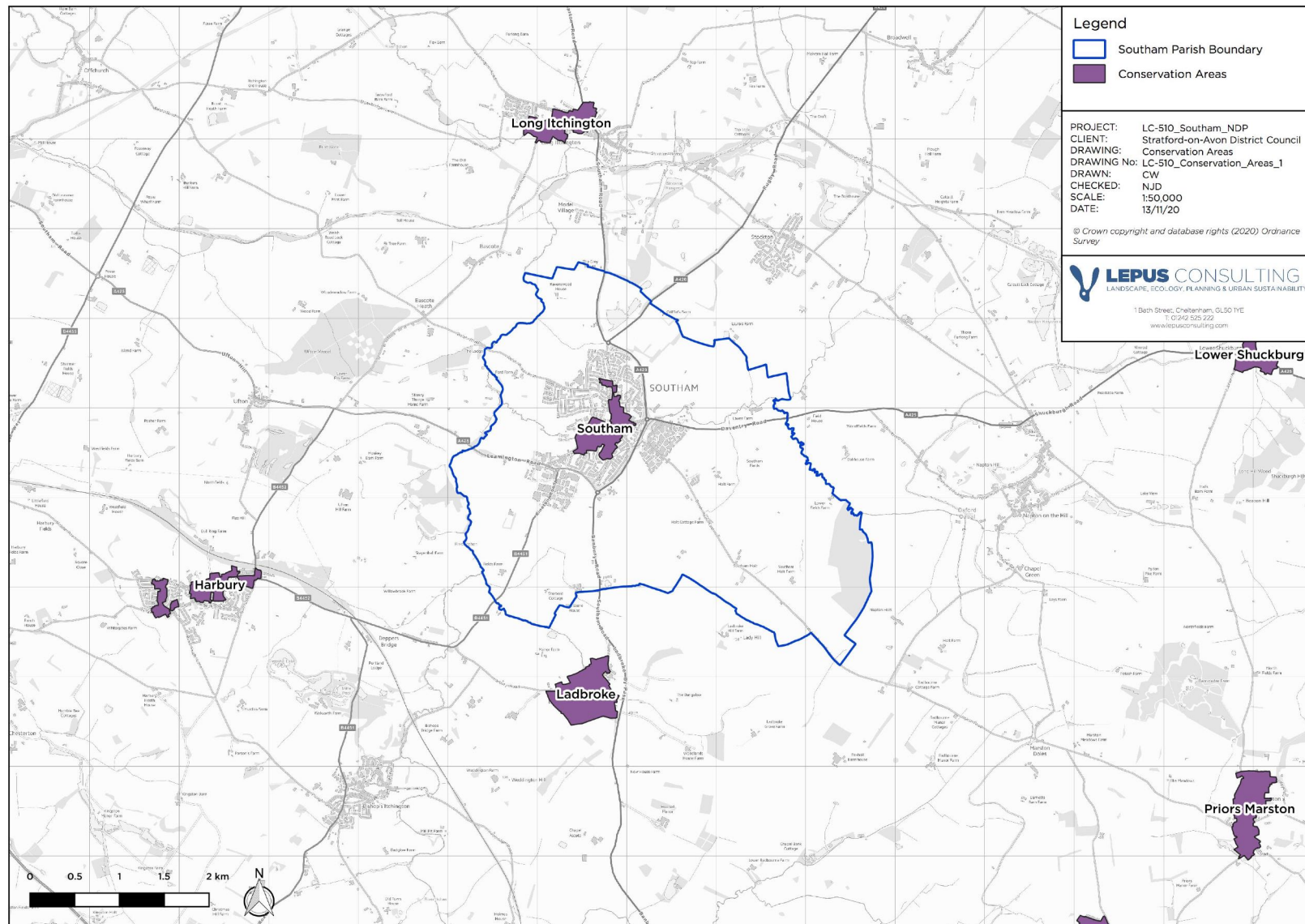


Figure 2.8: Conservation Areas in and around Southam Parish (source: Stratford-on-Avon District Council)

2.12 Landscape

- 2.12.1 The majority of Southam is located within the ‘Dunsmore and Feldon’ National Character Area (NCA)¹². 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”*. A small section to the south east is located in the ‘Northamptonshire Uplands’ NCA¹³. A key characteristic of this NCA is the *“gently rolling, limestone hills and valleys capped by ironstone-bearing sandstone and clay Lias, with many long, low ridgelines”*.
- 2.12.2 The Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) is located approximately 10.6km to the south of the parish.
- 2.12.3 Policy 02 of the NP, Valued Landscapes and Viewpoints, seeks to ensure development proposals *“are appropriate to, and integrate with, the character of the landscape setting whilst conserving, and where appropriate, enhancing the character of the landscape”* and ensure that the valued landscapes identified within the NP are maintained and safeguarded (see **Figure 2.9**). This policy would be likely to help protect valued landscape and special views within the parish from inappropriate future development.
- 2.12.4 Overall, the NP is not expected to lead to any likely significant effects on landscape.

¹² Natural England (2014) National Character Area profile: 96. Dunsmore and Feldon. Available at: <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/4878893332824064> [Date Accessed: 13/11/20]

¹³ Natural England (2014) National Character Area profile: 95. Northamptonshire Uplands. Available at: <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5007752023769088#:~:text=The%20Northamptonshire%20Uplands%20National%20Character.with%20many%20long%2C%20low%20ridgelines> [Date Accessed: 13/11/20]



Figure 2.9: Valued Landscapes and Viewpoints (source: Southam 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 2017¹⁴.

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 Directive¹⁵ and the Birds Directive¹⁶. 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 Southam Parish is 'Ensor's Pool' SAC, which is located approximately 27.3km away. Due to this distance and the fact that no impact pathways have been identified to European sites, in addition 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.

¹⁴ Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. Available at: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2017/1012/regulation/105/made> [Date Accessed: 16/11/20]

¹⁵ 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: 16/11/20]

¹⁶ 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: 16/11/20]

4 Conclusions

4.1 SEA Screening outcome

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

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

4.3 Consultation

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

Appendix A: Southam NP Policies

Policy	Policy Name
Conserve and Develop Local Green Spaces (Environment)	
Policy 01	Local Green Spaces
Policy 02	Valued Landscapes and Viewpoints
Policy 03	Use of Brownfield Land
Reflect and Enhance Southam Qualities	
Policy 04	Conservation Area
Enhance the Public Realm	
Policy 05	Designing Out Crime
Meeting the Housing Need	
Policy 06	Local Housing Need
Policy 07	Self-Build Provision
Refine the Housing Mix	
Policy 08	Housing Mix
Reduce Carbon and Resource Demand	
Policy 09	Environmental Sustainability
Policy 10	Water Conservation
Policy 11	Electric Vehicles
Policy 12	Dark Skies
Safe Walking and Cycling	
Policy 13	Safe Walking and Cycling
Parking and Traffic	
Policy 14	Residential Parking
Flood Strategy	
Policy 15	Flood Risk Mitigation
Policy 16	Riverside Management

Appendix B: Consultation Responses



Historic England

[REDACTED]
Lepus Consulting
1 Bath Street
Cheltenham
GL50 1YE

Direct Dial: 0121 625 6887

Our ref: PL00729662

21 December 2020

Dear [REDACTED]

SOUTHAM 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/>

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

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Historic Places Advisor

[REDACTED]

cc:



THE AXIS 10 HOLLIDAY STREET BIRMINGHAM B1 1TF

Telephone 0121 625 6888
HistoricEngland.org.uk



Historic England is subject to both the Freedom of Information Act (2000) and Environmental Information Regulations (2004). Any Information held by the organisation can be requested for release under this legislation.

Date: 15 January 2021
Our ref: 339698
Your ref: Southam SEA and HRA Screening



[REDACTED]
Lepus Consulting Ltd
1 Bath Street
Cheltenham
GL50 1YE

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

BY EMAIL ONLY

T 0300 060 3900

Dear [REDACTED],

Southam Neighbourhood Plan – SEA & HRA Screening

Thank you for your consultation on the above dated 04 December 2020 which was received by Natural England on the same date.

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

Strategic Environmental Assessment 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 Screening

Natural England welcomes the consideration given to the Habitats Regulations. We agree with the conclusion of the report of no likely significant effect upon the named European designated site and therefore advise that further Habitats Regulations Assessment is not required.

- Ensor's Pool Special Area of Conservation (SAC) - located approximately 27.3km away.

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

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

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]
Consultations Team

██████████
Lepus Consulting
1 Bath Street
Cheltenham
GL50 1YE

Our ref: UT/2007/101490/SE-
35/SP1-L01
Your ref:

Date: 21 January 2021

Dear Madam

Southam Neighbourhood Plan SEA and HRA Screening Request

Thank you for referring the above SEA and HRA Screening document for comment which was received on 21 January 2021.

As requested we have reviewed the Screening Assessment prepared in support of the Southam Neighbourhood Plan (NP). Having reviewed the proposals we do not consider there to be significant environmental impacts. Therefore, we concur with the conclusions of the report and do not require an SEA or HRA to be undertaken in support of the Southam NP. 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 Stowe, River Itchen and ordinary watercourses within the Neighbourhood Plan boundary. There are significant areas of floodplain most of which is Flood Zone 3 (high probability). Any proposals and policies that are considered during the NP process should take this into account.

The NP should propose local policies to safeguard land at risk from fluvial flooding and the provision of sustainable management of surface water. 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.

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,

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..

directed away from those areas at highest flood risk, i.e. towards Flood Zone 1. All new development, including infill development and small scale development, should incorporate sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) to reduce flood risk and manage surface water to ensure that runoff does not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere.

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 Plan. 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.

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.

Yours faithfully


Senior Planning Advisor

Direct dial 

Direct e-mail 

Ecological Services

Green Infrastructure

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

Landscape Character Assessment

Habitats Regulations Assessment

Strategic Environmental Assessment

Sustainability Appraisal



LEPUS CONSULTING
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