



# Draft Bourn Airfield New Village Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

## Sustainability Appraisal (SA) & Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening Report – June 2019





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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 The Purpose of this Report

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This Screening Report is an assessment of whether or not the contents of the Draft Bourn Airfield New Village Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) require a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in accordance with the European Directive 2001/42/ EC and associated Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004. A SEA is required if a SPD is deemed to have a likely significant effect on the environment.

This report will also consider whether the Draft SPD requires a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) in accordance with Article 6(3) and (4) of the EU Habitats Directive and with Regulation 61 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. A HRA is required when it is deemed that likely significant effects may occur on protected Habitats (European) Sites (Natura 2000 sites) as a result of the implementation of a plan or project.

Please note that this screening report takes account of the legal ruling *People over Wind, Peter Sweetman v Coillte Teoranta*.

This SEA/HRA screening report is based on the draft Bourn Airfield New Village SPD which is being consulted upon and the report itself will be subject to statutory consultation; this is therefore an initial screening report. A final screening report will therefore be produced when the adoption of the SPD is being considered, having regard to the response to consultation and all other relevant considerations as they may arise at that stage.

## 1.2 Bourn Airfield Planning Context

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### 1.2.1 The Local Plan

Bourn Airfield has been allocated in the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (2018) for the development of a new village of approximately 3,500 homes, together with associated community facilities and infrastructure improvements (Local Plan Policy SS/7: Bourn Airfield new village). As a major development site, it represents a significant opportunity to deliver sustainable development and healthier living, which will make a significant contribution to the long-term development needs of the Cambridge area.

#### 1.2.1.1 The Local Plan Sustainability Appraisal (SA)

The Local Plan was adopted in 2018, having gone through an Examination in Public (EiP). The EiP examined the soundness of the Local Plan, as well as the Plan's SA and HRA Screening Assessment as accompanying documents that were legally required. As an allocation within the Plan under Policy SS/7, the principle of the development, its location and the indicative scale of a new village at Bourn Airfield has already been established through the Local Plan.

The SA of the Local Plan assessed the Bourn Airfield allocation through 'policy off' and 'policy on' mechanisms; that is, the on-site effects of the environment were identified, and the subsequent policy criteria for mitigating these in Policy SS/7 were also assessed for their suitability in



addressing any identified effects.

### 1.2.1.2 The Local Plan Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)

HRA was undertaken for the Local Plan and determined that the Local Plan would not have a Likely Significant Effect on any Habitats Sites and that there was no resulting requirement to progress to an Appropriate Assessment of the Plan. During the examination process, the European Court of Justice gave its judgement in *People Over Wind v Coillte Teoranta* C-323/17. The Court determined that mitigation measures cannot be taken into account when carrying out a HRA screening assessment to decide whether a plan or project is likely to result in significant effects on a Habitats Site.

The implications of this court judgement were considered within the context of the Local Plan (including as an allocation the Bourn Airfield new settlement), through a review of the HRA Screening Assessment work. This review found that the conclusions of the previous HRA work were properly reached without regard to mitigation measures intended to avoid or reduce harmful effects on any European Protected site. Therefore, the previous HRA screening report remained valid and there was no need to progress to Appropriate Assessment as a result of the legal precedent set by CJEU *People Over Wind v Coillte Teoranta* C-323/17. The Local Plan Inspectors did not disagree with this conclusion.

A draft screening report in respect of the draft SPD was shared with Natural England in May 2019. They responded to the HRA screening suggesting that there have been material changes in evidence since the SA and HRA for the Local Plan and (a) further evidence of an increased propensity for recreational walking as a result of "lifestyle changes", (b) increasing dog ownership leading to more frequent visits to the countryside, (c) changes to Natural England's impact risk zones regarding recreational pressures and (d) increased visitor pressure on Eversden & Wimpole Woods SAC than was identified in the Local Plan.

Having considered the informal comments from Natural England and all other matters, it is considered that the conclusions of the draft screening report remain correct such that the draft Bourn Airfield New Village SPD is unlikely to have any significant effects on the Habitats sites identified, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects. As such, it is considered that it is not necessary to proceed to the next stage of the Habitats Regulations Assessment process, i.e. Stage 2 and there is no requirement for an Appropriate Assessment.

Given that this screening process concerns the SPD, this screening report addresses the likely effects of the draft SPD guidance, of itself, rather than wider issues, including the principle of the development proposed. At planning application stage however, the LPA will need to consider the likely impacts of the development as a whole, both in principle and in detail, when carrying out HRA screening and, if required, appropriate assessment.

## 1.2.2 What does the draft SPD cover?

The document provides guidance about how the new Bourn Airfield settlement should be designed, developed and delivered in accordance with Policy SS/7 of the adopted South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (2018). It has been informed by survey work and analysis that has been undertaken by South Cambridgeshire District Council (SCDC) and its partners in relation to land at Bourn Airfield. Once adopted, the SPD will become a significant material consideration in determining any planning applications for the development of the site. This draft SPD cannot and does not create new policy but provides additional guidance on the implementation of Policy SS/7 as it applies to the Bourn



## Airfield site.

It is important to note that this Screening Report and the draft SPD itself are not responding to any emerging planning application. Any planning application on the site will be subject to scrutiny at the development management stage, and permission would be subject to adherence to the full suite of relevant planning policies adopted at the District level, notably the adopted South Cambridgeshire Local Plan (2018) and the draft SPD to which this Screening Report relates. Any planning application itself will need to be the subject of an application-level HRA screening and, if deemed necessary, appropriate assessment.

The principle of a new settlement at Bourn Airfield is established at the (adopted) Local Plan level. This Screening Report will focus therefore on the specific policy guidance contained within the draft SPD.

The draft Bourn Airfield New Village SPD includes a vision, objectives and specific chapters relating to the site context and the overarching framework and guiding principles for the new development.

*'Bourn Airfield will be a distinct new South Cambridgeshire village acknowledging its historic past but with its own contemporary identity. A diverse, yet integrated community, with a range of facilities and services to complement, not compete with, existing local provision. Well connected to the wider area by high quality public transport and providing employment and homes to support the Greater Cambridge economy. The village will have a vibrant and strong heart, supporting healthy, active and inclusive community lifestyles and providing a high quality of life for its residents in a beautiful contemporary landscape setting.*

*The village will be embedded in a network of multi-functional green infrastructure, which is accessible and sustainable, being integrated with the natural environment. Supporting walking, cycling and public transport as the preferred mode of choice for travel for people within the new village and beyond, and facilitating a move towards zero carbon lifestyles through an innovative approach to planning, design and construction.'*

Additionally, a number of Strategic Development Objectives have been devised for the draft Bourn Airfield New Village SPD. These are:

Theme		Strategic Development Objective
1	A Well-Connected Place:	Facilitating sustainable movement within the site and to and from surrounding villages, shaped around a network of traffic-free active travel routes, integrated public transport, and delivering excellent connections along the A428 corridor to St Neots and Cambridge via a new high-quality public transport route.
2	Vibrant, Prosperous and Inclusive:	Providing a range of housing types and tenures to meet the local housing needs (including low cost and affordable housing) and aspirations of a broad and diverse community. Meeting the educational needs of its community, with a village centre integrating a range of community facilities alongside convenient and independent retail, with opportunities for local employment and entrepreneurship within the site.
3	Healthy, Active and Resilient:	Providing for the wellbeing of residents as an integral aspect of the village's fabric. Encouraging walking and cycling as a part of daily life, offering opportunities for physical recreation and social interaction for all, and supporting access to fresh and healthy food choices. Designing spaces that encourage social interaction for all and supporting the residents to connect and form their own community.



Theme		Strategic Development Objective
4	Locally Distinctive:	Responding to the existing context of the site and the inherited assets of the airfield and its landscape, whilst delivering a bespoke and modern built environment which includes high quality public spaces and unique and locally inspired buildings, including opportunities for custom and self-build.
5	Responsive and Sustainable:	Building in a manner that is responsive to climate change and sensitive to the environment. Delivering enhanced outcomes for biodiversity and hydrology, and incorporating low or zero carbon buildings, renewable energy and low-emission travel that aim to exceed existing standards within the Local Plan.
6	Cohesive, Well Planned and Well Governed:	Considering the lifetime of the village through conception, construction, completion and maturity. Utilising tools such as masterplans and design codes to manage quality, supporting community building, placemaking and community ownership models, and creating community focused governance models.

## 2. Legislative Background

### 2.1 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) & Sustainability Appraisal (SA)

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Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 June 2001 on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment states that,

*‘Environmental assessment is an important tool for integrating environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of certain plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment.*

*(10) All plans and programmes which are prepared for a number of sectors and which set a framework for future development consent of projects listed in Annexes I and II to Council Directive 85/337/EEC of 27 June 1985 on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment(7), and all plans and programmes which have been determined to require assessment pursuant to Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild flora and fauna(8), are likely to have significant effects on the environment, and should as a rule be made subject to systematic environmental assessment. When they determine the use of small areas at local level or are minor modifications to the above plans or programmes, they should be assessed only where Member States determine that they are likely to have significant effects on the environment.*

*(11) Other plans and programmes which set the framework for future development consent of projects may not have significant effects on the environment in all cases and should be assessed only where Member States determine that they are likely to have such effects.’*

The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (commonly referred to as the ‘Strategic Environmental Assessment Regulations’) implement the requirements of the European Directive 2001/42/EC (the ‘Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive’) on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment. SEA ensures that potential environmental effects are given full consideration alongside social and economic issues.

The draft Bourn Airfield New Village SPD may influence frameworks for future development, or become ancillary to those plans and programmes that do set such a framework, and as such it has been determined that the principle of the draft SPD should be screened for the necessary application of the SEA Directive, with further consideration as to whether the draft Bourn Airfield New Village SPD would additionally need a SEA or not.

The Report from the Commission to The Council, The European Parliament, The European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions states, on the application and effectiveness of the Directive on Strategic Environmental Assessment (Directive 2001/42/EC), that

*‘the following P&P, and modifications to them, are covered when prepared and/or adopted by an authority[2] and required pursuant to legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions:*

*- P&P prepared for certain sectors and which set the framework for future development consent in respect of projects under the Environmental Impact Assessment-EIA-Directive.*



- *P&P requiring an assessment under the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC).*
- *P&P setting the framework for development consent in respect of projects (not limited to those listed in the EIA Directive; see above) and determined by "screening" as being likely to have significant environmental effects.'*

This report represents this screening process in regard to the content and influence of the draft Bourn Airfield SPD.

## 2.2 Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)

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Under the provisions of the EU Habitats Directive and translated into English law by the Habitats Regulations (*The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) Regulations 2017*), a competent authority must carry out an assessment of whether a plan or project will significantly affect the integrity of any European Site (also referred to as Habitats Sites in the National Planning Policy Framework), in terms of impacting the site's conservation objectives. The assessment of effects is carried out through an "appropriate assessment".

HRA is a screening assessment of the impacts of a land use proposal against the conservation objectives of Habitats (European) sites, in order to identify whether effects are likely so as to require a full appropriate assessment. Specifically, it is to ascertain whether or not a proposal (either alone or in combination with other proposals) would potentially damage the internationally designated features or in integrity of that site. European sites are also known as Natura 2000 sites.



## 3. SEA / SA Screening

### 3.1 When are SEA / SA Required?

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SA and SEA are tools used at the *plan-making stage* to assess the likely effects of the plan when judged against reasonable alternatives. A SA of the proposals in each Local Plan is required by Section 19 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and incorporates the required SEA. An SEA process was integral to the preparation of the adopted Local Plan (2018).

Not within the legislative scope of this Screening Report (relevant to plan-making) but worthy of mention here to distinguish between different environmental assessment procedures; Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is applied to individual projects which are likely to have significant environmental effects through the development management process as upheld by the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011). The Council has already determined that the development proposals submitted for development at Bourn Airfield should be subject to EIA and a scoping opinion was provided in 2017.

SEA for an SPD alone can be required, but usually only in exceptional situations. This is usually only applicable to SPDs which themselves could cause significant environmental effects that have not been previously considered.

Planning Practice Guidance – Strategic environmental assessment and sustainability appraisal (Paragraph: 008 Reference ID: 11-008-20140306) states that,

*‘Supplementary planning documents do not require a sustainability appraisal but may in exceptional circumstances require a strategic environmental assessment if they are likely to have significant environmental effects that have not already been assessed during the preparation of the Local Plan.*

*A strategic environmental assessment is unlikely to be required where a supplementary planning document deals only with a small area at a local level (see regulation 5(6) of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004), unless it is considered that there are likely to be significant environmental effects.’*

Articles 2 and 3 of the SEA Directive set out the circumstances in which an SEA is required. Table 1 sets out the assessment of whether the draft Bourn Airfield New Village SPD will require a full SEA.

**Table 1: Exploring whether the Principle of the draft SPD would warrant SEA**

Q	Criteria	Response	Outcome	Commentary
1	Is the Plan subject to preparation and/or adoption by a national, regional or local authority OR prepared by an authority for adoption through legislative procedure by Parliament or Government	Yes	Go to question 2	The SPD has been subject to preparation and/or adoption by a national, regional or local authority.
2	Is the Plan required by legislative, regulatory or <u>administrative provision</u>  Typical characteristics of "administrative provisions" are that they are publicly available, prepared in a formal way, probably involving consultation with interested parties. The administrative provision must have sufficient formality such that it counts as a "provision" and it must also use language that plainly requires rather than just encourages a Plan to be prepared.	Yes	Go to question 3	The SPD would be considered as falling within the category of an 'administrative provision'.
		No	DOES NOT REQUIRE SEA	
3	Is the Plan 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?	Yes to both criteria	Go to question 5	The SPD has been prepared for town and country planning and sets a framework for future development consent.
		No to either criteria	Go to question 4	
4	Will the Plan, in view of its likely effect on sites, require an assessment under Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive?	Yes	Go to question 5	The Plan's likely effect on sites and requirement for an assessment under Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive is explored in Section 4 of this Report.
		No	Go to question 6	
5	Does the Plan determine the use of small areas at local level, OR is it a minor modification of a Plan likely to require assessment under the Habitats Directive?	Yes to either criteria	Go to question 8	The SPD can be considered to assist the determination (through guidance) of the use of small areas at the local level commensurate to its status in determining local

Q	Criteria	Response	Outcome	Commentary
		No to both criteria	Go to question 7	planning applications.
6	Does the Plan set the framework for future development consent of projects (not just projects in the Annexes of the EIA Directive)?	Yes	Go to question 8	The SPD has been prepared for town and country planning and sets a framework for future development consent.
		No	DOES NOT REQUIRE SEA	
7	Is the Plans sole purpose to serve national defence or civil emergency, OR is it a financial or budget Plan, OR is it co-financed by structural funds or EAGGF programmes 2000 to 2006/7	Yes to any criteria	DOES NOT REQUIRE SEA	The SPD does not serve a purpose related to national defence or civil emergency, a financial or budget Plan. The SPD is not co-financed by structural funds or EAGGF programmes 2000 to 2006/7.
		No to all criteria	REQUIRES SEA	
8	Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment?	Yes	REQUIRES SEA	Likely significant effects are explored in more detail in Section 3.2 of this Screening Report. The 'conclusions' section of the Report outlines whether the SPD requires SEA or not due to having a significant effect on the environment.
		No	DOES NOT REQUIRE SEA	

The following section looks at the identified effects of the draft SPD in line with the criteria for assessing effects as per Article 3(5) of Directive 2001/42/EC (the SEA Directive). Crucially, it will determine whether there are any likely significant effects on the environment arising from the SPD.

## 3.2 Likely Significant Effects on the Environment resulting from the draft Bourn Airfield New Village SPD

The following assessment will consider the likelihood of the draft SPD (at the time of writing) to have significant effects on the environment. The table below will explore the likelihood of effects on the following required themes, as included within Annex I of the SEA Directive (2001/42/EC):

- Biodiversity;
- Population;
- Human health;
- Fauna;
- Flora;
- Soil;
- Water;



- Air;
- Climatic factors;
- Material assets;
- Cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage;
- Landscape; and
- The interrelationship between the above factors.

**Table 2: Assessment of Likely Significant Effects on the Environment**

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)	Likelihood and summary of significant effects
<p>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.</p>	<p>The purpose of the draft SPD is to provide context and guidance regarding a new village at Bourn Airfield.</p> <p>The draft SPD provides further guidance and detail to the requirements of Policy SS/7 of the Local Plan. As stated within the draft SPD, it exists to <i>‘provide clarity to assist developers, landowners and infrastructure delivery partners in the achievement of an attractive, sustainable, well-designed, high quality environment that integrates housing, employment and community uses, together with infrastructure and green areas in conjunction with the surrounding landscape and local communities.’</i></p> <p>The Airfield is allocated within the adopted Local Plan (2018), which established the principle of development in this location and at an indicative scale of 3,500 dwellings. That document was subject to SA and HRA mandatorily, which explored the environmental effects of the allocation.</p> <p>The degree to which the draft SPD sets a framework for projects is therefore relatively low in so far as the SPD relates directly to an allocation within the adopted Local Plan that has been adopted and is already been subject to the required environmental assessments.</p>
<p>The degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans or programmes including those in a hierarchy.</p>	<p>Adopted Local Plan policy SS/7: Bourn Airfield new village sets out the components for the new village including the requirement for a draft SPD to be prepared. The draft SPD provides greater detail and clarity on spatial outcomes and delivery, but is not a standalone document and must be read in conjunction with the ‘parent’ policy (Policy SS/7) and other policies relevant to the area. The draft SPD ensures that future development is plan-led for the purposes of ensuring sustainable outcomes. The degree to which the draft SPD influences other programmes is therefore limited.</p> <p>Were the draft SPD not to be produced, the Bourn Airfield new village would still be a commitment of the LPA through its allocation within the adopted Local Plan.</p>

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)	Likelihood and summary of significant effects
<p>The relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development.</p>	<p>The primary aim of the draft SPD is to help ensure that sustainable outcomes are forthcoming from the development of Bourn Airfield as a new settlement, in accordance with the Local Plan allocation.</p> <p>Strategic Development Objective 5 (Responsive and Sustainable) includes an aspiration that the draft SPD delivers enhanced outcomes for biodiversity and hydrology, and incorporating low or zero carbon buildings, renewable energy and low-emission travel that aim to exceed existing standards within the Local Plan. This Objective is elaborated on in the draft SPD, and includes a number of guiding principles covering Biodiversity and Habitats (5A), Flood risk and resilience (5B), Integrating Sustainable Drainage (5C), Site-wide energy (5D), Sustainable buildings (energy, water, materials) (5E), and Noise, light and air quality (5G).</p> <p>The draft SPD actively seeks to ensure that environmental considerations are integrated into any forthcoming development, with a view to promoting sustainable development.</p>
<p>Environmental problems relevant to the plan.</p>	<p>The draft SPD relates to a small area. The policy content of the adopted Local Plan will additionally apply to forthcoming development proposals on the site, including the criteria of Policy SS/7. This and all Local Plan policies have been subject to Sustainability Appraisal within the context of the preparation of the Local Plan. The draft SPD and this Screening Report identify the following potential (direct / indirect) environmental problems or sources of potential problems relevant to the Bourn Airfield site area:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The site is within the Impact Risk Zones of Eversden &amp; Wimpole Woods SAC (designated for Barbastelle bats). Caldecote Meadows SSSI and Hardwick Wood SSSI. Development of the site at the quantum allocated within the Plan would require consultation with Natural England at the planning application stage.</li> <li>• A number of Priority Habitats (from the Priority Habitat Inventory<sup>1</sup>) are scattered throughout and adjacent to the Plan area. These include Deciduous Woodland and Young Trees Woodland. Areas of lowland meadow are also adjacent to the site.</li> <li>• Grassland habitats are currently found within the airfield strips and great crested newts are known to be in the vicinity.</li> <li>• Significant stands of trees which are protected by Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) and/or have been graded as Category A trees (trees of high quality and value) include: Site boundaries from the boundary of the industrial site with Highfields Caldecote in the east through to Bucket Hill</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup> a spatial dataset that describes the geographic extent and location of Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006) Section 41 habitats of principal importance.



Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)	Likelihood and summary of significant effects
	<p>Plantation in the south-eastern corner; Mature hedgerow trees alongside the watercourse from Bucket Hill Plantation and the bridleway in the south; Blocks of woodland, groups of trees, and specimen trees surround the Grange in the south-western corner; and a hedgerow on the western boundary with Broadway, opposite Great Common Farm.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The site contains a single Grade II Listed Building (conjoined 18th century Barns to the North of The Grange) and is additionally adjacent to the Grade II Listed late 16th/early 17th Great Common Farmhouse to the west.</li> <li>• The site is partially within or adjacent to an area with a history of contamination, as well as that which may be associated with the site’s use as an airfield.</li> <li>• The SA of the Local Plan identified adverse noise issues, highlighting Environmental Health concerns about the site in 2012 related to the former ThyssenKrupp manufacturing processes on the site.</li> <li>• There are also additional noise issues associated with traffic noise from the A428.</li> <li>• The Local Plan SA’s assessment of the site indicated that the scale of development at the site increases the potential for an increase in traffic and static emissions that could affect local air quality.</li> <li>• The south of the site area is within a Source Protection Zone - Zone 3: total catchment. This is defined as the area around a source within which all groundwater recharge is presumed to be discharged at the source.</li> <li>• The non-developed areas of the site, amounting to roughly two thirds of the land area, are in agricultural use on land that is classified as Grade 2 (very good).</li> <li>• Development of the site could be perceived to lead to the coalescence of Highfields Caldecote to the east with Cambourne to the west.</li> </ul>
<p>The relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (e.g. plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection).</p>	<p>The content of the draft SPD is not in conflict with those relevant planning documents within the wider district and county area related to waste management or water protection.</p>
<p>The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects on the following factors:</p>	<p>The following impacts have been identified within this Screening Assessment:</p>



Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)	Likelihood and summary of significant effects
<p>- Biodiversity</p>	<p>By virtue of the historic use of the site as an airfield substantial proportions of the site are largely devoid of natural vegetation. There is the possibility that brownfield habitats exist on site, however these are not likely to be identified until the planning application stage and until ecological assessments are completed if deemed relevant.</p> <p>The Local Plan SA (through a policy-off appraisal) identified that the site is adjacent to an existing site designated for nature conservation, namely the Bucket Hill Plantation County Wildlife Site (CWS). Barbastelle bats have been confirmed to be using this CWS and nearby woodlands and these may be a functional part of the protected population within Eversden &amp; Wimpole Woods SAC. Barbastelle bats have also been found to be using parts of Bourn Airfield and any using the site for foraging, commuting or roosting may be part of the meta-population of bats using the SAC.</p> <p>The draft SPD identifies that this Bucket Hill Plantation CWS appears not to have been managed and is currently somewhat overgrown, and development will need to protect and enhance this habitat and include plans for its long-term management. The Spatial Framework within the draft SPD seeks to enhance and protect this designation through effective Green Corridors, open space and landscaping. Some large areas of deciduous and broadleaved woodland (National Forest Inventory &amp; Priority Habitat) exist within the south east of the site and centrally, however these are intended to be retained as features within the draft SPD's Spatial Framework and enhanced through surrounding Green Corridors, open spaces and landscaped areas to ensure biodiversity net gain. This is also the case regarding the following adjacent Priority Habitats:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 'Lowland meadows' (to the south east); and</li> <li>• 'Young trees woodland (and ground preparation)' (to the west).</li> </ul> <p>The draft SPD's 'FIX F' covers green edges and corridors, which includes suitable buffers at each of the site's northern, western, eastern, southern and Country Park edges. Further green corridors are stated as being required alongside the runway, the brook watercourse, the block of woodland in the south eastern corner, the required employment site, and diagonally between the school playing fields and the sports pitches to the east.</p> <p>The site is within the Impact Risk Zones of three SSSIs in close proximity (Eversden &amp; Wimpole Woods, Caldecote Meadows SSSI and Hardwick Wood SSSI). The Impact Risk Zones (IRZs) are a GIS tool developed by Natural England to make a rapid initial assessment of the potential risks posed by development proposals to: Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Ramsar sites. They define zones around each site which reflect the particular sensitivities of the features for which it is notified and indicate the types of development proposal which could potentially have adverse impacts.</p>

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)	Likelihood and summary of significant effects
	<p>The specific implications of this are that any residential development of 100 units or more on the site would require consultation with Natural England at the planning application stage. In a planning policy context, Natural England have been consulted during the preparation of the now adopted Local Plan and accompanying SA, both of which include the new settlement as an allocation and for the same quantum. These consultation comments have been factored into relevant policies and the draft SPD where relevant.</p> <p>The draft SPD refers to Eversden &amp; Wimpole Woods SAC as Bourn Airfield also partially lies within its 5km Impact Risk Zone. The draft SPD is considered unlikely to have significant effects on biodiversity as it does not identify land for development in the first instance.</p> <p>Moreover, the SPD, consistent with Local Plan policy SS/7 and other plan policies, secures embedded measures concerning the provision of formal and informal open space, the provision of a large Country Park in the south of the site, strategic landscaping, measures to enhance biodiversity, the retention of existing woods, hedges and water features and in regard to lighting. These measures will minimise the potential for ecological impacts on site and beyond. These embedded aspects of the development will allow residents to fulfil their daily recreational needs on site rather than in other locations where an increase in visitors may give rise to pressures which are adverse to biodiversity interests. No likely significant effects on biodiversity are likely to arise.</p>
- Population	<p>The SA of the Local Plan, in considering the principle of the allocating the Bourn Airfield site for a new village of 3,500 dwellings, considered effects related to the existing populations of neighbouring settlements. A new village at Bourn Airfield can be seen to offer wider social benefits related to connectivity, new services and employment opportunities.</p>
- Human health	<p>There are no highlighted negative significant effects of the draft SPD regarding human health that would warrant an assessment through SEA. The Plan includes policies for the protection and significant enhancement of green and open spaces that contribute to healthy lifestyles. There is also a suitable focus on connectivity through walking and cycling which can be expected to offer some indirect positive benefits regarding health.</p>
- Fauna	<p>The SA of the site within the adopted Local Plan (2018) highlighted some indicative negative impacts on existing features or network links that do or may include protected species. It added that the greatest possible impact would be as a result of losing grassland habitats currently found within the airfield strips. Great crested newts are known to be in the vicinity and may also be adversely affected, however if present these are considered to be more appropriately</p>



Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)	Likelihood and summary of significant effects
	<p>addressed at the planning application stage and in consideration of any site specific accompanying ecological assessments if required. The Local Plan SA assessment reflected the ‘policy-off’ principle of development in regards to on-site features. The assessment of the site specific policy (SS/7) indicated positive effects from a ‘policy-on’ point of view that are further enhanced through the plan-led approach of a supporting draft SPD for the site.</p> <p>Indeed, the SA of the Local Plan (2018) indicated that any negative effects that could be perceived from development of the site are capable of appropriate mitigation, based on assumptions that existing features that warrant retention can be retained or appropriate mitigation achieved through the development process rather than through the draft SPD. This can be seen as forthcoming through the draft SPD and its accompanying Spatial Framework, with features enhanced through Green Corridors, open space and landscaping to offer net gains in habitats. In regard to the grassland habitats currently found within the airfield strips, the Spatial Framework includes a ‘runway green corridor’ in the form of a formal linear park landscape. Management mechanisms may need to be introduced to minimize the effects of human use on any found protected species; however the uncertainty surrounding effects in this regard may be more appropriately covered through conditions attached to any planning permission. The draft SPD recognises this, through a requirement that any application for development would need to consider the ecological impacts on habitats within the site and beyond, for example in terms of lighting and the appropriate level of public access.</p> <p>Barbastelle bats have been found to be using parts of Bourn Airfield and any using the site for foraging, commuting or roosting may be part of the meta-population of bats using the SAC.</p> <p>The HRA Screening element of this Report ‘screens out’ further assessment of the draft SPD of itself as having no likely significant effects on Barbastelle bats which are qualifying features of Eversden &amp; Wimpole Woods SAC.</p>
- Flora	<p>In addition to the effects considered surrounding habitats and features on site considered above in the ‘biodiversity’ and fauna’ sections of this table, the Local Plan SA of the allocation at Bourn Airfield identified an adverse impact on protected trees with TPOs present in hedge lines throughout the site and a significant woodland in the south east boundary (just off site). The SA added however that these impacts are easily capable of appropriate mitigation. The draft SPD’s Spatial Framework includes the protection of these areas ensuring that there will be no likely significant effects on flora.</p>
- Soil	<p>The site includes runways and some aircraft hangers, industrial buildings and outside storage areas, amounting to approximately one third of site being previously developed land (PDL). The rest of the</p>



Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)	Likelihood and summary of significant effects
	<p>site is in agricultural use on land that is classified as Grade 2 (very good). Although this reflects the best and most versatile soil in the wider District, its loss was considered through the allocation of the site within the Local Plan process in reflection of that Plan’s growth requirements, the relative merits of alternative options, and on reflection of the balance of sustainability. To this extent, significant effects were not highlighted and it is not considered that this position is altered through the additional content of the draft SPD.</p> <p>The SA of the site allocation within the adopted Local Plan identified that the site was partially within or adjacent to an area with a history of contamination, as well as any associated with the site’s use as an airfield. If this is identified, it is considered that contamination can be remediated, with wider benefits associated with an improvement on current conditions. This will be dealt with at the planning application stage. There will be no significant negative effects as a result.</p>
<p>- Water</p>	<p>The Local Plan SA’s assessment of the site identified no impacts that were not capable of full mitigation, based on assumptions that appropriate standards and pollution control measures will be achieved through the development process, e.g. as part of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS). This includes Bourn Brook, which runs through the site. The draft SPD responds to this through Guiding Principle 5C (Integrating Sustainable Drainage), which states that the new village should provide a site-wide network of sustainable drainage features which mimics the natural catchment processes of the site as much as possible, manages the flow of water from the site and returns water to local watercourses at a greenfield rate or lower.</p> <p>The south of the site area is within a Source Protection Zone - Zone 3: total catchment. This is defined as the area around a source within which all groundwater recharge is presumed to be discharged at the source. It cannot be considered however that development responding to the content of the draft SPD would cause any related negative water quality effects related to the potential pollution of ground water (e.g. give rise to hazardous substances such as pesticides, oils, petrol and diesel, solvents, arsenic, mercury or chromium VI; or non-hazardous substances such as ammonia or nitrates). Pollution control policies at the LPA level will also apply at the planning application stage to ensure that no negative effects on water quality would be experienced.</p>
<p>- Air</p>	<p>The site area is not located within or near to an Air Quality Management Area. The Local Plan SA’s assessment of the site indicated that the scale of development at the site increases the potential for additional traffic and static emissions that could affect local air quality. It is important to note that the Local Plan SA explored effects on a Plan-wide level associated with the Plan’s level of growth (and cumulatively across all allocated sites) and that effects were considered manageable and the Plan found sound at examination.</p>



Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)	Likelihood and summary of significant effects
	<p>This indicates that the effects of development at Bourn Airfield for 3,500 dwellings were not seen as singularly significant. The draft SPD includes a guiding principle (5G Noise, Light and Air Quality) that establishes the requirement that developers will need to demonstrate that they have maximised the opportunities for sustainable travel and mitigated impacts on air quality through submission of a Travel Plan and a Low Emissions Strategy Statement (through adherence to Local Plan Policy TI/2).</p> <p>The SA of the Local Plan also identified adverse noise issues, highlighting Environmental Health concerns about the site in 2012 related to the former ThyssenKrupp manufacturing processes on the site. The allocation of the site within the Local Plan, and the draft SPD, both seek the replacement of the existing industrial type uses with lower noise impact employment development more compatible with residential surrounds, with additional noise mitigation as appropriate, and consideration of measures to mitigate traffic noise impacts from the A428.</p> <p>The content of the draft SPD is not considered to result in any significant noise related impacts in so far as on-site noise effects (created at source through employment uses and those that can be expected to be on-site already through proximity to the A428) will be mitigated.</p>
<p>- Climatic factors</p>	<p>The site area does not contain any areas of Flood Risk Zones 3 or 2. The draft SPD’s Strategic Objective 5 (Responsive and Sustainable) includes aspirations of incorporating low or zero carbon buildings, renewable energy and low-emission travel, that aim to exceed existing standards within the Local Plan. Guiding Principle 5D (Site-wise energy strategy) includes the requirement that an Energy Strategy must accompany the outline planning application at that stage, adding that the strategy should be prepared in accordance with the principles of the energy hierarchy and outline how Bourn Airfield will seek to reduce energy by design, use energy efficiently and utilize renewable and low-carbon energy. Furthermore, Guiding Principle 5E (Sustainable buildings (energy, water, materials) includes further requirements regarding the energy efficiency of all buildings, technologies such as solar photovoltaic panels (PV), solar water heating, Air Source Heat Pumps (ASHPs), Ground Source Heat Pumps (GSHPs), Water Source Heat Pumps (WSHP) and biomass, and construction materials with low embodied energy. There will therefore be no significant impacts associated with the draft SPD.</p>
<p>- Material assets</p>	<p>The site is not within an allocated or safeguarded area regarding mineral deposits, development or activity.</p> <p>Regarding other material assets, any further possible effects are more appropriate to be considered at the development management stage and in accordance with relevant development management</p>



Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)	Likelihood and summary of significant effects
<p>- Cultural heritage</p> <p>- Landscape</p>	<p>policies contained within the LPA’s adopted Local Plan.</p> <p>The site contains a single Grade II Listed Building (conjoined 18th century Barns to the North of The Grange) and is additionally adjacent to the Grade II Listed late 16th/early 17th Great Common Farmhouse to the west. In both instances the SPD includes either significant areas of open space or landscaping to protect any harm to the settings of these Listed Buildings. Additionally, Guiding Principle 3A (Responding to Context) includes that the physical environment should be shaped by the existing surrounding context, creating a place which is rooted in the local area, including incorporating and respecting inherited assets including listed buildings and (additionally) the WWII airfield heritage.</p> <p>In consideration of the above, and the fact that Policy exists at the LPA level which additionally applies in the Plan area, significant negative effects can be ruled out at this stage.</p> <p>The assessment of the site at the Local Plan level considered that the proposal would have no impact on landscape, and that development would generally be compatible, or is capable of being made compatible with local landscape character. This assessment was based on assumptions that appropriate design and mitigation measures would be achieved through the development process. These measures can be seen to be a significant focus of the draft SPD, with additional merits of introducing biodiversity net gain within the landscaping of the site. Although the development of the site could be perceived to lead to the coalescence of Highfields Caldecote to the east with Cambourne to the west, the merits of the proposal have been considered and found acceptable / sound at the Local Plan level commensurate with the Airfield’s allocation within that Plan’s policy SS/7.</p> <p>As a result, there have not been any significant strategic landscape effects identified that would warrant the requirement for the application of the SEA Directive and the formulation of a SEA (or SA) Environmental Report.</p>
<p>The cumulative nature of the effects against the (above) Sustainability Themes.</p>	<p>In line with the above considerations that explore the possible individual effects of the Plan’s content, no significant cumulative effects are considered to be likely to warrant the requirement for the application of the SEA Directive and the formulation of a SEA (or SA) Environmental Report.</p>
<p>The trans boundary nature of the effects.</p>	<p>The adopted Local Plan, and the wider suite of development plan documents adopted at the district level, can be seen to support the protection and improvement of conditions relevant to those sustainability factors listed within the SEA Directive. The SPD is not</p>

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)	Likelihood and summary of significant effects
	in conflict with these wider thematic policies. The HRA Screening element of this Report, which discusses in-combination effects with other relevant plans and programmes, also supports the Local Plan HRA's finding that there are no in-combination effects regarding Habitats (European) Sites.
The risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents).	There is limited risk to human health or the environment as a result of the draft SPD or any adhering development. This is in consideration of the above screening requirements related to sustainability themes. The draft SPD is suitably focused on minimising effects for the benefits of sustainable development, and is unlikely to give rise to any accidents that can be considered to have a significant risk to human health or the environment.
The magnitude spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected).	The draft SPD relates to a relatively local level only and the allocation of Bourn Airfield as a new village of 3,500 dwellings and supporting development has been considered within a wider spatial context as part of its allocation within the adopted (sound) Local Plan. As such, no significant effects are identified within this Screening Report.
The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- special natural characteristics or cultural heritage</li> <li>- exceeded environmental quality standards</li> <li>- intensive land use</li> </ul>	As highlighted above in the screening of the draft SPD per sustainability theme, the draft SPD has been assessed as having no potential for significant effects that would warrant further assessment through SEA or SA.
The effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, community or international protection status.	<p>The site is beyond the Cambridge Green Belt and in the immediate vicinity of the site are a number of established settlements within open countryside: Highfields Caldecote immediately to the east, Cambourne to the west, and Bourn village to the south-west. There will be no impact associated with Green Belt purposes as a result.</p> <p>Further, as highlighted above in the screening of the draft SPD per sustainability theme, the draft SPD has been assessed as not having any significant effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, community or international protection status.</p>

The assessment in Table 2 indicates that, given the guidance within the draft SPD, it is not considered that it will give rise to any significant environmental effects.

## 4. HRA Screening

### 4.1 Procedural Requirements of HRA and the draft SPD

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Under the provisions of the EU Habitats Directive and translated into English law by the Habitats Regulations (The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) Regulations 2017), a competent authority must carry out an assessment of whether a *plan or project* will significantly affect the integrity of any European Site, in terms of impacting the site's conservation objectives.

Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) as required by Regulation 63 of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017. Regulation 63 states that,

63.—(1) A competent authority, before deciding to undertake, or give any consent, permission or other authorisation for, a plan or project which—

*(a) is likely to have a significant effect on a European site or a European offshore marine site (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects), and*

*(b) is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of that site,*

*must make an appropriate assessment of the implications of the plan or project for that site in view of that site's conservation objectives.*

HRA is the first stage of the process and involves a screening assessment of the impacts of a plan or land use proposal against the conservation objectives of Habitats (European) sites to establish whether likely significant effects would arise. Specifically, it is to ascertain whether or not a proposal (either alone or in combination with other proposals) would potentially damage the internationally designated features of that site. Habitats (European) sites are also known as Natura 2000 sites.

The various iterations of the HRA Screening Report of the Local Plan concluded that there were no likely significant effects from the Local Plan either alone or in combination with other reasonably foreseeable plans and projects on the identified Habitats (European) sites and that there was no resulting requirement to progress to an Appropriate Assessment of the Plan.

During the Local Plan examination process the European Court of Justice gave its judgement in *People Over Wind v Coillte Teoranta C-323/17*. The Court determined that mitigation measures cannot be taken into account when carrying out a screening assessment to decide whether a plan or project is likely to result in significant effects on a Habitats Site. The implications of this court judgement were considered within the context of the Local Plan (including the allocation the Bourn Airfield new village, as part of the overall development strategy), through a review of the HRA Screening Assessment work.

This review found that the conclusions of the previous HRA work remained correct. Therefore, the previous HRA screening report remained valid and there was no need to progress to Appropriate Assessment as a result of the legal precedent set by CJEU *People Over Wind v Coillte Teoranta C-323/17*. This Local Plan Inspectors did not disagree with this conclusion.

The role of the draft SPD is to provide a framework to assist the implementation of the Local Plan. The draft SPD does not allocate land for development or prescribe or change the scale parameters



of potential development which is set out in the Local Plan policy SS/7 as approximately 3,500 dwellings.

Natural England has raised concerns regarding likely recreational pressure from new residential development at Bourn Airfield on Eversden and Wimpole Woods SAC and in particular, impacts on the internationally important population of Barbastelle bats, an Annex II species under the Habitats Directive.

This screening report considers the likelihood of significant effects of the draft SPD, which are those that would undermine the conservation objective for this SAC i.e. to maintain, in favourable condition, the habitats for the population of Barbastelle bats, subject to natural change and to maintain the broadleaved deciduous woodland in favourable condition.

It is necessary to understand how the draft SPD, of itself, could affect this Habitats Site. Natural England has identified how Barbastelle bats as qualifying features could be affected by a new residential settlement on Bourn Airfield.

This HRA screening will assess the likelihood of significant effects as a result of the draft SPD, in itself, by considering impact pathways, the various characteristics of potential effects and the risk to Barbastelle bat population. This takes account of assumptions and limitations and has regard to the extent and nature of the on-site greenspace and information recreational space embedded in the design detail of the draft SPD, the precautionary principle and other requirements of Habitats Regulations.

Natural England has commented that any *planning application* for residential development on Bourn Airfield will need to consider the likelihood of any significant effects on the qualifying features of Eversden and Wimpole Woods SAC to comply with Habitats Regulations Assessment requirements.

## 4.2 Habitats (European) Sites

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This section of this Report will:

- Identify the Habitats (European) sites within 20km of the Bourn Airfield site
- Summarise the reasons for designation and Conservation Objectives for each site to be considered in this assessment.
- Screen the draft Bourn Airfield New Village SPD for its potential to impact upon a Habitats (European) site.
- Assess the potential for in combination effects from other projects and plans in the area.
- Identify if there are any outstanding issues that need further investigation.

The aim of the EU wide network of nature protection areas is to assure the long-term survival of Europe's most valuable and threatened species and habitats.

European sites are designated under the European Union (EU) Birds Directive (Council Directive 79/409/EEC on the Conservation of Wild Birds) and the EU Habitats Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora).

The Birds Directive requires the establishment of Special Protection Areas (SPAs) for birds. The Habitats Directive similarly requires Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) to be designated for other species, and for habitats. Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar sites) are also part of



the Natura 2000 network. Together, SPAs, SACs and Ramsar sites make up the Natura 2000 network in England.

#### 4.2.1 Explanation of SPAs, SACs and Ramsar sites

##### Special Protection Areas (SPAs)

SPAs are areas which have been identified as being of international importance for the breeding, feeding, wintering or the migration of rare and vulnerable species of birds found within EU countries. Example: Ouse Washes is internationally important for wintering waterfowl. *Legislation: EU Birds Directive.*

##### Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)

SACs are areas designated to protect habitat types that are in danger of disappearance, have a small natural range, or are highly characteristic of the region; and to protect species that are endangered, vulnerable, rare, or endemic. Example: woodland habitat of Eversden and Wimpole Woods for the population of Barbastelle bats. *Legislation: EU Habitats Directive.*

##### Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar Sites)

Ramsar Sites are designated to protect the biological and physical features of wetlands, especially for waterfowl habitats. For example, Wicken Fen is an outstanding remnant of East Anglian peat fens and supports one species of British Red Data Book plant fen violet *Viola persicifolia* which survives at only two other sites in Britain. Ramsar sites often overlap with SACs and SPAs and UK planning policy determines that they should be accorded the same importance when developments are proposed. *Legislation: Ramsar Convention (1971) – Wetlands of International Importance.*

#### 4.2.2 Habitats (European) Sites to be considered

There is only one Habitats (European) Site which lies within 20 km of the Bourn Airfield site. This was identified by the Magic website [www.magic.gov.uk](http://www.magic.gov.uk) and is shown on the map in Appendix 2. The site is within a 5km Impact Risk Zone (IRZ) for the Eversden and Wimpole Woods SAC.

Impact Risk Zones are a GIS tool developed by Natural England to make a rapid initial assessment of the potential risks posed by development proposals to: Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Ramsar sites. They define zones around each site which reflect the particular sensitivities of the features for which it is notified and indicate the types of development proposal which could potentially have adverse impacts.

The statutory consultees, including Natural England, have been invited to provide initial views on an early draft of the SPD to inform this screening process.

**Table 3: Habitats (European) Sites within 20km of the Bourn Airfield to be considered in this assessment**

SPA	SAC	Ramsar
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SPA	SAC	Ramsar
N/A	Eversden and Wimpole Woods SAC	N/A

It was therefore concluded that only one Habitats Site, shown in Table 3, which lies within 20 km of the site should be assessed for 'likely significant effects' from this draft SPD. The Habitats Site within scope of this HRA screening is Eversden and Wimpole Woods SAC.

### 4.2.3 Conservation Objectives

Information on the above site has been taken from the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan SA Scoping report Appendix 11 (June 2012) and as subsequently updated. The table below indicates the reason why each site is important and has been designated and the Conservation Objectives for each site. This information has been obtained from the Natural England website.

**Table 4: European Sites considered within this assessment**

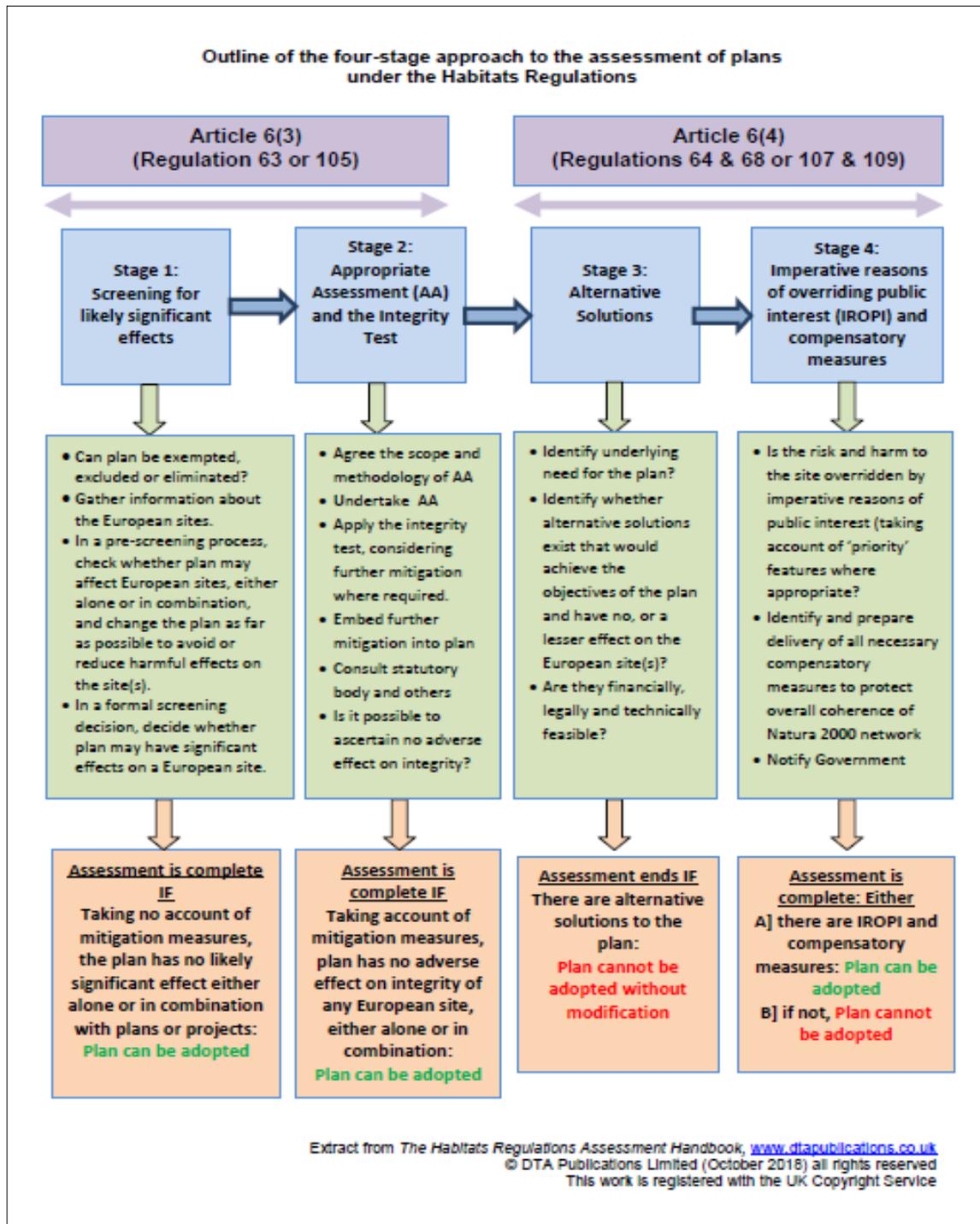
Reasons for Site Designation and Conservation Objectives of the Habitats site	Reason for importance	Conservation Objectives for the Habitats Site
Eversden and Wimpole Woods SAC	<p>Comprises Eversden and Wimpole Woods SSSI</p> <p>Presence of colony of Barbastelle bats <i>Barbastella barbastellus</i> for which it is considered to be one of the best areas in UK.</p>	<p>To maintain, in favourable condition, the habitats for the population of Barbastelle bats.</p> <p>Subject to natural change, to maintain the broadleaved deciduous woodland in favourable condition.</p> <p>The qualifying features are <i>Barbastella barbastellus</i> bats.</p>

## 4.3 Method and Approach

An assessment under the Habitats Regulations can be split into 4 stages with Tests 1 (LSE) & 2 (Integrity) and this report only covers HRA screening, as show in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1 outlines of the Four Stage Approach to the Assessment of Plans under the Habitats Regulations (taken from the DTA handbook). It is considered that that Figure represents a reasonable and accurate working summary of the HRA process as a whole.

Figure 1: the Four Stage Approach to the Assessment of Plans under the Habitats Regulations (taken from the DTA handbook)



### 4.3.1 Stage 1: HRA Screening

The screening stage considers whether the draft SPD is likely to result in significant effects on a Habitats (European) Site. Section 4 considers each objective and the results of the screening exercise recorded.

### 4.3.2 Potential impacts of draft Bourn Airfield New Village SPD on Habitats sites

The draft Bourn Airfield New Village SPD does not make any material changes to the site area, or the general policy guidance contained within policy SS/7 of the Local Plan.

The range of potential impact types to be considered for any plan or project can be summarised as -

- Land take by developments;
- Impact on protected species found within but which travel outside the protected sites may be relevant where development could result in effects on qualifying interest species within the Habitats site, for example through the loss of feeding grounds for an identified species.
- Increased disturbance, for example from recreational use resulting from new housing development and / or improved access due to transport infrastructure projects;
- Changes in water availability, or water quality as a result of development and increased demands for water treatment, and changes in groundwater regimes due to increased impermeable areas;
- Changes in atmospheric pollution levels due to increased traffic, waste management facilities etc. Pollution discharges from developments such as industrial Developments, quarries and waste management facilities.

The different categories assigned to each strategic objective in the draft SPD are identified in Table 5 though the reasons for this conclusion are summarised below. These are in line with the screening matrix which was used to assess the South Cambridgeshire Local Plan and this methodology has been used to assess previous plans and supplementary planning documents produced by South Cambridgeshire District Council in consultation with Natural England. There are no potential significant effects are identified in Table 5 below arising from the draft SPD of itself.

Table 5: Potential impacts of draft Bourn Airfield New Village SPD on Habitats sites

Nature of potential impact	How the draft Bourn Airfield New Village SPD (alone or in combination with other plans and projects) could affect a Habitats site?	How could these effects be considered significant?
Land take by development	The draft Bourn Airfield New Village SPD does not propose any development that would result in the loss of any land within the boundaries of the single Habitats Site within scope of this HRA screening.	N/A
Impact on protected species	Whilst the population of Barbastelle bats in Eversden and Wimpole Woods SAC could be	Consistent with Local Plan policy SS/7 and other plan policies, the SPD

Nature of potential impact	How the draft Bourn Airfield New Village SPD (alone or in combination with other plans and projects) could affect a Habitats site?	How could these effects be considered significant?
outside the protected sites	<p>affected by the development on Bourn Airfield as the site lies within the zone of influence for this Habitats site, the draft SPD is considered in itself unlikely to impact on habitats for Barbastelle bats. This rare species of bat, which is a qualifying feature of Eversden and Wimpole Woods SAC, requires minimal disturbance within 2 km of their roost. They can forage up to 20km from their roosts but more typically venture around 6-8km. Development on Bourn Airfield could therefore potentially impact on foraging and roosting habitat for Barbastelle bats given that it is located outside of the boundary of the SAC.</p>	<p>embeds a spatial framework and policy guidance concerning the provision of formal and informal open space, the provision of a large Country Park in the south of the site, strategic landscaping, measures to enhance biodiversity, the retention and enhancement of existing woods, hedges and water features and in regard to lighting. These measures will be of benefit to biodiversity and habitats and have the effect of protecting bat roosting and foraging features within the Bourn Airfield new settlement site. It is therefore envisaged that the draft SPD is unlikely to result in a significant adverse effect. Indeed, the guidance within the SPD through protection and enhancement of woodland and other open space is likely to have a positive effect on the interest of the SAC.</p>
Recreational pressure and disturbance	<p>There is public access to Eversden and Wimpole Woods SAC, managed by the National Trust.</p> <p>Bourn Airfield new settlement site lie within the Zone of Influence for Eversden and Wimpole Woods SAC so within the distance that Natural England consider, in the absence of evidence that visitors are likely to travel for recreation.</p> <p>The site is carefully managed by the landowners to avoid impacts from recreational pressure and disturbance.</p>	<p>Consistent with Local Plan policy SS/7 and other plan policies the SPD embeds a spatial framework and policy guidance concerning the provision of formal and informal open space, the provision of a large Country Park in the south of the site, strategic landscaping, measures to enhance biodiversity, the retention of existing woods, hedges and water features and in regard to lighting. These measures will be of benefit to biodiversity and habitats and have the effect of protecting bat roosting and foraging features within the Bourn Airfield new settlement site. It is therefore envisaged that the draft SPD, in itself is unlikely to result in a significant effect.</p> <p>In particular, the guidance in the draft SPD includes the provision of a large on-site Country Park and woodland walks which will provide the opportunity for daily recreational needs to be met on site and help to support healthy lifestyles. This will have the effect of reducing the likelihood that new residents will visit the SAC to fulfil these needs given that there will be ample</p>

Nature of potential impact	How the draft Bourn Airfield New Village SPD (alone or in combination with other plans and projects) could affect a Habitats site?	How could these effects be considered significant?
		high quality opportunities to do so on site. Given the guidance within the SPD, it is not considered that it will give rise to any likely significant effects through increased recreational pressure on the SAC or therefore its ecological interest.
Water quantity and quality	As Bourn Airfield lies outside the zone of influence for Ouse Washes SAC, SPA & Ramsar, it is considered that there is no pathway for development to result in impacts on water quantity or quality in relation to a Habitats Site.	N/A.

## 4.4 Results from HRA Screening of draft Bourn Airfield New Village SPD

The draft SPD provides guidance on existing Local Plan policy SS/7 and has embedded design details supplementing this policy, which the LPA can have regard to when considering if the draft SPD itself is likely to result in any significant effect on Eversden & Wimpole Woods SAC.

**Table 6: Screening categorisation**

### Category A : No negative effect

The SPD of itself is not likely to have any negative effect on a Habitats (European) site.

### Category B : No Likely Significant Effect

The SPD of itself could have an effect but would not be likely to have a *significant* negative effect on a Habitats (European) site either alone or in combination. This conclusion could only be reached if the effects, even in combination and taking the precautionary principle into account, are considered trivial.

### Category C : Likely Significant Effect

The draft SPD of itself is predicted to have a likely significant effect on a Habitats (European) site on either alone or in combination with other plans and projects.

The table below provides assessment of the draft SPD (including strategic objectives, guiding principles and structural fixes within the spatial framework) with categories of likely effect assigned as set out in Table 6. Assessment of the guiding principles and fixes is considered below.

In addition to the strategic objectives, the draft Bourn Airfield New Village SPD also contains a spatial framework with guiding principles and structural fixes with an infrastructure delivery plan. Looking at

the likely effects of the draft SPD on the interest features, it is not considered to result in any likely significant effect on Eversden & Wimpole Woods SAC.

**Table 7: Assessment of potential impacts from the draft SPD**

Theme	Strategic objectives, guiding principles & structural fixes in the spatial framework	Will the draft SPD have a Likely Significant Effect on the Habitats (European) Sites?
1. A Well-Connected Place	Facilitating sustainable movement within the site and to and from surrounding villages, shaped around a network of traffic-free active travel routes, integrated public transport, and delivering excellent connections along the A428 corridor to St Neots and Cambridge via a new high-quality public transport route.	No, Category A
2. Vibrant, Prosperous and Inclusive	Providing a range of housing types to meet the local housing needs (particularly for low cost and affordable housing) and aspirations of a broad and diverse community. Meeting the educational needs of its community, with a village centre integrating a range of community facilities alongside convenient and independent retail, with opportunities for local employment and entrepreneurship within the site.	No Category A
3. Healthy, Active and Resilient:	Providing for the wellbeing of residents as an integral aspect of the village's fabric. Encouraging walking and cycling as a part of daily life, offering opportunities for physical recreation and social interaction for all, and supporting access to fresh and healthy food choices. Designing spaces that encourage social interaction for all and supporting the residents to connect and form their own community.	No, Category A
4. Locally Distinctive:	Responding to the existing context of the site and the inherited assets of the airfield and its landscape, whilst delivering a bespoke and modern built environment which includes high quality public spaces and unique and locally inspired buildings, including opportunities for custom and self-build.	No, Category A
5. Responsive and Sustainable:	Building in a manner that is responsive to climate change and sensitive to the environment. Delivering enhanced outcomes for biodiversity and hydrology, and incorporating low or zero carbon buildings, renewable energy and low-emission travel that aim to exceed existing standards within the Local Plan.	No, Category A

Theme	Strategic objectives, guiding principles & structural fixes in the spatial framework	Will the draft SPD have a Likely Significant Effect on the Habitats (European) Sites?
6. Cohesive, Well Planned and Well Governed	Considering the lifetime of the village through conception, construction, completion and maturity. Utilising tools such as masterplans and design codes to manage quality, supporting community building, place making and community ownership models, and creating community focused governance models allowing residents a strong and active role in how the village evolves.	No, Category A

#### 4.4.1 Screening result from the draft SPD alone

This draft SPD provides guidance on the design of future development at the Bourn Airfield site. The guidance and design detail embedded in the draft SPD has been taken into account for this HRA screening and it is considered that the draft SPD is not predicted to result in any likely significant effects on the SAC.

Any In-combination effects from other plans and projects are considered separately below.

#### 4.5 Assessment of any effects of the draft SPD in-combination with other plans and projects

There are four relevant Plan level HRAs that have been carried out by South Cambridgeshire DC or other organisations and none have been found to have a likely significant effect on the European site within scope i.e. Eversden and Wimpole Woods SAC.

In the context of this HRA screening, the relevant other plans and projects to be considered are listed below in combination with draft Bourn Airfield New Village SPD.

**Table 8: Other plans or projects considered for in combination effects**

Statutory Body	Title of HRA or Project	Findings of HRA or Project	Potential for in combination effects
South Cambridgeshire District Council	Habitat Regulations Assessment: Chapter 20 of South Cambridgeshire Local Plan SA Scoping Report (June 2012) and including the Draft Final Sustainability Report (2014) and Sustainability Appraisal Addendum	"The DPDs that form part of the Local Development Framework (LDF) for the district were all subject to an HRA screening and found to have no likely significant impact on a Natura site	It is considered that in combination likely significant effects are not predicted. The Local Plan establishes the principle of development and the draft SPD does not and cannot reconsider that matter. The

Statutory Body	Title of HRA or Project	Findings of HRA or Project	Potential for in combination effects
	(2015)	or a Ramsar site.”	effects of the SPD are limited to providing guidance on the implementation of the development, and will not give rise to any likely effects on the SAC whether considered alone or in combination with the allocation. Indeed, the SPD guidance, in particular the safeguarding of existing woodland and hedges and provision of new open space, is likely to be positive so far as the integrity of the SAC is concerned.
Cambridge Southern Fringe Area Action Plan	Cambridge Southern Fringe Area Action Plan HRA (May 2007)	“This AAP was subject to an HRA and found not to impact on a Natura site or a Ramsar site.”	It is considered that in combination likely significant effects are not predicted.
North West Cambridge Area Action Plan	North West Cambridge Area Action Plan DPD Habitats Directive Assessment (August 2007)	It has been objectively concluded that the North West Cambridge Area Action Plan- Preferred Options draft is not likely to have any significant effects on any Natura 2000 or Ramsar sites. There is therefore no requirement to proceed to the next stage of an Appropriate Assessment.	It is considered that in combination likely significant effects are not predicted.
Waterbeach New Town SPD	Waterbeach New Town SPD HRA screening report (Ramboll, Sept 2018)	“The draft Waterbeach New Town SPD is unlikely to have any significant effects on the Natura 2000 and Ramsar sites identified alone or in combination with other plans or projects”	It is considered that in combination likely significant effects are not predicted.
Bourn Airfield new village	Yet to be prepared. Report	Unknown at this stage	N/A.



<b>Statutory Body</b>	<b>Title of HRA or Project</b>	<b>Findings of HRA or Project</b>	<b>Potential for in combination effects</b>
application	to Inform Appropriate Assessment (RIAA) submitted by the applicant		



## 5. Conclusions

### 5.1 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) & Sustainability Appraisal (SA)

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The draft Bourn Airfield New Village Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) has been prepared for town and country planning purposes. Planning Practice Guidance – Strategic environmental assessment and sustainability appraisal (Paragraph: 008 Reference ID: 11-008-20140306) states that,

*‘Supplementary planning documents do not require a sustainability appraisal but may in exceptional circumstances require a strategic environmental assessment if they are likely to have significant environmental effects that have not already have been assessed during the preparation of the Local Plan.*

*A strategic environmental assessment is unlikely to be required where a supplementary planning document deals only with a small area at a local level (see regulation 5(6) of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004), unless it is considered that there are likely to be significant environmental effects.’*

This Screening Report determines that the quantum, scale and principle of any future development of the Bourn Airfield allocation within the Local Plan (2018) have not been altered by the content of the draft Bourn Airfield New Village SPD. To that extent, the majority of the effects on the environment that have been identified and considered at the Local Plan level within the Local Plan SA.

The draft SPD provides guidance on a range of environmental, social and economic factors, with a focus on maximising the benefits of any potential future scheme. This guidance includes embedded measures regarding woods, hedges, water features, lighting and other relevant matters in response to relevant policies of the Local Plan and especially policy SS/7 which will provide for the recreational needs for the new settlement. This will also ensure that no likely significant effects arise from the draft SPD of itself on the bats of Eversden & Wimpole Woods SAC.

The HRA Screening element of this Report ‘screens out’ the draft SPD (see Section 5.2 of this Report), determining no likely significant effects on Habitats Sites either alone or in combination with other plans and projects. The draft Bourn Airfield New Village SPD can therefore be **screened out** for its requirement of Strategic Environmental Assessment in line with the requirements of Directive 2001/42/EC.

### 5.2 Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)

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The adopted Local Plan (2018) allocates Bourn Airfield for 3,500 dwellings within Policy SS/7. The principle of the new village and the parameters of the development in terms of quantum and overall



scale, which have not been altered within the draft SPD, have therefore already been considered through the SA and HRA Assessment of the Local Plan.

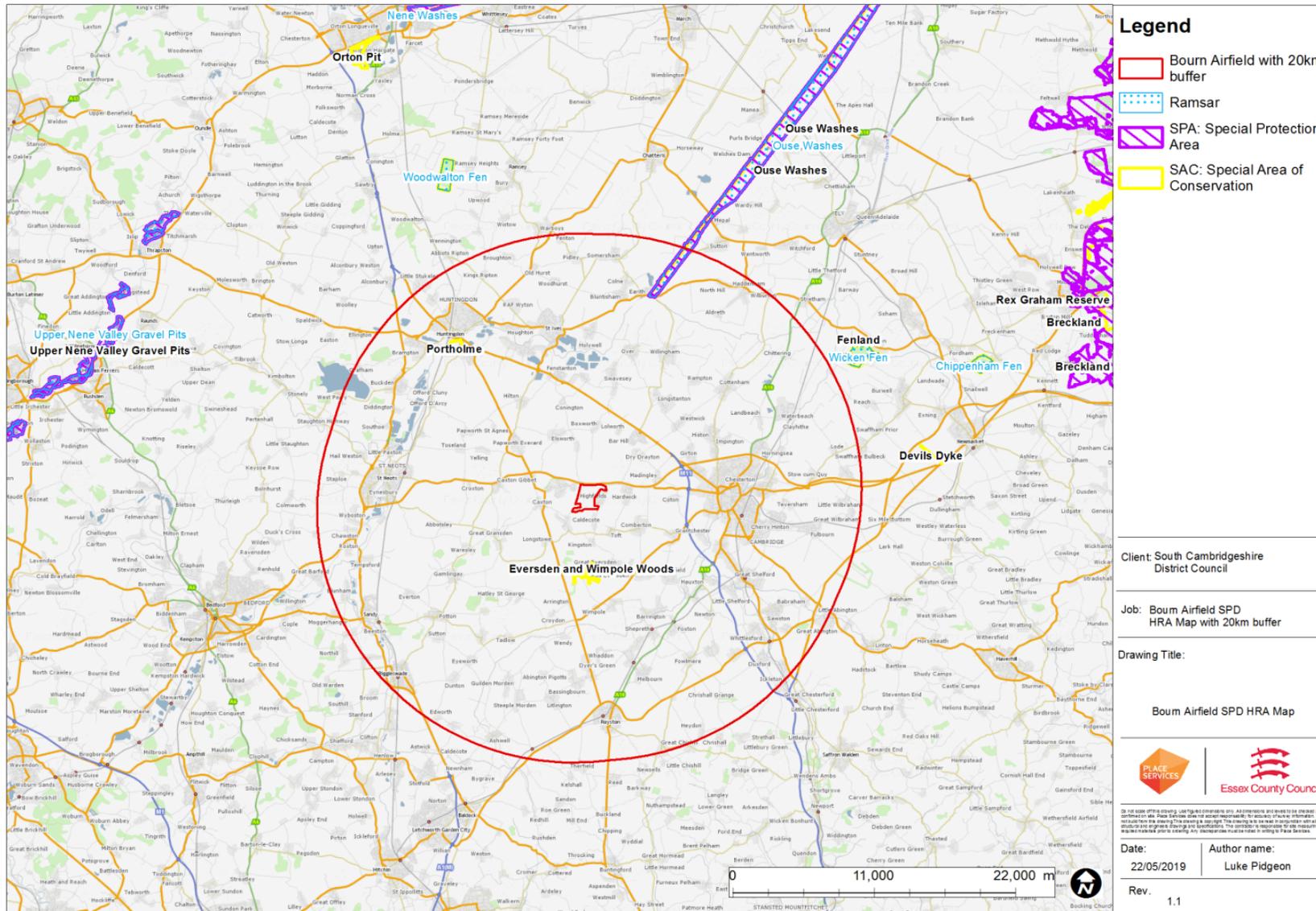
The HRA element of this Screening Report indicates that the draft Bourn Airfield New Village SPD is **not** predicted to have likely significant effects on Eversden and Wimpole Woods SAC, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects.

The requirement for the draft SPD to undertake further assessment under the Habitats Regulations 2017 is therefore **screened out**.





# Appendix 2: The Bourn Airfield and Habitats sites within 20km





## Place Services

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Essex County Council