



Groby Parish Neighbourhood Plan 2023-2041

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) & Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening Report

July 2024





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1. Introduction

1.1 The Purpose of this Report

This screening report is an assessment of whether or not the contents of the Groby Parish Neighbourhood Plan Pre-Submission Draft (2023-2041) requires a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in accordance with the European Directive 2001/42/ EC and associated Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations. A SEA is required if the Neighbourhood Plan is deemed to have a likely significant effect on the environment.

This report will also screen to determine whether the Neighbourhood Plan requires a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) in accordance with Regulation 61 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). An HRA screening report is required when it is deemed that likely adverse significant effects may occur on protected Habitats (European) Sites as a result of the implementation of a plan or project.

1.2 The Groby Neighbourhood Plan

The Neighbourhood Plan will set out planning policies for the Groby Neighbourhood Plan area. Once formally adopted, a Neighbourhood Plan carries the same legal weight as Local Development Plans adopted by the Local Planning Authority (LPA), in this case Hinckley and Bosworth District Council.

The Neighbourhood Plan includes a Vision statement, which expresses the community's aspirations for the plan area. This Vision statement is included within the Plan as follows:

'To enhance community well-being through responsible and sustainable development while protecting nature and our woodland parish character.'

A number of economic, social and environmental objectives have been devised for the Neighbourhood Plan. These are:

- The unique character and heritage of the area is conserved
- Local services and facilities are protected and improved
- Important green spaces are protected
- The character and beauty of the countryside and its natural environment are safeguarded
- The separate identity of Groby village is protected
- Local housing needs are met
- Improved local employment opportunities
- Promote healthy and safe communities

1.3 The Hinckley and Bosworth District Council Local Plan

The Hinckley and Bosworth District Local Plan (2006-2026) is made up of two Development Plan Documents (DPDs): the Core Strategy DPD and the Site Allocation and Development Management Policies DPD.

The Hinckley and Bosworth Core Strategy provides the vision and spatial strategy for Hinckley and Bosworth Borough. It also identifies development requirements for the district's settlements.

The Site Allocation and Development Management Policies DPD identifies sites for uses such as housing, employment, retail, open space and community facilities that will deliver the aims, vision and objectives of the Core Strategy. It also contains development management policies which will be used to assess planning applications over the plan period.

Work on the new Hinckley and Bosworth Local Plan has been ongoing since 2017. The new Local Plan will set out the overall development strategy for Hinckley and Bosworth Borough for the period up to 2039 as well as strategic policies and site allocations to meet identified development needs. It will also provide appropriate policies and guidance by which to determine planning applications. Recent consultations regarding the new Local Plan have included on a Regulation 18 Draft Local Plan (between June and August 2021) and a Regulation 19 Draft Submission Local Plan between February and March 2022. A revised Regulation 18 Draft Plan is scheduled for further public consultation in Summer 2024.

The content of the Local Plan relevant to Groby is outlined in the corresponding sub-sections.

1.3.1 Groby in the Local Plan

The Local Plan (2006-2026) identifies Groby as a 'Key Rural Centre'. Key Rural Centres are defined within the Core Strategy as those villages that have populations over 1500 people, have a primary school, local shop, post office, GP, community/leisure facilities, employment and a 6 day a week bus service (hourly). Key Rural Centres that provide localised provision of facilities permit access by foot, cycle and local bus and can minimise car journeys not only for those people who are living in the Key Rural Centres, but also the rural villages and hamlets surrounding these centres. Policy 7: Key Rural Centres establishes that the principle of development is considered sustainable within the settlement boundary of a Key Rural Centre.

The Core Strategy additionally includes Groby as within the classification of a 'Key Rural Centres Relating to Leicester' due to its location on the edge of the Leicester Principal Urban Area. The Core Strategy states that the focus for these villages will be on maintaining existing services, maintaining the separate village identities of these settlements and improving the linkages between these villages and Leicester. The scale and type of development in these villages is based on supporting local needs, rather than encouraging larger scale development, which, due to the close relationship with Leicester, could encourage increased levels of commuting. Policy 8: Key Rural Centres Relating to Leicester

sets out that the development of 110 new homes will be identified within the Site Allocation and Development Management Policies DPD, amongst other commitments for the village.

Core Strategy Policy 20: Green Infrastructure, additionally sets out the promotion of tourism in the North Eastern Zone of the District, specifically (regarding Groby) the settlements within the National Forest (Markfield, Thornton, Stanton Under Bardon and Bagworth) and on the fringe (Groby, Ratby, Newbold Verdon, Desford, Barlestone and Nailstone) as 'gateway' villages to the National Forest. Furthermore, the Policy seeks to improve public access through the provision of multi-user and traffic free access between Markfield and Groby.

1.3.2 Housing Allocations

The Site Allocation and Development Management Policies DPD identifies three development sites within Groby to meet a (as of 2016) residual minimum housing need of 84 dwellings. These three sites are: GRO02 Land south of Martinshaw Lane Residential (11 dwellings); GRO03 Land to the rear of Daisy Close Residential (38 dwellings); and GRO04 Land at Laurel Farm Residential (45 dwellings).

1.3.3 Other relevant Local Plan policies

Core Strategy Policy 9: Rothley Brook Meadow Green Wedge seeks the retention and enhancement of land of recreational and biodiversity value along the Rothley Brook corridor. This includes land around the majority of the village of Groby, up to its settlement boundary to the north, east and south. The Policy sets out that any land use or associated development in the Green Wedge should retain the function of the Green Wedge, create green networks between the countryside and open spaces within the urban areas, retain and enhance public access to the Green Wedge (especially for recreation), retain and enhance function as a floodplain and infiltration basin, and retain the visual appearance of the area.

The Site Allocation and Development Management Policies DPD further outlines various site allocations proposed for Groby. Aside from those outlined above in relation to housing allocations, these are included within the following table.

Table 1: Groby Site Allocations (taken from the Site Allocation and Development Management Policies DPD)

Reference	Location	Designation	Policy
GRO36N	Lawnwood Road Neighbourhood Centre	Neighbourhood Centre	DM22
GRO37L	Groby Village Centre	Local Centre	DM22

Reference	Location	Designation	Policy
GRO38N	Laundon Way Neighbourhood Centre	Neighbourhood Centre	DM22
GRO33	Groby Trading Estate, Fir Tree Lane	Employment Site	DM19
GRO34	Walker Smiths Haulage Site, Rookery Lane	Employment Site	DM19
GRO35	Workshops, The Rookery	Employment Site	DM19
GRO07	Proposed Cemetery Extension, Ratby Road	Cemeteries and Churchyards	DM8
GRO08	Brookvale High School and Groby Community College Playing Fields, Ratby Road	Outdoor Sports Facility	DM8
GRO09	Butlers Field Cemetery	Cemeteries and Churchyards	DM8
GRO10	Butlers Field Amenity Green Space, Ratby Road	Amenity Green Space	DM8
GRO11	The Spinney	Green Corridor	DM8
GRO12	Greys Drive Amenity Green Space	Amenity Green Space	DM8
GRO13	Ratby Road Allotments	Allotments	DM8
GRO14	Quarry Park	Formal Park and	DM8

Reference	Location	Designation	Policy
		Children's Play Space	
GRO15	Martinshaw County Primary School Playing Fields, Forest Rise	Outdoor Sports Facility	DM8
GRO16	Forest Close Amenity Green Space	Amenity Green Space	DM8
GRO17	Forest Rise Amenity Green Space	Amenity Green Space	DM8
GRO18	Lawnwood Road Amenity Green Space	Amenity Green Space	DM8
GRO19	Stephenson Way South Amenity Green Space	Amenity Green Space	DM8
GRO20	Poplars Close Amenity Green Space	Amenity Green Space	DM8
GRO21	Stephenson Way North Amenity Green Space	Amenity Green Space	DM8
GRO22	Ratby Road Amenity Green Space	Amenity Green Space	DM8
GRO23	Markfield Road Allotments	Allotments	DM8
GRO24	The Old Mineral Line, Markfield Road	Green Corridor	DM8
GRO25	St Philip and St James Churchyard, Markfield Road	Cemeteries and Churchyards	DM8

Reference	Location	Designation	Policy
GRO26	Flaxfield Close Amenity Green Space	Amenity Green Space	DM8
GRO27	Elizabeth Woodville Primary School Playing Fields, Glebe Road	Outdoor Sports Facility	DM8
GRO28	Beacon Close Amenity Green Space	Amenity Green Space	DM8
GRO29	Lady Jane Grey Primary School Green Space	Amenity Green Space	DM8
GRO30	Laundon Way Amenity Green Space	Amenity Green Space	DM8
GRO31	Meadow Way Amenity Green Space	Amenity Green Space	DM8
GRO32	Marina Park, Castell Drive	Formal Park and Children's Play Space	DM8
GRO52	Branting Hill Amenity Green Space	Amenity Green Space	DM8
GRO39	Groby Community College, Ratby Road	Community Facility	DM25
GRO40	Brookvale High School, Ratby Road	Community Facility	DM25
GRO41	Groby Community Centre, Forest Rise	Community Facility	DM25

Reference	Location	Designation	Policy
GRO42	Martinshaw Primary School, Forest View	Community Facility	DM25
GRO43	St Philip and St James Church, Markfield Road	Community Facility	DM25
GRO44	Groby Library, Leicester Road	Community Facility	DM25
GRO45	Groby Village Hall, Leicester Road	Community Facility	DM25
GRO46	Groby Doctors Surgery, Rookery Lane	Community Facility	DM25
GRO47	Elizabeth Woodville Primary School, Glebe Road	Community Facility	DM25
GRO48	Lady Jane Grey Community Primary School, Wolsey Close	Community Facility	DM25
GRO49	Groby Pool Natural and Semi-Natural	Open Space	DM8/DM9
GRO50	Groby Pool Nature Area Natural and Semi-Natural	Open Space	DM8/DM9
GRO51	Scania Depot, Markfield Road (A50)	Employment Site	DM19
N/A	Rothley brook Meadow Green Wedge	Green Wedge	CS Policy 9

2. Legislative Background

2.1 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27th 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 Groby Neighbourhood Plan may influence frameworks for future development or become used ancillary to those plans and programmes that do set such a framework, and as such it has been determined that the principle of the Neighbourhood Plan should be screened for the necessary application of the SEA Directive.

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 Plan & Programme (P&P), and modifications to them, are covered when prepared and/or adopted by an authority 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 Groby Neighbourhood Plan.

2.2 Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)

Under the provisions of the Habitats Regulations (The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, as amended), 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 first stage of HRA is the screening assessment of the impacts of a land use proposal against the conservation objectives of Habitats sites. 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. European sites are also known as Natura 2000 sites.

This HRA Screening Report has been undertaken in order to accompany the Groby Neighbourhood Plan in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.

The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, state that submitted Plans need to be accompanied by a statement explaining how the proposed Plan meets the 'basic conditions' set out in Schedule 4B of the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act. These basic conditions include a requirement to demonstrate how the Plan is compatible with certain obligations, which includes the need to undertake an HRA.

In line with the Court judgement (CJEU People Over Wind v Coillte Teoranta C-323/17), 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.

On 23 June 2016, the United Kingdom (UK) held a referendum and voted to leave the European Union (EU). On 26 June 2018, The European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018 received Royal Assent and the UK left the EU. The European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018 made sure that UK laws continue to operate following the UK's exit. Relevant EU Directives have been transposed into UK law and those are unchanged until amended by Parliament. The requirements for HRA under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) remain in place with minor changes being affected by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Amendment (EU Exit) Regulations 2019. Parliament is however at liberty to introduce future changes to the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) since, after 31 December 2020, the UK is no longer bound by the EU Habitats and Wild Birds Directives.

At the present time the position, under section 6(3) EU (Withdrawal) Act 2018 (as amended), is that the courts in the UK, with the sole exception of the Supreme Court, will continue to be bound by HRA judgements handed down by the CJEU and by domestic courts prior to 31 December 2020 when interpreting the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). This is the case as long as the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) remain unmodified by Parliament.

There is currently a legal requirement for HRA screening of Plans prior to being adopted so any additional plans or projects which might reasonably interact with the Grobby Neighbourhood Plan will be considered before post consultation.

3. SEA Screening

3.1 When is SEA Required?

Planning Practice Guidance – Strategic environmental assessment requirements for Neighbourhood Plans (Paragraph: 026 Reference ID: 11-026-20140306) states that,

‘In some limited circumstances, where a Neighbourhood Plan is likely to have significant environmental effects, it may require a strategic environmental assessment. Draft Neighbourhood Plan proposals should be assessed to determine whether the plan is likely to have significant environmental effects. This process is commonly referred to as a “screening” assessment and the requirements are set out in regulation 9 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.

If likely significant environmental effects are identified, an environmental report must be prepared in accordance with paragraphs (2) and (3) of regulation 12 of those Regulations.

One of the basic conditions that will be tested by the independent examiner is whether the making of the Neighbourhood Plan is compatible with European Union obligations (including under the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive).

To decide whether a draft Neighbourhood Plan might have significant environmental effects, it must be assessed (screened) at an early stage of the plan’s preparation according to the requirements set out in regulation 9 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004. These include a requirement to consult the environmental assessment consultation bodies.

Each consultation body will be able to advise on particular topics relevant to its specific area of expertise and responsibility, and the specific information that it holds.

Where it is determined that the plan is unlikely to have significant environmental effects (and, accordingly, does not require an environmental assessment), a statement of reasons for the determination should be prepared. A copy of the statement must be submitted with the Neighbourhood Plan proposal and made available to the independent examiner.’

Articles 2 and 3 of the SEA Directive set out the circumstances in which a SEA is required. Table 1 sets out the assessment of whether the principle of the Groby Neighbourhood Plan will require a full SEA.

Table 2: Exploring whether the Principle of the Plan would warrant SEA

Question 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 - The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared for adoption through legislative procedure.

Question 2: Is the Plan required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provision? (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 - The Neighbourhood Plan would be considered as falling within the category of an 'administrative provision'.

Question 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 - The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared for town and country planning and sets a framework for future development consent.

Question 4: Will the Plan, in view of its likely effect on sites, require an assessment under Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive?

The Neighbourhood 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.

Question 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 one of the criteria - the policies of the Neighbourhood Plan can be considered to determine the use of small areas at local level commensurate with their status in determining local planning applications.

Question 6: Does the Plan set the framework for future development consent of projects (not just projects in the Annexes of the EIA Directive)?

Yes - the Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared for town and country planning and sets a framework for future development consent.

Question 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 European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF) programmes 2000 to 2006/7?

The Neighbourhood Plan does not serve a purpose related to national defence or civil emergency, a financial or budget Plan. The Neighbourhood Plan is not co-financed by structural funds or EAGGF programmes 2000 to 2006/7.

Question 8: Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment?

Likely significant effects are explored in more detail in Section 3.3 of this Screening Report. The 'conclusions' section of the Report outlines whether the Neighbourhood Plan requires SEA or not due in regard to its effects on the environment.

The following section looks at the criteria for assessing the effects of the Neighbourhood Plan and the identified effects of the Neighbourhood Plan in line with the criteria. Crucially, it will determine whether there are any likely significant effects on the environment.

3.2 Criteria for Assessing the Effects of the Neighbourhood Plan

Criteria for determining the likely significant effects on the environment, referred to in Article 3(5) of Directive 2001/42/EC are set out below.

Annex II of SEA Directive 2001/42/EC – Significant Effects

1. The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular, to
 - 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 degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy,
 - the relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development,

Annex II of SEA Directive 2001/42/EC – Significant Effects

- environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme,
- 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).

2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to

- the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects,
- the cumulative nature of the effects,
- the transboundary nature of the effects,
- the risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents),
- the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected),
- the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:
 - * special natural characteristics or cultural heritage,
 - * exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values,
 - * intensive land-use,
 - * the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.

3.3 Likely Significant Effects resulting from the Neighbourhood Plan

The following assessment will consider the likelihood of the Grobby Neighbourhood Plan (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 3: 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
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 Plan sets out relevant policies which will be used to determine proposals for development within the Neighbourhood Plan area once adopted. A Neighbourhood Plan must demonstrate conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan and once brought into force, the policies it contains take precedence over existing non-strategic policies only in the Local Plan for that Neighbourhood Plan area. The principle of growth is established for Grobby as a ‘Key Rural Centre’ and a ‘Key

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)	Likelihood and summary of significant effects
	Rural Centre Relating to Leicester' and is identified as appropriate within the settlement boundaries in the Plan area (Groby, Field Heath, Bradgate Hill, and The Brantings). The adopted Hinckley and Bosworth Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD identifies three housing allocations within the Neighbourhood Plan area, two of which have been built out. The Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate any additional land for development purposes. Irrespective of the Neighbourhood Plan policies' compliance with those of the adopted Local Plan documents, which will be considered between the Parish Council and the Local Planning Authority in finalising the Neighbourhood Plan and through the independent examination of the Neighbourhood Plan, it is considered that the degree to which the Neighbourhood Plan sets a framework for development is low. This is primarily due to the Neighbourhood Plan not allocating land for development purposes.
The degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans or programmes including those in a hierarchy.	The Neighbourhood Plan, when/if 'made', will have weight in all planning decisions within the plan area. The Neighbourhood Plan provides policies for the Plan area, relevant to a local level only. The Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate land for development purposes. Allocations within the Neighbourhood Plan area are included within the adopted Hinckley and Bosworth Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD. The latest iteration of the new emerging Local Plan also included a housing allocation within Groby for 45 dwellings. Although the emerging Local Plan is proposed for revision (a Regulation 18 consultation is scheduled for Summer 2024), it can be expected that identified housing needs will be met over the Plan period within the Neighbourhood Plan area through the Local Plan. In consideration of the above, the degree to which the Neighbourhood Plan influences other plans or programmes is considered relatively low in the context of the Neighbourhood Plan area. This is primarily related to the

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)	Likelihood and summary of significant effects
	Plan's position of not allocating land for development purposes.
The relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development.	Neighbourhood Plans are required to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The Neighbourhood Plan policies seek to ensure environmental considerations are taken into account. The Neighbourhood Plan includes policies related (directly / indirectly) to ensuring environmental considerations will be integrated into any forthcoming development within the Plan area. Irrespective of the adequacy of any such policies, adopted Local Plan document policies apply within the Neighbourhood Plan area, which have been subject to thorough assessment within the Local Plan Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment. This ensures that environmental considerations, in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development, will be considered for all development proposals within the Neighbourhood Plan area.
Environmental problems relevant to the plan area	The Neighbourhood Plan reflects a small area and the Plan's policy content seeks to address environmental issues. The policy content of the adopted Local Plan documents will additionally apply to any proposals within the Neighbourhood Plan area. Local Plan policies have been subject to Sustainability Appraisal (SA) within the context of the Local Plan. The Neighbourhood Plan and this Screening Report identify the following potential (direct / indirect) environmental problems or sources of potential problems relevant to the Neighbourhood Plan area: • The Groby Pool and Woods Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) is located within the Plan area. This 29 hectare SSSI is located north of Groby village and is used by wintering wildfowl. • Parts of this SSSI are within a 'favourable' condition, however one part is in an 'unfavourable'

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)	Likelihood and summary of significant effects
	no change' condition, and another is in an 'unfavourable declining' condition. The SSSI is designated for its importance as a standing open water habitat, and the site also includes examples of alder wood, dry and wet grassland, marsh, and reedswamp. Its condition is a result of freshwater pollution, water pollution, and agricultural run-off. • The Plan area is within the Impact Risk Zone (IRZ) of the abovementioned SSSI as well as two others (Sheet Hedges Woods, and Bradgate Park and Cropston Reservoir) outside the Plan area to the north and both within an 'unfavourable declining' condition. As a result, consultation with Natural England is required of any planning application for residential development of 100 units or more. • Regionally Important Geological and Geomorphological Sites (RIGS) are important places for geology and geomorphology outside statutorily protected land such as SSSIs. There are three RIGSs in the Plan area, at Groby Quarries (east), Groby Slate Quarry and Bradgate Home Farm Quarry. • A number of areas on the Priority Habitat Inventory exist throughout the Plan area, including: Good quality semi-improved grassland; Lowland Meadows; Lowland Fens; Ancient and Semi-Natural Woodland; Ancient Replanted Woodland; Open Mosaic Habitat • There is a single Scheduled Monument within the Plan area: a Motte and bailey castle and manorial complex at Groby. The monument at Groby is situated on the north side of the village and includes a motte and the surviving part of the bailey, together with the remains, above and below ground, of a manorial complex. • The motte at Groby is large and is a good survival incorporating a rare substantial internal Norman stone building. The associated manorial complex is one of the most extensive in Leicestershire with

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)	Likelihood and summary of significant effects
	a core considered to date to the period of the Norman castle. • The Parish contains approximately 14 Listed Building, including the Grade II* listed The Old Hall, and the Grade II* listed Stables and Kennels to Bradgate House. • The Stables complex has not been maintained for many years and is deteriorating, with the buildings being on Historic England's Heritage at Risk programme. • Grade II listed buildings within the Plan area are: 20 Chapel Hill; 23-27 Chapel Hill; 33 Chapel Hill; Old School, Leicester Road; The Cottage, 12 Leicester Road; Earl of Stamford Arms, Leicester Road; Church of St Philip and James, Markfield Road; The Old Cottage, 30 Markfield Road; Pool House and attached Stable Range and Cottage, Markfield Road; Pool Cottage, 45 Markfield Road; Blacksmiths Cottage, Rookery Lane; and 26 Rookery Lane. • There is a designated Conservation Area within the historic core of the village of Groby, which contains the majority of the Parish's listed buildings and Scheduled Monument. The extent of the Conservation Area includes land to the south of the A50, Markfield Road, part of Leicester Road and Chapel Hill. • The Leicestershire & Rutland Historic Environment Record (HER) is the most complete record of Leicestershire and Rutland's known archaeological remains, including historic buildings. The HER identifies 11 historic buildings in the Plan area which are not already listed. There are also 54 non-designated archaeological sites within the Plan area, as identified through the HER ranging from the prehistoric, Roman, post-medieval and modern. • Additionally, approximately 49 non-designated

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)	Likelihood and summary of significant effects
	heritage assets are identified within the Neighbourhood Plan (Policy G16). • The Rothley Brook provides a source of fluvial flood risk in the Plan area, affecting an area to the north of the A50 and north of Groby village. The Plan identifies that some properties at the bottom of Bradgate Hill are affected by the flooding of Slate Brook with areas in Flood Risk Zones 3 (high risk) and 2 (medium risk). • The non-developed areas of the Plan area, and those also not in non-agricultural use, are of Grade 3 ('good to moderate') soil. Grade 2 soil represents the best and most versatile soil within the wider District context. • There is one non-automatic air quality monitoring site in Groby: alongside the Markfield Road (A50) at Bradgate Hill. The 2020 nitrogen dioxide results show that the air quality levels are below the objective of 40µg/m³. However, in winter months 30µg/m³ is exceeded and can approach the objective of 40µg/m³. • The Plan area contains the A46, the A50, and part of the M1 to the south. Associated with these major roads are stretches where noise can reach over 75 decibels. The Plan states that 'the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) has identified specific noise 'hotspots' – or noise important areas (NIAs) where road noise is impacting people living close by. There are NIAs along the A50 at Field Head, Bradgate Hill and The Brantings' within the Plan area. • The Charnwood Forest Regional Park is an initiative which seeks to develop and implement a strategy for the unique natural and cultural heritage of Charnwood Forest. The 2019 Charnwood Forest Landscape Character Assessment identifies that Groby village lies within Area 10: Groby Wooded Farmland Landscape

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)	Likelihood and summary of significant effects
	Character Area (LCA) with most other parts of the Parish lying in two other Character areas. • The Groby Wooded Farmland LCA consists of a mix of arable and pastoral farmland with extensive woodland and some scattered trees. Much of the woodland is open access land, including the extensive Martinshaw Wood which straddles the M1 corridor, just outside the Plan area. • Woodland generally consists of mixed broadleaved species although pine trees are also present. Fields are a mix of sizes ranging from some large linear fields to smaller fields close to settlements. Fields are bound by hedgerows with hedgerow trees, often oak, with stone walls in some areas. • The Landscape Character Area has a generally open feel but enclosure is created by the extensive woodland which extends into settlements at Ratby and Groby through tree planting along the main roads. Away from the settlements, the area is generally quite tranquil, although disturbance is created as a result of underlying noise along major road corridors. • Additionally within the Plan area is land within the Groby Estate Woodland LCA. This character area has an undulating landform which reflects the historic quarrying which has occurred in the area, including Groby Pool. Smaller watercourses and field ponds are also scattered within woodland areas; the majority of which is Ancient Woodland. • Furthermore, the Plan area includes land within the Rothley Brook Lowland Farmland LCA. This Landscape Character Area covers a lower lying landform which follows the Rothley Brook extending south west to north east along the edge of the Charnwood Forest. The area contains mainly arable farmland with a belt of willow and alder woodland, and mature scrub, following the line of the Rothley Brook. Views are possible out

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)	Likelihood and summary of significant effects
	of the area to the higher ground of Bradgate Park to the north and towards the edge of Leicester City to the south.
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).	The content of the Neighbourhood Plan is not in conflict with those relevant planning documents within the wider district and county area related to waste management or water protection.
The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects on the following factors:	The following impacts have been identified within this Screening Assessment:
Biodiversity	The Plan includes Policy G6: Ecology and Biodiversity regarding the conservation, restoration and enhancement of local ecological networks and habitats. The Policy also sets out that development requires the delivery of measurable net gains for biodiversity in a local context, including the integration of features such as bat boxes, bird boxes and hedgehog highways; woodland, hedgerow and tree planting; enhancement of ponds and watercourses; and the creation of meadow and grassland habitats. The Plan area contains the Groby Pool SSSI, and is also within the IRZs of several SSSIs outside of the Plan area. Some planning applications coming forward within the Plan area may require consultation with Natural England should they be of a size or type that meets specific conditions. This is identified as any residential scheme of over 100 dwellings. Nevertheless, the Plan does not allocate any land for development purposes that could potentially conflict with any

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)	Likelihood and summary of significant effects
	such requirements. The HRA element of this Screening Report, due to the content of the Plan, outlines that there will be no likely significant effects on the designated features of the Habitats site within scope, either alone or in-combination with other plans and projects. In consideration of all of the above effects on biodiversity that would require the full application of the SEA Directive (a SEA Environmental Report) can be screened out.
Population	The Plan has the potential to ensure positive effects regarding population within the context of the Plan area. Although the Plan does not allocate land for development purposes that would have a direct positive effect on the existing population of the Parish, various Plan policies seek to ensure that any development that might occur 'off-plan' within the plan period would respond to identified needs. This includes on matters such as housing type and tenure, accessibility to services, design, and community facilities and services. It is considered that there would be no negative effects on population resulting from the Neighbourhood Plan. This is due to the small scale of the Plan area.
Health	The Neighbourhood Plan includes Policy G5: Countryside Access, and Policy G18: Climate Change, both of which support the principle of improving health and wellbeing in the Plan area. In addition, the Plan's policy approach to ensuring net gains in biodiversity can be expected to have some degree of indirect positive effect on human health. Positive benefits can be expected of any development that may come forward within the Plan area as a result of these policies. The Plan also includes Policy G11: Noise, in response to the baseline position of the Plan area containing the A50, the A46 and the M1 and associated noise 'hotspots.' This policy

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)	Likelihood and summary of significant effects
	requires an Acoustic Assessment in relevant, qualifying areas of the Parish. Similarly noise generating development would have to demonstrate that the economic, social or environmental benefits associated with the proposed development outweigh the adverse effects. This Policy seeks a neutral position in regard to effects resulting from any development that may be forthcoming in the Plan area. There are therefore no significant (negative) effects resulting from the Neighbourhood Plan regarding human health that would warrant a strategic assessment through SEA.
• Fauna	There are no direct impacts resulting from the Neighbourhood Plan on fauna that are considered significant at the Plan level. The Plan seeks the protection and enhancement of biodiversity and does not propose any development that could lead to the direct deterioration of habitats. Possible effects on fauna (outside those associated with Habitats sites) cannot be considered strategically significant to the extent that Strategic Environmental Assessment would be warranted. Such issues are more appropriate to be considered on a case-by-case 'project level' basis at the development management stage and in accordance with relevant development management policies contained within the LPA's adopted Local Plan documents. Effects on fauna from the content of the Neighbourhood Plan can therefore be screened out.
• Flora	Numerous varied areas of priority habitat exist within the Plan area. The Plan does not allocate or otherwise any identify any land for development purposes that could lead to the loss of deterioration of any such habitats. The Plan actively seeks their conservation, restoration and enhancement through Policy G6: Ecology and Biodiversity. The Policy further seeks that biodiversity net gains from any 'off-plan' development proposals that may come forward will

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)	Likelihood and summary of significant effects
	be required to focus on (amongst other opportunities) woodland, hedgerow and tree planting, and the creation of meadow and grassland habitats. It should also be acknowledged that relevant to such matters, Local Plan policies regarding biodiversity also apply within the Neighbourhood Plan area. As a result, no effects are expected to result from the Neighbourhood Plan regarding flora.
• Soil	The non-developed areas of the Neighbourhood Plan area consist of predominantly Grade 3 soils. Although no thematic policies are included within the Plan that address soil quality, it should be acknowledged that Local Plan policies apply on the matter and that the Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate land for development purposes. There are no identified negative implications surrounding soil quality as a result of the Neighbourhood Plan.
• Water	The Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate any land for development purposes and as such no uses are considered to give rise to ground water pollutants (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). The HRA element of this Screening Report confirms that there are no potential pathways for development within the Groby Neighbourhood Plan area to impact on the Habitats sites within scope of the HRA.
• Air	The Plan area contains the A46, the A50, and part of the M1 to the south. Associated with these major roads are stretches where noise can reach over 75 decibels. The Plan indicates that noise important areas (NIAs), where road noise is impacting people living close by, are located within along the A50 at Field Head, Bradgate Hill and The Brantings' within the Plan area.

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)	Likelihood and summary of significant effects
	In response to this the Plan includes Policy G10: Air Quality which sets out that within the A46, M1 and A50 corridors (measured as 100m from the carriageway edge), an Air Quality Assessment should be submitted with applications for all new residential developments, amongst other development types. Proposals will require through the Policy, that air quality has been accounted for in the design of the development and how the development improves existing conditions. The Plan does not allocate land for development purposes or include any other commitments that would or could lead to a deterioration in air quality. There will not be any effects on air quality as a result.
• Climatic factors	The Neighbourhood Plan area contains a significant stretch of the Rothley Brook, which runs north of the village to the east. Areas of Flood Risk Zone 3 are prevalent along this stretch of watercourse. Policy G8: Water Management includes that ‘development sites should be built to manage surface water sustainably and utilise resources sustainably during use.’ As a result, the Policy requires that major development should incorporate Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), incorporate water efficient design and technology and protect existing drainage systems. Further, Policy G18: Climate Change sets out that all development proposals will be expected to mitigate against and adapt to climate change and to comply with national targets on reducing carbon emissions and energy use. The Policy adds various criteria related to design and construction that will be required of development proposals. The Plan does not include development allocations and irrespective of the adequacy of policies G8 and G18, adopted Local Plan policies on flood risk and climatic factors will also apply to any off-plan proposals that may come forward within the Plan area. It is therefore considered that SEA would not be required

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)	Likelihood and summary of significant effects
	regarding matters of flood risk or climate factors.
Material assets	The Plan area contains land (to the north of the A50) within a Minerals Consultation Area (MCA) for igneous rock as identified within the County Council's adopted Minerals Local Plan. Nevertheless, the Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate any land for development proposals or contain any commitments that are considered contrary to preserving the integrity of these deposits. The Plan area does not contain any existing or allocated sites for waste management facilities within the County Council's adopted Waste Local Plan. Regarding other material assets, the content of the Neighbourhood Plan is not considered to have any significant effects due to the extent / size of the Plan area. Such issues are more appropriate to be considered on a case-by-case basis at the development management stage and in accordance with relevant development management policies contained within the LPA's adopted Local Plan.
Cultural heritage	The Plan area contains numerous Listed Buildings, a Scheduled Monument, and a Conservation Area reflecting Groby village's historic core. The Plan does not allocate land for development purposes that could have any effects on these listings or their settings. The Plan does not include any specific thematic policy regarding designated heritage assets, acknowledging that national and local planning policies ensure protection and enhancement where possible. The Plan does however include Policy G16: Non-Designated Heritage Assets, which recognises other historic buildings and sites in the Neighbourhood Area that make a positive contribution providing local character because of their heritage value. The Policy ensures there is a level of protection through of these assets through the Neighbourhood Plan. The Plan does not allocate land for development purposes

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)	Likelihood and summary of significant effects
	that would or could conflict with the protection objectives of either designated or non-designated heritage assets in the Plan area. The effects on heritage are, as a result, considered a development management issue in the context of the Plan and its content. There are not considered to be any elements of the Plan that would give rise to significant effects on the historic environment at the strategic level that would require the full application of the SEA Directive.
Landscape	The parish is within various Landscape Character Areas (LCAs), including in part the Charnwood Forest Regional Park. The localised landscape contains many features synonymous with the landscape character of these LCAs. The Plan does not allocate any land for development purposes and includes Policy G2: Landscape Character which seeks positive contributions from development proposals and a sensitivity of design in regard to local character. In light of the Plan not allocating land for development purposes and in consideration also of the requirements of development proposals in accordance with the adopted Hinckley and Bosworth Local Plan documents, there are no significant strategic landscape effects identified within this Report that would warrant the requirement for the application of the SEA Directive and the formulation of a SEA Environmental Report.
The cumulative nature of the effects.	The Plan does not allocate any land for development purposes and therefore any negative cumulative effects can be ruled out.
The trans boundary nature of the effects.	The adopted Hinckley and Bosworth Local Plan documents can be seen to support the protection and improvement of conditions relevant to those sustainability factors listed within the SEA Directive. The Neighbourhood Plan is broadly aligned with the principles of those wider thematic environmental policies. The HRA Screening element of this

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)	Likelihood and summary of significant effects
	Report, which explores in-combination effects with other relevant plans and projects, also identifies no in-combination effects regarding Habitats (European) sites.
The risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents).	It is considered that there is no risk to human health or the environment as a result of the Neighbourhood Plan. This is in consideration of the above screening requirements related to sustainability themes. The Neighbourhood Plan 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 Neighbourhood Plan relates to the local level only. The magnitude and spatial extent of the Plan's content is therefore not considered significant in a wider District context. No effects are highlighted within this SEA screening at either the local or wider geographic area.
The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to: • special natural characteristics or cultural heritage • exceeded environmental quality standards • intensive land use	As highlighted above in the screening of the Neighbourhood Plan per sustainability theme, the Neighbourhood Plan has not been assessed as having negative effects associated with environmental themes.
The effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national,	As highlighted above in the screening of the Plan per sustainability theme, the Neighbourhood Plan has not been assessed as having any significant effects on areas or



Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)	Likelihood and summary of significant effects
community or international protection status.	landscapes which have a recognised national, community or international protection status.

4. HRA Screening

4.1 Habitats Regulations Assessment of Development Plans

This section forms a plan level Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) as required by Regulation 63 of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended).

This section of this Report aims to:

- Identify the Habitats sites within 20km of Groby Neighbourhood Plan area.
- Summarise the reasons for designation and Conservation Objectives for each site to be considered in this assessment.
- Screen the Groby Neighbourhood Plan for its potential to impact upon a Habitats 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.

4.2 Court Judgements and their consideration in this Report

4.2.1 CJEU People Over Wind v Coillte Teoranta C-323/17

In line with the Court judgement (CJEU People Over Wind v Coillte Teoranta C-323/17), 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.

This HRA Screening Report does not therefore consider mitigation measures within the assessment of Likely Significant Effects resulting from the Groby Neighbourhood Plan.

4.2.2 CJEU Holohan C- 461/17

This Court judgement now imposes more detailed requirements on the competent authority at Appropriate Assessment stage:

1. [...] an 'Appropriate Assessment' must, on the one hand, catalogue the entirety of habitat types and species for which a site is protected, and, on the other, identify and examine both the implications of the proposed project for the species present on that site, and for which that site has not been listed, and the implications for habitat types and species to be found outside the boundaries of that site, provided that those implications are liable to affect the conservation objectives of the site.

2. [...] the competent authority is permitted to grant to a plan or project consent which leaves the developer free to determine subsequently certain parameters

relating to the construction phase, such as the location of the construction compound and haul routes, only if that authority is certain that the development consent granted establishes conditions that are strict enough to guarantee that those parameters will not adversely affect the integrity of the site.

3. [...] where the competent authority rejects the findings in a scientific expert opinion recommending that additional information be obtained, the 'Appropriate Assessment' must include an explicit and detailed statement of reasons capable of dispelling all reasonable scientific doubt concerning the effects of the work envisaged on the site concerned.

Within this Stage 1 HRA Screening report, the assessment determines the requirement whether or not a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment is needed for the Groby Neighbourhood Plan.

4.3 Habitats (European) Sites

Habitats sites is the term used in the (revised) NPPF (2023) to describe any site which would be included within the definition at Regulation 8 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) for the purpose of those regulations. These now form part of the UK national network of sites for nature protection. The aim of the network is to assure the long-term survival of UK's most valuable and threatened species and habitats.

All Special Protection Areas (SPAs) are designated for birds and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) are designated for other species, and for Habitats. Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar sites) are also part of the National Network of sites. This is because all SPAs and SACs are comprised of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and all Ramsar sites in England are SSSIs. Together, SPAs, SACs and Ramsar Sites make up the Habitats sites in England. The following offers a description and explanation of SPAs, SACs and Ramsar Sites.

4.3.1 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. Example: Rutland Water SPA regularly supports internationally or nationally important numbers of migratory wildfowl species and is also of strong scientific and nature conservation interest for supporting a diverse assemblage of wintering wildfowl. Legislation: The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended).

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: River Mease SAC: This relatively unmodified lowland river contains a diverse range of physical in-channel features, including

riffles, pools, slacks, vegetated channel margins and bankside tree cover, which provide the conditions necessary to sustain significant populations of spined loach, bullhead, freshwater white-clawed crayfish and otter. Legislation: The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended).

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, Rutland Water Ramsar is a large, artificial freshwater reservoir fringed by a mosaic of wetland habitats and a regionally important area for breeding and passage birds. Wintering waterbirds include internationally important numbers of ducks and nationally important numbers of ducks, geese, swans. Legislation: Ramsar Convention (1971) – Wetlands of International Importance..

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.

4.3.2 Habitats sites to be considered

There is one Habitats site (SPA/SAC/Ramsar) which lie within 20 km of Groby.

Table 4: Habitats sites within 20km to be considered in this assessment

SPA
N/A
SAC
River Mease
Ramsar
N/A

Consideration was given to potential impact pathways, Impact Risk Zones (IRZ) for the underpinning SSSIs for the Habitats sites listed in Table 3 and confirmed on MAGIC website www.magic.gov.uk.

The Groby Neighbourhood Plan area lies 13.7km from the River Mease SAC and is outside the Impact Risk Zone for this Habitat site as identified by Natural England.

Therefore there are no Habitats sites are within scope of this Plan level HRA screening when

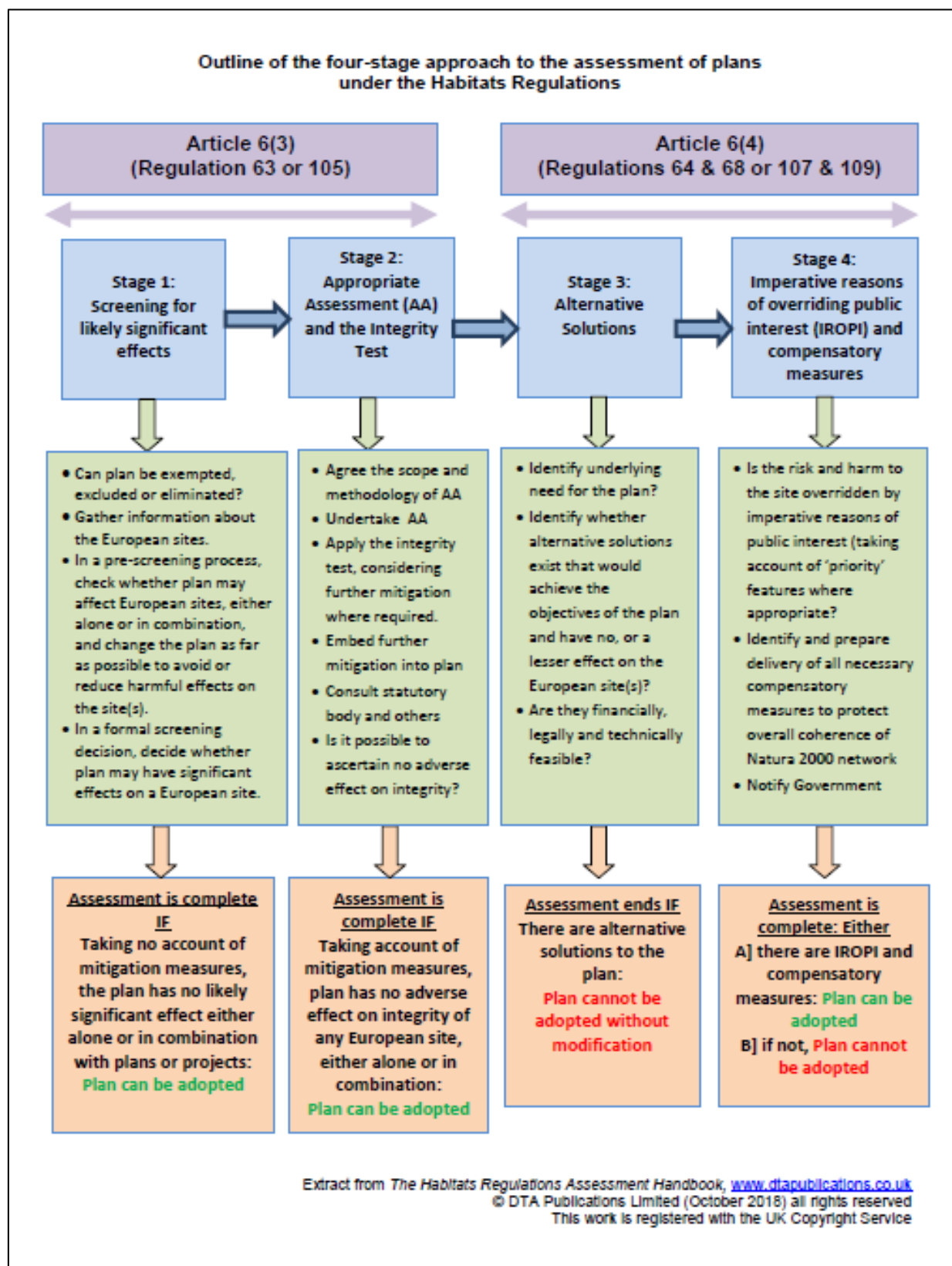
considered in combination either alone or in combination with other plans and projects.

Any mitigation considered necessary would need to be secured at application stage in line with policies in the adopted Hinckley and Bosworth Local Plan as well any project level HRA Appropriate Assessment as the competent authority for planning decisions.

4.4 Method and Approach

The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 state that submitted Plans need to be accompanied by a statement explaining how the proposed Plan meets the 'basic conditions' set out in Schedule 4B of the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act. These basic conditions include a requirement to demonstrate how the Plan is compatible with international obligations, which includes the need to undertake a HRA screening report; this is necessary to ensure the making of the Neighbourhood Plan is not likely to have a significant effect on a Habitats (European) site or a Habitats (European) offshore marine site, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects. This document relates only to Stage 1 of the HRA process as set out in Figure 1 below.

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



4.4.1 Stage 1: HRA Screening

The screening stage identifies if any significant effects are likely because any policies or projects will have an impact on a Habitats site. Table 4 identifies the different categories assigned to each policy in the plan: Category A identifies those policies or projects that are considered to have No Negative Effect. Category B identifies those policies or projects that will have No Likely Significant Effect. Category C identifies those policies or projects that might have Likely Significant Effect upon a Habitats site either alone or in combination with other plans or projects. Section 4.5 considers each policy or projects and the results of the screening exercise recorded.

Each of the policies in the Grobby Neighbourhood Plan has been screened to identify whether they would have any effect on a Habitats site and allocated to a category as shown in Table 4.

Table 5: Screening categorisation

Category A: No negative effect
Policies or projects that will not be likely to have any negative effect on a Habitats site.
Category B: No Likely Significant Effect
Policies or projects that could have an effect but would not be likely to have a <i>significant</i> negative effect on a Habitats site 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
Policies or projects which are predicted to have a likely significant effect on a Habitats site either alone or in combination with other plans and projects and require revision or further assessment (Appropriate Assessment).

4.4.2 Potential impacts of Grobby Neighbourhood Plan on Habitats Sites

There are a wide range of potential impacts on Habitats sites that could arise from development plans. These can be summarised as -

- Land take by development;
- 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 waste 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.

Each policy will be assessed against the criteria in the table below.

Table 6: Assessment of potential impacts on Habitats sites

Nature of potential impact	How the Groby Neighbourhood Plan (alone or in combination with other plans and projects) could affect a Habitats site	Why these effects are not considered significant
Land take by development	The Groby Neighbourhood Plan area is outside the boundaries of the one Habitats site within scope of this HRA.	No likely significant effects are expected, as no development will be allocated on designated land. It is therefore, considered that impacts from land take by development can be screened out when considered from the Plan alone. As there will be no land take by development this impact pathway is screened out .
Impact on protected species outside the protected sites	The Groby Neighbourhood Plan area does not contain any land providing functional use by designated features of the Habitats site.	There is no risk of impacts on protected species outside of the Habitats site. It is therefore considered that this impact pathway will not result in likely significant effects upon any Habitats site from the Neighbourhood Plan. Therefore, impacts on protected species outside the Habitats site from the Neighbourhood Plan alone

Nature of potential impact	How the Groby Neighbourhood Plan (alone or in combination with other plans and projects) could affect a Habitats site	Why these effects are not considered significant
		on the Habitats sites can be this impact pathway is screened out .
Recreational pressure and disturbance	The Groby Neighbourhood Plan area lies outside of any Impact Risk Zone of any Habitats site.	It is therefore considered that this impact pathway should be screened out for further assessment as without mitigation, Likely Significant Effects from the Neighbourhood Plan resulting from recreational impacts on Habitats sites can be ruled out.
Water quantity and quality	There is no potential pathway for development within the Groby Neighbourhood Plan area to impact on any Habitats site.	Although the Groby Neighbourhood Plan does allocate land for development, no likely significant effects are expected given the distance and no impact pathway, so changes in water quantity or quality have been screened out .
Changes in pollution levels	It is considered that there is no pathway for development to result in pollution impacts.	Although the Groby Neighbourhood Plan does allocate land for development, no likely significant effects are expected given the distance, so changes in air pollution have been screened out .

4.5 Results from HRA Screening of Neighbourhood Plan Policies

Each of the policies in the Groby Neighbourhood Plan was screened in turn to identify whether they would have any impact on a Habitats site and the result of this exercise is recorded in Table 5.

Table 7: Assessment of potential impacts from the Plan policies

Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites?	Recommendations
Policy G1: Countryside	The Countryside (land outside the Groby, Field Head, Bradgate Hill and The Brantings Limits to Development as defined on the Policies Map) will be protected for the sake of its intrinsic character, beauty, the diversity of its landscapes, heritage and wildlife, the wealth of its natural resources and to ensure it may be enjoyed by all. Development in the Countryside will be strictly controlled in accordance with national and Hinckley and Bosworth Local Plan policies.	No, Category A	No specific recommendations
Policy G2: Landscape Character	Development should be located and designed in a way that is sensitive to its landscape setting, retaining and, where possible, enhancing the distinctive qualities of the landscape character area (identified by Map 3) which it would affect. Development should: A. Conserve and, where possible, enhance the character and qualities of the local landscape through appropriate design of development proposals; B. Retain and where possible enhance woodland, hedgerows,	No, Category A	No specific recommendations

Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites?	Recommendations
	mature trees, and stone walls as features of landscape importance unless it is demonstrated this is not viable or practicable; C. Be well integrated within the landscape with planting to soften urban edges; and D. Provide appropriate landscape mitigation and/or suitable off-site enhancements.		
Policy G3: Locally Important Views	Sensitivity should be shown for the Locally Important Views from publicly accessible locations that are regarded as highly characteristic, as listed below and identified on Map 4: To be inserted Major development proposals, and proposals that could affect Locally Important Views should be supported by a Landscape Visual Impact Assessment.	No, Category A	No specific recommendations
Policy G4: Green Wedge	Within the Groby Neighbourhood Plan Area, Hinckley and Bosworth Core Strategy Development Plan Document Policy 6 applies to the Rothley Brook Meadow Green Wedge defined by Map 5.	No, Category A	No specific recommendations
Policy G5: Countryside	The loss of existing footpaths and cycleways will be resisted. Wherever possible, new	No, Category A	No specific recommendations

Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites?	Recommendations
Access	development should create new footpath and cycleway links to the existing network connecting the development to neighbouring areas, nearby settlements and the wider countryside.		
Policy G6: Ecology and Biodiversity	Development should conserve, restore and enhance the network of local ecological features and habitats which include (as shown on Map 8) Local Wildlife Sites (including historical sites) and Geology Sites. New development will be expected to secure measurable net gains for biodiversity through the following opportunities: A. The integration of features such as bat boxes, bird boxes and hedgehog highways; B. Woodland, hedgerow and tree planting; C. Enhancement of ponds and watercourses; and D. Creation of meadow and grassland habitats.	No, Category A	No specific recommendations
Policy G7: Trees and Hedgerows	Existing trees and hedgerows should be retained where possible and integrated into new developments. Development that damages or	No, Category A	No specific recommendations

Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites?	Recommendations
	results in the loss or deterioration of ancient trees, hedgerows or trees of good arboricultural and amenity value will not be supported. Proposals should be designed to retain ancient trees, hedgerows or trees of arboricultural and amenity value. Proposals should be accompanied by a tree survey that establishes the health and longevity of any affected trees and hedgerows, indicating replanting where appropriate.		
Policy G8: Water Management	Development sites should be built to manage surface water sustainably and utilise resources sustainably during use. Major development should incorporate: A. Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) unless demonstrated to be inappropriate. All schemes for the inclusions of SuDS should demonstrate they have considered all four aspects of good SuDS design, Quantity, Quality, Amenity and Biodiversity, and the SuDS and development will fit into the existing landscape. The completed SuDS schemes should be accompanied by a maintenance schedule detailing maintenance boundaries, responsible parties and arrangements to ensure that the SuDS are maintained in	No, Category A	No specific recommendations

Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites?	Recommendations
	perpetuity; B. Surface water discharges that have been carried out in accordance with the drainage hierarchy, such that discharge to the public sewerage systems is avoided, where possible; C. Incorporate water efficient design and technology; and D. Protection of existing drainage systems. No development shall prevent the continuation of existing natural or manmade drainage features, where watercourses or dry ditches are present within a development site, these should be retained and where possible enhanced.		
Policy G9: Local Green Spaces	The following areas identified on Map 10 are designated as Local Green Space: 1. Beacon Field 2. Branting Hill Amenity Green Space 3. Cowpen Spinney 4. Flaxfield Amenity Green Space 5. Groby Meadow 6. Groby Granite Railway North	No, Category A	No specific recommendations

Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites?	Recommendations
	7. Groby Granite Railway South 8. Dowry Furlong 9. Highfield Amenity Green Space 10. Land at Ratby Lane and Launde Road 11. Laundon Way Amenity Green Space 12. Marina Park 13. Orchard Close Allotments 14. Quarry Park 15. Queen Elizabeth II XC Park 16. Ratby Road Allotments 17. Ratby Road Copse 18. Stamford Memorial Park 19. St Philip and St James Churchyard 20. Martinshaw Wood 21. Greys Drive Amenity Green Space 22. Bluebell Drive Amenity Green Space 23. Land at Leicester Road and Bluebell Drive 24. Foxglove Drive Amenity		

Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites?	Recommendations
	Green Space 25. Land at Link Rise and Ratby Lane Development proposals within the designated Local Green Spaces will only be supported in very special circumstances.		
Policy G10: Air Quality	Within the A46, M1 and A50 corridors (measured as 100m from the carriageway edge), an Air Quality Assessment should be submitted with applications for the following proposals: A. Major developments; B. Proposals that include potentially air pollution generating uses or combustion-based technologies; C. Proposals incorporating sensitive uses; and D. All developments for new dwellings. Air Quality Assessments should include a statement setting out how air quality has been accounted for in the design of the development and how the development improves the existing air quality position.	No, Category A	No specific recommendations
Policy G11:	Where the unmitigated annual	No,	No specific

Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites?	Recommendations
Noise	average noise levels for the 16-hour period between 0700 – 2300 is likely to exceed LAeq, 16hr 60dB proposals should be accompanied by an Acoustic Assessment. The principle requirement will be to achieve an acceptable acoustic standard through the application of good acoustic design. New noise sensitive development that is likely to experience significant adverse effects from noise will not be supported unless it can be demonstrated that the economic, social or environmental benefits associated with the proposed development outweigh the adverse effects.	Category A	recommendations
Policy G12: The Klondyke	Development that would prejudice the restoration of The Klondyke, as defined by Map 12 and the Policies Maps, to woodland is not supported.	No, Category A	No specific recommendations
Policy G13: Village Centre	Development proposals that will enhance the commercial, business and service functions of the Village Centre, defined on Map 13 and the Policies Maps, will be supported. Class E (Commercial, business and service uses) should remain the dominant use and development leading to an over-concentration of any other uses	No, Category A	No specific recommendations

Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites?	Recommendations
	(such as hot food takeaways) will not be supported. Development proposals outside the Village Centre that will adversely affect the vitality and viability of the Village Centre will not be supported.		
Policy G14: Community Services and Facilities	The community facilities listed below should be retained in accordance with Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD Policy DM25: 1. Beacon Field 2. Highfield Amenity Area 3. Flaxfield Amenity Area 4. Marina Park 5. Quarry Park 6. Queen Elizabeth XC II Park 7. Stamford Memorial Park 8. Ratby Road Allotments 9. Orchard Close Allotments 10. Groby Village Hall 11. Groby Community Library 12. The Stamford Arms PH 13. The Groby Club	No, Category A	No specific recommendations

Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites?	Recommendations
	14. Post Office 15. Groby Surgery		
Policy G15: Infrastructure	Developer contributions will be utilised for new or improved infrastructure relating to the following: Improvements to the operation of the A50, A46 and other highways; The improvement, remodelling or enhancement of: - Education facilities - Groby Community Library - Groby Village Hall The provision of a new Healthcare Centre and Sports Centre; The provision of park, amenity greenspace, children's play areas, facilities for young people, allotments and burial space; The restoration of the route of the former Groby Granite Railway as a Public Right of Way; Community infrastructure improvements including the provision of parish notice boards, seats, children's play area equipment, bus shelters, litter bins; Public Rights of Way, Green	No, Category A	No specific recommendations

Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites?	Recommendations
	Infrastructure; and National Forest planting in accordance with Hinckley and Bosworth Local Plan Core Strategy Policy 21.		
Policy G16: Non-Designated Heritage Assets	Development proposals that will affect the following locally valued heritage assets or their setting will be assessed having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset: Features of Local Heritage Interest (Map 15): 2-4 Ratby Road 11-15 Ratby Road 18, 18A & 18B Ratby Road Former Groby Co-operative 27 Ratby Road Victoria Cottages 79-117 Ratby Road 118-124 Ratby Road Quarry Manager's House Chaplins Butchers Shop Cattle trough, Leicester Road Village Hall	No, Category A	No specific recommendations

Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites?	Recommendations
	The Old Schoolmasters House War Memorial at Groby Club 20-30 Leicester Road Victoria Stone Terrace, 32-42 Leicester Road Victoria Stone Terrace, 44-54 Leicester Road 56 Leicester Road 65 Leicester Road 21 Chapel Hill 29 Chapel Hill 30 Chapel Hill 31 Chapel Hill 35 Chapel Hill Footpath linking Chapel Hill to Ferrers Rise 1-9 Markfield Road 11 Markfield Road 13 Markfield Road 15 Markfield Road 33 Markfield Road 35 Markfield Road		

Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites?	Recommendations
	43 Markfield Road 57 Markfield Road Home Farm Weighbridge, Home Farm Slate Wall, Markfield Road Stone Wall, Markfield Road Wall in Orchard Close Allotment Groby Old Hall Outbuildings Medieval wall west of Groby Old Hall 11 Newtown Linford Lane Mill by Groby Pool 20 Rookery Lane 24 Rookery Lane Outbuilding Wharf Cottage 22 & 24 Stephenson Way The White Cottage Groby Granite Railway Memorial on Stamford Memorial Park Non-designated archaeological sites (Appendices 5 and 6)		

Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites?	Recommendations
Policy G17: Design	To be supported development must be sympathetic to local character and history, unless the development is of exceptional quality or innovative design. Development must also: 1. Be in keeping with the scale, form and character of its surroundings; 2. Protect important features such as granite setts, traditional walls, hedgerows and trees; 3. Have safe and suitable access; 4. Integrate into its surroundings by reinforcing existing connections and creating new ones, while also respecting existing buildings and land uses around the development site; 5. The amenities of residents in the area should not be significantly adversely affected, including by loss of daylight/sunlight, privacy, air quality, noise and light pollution; 6. Create a place with a locally inspired or otherwise distinctive character and: a. Resist the encroachment of modern, generic, domestic forms along key historic routes such as Markfield Road, Leicester Road	No, Category A	No specific recommendations

Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites?	Recommendations
	and Ratby Road; b. Ensure development responds to the agricultural and quarrying precedents in the village through materials and form; c. Protect the influence of agricultural buildings and quarrymen's cottages to the south and west of the village. d. Meets the general design principles of the National Forest. 7. Take advantage of existing topography, landscape features (including water courses), wildlife habitats, existing buildings, site orientation and microclimates; 8. Ensure buildings are designed and positioned to enhance streets and spaces; 9. Be designed in a way that encourage low vehicle speeds; 10. Ensure parking is integrated so that it does not dominate the street; 11. Ensure public and private spaces are clearly defined and designed to be attractive, well managed and safe; and 12. Provide adequate external storage space for bins and recycling as well as vehicles and		

Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites?	Recommendations
	cycles.		
Policy G18: Climate Change	All development proposals will be expected to mitigate against and adapt to climate change and to comply with national targets on reducing carbon emissions and energy use. Development, including extensions and refurbishment where it requires planning permission, will be expected to take account of the following: 1. How it makes effective use of sustainably sourced resources and materials, minimises waste, and water use; 2. How it is designed to withstand the impacts of climate change, particularly the effect of rising temperatures, sustained periods of high temperatures and periods of intense rain and storms; 3. How it is designed to promote the use of sustainable modes of transport and minimise car usage; 4. That the building form and its construction allows for adaptation to future changes in climate; 5. That the building form and its construction permits further reduction in the building's carbon footprint, where feasible and	No, Category A	No specific recommendations

Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites?	Recommendations						
	viable; and 6. That in addressing the above measures, the development’s design and layout also strives to maximise health and well-being and enjoyment of its residents and net gains in biodiversity, where at all possible.								
Policy G19: Infill Housing Development	Housing development proposals will be supported within the Groby, Field Head, Bradgate Hill and The Brantings Settlement Boundaries identified on Map 17 and the Policies Maps.	No, Category A	No specific recommendations						
Policy G20: Housing Mix	On developments of five or more dwellings, market housing should broadly reflect the following mix: <table><tr><td>1 or 2 bedroom</td><td>48%</td></tr><tr><td>3-bedroom</td><td>52%</td></tr><tr><td>4+bedroom</td><td>0%</td></tr></table> Variations to this housing mix will only be acceptable if justified by: 1. More recent evidence of housing need; 2. The characteristics of the site or adjoining properties; or 3. A need to provide a greater variety of housing on sites of 100	1 or 2 bedroom	48%	3-bedroom	52%	4+bedroom	0%	No, Category A	No specific recommendations
1 or 2 bedroom	48%								
3-bedroom	52%								
4+bedroom	0%								

Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites?	Recommendations
	dwelling or more.		
Policy G21: Affordable Housing	For developments of 10 or more homes, or if the site has an area of 0.5 hectares or more, the minimum affordable housing provision is 40%. This may be negotiated on a site by site basis taking into account identified local need, existing provision, characteristics of the site and viability. All affordable housing will be subject to conditions, or a planning obligation will be sought, to ensure that when homes are allocated or sold, priority is given to people with a local connection to Groby Parish (i.e. including living, working or with close family ties in the Parish).	No, Category A	No specific recommendations
Policy G22: Key Employment Sites	Fir Tree Lane Industrial Estate and Midlands Distribution Centre, as defined on Map 18 and the Policies Maps, will be retained for class B uses⁶. Non-B class uses development will only be supported if it: 1. Is for small-scale uses providing services to support the businesses on the Fir Tree Lane Industrial Estate or Midlands Distribution Centre; or 2. Would not result in any significant loss in employment;	No, Category A	No specific recommendations

Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites?	Recommendations
	3. Would, where possible, enhance the quality and attractiveness of the Industrial Estate; and 4. Would not, alone or cumulatively, result in either site ceasing to be predominantly in B class use.		
Policy G23: Business Conversion of Rural Buildings	The re-use, adaptation or extension of rural buildings for business use will be supported where: 1. Any enlargement is proportionate to the size, scale, mass and footprint of the original building; 2. The development would not have a detrimental effect on the fabric, character and setting of historic buildings; 3. The development respects local building styles and materials; 4. The building is surveyed for protected species and mitigation measures are approved where necessary; 5. The proposed development would not generate traffic of a type or amount harmful to local rural roads, or require improvements which	No, Category A	No specific recommendations

Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats Sites?	Recommendations
	would detrimentally affect the character of such roads or the area generally; and 6. The proposed development would not materially harm the character of the surrounding rural area.		
Policy G24: Working from Home	Development that enables home working will be supported if the development: 1. Is in keeping with the scale, form and character of its surroundings; 2. Does not significantly adversely affect the amenities of residents in the area; and 3. Has safe and suitable access to the site for all people.	No, Category A	No specific recommendations

4.5.1 Recommendations

There are no recommendations for the policies in this Neighbourhood Plan as they have all been assigned to Category A. This states that all residential development proposals must meet the requirements of Hinckley and Bosworth Local Plan Policy LPP64 (Protected Sites) and any proposals that have adverse effects on the integrity of existing habitats (either alone or in-combination) will not be supported.

There will therefore be no need for any residential development subsequently coming forward under this Plan to be subject to a project level HRA. As such there is no requirement for this Plan to progress to Appropriate Assessment.

Given that there are no Habitats sites within scope (the River Mease SAC is further than 13km), there are no predicted effects from the Plan alone and no residual effects to consider

in combination with other plans and projects.

There is therefore no need to identify any relevant plans or projects likely to result in a significant effect on Habitats sites in combination with the Plan. In the context of this HRA, there are no relevant plans or projects to be considered in combination with Grobby Neighbourhood Plan.

5. Conclusions

5.1 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared for town and country planning purposes and sets a framework for future development consent. The policies of the Neighbourhood Plan can be considered to determine the use of small areas at local level commensurate with their status in determining local planning applications.

Planning Practice Guidance on SEA of Neighbourhood Plans indicates that a strategic environmental assessment may be required, for example, where a Neighbourhood Plan allocates sites for development; the neighbourhood area contains sensitive natural or heritage assets that may be affected by the proposals in the plan; or the Neighbourhood Plan is likely to have significant environmental effects that have not already been considered and dealt with through a sustainability appraisal of the Local Plan.

The Plan does not allocate any land for development purposes and seeks to strengthen the protection and enhancement of assets at the local level and in a local context.

In consideration of the findings of this Screening Report, the Groby Neighbourhood Plan can 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)

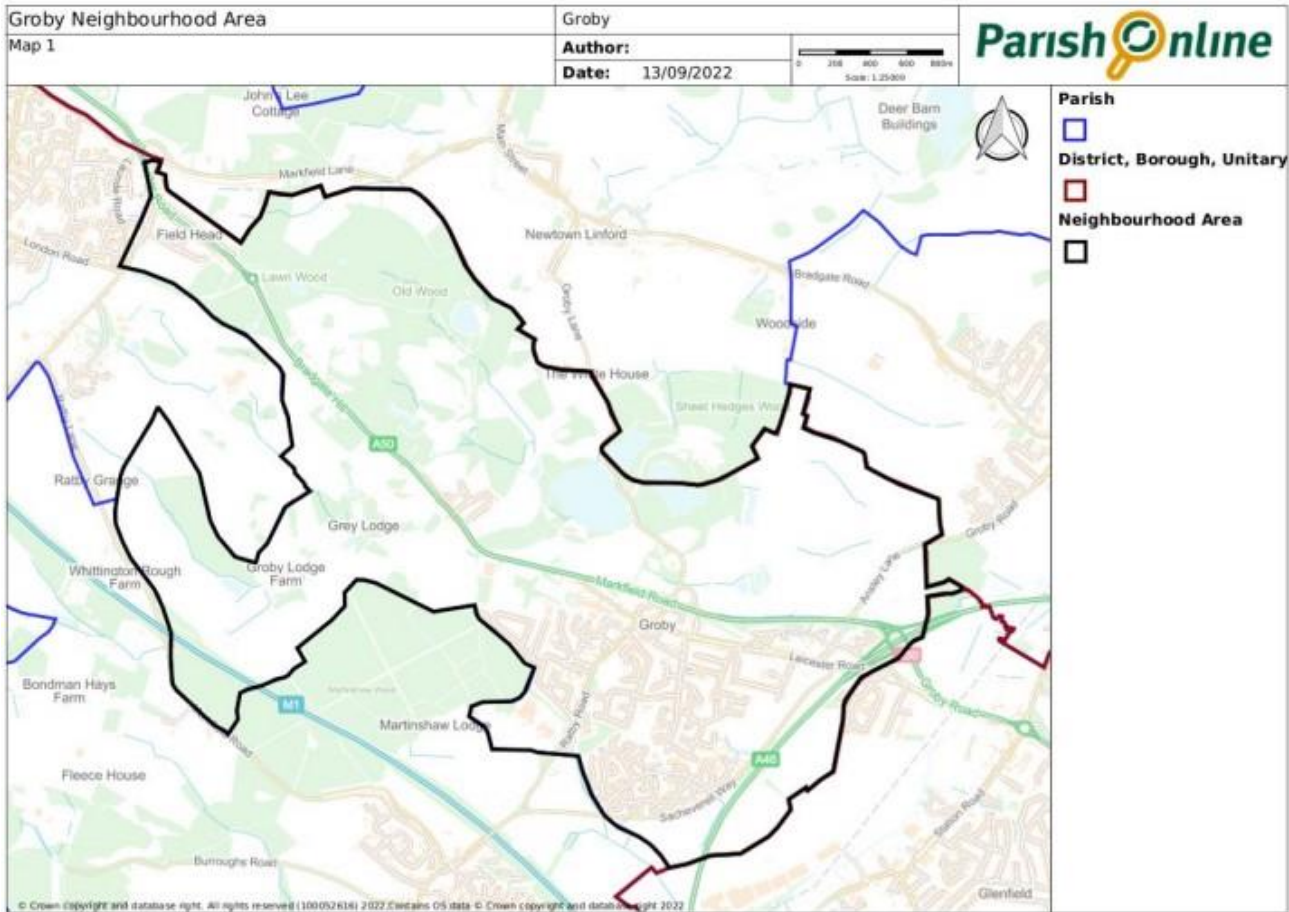
Subject to Natural England's review, this HRA Screening Report, indicates that, without mitigation embedded, the Groby Neighbourhood Plan is not predicted to have Likely Significant Effect on the designated features of any Habitats site, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects. The requirement for the Plan to undertake further assessment under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) is therefore **screened out**.

6. References

- Hinckley and Bosworth District Council Local Plan documents
- Groby Neighbourhood Plan Submission Version 2024
- **Natural England Access to Evidence - Conservation objectives for European Sites: East Midlands**
- Tydlesley, D., and Chapman, C., (2013) The Habitats Regulations Assessment Handbook, (April 2022) edition UK: DTA Publications Limited (Accessed under licence April 2024)

Appendix 1

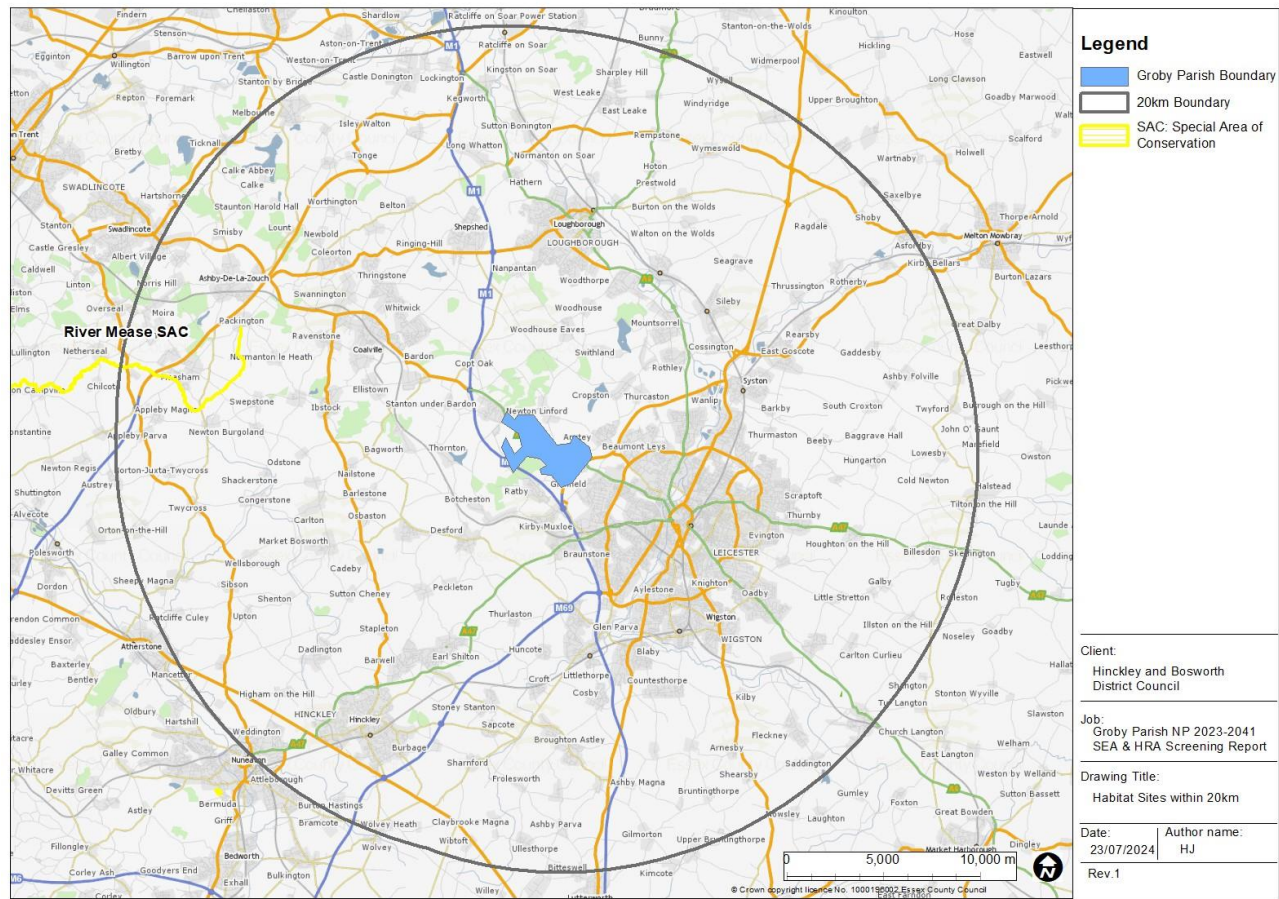
The Groby Neighbourhood Plan area



Source: Groby Neighbourhood Plan (2024)

Appendix 2

Groby Neighbourhood Plan area & Locations of Habitats sites within 20 km



Source: Place Services (2024)



Essex County Council