



Basic Conditions Statement

The Central Gowy (South) Neighbourhood Development Plan is submitted by Hargrave & Huxley Parish Council, which is the qualifying body as defined by the Localism Act 2011 (referred to hereon in as 'the Act').

What is proposed is a Neighbourhood Development Plan as defined in the Act.

The proposed plan states the period for which it is to have effect; which is the period from 1st January 2015 to 31st December 2030.

It is confirmed that:

- the policies do not relate to 'excluded development'
- the proposed NDP does not relate to more than one neighbourhood area
- there are no other NDPs in place within the neighbourhood area

The area of the Plan is shown in the map below (Figure 1) and Plan 1 in the Supporting Document.

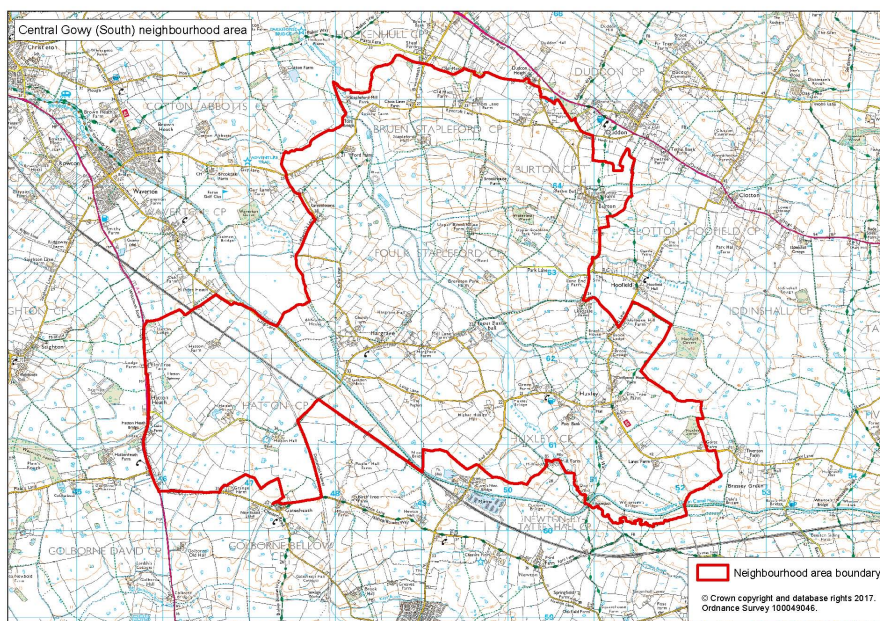


Figure 1: Neighbourhood Area

Sustainable Development

We carried out sustainability appraisals for the two largest settlements in the Area which concluded they are not sustainable locations for development. This concurs with the Cheshire West and Chester Council Local Plan (Part One) Strategic Policy STRAT 9, and the emerging Part Two Local Service Centres; there are no Local Service Centres proposed for the Area.

In conformity with the appraisal and Local Plan, the NDP has a Housing Policy which encourages the re-use and refurbishment of existing buildings.

We therefore believe that the NDP contributes to the achievement of sustainable development, as far as this can be applied to the Area.

Conformity with national Policy and the Local Plan

We believe that the NDP has appropriate regard for National Policy and is in general conformity with the strategic policies in the development plan for the local area.

Policy 1 – Housing, is supported by:

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) paragraphs: 17, 28, 55, 111.
- Cheshire West and Chester Council Local Plan (Part One): Strategic Policies SO3, SO9, SO10, SO12, STRAT1, STRAT2, STRAT9, ENV2, ENV5, ENV6.

Policy 2 – Community Facilities, is supported by:

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) paragraphs: 28, 70, 75.
- Cheshire West and Chester Council Local Plan Part One: Strategic Policies STRAT1, STRAT8 SO8, SOC5, SOC6, ENV2 and ENV3.

Policy 3 – Local Character, is supported by:

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) paragraphs: 17, 58, 61, 109, 125.
- Cheshire West and Chester Council Local Plan Part One: Strategic Policies SO3, SO10, SO12, STRAT1, STRAT9, SOC2, ENV2, ENV5, ENV6.

EU Obligations

We believe that the NDP is compatible with EU obligations, including human rights requirements.

Our assessment of the impact on equality concludes that the NDP does not directly address social attitudes towards members of the community with protected characteristics: older people, young people, mothers to be and with young children, people with disabilities and those with limited mobility. However, the NDP does make equal provision for affordable housing and for a range of housing, and seeks to protect community facilities which will benefit these groups equally.

The NDP does not have a significant adverse effect on a European site or a European offshore marine site, as determined by the SEA & HRA screening carried out by CWaC (see appendix).

Appendix - SEA & HRA screening carried out by CWaC

Strategic Environmental Assessment,
Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats
Regulation Assessment Screening
Determination for Central Gowy (South)
Neighbourhood Plan

Prepared on behalf of Central Gowy (South) Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group by
Cheshire West and Chester Council

April 2016

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Appendix 1: Overview of policies and identified effects of the Central Gowy (South)
Neighbourhood Plan

Appendix 2: Comments received on the initial SEA Screening Opinion

1.0 Introduction

In accordance with European Directive 2001/42/EC and the requirements of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (as amended), this document is the screening determination of the need for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) for the Central Gowy (South) Neighbourhood Plan. This document also sets out the decision on whether separate screening and a Habitats Regulations Assessment is required under European Directive 92/43/EEC and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended).

Under the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, the responsible authority (i.e. the Local Planning Authority) must carry out an environmental assessment for any plan or programme that is prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism, town and country planning or land use, which sets the framework for future development consents of projects listed in Annex I or II of Council Directive 83/337/EEC. It is likely that Development Plan Documents (DPDs), such as the Local Plan (Part Two) Land Allocations and Detailed Policies and Neighbourhood Plans will require SEA as they will contain planning policies that influence the above list of topics, and which will be used to determine planning applications.

However, the regulations state that an environmental assessment need not be carried out for a plan or programme which determines the use of a small area at a local level unless it has been determined that the plan is likely to have significant environmental effects.

The regulations advise that a screening process is used to determine whether or not a plan is likely to have a significant effect on the environment. This process should use a specified set of criteria (set out in Schedule 1 of the regulations). The results of this process must be summarised in a SEA screening opinion, which is then sent to the statutory consultation bodies for comment. Once comments have been taken into account a screening determination is prepared setting out whether SEA is required and reasons for the decision and this must be made publicly available.

This screening opinion has been based upon the policies set out in the draft Central Gowy (South) Neighbourhood Plan (February 2015).

A draft screening opinion was produced in May 2015. The Council has a duty to consult four specified environmental organisations – Countryside Agency, English Nature, English Heritage (now known as Historic England) and the Environment Agency. The Countryside Agency and English Nature have now merged to form Natural England. Due to the proximity to the Welsh border Natural Resources

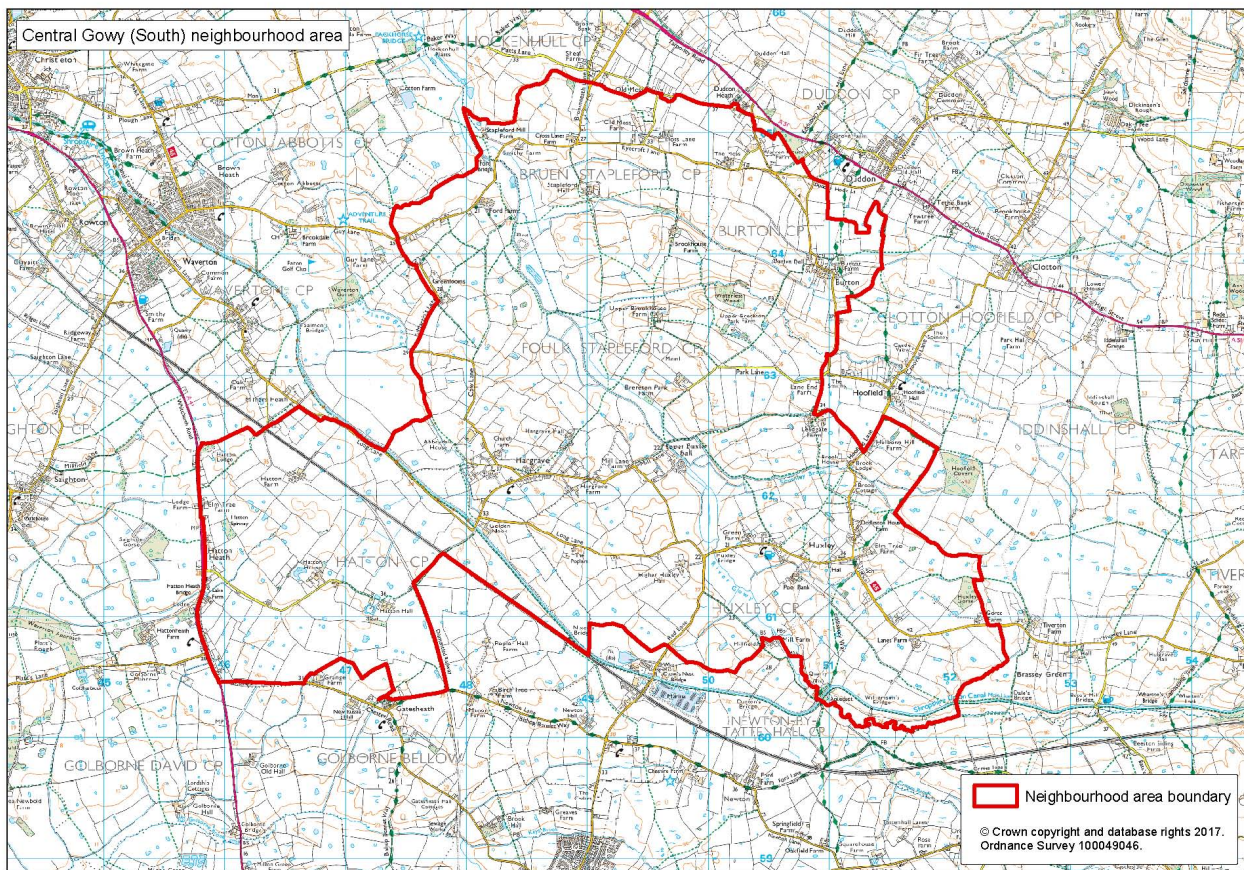
Wales, and CADW were also consulted. The statutory environmental bodies were consulted on 26th May 2015. Details of the bodies consulted and the responses received are provided in Appendix 2. Responses were received from the Environment Agency, and Natural England who agreed with the outcome of the initial screening exercise, that SEA is not required. This final screening statement addresses comments made during the consultation.

Location and profile of the Central Gowy (South) Neighbourhood Plan

Central Gowy (South) is within the rural area, 8 miles south east of the city of Chester. It is comprised of the Parishes of Bruen Stapleford, Burton, Foulk Stapleford, Hatton and Huxley. The bulk of the Neighbourhood Plan area lies within the Tattenhall ward, but the parishes of Bruen Stapleford and Burton lie within the Tarvin and Kelsall ward. The settlement is predominantly dispersed and has a generally low density with some clusters of more concentrated development. Central Gowy (South) covers an area of approximately 25 square kilometres, with an approximate population of 700.

The Central Gowy (South) Neighbourhood Plan Area has few facilities with residents predominantly using facilities in the urban area of Chester, or the nearer key service centres of Tarvin, Tattenhall and Tarporey.

Map 1 – Central Gowy (South) Neighbourhood Area



Relationship to other plans and programmes

Once made the Neighbourhood Plan will form part of development plan for Cheshire West and Chester. The policy framework once made will not work in isolation. The Neighbourhood Plan will work alongside the adopted Local Plan policies in place at the time it is made.

The Neighbourhood Plan must have regard to national policy; be in general conformity with the strategic policies in the adopted Local Plan; must contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and meet EU obligations and human rights requirements.

The current adopted Local Plan for the area is Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan Part One – Strategic Policies (adopted January 2015). This plan sets out the overall vision, strategic objectives, spatial strategy and strategic planning policies for the borough to 2030. Some of the policies in the Chester Local Plan (ENV5, ENV6, ENV8, ENV12, ENV13, ENV14, ENV15, ENV16, ENV17, ENV19, ENV21, ENV22, ENV23, ENV25, ENV26, ENV27, ENV28, ENV29, ENV30, ENV31, ENV32, ENV33,

ENV34, ENV35, ENV36, ENV37, ENV38, ENV39, ENV40, ENV41, ENV42, ENV43, ENV44, ENV45, ENV46, ENV47, ENV48, ENV49, ENV50, ENVF51, ENV52, ENV53, ENV54, ENV55, ENV60, ENV61, ENV66, ENV68, ENV69, ENV70, ENV71, ENV72, ENV73, ENV74, ENV75, ENV76, ENV77, TR4, TR5, TR6, TR7, TR10, TR11, TR12, TR13, TR14, TR15, TR17, TR20, TR21, TR22, EC2, EC3, EC4, EC6, EC7, EC8, EC11, EC17, EC18, EC21, EC22, EC23, RET2, RET3, RET7, RET8, RET9, RET10, RET11, RET12, RET14, RET15, HO2-in part, HO4, HO5, HO6, HO7, HO8, HO9, HO10, HO11, HO14, HO15, HO16, HO17, HO18, HO19, CF2, CF3, SR1, SR3, SR5, SR6, SR7, SR8, SR9, SR10, SR11, SR12, SR13, SR14, SR16, SR17, CU1, CU3, CU4, URBREN1, URBREN2, and MI2) and the Cheshire Replacement Minerals and Waste Local Plans are to be retained alongside the Local Plan (Part One) until such time that they are to be replaced by the Local Plan (Part Two). Preparation of the Local Plan (Part Two) Land Allocations and Detailed Policies began in Autumn 2014.

The existing and emerging Local Plan policy framework has been taken into account when carrying out the screening exercise. This forms the baseline for the SEA and HRA screening assessment. It has considered the potential effects of the Neighbourhood Plan over and above the current adopted Local Plan (Part One) and the remaining policies in the Chester Local Plan.

Scope of Neighbourhood Plan

The vision of the Central Gowry (South) neighbourhood Plan is to ‘understand and celebrate the local character of our Area which we know is important to the vast majority of the people who live here - the open countryside of the West Cheshire Plain which encompasses our small, dispersed, rural communities - and to maintain and enhance that local character by limited and appropriate development which respects it.’

It includes the objectives:

- To maintain and enhance the rural character of our small, dispersed communities.
- To better define and understand the distinctive local character of our Area, by means of this Plan, so that we are better equipped to maintain and enhance that character.
- To ensure that local people are consulted, contribute to and have ownership of the Plan, via their Parish Council(s).
- To promote the re-use of existing buildings and brownfield sites.
- To lessen the impact of through-traffic
- Improve digital communications.
- To provide safer access for ALL users of rural lanes.
- To ensure that the Plan informs and leads decision-making by the Parish Council(s) and Unitary Council about what happens in the Area.

2.0 Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening

Legislative background and methodology

European Directive 2001/42/EC (the SEA Directive) requires a Strategic Environmental Assessment to be carried out for certain plans and programmes to assess their effects on the environment. This Directive was transposed in law by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.

The Central Gowy (South) Neighbourhood Plan fall within the scope of this legislation as it is a plan prepared for town and country planning or land use and will set the framework for future development consent of projects, in accordance with Part 2(2) of the regulations. However, Neighbourhood Plans are land use planning documents prepared at the local level to determine land use in a small area.

Under Article 3(3) of the SEA Directive and Part 2(6) of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, SEA is only required for documents that determine land use of a small area at local level and minor modifications to plans and programmes where it is considered that it is likely to have significant environmental effects. Assessment of whether the plan is likely to have significant environmental effects is carried out through the screening process.

If SEA is required, the assessment is usually incorporated into a Sustainability Appraisal, which includes environmental factors as required under the SEA Directive, along with social and economic factors.

Screening methodology

The role of the screening exercise is to determine whether the implementation of a plan or programme is likely to have a significant effect on the environment.

The criteria for assessing whether a plan or programme is likely to have a significant environmental effect are set out in Annex II of the SEA Directive and Schedule 1 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.

The assessment criteria used to determine whether a plan or programme will have significant environmental effects are separated into two categories:

- those relating to the characteristics of the plan; and
- those relating to the characteristics of the plan's effects and of the area likely to be affected.

The assessment of the draft Neighbourhood Plan against the criteria relating to the characteristics of the plan is set out in Table 1 and the assessment against the criteria relating to the characteristics of the plans effects and the area likely to be affected is set out in Table 2.

In order to assist with completion of Table 1, Table 2 and identification of the likely significance of effects, an assessment has been undertaken of each policy in the Neighbourhood Plan, its potential effects and its relationship to Local Plan Part One strategic policies and retained policies in the Chester Local Plan. This helps to assess the impact that the Neighbourhood Plan will have above and beyond the impact of existing Local Plan policies. This assessment is set out in the table at Appendix 1.

Table 1: Testing of Significant Effects

	Significance Test
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>The Neighbourhood Plan is a local level land use planning document to determine land use in a small area. Once made, it will work within the planning policy framework of the Local Plan for the borough.</p> <p>The Neighbourhood Plan will provide a local planning policy framework for Central Gowy (South) that will become part of the development plan for Cheshire West and Chester. It is required to be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the adopted Local Plan. The Central Gowy (South) Neighbourhood Plan will not impact on the strategic location, nature, size and operating conditions of new development over and above that set by current adopted Local Plan or the emerging Local Plan for the borough. It will provide local level guidance within the strategic framework on the nature of development in the Central Gowy (South) Neighbourhood Area. The Neighbourhood Plan policies will work alongside the strategic policies in the development plan; other development management measures and environmental protection legislation.</p>
The degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy.	The Neighbourhood Plan will be the lowest level of planning policy for the area. It has to be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the adopted Local Plan and must contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. It will therefore have limited influence over changing the policies in plans at the higher strategic level.
The relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development,	The Neighbourhood Plan is required, as one of the basic condition tests, to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Whether this basic condition is met will be tested during the examination of the Neighbourhood Plan. However, the framework for the promotion of sustainable development is set by the Government's Strategy for Sustainable Development, the National Planning Policy Framework and the policies in the adopted and emerging Local Plan's for the borough. The Neighbourhood Plan will have limited influence over changing the sustainable development policies in plans and policies at the higher strategic level.
What are the environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme?	The Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report for the Local Plan (Part One): Strategic Policies is a comprehensive overview of the issues in Cheshire west and Chester. There are no specific additional environmental problems identified for the Central Gowy (South) area.
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 Neighbourhood Plan will have no direct role in the delivery of community legislation on the environment. It does include policies on these matters. The Neighbourhood Plan has been subject to Habitats Regulation Assessment screening as set out in Part Two of this document.

Table 2 – Characteristics of the plans effects

Identified effects	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),	Effect on special natural characteristics or cultural heritage,	Effect on environmental quality standards or limit values,	Effect on intensity of land-use.	the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.	Significance of the effects?
Promote Greenfield protection	Probability is difficult to assess as dependent on the nature, scale, and details of proposed development, however proposals are likely to be infrequent. Impacts would be long term and irreversible.	Each new development has the potential to benefit the local population. There would be greater potential to maximise these benefits if several developments could have a synergistic cumulative effect.	None	None	Local, small scale impact, at neighbourhood level.	None	None	None	None identified – see HRA screening and no impact on Conservation Area.	No
Positive impacts on re-use of redundant buildings and brownfield land	Probability is difficult to assess as dependent on the nature, scale, and details of proposed development,	Each new development has the potential to benefit the local population. There would be greater potential to	None	None	Local, small scale impact, at neighbourhood level.	None	None	None	None identified – see HRA screening and no impact on Conservation Area.	No

Identified effects	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),	Effect on special natural characteristics or cultural heritage,	Effect on environmental quality standards or limit values,	Effect on intensity of land-use.	the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.	Significance of the effects?
	however proposals are likely to be infrequent. Impacts would be long term and irreversible.	maximise these benefits if several developments could have a synergistic cumulative effect.								
Promoting rural regeneration and diversification	Probability is difficult to assess as dependent on the nature, scale, and details of proposed development, however proposals are likely to be infrequent. Impacts would be long term and irreversible.	Each new development has the potential to benefit the local population. There would be greater potential to maximise these benefits if several developments could have a synergistic cumulative effect.	None	None	Local, small scale impact, at neighbourhood level.	None	None	None	None identified – see HRA screening and no impact on Conservation Area.	No
Positive benefits on population and human health	Probability is difficult to assess as dependent on the nature, scale, and details of proposed development, however proposals are likely to be infrequent. Impacts would be long term and irreversible.	Each new development has the potential to benefit the local population. There would be greater potential to maximise these benefits if several developments could have a synergistic cumulative effect.	None	None	Local, small scale impact, at neighbourhood level.	None	None	None	None identified – see HRA screening and no impact on Conservation Area.	No
Positive impact on landscape and cultural heritage	Probability is difficult to assess as dependent on the nature, scale, and details of proposed development, however proposals are likely to be infrequent. Impacts would be long term and irreversible.	Each new development has the potential to benefit the local population. There would be greater potential to maximise these benefits if several developments could have a synergistic cumulative effect.	None	None	Local, small scale impact, at neighbourhood level.	None	None	None	None identified – see HRA screening and no impact on Conservation Area.	No
Positive impact on Green Infrastructure and biodiversity	High probability of achievement in all new development, although specifics will depend on the nature, scale, and details of	Each new development has the potential to enhance and protect biodiversity. There is a greater	None	None	Local, small scale impact, at neighbourhood level.	None	None	None	None identified – see HRA screening and no impact on Conservation Area.	No

Identified effects	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),	Effect on special natural characteristics or cultural heritage,	Effect on environmental quality standards or limit values,	Effect on intensity of land-use.	the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.	Significance of the effects?
	proposed development. Proposals are likely to be infrequent, however due to small scale of potential development in the neighbourhood plan area. Impacts would be long term and irreversible.	potential to maximise these benefits as the Neighbourhood Plan works towards an Ecological Network approach.								

Conclusion

As a result of the screening assessment it is considered unlikely there will be any significant environmental effects arising from the Central Gowy (South) Neighbourhood Plan.

A Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Central Gowy (South) Neighbourhood Plan is not required.

3.0 Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening

Legislative Background

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended) transposed the requirements of the European Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC into UK law. The Habitats Directive and Regulations afford protection to plants, animals and habitats that are rare and vulnerable in a European context.

Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) is a systematic process through which the performance of a plan or project can be assessed for its likely impact on the integrity of a European Site. European Sites, also referred to as Natura 2000 sites, consist of Special Protection Areas (SPA), Special Areas of Conservation (SAC); Potential Special Protection Areas and candidate Special Areas of Conservation (pSPA and cSAC); and listed or proposed Ramsar sites.

Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive states that any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans and projects, shall be subject to appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site's conservation objectives.

The first stage of HRA is to screen a plan or programme to identify if there are likely to be any significant effects on Natura 2000 sites. This will indicate whether a full Appropriate Assessment is required. The regulations require that the impacts and effects of any land use plan being assessed, are considered in combination with other plans and projects that may also be affecting the relevant European site(s).

Inter-relationship with the Local Plan HRA

The Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan (Part One) Strategic Policies has already been through the HRA process, and the results detailed in the Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan Publication Draft (Part 1) Strategic Policies Habitat Regulations Assessment Screening Report.

The HRA for the Local Plan (Part One) identified 12 sites to include within the HRA as set out in table 3 below.

Table 3 – Natura 2000 sites relevant to the Local Plan (Part One)

European site	Reason for inclusion
Oak Mere SAC	Located within Cheshire West and Chester
Midlands Meres and Mosses Ramsar site	Located within Cheshire West and Chester
West Midlands Mosses SAC	Located partly within Cheshire West and Chester
River Dee and Bala Lake SAC	Identified as a source of potable water for Cheshire West and Chester and also the receiving watercourse for waste water treatment works discharge
Mersey Estuary SPA and Ramsar	Located partially within Cheshire West and Chester
Dee Estuary SAC SPA and Ramsar site	Downstream of the River Dee which is identified as a source of potable water for Cheshire West and Chester. Development in the Borough also creates potential water quality pathways.
Liverpool Bay SPA	Located immediately downstream of the Mersey Estuary. There is therefore a potential water quality pathway through sewage effluent discharges, air quality from transport plans, disturbance of birds and recreational pressure
Berwyn and South Clwyd Mountains SAC	Included at the request of Natural Resources Wales
Mersey Narrows and North Wirral Foreshore pRamsar and pSPA	Located within Merseyside downstream of the Mersey Estuary SPA/Ramsar site. There is a direct link to development in through water quality
Sefton Coast SAC	Located within Merseyside and linked to development in Cheshire West and Chester through recreational pressure and water quality
Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA and Ramsar site	Located within Merseyside and is an indirect link to development in Cheshire West and Chester through water quality and recreational pressure
River Eden SAC	Haweswater Lake (to which the River is hydrologically connected) is likely to form part of the future water supply for Cheshire West and Chester.

The HRA undertaken for the Local Plan (Part One) forms the baseline for the HRA screening assessment of the Neston Neighbourhood Plan. The main consideration is the potential effects of the Neighbourhood Plan over and above those already assessed for the Local Plan. The Local Plan was screened out through this process, as not leading to a likely significant effect on European Sites.

It is considered that as long as the proposed policies of a Neighbourhood Plan do not alter the strategic policy framework assessed in the Local Plan Part One Habitats Regulation Assessment Screening Report then an additional separate full screening exercise on the Neighbourhood Plan will not be required. However, if the Neighbourhood Plan does change the strategic policy framework then a separate Habitats Regulation Assessment Screening Report to assess the effect on European Sites would be required.

Whether the Neighbourhood Plan alters the policy position for the area is set out in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Screening of policies for altering Local Plan Policy

Policy	Change in policy position in emerging Local Plan and policies to be retained? Y/N
Policy 1 - Housing	N
Policy 2 - Community Facilities	N
Policy 3 - Local Character	N
Policy 4 - Transport	N
Policy 5 - Communications	N

Context

There are 9 European designated sites identified within a 15km buffer from the boundaries of the Central Gowy (South) Neighbourhood Plan. There are 5 Ramsar sites, 3 SAC's, and 2 SPA's, although some of these designations do overlap.

These are shown in Map 2.

Outcome of high level screening

1. Is the Neighbourhood Plan directly connected with, or necessary to the management of a European site for nature conservation?

No
2. Does the Neighbourhood Plan propose new development or allocate sites for development?

No

3. Are there any other projects or plans that together with the Neighbourhood Plan that could impact on the integrity of a European Site?

Yes, the existing Chester Local Plan and the Local Plan: Part One.

4. Are there any potential impacts on the integrity of a European Site?

The Neighbourhood Plan will not work in isolation and will be used alongside other development plan policies including the Local Plan Part One and retained policies in the existing Chester Local Plan for determining planning applications for new development. The quantum of development to come forward in Central Gowy (South) in the future will be set by Local Plan policy. The Neighbourhood Plan will guide how this should come forward locally.

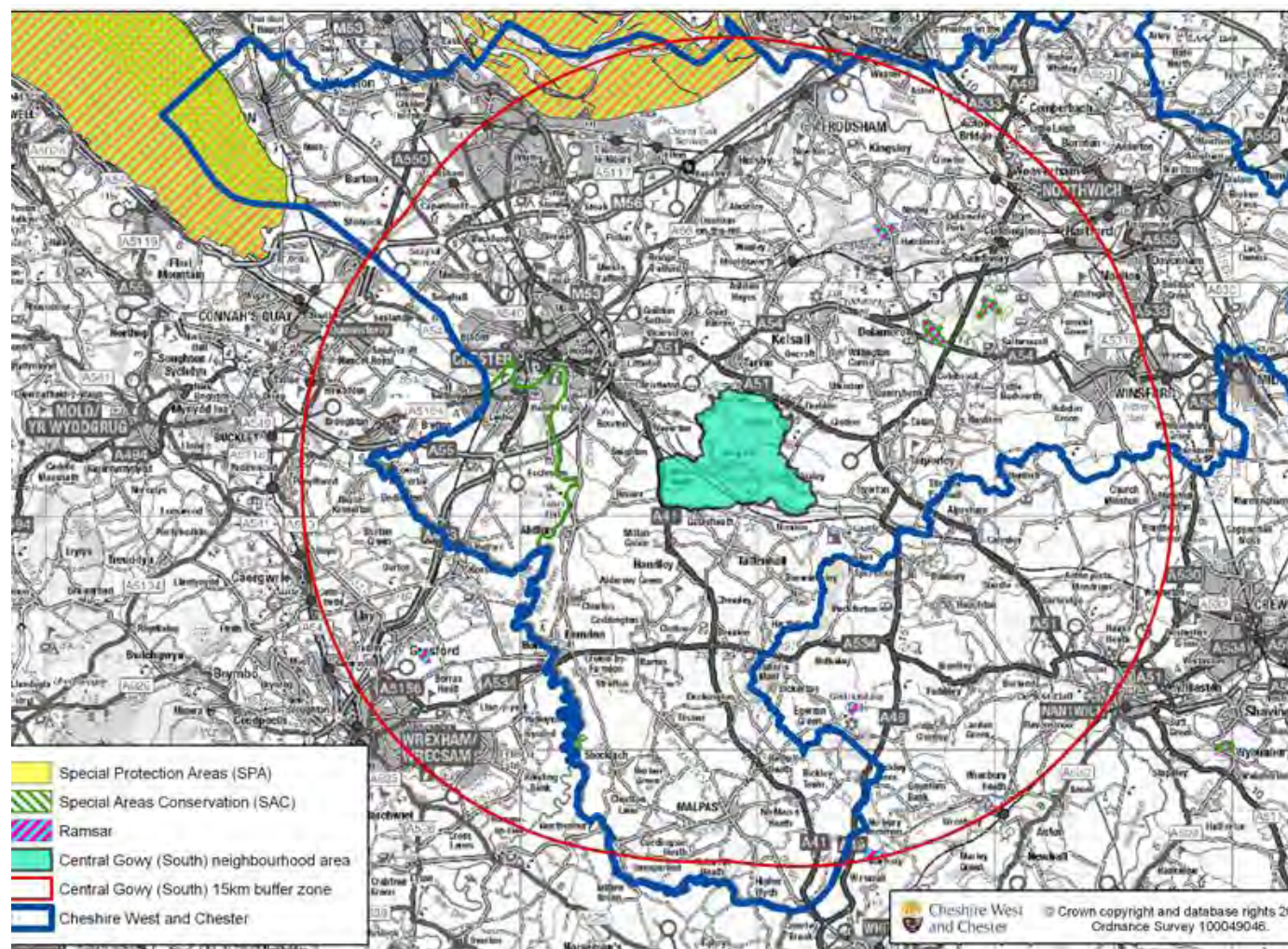
There are no specific issues highlighted in the HRA of the emerging Local Plan in relation to Central Gowy (South), although there are other more general potential impacts highlighted as a result of the quantum and location of development proposed for the borough as a whole in the Local Plan Part One. However, it is considered there are sufficient mitigation and control measures in the policy framework of the Local Plan Part One to avoid and mitigate any of these adverse effects on the integrity of European in the emerging Local Plan.

Therefore, it is considered that any proposals coming forward for Central Gowy (South) in accordance with the Neighbourhood Plan would not result in a likely significant effect on a European site than already identified and assessed through the Local Plan Part One Habitats Regulation Assessment Report.

Conclusion

The Screening determination made by Cheshire West and Chester Council is that the Central Gowy (South) Neighbourhood Plan is unlikely to have an adverse effect on a European site (as defined in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (d), alone or in combination with other plans and projects. As such, a separate full screening exercise and Habitats Regulations Assessment are not considered to be required.

Map 2- European Designations within a 15km distance of the Central Gowy (South) Neighbourhood Plan



Appendix 1: Overview of Policies and Identified Effects of the Central Gowy (South) Neighbourhood Plan.

Plan elements	Summary of policy	Identified potential effects of policy (taking into account SEA topics of Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna; Population; Human Health; Soil; Water; Air; Climatic Factors; Material Assets; Cultural Heritage; Landscape)	Relationship to emerging Local Plan (Part One); Strategic Policies and policies to be retained in the Chester Local Plan.
Policy 1 - Housing	<p>1a Development of greenfield sites in open countryside will not be permitted.</p> <p>1b In line with the Local plan our criteria will be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ <i>Change of use of existing buildings (including barn conversions)</i> □ <i>Re-development (of previously used 'brownfield' sites)</i> □ <i>In-fill, as strictly defined below.</i> <p>1c Development, both new and change of use, will be well-sited and designed in relation to the local rural character of our dispersed settlements and the limited capacity of local infrastructure in accordance with Policy 3.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote Greenfield protection • Positive impacts on re-use of redundant buildings and brownfield land • Promoting rural regeneration and diversification 	This policy is in line with STRAT 8 and STRAT 9 of the CWAC Local Plan (Part One).
Policy 2 - Community Facilities	<p>2a To support our existing community facilities of a school, church, village halls and a public house.</p> <p>2b To retain our extensive network of existing Public Rights of Way.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive benefits on population and human health 	This policy is in line with STRAT 8 of the CWAC Local Plan (Part One).
Policy 3 - Local Character	<p>3a To retain the open, rural landscape, space, peace and quiet, dark skies, natural and managed habitats which are important to the community.</p> <p>3b For any development to promote the use of forms and materials consistent with the local character, including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ <i>With few exceptions, most houses are individuals; groups of buildings are usually farms with a courtyard of barns. Respect this character, avoid 'estates'.</i> □ <i>The larger houses are usually set further back from the road, smaller ones closer to it; respect the relationship between scale and proximity to the road.</i> □ <i>The scale and mass of development: maintain the existing overall mix of sizes and position in relation to the road.</i> □ <i>Respect the position and orientation of development; this is typically set back from and parallel to the road, with the occasional building at right angles to it.</i> □ <i>Use the locally predominant materials, brick walls and slate roofs.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive benefits on population and human health • Positive impact on landscape and cultural heritage • Positive impact on Green Infrastructure and biodiversity 	This policy is in line with ENV3, ENV4 and ENV6 of the CWAC Local Plan (Part One).

	<p><input type="checkbox"/> <i>Use the locally predominant roadside boundary treatment, Hawthorn hedges</i></p> <p>3c To promote the retention and use of the landscape features and species which contribute to our local character such as ridge and furrow, hedgerows, ponds, ditches, Black Poplars, small Apple and Damson orchards, and Cheshire fencing.</p> <p>3d To reduce 'urban clutter' such as signs, pavements, kerbs, road markings and light pollution.</p> <p>3e To encourage the use of high quality materials and site-specific design which complements its context.</p>		
Policy 4 - Transport	4a To promote the use of a 'Quiet Lanes' policy and management for the majority of the Area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive benefits on population and human health 	This policy is in line with STRAT10 of the CWAC Local Plan (Part One).
Policy 5 - Communications	5a To campaign for high-speed broadband and consider organising our own supply.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive benefits on population and human health • Promoting rural regeneration and diversification 	This policy is in line with STRAT9 of the CWAC Local Plan (Part One).

Appendix 2: Comments received during consultation on the screening opinion

Agency	Date Consulted	Response
Natural England	26 th May 2015	<p>Natural England is in agreement with the Screening Statement that concludes that Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Central Gowy (South) Neighbourhood Plan is not required.</p> <p>Natural England is in agreement that any proposals coming forward for Central Gowy (South) in accordance with the Neighbourhood Plan would not result in a likely significant effect on a European site than already identified and assessed through the Local Plan Part One Habitats Regulation Assessment Report, subject to the mitigation and control measures in the policy framework of the Local Plan Part One. We advise that any policy that could lead to development in the Neighbourhood Plan makes clear reference to the policy ENV4 Biodiversity and Geodiversity in the adopted Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan to ensure that the natural assets in the plan area are protected.</p>
Environment Agency	26 th May 2015	We have no comments to make with regards to the SEA/HRA screening for Central Gowy (South).
Historic England	26 th May 2015	No response received.
Natural Resources Wales	26 th May 2015	No response received.
CADW	26 th May 2015	No response received.