

**Strategic Environmental Assessment, Habitats  
Regulations Assessment and Marine Plan  
Screening Determination for Dunham on the  
Hill and Hapsford Neighbourhood Plan**

Prepared on behalf of Dunham on the Hill and Hapsford Neighbourhood Plan  
Steering Group by

Cheshire West and Chester Council

**February 2025**

## Contents

1	Introduction.....	2
2	Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening.....	7
3	Habitats Regulation Assessment Screening.....	8
4	Marine Plan Screening.....	15

Appendix 1: SEA Screening - Overview of policies and identified effects of the Dunham on the Hill and Hapsford Neighbourhood Plan (December 2023)

Appendix 2: SEA Screening – Assessment of significant environmental effects of the Dunham on the Hill and Hapsford Neighbourhood Plan

Appendix 3: SEA Screening – Characteristics of the plan’s effects and of the area likely to be affected

Appendix 4: HRA Screening – European sites relevant to the Dunham on the Hill and Hapsford Neighbourhood Plan

Appendix 5: HRA Screening – Screening of Neighbourhood Plan policies for Likely Significant Effect

Appendix 6: Marine Plan Screening – Assessment of potential to impact on the North-West Marine Plan area

Appendix 7: Comments received on the initial SEA Screening Opinion, HRA screening and Marine Plan Screening

## 1 Introduction

In accordance with 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 Dunham on the Hill and Hapsford Neighbourhood Plan. This document also sets out the findings of the Habitats Regulations Assessment screening and identifies whether Appropriate Assessment is required under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). It also identifies whether further work is required to ensure that the Neighbourhood Plan takes full account of the relevant Marine Plans.

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 certain projects. 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.

Please note that under the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023, SEA will be replaced by Environmental Outcomes Reports (EOR). The Regulations relating to EOR have not yet been introduced and as such, the existing SEA process has been followed in this document and will continue to be used until further Regulations and guidance are issued.

A draft screening opinion was produced in December 2023, based upon the policies set out in the draft Dunham on the Hill and Hapsford Neighbourhood Plan (December 2023). The Council has a duty to consult Natural England, Historic England and the Environment Agency. The statutory environmental bodies were

consulted on 7 December 2023. Details of the bodies consulted and the responses received are provided in Appendix 7.

The Environment Agency and Marine Management Organisation did not provide a response. Historic England stated that on the basis of the information supplied, they consider that the plan is unlikely to have significant environmental effects upon the historic environment and they concur with the conclusion that SEA is not required. Natural England stated that on the basis of the material supplied with the consultation: significant effects on statutorily designated nature conservation sites or landscapes are unlikely; and significant effects on Habitats sites, either alone or in combination, are unlikely.

This screening determination is based on the policies set out in the Dunham on the Hill and Hapsford Submission Neighbourhood Plan from January 2025. The plan was updated and amended between December 2023 and January 2025. The 2025 version of the plan includes an additional policy (DHH 2) relating to incidental open spaces of community value. This addition means the policy numbering has also changed. Some minor amendments were also made to the wording of policies and policy titles and this has been picked up in the assessment of the policies within the appendices of this report.

### **Location and geographical scope of the Dunham on the Hill and Hapsford Neighbourhood Plan**

The Neighbourhood Area covers the whole of Dunham on the Hill and Hapsford Parish Council area. Dunham on the Hill and Hapsford Parish is located within the Sandstone ward.

According to the 2021 Census, the Parish contains 294 households. There are two main villages in the Neighbourhood Area – Dunham on the Hill and Hapsford, which are separated by agricultural land. The village of Dunham on the Hill is split by the A56 and the Neighbourhood Area includes part of the M56 motorway. The villages are close to Helsby and the boundary of the Neighbourhood Area adjoins the south-western edge of Helsby.

Designated neighbourhood area  
Dunham on the Hill and Hapsford parish



## **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) and the Local Plan (Part Two) Land Allocations and Detailed Policies (adopted July 2019). The Part One plan sets out the overall vision, strategic objectives, spatial strategy and strategic planning policies for the borough to 2030, with supporting policies in Part Two.

The 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 Local Plan (Part Two).

## **Scope of Neighbourhood Plan**

The vision for the Dunham on the Hill and Hapsford Neighbourhood Plan is:

“In 2030 Dunham on the Hill and Hapsford will remain a friendly and welcoming community, where residents of all ages feel safe, valued and enjoy an excellent quality of life. The parish will remain set within an attractive landscape and enjoying easy access to facilities and the countryside. Any new development will be sustainable and maintain the separate nature of each of the villages of Dunham on the Hill and Hapsford with the appropriate infrastructure to meet the needs of all residents, whilst conserving and enhancing the local character, heritage and the natural and built environment.

The objectives set within the Neighbourhood Plan are:

- To conserve and enhance Dunham-on-the Hill and Hapsford’s natural environment, wildlife, biodiversity and local landscape character
- To ensure the community infrastructure continues to reflect the evolving needs of the local community and enhancements of links and access to the open countryside and local facilities with the encouragement and support of safe and sustainable transport where possible thereby maintaining the strong sense of community and enable existing local amenities to thrive



- To ensure that new development is well designed, sustainable, in keeping with local character and reflects local needs
- To conserve and enhance Dunham on the Hill and Hapsford's heritage assets
- To support the redevelopment of the land currently taken up by the unused Wheatsheaf public house and ensure that any future development of the site is sustainable, of high quality and meets identified residential and business needs of the parish whilst becoming fully integrated within the community of Dunham on the Hill and Hapsford
- To encourage and support renewable energy generation at an appropriate scale that minimizes impact on the natural environment, biodiversity and local landscape character

The vision and objectives have been translated into plan policies covering the following topic areas:

- Local Green Spaces and Incidental Open Spaces of Community Value
- Wildlife and biodiversity
- Design
- Hapsford Area of Special Character
- Local heritage assets
- Land at the former Wheatsheaf public house
- Community facilities and assets
- Sustainable drainage and flood mitigation
- Renewable energy generation

The Dunham on the Hill and Hapsford Neighbourhood plan has been prepared so as to be in general conformity with the strategic policies in the adopted Local Plan (Part One and Part Two).

The Parish is located in the rural area of the borough and within Green Belt. The villages of Dunham on the Hill and Hapsford are not identified within the Local Plan as key or local service centres, therefore new development is restricted to certain types, as set out in Local Plan policy STRAT 9. Neighbouring Helsby is identified in the Local Plan as a key service centre.

The Neighbourhood Plan does not propose land allocations for development and does not refer to 'excluded development' such as minerals or waste. There are

policies relating to local green spaces, flood risk/prevention, wildlife and biodiversity. There are also policies relating to heritage, character and design. There are specific policies relating to community facilities and the development of a specific site, which was the location of the former Wheatsheaf public house.

The Neighbourhood Plan provides local level guidance on how the community would like future development, as set and restricted by the Local Plan and national planning policy, to come forward.

This screening determination only considers the likelihood of significant environmental effects resulting from the draft policies, rather than assessing general conformity with the strategic policies in the Local Plan, which is a matter for the Examination.

## **2 Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening**

### **Legislative background and methodology**

European Directive 2001/42/EC (the SEA Directive) required 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 Dunham on the Hill and Hapsford Neighbourhood Plans 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 3(2) of the SEA Directive. However, Neighbourhood Plans are land use planning documents prepared at the local level to determine land use in a small area.

Under Part 5(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 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.

In order to undertake the identification of the likely significance of effects, an assessment has been undertaken of each policy of the Neighbourhood Plan, its potential effects and its relationship to Local Plan (Part One) strategic policies and the policies in the Local Plan (Part Two). 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 in Appendix 1.

The assessment of the significant environmental effects of the draft Neighbourhood Plan is set out in Appendix 2. The characteristics of the plans effects and the area likely to be affected are set out in Appendix 3.

## **Conclusion**

As a result of the SEA screening assessment, Cheshire West and Chester Council consider that it is unlikely there will be any significant environmental effects arising from the Dunham on the Hill and Hapsford Neighbourhood Plan. As such, a Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Dunham on the Hill and Hapsford Neighbourhood Plan is not required.

## **3 Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening**

### **Legislative background**

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 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.

Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site but likely to have a significant effect on it, either individually or in combination with other plans and projects, should 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 the European 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 European sites to include within the HRA:

- Oak Mere SAC;
- Midlands Meres and Mosses Ramsar site;
- West Midlands Mosses SAC;
- River Dee and Bala Lake SAC;
- Mersey Estuary SPA and Ramsar;
- Dee Estuary SAC, SPA and Ramsar;
- Liverpool Bay SPA;
- Berwyn and South Clwyd Mountains SAC;
- Mersey Narrows and North Wirral Foreshore Ramsar and SPA;
- Sefton Coast SAC;

- Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA and Ramsar site; and
- River Eden SAC.

Information about all of these sites, the reasons for designation, pressures and pathways of impacts are provided in the HRA for the Local Plan (Part One and Part Two). Information about sites relevant to the Neighbourhood Plan is summarised in Appendix 4.

Map 2 shows the European sites that are within 15km of the Neighbourhood Plan area. All of the other European sites have been screened out from this assessment as impacts would not occur due to the distance or would be so small and insignificant in scale that they would not have a Likely Significant Effect, even when combined with other plans or projects.

The following sites have been screened out as they are outside the 15km radius for the Dunham on the Hill and Hapsford Neighbourhood Area:

- Liverpool Bay SPA;
- Berwyn and South Clwyd Mountains SAC;
- Mersey Narrows and North Wirral Foreshore Ramsar and SPA;
- Sefton Coast SAC;
- Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA and Ramsar site; and
- River Eden SAC.

Due to the distance and scale of anticipated development proposed through the Neighbourhood Plan, it is not considered relevant to include these sites in the HRA Screening of the Dunham on the Hill and Hapsford Neighbourhood Plan.

The European protected sites that fall within a 15km radius of the Neighbourhood Area (as shown on Map 2) are included within the HRA Screening. Due to the pathways of impact on these sites, the scale and location of the Neighbourhood Plan area and the scale of potential future developments means that some of the European sites can be screened out and do not require further assessment. The River Dee and Bala Lake SAC falls within the 15km radius of the Dunham on the Hill and Hapsford Neighbourhood Area. However, it is a significant distance from the Neighbourhood Area and is unlikely to be directly affected by the policies in the plan. Indirect effects via abstraction and water quality / flow are also unlikely due to the distance and the small scale of the area, the anticipated small scale of any developments (due to Green Belt restrictions as well as the policies) and the lack of pathways of impact.

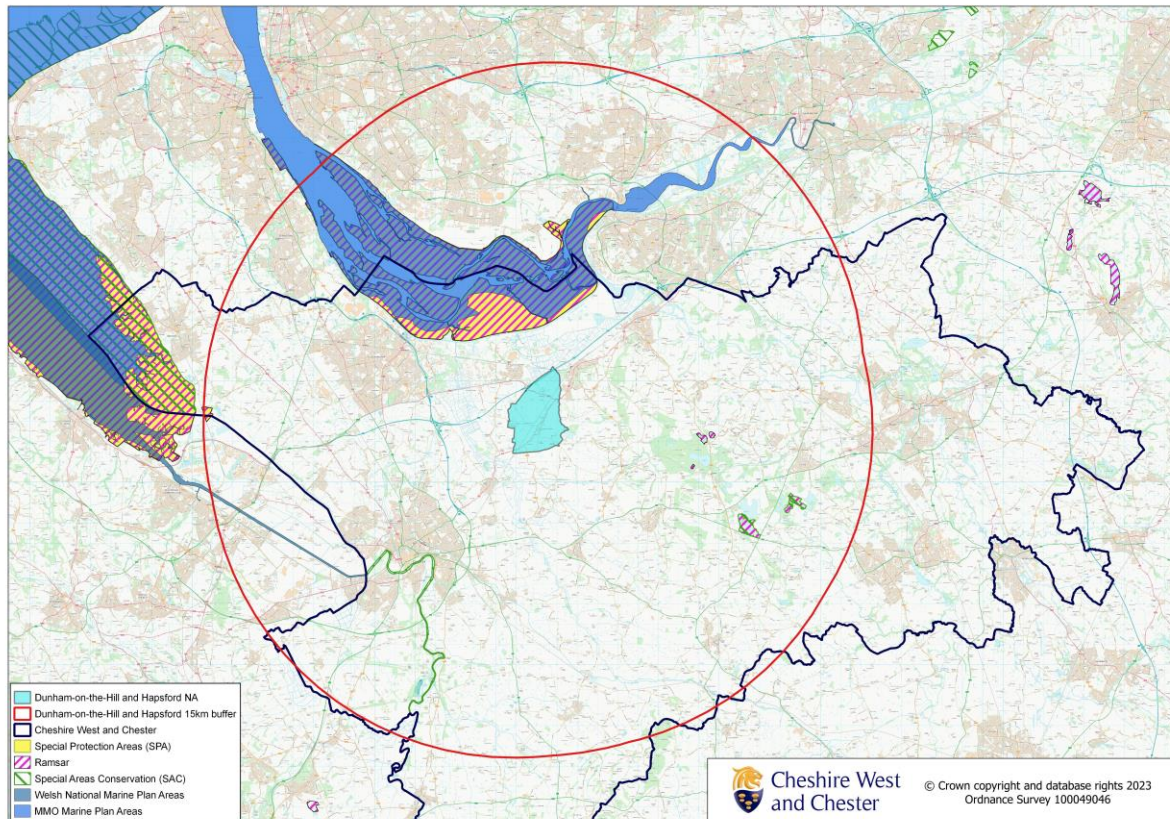
The Dee Estuary SAC, SPA and Ramsar also falls within the 15km radius of the Dunham on the Hill and Hapsford Neighbourhood Area. However, it is a significant distance from the Neighbourhood Area and is unlikely to be directly affected by the policies in the plan. Indirect effects via air quality, abstraction and disturbance are also unlikely due to the distance and the small scale of the area, the anticipated small scale of any developments (due to Green Belt restrictions as well as the policies) and the lack of pathways of impact.

Appendix 5 identifies whether there could be potential impacts arising from the policies in the Neighbourhood Plan, on the European protected site and their reasons for designation.

The conservation objectives of the European sites will be taken into account. These include maintaining or restoring:

- The extent and distribution of qualifying natural habitats and habitats of qualifying species
- The structure and function (including typical species) of qualifying natural habitats
- The structure and function of the habitats of qualifying species
- The supporting processes on which qualifying natural habitats and the habitats of qualifying species rely
- The populations of qualifying species
- The distribution of qualifying species within the site.

The HRA undertaken for the Local Plan (Part One) and (Part Two) forms part of the baseline for the HRA screening assessment of the Dunham on the Hill and Hapsford Neighbourhood Plan. The potential effects of the Neighbourhood Plan over and above those already assessed for the Local Plan have been considered. The Local Plan (Part One) was identified through the HRA process, as not leading to a Likely Significant Effect on European Sites. The HRA of the Local Plan (Part Two) concluded that, in the context of the over-arching strategic policies contained within the Local Plan (Part One) comprises a sufficient policy framework to enable the subsequent delivery of necessary measures that would avoid or adequately mitigate adverse effects on internationally designated sites and thus enable a conclusion of no adverse effect on integrity.



The European sites are also subject to certain pressures that are outside the scope of the Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plans and therefore have not been included in the table above. Table 1 below identifies the potential pressures (which may be relevant to one or several of the European sites) and explains why it is not considered relevant to the HRA of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Table 1: Potential pressures outside the scope of the HRA

<b>Pressure</b>	<b>Reasons outside scope of this HRA</b>
Disturbance of sediment releasing legacy heavy metal pollution that is bound into the sediment.	The policies within the Neighbourhood Plan relate to land-based uses and operations, which will not disturb sediment within European sites.
Pollution via commercial shipping by chemical or noise pollution and dumping of litter at sea	The policies within the Neighbourhood Plan will not have a significant impact on commercial shipping.
Navigational / aggregate dredging resulting in physical loss and alteration of coastal processes or damage of marine benthic habitat	The policies within the Neighbourhood Plan will not have a significant impact on navigational or aggregate dredging.
Overfishing of particular species	Fishing levels are not controlled through Neighbourhood Plans.
Overgrazing of ungrazed / little grazed saltmarsh	Grazing levels are not controlled through Neighbourhood Plans.
Damage of marine benthic habitat directly from fishing methods	Commercial fishing methods and levels are not controlled through Neighbourhood Plans.
The need to manage continuing coastal erosion at protected sites outside CWaC	Neighbourhood Plans within CWaC will not impact on management of coastal erosion in areas outside CWaC.
The need to develop and maintain management practices which sustain the conservation value of the area for protected sites outside CWaC.	Neighbourhood Plans cannot influence management practices for protected sites outside CWaC.
Loss or damage of habitat as a result of increasing off-shore exploration and production activity associated with oil and natural gas on protected sites outside CWaC.	Neighbourhood Plans within CWaC cannot control oil and gas exploration and production activity outside CWaC.
Coastal squeeze from land reclamation and coastal flood defences and drainage in European sites outside CWaC.	Neighbourhood Plans within CWaC will not have a significant impact on coastal squeeze resulting from land reclamation, coastal flood defences and drainage in areas outside CWaC.

## **HRA screening**

The Neighbourhood Plan is not directly connected with, or necessary to the management of a European site for nature conservation and therefore needs to be assessed for Likely Significant Effects.

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 and Part Two) HRA Screening Report and do not have Likely Significant Effects beyond this, then Appropriate Assessment of the Neighbourhood Plan will not be required. The Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate sites for development, which makes it less likely to have significant effects resulting from specific development supported through the Plan.

In March 2022, Natural England issued advice to Local Authorities about the adverse effect that nutrient pollution is having on habitats sites. Nutrient neutrality advice requires that competent authorities under the Habitats Regulations carefully consider the nutrient impacts of any new plans and projects on habitats sites and whether those impacts may have an adverse effect on the integrity of a protected site. Within CWaC, Oakmere and the West Midlands Meres and Mosses are identified as potentially affected sites.

The assessment in Appendix 5 identifies that there are unlikely to be any direct or indirect significant impacts on Oakmere and the West Midlands Meres and Mosses. This is due to the nature of the policies, the distance between the Neighbourhood Area and the protected areas and the anticipated small scale of any future development in the area (due to Green Belt restrictions and other local and national policies). The Plan does not provide land allocations and is within overall levels of growth established through the Local Plan. It is unlikely to create a significant source of water pollution and there is no hydrological connectivity between the protected sites and the Dunham on the Hill and Hapsford Neighbourhood Plan. It is therefore not necessary to apply the nutrient neutrality methodology to the Dunham on the Hill and Hapsford Neighbourhood Plan.

Appendix 5 identifies whether the Neighbourhood Plan alters the policy position for the area. It also assesses whether each policy has a Likely Significant Effect alone. If a Likely Significant Effect is identified, the policy would be taken forward for further investigation through Appropriate Assessment. If there is no Likely Significant Effect when considering the policy alone, the final column assesses whether the policy could have a Likely Significant Effect when combined with the effects of other relevant policies, plans or projects.



## **Conclusion**

The Neighbourhood Plan will not work in isolation and will be used alongside other development plan policies including the Local Plan (Part One) and Local Plan (Part Two) for determining planning applications for new development. The quantum of development to come forward in Dunham on the Hill and Hapsford 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 Dunham on the Hill and Hapsford, although there were other more general potential impacts resulting from the quantum and location of development proposed for the borough as a whole in the Local Plan (Part One and Part Two). However, this was considered within the HRAs for the Local Plan (Part One and Part Two) and the HRAs concluded that there were sufficient mitigation and control measures in the policy framework of the Local Plan (Part One and Part Two) to avoid and mitigate any of these adverse effects on the integrity of a European site in the emerging Local Plan. The policies and proposals within the Neighbourhood Plan will not add significantly to the impacts and will not prevent the mitigation and control measures from avoiding and mitigating the effects sufficiently.

Therefore, it is considered that any proposals coming forward for Dunham on the Hill and Hapsford 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 and Part Two) Habitats Regulation Assessment Report.

The Dunham on the Hill and Hapsford 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, Appropriate Assessment is not considered to be required.

## **4 Marine Plan Screening**

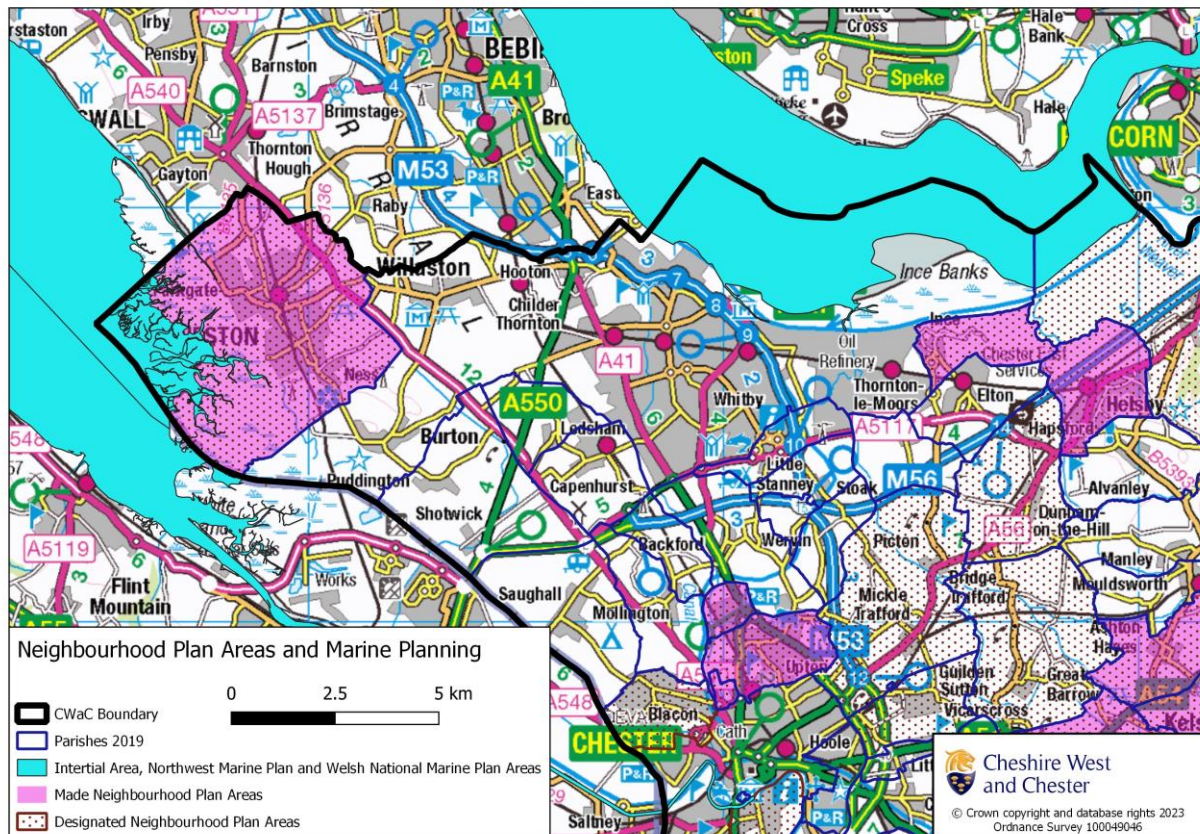
Marine planning ensures that the right activities happen in the right place, at the right time and in the right way in marine areas.

Marine plans provide guidance on things to promote or avoid in certain marine locations. As the marine planning authority for England, the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) is responsible for preparing marine plans in England for inshore and offshore waters.

The Marine Plans that are potentially relevant to neighbourhood planning in Cheshire West and Chester (CWaC) are the draft North-West Marine Plan and the Welsh National Marine Plan. The diagram below shows the areas covered by these Marine Plans. Marine plans apply up to the mean high-water springs mark, which includes the tidal extent of any rivers, as shown on the map.



*Figure showing CWaC boundary in black. The light blue is the area covered by the emerging North-West Marine Plan, and the darker turquoise the area covered by the Welsh National Marine Plan.*



It is a legal requirement for marine plans to be considered in all decisions that affect England's marine area, now and into the future. Section 58(3) of the Marine and Coastal Access Act requires that public authorities must have regard to marine plans when taking any decisions which relate to the exercise of any function capable of affecting the UK marine area. This can include decision making relating to Neighbourhood Plans.

The policies set out in marine plans apply only in their area (i.e. up to the mean high-water springs mark – which includes the tidal extent of any rivers), but if a proposed activity may affect the plan area, this should be acknowledged and considered.

There are not statutory requirements or guidelines for the screening of Neighbourhood Plans to assess likelihood of impacts on the marine plan or marine area. To do this we undertake a three-stage process, with the first stage to assess the distance of the Neighbourhood Plan area from the marine area.

## Stage 1

If a Neighbourhood Plan extends into the marine plan area, it will definitely be screened in. If a Neighbourhood Plan is within 1km of a marine plan area it should proceed to the next stage, but it is likely that it will need to be screened in. As the distance from mean high-water springs mark increases, the likelihood of being screened in reduces, however further assessment is required at the next stage.

Dunham on the Hill and Hapsford Neighbourhood Plan is approximately 3.7 km from the mean high-water springs mark for the North-West Marine Plan and 10 km from

the mean high-water springs mark for the Welsh National Marine Plan. There are some drains and other water courses in the Dunham on the Hill and Hapsford area that drain towards and into the Manchester Ship Canal and therefore also drain into the Mersey Estuary. As this is part of the North-West Marine Plan area, this Marine Plan has been screened in. It is a significant distance to the North-West Marine Plan area, but potential impacts are investigated further below. The Welsh Marine Plan has been screened out due to the distance and the fact that there are no major watercourses that drain from the Dunham on the Hill and Hapsford area into the Marine Plan area.

## **Stage 2**

The second stage is to assess whether the plan includes proposed allocations and if so, whether these allocations have the potential to impact on the marine plan area. The potential for impacts will depend upon distance from the marine plan area, potential pathways of impact and scale and nature of the proposed allocation.

There are no allocations within the Dunham on the Hill and Hapsford Neighbourhood Plan, so the assessment moves to stage 3.

## **Stage 3**

The final stage is to assess whether the proposed policies have the potential to impact on the marine plan area.

The policies have been checked against the key policies in the marine plan using the [Explore Marine Plans](#) tool. When the tool was used, only the 'land' policies were relevant, which indicates no direct relationship with the marine plan area. It is possible that there may be indirect impacts via watercourses. As such, further assessment has been undertaken in Appendix 6.

All North-West Marine Plan policies will need to be considered. However, the nature of the Dunham on the Hill and Hapsford area and the distance to the Marine Plan area means that the key North-West Marine Plan policies that are likely to be most relevant are:

- NW-WQ-1 – Proposals that protect, enhance and restore water quality will be supported. Proposals that cause deterioration of water quality must demonstrate that they will avoid or minimise deterioration.
- NW-BIO-1 – Proposals that enhance the distribution of priority habitats and priority species will be supported.
- NW-BIO-2 – Proposals that enhance or facilitate native species or habitat adaptation or connectivity, or native species migration, will be supported.

## **Conclusion**

The Dunham on the Hill and Hapsford Neighbourhood Plan is unlikely to impact significantly on the North-West Marine Plan or Welsh Marine Plan. The Dunham on the Hill Neighbourhood Plan has the potential to have a positive impact on the North-West marine plan in terms of flood risk, runoff and water pollution, through policies

DHH 1 Local Green Spaces, DHH 2 Incidental Open Spaces of Community Value, DHH 3 wildlife and biodiversity, DHH 4 Dunham and Hapsford design code and DHH 9 sustainable drainage systems and flood mitigation. Policy DHH 7 land at the former Wheatsheaf public house when viewed individually, would have the potential for negative impacts on water, but when the Neighbourhood Plan is used and viewed as a whole this would be prevented by the requirements in other policies, particularly DHH 9.

The Neighbourhood Plan group will need to consider the impacts of the Neighbourhood Plan on the North-West Marine Plan and should specifically consider the impacts of those policies and allocations that have been screened in. The impact of the Neighbourhood Plan will also need to be considered as a whole.

The Local Planning Authority will inform the neighbourhood plan group of the outcome of the screening assessment and identify additional work required.

## Appendix 1: SEA Screening - Overview of policies and identified effects of the Dunham on the Hill and Hapsford Neighbourhood Plan.

Policy reference	Summary of policy	Identified potential effects of policy (taking into account SEA topics of biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage and landscape).	Relationship to Local Plan (Part One) Strategic Policies and Local Plan (Part Two) Land Allocations and Detailed Policies
<b>DHH 1 – Local Green Spaces</b>	Lists 6 Local Green Spaces and identifies that proposals for inappropriate development on land within a LGS will only be supported in very special circumstances.	Protecting landscape and townscape. Protecting local character. Population and human health. Protection and enhancement of biodiversity, flora and fauna. Climatic factors. Water. Soil. Air quality.	Local Plan (Part One) Strategic Policies:  - STRAT 9 – Greenbelt and Countryside  - SOC6 – Open space, sport and recreation  - SOC 5 – Health and wellbeing  - ENV 2 - Landscape  Local Plan (Part Two) Land Allocations and Detailed Policies:  - R 1 – Development in the rural area  - DM 35 - Open space and new development  - DM 36 - Provision for sport and recreation
<b>DHH 2 – Incidental Open Spaces of Community Value</b>	Identifies 5 Incidental Open Spaces of Community Value. Proposals for development within an Incidental Open Space of Community Value will only be supported where it preserves and where possible enhances the contribution to public amenity and community wellbeing and where it retains the openness of the space.	Protecting landscape and townscape. Protecting local character. Population and human health. Protection and enhancement of biodiversity, flora and fauna. Climatic factors. Water. Soil. Air quality.	Local Plan (Part One) Strategic Policies:  - STRAT 9 – Greenbelt and Countryside  - SOC6 – Open space, sport and recreation  - SOC 5 – Health and wellbeing  - ENV 2 - Landscape  Local Plan (Part Two) Land Allocations and Detailed Policies:

			<p>Policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- R 1 – Development in the rural area</li> <li>- DM 35 - Open space and new development</li> <li>- DM 36 - Provision for sport and recreation</li> </ul>
<b>DHH 3 – Wildlife and biodiversity</b>	<p>Resists development within 15 metres of the boundaries of wildlife corridors. Identifies that development adjacent to high distinctiveness habitats or adjoining the 15 metre buffer of a wildlife corridor should avoid or minimise harmful impacts on wildlife and where this is not feasible, demonstrate substantial mitigation.</p> <p>Requires that proposals are supported by a proportionate drainage strategy and if not, the scheme will be resisted.</p>	<p>Protecting landscape and townscape. Protection and enhancement of biodiversity, flora and fauna. Climatic factors. Water. Soil. Air quality.</p>	<p>Local Plan (Part One) Strategic Policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ENV 3 Green infrastructure</li> <li>- ENV 4 Biodiversity and geodiversity</li> </ul> <p>Local Plan (Part Two) Land Allocations and Detailed Policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- DM 44 - Protecting and enhancing the natural environment</li> <li>- DM 43 – Water quality, supply and treatment</li> </ul>
<b>DHH 4 – Dunham and Hapsford Design Code</b>	<p>Proposals must have regard to the design guidance and must comply with the design coding of the Design Guide and Code.</p>	<p>Protecting landscape and townscape. Cultural heritage. Protecting local character.</p>	<p>Local Plan (Part One) Strategic Policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ENV 2 - Landscape</li> <li>- ENV6 – High quality design and sustainable construction</li> <li>- STRAT 9 – Greenbelt and countryside</li> </ul> <p>Local Plan (Part Two) Land Allocations and Detailed Policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- DM3 – Design, character and visual amenity</li> <li>- DM4 – Sustainable construction</li> </ul>
<b>DHH 5 – Hapsford Area of Special Character</b>	<p>Defines the Hapsford Area of Special Character, which encompasses the historic core of the settlement. Identifies that development proposals in</p>	<p>Protecting landscape and townscape. Cultural heritage. Protecting local character.</p>	<p>Local Plan (Part One) Strategic Policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- STRAT 1 – Sustainable development</li> </ul>



	the Area of Special Character should safeguard or enhance both designated and non-designated heritage assets and the character and setting of the area. Development is required to respect and respond positively to designated heritage assets and their settings, avoiding loss or harm to their significance.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- STRAT 9 – Greenbelt and countryside</li> <li>- ENV 5 – Historic environment</li> </ul> <p>Local Plan (Part Two) Land Allocations and Detailed Policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- GBC 2 – Protection of landscape</li> <li>- DM 1 – Development of previously developed land</li> <li>- DM 3 – Design, character and visual amenity</li> <li>- DM 48 – Non-designated heritage assets</li> </ul>
<b>DHH 6 – Local Heritage Assets</b>	Identifies Local Heritage Assets based on architectural and historic value. Development proposals that preserve and enhance the significance of a Local Heritage Asset will be supported. Development that would result in harm to or loss of a Local Heritage Asset will only be permitted where the benefits outweigh the harm, having regard to the scale of the harm and the significance of the asset.	Protecting landscape and townscape. Cultural heritage. Protecting local character.	<p>Local Plan (Part One) Strategic Policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- STRAT 1 – Sustainable development</li> <li>- ENV 5 – Historic environment</li> </ul> <p>Local Plan (Part Two) Land Allocations and Detailed Policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- DM 48 – Non-designated heritage assets</li> </ul>
<b>DHH 7 – Housing development: site of the former Wheatsheaf public house</b>	Sets out criteria for proposals for the redevelopment of the land at the former Wheatsheaf public house. The criteria relate to: distance from the Church of St Luke; vehicular access; architectural style and building materials; retention of an existing permissive path; style and scale of buildings if housing is proposed.	Protecting landscape and townscape. Protecting local character. Population and human health. Protection and enhancement of biodiversity, flora and fauna. Climatic factors.	<p>Local Plan (Part One) Strategic Policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- STRAT 1 – Sustainable development</li> <li>- STRAT 9 – Greenbelt and countryside</li> <li>- STRAT 10 – Transport and accessibility</li> <li>- STRAT 11 - Infrastructure</li> <li>- ENV 2 – Landscape</li> <li>- ENV3 – Green infrastructure</li> <li>- ENV 4 – Biodiversity and geodiversity</li> </ul>

			<p>- ENV6 – High quality design and sustainable construction.</p> <p>Local Plan (Part Two) Land allocations and Detailed Policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- R 1 – Development in the rural area</li> <li>- GBC 2 – Protection of landscape</li> <li>- T 5 – Parking and access</li> <li>- DM 1 – Development of previously developed land</li> <li>- DM3 – Design, character and visual amenity</li> <li>- DM4 – Sustainable construction</li> </ul>
<b>DHH 8 – Protecting community facilities and assets</b>	Identifies specific community facilities and states that proposals that retain or enhance the provision, quality and accessibility of these uses will be supported. It identifies that development proposals for new community facilities or services should be: in locations within or adjoining the built-up areas of Dunham on the Hill or Hapsford; accessible to the community by walking and cycling; of an appropriate scale so as not to undermine the essential openness of the Green Belt; compatible with existing nearby land uses and not result in unacceptable amenity impacts to nearby residents; and where possible, a flexible design to enable multiple uses.	Population and human health.	<p>Local Plan (Part One) Strategic Policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- STRAT 11 – Infrastructure</li> <li>- SOC 5 – Health and well-being</li> <li>- SOC 6 – Open space, sport and recreation</li> </ul> <p>Local Plan (Part Two) Land Allocations and Detailed Policies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- DM 2 – Impact on residential amenity</li> <li>- DM 39 – Culture and community facilities</li> </ul>
<b>DHH 9 – Sustainable urban drainage and flood mitigation</b>	Identifies that proposals that include sustainable urban drainage features will be supported and such features should be multi-functional where possible. The use of ponds, swales and rainwater harvesting is encouraged. The policy requires hardstanding to be constructed of permeable materials and to be limited in order to maintain the rural character and appearance of the area.	<p>Protecting landscape and townscape.</p> <p>Protecting local character.</p> <p>Population and human health.</p> <p>Protection and enhancement of biodiversity, flora and fauna.</p> <p>Climatic factors.</p> <p>Water.</p>	<p>Local Plan (Part One) Strategic Policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ENV 1 – Flood risk and water management</li> </ul> <p>Local Plan (Part Two) Land Allocations and Detailed Policies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- DM 41 – Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDs)</li> </ul>

<b>DHH 10 – Renewable energy generation</b>	<p>Supports proposals for renewable energy generation, provided that: they are of a scale and type where landscape sensitivity has been identified as being low/moderate or moderate and the impacts on key landscape characteristics are considered to be acceptable; developers demonstrate how adverse impacts on landscape would be mitigated; and there would be no unacceptable harm to the historic environment, heritage assets and their setting.</p>	<p>Protecting landscape and townscape. Climatic factors. Supporting the economy (no direct SEA topic).</p>	<p>Local Plan (Part One) Strategic Policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- ENV 6 - High quality design and sustainable construction</li> <li>- ENV 7 - Alternative energy supplies</li> </ul> <p>Local Plan (Part Two) Land allocations and Detailed Policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- DM 53 - Energy generation, storage and district heat networks</li> </ul>
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## **Appendix 2: SEA Screening – Assessment of significant environmental effects of the Dunham on the Hill and Hapsford Neighbourhood Plan**

<b>SEA Directive</b>	<b>Characteristics of the plan</b>	<b>Significant environmental effect?</b>
<b>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</b>	<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 Dunham on the Hill and Hapsford 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 Dunham on the Hill and Hapsford Neighbourhood Plan will not impact on the strategic location, nature, size and operating conditions of new development over and above that set by the adopted Local Plan for the borough.</p> <p>The Neighbourhood Plan policies will work alongside the strategic policies in the development plan; other development management measures and environmental protection legislation.</p>	No
<b>The degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy</b>	The Neighbourhood Plan 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 or lead to the development of further plans below it.	No
<b>The relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development</b>	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 National Planning Policy Framework and the policies in the adopted Local Plan 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.	No
<b>Environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme</b>	The Sustainability Appraisal scoping reports for the Local Plan (Part One and Part Two) provide a comprehensive overview of the issues in Cheshire West and Chester. There are no specific additional	No

	<p>environmental problems identified for the Dunham on the Hill and Hapsford area.</p> <p>Some of the environmental issues and problems for Dunham on the Hill and Hapsford include the need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protect Green Belt, the countryside, wildlife, biodiversity and local green spaces.</li> <li>• Achieve high quality design in new developments.</li> <li>• Safeguard and enhance local heritage assets and safeguard and enhance local character, particularly in the Hapsford Area of Special Character.</li> <li>• Redevelop the site of the former Wheatsheaf public house in a way which meets national and local policies and protects and enhances local character.</li> <li>• Protect and provide community facilities and assets.</li> <li>• Provide sustainable urban drainage and flood mitigation.</li> <li>• Enable renewable energy generation in acceptable locations and providing benefits to the local community.</li> </ul> <p>The Neighbourhood Plan will seek to address these issues.</p>	
<p><b>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)</b></p>	<p>The Neighbourhood Development 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 2 of this document.</p>	<p>No</p>

### Appendix 3: SEA Screening – Characteristics of the plan's effects and of the area likely to be affected

Identified effects of the proposed policies	Probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects	Cumulative nature of the effects	Trans-boundary nature of the effects <sup>1</sup>	Risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents)	Magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)	Value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to the effect on special natural characteristics or cultural heritage	Value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to the effect on environmental quality standards or limit values	Value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to the effect on intensity of land-use	Effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status	Significant environmental effect?
Protecting landscape and townscape.	High probability as policies support the protection of landscape and townscape character. However, the Green Belt designation already prevents certain development. Long term, over the Plan period.	Potential small scale positive cumulative effect.	None	None	Local small-scale impact at the wider than neighbourhood level – as would impact neighbourhood area and views from surrounding areas.	None – policies aim to protect and enhance landscape and townscape.	No relevant quality standards or limit values.	Minor impact only as Green Belt designation already restricts intensity of land use.	None identified.	No

<sup>1</sup> The assessment here has considered whether the effect of the policy goes beyond the UK and impacts upon other EU territories. Given scale and nature of Neighbourhood Plan the effects are not considered to be transboundary.

Cultural heritage	High probability as policies support the protection of the Hapsford Special Character Area and local heritage assets. Long term, over the Plan period.	Potential small-scale positive cumulative effect.	None	None	Local small-scale impact at the neighbourhood level.	None – policies aim to protect the specific local cultural heritage areas and assets.	No relevant quality standards or limit values.	None	None identified.	No
Protecting local character.	High probability as policies support the protection of local character. However, the Green Belt designation already prevents certain development. Long term, over the Plan period.	Potential small-scale positive cumulative effect.	None	None	Local small-scale impact at the wider than neighbourhood level – as would impact neighbourhood area and views from surrounding areas.	None – policies aim to protect and enhance local character.	No relevant quality standards or limit values.	Minor impact only as Green Belt designation already restricts intensity of land use.	None identified.	No



Population and human health.	Medium probability as policies may impact on housing delivery and human health through walking, cycling and outdoor recreation. Medium term.	Potential small-scale positive cumulative effect on health and potential mixed cumulative effects on housing delivery as promoting housing on one specific site, but restrictions relating to heritage and biodiversity may reduce housing opportunities.	None	None	Local small-scale impact at the neighbourhood level.	None.	No relevant quality standards or limit values.	Minor impact only as Green Belt designation already restricts intensity of land use.	None identified.	No
Protection and enhancement of biodiversity, flora and fauna.	Medium probability as policies refer to biodiversity requirements in very specific locations within the neighbourhood area. Long term, over the plan period.	Potential small-scale positive cumulative effect.	None	None	Local small-scale impact at the wider than neighbourhood level, as could connect to neighbouring biodiversity corridors.	None – policies aim to protect and enhance biodiversity.	No relevant quality standards or limit values.	Minor impact only as Green Belt designation already restricts intensity of land use.	None identified.	No

Climatic factors.	Medium probably as policies would impact on any renewable energy proposals in the area. Short to medium term as renewable energy schemes are temporary installations.	Potential small-scale mixed cumulative effect as policies promote protection of planting / green spaces / biodiversity, but could limit renewable energy developments.	None	None	Local small-scale impact at the neighbourhood level.		No relevant quality standards or limit values.	Minor impact only as Green Belt designation already restricts intensity of land use.	None identified.	No
Water.	High probability as policies seek to promote sustainable drainage systems and prevent water quality impact on biodiversity. Medium to long term.	Potential small-scale positive cumulative effect.	None	None	Local small-scale impact at the wider than neighbourhood level, as could reduce runoff and water quality issues in neighbouring areas as well as within the parish.	None – policies aim to protect water quality and reduce the risk of flooding.	No relevant quality standards or limit values.	Minor impact only as Green Belt designation already restricts intensity of land use.	None identified.	No
Soil.	Low probability as no specific policies relating to soil. Some potential indirect impacts, but levels of development likely to be low. Medium to long term.	Potential small-scale positive cumulative effect.	None	None	Local small-scale impact at the neighbourhood level.	None.	No relevant quality standards or limit values.	None.	None identified.	No

Air quality.	Medium probably as policies would impact on any renewable energy proposals in the area. Short to medium term as renewable energy schemes are temporary installations.	Potential small-scale mixed cumulative effect as policies promote protection of planting / green spaces / biodiversity, but could limit renewable energy developments.	None	None	Local small-scale impact at the neighbourhood level.	None.	No relevant quality standards or limit values.	Minor impact only as Green Belt designation already restricts intensity of land use.	None identified.	No
Supporting the economy (no direct SEA topic).	Low probability as no specific policies relating to the economy. Some potential indirect negative impacts due to restrictions on development to protect biodiversity and heritage etc. Some positive effects through support given to new community facilities. Short to medium term.	Potential small-scale mixed cumulative effect.	None	None	Local small-scale impact at the neighbourhood level.	None.	No relevant quality standards or limit values.	Minor impact only as Green Belt designation already restricts intensity of land use.	None identified.	No

#### Appendix 4 – HRA Screening - European sites relevant to the Neighbourhood Plan

European site	Reason for inclusion	Reason for designation	Existing pressures and potential impacts	Relevance to the Neighbourhood Area
Oak Mere SAC	Located within Cheshire West and Chester	Water body with clear water of low nutrient status characteristics of oligotrophic waters and a marginal zone of shoreweed ( <i>Littorella uniflora</i> ). Site supports an assemblage of plants that are rare in the lowlands of England, including bog moss ( <i>Sphagnum</i> spp) and the scarce narrow small-reed ( <i>Calamagrostis stricta</i> ).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Water pollution / enrichment.</li> <li>- Hydrological changes - reduction in size of the mere due to natural lowering of the local water table caused by successive droughts, resulting in threat to shoreline communities from desiccation and invasion by birch and willow.</li> <li>- Atmospheric pollution from nearby roads.</li> </ul>	Potential impacts assessed in Appendix 5.
Midlands Meres and Mosses Ramsar site	Located within Cheshire West and Chester	Series of open water and peatland sites supporting a diverse range of habitats from open water to raised bog. This includes natural dystrophic lakes and ponds and transition mires and quaking bogs with floating bog moss.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Water pollution / enrichment.</li> <li>- Hydrological changes.</li> <li>- Despite number of visitors to some of the meres and mosses, interest features are resilient to recreational pressure and off-track trampling is not a significant issue due to the hazardous nature of the sites away from designated tracks and boardwalks.</li> </ul>	Potential impacts assessed in Appendix 5.
West Midlands Mosses SAC	Located partly within Cheshire West and Chester	Site supports a number of rare plant species associated with wetlands and an assemblage of rare wetland invertebrates.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Due to distance to major roads, changes in local air quality are not an issue requiring investigation.</li> </ul>	Potential impacts assessed in Appendix 5.
River Dee and Bala Lake SAC	Located partly within Cheshire	The site contains the following Annex 1 habitats:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Recreational activities, specifically fishing.</li> </ul>	The River Dee and Bala Lake SAC falls within the 15km radius

	West and Chester. Identified as a source of potable water for Cheshire West and Chester and also the receiving watercourse for wastewater treatment works discharge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Water courses of plain to montane levels with the Renunculon fluitantis and Callitricho-Batrachion vegetation</li> </ul> <p>The site contains the following Annex II species:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Atlantic salmon (<i>Salmo salar</i>)</li> <li>- Floating water-plaintain (<i>Luronium natans</i>)</li> <li>- Sea lamprey (<i>Petromyzon marinus</i>)</li> <li>- Brook lamprey (<i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i>)</li> <li>- Bullhead (<i>Cottus gobio</i>)</li> <li>- Otter (<i>Lutra lutra</i>)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Risk of excessive abstraction resulting in a decrease in freshwater flows and an increase in sediment loading of water such that dehydration of interest features may occur.</li> <li>- Fish entrainment associated with abstraction.</li> <li>- Deterioration in water quality and changes in flow rates due to ex-industrial runoff, discharge of treated sewage effluent and agricultural runoff.</li> <li>- Introduction of invasive species.</li> </ul>	of the Dunham on the Hill and Hapsford Neighbourhood Area. However, it is a significant distance from the Neighbourhood Area and is unlikely to be directly affected by the policies in the plan. Indirect effects via abstraction and water quality / flow are also unlikely due to the distance and the small scale of the area, the anticipated small scale of any developments (due to Green Belt restrictions as well as the policies) and the lack of pathways of impact.
Mersey Estuary SPA and Ramsar	Located partially within Cheshire West and Chester	<p>Designated for over-wintering and on passage birds.</p> <p>Over winter – Golden plover (<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>), Redshank (<i>Tringa tetanus</i>), Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina alpina</i>), Pintail (<i>Anas acuta</i>), Shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>), Eurasian teal (<i>Anas crecca</i>), Wigeon (<i>Anas Penelope</i>), Curlew (<i>Numenius arquata</i>), Grey plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>), Great crested grebe (<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>), Lapwing (<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>).</p> <p>On passage – Ringed plover (<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>).</p> <p>It also contains internationally important populations of Shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>), Black-tailed godwit (<i>Limosa limosa</i>), Redshank (<i>Tringa tetanus</i>), Eurasian teal (<i>Anas crecca</i>), Pintail (<i>Anas acuta</i>) and Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina alpina</i>).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Recreational disturbance from abrasion (boating, anchoring, trampling).</li> <li>- Selective extraction of species (harvesting, bait digging, recreational fishing)</li> <li>- Visual presence of recreational activity.</li> <li>- Disturbance to birds from increased recreational pressure and wildfowling.</li> <li>- Coastal squeeze and loss of supporting habitat.</li> <li>- Deterioration in water quality.</li> <li>- Deterioration in air quality.</li> <li>- Introduction of non-native species.</li> </ul>	Potential impacts assessed in Appendix 5.

		It also has a 5 year peak mean (1998/99-2002/3) of 89,576 waterfowl.		
Dee Estuary SAC, SPA and Ramsar	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.	<p>The site includes the following Annex I habitats:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Water courses of plain to montane levels with the Renunculon Fluitantis and Callitricho-Batrachion vegetation.</li> <li>- Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide.</li> <li>- Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand.</li> <li>- Atlantic salt meadows.</li> </ul> <p>The site contains the following Habitats Directive Annex II habitats and species:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Estuaries</li> <li>- Annual vegetation of drift lines</li> <li>- Vegetated sea cliffs of the Atlantic and Baltic coasts</li> <li>- Embryonic shifting dunes</li> <li>- Shifting dunes along the shoreline with marram</li> <li>- Fixed dunes with herbaceous vegetation</li> <li>- Humid dune slacks</li> <li>- Sea lamprey (<i>Petromyzon marinus</i>)</li> <li>- River lamprey (<i>Lampetra fluviatilis</i>)</li> <li>- Petalwort (<i>Petalophyllum ralfsii</i>)</li> </ul> <p>It also supports:</p> <p>During the breeding season –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Little tern (<i>Sterna albifrons</i>)</li> <li>- Common tern (<i>Sterna hirundo</i>)</li> </ul> <p>On passage –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sandwich tern (<i>Sterna sandvicensis</i>)</li> </ul> <p>Over winter –</p> <p>Bar-tailed godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>)</p> <p>The site also supports populations of European importance of the following</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Recreational disturbance from abrasion from recreational pressures on the upper shore, dredging operations and fisheries.</li> <li>- Disturbance from commercial / industrial developments.</li> <li>- Selective extraction of species (bait digging and shellfishing).</li> <li>- Deterioration in water quality.</li> <li>- Coastal squeeze from land reclamation, coastal flood defences and drainage.</li> <li>- Air quality.</li> <li>- Excessive abstraction resulting in decrease in freshwater flows into the estuary.</li> <li>- Introduction of non-native species.</li> </ul>	The Dee Estuary SAC, SPA and Ramsar falls within the 15km radius of the Dunham on the Hill and Hapsford Neighbourhood Area. However, it is a significant distance from the Neighbourhood Area and is unlikely to be directly affected by the policies in the plan. Indirect effects via air quality, abstraction and disturbance are also unlikely due to the distance and the small scale of the area, the anticipated small scale of any developments (due to Green Belt restrictions as well as the policies) and the lack of pathways of impact.

		<p>migratory species:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Black-tailed godwit (<i>Limosa limosa islandica</i>)</li> <li>- Curlew (<i>Numenius arquata</i>)</li> <li>- Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina alpina</i>)</li> <li>- Grey plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>)</li> <li>- Knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>)</li> <li>- Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>)</li> <li>- Pintail (<i>Anas acuta</i>)</li> <li>- Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>)</li> <li>- Shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>)</li> <li>- Teal (<i>Anas crecca</i>)</li> </ul> <p>The estuary also regularly supports 130,408 individual waterfowl (5 year peak mean 1995-99).</p> <p>It also meets several Ramsar criteria as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Extensive intertidal mud and sand flats with large expanses of saltmarsh towards the head of the estuary.</li> <li>- Supporting an overall bird assemblage of international importance.</li> <li>- Supporting the following species at levels of international importance: Shelduck (<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>), Oystercatcher (<i>Haematopus ostralegus</i>), Curlew (<i>Numenius arquata</i>), Redshank (<i>Tringa totanus</i>), Teal (<i>Anas crecca</i>), Pintail (<i>Anas Acuta</i>), Grey plover (<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>), Knot (<i>Calidris canutus</i>), Dunlin (<i>Calidris alpina alpina</i>), Bar-tailed godwit (<i>Limosa lapponica</i>), Black-tailed godwit (<i>Limosa limosa islandica</i>) and Turnstone (<i>Arenaria interpres</i>).</li> </ul>		
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## Appendix 5: HRA Screening – Screening of Neighbourhood Plan policies for Likely Significant Effect

<b>Policy</b>	<b>Comment</b>	<b>Likely Significant Effect (LSE) alone?</b>	<b>LSE in combination?</b>
<b>DHH 1 – Local Green Spaces</b>	Lists 6 Local Green Spaces and identifies that proposals for inappropriate development on land within a LGS will only be supported in very special circumstances.	Generally positive impacts on water quality, hydrology, runoff and air pollution through protection of green spaces. Greater use of existing green spaces in the Neighbourhood Area would reduce pressure on other sites including coastal areas and meres. The green spaces already have some protection through Green Belt and open space policies in the NPPF and Local Plan. No impact on abstraction or invasive species. No LSE.	No LSE.
<b>DHH 2 – Incidental Open Spaces of Community Value</b>	Identifies 5 Incidental Open Spaces of Community Value. Proposals for development within an Incidental Open Space of Community Value will only be supported where it preserves and where possible enhances the contribution to public amenity and community wellbeing and where it retains the openness of the space.	Generally positive impacts on water quality, hydrology, runoff and air pollution through protection of incidental open spaces. No impact on abstraction or invasive species. No LSE.	No LSE.
<b>DHH 3 – Wildlife and biodiversity</b>	Resists development within 15 metres of the boundaries of wildlife corridors. Identifies that development adjacent to high distinctiveness habitats or adjoining the 15 metre buffer of a wildlife corridor should avoid or minimise harmful impacts on wildlife and where this is not feasible, demonstrate substantial mitigation.  Requires that proposals are supported by a proportionate drainage strategy and if not, the scheme will be resisted.	Generally positive impacts on water quality, hydrology, runoff and air pollution through protection of wildlife corridors. The Local Plan already protects green infrastructure and biodiversity. No impact on abstraction, recreational disturbance or invasive species. No LSE.	No LSE.
<b>DHH 4 – Dunham and Hapsford Design Code</b>	Proposals must have regard to the design guidance and must comply with the design coding of the Design Guide and Code.	No detailed provided yet, but any impacts of design policies are likely to be minor and positive in relation to water quality, hydrology, runoff and air pollution. The Local Plan already requires a high standard of design. Links or pathways to recreational disturbance and invasive species are unlikely. No LSE.	No LSE.
<b>DHH 5 – Hapsford Area of Special Character</b>	Defines the Hapsford Area of Special Character, which encompasses the historic core of the settlement. Identifies that development proposals	No links or pathways with water quality, hydrology, runoff, air pollution, abstraction, recreational disturbance or invasive species. The Local Plan requires that designated and non-designated heritage assets and their settings are safeguarded or enhanced. No LSE.	No LSE.

	in the Area of Special Character should safeguard or enhance both designated and non-designated heritage assets and the character and setting of the area. Development is required to respect and respond positively to designated heritage assets and their settings, avoiding loss or harm to their significance.		
<b>DHH 6 – Local Heritage Assets</b>	Identifies Local Heritage Assets based on architectural and historic value. Development proposals that preserve and enhance the significance of a Local Heritage Asset will be supported. Development that would result in harm to or loss of a Local Heritage Asset will only be permitted where the benefits outweigh the harm, having regard to the scale of the harm and the significance of the asset.	No links or pathways with water quality, hydrology, runoff, air pollution, abstraction, recreational disturbance or invasive species. The Local Plan requires that designated and non-designated heritage assets and their settings are safeguarded or enhanced. No LSE.	No LSE.
<b>DHH 7 – Housing development: site of the former Wheatsheaf public house</b>	Sets out criteria for proposals for the redevelopment of the land at the former Wheatsheaf public house. The criteria relate to: distance from the Church of St Luke; vehicular access; architectural style and building materials; retention of an existing permissive path; style and scale of buildings if housing is proposed.	Criteria-based policy rather than an allocation. Potential for minor impacts on water quality, hydrology, runoff, air pollution abstraction, recreational disturbance and invasive species. However, this is a small site, so any impacts would be very small scale. It is also a significant distance from any of the protected sites and there are limited pathways of impact (road links / water courses), so impacts on the protected sites are unlikely. No LSE.	No LSE.
<b>DHH 8 – Protecting community facilities and assets</b>	Identifies specific community facilities and states that proposals that retain or enhance the provision, quality and accessibility of these uses will be supported. It identifies that development proposals for new community facilities or services should be: in locations within or adjoining the built-up areas of Dunham on the Hill or Hapsford; accessible to the community by walking and cycling; of an appropriate scale so as not to undermine the essential openness of the Green Belt; compatible with existing nearby land uses and not result in unacceptable amenity impacts to nearby residents; and where possible, a flexible design to enable	Potential for both positive and negative impacts on water quality, hydrology, runoff, air pollution and abstraction. 'Green' community facilities could have positive impacts, while the other built facilities could have negative impacts. Could reduce the potential for recreational disturbance due to increased use of local facilities. No impact on invasive species. Any impacts are likely to be small in scale due to the small number of affected sites and the fact that the sites are a significant distance from any of the protected sites and there are limited pathways of impact (road links/water courses). The Local Plan supports proposals for new or improved community facilities and resists the loss of existing community facilities. No LSE.	No LSE.

	multiple uses.		
<b>DHH 9 – Sustainable urban drainage and flood mitigation</b>	Identifies that proposals that include sustainable urban drainage features will be supported and such features should be multi-functional where possible. The use of ponds, swales and rainwater harvesting is encouraged. The policy requires hardstanding to be constructed of permeable materials and to be limited in order to maintain the rural character and appearance of the area.	Potential for positive impacts on water quality, hydrology, runoff and abstraction. Any impacts are likely to be small scale due to the small number and scale of anticipated developments. The sites are also a significant distance from any of the protected sites. No potential impacts on other pathways of impact. The Local Plan requires proposals for major development to incorporate sustainable drainage systems. No LSE.	No LSE.
<b>DHH 10 – Renewable energy generation</b>	Supports proposals for renewable energy generation, provided that: they are of a scale and type where landscape sensitivity has been identified as being low/moderate or moderate and the impacts on key landscape characteristics are considered to be acceptable; developers demonstrate how adverse impacts on landscape would be mitigated; and there would be no unacceptable harm to the historic environment, heritage assets and their setting.	Potential for positive impacts on air quality at a wider geographical scale due to the use of renewable energy rather than alternatives. However, the scale of any renewable energy projects in this area is likely to be relatively limited and the Green Belt designation provides additional restrictions. Potential for small-scale impacts on water quality, hydrology and runoff depending on the design and construction of renewable energy schemes, but this is likely to be considered through the EIA process for individual projects. Renewable energy developments would be a significant distance from any of the protected sites. The Local Plan includes policies relating to wind energy and solar energy and sets criteria for renewable energy developments. No LSE.	No LSE.

## Appendix 6: Marine Plan Screening – Assessment of potential to impact on the North-West Marine Plan area

Policy	Key features of the policy	Potential pathways of impact	Assessment of potential to impact on the marine plan area
<b>DHH 1 – Local Green Spaces</b>	Lists 6 Local Green Spaces and identifies that proposals for inappropriate development on land within a LGS will only be supported in very special circumstances.	Potential indirect positive impacts on flood risk, runoff and water pollution. Potential indirect impacts on biodiversity.	Due to the distance to the marine plan area, the separate by the motorway and Manchester Ship canal and the lack of watercourses directly from the neighbourhood plan area to the marine plan area, the potential to impact the marine plan area is very low and small-scale.
<b>DHH 2 – Incidental Open Spaces of Community Value</b>	Identifies 5 Incidental Open Spaces of Community Value. Proposals for development within an Incidental Open Space of Community Value will only be supported where it preserves and where possible enhances the contribution to public amenity and community wellbeing and where it retains the openness of the space.	Potential indirect positive impacts on flood risk, runoff and water pollution. Potential indirect impacts on biodiversity.	Due to the distance to the marine plan area, the separate by the motorway and Manchester Ship canal and the lack of watercourses directly from the neighbourhood plan area to the marine plan area, the potential to impact the marine plan area is very low and small-scale.
<b>DHH 3 – Wildlife and biodiversity</b>	Resists development within 15 metres of the boundaries of wildlife corridors. Identifies that development adjacent to high distinctiveness habitats or adjoining the 15 metre buffer of a wildlife corridor should avoid or minimise harmful impacts on wildlife and where this is not feasible, demonstrate substantial mitigation.  Requires that proposals are supported by a proportionate drainage strategy and if not, the scheme will be resisted.	Potential indirect positive impacts on flood risk, runoff and water pollution. Potential indirect impacts on biodiversity.	Due to the distance to the marine plan area, the separate by the motorway and Manchester Ship canal and the lack of watercourses directly from the neighbourhood plan area to the marine plan area, the potential to impact the marine plan area is very low and small-scale.
<b>DHH 4 – Dunham and</b>	Proposals must have regard to the design guidance and must	Potential indirect beneficial impacts on flood risk, runoff, water pollution	Due to the distance to the marine plan area, the separate by the motorway and Manchester Ship canal

<b>Hapsford Design Code</b>	comply with the design coding of the Design Guide and Code.	and biodiversity.	and the lack of watercourses directly from the neighbourhood plan area to the marine plan area, the potential to impact the marine plan area is very small.
<b>DHH 5 – Hapsford Area of Special Character</b>	Defines the Hapsford Area of Special Character, which encompasses the historic core of the settlement. Identifies that development proposals in the Area of Special Character should safeguard or enhance both designated and non-designated heritage assets and the character and setting of the area. Development is required to respect and respond positively to designated heritage assets and their settings, avoiding loss or harm to their significance.	None	N/A
<b>DHH 6 – Local Heritage Assets</b>	Identifies Local Heritage Assets based on architectural and historic value. Development proposals that preserve and enhance the significance of a Local Heritage Asset will be supported. Development that would result in harm to or loss of a Local Heritage Asset will only be permitted where the benefits outweigh the harm, having regard to the scale of the harm and the significance of the asset.	None	N/A
<b>DHH 7 – Housing development: site of the former Wheatsheaf public house</b>	Sets out criteria for proposals for the redevelopment of the land at the former Wheatsheaf public house. The criteria relate to: distance from the Church of St Luke; vehicular access; architectural style and building materials; retention of an existing permissive path; style and scale of buildings if housing is proposed.	Potential indirect negative impacts on flood risk, runoff, biodiversity and water pollution through this policy when viewed individually, but the other Neighbourhood Plan policies would ensure that SUDs and other water reduction / protection / flood reduction measures were undertaken.	Due to the distance to the marine plan area, the separate by the motorway and Manchester Ship canal and the lack of watercourses directly from the neighbourhood plan area to the marine plan area, the potential to impact the marine plan area is very small.

<b>DHH 8 – Protecting community facilities and assets</b>	Identifies specific community facilities and states that proposals that retain or enhance the provision, quality and accessibility of these uses will be supported. It identifies that development proposals for new community facilities or services should be: in locations within or adjoining the built-up areas of Dunham on the Hill or Hapsford; accessible to the community by walking and cycling; of an appropriate scale so as not to undermine the essential openness of the Green Belt; compatible with existing nearby land uses and not result in unacceptable amenity impacts to nearby residents; and where possible, a flexible design to enable multiple uses.	None	N/A
<b>DHH 9 – Sustainable urban drainage and flood mitigation</b>	Identifies that proposals that include sustainable urban drainage features will be supported and such features should be multi-functional where possible. The use of ponds, swales and rainwater harvesting is encouraged. The policy requires hardstanding to be constructed of permeable materials and to be limited in order to maintain the rural character and appearance of the area.	Potential indirect positive impacts on flood risk, runoff and water pollution.	Due to the distance to the marine plan area, the separate by the motorway and Manchester Ship canal and the lack of watercourses directly from the neighbourhood plan area to the marine plan area, the potential to impact the marine plan area is very small.
<b>DHH 10 – Renewable energy generation</b>	Supports proposals for renewable energy generation, provided that: they are of a scale and type where landscape sensitivity has been identified as being low/moderate or moderate and the impacts on key landscape characteristics are considered to be acceptable;		Due to the distance to the marine plan area, the separate by the motorway and Manchester Ship canal and the lack of watercourses directly from the neighbourhood plan area to the marine plan area, the potential to impact the marine plan area is very small.

	<p>developers demonstrate how adverse impacts on landscape would be mitigated; and there would be no unacceptable harm to the historic environment, heritage assets and their setting.</p>		
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## Appendix 7: Comments received during consultation on initial screening opinion

Statutory environmental consultee	Date Consulted	Response
Environment Agency	7 December 2023	No response received.
Marine Management Organisation	7 December 2023	No response received.
Historic England	7 December 2023	<p>We write in response to your e-mail of 7 December 2023, seeking a formal screening opinion from Historic England on the need to prepare a SEA of Dunham-on-the-Hill &amp; Hapsford Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>Historic England has produced a document that you might find helpful in providing guidance on the effective assessment of the historic environment in Strategic Environmental Assessments. This can be found at: <a href="#">Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment   Historic England</a></p> <p>For the purposes of this consultation, Historic England will confine the advice given to the question, “Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment?”, in respect to our area of concern, cultural heritage.</p> <p>In the context of the criteria set out in Schedule 1 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 [Annex II of SEA Directive], and on the basis of the information supplied, it is considered that the plan is unlikely to have significant environmental effects upon the historic environment, and so Historic England concur with your conclusion that SEA is not required.</p> <p>We would like to stress that this opinion is based on the information made available in the email dated 7</p>



		<p>December 2023. To avoid any doubt, this decision does not preclude Historic England providing further advice on later stages of the SEA process, should this be required, nor objecting to specific proposals that may subsequently arise (either as a result of this consultation or in later versions of the plan/guidance), where we consider that these would have an adverse effect upon the historic environment. We note that the views of the other statutory consultation bodies should be taken into account before the overall decision on the need for SEA is made.</p> <p>Historic England strongly advises that the conservation and archaeological staff of the Cheshire West &amp; Chester Council and the Cheshire Archaeology Planning Advisory Service are closely involved in the plan's review. They are best placed to advise on: local historic environment issues and priorities, including access to data held in the HER (formerly SMR); how the policies or proposals can be tailored to minimise potential adverse impacts on the historic environment; the nature and design of any required mitigation measures; and opportunities for securing wider benefits for the future conservation and management of historic assets.</p> <p>Thank you for consulting Historic England. We request that you please send us a copy of the determination as required by Reg 11 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.</p>
<b>Natural England</b>	<b>7 December 2023</b>	<p>Thank you for your consultation on the above dated and received by Natural England on 07 December 2023.</p> <p>Natural England is a non-departmental public body. Our statutory purpose is to ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced, and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development.</p> <p><b>Screening Request: Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)</b></p> <p>It is Natural England's advice, on the basis of the material supplied with the consultation, that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• significant effects on statutorily designated nature conservation sites or landscapes are unlikely; and,</li> <li>• significant effects on Habitats sites, either alone or in combination, are unlikely.</li> </ul>

		<p>The proposed neighbourhood plan is unlikely to significantly affect any Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ), Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection areas (SPA), Ramsar wetland or sites in the process of becoming SACs or SPAs ('candidate SACs', 'possible SACs', 'potential SPAs') or a Ramsar wetland. The plan area is unlikely to have a significant effect on a National Park, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty or Heritage Coast, and is unlikely to impact upon the purposes for which these areas are designated or defined.</p> <p>Guidance on the assessment of Neighbourhood Plans, in line with the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 is contained within the Planning Practice Guidance. This identifies three triggers that may require the production of an SEA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a neighbourhood plan allocates sites for development</li> <li>• the neighbourhood area contains sensitive natural or heritage assets that may be affected by the proposals in the plan</li> <li>• the neighbourhood plan may have significant environmental effects that have not already been considered and dealt with through a sustainability appraisal of the Local Plan.</li> </ul> <p>Natural England does not hold information on the location of significant populations of protected species, so is unable to advise whether this plan is likely to affect protected species to such an extent as to require an SEA. Further information is included in Natural England's standing advice on protected species.</p> <p>Furthermore, Natural England does not routinely maintain locally specific data on all environmental assets. The plan may have environmental impacts on priority species and/or habitats, local wildlife sites, soils and best and most versatile agricultural land, or on local landscape character that may be sufficient to warrant an SEA. Information on ancient woodland, ancient and veteran trees is set out in Natural England/Forestry Commission standing advice.</p> <p>We therefore recommend that advice is sought from your ecological, landscape and soils advisers, local record</p>
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		<p>centre, recording society or wildlife body on the local soils, best and most versatile agricultural land, landscape, geodiversity and biodiversity receptors that may be affected by the plan before determining whether a SEA is necessary.</p> <p>Natural England reserves the right to provide further advice on the environmental assessment of the plan. This includes any third party appeal against any screening decision you may make. If a SEA is required, Natural England must be consulted at the scoping and environmental report stages.</p> <p>Please send any new consultations, or further information on this consultation to <a href="mailto:consultations@naturalengland.org.uk">consultations@naturalengland.org.uk</a></p>
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