

# **Strategic Environmental Assessment, Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening Determination**

## **Draft Hartford Neighbourhood Plan**

Prepared on behalf of Hartford Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group by Cheshire  
West and Chester Council

**July 2015**

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May - June 2014

## **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 Hartford 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 (this document) is prepared setting out whether SEA is required and reasons for the decision and this must be made publicly available.

A draft screening opinion was produced in May 2014 based upon the policies set out in the draft Hartford Neighbourhood Plan (April 2014).

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. The statutory environmental bodies were consulted on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2014. Details of the bodies consulted and the responses received are provided in Appendix 2. Responses were received from the Environment Agency, Natural England and English Heritage, who agreed with the outcome of the initial screening exercise, that SEA is not required or confirming that they had no further comments to make in this regard. This final screening determination addresses comments made during the consultation.

Since April 2014, the draft Neighbourhood Plan has been amended to reflect consultation responses and the subsequent Adoption of the Local Plan (Part One) Strategic Policies.

This Strategic Environmental Assessment, Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening Determination has been prepared to incorporate the working amendments made to the draft Neighbourhood Plan and the adoption of the Local Plan (Part One) Strategic Policies since April 2014.

It is not considered that any of the amendments to the policies of the draft Neighbourhood Plan change the assessment and conclusions made at the time of the initial screening opinion in May 2014. All amendments are shown in Table 2 and Appendix 1 of this report.

### **Location and geographical scope of the Hartford Neighbourhood Plan**

The Hartford Neighbourhood Plan covers the Hartford Parish Council area.

Hartford is defined as one of the settlements adjoining Northwich town defined within policy STRAT5 of the Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan (Part One) Strategic Policies. It has a population of 5,556 persons in 2,264 households (2011 Census). The settlement provides key services to the wider community particularly in

education including three primary schools, two secondary schools, two schools for special educational needs, a tertiary college, and 2 independent schools.

The community has identified the following objectives for the Hartford Neighbourhood Plan:

- **Transport and Communications**

- Prevent the traffic congestion on Hartford's highway network becoming more severe.
- Improve public transport
- Improve the pedestrian environment and ability to move around by other means than the private motor vehicle.
- Work towards improving parking at Hartford Station
- Broadband provision to Hartford

- **Local Economy**

- Support sustainable economic growth that will protect and maintain existing businesses in Hartford and attract new inward investment.
- Improve local employment opportunities.

- **Local Facilities**

- This objective is aimed at ensuring that the current levels of services enjoyed in the village are maintained and to extend community and social facilities to all members of Hartford (should the population increase significantly) with additional support to the elderly and people with special needs and seek ways to provide better facilities for young people.
- Ensure that primary, high and special schools and the college are supported and continue to improve and that Hartford is provided with high quality educational facilities for all pupils and students.
- The health and well-being of all residents of Hartford is of prime concern. The promotion of the diversity of services, a safe environment in which to live, addressing health inadequacies and

ensuring that the physical and environment in which people live is important.

- **Built Environment and Local Distinctiveness**

- The green belt, open countryside, heritage assets as well as the conservation area are important features that are valued by the community and need to be protected.
- The aim is to embrace the concept of local distinctiveness that contributes to a sense of place and well being which also ensures the quality of life for the community.

- **Natural Environment**

- The objective is a focus for nature conservation, and the natural environment and the biodiversity that it supports.
- The protection of all local sites of natural beauty, conservation areas, as well as woodlands, green space and areas of significant local environmental value.

- **Housing**

- To develop a vibrant and prosperous neighbourhood by delivering homes that meet the needs of local people and protect and enhance the quality of Hartford's built and local environment.
- Also to insure that any development will not contribute to further traffic congestion on the highway network at peak times of the day and severely impact on the economic, social and environmental aspect of the village.
- Ensure that existing utilities infrastructure is protected and adequate new infrastructure is provided for any development.
- New development should create a sustainable and mixed community.

## **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 Vale Royal Local Plan (adopted 2006) 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) began in Autumn 2014.

The retained and Local Plan policy framework has been taken into account in the 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 adopted Local Plans.

The policies in the Local Plan applicable to Hartford are STRAT1 (Sustainable Development); STRAT2 (Strategic Development); STRAT5 (Northwich); STRAT9 (Green Belt and countryside); STRAT10 (Transport and Accessibility); STRAT11 (Infrastructure); and the suite of economic, social and environmental policies accompanying them.

It was anticipated that the Hartford Neighbourhood Plan would be made following the adoption of the Local Part One and the screening has been carried out on this assumption.

The Local Plan Part One Strategic Policies have been subject to a Sustainability Appraisal incorporating the requirements of the Strategic Assessment Directive and a screening exercise under the Habitats Directive. This determination has considered the effects of the neighbourhood plan in this context. The Sustainability Appraisal of the Local Plan Part One sets out the impacts of the strategic policies that apply to Hartford.

### **Scope of Neighbourhood Plan**

The Hartford Neighbourhood Plan seeks to build upon the policy framework in the Local Plan (Part One).

1. Provide an excellent quality of life in the local area.
2. Promote sustainability and reduce carbon-dependent activities.
3. To deliver housing growth to meet the needs of the local population throughout their lives.
4. To ensure that new development is sustainably located, reflects local character and integrates well with the village
5. To safeguard a comprehensive range of local shops, services and community facilities for all
6. To support a broad and sustainable local economy that provides jobs for residents of Hartford.
7. To ensure that the area is easy and safe to move around in for all modes of transport and that the infrastructure continues to adequately serve the village as it grows
8. To prevent the traffic congestion becoming more severe.
9. To ensure our distinctive built character is protected and enhanced.
10. To protect and maintain the existing rural landscape character.
11. To protect and enhance the natural environment.

The draft plan includes a suite of policies covering the topics of:

- Transport and Communications
- Local Economy
- Local Facilities

- Built Environment and Local Distinctiveness
- Natural Environment
- Housing

These policies work within the strategic framework set by the Local Plan Part One Strategic Policies. The proposed policies in the Hartford Neighbourhood Plan do not propose a level of development outside of the levels proposed in the local plan or significantly alters the planning policy position for the area. It provides local level guidance on how the community wishes future development as set by the Local Plan should come forward.



## **2.0 Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening and Determination**

### **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 Hartford Neighbourhood Plan falls 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.

Section 19(5) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004, as amended) requires that the local planning authority must carry out an appraisal of the sustainability of the proposals in each Local Development Document (neighbourhood plans are considered to be Local Development Documents) and must prepare a report of the findings of the appraisal. This is generally done through a Sustainability Appraisal, which incorporates the requirements of the SEA Directive. As such, this screening process covers both the SEA and Sustainability Appraisal requirements.

### **Screening methodology**

The role of the screening exercise is to determine whether the effect of 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 2 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 these criteria is set out in table 1.

A key part of the Neighbourhood Plan screening has been to consider the context of its preparation and its interaction with the Local Plan (Part One) Strategic Policies for Cheshire West and Chester. In order to inform this assessment a review of the anticipated effects of the draft policies and their relationship to policies at the Local Plan level was carried out. This is set out in appendix 1 to this report. Table 1 sets out the exact nature of the neighbourhood plan policies and how they interact with the Local Plan. Table 1 sets out the findings of the screening. In summary the characteristics of the plan policies mean that:

- Any effects of them are likely to be small scale, local at the neighbourhood level.
- They do not allocate sites for housing or employment development and many of the policies seek to minimise and control the impacts of new development.
- The plan does not set the level of development for the area. The strategic context for the Neighbourhood Plan has been set at the Local Plan level.

## **Conclusion**

In accordance with Part 2(9) of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations Cheshire West and Chester consider that it is unlikely there will be any significant environmental effects arising from the Hartford

Neighbourhood Plan. A Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Hartford Neighbourhood Plan is therefore not required.

However, it is acknowledged that the strategic planning policies for the Hartford area as set out in the Local Plan (Part One) for Cheshire West and Chester may have the potential for significant environmental effects. However, these policies have been subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment as set out in the Sustainability Appraisal of the Local Plan (Part One) and no further assessment is required.

**Table 1: Assessment of the significant environmental effects of the Hartford Neighbourhood Plan**

<b>1. 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 Hartford 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 Hartford 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. It will however provide local level guidance within the strategic framework on the nature of development in the Hartford Neighbourhood Area should be brought forward and the mitigation and enhancement measures required in order to minimise impacts. 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</b>	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	No

<b>plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy.</b>	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.	
<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 under legislation to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. This is one of the basic condition tests. 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 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>What are the environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme?</b>	<p>The Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report for the Local Plan Part One is a comprehensive overview of the issues in Cheshire West and Chester. There are no specific additional environmental problems identified for the Hartford area.</p> <p>Some of the environmental issues and problems for Hartford include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• House prices are above average</li> <li>• Lower income households</li> <li>• An ageing population</li> <li>• Development pressure as a popular place to live</li> </ul>	No

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Affordable housing needs</li> <li>• Need to conserve, preserve and enhance landscape and the historic and cultural environment</li> <li>• High dependence on the use of the car</li> <li>• Provision of local job opportunities and support for the rural businesses and enterprises including agriculture</li> <li>• Continued provision and access to local services and community facilities including shops and healthcare</li> <li>• Access to public transport</li> <li>• Limited access to broadband</li> </ul> <p>The Neighbourhood Plan will seek to address these issues. Our vision for Hartford for the next 15-20 years is to maintain and enhance the quality of life for all sections of the community, ensuring that Hartford retains its village character but maintains its strong links with Northwich Town and its adjoining parishes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To achieve this vision we will protect Hartford's built, historical and natural environment ensuring that our green spaces and widespread mature trees are protected.</li> <li>• We will promote nature conservation and protect areas of special environmental value.</li> <li>• We will allow sustainable economic and social growth and development and will seek to enhance facilities for all local people in order that the community can take further advantage of a full social and active life style.</li> <li>• We will oppose large, major unsustainable housing developments within the Parish .</li> <li>• We will support developments of modest size that maintain and enhance our</li> </ul>	
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	<p>built environment and meet the aims of our vision for future generations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To ensure that our village develops over the coming years we will support the local economy to expand by encouraging business and employment opportunities to people of all ages.</li> <li>• We will constantly monitor transport, safety and service issues to ensure that Hartford remains a safe place to live.</li> <li>• We will take forward the ethos of the Localism Bill in producing our Neighbourhood Plan, embracing the concept of local distinctiveness that contributes to a sense of place and well being for the community and future generations.</li> <li>• We will constantly monitor transport, safety and service issues to ensure that Hartford remains a safe place to live.</li> <li>• We will take forward the ethos of the Localism Bill in producing our Neighbourhood Plan, embracing the concept of local distinctiveness that contributes to a sense of place and well being for the community and future generations.</li> </ul> <p>The focus of the Neighbourhood Plan is about community sustainability and allowing appropriate levels of development into the future which address environmental concerns and not exacerbate them.</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>

2. Characteristics of the plan’s effects and of the area likely to be affected.										
Identified effects of the proposed policies	the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects,	the cumulative nature of the effects	the trans-boundary nature of the effects <sup>1</sup> ,	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.	Significant environmental effect?
<b>Biodiversity loss</b>	Low probability and infrequent as neighbourhood plan policies seek to enhance and protect biodiversity. However, biodiversity loss would have long term impacts and they would be irreversible.	Each new development has the potential weaken ecological networks/systems. Potential cumulative effect with other development in borough.	None	None	Local, small scale at neighbourhood level.	None	None	None	None identified – see HRA screening and no impact on Conservation Area.	No
<b>Enhancement and protection of biodiversity</b>	High probability and would occur as each new development comes forward. Neighbourhood plan policies seek to enhance and protect biodiversity.	Potential to add to biodiversity loss and to weaken ecological networks/systems. Potential cumulative effect with other development in borough and in neighbouring Wales.	None	None	Local, small scale at neighbourhood level.	None	None	None	None identified – see HRA screening and no impact on Conservation Area.	No
<b>Loss of Greenfield land and associated soil impacts</b>	High probability of greenfield loss as a result of policy in Neighbourhood Plan. Effect would be long term and irreversible.	Each new development has the potential to add to greenfield loss. Cumulative effect with other greenfield loss in borough as set by STRAT2 and 9 in the Local Plan.	None	None	Local, small scale at neighbourhood level.	None	None	None	None identified – see HRA screening and no impact on Conservation Area.	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.



Identified effects of the proposed policies	the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects,	the cumulative nature of the effects	the trans-boundary nature of the effects <sup>2</sup> ,	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.	Significant environmental effect?
<b>Loss or harm to cultural heritage and landscape</b>	Low probability as neighbourhood plan and Local Plan policies seek to enhance and protect cultural heritage and landscape. However, loss of cultural heritage and landscape. Effect would be long term and irreversible. Effect would have long term impacts and they would be irreversible.	Each new development has the potential to add harm to overall cultural heritage and landscape. Potential cumulative effect with other development in borough.	None	None	Local, small scale at neighbourhood level.	No	None	None	Potential negative impacts on Conservation Area.	No
<b>Enhancement and protection of cultural and heritage assets</b>	High probability as neighbourhood plan and Local Plan policies seek to enhance and protect cultural heritage and landscape. Effect would be long term and irreversible.	Each new development has the potential to add harm to overall cultural heritage and landscape. Potential cumulative effect with other development in borough.	None	None	Local, small scale at neighbourhood level.	None	None	None	Potential positive impacts on Conservation Area.	No
<b>Environmental impacts of new development e.g. flooding; water consumption; air quality</b>	Low probability as neighbourhood plan and Local Plan policies include measures to ensure the environmental impacts of new development are controlled and mitigated. Impacts would be long term and some would irreversible.	Each new development has the potential to have environmental impacts. Potential cumulative effect with other development in borough in relation to air quality; flood impacts.	None	None	Local, small scale at neighbourhood level.	None	None	None	None identified – see HRA screening and no impact on Conservation Area.	No

<sup>2</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.

Identified effects of the proposed policies	the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects,	the cumulative nature of the effects	the trans-boundary nature of the effects <sup>3</sup> ,	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.	Significant environmental effect?
<b>Benefits to population and human health of new housing and economic development including new homes, employment and amenities.</b>	Probability difficult to assess as depends on proposals coming forward and on the scale and nature of the development. Impacts would be long term and irreversible.	Each new development has the potential to benefit the local population and health but would be dependent on the nature and scale of the development. Cumulatively several developments may be able to realise and bring about community benefits that one development in isolation may not.	None	None	Local, small scale at neighbourhood level.	None	None	None	None identified – see HRA screening and no impact on Conservation Area.	No
<b>Protection and enhancement of community assets and village centre</b>	Probability difficult to assess as depends on proposals coming forward. Impacts could be seen in the short, medium and long term and could be reversed.	New development has potential to strengthen and enhance community assets and the village centre more.	None	None	Local, small scale at neighbourhood level.	None	None	None	Potential positive impact on conservation area.	No

<sup>3</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.

Identified effects of the proposed policies	the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects,	the cumulative nature of the effects	the trans-boundary nature of the effects <sup>4</sup> ,	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.	Significant environmental effect?
Increased traffic	High probability but neighbourhood plan includes policies to manage and mitigate traffic. Impacts could be seen in the short, medium and long term and could be reversed.	Cumulative increases as each development comes forward unless managed and mitigated.	None	None	Local, small scale at neighbourhood level.	None	None	None	None identified – see HRA screening and no impact on Conservation Area.	No
Management and mitigation of traffic impacts	Probability difficult to assess as depends on proposals coming forward. Impacts could be seen in the short, medium and long term and could be reversed.	None as the effect should be to reduce and manage cumulative traffic impact as a result if new development.	None	None	Local, small scale at neighbourhood level.	None	None	None	None identified – see HRA screening and no impact on Conservation Area.	No

<sup>4</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.

### **3.0 Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening and Determination**

#### **Legislative Background**

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended in 2012) transpose 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: '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 Local Plan 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. Each of the sites within 15km of Hartford were assessed at the Local Plan level. This appraisal forms the baseline for the HRA screening assessment of the Hartford Neighbourhood Plan with the prime consideration being the potential effects of the Neighbourhood Plan over and above those of the 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.

### **Context**

There are three areas designated within a 15km buffer from the boundaries of the Hartford Neighbourhood Plan: the Midlands and Mosses Ramsar sites; the Oak Mere Special Area of Conservation (SAC); and the Mersey Estuary Special Protection Area (SPA) and Ramsar.

These are shown in Map 1.

### **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?

The Neighbourhood Plan sets out how new development should come forward in Hartford. It does not set a quantum of development as it looks to support the level of development set out at the Local Plan level. It seeks to set out how new development should be brought forward and whilst still in preparation looks to support the quantum of development set out in the emerging Local Plan for the borough.

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 retained policies of the Vale Royal Local Plan and the Local Plan: Part One Strategic Policies.

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 Vale Royal Local Plan for determining planning applications for new development. The quantum of development to come forward in Hartford in the future will be set by Local Plan policy. The Neighbourhood Plan will guide how this should come forward locally.

Whether the Neighbourhood Plan alters the policy position for the area is set out in table 2 below. The Draft Neighbourhood Plan policies have been renumbered and re-drafted or removed between the April 2014 version which was subject to the initial SEA Screening consultation in May 2014. The detailed changes are set out at Appendix 1 of this report.

<b>Table 2: Screening of policies for altering Local Plan Policy</b>	
<b>Policy</b>	<b>Change in policy position in the Local Plan and policies to be retained? Y/N</b>
TC1	No
TC2	No
TC3	No
TC4	No
TC5 (Deleted in the final draft NDP)	No
TC6 (Deleted in the final draft NDP)	No
LE1	No
LE2	No
LE3	No
LE4	No
LE5( Deleted in the final draft NDP)	No
LF1	No

LF2	No
LF3	No
LF4(Deleted in the final draft NDP)	No
LF5(Deleted in the final draft NDP)	No
LF6 (Deleted in the final draft NDP)	No
BELD1	No
BELD2	No
BELD3	No
BELD4(Deleted in the final draft NDP)	No
BELD5(Deleted in the final draft NDP)	No
NE1	No
NE2	No
NE3	No
NE4	No
NE5	No
NE6(Deleted in the final draft NDP)	No
NE7 (Deleted in the final draft NDP)	No
H1	No
H2	No
H3	No
H4	No
H5 (new policy)	No
H6 (new policy)	Yes. The settlement policy boundary has been amended to incorporate two planning commitments for residential development on the edge of the settlement. This extends the boundary beyond that shown in the retained policies of the Vale Royal Borough Local Plan. However, as the sites included have planning permission and work has started on site, there would not be an additional impact on any Natura 2000 European

	sites above and beyond the position without the Neighbourhood Plan. In any case due to the nature of the development on these sites and the distance from any European Sites, the inclusion of the site within the boundary and the development of the sites will not affect the integrity of any European sites.
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There are no specific issues highlighted in the HRA of the Local Plan in relation to Hartford, 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 Local Plan.

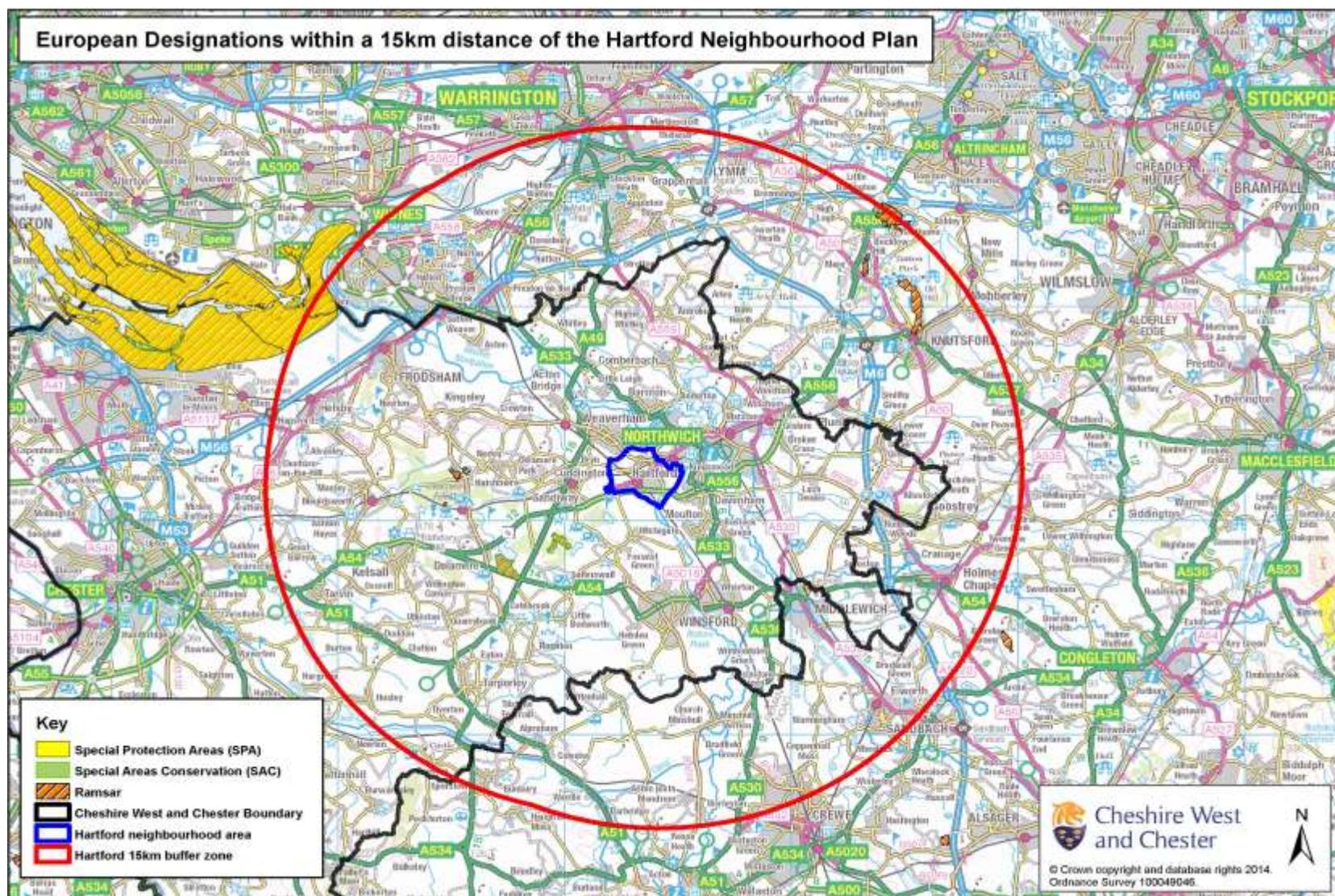
Therefore, it is considered that any proposals coming forward for Hartford in accordance with the Neighbourhood Plan would not result in a likely significant effect on a European site than already identified and assessed through the Local Plan Part One Habitats Regulation Assessment Report. A separate full screening report is not required.

## **Conclusion**

The Screening Determination made by Cheshire West and Chester Council is that The Hartford 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 1- European Designations within a 15km distance of the Hartford Neighbourhood Plan



## Appendix 1: Overview of policies and identified effects of the Hartford Neighbourhood Plan

Some of the Draft Neighbourhood Plan policies have been renumbered, re-drafted, incorporated within other policies or deleted since the April 2014 version which was subject to the initial SEA Screening and consultation in May 2014. There are however no changes to the identified effects arising from these working amendments.

The amended policies are shown in italics underneath the original draft policies which were subject to the SEA Screening in May 2014. The revised policies have been re-assessed and the identified potential effects and relationship to Local Plan policies are shown in italics in the table below:

Policy Number	Policy Wording	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 District Local Plan
TC1	Development will be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Management and mitigation of traffic impacts.</li> <li>• Promotion of sustainable travel</li> </ul>	This policy supports policy STRAT10 in the Local Plan Part One and retained transport policies in the Vale Royal Local Plan.
<b><i>TC1</i></b>	<b><i>Any major development over ten dwellings will need to demonstrate that additional traffic from the development can be accommodated safely and satisfactorily within the existing severely congested highway network.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>Management and mitigation of traffic impacts.</i></b></li> <li>• <b><i>Promotion of sustainable travel</i></b></li> </ul>	<b><i>This policy supports policy STRAT10 in the Local Plan Part One and retained transport policies in the Vale Royal Local Plan.</i></b>
TC2	Hartford Parish Council and CW&C will encourage operators to :- Improve bus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promotion of sustainable travel</li> </ul>	This policy supports policy STRAT10 in the Local Plan Part One and

	services particularly in the evenings and at weekends and also between Hartford and Warrington where there is currently no transport provision.		retained transport policies in the Vale Royal Local Plan.
<b>TC2</b>	<b><i>Developers will be required to ensure that the travel and parking impacts of their proposals are accurately identified, assessed and mitigated. This should be discussed at an early stage with CW&amp;C Highways Officers so that the full implications of the lack of station and village car parking facilities can be addressed. Opportunities to improve public transport will be sought.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>Management and mitigation of traffic impacts.</i></b></li> <li>• <b><i>Promotion of sustainable travel</i></b></li> </ul>	<b><i>This policy supports policy STRAT10 in the Local Plan Part One and retained transport policies in the Vale Royal Local Plan.</i></b>
TC3	Improvements to Hartford station environment and the provision of more car parking spaces will be supported.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Management and mitigation of traffic impacts.</li> <li>• Promotion of sustainable travel</li> </ul>	This policy supports policy STRAT10 in the Local Plan Part One and retained transport policies in the Vale Royal Local Plan.
<b>TC3</b>	<b><i>New development should provide for safe, direct and attractive pedestrian and cycle routes through the developments and into the centre of the village, where these are required by the developer and do not currently exist or are in need of improvement. All new roads must have pavements on both sides.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>Promotion of sustainable travel</i></b></li> </ul>	<b><i>This policy supports policy STRAT10 in the Local Plan Part One and retained transport policies in the Vale Royal Local Plan.</i></b>

TC4	New development will be expected to contribute towards the provision of improved and safe cycle and pedestrian connectivity within the village.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promotion of sustainable travel</li> </ul>	This policy supports policy STRAT10 in the Local Plan Part One and retained transport policies in the Vale Royal Local Plan.
<b>TC4</b>	<b><i>The Parish Council will oversee the preparation and regular updating of a Village Travel Plan for Hartford, which will promote a holistic, joined up strategy to transport and parking. Where applicants are required to produce a Travel Plan to support a planning application, they will be encouraged to work with the Parish Council to contribute to the Hartford Travel Plan, rather than producing a stand-alone Travel Plan</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b><i>Promotion of sustainable travel</i></b></li> </ul>	<b><i>This policy supports policy STRAT10 in the Local Plan Part One and retained transport policies in the Vale Royal Local Plan.</i></b>
TC5	All commercial and educational establishments based in the village will be encouraged to investigate and operate green travel plans.  <b><i>This policy has been incorporated within Policy TC4</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Management and mitigation of traffic impacts.</li> <li>Promotion of sustainable travel</li> </ul>	This policy supports policy STRAT10 in the Local Plan Part One and retained transport policies in the Vale Royal Local Plan.
TC6	The early introduction of “Superfast” broadband to that part of Hartford serviced from the Sandiway telephone exchange will be supported.  <b><i>This policy has been deleted as not a land</i></b>		This policy supports policy STRAT11 in the Local Plan Part One.

	<b><i>use policy. The introduction of Superfast broadband is highlighted as an aspiration of the Neighbourhood Plan within the Transport and Communications section.</i></b>		
LE1	<p>New development must include off street parking facilities to accommodate shoppers in order to support the viability of the local shops.</p> <p>Where possible, any new large development, in the centre of the village, must include off street parking facilities to accommodate shoppers in order to support the viability of the local shops.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Management and mitigation of traffic impacts.</li> <li>• Protection and enhancement of retail and community assets</li> </ul>	This policy supports policies ECON2 and STRAT10 in the Local Plan Part One and retained policies in the Vale Royal Local Plan.
<b><i>LE1</i></b>	<b><i>Where possible, any major new development, in the centre of the village, must include off street parking facilities to accommodate shoppers in order to support the viability of the local shops.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>Management and mitigation of traffic impacts.</i></b></li> <li>• <b><i>Protection and enhancement of retail and community assets</i></b></li> </ul>	<b><i>This policy supports policies ECON2 and STRAT10 in the Local Plan Part One and retained policies in the Vale Royal Local Plan.</i></b>
LE2	The loss of retail (A1) use on the ground floor of existing shops within the village will be resisted.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protection and enhancement of retail and community assets.</li> </ul>	This policy supports policy ECON2 in the Local Plan Part One and retained policies in the Vale Royal Local Plan.
<b><i>LE2</i></b>	<b><i>The loss of retail (A1 and A3) use in the ground floor of existing shops within the village will be resisted to ensure the long term vitality and viability of the village centre and meet the day to day needs of the</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>Protection and enhancement of retail and community assets.</i></b></li> </ul>	<b><i>This policy supports policy ECON2 in the Local Plan Part One and retained policies in the Vale Royal Local Plan.</i></b>



	<b><i>local community.</i></b>		
LE3	<p>The growth and expansion of new and existing business operations within the settlement boundary of the village will be supported.</p> <p>Development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of the development are severe.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New economic development and employment opportunities.</li> <li>• Management and mitigation of traffic impacts.</li> </ul>	This policy supports policies ECON1, ECON2 and STRAT10 in the Local Plan Part One and retained policies in the Vale Royal Local Plan.
<b><i>LE3</i></b>	<b><i>The growth and expansion of new and existing business operations within the settlement boundary of the village will be supported. New business development should respect the character of the area, and ensure that it does not have any adverse impact on traffic and that noise and other issues are minimised.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>New economic development and employment opportunities.</i></b></li> <li>• <b><i>Management and mitigation of traffic impacts.</i></b></li> </ul>	<b><i>This policy supports policies ECON1, ECON2 and STRAT10 in the Local Plan Part One and retained policies in the Vale Royal Local Plan.</i></b>
LE4	Support initiatives with higher education facilities within the village with regard to training and apprenticeships for young people.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New economic development and employment opportunities.</li> </ul>	This policy supports policy ECON1 in the Local Plan Part One and retained policies in the Vale Royal Local Plan.
<b><i>LE4</i></b>	<b><i>If possible, any new commercial or business development will be encouraged to consider local employees and to enter into schemes for new apprenticeships. There are opportunities at Mid Cheshire College available to new developers. This would be supported by Hartford Parish</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>New economic development and employment opportunities.</i></b></li> </ul>	<b><i>This policy supports policy ECON1 in the Local Plan Part One and retained policies in the Vale Royal Local Plan.</i></b>

	<b>Council.</b>		
LE5	Encourage the development of more retail and industrial units within the village.  <b><i>Policy deleted and incorporated within Policy LE3</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protection and enhancement of retail and community assets.</li> <li>• New economic development and employment opportunities.</li> </ul>	This policy supports policies ECON1 and ECON2 in the Local Plan Part One and retained policies in the Vale Royal Local Plan.
LF1	The protection and support to existing facilities within the village.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protection and enhancement of retail and community assets.</li> <li>• Protection and enhancement of existing cultural heritage and landscape.</li> </ul>	This policy supports policies ECON1 and ECON2 in the Local Plan Part One and retained policies in the Vale Royal Local Plan.
LF1	<b><i>Developers will be required to assess and mitigate the impact of significant major new residential developments on existing community facilities that are available in the village, as well as those related to education, health and well-being.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>Protection and enhancement of retail and community assets.</i></b></li> <li>• <b><i>Protection and enhancement of existing cultural heritage and landscape.</i></b></li> </ul>	<b><i>This policy supports policies ECON1, ECON2, SOC5 and STRAT11 in the Local Plan Part One and retained policies in the Vale Royal Local Plan.</i></b>
LF2	The introduction of new community facilities in the village to meet the needs of all residents will be supported.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protection and enhancement of retail and community assets.</li> <li>• Protection and enhancement of existing cultural heritage and landscape.</li> </ul>	This policy supports policies ECON1 and ECON2 in the Local Plan Part One and retained policies in the Vale Royal Local Plan.
LF2	<b><i>Where there would be insufficient capacity within Hartford's educational establishments to accommodate the likely additional pupils arising from new development, developers will be expected</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>Protection and enhancement of community assets and infrastructure</i></b></li> </ul>	<b><i>This policy supports STRAT11 in the Local Plan Part One and retained policies in the Vale Royal Local Plan.</i></b>

	<i>to make appropriate provision to meet this need. This will generally be by means of financial contributions.</i>		
LF3	As a result of the increase in population the developers will be expected to make a financial contribution towards schools.  <b><i>Now incorporated within Policy LF2</i></b>		
<b>LF3</b>	<b><i>Major housing development, which requires open space provision under SOC6 of the adopted Local Plan, will be expected to create new open space on site in accordance with these standards. In the case of major developments, there is a possibility that a financial requirement will be required for further sport and social provisions and future maintenance.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>Benefits to population and human health.</i></b></li> <li>• <b><i>Continued and enhanced open space provision for local population.</i></b></li> </ul>	<b><i>This policy supports policy SOC6 in the Local Plan Part One and retained policies in the Vale Royal Local Plan.</i></b>
LF4	In order to meet the health and well-being of the residents of Hartford proposals will be supported for a facility for a doctor's surgery  <b><i>Policy deleted and incorporated within Policy LF1</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Benefits to population and human health.</li> </ul>	This policy supports policy SOC5 in the Local Plan Part One.
LF5	Improved links to other healthcare facilities.  <b><i>Policy deleted and incorporated within Policy LF1 and the objectives of the Local</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Benefits to population and human health.</li> </ul>	This policy supports policy SOC5 in the Local Plan Part One.



	<b><i>Facilities Chapter which addresses the provision of health care facilities.</i></b>		
LF6	High quality greenspace on all new development for community use.  <b><i>Policy deleted and incorporated within Policy LF3</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protection and enhancement of existing cultural heritage and landscape.</li> <li>• Continued and enhanced open space provision for local population.</li> <li>• Protection and enhancement of biodiversity.</li> </ul>	This policy supports policy ENV4 and SOC6 in the Local Plan Part One and retained policies in the Vale Royal Local Plan.
BELD1	All development proposals in Hartford should be a high standard of design, be in keeping with the character and scale of surrounding development and wherever possible be on previously developed land.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protection and enhancement of existing cultural heritage and landscape.</li> </ul>	This policy supports policy ENV6 in the Local Plan Part One and retained policies in the Vale Royal Local Plan.
<b><i>BELD1</i></b>	<b><i>All development proposals in Hartford must be of a high standard of design and construction, be in keeping with the character and scale of surrounding development and wherever possible be on previously developed land.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>Protection and enhancement of existing cultural heritage and landscape.</i></b></li> </ul>	<b><i>This policy supports policy ENV6 in the Local Plan Part One and retained policies in the Vale Royal Local Plan.</i></b>
BELD2	All important features of the village that have been identified that contribute to its character should be protected.  <i>Policy now incorporated within Policy BELD3</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protection and enhancement of existing cultural heritage and landscape.</li> <li>• Protection and enhancement of biodiversity.</li> </ul>	This policy supports policies ENV4, ENV5 and SOC6 in the Local Plan Part One and retained policies in the Vale Royal Local Plan.

<b>BELD2</b>	<b><i>All development must preserve the important views into and out of the village as defined on the map appended to the Neighbourhood Plan.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>Protection and enhancement of existing cultural heritage and landscape.</i></b></li> </ul>	<b><i>This policy supports policy ENV2 in the Local Plan Part One and retained policies in the Vale Royal Local Plan.</i></b>
BELD3	<p>All signage in the village should be kept to a minimum. Advertisement proposals associated with the shops should enhance the character of the area.</p> <p><b><i>Policy now incorporated within Policy BELD1</i></b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protection and enhancement of existing cultural heritage and landscape.</li> </ul>	This policy supports policies ENV5 and ENV6 in the Local Plan Part One and retained policies in the Vale Royal Local Plan.
<b>BELD3</b>	<b><i>Development should safeguard or enhance both designated and non-designated heritage assets and the character and setting of areas of acknowledged significance in the Parish. Development must not result in any loss of community value or local distinctiveness and must also comply with ENV5 of the adopted Local Plan that applies to such sites.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>Protection and enhancement of existing cultural heritage and landscape.</i></b></li> </ul>	<b><i>This policy supports policies ENV5 and ENV6 in the Local Plan Part One and retained policies in the Vale Royal Local Plan.</i></b>
BELD4	<p>All development should preserve the important views defined in the supporting evidence into and out of the village.</p> <p><b><i>Policy now incorporated within Policy BELD2</i></b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protection and enhancement of existing cultural heritage and landscape.</li> </ul>	This policy supports policy ENV2 in the Local Plan Part One and retained policies in the Vale Royal Local Plan.

BELD5	Any development which affects Heritage Assets or its settings within Hartford must comply with legal regulations that apply to such sites.  <b><i>Policy now incorporated within Policy BELD3</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protection and enhancement of existing cultural heritage and landscape.</li> </ul>	This policy supports policy ENV5 in the Local Plan Part One and retained policies in the Vale Royal Local Plan.
NE1	The protection and where possible the enhancement of the designated Areas of Significant Local Environmental Value (ASLEV) of the village.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protection and enhancement of existing cultural heritage and landscape.</li> <li>• Protection and enhancement of biodiversity.</li> </ul>	This policy supports policies ENV2, ENV3, ENV4 and SOC6 in the Local Plan Part One and retained policies in the Vale Royal Local Plan.
<b><i>NE1</i></b>	<b><i>Prevent and protect any development which would adversely impact on the features of the area which warrants its ASLEV designation unless allowed through the provision of STRAT9 of the Local Plan, that restricts development only to that which requires a countryside location.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>Protection and enhancement of existing cultural heritage and landscape.</i></b></li> <li>• <b><i>Protection and enhancement of biodiversity.</i></b></li> </ul>	<b><i>This policy supports policies ENV2, ENV3, ENV4 and SOC6 in the Local Plan Part One and retained policies in the Vale Royal Local Plan.</i></b>
NE2	Protect the green corridors around Hartford to prevent the coalescence of the village with neighbouring settlements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protection and enhancement of existing cultural heritage and landscape.</li> <li>• Protection and enhancement of biodiversity.</li> </ul>	This policy supports policies ENV2, ENV3, ENV4 and SOC6 in the Local Plan Part One and retained policies in the Vale Royal Local Plan.
<b><i>NE2</i></b>	<b><i>Protect the green corridors between Hartford, Weaverham, Cuddington, Whitegate and Kingsmead, from any inappropriate development that would harm</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>Protection and enhancement of existing cultural heritage and landscape.</i></b></li> <li>• <b><i>Protection and enhancement of biodiversity.</i></b></li> </ul>	<b><i>This policy supports policies ENV2, ENV3, ENV4 and SOC6 in the Local Plan Part One and retained policies in the Vale Royal Local Plan.</i></b>

	<b><i>the character of these areas.</i></b>		
NE3	Protect the views across the River Weaver Valley to ensure this natural resource can be made available to not only residents of Hartford but the wider community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protection and enhancement of existing cultural heritage and landscape.</li> <li>• Protection and enhancement of biodiversity.</li> </ul>	This policy supports policies ENV2, ENV3, ENV4 and SOC6 in the Local Plan Part One and retained policies in the Vale Royal Local Plan.
<b>NE3</b>	<b><i>Protect and where possible enhance the designated Local Wildlife Sites, including the Weaver Valley and Marshall's Arm Local Nature Reserve, from the effects of inappropriate development.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>Protection and enhancement of existing cultural heritage and landscape.</i></b></li> <li>• <b><i>Protection and enhancement of biodiversity.</i></b></li> </ul>	<b><i>This policy supports policies ENV2, ENV3, ENV4 and SOC6 in the Local Plan Part One and retained policies in the Vale Royal Local Plan.</i></b>
NE4	Protect and where possible enhance the designated areas of Biological Importance including Marshall's Arm from inappropriate development.  <b><i>Policy now incorporated within Policy NE3</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protection and enhancement of biodiversity.</li> </ul>	This policy supports policy ENV4 in the Local Plan Part One and retained policies in the Vale Royal Local Plan.
<b>NE4</b>	<b><i>Protect trees within the urban setting and rural areas and, if possible, plant or extend woodland for amenity use. Maintain the open green approaches to the village.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>Protection and enhancement of biodiversity.</i></b></li> </ul>	<b><i>This policy supports policy ENV4 in the Local Plan Part One and retained policies in the Vale Royal Local Plan.</i></b>
NE5	Protect trees within the urban setting and rural areas and, if possible plant or extend woodland for amenity use and maintain the open green approaches to the village.  <b><i>Policy now incorporated within Policy NE4</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protection and enhancement of biodiversity.</li> </ul>	This policy supports policy ENV4 in the Local Plan Part One and retained policies in the Vale Royal Local Plan.

<b>NE5</b>	<b><i>Any major development, of more than ten properties or large commercial ventures, must include landscaping proposals which complement and enhance the distinctive character of the village and its surroundings.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>Protection and enhancement of existing cultural heritage and landscape.</i></b></li> <li>• <b><i>Protection and enhancement of biodiversity.</i></b></li> </ul>	<b><i>This policy supports policies ENV2, ENV3 and ENV4 in the Local Plan Part One and retained policies in the Vale Royal Local Plan.</i></b>
NE6	Any new development should include landscaping proposals which compliment and enhance the distinctive character of the village and its surroundings.  <b><i>Policy now incorporated within Policy NE5.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protection and enhancement of existing cultural heritage and landscape.</li> <li>• Protection and enhancement of biodiversity.</li> </ul>	This policy supports policies ENV2, ENV3 and ENV4 in the Local Plan Part One and retained policies in the Vale Royal Local Plan.
NE7	The use and accessibility of the natural environment beyond the settlement boundary by residents of the village and from elsewhere by means other than the private motor vehicle will be encouraged.  <b><i>Policy deleted. Access to the countryside by sustainable means continues to be a community aspiration and objective of the Neighbourhood Plan.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protection and enhancement of biodiversity.</li> <li>• Promotion of sustainable travel.</li> </ul>	This policy supports policies STRAT10, ENV2, ENV3 and ENV4 in the Local Plan Part One and retained policies in the Vale Royal Local Plan.
H1	Development outside the settlement boundary of the parish will be prevented or refused.  <b><i>This policy has been replaced by Policy H6</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Possible biodiversity loss</li> <li>• Benefits to population and human health.</li> <li>• Potential negative environmental impacts of development within settlement boundaries.</li> </ul>	This policy supports policies STRAT2 and STRAT5 in the Local Plan Part One in relation to development that may come forward within Hartford set within the wider context of Northwich.
<b>H1</b>	<b><i>All development should aim to ensure that</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>Possible biodiversity loss</i></b></li> </ul>	<b><i>This policy supports policies</i></b>

	<i>the housing to be provided meets local housing need that has been identified from available local statistics and consultation with the community in association with the independent parish needs survey. This will ensure that development provides an appropriate mix of housing types that responds to local demand, including affordable homes and the provision of a range of accommodation types to meet the long term needs of older people.</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Benefits to population and human health.</i></li> <li>• <i>Potential negative environmental impacts of development within settlement boundaries.</i></li> </ul>	<i>STRAT1, STRAT2 and STRAT5 in the Local Plan Part One in relation to development that may come forward within Hartford set within the wider context of Northwich. It also supports policies SOC1 and SOC3 in the Local Plan Part One.</i>
H2	The development of previously developed land will be positively supported.  <b><i>Policy now incorporated within Policy H3</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Possible biodiversity loss</li> <li>• Benefits to population and human health.</li> <li>• Potential negative environmental impacts of development within settlement boundaries.</li> </ul>	This policy supports policies STRAT1, STRAT2 and STRAT5 in the Local Plan Part One in relation to development that may come forward within Hartford set within the wider context of Northwich.
<b>H2</b>	<b><i>Housing developments within the settlement boundary will be supported on sustainable sites providing they meet the identified housing needs of the community and where the material benefits will outweigh the harm.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>Possible biodiversity loss</i></b></li> <li>• <b><i>Benefits to population and human health.</i></b></li> <li>• <b><i>Potential negative environmental impacts of development within settlement boundaries.</i></b></li> </ul>	<b><i>This policy supports policies STRAT1, STRAT2 and STRAT5 in the Local Plan Part One in relation to development that may come forward within Hartford set within the wider context of Northwich. It also supports policies SOC1 and SOC3 in the Local Plan Part One.</i></b>
H3	Development should be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Management and mitigation of traffic impacts.</li> <li>• Promotion of sustainable travel</li> </ul>	This policy re-iterates and supports policy STRAT10 in the Local Plan Part One and retained transport policies in

	<b><i>Policy now incorporated within Policy H4</i></b>		the Vale Royal Local Plan.
<b>H3</b>	<b><i>The development of previously developed land delivers social, economic and environmental benefits and will be positively supported within the settlement boundary providing it meets the identified needs of the community.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>Possible biodiversity loss</i></b></li> <li>• <b><i>Benefits to population and human health.</i></b></li> <li>• <b><i>Potential negative environmental impacts of development within settlement boundaries.</i></b></li> </ul>	<b><i>This policy supports policies STRAT1, STRAT2 and STRAT5 in the Local Plan Part One in relation to development that may come forward within Hartford set within the wider context of Northwich.</i></b>
H4	<p>Proposals for new housing must demonstrate that with any scheme account has been taken of the current and future needs of the households living in Hartford. Particular consideration must be given to housing for the ageing population and housing for young people.</p> <p><b><i>This policy has been replaced by Policy H1</i></b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Possible biodiversity loss</li> <li>• Benefits to population and human health.</li> <li>• Potential negative environmental impacts of development within settlement boundaries.</li> </ul>	This policy supports policies STRAT1, STRAT2 and STRAT5 in the Local Plan Part One in relation to development that may come forward within Hartford set within the wider context of Northwich. It also supports policies SOC1 and SOC3 in the Local Plan Part One.
<b>H4</b>	<b><i>Development must demonstrate that Hartford's highway system can accommodate any increase in the volume of traffic generated by the development.</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>Management and mitigation of traffic impacts.</i></b></li> <li>• <b><i>Promotion of sustainable travel</i></b></li> </ul>	<b><i>This policy re-iterates and supports policy STRAT10 in the Local Plan Part One and retained transport policies in the Vale Royal Local Plan.</i></b>
<b>H5 (New Policy)</b>	<b><i>The character of new housing should reflect the existing character of Hartford and new development should contribute to creating sociable and inclusive neighbourhoods that respond to the village character and strengthen the existing</i></b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b><i>Protection and enhancement of existing cultural heritage and landscape.</i></b></li> <li>• <b><i>Benefits to population and human health</i></b></li> </ul>	<b><i>This policy supports policy STRAT5 and ENV6 in the Local Plan Part One and retained policies in the Vale Royal Local Plan.</i></b>

	<i>community.</i>		
<b>H6 (New Policy)</b>	<p><i>Development outside the settlement boundary of the Parish will be limited to that which requires a countryside location.</i></p> <p><i>Note: The settlement policy boundary for Hartford has been revised to reflect the housing commitments at Grange Farm and Hollies Farm and in light of paragraph 5.73 of the Adopted Local Plan (Part One). The change to the settlement boundary is explained at section 4.1 of the Draft Neighbourhood Plan and the amended settlement boundary is shown at Appendix 6.2.1.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Protection and enhancement of existing cultural heritage and landscape.</i></li> <li>• <i>Potential negative environmental impacts of development within settlement boundaries.</i></li> </ul>	<p><i>This policy supports policy STRAT5, ENV2 and STRAT9 in the Local Plan Part One and retained policies in the Vale Royal Local</i></p>



**Appendix 2: Comments received during consultation on draft Screening Report – May-June 2014**

<b>Agency</b>	<b>Date Consulted</b>	<b>Response</b>
<b>Environment Agency</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> May 2014</b>	<b>See correspondence below</b>
<b>English Heritage</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> May 2014</b>	<b>See correspondence below</b>
<b>Natural England</b>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> May 2014</b>	<b>See correspondence below</b>

**From:** Hewitt, Dawn [<mailto:dawn.hewitt@environment-agency.gov.uk>]  
**Sent:** 06 May 2014 11:52  
**To:** MCCORQUODALE, Duncan  
**Subject:** RE: Hartford Neighbourhood Plan

Duncan

Thank you for the above consultation.

I can confirm that we will not be commenting on the SEA Screening or the Habitats Reg Assessment, as this is outside the scope of referrals we would wish to receive.

However our comments on the draft Hartford Neighbourhood Plan will follow shortly.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you wish to discuss.

Dawn Hewitt

**Planning Advisor**  
Greater Manchester, Merseyside & Cheshire

**The Environment Agency**  
Richard Fairclough House  
Knutsford Road  
Latchford  
Warrington WA4 1HT  
Tel: 01925 542499

We are now

## Greater Manchester, Merseyside and Cheshire Area

From 1 April 2014 North West South Area has a new name. Covering the same geography, we will continue to work with our partners and customers to help protect and improve the environment.



We have  
moved to...

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We've launched a consultation on proposals for voluntary chargeable agreements for planning pre-application advice for complex developments. You can view the consultation document and have your say here – <https://consult.environment-agency.gov.uk/portal/> The closing date for comments is 9 November 2012.



## ENGLISH HERITAGE

### NORTH WEST

FAO: Duncan McCorquodale  
Local Plan Manager – Spatial Planning  
Spatial Planning  
Cheshire West and Chester  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
The Forum Offices  
Chester  
CHI 2HS

Our Ref: 1383  
Your Ref:  
Date: 30<sup>th</sup> May 2014

Dear Sirs,

#### **Screening Opinion for SEA of Hartford Neighbourhood Plan**

Thank you for consulting English Heritage about the above document.

English Heritage has no further comments to make on the report and the recommendation that an additional SA/SEA will not be required.

English Heritage has produced a document, which you might find helpful in providing guidance on the effective assessment of the historic environment in Strategic Environmental Assessments. This can be found at <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/strategic-environ-assessment-sustainability-appraisal-historic-environment/>.

Finally, we should like to stress that this opinion is based on the information provided by you in your email dated 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2014. To avoid any doubt, this does not affect our obligation to provide further advice and, potentially, object to specific proposals which may subsequently arise (either as a result of this consultation or in later versions of the Neighbourhood Plan) where we consider that, despite no SA/SEA, these would have an adverse effect upon the historic environment.

If you have any queries about this matter or would like to discuss anything further, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

SUITES 3.3 AND 3.4 CANADA HOUSE 3 CHEPSTOW STREET MANCHESTER M1  
5FW

Telephone 0161 242 1400 Facsimile 0161 242 1401  
[www.english-heritage.org.uk](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk)

*Please note that English Heritage operates an access to information policy.  
Correspondence or information which you send us may therefore become publicly  
available*



E. Hrycan

**Emily Hrycan**

English Heritage, Historic Environment Planning Adviser (North West)

Telephone: 0161 242 1423

E-mail: [emily.hrycan@english-heritage.org.uk](mailto:emily.hrycan@english-heritage.org.uk)

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Correspondence or information which you send us may therefore become publicly  
available*

- 2 -



Date: 05 June 2014  
Our ref: 119993



duncan.mccorquodale@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk  
**BY EMAIL ONLY**

Customer Services  
Hornbeam House  
Crewe Business Park  
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Crewe  
Cheshire  
CW1 6GJ

T 0300 060 3900

Dear Mr McCorquodale

**Planning consultation:** Hartford Neighbourhood Plan, Draft Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive Screening and Habitats Regulation Assessment Statement

Thank you for your consultation on the above dated March 2014 which was received by Natural England on 02 May 2014.

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.

The conclusions reached are that the Hartford Neighbourhood Plan does not require a Strategic Environmental Assessment or Habitat Regulations Assessment. These conclusions reached are based on the emerging Local Plan for Cheshire West and Chester Part 1, it is stated in the document that it is considered that there are sufficient mitigation and control measures in the policy framework of the Local Plan part 1 to avoid and mitigate any of the outlined adverse effects on the integrity of European Sites in the emerging Local Plan. Although we agree in principle we advise that you consider the scenario if development emerges in the Neighbourhood Plan before the Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan is formally adopted.

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

For any queries relating to the specific advice in this letter only please contact Kate Wheeler on 07769 918711. For any new consultations, or to provide further information on this consultation please send your correspondences to [consultations@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:consultations@naturalengland.org.uk).

Yours sincerely

Kate Wheeler  
Cheshire, Greater Manchester, Merseyside and Lancashire Area

