

Strategic Environmental Assessment for the Loggerheads Neighbourhood Plan

Environmental Report to accompany
Regulation 14 consultation
on the Neighbourhood Plan

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Quality information

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Non-Technical Summary

What is strategic environmental assessment?

A strategic environmental assessment has been undertaken to inform the Loggerheads Plan (LNP). This process is required by the SEA Regulations.

Neighbourhood Plan groups use SEA to assess Neighbourhood Plans against a set of sustainability / environmental objectives developed in consultation with interested parties. The purpose of the assessment is to avoid adverse environmental and socio-economic effects through the Neighbourhood Plan, and identify opportunities to improve the environmental quality of the area covered by the Neighbourhood Plan and the quality of life of residents.

What is the Loggerheads Neighbourhood Plan?

The Loggerhead Neighbourhood Plan (LNP) presents a plan for the administrative area of Loggerhead Parish for the period to 2033. Prepared to be in conformity with the Newcastle-under-Lyme and Stoke-on-Trent Joint Core Strategy, it sets out a vision and a range of policies for the Neighbourhood Plan area. These relate to a range of topics, including, but not limited to, village centre development, transport, open space and housing.

It is anticipated that the LNP will be published for Regulation 14 Consultation in November 2017.

Purpose of the Environmental Report

The Environmental Report, which accompanies the current consultation on the LNP, is the second document to be produced as part of the SEA process. The first document was the SEA Scoping Report (September 2017), which includes information about the Neighbourhood Plan area's environment and community.

The purpose of the Environmental Report is to:

- Identify, describe and evaluate the likely significant effects of the LNP and alternatives; and
- Provide an opportunity for consultees to offer views on any aspect of the SEA process which has been carried out to date.

The Environmental Report contains:

- An outline of the contents and main objectives of the LNP and its relationship with other relevant policies, plans and programmes;
- Relevant aspects of the current and future state of the environment and key sustainability / environmental issues;
- The SEA Framework of objectives against which the LNP has been assessed;
- The appraisal of alternative approaches for the LNP;
- The likely significant environmental effects of the LNP;
- The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects as a result of the LNP; and
- Potential monitoring measures.

Scoping

The scoping stage involves the collection of information relating to:

- the state of the environment in the plan area; *and*
- relevant objectives and targets set out within plans, policies and programmes.

This information allowed for a range of key issues to be identified, and to establish what topics should be the focus of the SEA. The scoping process led to the following topics being scoped in or out of the SEA. These topics then formed the basis of an SEA Framework, which is the basis for appraising the Plan (and reasonable alternatives).

- Air Quality – **Scoped out**
- Biodiversity – **Scoped in**
- Climatic factors - **Scoped in**
- Landscape and historic environment – **Scoped in**
- Land, soil and water resources – Soil and waste **Scoped out**, Water **Scoped in**.
- Population and community – **Scoped in**
- Health and wellbeing – **Scoped in**
- Transportation – **Scoped in**

Assessment of alternative approaches for the LNP

Multi-sports and community facility

One of the key aims of the neighbourhood plan is to enable the development of a community and multi sports facility. This would help to meet local aspirations, and tackle shortages in provision. Consequently, a feasibility study for the multi-sport, community and recreational facility was commissioned as part of the Neighbourhood Plan work.

The study concluded that the most suitable site, of the size and layout of land required and within walking distance of the majority of residents, was on the A53 alongside the Fire Station.

However, the initial site identified, directly adjacent to the fire station has been superseded by a planning application for +65 new houses which was granted permission in September 2017.

There are two fields adjacent to this permitted development site that are considered to be the only suitably remaining sites (for a multi-sport, community and recreational facility) in the village of Loggerheads. This is based on factors such as layout and walking distance.

These two sites are therefore proposed for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan (for a multi-sport, community and recreational facility).

The group concluded that there were no reasonable alternative site options on the basis that the feasibility study identified the preferred sites as the most appropriate and suitable.

Determining the village boundaries

Though the neighbourhood plan does not allocate housing or employment sites, it seeks to manage growth through the continued application of policies relating to the village boundary.

A built up area boundary (village envelope) has been defined for Ashley and Loggerheads villages. The proposed approach (identified as part of LPN-G1) is based on previous boundaries from the adopted local plan (Newcastle-under-Lyme Local Plan 2011 (adopted in 2003), but with some expansion to allow for growth and to recognise where development has been approved. The boundaries have been set to create a clear and logical boundary, based on physical features and logical defensible boundaries. Other factors that have influenced the setting of the boundaries are as follows:

- Loggerheads is a largely rural area, with high-grade agricultural land. Therefore, development should focus on existing built settlements and not sprawl into the rural area or create connected and uncontrolled ribbon development.
- There is a need for a balanced mix of use in the settlements, to create more sustainable live-work patterns. Focusing growth on the existing centres helps to make them and their community facilities more viable.
- Community facilities and public transport services are focused on the larger settlements, so focusing growth in and around them have less impact through car journey generation and make them more sustainable.
- There is a need to preserve the largely rural character of the area.
- To protect and enhance the character of the villages and the surrounding countryside.

The Plan working group do not consider that there are any reasonable alternatives. Expanding the village envelope further to allow for additional future growth is not considered appropriate for the following reasons:

- The character of the settlements and rural areas could be negatively affected.
- It could lead to more unsustainable forms of development that are less accessible by sustainable modes of travel
- There could be a loss of agricultural land
- Strategic changes to settlements and potential Green Belt loss ought to be dealt with through the new Local Plan.

Assessment of the current version of the LNP

The draft LNP has been appraised against each of the environmental objectives in the SEA Framework. In undertaking the appraisal, each of the policies in the Plan has been considered individually and collectively. A summary of the findings is presented below.

Biodiversity	Climate change mitigation	Climate change resilience	Built and natural environment	Water	Housing	Health and wellbeing	Travel and transport
Positive	Neutral	Neutral	Positive	Neutral	Positive / Uncertain	Positive	Positive

Mitigation

No negative effects have been identified, and so there are no corresponding mitigation measures.

The Plan has been proactively prepared with regards to the protection of local greenspace, promotion of walking and cycling, protection of cultural heritage and the allocation of recreational facilities. However, some additional minor recommendations for enhancement have been made as follows.

- Policy LNP-P4 could be strengthened by encouraging green infrastructure linkages between open spaces.
- Positive effects upon water could perhaps be achieved for policy LNP-S2 by requiring the new site for multi-sport and community facilities and sports pitch to incorporate sustainable / natural drainage systems.

Monitoring

There is a requirement to present measures that could be used to monitor the effects of the Plan identified through the SEA. It is particularly important to monitor effects that are predicted to be significant, whether this be positive or negative. Monitoring helps to track whether the effects turn-out as expected, and to identify any unexpected effects.

Two significant effects have been predicted in the SEA. Whilst these are both positive, it is still important to monitor whether the effects that occur in reality are as positive as expected. Potentially suitable indicators are identified below for each of the significant effects.

Significant effects	Monitoring measures
Overall, the plan is predicted to have a significant positive effect upon the built and natural environment as it sets out several policies that add local context in support of the exiting Local Plan.	Character appraisals of local settlements Development approved in accordance with policy advice
Overall, the plan is predicted to have a significant positive effect on health and wellbeing. This is mainly related to the benefits of a new multi-recreational facility, but also supported by minor benefits from a range of other plan policies.	Progress on the development of a multi recreational facility Number of users of recreational facilities

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

AECOM has been commissioned to undertake an independent Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in support of the emerging Loggerheads Neighbourhood Plan (LNP).

The LNP is currently being prepared as a Neighbourhood Development Plan under the Localism Act 2012. The Neighbourhood Plan area, which includes the administrative area of Loggerheads Parish (Figure 1.1), is being prepared in the context of the Newcastle-under-Lyme and Stoke-on-Trent Joint Core Strategy.

It is currently anticipated that the LNP will be submitted to Newcastle-under-Lyme in January 2018.

Key information relating to the LNP is presented in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1: Key facts relating to the Loggerheads Neighbourhood Plan

Name of Qualifying Body	Loggerheads Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group
Title of Plan	Loggerheads Neighbourhood Plan
Purpose	The Loggerheads Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared as a Neighbourhood Development Plan under the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. The plan will be in conformity with the Newcastle-under-Lyme and Stoke on Trent Core Spatial Strategy 2006-2026 and the saved policies of the Newcastle-under-Lyme Local Plan 2011.
Timescale	To 2033
Area covered by the plan	Loggerheads Parish, which includes the wards of Ashley, Loggerheads, Mucklestone and Tyrley. (As shown in Figure 1.1)
Summary of content	The Loggerheads Neighbourhood Plan will set out a vision, strategy and range of policies for the plan area.
Plan contact point	Karen Watkins Email address: loggerheadspc@btconnect.com

1.2 SEA explained

The LNP has been screened in as requiring an SEA.

SEA is a mechanism for considering and communicating the likely significant effects of an emerging plan, and reasonable alternatives in terms of key environmental issues. The aim of SEA is to inform and influence the plan-making process with a view to avoiding or mitigating negative environmental effects and maximising positive effects. Through this approach, the SEA for the LNP seeks to maximise the emerging Neighbourhood Plan's contribution to sustainable development.

The SEA has been prepared in line with the procedures prescribed by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (the SEA Regulations) which transpose into national law the EU Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive¹.

The SEA Regulations require that a report is published for consultation alongside the draft plan that 'identifies, describes and evaluates' the likely significant effects of implementing 'the plan, and reasonable alternatives'. The report must then be taken into account, alongside consultation responses, when finalising the plan.

In line with the SEA Regulations this Environmental Report must essentially answer four questions:

- What is the scope of the SEA?
- What has plan-making/SEA involved up to this point?
 - 'Reasonable alternatives' must have been appraised for the plan.
- What are the appraisal findings at this stage?
 - i.e. in relation to the draft plan.
- What happens next?

These questions are derived from Schedule 2 of the SEA Regulations, which present 'the information to be provided within the report'. **Table 1.2** presents the linkages between the regulatory requirements and the four SEA questions.

¹ Directive 2001/42/EC

1.3 Structure of this Environmental Report

This document is the Environmental Report for the LNP and hence needs to answer all four of the questions listed above with a view to providing the information required by the SEA Regulations.

Each of the four questions is answered in turn within this report, as follows:

Table 1.2: Questions that must be answered by the Environmental Report in order to meet regulatory² requirements

Environmental Report question	In line with the SEA Regulations, the report must include... ³
What is the plan seeking to achieve?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan and relationship with other relevant plans and programmes
What is the sustainability 'context'?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The relevant environmental protection objectives, established at international or national level Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan including those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance
What's the scope of the SEA?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan including those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key problems/issues and objectives that should be a focus of (i.e. provide a 'framework' for) assessment
What has plan-making/SEA involved up to this point?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outline reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with (and thus an explanation of the 'reasonableness' of the approach) The likely significant effects associated with alternatives Outline reasons for selecting the preferred approach in-light of alternatives appraisal/a description of how environmental objectives and considerations are reflected in the draft plan.
What are the assessment findings at this stage?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The likely significant effects associated with the draft plan The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects of implementing the draft plan
What happens next?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The next steps for plan making/SEA process.

² Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004

³ NB this column does not quote directly from Schedule II of the Regulations. Rather, it reflects a degree of interpretation.

2. Local Plan context and vision for the LNP

2.1 Local Plan context for the LNP

Due to the Neighbourhood Plan area's location within Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough, this Plan is being prepared in the context of the existing development plan for the borough.⁴

The joint Newcastle under-Lyme and Stoke-on-Trent Core Spatial Strategy was adopted in October 2009 and classifies Loggerheads as a Rural Service Centre with a good range of local services. In the key Rural Service Centres, the Core Spatial Strategy includes a housing requirement of 900 dwellings primarily located on brownfield sites within the village envelopes. This is designed to meet identified local requirements – in particular, the need for affordable housing. However, no targets or allocations are specifically included for the Neighbourhood Plan area.

Neighbourhood plans are required to be in conformity with the Core Strategy and can develop policies and proposals to address local place-based issues. In this way it is intended for the Core Spatial Strategy (particularly policy ASP6) to provide a clear overall strategic direction for development in the Neighbourhood Plan area, whilst enabling finer detail to be determined through the neighbourhood planning process where appropriate.

A new Joint Local Plan is being prepared by Stoke-on-Trent and Newcastle-under-Lyme. This plan will provide the strategic direction for Loggerheads, and will also contain updated policies for the management of development.

The latest stage of plan-making involved consultation on key Strategic Options during July-August 2017. Though this document sets out a vision and broad options for growth, it does not set a clear preferred strategy yet.

As the new joint Local Plan is in the early stages of development, the Loggerheads Neighbourhood Plan will still need to take account of the existing Adopted Plan. However, it is acknowledged that the Neighbourhood Plan should be developed in the context of the emerging new Local Plan as well.

2.2 Vision for the Loggerheads Neighbourhood Plan

The vision / mission statement for the Loggerheads Neighbourhood Plan, which was developed during earlier stages of plan development, is as follows:

“ To create an enhanced sustainable rural community that provides for people of all ages. ”

**Vision / Mission Statement for the
Loggerheads Neighbourhood Plan**

To support the Neighbourhood Plan's mission statement, the LNP sets out five aims and a number of Neighbourhood Plan policies. The latest iteration of these policies have been appraised in **Chapter 0** of this Environmental Report.

⁴ Newcastle-under-Lyme and Stoke on Trent Joint Core Strategy (June 2014) https://www.newcastle-staffs.gov.uk/sites/default/files/IMCE/Planning/Planning_Policy/SpatialStrategy/Core%20Strategy%20Final%20Version%20-%2028th%20October.pdf

3. The Scope of the SEA

3.1 SEA Scoping Report

The SEA Regulations require that: “When deciding on the scope and level of detail of the information that must be included in the report, the responsible authority shall consult the consultation bodies”. In England, the consultation bodies are Natural England, the Environment Agency and Historic England.⁵ These authorities were formally consulted on the scope of the LNP SEA from the 1st September to the 6th October 2017.

The purpose of scoping was to outline the ‘scope’ of the SEA through setting out:

- A context review of the key environmental and sustainability objectives of national, regional and local plans and strategies relevant to the Neighbourhood Plan;
- Baseline data against which the Neighbourhood Plan can be assessed;
- The key sustainability / environmental issues for the Neighbourhood Plan; and
- An ‘SEA Framework’ of objectives against which the Neighbourhood Plan can be assessed.

Baseline information (including the context review and baseline data) is presented in **Appendix A**.

Two of the statutory consultees (Historic England and the Environment Agency) provided a response to the Scoping Report within the five week consultation period. The comments made and how they have been considered and addressed, are presented in **Table 3.1** below.

Table 3.1: Consultation responses received on the SEA Scoping Report

Consultation response	How the response was considered and addressed
<p>Historic England</p> <p>We have no substantive concerns as to the contents of the document and commend the approach taken to historic landscape and Heritage at Risk.</p>	Comments welcomed
<p>Environment Agency</p> <p>We note that the issue of flood risk is assessed under section 4 of the scoping report. It identifies how there is a small area of mapped floodplain to the south west of the plan area. It does not however, consider the ordinary watercourse flowing in a westerly direction out of Loggerheads itself, and through the extended development boundary area. The scoping report in fact states:</p> <p><i>‘The built up parts of the Neighbourhood Plan area falls entirely within Flood Zone 1, and so development is unlikely to be affected by fluvial flood risk’</i></p> <p>This watercourse is classified an Ordinary Watercourse and only falls within low risk Flood Zone 1 as no mapping has been undertaken due to its position high in the catchment. In light of this, there may well be risk associated with this watercourse which is currently unassessed and is not shown on the Flood Map for Planning.</p>	Scope updated to consider the potential for flooding in unmapped areas.

⁵ In-line with Article 6(3).of the SEA Directive, these consultation bodies were selected because ‘by reason of their specific environmental responsibilities,[they] are likely to be concerned by the environmental effects of implementing plans and programme’.

3.2 Key sustainability / environmental issues

Drawing on the review of the policy context and baseline information, the SEA Scoping Report was able to identify a range of sustainability / environmental issues that should be a particular focus of SEA. These issues are as follows, presented by eight environmental themes:

The selected environmental themes incorporate the 'SEA topics' suggested by Annex I(f) of the SEA Directive⁶. These were refined to reflect a broad understanding of the anticipated scope of plan effects (drawing from the screening opinion and local knowledge).

The scoping process allowed for some sustainability topics to be 'scoped out'; as it was considered the Plan is unlikely to have significant effects on certain factors.

3.2.1 Air quality

- Air quality is not a particular issue in the Plan area and is unlikely to be significantly affected by the Plan.
- There is likely to be a continued reliance on the car to access services, jobs and facilities.

Scoped OUT

3.2.2 Biodiversity

- There are no European designated sites located within the Neighbourhood Plan area and the closest is located approximately 7km from the edge of the area. The Neighbourhood Plan is not expected to have any potential impact on international designated assets due to their distance from the neighbourhood area and lack of receptor pathways.
- The Neighbourhood Plan area contains several SSSI units which are vulnerable to unmanaged public access.
- Numerous Protected Species are present in the Neighbourhood Plan area and could be affected by new development.
- Features of biodiversity value such as trees, hedgerows, waterways and meadows should be protected from the impacts of future development and where possible enhanced. Their integrity should also be supported through improved ecological connections in the area, including through the provision of green infrastructure enhancements.

Scoped IN

3.2.3 Climatic factors

- The built up parts of the Neighbourhood Plan area falls entirely within Flood Zone 1, and so development is unlikely to be affected by fluvial flood risk.
- Newcastle-Under-Lyme has higher CO2 emissions than the rest of the districts in the West Midlands until 2014.

Scoped OUT

⁶ The SEA Directive is 'of a procedural nature' (para 9 of the Directive preamble) and does not set out to prescribe particular issues that should and should not be a focus, beyond requiring a focus on '*the environment, including on issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors*' [our emphasis]

3.2.4 Landscape and historic environment

- There are 76 Listed Buildings and structures within the Neighbourhood Plan area and two scheduled monuments.
- Whilst there are no landscapes designated nationally for their sensitivity or importance, landscape has been characterised locally, with a focus on 'conservation' and 'enhancement' at identified development sites.

Scoped IN

3.2.5 Land, soil and water resources

- The only agricultural land in the Plan area is within areas already permitted or allocated for development. No further agricultural land is likely to be affected by the Plan.
- The plan area contains areas that fall within a groundwater protection zone, and the whole area is identified as a groundwater and surface water nitrate vulnerable zone.

Soil & waste Scoped OUT Water Quality Scoped IN

3.2.6 Population and community

- The population of Loggerheads Parish has increased significantly higher than borough averages between 2001 and 2011 (6.8%).
- The age profile of the Neighbourhood Plan area is older than borough, regional and national averages.
- The age profile of the parish has become recently become older. This will have implications for community provision and the provision of suitable housing to meet specialist needs.

Scoped IN

3.2.7 Health and Wellbeing

- Loggerheads has a higher number of residents with a limiting long-term illness.
- Medical centres in the area are already at over-capacity.
- Leisure facilities are lacking within the parish of Loggerheads.

Scoped IN

3.2.8 Transportation

- Whilst bus services to Market Drayton, Stone and Newcastle-under-Lyme are relatively frequent during the day, they are poor during the evening and at weekends.
- Loggerheads has a significantly higher level of car and van ownership than borough and regional averages.
- A higher proportion of people travel to work by car than the borough and national average.

Scoped IN

3.3 SEA Framework

The SEA framework has been established through the identification of key issues and environmental objectives as part of the scoping exercise. This draws upon the baseline position and policy context that has been prepared for a range of SEA topics.

The framework consists of a set of headline objectives and ancillary questions, which has been used to appraise the environmental effects of the draft Plan (and any reasonable alternatives).

Table 3.2 below outlines the full SEA Framework, which focuses on those issues that have been identified as the most important to consider in the preparation of the Plan; but acknowledging the limited influence that the Plan can/will have in some areas.

These issues were then translated into an ‘SEA Framework’. This SEA Framework provides a methodological framework for the appraisal of likely significant effects on the baseline.

Table 3.2: SEA Framework for the Loggerheads Neighbourhood Plan

SEA Objective	Supporting questions (Will the option/proposal help to...)
Protect and enhance the function and connectivity of biodiversity habitats and species.	Will the option/proposal help to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support connections between habitats in the Plan area? • Support continued improvements to the designated sites in the Plan area? • Achieve a net gain in biodiversity? • Support access to interpretation and understanding of biodiversity and geodiversity? • Better manage public access to SSSIs
Contribute to climate change mitigation	Will the option/proposal help to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote high quality design? • Promote the use of sustainable modes of transport, including walking, cycling and public transport? • Reduce the need to travel?
Support the resilience of Loggerheads to the potential effects of climate change	Will the option/proposal help to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve green infrastructure networks in the plan area to support adaptation to the potential effects of climate change? • Ensure the potential risks associated with climate change are considered through new development in the plan area? • Increase the resilience of biodiversity in the plan area to the effects of climate change?
Protect, enhance and manage the distinctive character and appearance of the built and natural environment.	Will the option/proposal help to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conserve, better reveal the significance and enhance heritage assets, their setting and the wider historic environment? • Contribute to better management of heritage assets or tackle heritage at risk? • Identify and protect / enhance features of local importance? • Support access to, interpretation and understanding of the historic environment? • Improve linkages between residential areas and open space.

SEA Objective	Supporting questions (Will the option/proposal help to...)
Protect ground and surface water quality.	<p>Will the option/proposal help to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect groundwater quality in the GPZ? • Minimise water consumption? • Reduce surface water pollution through the use of SUDS?
Provide everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality, suitable housing which meets the needs of occupiers.	<p>Will the option/proposal help to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support enhancements to the current housing stock? • Provide quality and flexible homes that meet people's needs? • Promote the use of sustainable building techniques, including use of sustainable building materials in construction? • Provide housing in sustainable locations that allow easy access to a range of local services and facilities?
Protect and improve the health and wellbeing of residents by enhancing the quality and accessibility of open space, facilities for recreation and transport links.	<p>Will the option/proposal help to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote availability and accessibility to a range of leisure, health and community facilities, for all age groups? • Provide and enhance the provision of community access to green infrastructure, in accordance with Accessible Natural Greenspace Standards? • Improve access to health facilities?
Reduce the need to travel and support modal shift to active and sustainable modes of travel such as walking, cycling and public transport.	<p>Will the option/proposal help to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enable transport infrastructure improvements? • Increase the range, availability and affordability of sustainable travel choices i.e. public transport, walking, cycling? • Promote sustainable patterns of land use and development that reduce the need to travel and reliance on the private car? • Promote car-share schemes and/or working from home?

4. What has plan making / SEA involved to this point?

4.1 Introduction

In accordance with the SEA Regulations the Environmental Report must include...

- An outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with; and
- The likely significant effects on the environment associated with alternatives / an outline of the reasons for selecting the preferred approach in light of alternatives appraised.

The 'narrative' of plan-making / SEA up to this point is told within this part of the Environmental Report. Specifically, this section explains how preparation of the current version of the LNP has been informed by an assessment of alternative sites for villagecentre redevelopment and for specialist housing delivery.

4.2 Overview of plan making / SEA work undertaken

In August 2015 residents were given information on Neighbourhood Planning and asked if they wished to take this opportunity to plan proactively for the challenges of the future. There was unanimous agreement to draw up a Neighbourhood Plan so that the community could ensure gradual, sustainable development to allow the local infrastructure and facilities to keep pace with the additional demands more housing will create.

Over the next few months the Parish Council set about investigating what was required to produce a robust, evidence-based Neighbourhood Plan. Newsletters and the Parish Council website were used to publicise the process and several requests were made for volunteers from the community to participate in the exercise. The Parish Council applied for designation of the neighbourhood area, which was granted in September 2015.

The Neighbourhood Plan has been developed from the views of the local people gathered using a variety of different consultation approaches including meetings, presentations, interactive workshops, the Parish Council website, village-wide on-line surveys and paper surveys. A separate survey of young people was undertaken at both primary schools in the parish. In addition local businesses were asked to complete a survey, either paper-based or on-line. The Working Group has worked closely with neighbouring parishes and Newcastle under Lyme Borough Council. Staffordshire County Council, health and social housing providers have all been consulted.

There are several key stages of statutory consultation affording a wide range of consultees the opportunity to have a say about the Plan.

Designation: When the Parish Council applied for designation of the Neighbourhood Area the Local Authority undertook a 6-week consultation, which was publicised locally and borough-wide. The feedback received has been used to inform the plan.

Pre-submission Consultation: The Neighbourhood Plan will be submitted for consultation to the list of statutory and other bodies provided by Newcastle under Lyme Borough Council as required under Regulation 14, Town and Country Planning, England Neighbourhood Planning Regulations (General) 2012. Responses will be fully documented in the Consultation Statement which can be viewed on the Parish Council website.

4.3 Assessment of reasonable alternatives for the Neighbourhood Plan

A key element of the SEA process is the appraisal of 'reasonable alternatives' for the LNP. The SEA Regulations⁷ are not prescriptive as to what constitutes a reasonable alternative, stating only that the Environmental Report should present an appraisal of the '*plan and reasonable alternatives taking into account the objectives and geographical scope of the plan*'.

⁷ Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004

The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group considered different alternatives for how two key plan elements could be delivered.

1. The location of a site for multi-sport and community facility
2. The extent of the village envelopes

4.3.1 Alternative locations for a multi-sport and community facility

One of the key aims of the neighbourhood plan is to enable the development of a community and multi sports facility. This would help to meet local aspirations, and tackle shortages in provision. Consequently, a feasibility study for the multi-sport, community and recreational facility was commissioned as part of the Neighbourhood Plan work.

The study concluded that the most suitable site, of the size and layout of land required and within walking distance of the majority of residents, was on the A53 alongside the Fire Station.

However, the initial site identified, directly adjacent to the fire station has been superseded by a planning application for +65 new houses which was granted permission in September 2017.

There are two fields adjacent to this permitted development site that are considered to be the only suitably remaining sites (for a multi-sport, community and recreational facility) in the village of Loggerheads. This is based on factors such as layout and walking distance.

These two sites are therefore proposed for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan (for a multi-sport, community and recreational facility).

The group concluded that there were no reasonable alternative site options on the basis of accessibility for residents and topography, this is the only location with enough relatively flat land for a community centre and for sports pitches.

4.3.2 Determining the village boundaries

Though the neighbourhood plan does not allocate housing or employment sites, it seeks to manage growth through the continued application of policies relating to the village boundary.

A built up area boundary (village envelope) has been defined for Ashley and Loggerheads villages. The proposed approach (identified as part of LPN-G1) is based on previous boundaries from the adopted local plan (Newcastle-under-Lyme Local Plan 2011 (adopted in 2003), but with some expansion to allow for growth and to recognise where development has been approved. The boundaries have been set to create a clear and logical boundary, based on physical features and logical defensible boundaries. Other factors that have influenced the setting of the boundaries are as follows:

- Loggerheads is a largely rural area, with high-grade agricultural land. Therefore, development should focus on existing built settlements and not sprawl into the rural area or create connected and uncontrolled ribbon development.
- There is a need for a balanced mix of use in the settlements, to create more sustainable live-work patterns. Focusing growth on the existing centres helps to make them and their community facilities more viable.
- Community facilities and public transport services are focused on the larger settlements, so focusing growth in and around them have less impact through car journey generation and make them more sustainable.
- There is a need to preserve the largely rural character of the area.
- To protect and enhance the character of the villages and the surrounding countryside.

The Plan working group do not consider that there are any reasonable alternatives. Expanding the village envelope further to allow for additional future growth is not considered appropriate for the following reasons:

- The character of the settlements and rural areas could be negatively affected.
- It could lead to more unsustainable forms of development that are less accessible by sustainable modes of travel.
- There could be a loss of agricultural land.
- Strategic changes to settlements ought to be dealt with through the new Local Plan. (nb. There is NO green belt in Loggerheads neighbourhood plan area)

4.4 Current approach in the Neighbourhood Plan and the development of Neighbourhood Plan policies

The Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate new housing or employment provision. Instead it seeks to shape the location of development in the Neighbourhood Plan area by setting village envelopes within which the majority of development should be focused.

This is supported by the introduction of a range of Neighbourhood Plan policies which have been designed to shape development in the Neighbourhood Plan area and protect features of special local importance. A key policy is the allocation of land for the delivery of a multi-sport and community facility.

To support the implementation of the vision for the Neighbourhood Plan, the current version of the LNP puts forward fifteen policies to guide development in the Neighbourhood Plan area. The policies, which were developed following extensive community consultation and evidence gathering, are as follows:

Table 4.1: Loggerheads Neighbourhood Plan draft Policies

Plan Policies

LNP-G1. New Housing Growth

LNP-G2. Housing Mix

LNP-P1. Urban Design and Environment

LNP-P2. Local Character

LNP-P3. Local heritage considerations

LNP-P4. Local green space

LNP-T1. Sustainable Transport

LNP-S1. Community infrastructure

LNP-S2. Site allocation for multi-sport and community facility and sports pitch

LNP-S3. Sports pitches

LNP-E1. Employment

LNP-E2. Retail

LNP-E3. Broadband

5. What are the appraisal findings at this current stage?

5.1 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to present appraisal findings and recommendations in relation to the Regulation 14 version of the LNP.

5.2 Approach to the appraisal

The appraisal is structured under each of the SEA Objectives that are set out in the SEA Framework.

For each theme 'significant effects' of the current version of the plan on the baseline are predicted and evaluated. Account is taken of the criteria presented within Schedule 2 of the Regulations.⁸ So, for example, account is taken of the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of effects as far as possible. These effect 'characteristics' are described within the assessment as appropriate.

Every effort is made to identify / evaluate effects accurately; however, this is inherently challenging given the high level nature of the plan. The ability to predict effects accurately is also limited by understanding of the baseline and the nature of future planning applications. Because of the uncertainties involved, there is a need to exercise caution when identifying and evaluating significant effects and ensure all assumptions are explained. In many instances it is not possible to predict significant effects, but it is possible to comment on merits (or otherwise) in more general terms.

5.3 SEA Objective 1: Biodiversity

Plan policies	Effects
LNP-G1. New Housing Growth	Neutral
LNP-G2. Housing Mix	Neutral
LNP-P1. Urban Design and Environment	Positive
LNP-P2. Local Character	Positive
LNP-P3. Local heritage considerations	Neutral
LNP-P4. Local green space	Positive
LNP-T1. Sustainable Transport	Neutral
LNP-S1. Community infrastructure	Neutral
LNP-S2. Site allocation for multi-sport and community facility and sports pitch	Neutral
LNP-S3. Sports pitches	Neutral
LNP-E1. Employment	Neutral
LNP-E2. Retail	Neutral
LNP-E3. Broadband	Neutral
Cumulative effects	Positive

The plan does not allocate housing or set a specific target for housing or employment growth. Therefore no direct effects on biodiversity are predicted.

Policy LNP-G1 outlines that housing growth will be directed to within the village envelopes. Though the envelopes have been expanded, this is to take account of existing developments and permitted development. Therefore, the effects on biodiversity are likely to be neutral. Having said this, part of the new village envelope does include areas of woodland. It will be important to ensure that these areas are protected.

The majority of plan policies are also unlikely to have a significant effect upon biodiversity as they are related to specific policy areas. For example, the mix of housing is unlikely to affect biodiversity

⁸ *Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004*

assets, as are policies that seek to protect cultural heritage, support broadband delivery, community infrastructure or retail policy.

Policies LNP-P1 and LNP-P2 are predicted to have a positive effect on biodiversity, as they state that trees and hedgerows ought to be retained. The effects are not predicted to be significant, as existing saved policies (e.g. N14) already provide a degree of protection to such features.

Policy LNP-P4 could have benefits for biodiversity by helping to retain existing local green space; which has some value for biodiversity. However, these benefits are unlikely to be significant.

Policy LNP-S2 allocates a site for a multi-sports and community facility and sports pitch. The site does not fall within any areas designated for their biodiversity value.

Though the site is within 500m of Burnt Wood SSSI and adjacent to areas of priority habitat (*Ancient Replanted Woodland and Deciduous Woodland*), development is not likely to have a negative effect upon these habitats. In fact, the provision of sports and recreation facilities ought to help reduce recreational pressure on the SSSI. Presuming development is well-designed and provides measures to protect adjacent habitats; then effects during construction are also unlikely to occur.

In light of the factors discussed above, the cumulative effects of the Plan on biodiversity are predicted to be **positive**, but not significant.

5.4 SEA Objective 2: Climate change mitigation

Plan policies	Effects
LNP-G1. New Housing Growth	Neutral
LNP-G2. Housing Mix	Neutral
LNP-P1. Urban Design and Environment	Positive
LNP-P2. Local Character	Neutral
LNP-P3. Local heritage considerations	Neutral
LNP.P4. Local green space	Neutral
LNP-T1. Sustainable Transport	Positive
LNP-S1. Community infrastructure	Neutral
LNP.S2. Site allocation for multi-sport and community facility and sports pitch	Neutral
LNP-S3. Sports pitches	Neutral
LNP-E1. Employment	Neutral
LNP-E2. Retail	Neutral
LNP-E3. Broadband	Positive
Cumulative effects	Neutral

No housing or employment growth is proposed in the Neighbourhood Plan, and therefore the effects on greenhouse gas emissions are predicted to be insignificant.

Most of the plan policies are unrelated to climate change and unlikely to have an effect in terms of high quality design and sustainable travel. Neutral effects are therefore predicted in the main.

Certain policies could however contribute to an improvement in design quality, including LNP-P1.

Policy LNP-T1 will also support a reduction in emissions from travel by encouraging sustainable travel and electric charging points. This is recorded as a positive effect, but not likely to lead to a significant change in the baseline position.

Policy LNP-E3 could also contribute to a minor reduction in emissions from transport by supporting high speed broadband expansion.

Though there could be some small positive effects with regards to sustainable transport; the overall effects of the plan on climate change mitigation are predicted to be **neutral**.

5.5 SEA Objective 3: Climate change resilience

Plan policies	Effects
LNP-G1. New Housing Growth	Neutral
LNP-G2. Housing mix	Neutral
LNP-P1. Urban Design and Environment	Neutral
LNP-P2. Local Character	Neutral
LNP-P3. Local heritage considerations	Neutral
LNP.P4. Local green space	Positive
LNP-T1. Sustainable Transport	Neutral
LNP-S1. Community infrastructure	Neutral
LNP.S2. Site allocation for multi-sport and community facility and sports pitch	Neutral
LNP-S3. Sports pitches	Neutral
LNP-E1. Employment	Neutral
LNP-E2. Retail	Neutral
LNP-E3. Broadband	Neutral
Cumulative effects	Neutral

Policy LNP-P4 is predicted to have minor positive effects on resilience by helping to maintain local green spaces. This should help to protect green infrastructure, which can have benefits in terms of providing shade. The policy could perhaps be strengthened by encouraging green infrastructure linkages between open spaces.

All the other policies in the plan are predicted to have neutral effects as they are not related to climate change resilience. They are not likely to improve green infrastructure linkages, nor are they likely to affect flood risk or biodiversity resilience.

Overall, on balance the plan is predicted to have a **neutral effect**.

5.6 SEA Objective 4: Built and natural environment

Plan policies	Effects
LNP-G1. New Housing Growth	Positive
LNP-G2. Housing Mix	Neutral
LNP-P1. Urban Design and Environment	Positive
LNP-P2. Local Character	Positive
LNP-P3. Local heritage considerations	Positive
LNP.P4. Local green space	Positive
LNP-T1. Sustainable Transport	Neutral
LNP-S1. Community infrastructure	Neutral
LNP.S2. Site allocation for multi-sport and community facility and sports pitch	Neutral
LNP-S3. Sports pitches	Neutral
LNP-E1. Employment	Neutral
LNP-E2. Retail	Neutral
LNP-E3. Broadband	Neutral
Cumulative effects	Positive (significant)

Policy LNP-G1 sets out village envelopes which identify the areas that growth will broadly be acceptable within. This should help to ensure that the character of the rural areas is maintained and protected, which includes a variety of heritage assets. Though the settlement boundaries have been increased in some areas, this is mainly to cover existing and permitted development. Therefore, the effects are positive, but not expected to be significant.

Policies that seek to encourage high quality and sensitive design (LNP-P1, LNP-P2, LNP-P3) are predicted to have positive effects upon the historic environment. Policy LNP-P2 in particular sets out some locally important features that ought to be protected and enhanced through development. This will have a more positive effect upon the setting of heritage assets compared to the current policy position and so a **significant positive effect** is predicted.

Open space contributes to the setting of the built environment in the plan area, and so policy LNP-P4 ought to be beneficial. However, the effects are not predicted to be significant.

Overall, the plan is predicted to have a **significant positive effect** upon the built and natural environment as it sets out several policies that add local context in support of the exiting Local Plan.

5.7 SEA Objective 5: Water

Plan policies	Effects
LNP-G1. New Housing Growth	Neutral
LNP-G2. Housing Mix	Neutral
LNP-P1. Urban Design and Environment	Neutral
LNP-P2. Local Character	Neutral
LNP-P3. Local heritage considerations	Neutral
LNP-P4. Local green space	Positive
LNP-T1. Sustainable Transport	Neutral
LNP-S1. Community infrastructure	Neutral
LNP-S2. Site allocation for multi-sport and community facility and sports pitch	Neutral
LNP-S3. Sports pitches	Neutral
LNP-E1. Employment	Neutral
LNP-E2. Retail	Neutral
LNP-E3. Broadband	Neutral
Cumulative effects	Neutral

The plan does not specify a level of housing or employment growth, nor does it identify site allocations. Therefore the potential effects on water quality are likely to be minimal.

Though there is an allocated site for recreation proposed (LNP-S2), it is not likely that development would lead to effects upon water quality given its relatively small scale and proposed uses. Positive effects could perhaps be achieved by requiring the new site for multi-sport and community facilities and sports pitch to incorporate sustainable / natural drainage systems.

Policy LNP-P4 could indirectly contribute to the protection of water quality by aiming to protect green space. However, the effects would be minor due to the limited spatial areas covered and the small contribution to water quality that these local green spaces make.

The overall effects of the plan on water are predicted to be **neutral** on balance. Though the protection of green space ought to have some benefits, these areas are already protected to an extent in the current local plan. The magnitude of effects is also low and unlikely to lead to significant effects on the baseline position.

5.8 SEA Objective 6: Housing

Plan policies	Effects
LNP-G1. New Housing Growth	Uncertain
LNP-G2. Housing Mix	Positive
LNP-P1. Urban Design and Environment	Neutral
LNP-P2. Local Character	Neutral
LNP-P3. Local heritage considerations	Neutral
LNP.P4. Local green space	Neutral
LNP-T1. Sustainable Transport	Neutral
LNP-S1. Community infrastructure	Neutral
LNP.S2. Site allocation for multi-sport and community facility and sports pitch	Neutral
LNP-S3. Sports pitches	Neutral
LNP-E1. Employment	Neutral
LNP-E2. Retail	Neutral
LNP-E3. Broadband	Neutral
Cumulative effects	Positive / uncertain

The Plan does not set a target for the amount of housing to be delivered. Therefore, effects are unlikely in terms of supporting new homes. However, it is clear from the emerging Local Plan that levels of housing need across the Local Authorities are substantially higher than is planned for in the current Local Plan Core Strategy.

There may therefore be a need to set higher targets for the Loggerheads area. Whilst this would be dealt with through the Local Plan process, the Neighbourhood Plan could have an influence through policy LNP-G1, which seeks to limit the majority of housing to within the identified village envelopes. This could restrict development on greenfield sites outside of the village envelope, but these may be necessary for longer term growth. An **uncertain effect** is predicted at this stage as the Local Plan is in the early stages of development.

Policy LNP-G2 is predicted to have positive effects on housing as it ought to encourage the development of the types of dwellings that are needed in Loggerheads.

The remaining policies are predicted to have neutral effects upon housing. None of the policies are overly restrictive so as to deter housing development, whilst none of the policies would be likely to lead to additional housing growth. Whilst policies that protect the environment and encourage sustainable design and transport can be attractive for residential areas, the effects are considered to be negligible.

Overall, the effects of the Plan on housing are predicted to be **positive**, but not significant. However, there is also **uncertainty** given that new housing targets may need to be set for Loggerheads (through the Local Plan) and established village envelopes could restrict potential locations for growth. Ultimately though, the new Local Plan would provide the overall framework for development.

5.9 SEA Objective 7: Health and wellbeing

Plan policies	Effects
LNP-G1. New Housing Growth	Neutral
LNP-G2. Housing Mix	Positive
LNP-P1. Urban Design and Environment	Positive
LNP-P2. Local Character	Neutral
LNP-P3. Local heritage considerations	Neutral
LNP-P4. Local green space	Positive
LNP-T1. Sustainable Transport	Positive
LNP-S1. Community infrastructure	Positive
LNP-S2. Site allocation for multi-sport and community facility and sports pitch	Positive Significant
LNP-S3. Sports pitches	Positive
LNP-E1. Employment	Positive
LNP-E2. Retail	Neutral
LNP-E3. Broadband	Neutral
Cumulative effects	Positive Significant

Several of the plan policies are predicted to have positive effects on health and wellbeing. This includes the following elements.

- Supporting the provision for the type of housing that certain members of the community are in need of (LNP-G2),
- The protection and enhancement of local green space and sports pitches (LNP-P4, LNP-S3, LNP-P3), which will help to support healthy lifestyles.
- Support for community infrastructure (LNP-S1).
- Support for active modes of travel (LNP-T1).

Together, these policies all contribute to benefits for health and wellbeing for a range of community groups. However, the effects would be fairly minor as the policies are mostly related to protection of existing assets (which are unlikely to be vastly different in the absence of the Plan given that there are protection mechanisms in place in existing, saved Local Plan policies).

Policy LNP-S2 is predicted to have a **significant positive effect** as it will support new facilities into the settlement that ought to benefit the whole community. This should help to improve health over the plan period, as well as supporting greater community engagement activities.

Overall, the plan is predicted to have a significant positive effect on health and wellbeing. This is mainly related to the benefits of a new multi-recreational facility, but also supported by minor benefits from a range of other plan policies.

5.10 SEA Objective 8: Travel and transport

Plan policies	Effects
LNP-G1. New Housing Growth	Positive
LNP-G2. Housing Mix	Neutral
LNP-P1. Urban Design and Environment	Neutral
LNP-P2. Local Character	Neutral
LNP-P3. Local heritage considerations	Neutral
LNP-P4. Local green space	Neutral
LNP-T1. Sustainable Transport	Positive?
LNP-S1. Community infrastructure	Neutral
LNP-S2. Site allocation for multi-sport and community facility and sports pitch	Positive
LNP-S3. Sports pitches	Neutral
LNP-E1. Employment	Neutral
LNP-E2. Retail	Neutral
LNP-E3. Broadband	Positive
Cumulative effects	Positive

LNP-G1 ought to be beneficial in terms of travel, by seeking to contain development within village envelopes. These areas are more accessible and served by more facilities compared to the more rural areas, and so this approach should help to ensure that new development is located appropriately. The policy is unlikely to have significant effects though, as it would be a continuation of the approach outlined in the Local Plan.

Most other plan policies are likely to have neutral effects, as they do not influence patterns of travel or modes of transport. For example, protection of local heritage and quality design.

Several policies would have minor positive effects, including LNP-T1, which specifically seeks to improve walking and cycling links. The effects in the long term could perhaps be significant, but this is uncertain.

Policies which seek to retain or create local sports and recreation facilities are also likely to have minor benefits in terms of reducing the need to travel further afield to access facilities. Policy LNP-S2 should be particularly beneficial in this regard, as it will help to plug a gap in local service provision.

Policy LNP-E3 is predicted to have minor positive effects as improved broadband at home could help to support and encourage greater home working. However, the magnitude of effects would be very low.

Overall, a **positive effect** is predicted from the Plan as several policies ought to encourage sustainable modes of travel whilst reducing the need to travel to access recreational facilities. However, the effects are not likely to be significant given the relatively small magnitude of effects, and the likely continued reliance on cars to access jobs, and other services.

5.11 Conclusions at this current stage

5.11.1 Potential significant effects

Biodiversity	Climate change mitigation	Climate change resilience	Built and natural environment	Water	Housing	Health and wellbeing	Travel and transport
Positive	Neutral	Neutral	Positive	Neutral	Positive / Uncertain	Positive	Positive

The plan is predicted to have no negative effects. However, establishing a village envelope may restrict development in the longer term, which might be needed in light of emerging evidence on the local plan.

Two **significant positive effects** are identified. The first is for the built and natural environment associated with more locally specific policies that ought to provide greater protection and enhancement compared to the current situation. The second is related to health and wellbeing and mainly attributable to the allocation of a new multi-recreational facility.

The plan is predicted to have mostly minor effects for biodiversity. Though there are sensitive biodiversity habitats in the plan area, the plan includes policies to protect locally important features, which compliments the existing Local Plan approach.

The only allocated development site is the multi-recreational facility, which is unlikely to have significant effects on biodiversity, cultural heritage or water.

The effects of the plan on some environmental factors are limited, and so a neutral effect is predicted for climate change mitigation and resilience and water.

5.12 Recommendations at this current stage

No negative effects have been identified, and so there are no corresponding mitigation measures.

The Plan has been proactively prepared with regards to the protection of local greenspace, promotion of walking and cycling, protection of cultural heritage and the allocation of recreational facilities. However, some additional minor recommendations for enhancement have been made as follows.

- Policy LNP-P4 could be strengthened by encouraging green infrastructure linkages between open spaces.
- Positive effects upon water could perhaps be achieved for policy LNP-S2 by requiring the new site for multi-sport and community facilities and sports pitch to incorporate sustainable / natural drainage systems.

5.13 Monitoring

There is a requirement to present measures that could be used to monitor the effects of the Plan identified through the SEA. It is particularly important to monitor effects that are predicted to be significant, whether this be positive or negative. Monitoring helps to track whether the effects turn-out as expected, and to identify any unexpected effects.

Two significant effects have been predicted in the SEA. Whilst these are both positive, it is still important to monitor whether the effects that occur in reality are as positive as expected. Potentially suitable indicators are identified below for each of the significant effects.

Significant effects	Monitoring measures
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<p>Overall, the plan is predicted to have a significant positive effect upon the built and natural environment as it sets out several policies that add local context in support of the exiting Local Plan.</p>	<p>Character appraisals of local settlements</p> <p>Development approved in accordance with policy advice</p>
<p>Overall, the plan is predicted to have a significant positive effect on health and wellbeing. This is mainly related to the benefits of a new multi-recreational facility, but also supported by minor benefits from a range of other plan policies.</p>	<p>Progress on the development of a multi recreational facility</p> <p>Number of users of recreational facilities</p>

At this stage, the monitoring measures are not ‘decided’; rather they are suggested as potentially suitable indicators.

6. What are the next steps?

Subsequent to the current consultation on the Regulation 14 version of the LNP, the draft plan will be updated to reflect comments received. This Environmental Report will be updated to reflect the changes made to the plan.

The LNP will then be submitted to the Local Planning Authority, Newcastle under Lyme, for its consideration with the updated Environmental Report. Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council will consider whether the plan is suitable to go forward to Independent Examination in terms of the LNP meeting legal requirements and its compatibility with the Local Plan.

Subject to Newcastle-under-Lyme Council’s agreement, the LNP will then be subject to independent examination. The Examiner will consider whether the plan is appropriate having regard to national policy and whether it is in general conformity with the Newcastle under-Lyme and Stoke-on-Trent Core Strategy (and is mindful of the emerging new Local Plan).

The Examiner will be able to recommend that the LNP is put forward for a referendum, or that it should be modified or that the proposal should be refused. Newcastle-under-Lyme Council will then decide what should be done in light of the Examiner’s report. Where the report recommends modifications to the Plan, the Council will invite the LNP Steering Group to make modifications to the plan, which will be reflected in an updated Environmental Report. Where the Examiner’s Report recommends that the proposal is to be refused, Newcastle-under-Lyme would do so.

Where the examination is favourable, the LNP will then be subject to a referendum, organised by Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council. If more than 50% of those who vote agree with the plan, then it will be passed to Newcastle-under-Lyme with a request it is ‘made’. Once ‘made’, the LNP will become part of the Development Plan.

Appendix A - Scoping report

