Irchester, Knuston and Little Irchester
Neighbourhood Plan 2011–2031
Consultation Statement

Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group
December 2017
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Consultation Statement (the Statement) has been prepared by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (the Steering Group) appointed by Irchester Parish Council to prepare the Irchester, Knuston and Little Irchester Neighbourhood Plan. Regulation 15 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (the Regulations) requires the Irchester Parish Council to include a consultation statement when it submits the Plan to the Borough Council of Wellingborough. The Regulations require the Statement to:

- contain details of the persons and bodies who were consulted about the proposed neighbourhood development plan;
- explain how they were consulted;
- summarise the main issues and concerns raised by the persons consulted; and
- describe how these issues and concerns have been considered and, where relevant, addressed in the proposed neighbourhood development plan.

1.2 The Steering Group has sought to be inclusive and open in the preparation of its neighbourhood plan. Particular emphasis was placed on engaging a wide range of local people and interested parties prior to and during the formulation of proposals to ensure that the views and priorities of the community could inform the evolution of the Plan from the outset. In accordance with National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) (ID: 41-047-20140306) the Steering Group has sought to ensure that the wider community has:

- been kept fully informed of what is being proposed;
- been able to make their views known throughout the process;
- had opportunities to be actively involved in shaping the emerging neighbourhood plan; and
- been made aware of how their views have informed the draft neighbourhood plan.

1.3 The Statement should be read alongside the evidence base and other documents which have informed the preparation of the Plan. Evidence base documents can be accessed from the Neighbourhood Plan website at www.irchesterparishnhp.com. Prior to the submission of the Plan to the Borough Council of Wellingborough there are two formal or statutory stages of consultation as follows:
Consultation undertaken by the Borough Council following receipt of an application for designation of a Neighbourhood Area by the Parish Council; and

Consultation undertaken by the Parish Council following the preparation of a draft (Pre-Submission) Plan. This is also referred to as the Regulation 14 stage.

1.4 Between these two statutory stages of consultation, the Steering Group undertook two further stages of public consultation and considerable informal consultation which is also documented in this Statement.

2.0 DESIGNATING THE NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA

The Need for a Neighbourhood Plan

2.1 The Irchester Parish Council determined on 29 August 2012 to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan. Essentially this decision was a response to pressure for development on the periphery of Irchester and concerns about the impact that this could have on the character and infrastructure of the village. Neighbourhood planning was perceived by the Parish Council as an opportunity for the local community to influence the future location and type of development in the Parish.

2.2 Irchester Parish Council qualifies as a relevant body under section 61G of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as inserted by paragraph 2 of Schedule 9 of the Localism Act 2011 and early on in the development of the Neighbourhood Plan took the decision to establish a Steering Group of Parish Councillors and residents to develop the Plan. The Parish Council also engaged Armstrong Rigg Planning as the project’s planning consultants from an early stage in the process. The Steering Group currently consists of 3 Parish Councillors, 6 co-opted members of the community and an Administrator (who is also the Parish Council Clerk). Other members of the community and stakeholders have been invited to attend meetings when appropriate. The Steering Group reports to the Parish Council on a monthly basis.

Defining the Neighbourhood Area

2.3 The Parish Council and the Steering Group agreed to apply to designate the whole of the parish of Irchester as the Neighbourhood Area. This decision was taken as it was felt that any policies which were developed should be for the benefit of Irchester, Little Irchester and Knuston and as the parish area has a shared historical, community and landscape context.

2.4 Irchester Parish Council applied to the Borough Council of Wellingborough for the Neighbourhood Area to be designated on 1st October 2012 (Appendix A). The Borough Council of Wellingborough undertook consultation as required by Regulation 6 until 16th November 2012 and issued a formal decision notice (Appendix B) and plan (Appendix C) designating Irchester Neighbourhood Area on 4th December 2012. The designation was publicised by the Borough Council in accordance with Section 7 of the Regulations.
3.0 EARLY COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

3.1 The following list provides a brief summary of the engagement activities that the Steering Group undertook prior to the publication of the Consultation Draft Plan in September 2016. The purpose of the consultation was to engage with a broad range of people from the local community and other stakeholders to develop a clear understanding of the issues that the Plan should seek to address.

3.2 Communication: The Steering Group established at the start a website (www.irchesternhp.com) on to which minutes, reports and documents could be made accessible. The website was publicised through the production of posters that were distributed in an edition of the Irchester Village Voice, a community magazine that is delivered to every home and business in the Parish. The Poster also asked for people to display them, which many did which highlighted the website. The Irchester Village Voice is produced every quarter and a written report on the progress of the Plan was always included. Pens and parish views postcards, again highlighting the website, were also produced. These items were distributed at Neighbourhood Plan events, other community events and passed on to community groups in the Neighbourhood Plan area to be shared with their members. Finally a reference file of printed copies of minutes, reports and documents was made available at Irchester Library for public inspection.

3.3 Early Stages: In February 2012, Irchester Parish Council held a public meeting in Irchester Village Hall to which any landowner or developer was asked to come along and present any proposals. At this meeting volunteers were asked to come forward to form a Parish Plan Group, which subsequently in August 2012 proposed to the Irchester Parish Council to develop a Neighbourhood Plan.

3.4 Housing Needs Survey: During October-December 2012 a Housing Needs Survey designed by the Borough Council of Wellingborough was delivered to every household. Approximately 36% of households responded. The results of this survey revealed a need for around 150 houses in the main village of Irchester in the period 2011-2031. (Evidence base: Irchester Rural Housing Survey, Borough Council of Wellingborough (January 2013).

3.5 Community Event Day: In April-May 2013 consultation events for community groups, businesses and residents were held. The largest was held at Irchester Village Hall with two smaller events at Little Irchester and Knuston. At the events displays and a presentation explained the purpose of a Neighbourhood Plan, the plan process was explained, and examples of the type of issues that the Plan might address were highlighted. Display Boards relating to particular aspects of the Neighbourhood Plan, key facts and figures about the Parish of Irchester were displayed. People were asked to use post-it notes to highlight what they liked and didn’t like about the Neighbourhood Plan area; and what the Neighbourhood Plan area does not have that they might be like to achieve as part of the Plan. (Evidence base: Community Event Day Consultation Responses (April/May 2013).
3.6 **Meetings with Local Official Bodies**: Regular meetings have also been held with Officers of the Borough Council of Wellingborough to discuss progress on the Neighbourhood Plan throughout the process. Meetings, correspondence and conservations were also held with representatives of Irchester Community Primary School, Northamptonshire County Council's Education, and Highways Departments.

3.7 **Appointment of Consultants**: At the end of 2013, following funding from the Irchester Parish Council and a grant from Locality, Armstrong Rigg Planning (ARP) were appointed as the project’s planning consultants to help develop the plan.

3.8 **Search for Sites**: Between February-April 2014, ARP and representatives from the Steering Group made contact and held meetings with key stakeholders to enquire if they wished to be involved in the development of the Local Plan and landowners to see if they wished to promote their land for inclusion in the Neighbourhood Plan. Various stakeholders and landowners committed to being part of the plan and have engaged with the Steering Group through the Neighbourhood Plan process. Some of the stakeholders and landowners decided not to be part of the process, and from time to time did engage with the Steering Group to ask for updates. During the development of the Neighbourhood Plan various developers put forward Planning Applications for largescale development on the sites to the north of Irchester. These applications were considered by the Planning Committee of the Borough Council of Wellingborough and refused. In all cases they went on to Planning Appeals where they were dismissed by the Planning Inspectors. Consequently, while these Planning Applications were being considered it delayed the work on the Steering Group until outcomes had been decided by the relevant authorities.

3.9 **Preparation of Draft Assessments on Sites**: Between April-May 2014 draft reports were prepared on the various potential development sites which included a Highways Assessment by Northamptonshire County Council Highways (April 2014), an Environmental Assessment (Landscape, Archaeology and Ecology) prepared by ACD Landscape Architects Ltd (March 2014). These reports provided additional information to the Consultant (ARP) and the Steering Group and informed consideration of any potential development site coming forward. These documents help inform the Stage 1 Consultation. As the plan developed the Highways Assessment was also reviewed as an Addendum by Northamptonshire County Council Highways (August 2015) and also a Irchester, Little Irchester and Knuston Character Assessment (April 2017) was undertaken.

3.10 **Stage 1 Consultation**: In May 2014 a Stage 1 Consultation Leaflet was delivered to every home and business in the Neighbourhood Plan Area. Residents were asked to give their views on ‘broad location of growth’ for Irchester. Three potential growth zones were highlighted around the village of Irchester as the Northern, North-East and Southern areas. Two drop-in consultation events were held at Irchester Library in June 2014 as part of this process. The outcome of the vote was very close, with no clear preference to see development in one of the zones over the others. (Evidence Base: Stage 1 Consultation Results July 2014)
3.11 **Historic Landscape Assessment:** Due to various Planning Applications taking place in the period 2013-2016 and as a result Planning Appeals on applications in Irchester it emerged that an issue of particular importance in the Neighbourhood Plan Area is the need to conserve the significance of heritage assets. In particular the landscape setting of St. Katharine’s Church, a Grade I Listed building. This resulted in a Historic Landscape Assessment being undertaken that considered all potential development sites. (Evidence Base: Historic Landscape Assessment, MOLA (September 2015). Following discussion with various stakeholders this Assessment was later reviewed and was confirmed as a robust and appropriate assessment by Historic England (Evidence Base: Historic Landscape Assessment (Updated Version), MOLA (March 2016).

3.12 **Stage 2 Consultation:** In September 2015 a Stage 2 Consultation Leaflet was delivered to every household and business in the Neighbourhood Plan Area with the Irchester Village Voice magazine. It outlined the importance of the significance of conserving our heritage assets, in particular that of St. Katharine’s Church and how housing should be directed away from sites which contribute to the setting of the Church. As a result two sites were put forward for potential development with the consultation seeking views on whether either site should be allocated for 150 homes or both sites for 75 homes each. A drop-in consultation event was also held at Irchester Library in September 2015 as part of this process. There was a clear preference for allocating both 75 dwellings on Land off Austin Close and 75 dwellings on Land South off James Street. (Evidence Base: Stage 2 Consultation Results October 2015)

4.0 **THE CONSULTATION DRAFT PLAN (SEPTEMBER 2016)**

4.1 Regulation 14 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2014 required the Irchester Parish Council to:

- Publicise, in a manner that is likely to bring it to the attention of people who live, work or carry on business in the Neighbourhood Plan Area, details of the Plan including where and how it may be inspected, how to make representations and the date by which representations must be received, being not less than 6 weeks from the date on which the Plan is first published.

- Consult any consultation body referred to in paragraph 1 of Schedule 1 of the Regulations whose interests may be affected by the Plan proposal, and

- Send a copy of the Plan proposed to the Borough Council of Wellingborough

4.2 Collectively, all of the information from the early stages of the consultation informed the preparation of a draft vision and objectives for the Consultation Draft Neighbourhood Plan and a number of draft policies to help achieve the objectives. The Neighbourhood Plan policies were drafted in close collaboration with the Borough Council of Wellingborough to ensure that the emerging policies were not in conflict with the National Planning Policy Framework, were aligned to the Local Development Plan
and that they were usable in a Development Management context. The Borough Council also assisted early consultation and liaison with Historic England, the North Northamptonshire Joint Planning Unit and Northamptonshire County Council Highways. The draft vision, objectives and policies are outlined in Table 1:

**Table 1: Draft Vision, Objectives and Policies of Consultation Draft Neighbourhood Plan (Sep 2016)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Vision</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• The parish will remain an independent and distinctive rural community comprising the main village of Irchester and the hamlets of Knuston and Little Irchester.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The parish’s rich architectural and environmental heritage will be conserved and enhanced for the benefit of current villagers and for future generations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Our open social structure and mixed community is sustained and reinforced with activities and facilities that enhance them, including the provision of affordable housing.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• The adverse impact of road traffic on the community will be lessened. Transport and other links to neighbouring communities will be enhanced.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• The overall aim is that residents will want to continue to live in the parish, and that others will wish they could.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. To meet the future housing needs of the parish.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. To conserve the special historic character of the village including the protection and enhancement of key heritage assets and important views.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. To protect and support the development of local facilities and services through S106 agreements.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. To promote improved transport facilities and connectivity through S106 agreements.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policies</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Policy 1: Settlement Boundary Policy</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>The Neighbourhood Plan designates settlement boundaries for Irchester and Little Irchester, as shown on the Irchester and Little Irchester Policy Maps, for the purpose of defining where open countryside and rural settlement policies apply. There is no settlement boundary designated for Knuston as the whole of this settlement is designated as within the open countryside.</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Policy 2: Heritage Policy</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Any development in the Neighbourhood Plan A rea and the Parish of Irchester will:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. Be designed to protect, preserve or enhance the significance of heritage assets in the parish and their settings in particular:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Grade I Listed St Katharine’s Church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Scheduled Ancient Monument of the Roman Town of Irchester and preceding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Iron Age Settlement at Chester Farm and its associated Grade II* and Grade II</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Listed Buildings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Grade II Listed Knuston Hall and its surrounding curtilage and landscape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Grade II Listed Ditchford Bridge and attached Causeway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Listed buildings that exist in the main High Street area of Irchester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Archaeological remains and particularly those located in Station Road, Irchester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii. Protect and where possible enhance key views and vistas into and out of the settlement. In particular the historic landscape views obtained from village gateways by road and footpaths into and from High Street (Chester Road), Station Road, Wollaston Road and Farndish Road in Irchester.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Policy 3: Land off Austin Close

The Neighbourhood Plan allocates 5.14ha of land off Austin Close, as shown on the Policies Map, for housing development of approximately 75 dwellings. The site comprises private land and a 1.1ha area of Public Open Space (POS) owned by Irchester Parish Council, which is required for access into the wider site.

Development proposals for the land allocated for housing will be supported, provided they accord with the following principles:

i. The development shall be laid out in accordance with the zonal drawing provided at Figure 8, including the following provisions:
   - The vehicular access shall be off Austin Close from the existing turning head located adjacent to No.22 Austin Close and continue in a straight line across the existing Public Open Space to the field beyond.
   - Dwellings shall be located to the south of this access road facing towards the Public Open Space.
   - The area of Public Open Space lost through providing access into the site and housing to the south of the access road will be re-provided directly adjoining the north of the existing Public Open Space.
   - Vehicular access into the on-site open space shall be provided to enable management by the Irchester Parish Council.
   - The skate park on site shall be retained in its current location.
   - A turning head or other option shall be provided along the site’s southern boundary that would allow future road access into the fields to the southeast of the site should this land be required for development post-2031.
   - The public footpath that runs through the middle of the site shall be retained and incorporated into the proposal.

ii. Noise impact from the adjacent railway line will be shown to be adequately mitigated.

iii. The mix of housing provided on site will be reflective of the most up to date assessment of housing needs arising in the Parish (currently the 2013 Irchester Rural Housing Survey) and include a mix of 1-4 bedroom dwellings including a proportion of flats and bungalows.

iv. The development will protect and where possible enhance on-site biodiversity.

v. The development will be designed to integrate into the wider settlement linking to cycle, pedestrian, public transport and vehicular networks. Pedestrian access into the site will be provided along the existing farm access route adjoining the railway line from Station Road.

vi. The potential for pedestrian access into the site along the former allotments’ trackway adjoining the west of the site from Station Road will be explored.

vii. 40% of the total dwellings are provided as affordable homes, subject to viability.

viii. The existing scout storage hut located on the open space will require removal to make way for the access road and dwellings fronting it. Alternative provision of this facility (or a financial contribution commensurate with its re-provision) will be sought either on the re-provided open space or elsewhere in the community.

ix. Highways access shall be designed to a standard capable of accommodating 150 dwellings to future-proof potential access into land south of the site should it be required for development post-2031.
Policy 4: Land south of James Street

The Neighbourhood Plan allocates 3.98ha of land south of James Street, as shown on the Policies Map, for housing development of approximately 75 dwellings, public open space and a 0.3ha area reserved for a future community facility.

Development proposals for the land allocated for housing will be supported, provided they accord with the following principles:

i. The development shall be laid out in accordance with the zonal drawing provided at Figure 9, including the following provisions:
   - Vehicular access shall be provided from Farndish Road.
   - A pedestrian footpath shall be provided along the eastern side of Farndish Road from where it currently stops to the northwest of the site to the site’s vehicular entrance. A second pedestrian entrance into the site shall be provided from Farndish Road at the north-west corner of the site. This access will be designed to allow emergency service vehicles a secondary access point into the development.
   - 0.53ha of Public Open Space shall be provided on site in accordance with Saved Local Plan Policy L7 (i.e. 0.35ha per 50 dwellings).
   - In addition to this Public Open Space an additional 0.3ha area of open space shall be provided to be reserved as the potential location of a future community facility and provided as Public Open Space in the meantime.
   - An easement of 5m either side of the water main crossing the site shall be provided and incorporated into the site’s Public Open Space provision (N.B. the area reserved for community facilities should not form part of the easement).
   - A 5m wide landscape buffer shall be provided to the site’s boundaries. Along the eastern, southern and western boundaries it will create a strong and attractive settlement boundary. Along the northern boundary it will mitigate against any adverse impact on the existing properties along James Street and be incorporated into residential gardens where necessary to avoid security concerns to these properties.
   - The site layout shall consider views and vistas towards the Grade I Listed St Katharine’s Church.

ii. The mix of housing provided on site will reflect the most up to date assessment of housing needs arising in the Parish (currently the 2013 Housing Needs Survey) and include a mix of 1-4 bedroom dwellings including a proportion of flats and bungalows.

iii. The development will be designed to protect, enhance or better reveal the significance of heritage assets and their settings, most notably the Grade I Listed St Katharine’s Church.

iv. The development will protect and where possible enhance on-site biodiversity.

v. The development will be designed to integrate into the wider settlement linking to cycle, pedestrian, public transport and vehicular networks.

vi. 40% of the total dwellings will be provided as affordable homes, subject to viability and national policy regarding affordable housing thresholds.

vii. Highways access shall be designed to a standard capable of accommodating 150 dwellings to future-proof potential access into land south of the site should it be required for development post 2031.

viii. Consideration shall be given to the need to widen Farndish Road to mitigate potential highways impact from the development. Consideration shall also be given to highways issues and impacts on surrounding roads arising from the development.
Formal consultation period—16th September 2016 to 28th October 2016.

4.3 An Information Leaflet on the Consultation Draft Plan was delivered with the early September 2016 edition of the Irchester Village Voice magazine to every household and business within the Neighbourhood Plan Area. The Leaflet explained that copies of the Consultation Draft Plan were available for viewing on the Neighbourhood Plan website, hard copies were available for collection from Irchester Library or alternatively the Steering Group Administrator could be contacted to request a copy. The Information Leaflet also gave an overview on the Background to the Plan and how people could comment on the Consultation Draft Plan. Drop-in sessions were held at the following times at Irchester Library:

- Tuesday 20th September 2016, 4pm-7pm
- Tuesday 18th October 2016, 4pm-7pm

4.3 In Table 2 can be seen the list of organisations who were consulted by email or letter which included a copy of the Consultation Draft Plan. In addition to the organisations in this list, landowners that had promoted land for allocation in the Neighbourhood Plan were contacted.

Table 2: List of organisations that were sent the Consultation Draft Neighbourhood Plan (Sep 2016)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisation Consulted</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>East Northamptonshire Council, Planning Policy and Conservation Manager</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bedford Borough Council</td>
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<td>North Northamptonshire Joint Planning Unit</td>
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<tr>
<td>Northamptonshire County Council, Head of Planning Policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Doddington Parish Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>Irthlingborough Town Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>Podington Parish Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rushden Town Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wollaston Parish Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wymington Parish Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northamptonshire County Council Highways</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highways England</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Irchester Parish Councillors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borough Council of Wellingborough</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borough Council of Wellingborough, Councillors for Irchester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northamptonshire County Council, Irchester County Councillor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historic England</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment Agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural England</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nene Valley Nature Improvement Area</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Wildlife Trust: Northamptonshire</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Mobile Operators Association</td>
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- Western Power
- National Grid Plant Protection
- Amec Foster Wheeler (obo National Grid)
- Anglian Water Services Ltd
- Homes and Communities Agency
- Network Rail
- Wellingborough Homes
- Knuston Hall Residential College for Adult Education
- Irchester Community Primary School
- Irchester Country Park
- Chester Farm (Heritage Site)
- Irchester Parish Historical Society
- Irchester Sports Association
- Irchester Bowls Club
- Irchester Scouts
- Irchester Surgery

**Consultation Responses**

4.4 A total of 23 representations were received, including 9 from local residents, with the remainder from the organisations listed above and from landowners. The representations received are summarised at Appendix D. The left hand column of the Appendix D highlights the comments and the right hand column highlights the Steering Group responses and any relevant changes to be made to the Draft Consultation Plan (September 2016). In accordance Regulation 15 of the Regulations, Appendix D demonstrates how the concerns raised during the Regulation 14 consultation have been considered and where relevant addressed in the plan.
5.0 SCREENING OPINIONS FOR STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (SEA) AND HABITATS REGULATION ASSESSMENT (HRA)

5.1 Following the Regulation 14 consultation, a Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment Draft Screening Report (‘Draft Screening Report’) was prepared by the Irchester, Knuston and Little Irchester Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (‘the Steering Group’) on behalf of Irchester Parish Council in order to inform:

1. A determination under Paragraph 9 (1) of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (the Regulations) on whether or not a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is required for the Irchester, Knuston and Little Irchester Neighbourhood Plan (‘the Neighbourhood Plan’); and

2. A determination in accordance with Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive and with Regulation 61 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended) on whether or not a Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) is required for the Plan.

5.2 The Draft Screening Report was sent to the consultation bodies (i.e. Historic England, Natural England and the Environment Agency for SEA and Natural England for HRA) in February 2017. It presents a draft determination that neither an SEA nor a HRA are required for the Neighbourhood Plan.

5.3 In addition to the Draft Screening Report, the Steering Group prepared a Sustainability Assessment that was also sent to the consultation bodies. This assessment draws together the evidence base prepared on behalf of the Steering Group in developing the Neighbourhood Plan (e.g. reports on highways, heritage, archaeology, ecology, trees and landscape) and demonstrates that the site allocations chosen represent the most sustainable options for development in the Neighbourhood Area.

Consultation Responses

5.4 The Environment Agency responded to the SEA consultation on 20th March 2017 (See Appendix E) stating that:

_We have inspected the information submitted and consider that the Irchester Neighbourhood Plan is unlikely to have significant effects on the environment which are of interest to the Environment Agency._
5.5 Natural England responded to the SEA and HRA consultation on 4th April 2017 (See Appendix F) stating:

“Screening Request: Strategic Environmental Assessment
It is our advice, on the basis of the material supplied with the consultation, that, in so far as our strategic environmental interests are concerned (including but not limited to statutory designated sites, landscapes and protected species, geology and soils), that there are unlikely to be significant environmental effects from the proposed plan.”

“Habitats Regulation Assessment
I can also confirm that Natural England agrees with the report’s conclusions that the Irchester Neighbourhood Plan, is in line with the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy and will contribute to the mitigation strategy payments required for the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area (SPA). Thus the plan would not be likely to result in a significant effect on any European Site, either alone or in combination and therefore no further assessment work would be required.”

5.6 Historic England responded to the SEA consultation on 30th March 2017 (see Appendix G). In this response they concluded that an SEA is likely to be required, based on the information they had available at the time. In response to Historic England’s comments, the Steering Group prepared a Strategic Environmental Assessment Draft Screening Report – Heritage Update (April 2017) which details the level of historic environment evidence prepared in support of the Neighbourhood Plan and reiterates the draft determination that an SEA is not required. This report ensured that Historic England had all the evidence they required to provide a Screening Opinion. On the basis of this evidence, Historic England issued a revised Screening Opinion (Appendix H) on 2nd May 2017 stating:

“For the purposes of this consultation, Historic England will confine its advice to the question ‘Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment?’ in respect of our area of concern, cultural heritage. We note that the SEA screening statement considers that an SEA is not required. Following submission of more detailed information described above and with further consideration, we remain of the view that a rigorous assessment of the potential impact on the historic environment (both designated and non-designated assets and their settings) of a site allocation for 75 dwellings at land south of James Street is required. In this case, a more rigorous heritage impact assessment of the proposed housing site south of James Street would instead be acceptable.”

5.7 Following this response, further discussions with Historic England by the Steering Group, their Consultants ARP and Officers from the Borough Council of Wellingborough confirmed that the additional
production of a specific assessment of Policy 4: Land South of James Street would meet their requirements. A Historical Assessment – Policy 4: Land South of James Street (September 2017) was subsequently produced and sent to Historic England for consultation. This assessment recommended several changes to the wording of Policy 4 that are set out in the table below.

**Table 3: Revised Wording to Policy 4: Land South of James Street**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Revised Wording (Additions Underlined)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Policy 4: Land south of James Street</strong></td>
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The Neighbourhood Plan allocates 3.98ha of land south of James Street, as shown on the Policies Map, for housing development of approximately 75 dwellings, public open space and a 0.3ha area reserved for a future community facility.

Development proposals for the land allocated for housing will be supported, provided they accord with the following principles:

i. The development shall be laid out in accordance with the zonal drawing provided at Figure 9, including the following provisions:

- Vehicular access shall be provided from Farndish Road.
- A pedestrian footpath shall be provided along the eastern side of Farndish Road from where it currently stops to the northwest of the site to the site’s vehicular entrance. A second pedestrian entrance into the site shall be provided from Farndish Road at the north-west corner of the site. This access will be designed to allow emergency service vehicles a secondary access point into the development.
- Public Open Space shall be provided on site in accordance with adopted standards published by the Borough Council of Wellingborough.
- In addition to this Public Open Space an additional 0.3ha area of open space shall be provided to be reserved as the potential location of a future community facility and provided as Public Open Space in the meantime.
- An easement of 5m either side of the water main crossing the site shall be provided and incorporated into the site’s Public Open Space provision (N.B. the area reserved for community facilities should not form part of the easement).
- A 5m wide landscape buffer shall be provided to the site’s boundaries. Along the eastern, southern and western boundaries it will create a strong and attractive settlement boundary and will be designed to enhance views towards the Grade I Listed St Katharine’s Church by screening both existing and proposed modern development. Along the northern boundary it will mitigate against any adverse impact on the existing
properties along James Street and be incorporated into residential gardens where necessary to avoid security concerns to these properties.

- The site layout shall be informed by a detailed assessment of views towards the Grade I Listed St Katharine’s Church (included as part of the Heritage Impact Assessment require by point iii. below) to preserve key views towards the church spire along Farndish Road to the south of the site and to identify key vistas towards the church from within the site that can be designed into the layout to provide newly accessible and uninterrupted views towards the church spire.

ii. The mix of housing provided on site will reflect the most up to date assessment of housing needs arising in the Parish (currently the 2013 Housing Needs Survey) and include a mix of 1-4 bedroom dwellings including a proportion of flats and bungalows.

iii. The development will be designed to protect, enhance or better reveal the significance of heritage assets and their settings, most notably the Grade I Listed St Katharine’s Church. It will meet the design requirements set out under point i. and will additionally be informed by a Heritage Impact Assessment and Archaeological Assessments that will be prepared in consultation with Historic England and Northamptonshire County Council’s Archaeological Service.

iv. The development will protect and where possible enhance on-site biodiversity.

v. The development will make a financial contribution towards mitigating impacts on the Upper Nene Gravel Pits Special Protection Area (SPA) in accordance with JCS Policy 4 and ‘The Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area Supplementary Planning Document - Addendum to the SPA SPD: Mitigation Strategy’.

vi. The existing water main located within the boundary of the site needs to be incorporated into the proposed layout of the site. However, if this is not possible then the development can apply to divert existing assets under the Water Industry Act 1991.

vii. The development will be designed to integrate into the wider settlement linking to cycle, pedestrian, public transport and vehicular networks.

viii. 40% of the total dwellings will be provided as affordable homes, subject to viability and national policy regarding affordable housing thresholds.

ix. Highways access shall be designed to a standard capable of accommodating 150 dwellings to
future-proof potential access into land south of the site should it be required for development post-2031.

x. Consideration shall be given to the need to widen Farndish Road to mitigate potential highways impact from the development. Consideration shall also be given to highways issues and impacts on surrounding roads arising from the development.

5.8 In response to receiving the Historical Assessment – Policy 4: Land South of James Street (September 2017), Historic England responded on 11th October 2017 stating that “We have no further comments to make” (Appendix I).

6.0 CONCLUSION

6.1 This Consultation Statement explains the measures taken to ensure that the community has:

- Been fully informed of what is being proposed
- Been able to make its views known throughout the process
- Had the opportunity to be actively involved in shaping the emerging Plan
- Been made aware of how its views have informed the preparation of the Plan

6.2 The Consultation Statement demonstrates that the pre-submission consultation and publicity requirements set out in Regulation 14 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 have been exceeded and that a significant level of additional consultation, engagement, and research has been undertaken. Comments received have been fully considered and have guided and shaped the Plan so that it reflects what local people wish to see happen in the Neighbourhood Area.
Appendix A: Application for Designation of a Neighbourhood Area

THE PARISH COUNCIL OF IRCHESTER

Clerk
Nikki Daft MILCM
45 Park Road
Irthlingborough
Northants
NN9 5PV

1st October 2012

Steven Wood
Borough Council of Wellingborough
Swanspool House
Doddington Road
Wellingborough
Northants
NN8 1BP

Dear Mr Wood

Re: Application for Designation of a Neighbourhood Plan Area - Irchester Parish Council

At the parish council meeting on 29th August 2012 the councillors decided that they would like to develop a Neighbourhood Plan.

Please accept this letter as a formal request to register Irchester Parish Council’s intent in producing a Neighbourhood Plan.

As per the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 please find enclosed a map which identifies the area which the application relates to. The Parish Council and the NHP steering group have agreed to designate the whole of the parish of Irchester as the Neighbourhood Plan area.

The Parish Council and Steering Group have included the parish as a whole as they feel that any policies which are developed should be for the benefit of Irchester, Little Irchester and Knuston respectively. The area of the parish has been chosen due to its historical, community and landscape context. In addition the group who have been working on a parish plan have defined this as a good area to work on.

Irchester Parish Council qualifies as a relevant body under section 61G of the amended Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and has set up a Steering Group of Councils and residents for the Neighbourhood Plan process.

We you please confirm that the proposed area for this Neighbourhood Plan is appropriate.

Yours sincerely,

Nikki Daft
Clerk to Irchester Parish Council
Appendix B: Neighbourhood Area Decision Notice

Section 61G Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as inserted by paragraph 2 of Schedule 9 of the Localism Act 2011

An application for the designation of the parish of Irchester as a Neighbourhood Area was received from the Parish Council of Irchester dated 1 October 2012. The application was advertised and comments invited until 16 November 2012.

Following consideration of the application, the area shown on the attached map is designated as ‘Irchester Neighbourhood Area’.

Signed

Steven Wood
Head of Planning and Local Development

Dated: 4 December 2012
Appendix C: Neighbourhood Area Plan
**Appendix D: Regulation 14 Consultation Responses - October 2017.**
**In response to Consultation Draft Neighbourhood Plan (September 2016)**

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<tr>
<th>Consultee</th>
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<td>Anglian Water 28.10.16</td>
<td>It is important to note that the potential sites (IR7, IR11, IR13 and IR14) are expected to require improvements to the foul sewerage network to enable these developments to come forward. There may also be a need for off-site water supply network to enable these developments dependent upon the scale of growth proposed to come forward. In relation to the site at James Street there is an existing water main located within the boundary of the site. This asset will need to be incorporated into the proposed site layout for this site. However, if this is not possible developers can apply to divert existing assets under the provisions of the Water Industry Act 1991.</td>
<td>The Steering Group note that improvements to the foul sewerage network are likely to be required and that there may also be a need for off-site water supply network improvements. The Steering Group have worked with the promoters of the proposed site allocations to ensure that their sites can access existing utilities infrastructure. It is expected that any contributions required towards improving this infrastructure will be identified and secured at planning application stage. The Steering Group are aware of the water main located through the site and included a requirement in the draft policy for a 5m easement either side of this pipe to be included in the design of proposals for the site. In response to Anglian Water’s comments, the Steering Group have amended this policy to also refer to the provisions of the Water Industry Act 1991 regarding diverting assets.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Borough Council of Wellingborough 28.10.16</td>
<td>As a council we are keen to continue to discuss the more procedural aspects of plan making, including the preparation of evidence, whenever you require assistance. Overall the plan is considered to be in general conformity with the strategic policies set out in the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (JCS). In particular, the allocation of two housing sites (Policies 3 &amp; 4) to meet the housing requirements set out in Policy 29 is welcomed and supported. This is a firm indication that the plan has been positively prepared to deliver identified housing need. The plan also adds appropriate local detail to the JCS policies to help shape and direct sustainable development in the parish. Policy 2 of the Neighbourhood Plan adds suitable local detail to JCS Policies 2 and 3. Further local detail may be able to be added following completion of the character appraisal work which is currently being undertaken.</td>
<td>The Steering Group note the Council’s ongoing support in advising on procedural matters regarding the development of the plan. The Steering Group welcome the Council’s conclusion that the plan is in general conformity with the JCS, has been positively prepared and that it adds appropriate local detail to JCS policies.</td>
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<td>I suggest you amend Page 4 – glossary – Affordable Housing – bullet 2 “shared ownership” to “intermediate housing such as shared ownership and the rent to buy”.</td>
<td>The Steering Group have amended the definition of Affordable House to refer to “intermediate housing such as shared ownership and the rent to buy” rather than “shared ownership”.</td>
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<td><strong>Northamptonshire County Council Highways 27.09.16</strong></td>
<td>Para 2.2: ‘Expressway’ has a specific meaning under Highways England Road Investment Strategies. Under this definition the A45 is not currently an expressway (although there is the aspiration to upgrade it to one). To avoid confusion please remove all references to ‘expressway’ within the document. Para 2.3 talks about the Midland Main Line, however it does not talk about where people tend to access the rail service from. This additional information would be useful to set the neighbourhood plan in context. Add in details about use of Wellingborough/Bedford rail station, this could include using census data. Para 3.2 &amp; 5.6: Objective 4 refers to promoting improved transport facilities and connectivity through S106 agreements. All S106 agreements are now operating under the new CIL requirements, which BCW is looking to progress as part of the Local Plan. Add in reference to CIL to cover any future adoption. Northamptonshire Highways supports the wording of Policy 3 and Policy 4. Para 5.8 / Table 2: It may also be useful to clarify which footpaths there is a desire to upgrade between Irchester and Rushden/Wellingborough. Provide map. Where possible it would be useful to have an indication of the cost of some of the core funding priorities to give an idea of the funding level required so that if any funding does become available or opportunities to bid for funding are not missed. Insert indicative costs where possible.</td>
<td>The Steering Group have removed the use of the word expressway. The Steering Group have included details on Wellingborough/Bedford Railway Stations The Steering Group have added reference to the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). The Steering Group note the support of Northamptonshire Highways. Para 5.8 / Table 2: Rather than providing a map of the upgrade to footpaths between Irchester and Rushden/Wellingborough the Steering Group have added further detail by listing the roads referred to. The Steering Group have further discussed this point with Northamptonshire Highways and agreed that it is not desirable to include costs in the plan as they are likely to change and will cost money to obtain. However, the Parish Council will keep a record of any costings for work they do</td>
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<td>The core funding priorities relating to highways and transport would need to be looked at on a case by case basis. For example it is not clear what is meant by ‘Improvements to car parking facilities’ would encompass.</td>
<td>receive in order to maximise funding opportunities.</td>
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<td>Following further discussion and agreement with Northamptonshire Highways several changes have been made to the list of items under ‘Improvements to car parking facilities’. These are - the addition of the wording “(parking bays)” to several items for added clarity; - the deletion of item d. regarding improvements in the School Road and School Lane areas near to Irchester Community Primary School as Highways felt there was no solution other than the already included items regarding upgrading the Village Hall car park and adding parking bays in Baker Crescent; and - the addition of a small car-park at the recreation ground to the list due to recent highways problems caused by the relocation of the post-office.</td>
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<td>The following revised wording has been agreed: “a. In the centre of Irchester - Farndish Road, High Street and School Road areas (Parking Bays) b. In Wollaston Road between the junction of Berrill Street and Gray Street (Parking Bays). c. In Baker Crescent (Parking Bays). d. Additional parking provision in Farndish Road (Parking Bays) e. Upgrading the Irchester Village Hall car park f. In Wollaston Road on the Recreation Ground (small Car Park)”</td>
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<td>The Core Priorities for funding were established from consultation comments at event days and in response to two public consultation exercises (Stage 1 and Stage 2) as detailed in the Consultation Statement</td>
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<td>There appears to be a lack of quantitative evidence regarding car parking issues, to support the proposals in the NHP. Provide link to evidence base.</td>
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<td>Highways England</td>
<td>Highways England welcome the wording of Policies 3 and 4 that set out proposals to mitigate potential highways impact and make provision for sustainable transport usage. This will help encourage the use of more sustainable modes of transport and this is welcomed by Highways England as a means of safeguarding the operation of the A45. It is considered that there could be some localised impacts upon the A45, but we would expect these to be considered through the planning application process.</td>
<td>The Steering Group note Highways England’s support of the wording of policies 3 and 4 of the plan and their conclusion that localised impacts on the A45 would be able to be dealt with at planning application stage.</td>
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<td>Historic England</td>
<td>We welcome the emphasis given to the historic environment in the plan, and the inclusion of a footbridge to Chester Farm within funding priorities.</td>
<td>The Steering Group notes the support of Historic England in this regard.</td>
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<td>We also note that the plan includes proposed sites for housing, and we therefore draw your attention to our advice note on this which sets out the evidence necessary to support such policies: <a href="https://content.historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/historic-environment-and-site-allocations-in-local-plans/heag074-he-and-site-allocation-local-plans.pdf">https://content.historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/historic-environment-and-site-allocations-in-local-plans/heag074-he-and-site-allocation-local-plans.pdf</a></td>
<td>The Historic England Advice Note 3 (Historic England October 2015) at this link is referenced in the Irchester Historic Landscape Assessment which has formed a key piece of evidence in developing the plan. Advice Note 3 was published after the Irchester Historic Landscape Assessment, but this assessment has been reviewed in light of its contents and it is considered that the staged process undertaken in the assessment accords and is broadly compatible with the spirit of that set out on page 5 of Historic England Advice Note 3. This was confirmed by Claire Searson, Historic Environment Planning Adviser Historic England, in an email dated 28th January 2016 which is included as an Appendix to the Irchester Historic Landscape Assessment and concludes that it is “an appropriate and robust assessment of potential site allocations to be considered by the Neighbourhood Plan”.</td>
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<td><strong>Irchester Parish Historical Society</strong></td>
<td>The plan does not seem to have followed this - we have received no SEA screening consultation, and one is not present on your website, although reference is made to the regulations in the plan. We note the “Environmental Report” but this does not fulfil the requirements of the SEA regulations. We therefore advise you to re-visit this aspect of the plan in accordance with our advice, as at present the plan lacks the evidence base to demonstrate that the proposals for housing allocations are sustainable, and is therefore at risk of being found unsound at examination.</td>
<td>Following the consultation, a Strategic Environmental Assessment Draft Screening Report was prepared and Historic England consultation again. Please see main body of consultation statement for further details of this consultation.</td>
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| **King West (Austin Close Agent) on behalf of Mr S C Leveridge (Austin Close owner)** 28.10.16 | I confirm that the land owned by Mr Leveridge that forms part of the proposed Austin Close land allocation is available and deliverable for residential development. I also confirm that Mr Leveridge supports the emerging Neighbourhood Plan and the allocation of his land for residential development.  

In undertaking initial feasibility studies I have worked closely with Messrs WW Old & Son’s representative James Paynter of Sherwill, Drake, Forbes and, through the Steering Group, the Parish Council in respect of their individual land interests in the overall site. Together with Messrs Sherwill, Drake, Forbes, my firm have carried out investigations into the connections to services and confirm that these are available to serve the site through Western Power Distribution (electricity), Anglian Water (foul, surface and potable) and National Grid (gas). | The Steering Group note Mr Leveridge’s support of the allocation of his land in the Neighbourhood Plan and the work undertaken by King West on behalf of Mr Leveridge. This work has demonstrated that the land is available, suitable, achievable and viable for residential development such that it should be considered to be a deliverable housing site in accordance with footnote 11 to paragraph 49 of the NPPF. |
An investigation into a highway connection has also been undertaken following confirmation from Northants County Council that vehicular access of Austin Close may be acceptable with relatively minimal infrastructure subject to assessment. A subsequent assessment carried out by Matrix Transport and Infrastructure Consultants LTD has confirmed that a safe connection is possible off Austin Close with adequate visibility to serve the site.

Further investigations include highways access statement undertaken by WSP UK. This tested inter alia the potential trip generation of the site and the impact on local highways. The report concluded that the volume of trips was unlikely to impact on the local highway network.

Acoustic Air Limited carried out an assessment of the noise and vibration survey which demonstrated no significant impacts arising from the proximity of the proposed development to the railway. The report concluded that it would be possible to satisfy all internal and external noise standards subject to including mitigation measure where required; none of the mitigation measure are considered unusual for new developments near transportation sources.

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<td>National Grid 26.09.16</td>
<td>1211 Wellingborough to Ditchford Lane (1211) – HP Pipeline: From the consultation information provided, the above gas distribution pipeline does not interact with any of the proposed development sites. Whilst there is no implications for National Grid Gas Distribution’s Intermediate / High Pressure apparatus, there may however be Low Pressure (LP) / Medium Pressure (MP) Gas Distribution pipes present within proposed development sites. If further information is required in relation to the Gas Distribution network please contact: <a href="mailto:plantprotection@nationalgrid.com">plantprotection@nationalgrid.com</a></td>
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The Steering Group note the response of the National Grid and consider no further action necessary in this regard.
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<td><strong>Natural England 12.09.16</strong></td>
<td>Natural England notes that a Habitats Regulations Assessment screening report will be submitted to the Borough Council of Wellingborough alongside the Plan. This will need to include information regarding the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA SPD and mitigation strategy, as the neighbourhood plan includes 2 areas of residential developments, both for approximately 75 dwellings. Any net increase in residential dwellings, within 3km of the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA, will be required to make a financial contribution to mitigate the impact from an increase in residents in the area, who may use the SPA for recreation. The development allocations are approximately 1.8km and 1.9km from the SPA, therefore will need to make the mitigation payment. Natural England advises that this requirement is also included within policy 3 and policy 4 for each allocation site in the neighbourhood plan, to ensure the impact is fully covered.</td>
<td>The Steering Group have revised the wording of policy 3 and 4 to include reference to the requirement to make financial contributions to mitigate the impact from an increase in residents in the area, who may use the SPA for recreation. A Habitats Regulations Assessment screening report has since been prepared and Natural England consulted. In their response to this consultation, Natural England confirmed that they agree with the report’s conclusions that the Irchester Neighbourhood Plan, is in line with the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy and will contribute to the mitigation strategy payments required for the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area (SPA). Thus the plan would not be likely to result in a significant effect on any European Site, either alone or in combination and therefore no further assessment work would be required.</td>
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<td><strong>1st Irchester Scout Group</strong></td>
<td>I am the Group Secretary for 1st Irchester Scout Group, and I have been asked to send you an email with our feedback on the proposal to move our Scout hut. We understand the needs of the village plan, and the expansion required. In regards our Scout hut, we would like to work together to find a suitable new location, and plan how what we will require in the future.</td>
<td>The Steering Group notes the response from the 1st Irchester Scout Group and their support for working together to find an alternative location for their storage hut on the Austin Close playing field. The Steering Group consider that there are several potentially appropriate locations for the relocated scout hut and as development proposals on the site come forward, it will be a matter for the parish and scout group to determine the most appropriate location.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wollaston Parish Council 26.10.16</strong></td>
<td>Wollaston Parish Council are fully supportive of the draft plan and, in particular, your plan for the proposed cycleway between Wollaston and Irchester.</td>
<td>The Steering Group note and are grateful of Wollaston Parish Council’s support.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Peter Brett Associates (on behalf of Barwood Strategic Land II LLP) 28.10.16</strong></td>
<td>We are objecting to the above draft Plan on behalf of Barwood Strategic Land II LLP and Miss J.P. and Mr. R. Redden, who control land to the west of High Street, Irchester.</td>
<td>The Steering Group welcome the comments. However the NHP Steering Group has identified sites that are sustainable based on the evidence and work completed by the NHP process. See response to specific points below:</td>
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<td><strong>We have four main objections to the draft Plan:</strong></td>
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<td><strong>The Neighbourhood Plan is supported by a detailed and robust evidence base that sets out the reasons why the proposed allocations have been chosen and demonstrates that they are the most sustainable options for development.</strong></td>
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<td>1. Both of the locations now proposed for housing development have previously been shown to have significant constraints and we therefore question whether they are sustainable or suitable, available and achievable/viable as housing sites, as required by the National Planning Policy Framework (the NPPF). Furthermore, the evidence base to justify these proposed development locations instead of our clients’ land is inadequate;</td>
<td></td>
<td>The MOLA heritage report has been signed off as a robust assessment by Historic England. It led to Barwood Strategic Land’s site being discounted as a sustainable location for housing due to the harm its development would have on setting of the Grade I listed St Katharine’s Church. This conclusion is supported by the planning appeal decisions on land to the northwest of Irchester.</td>
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<td>2. The MOLA heritage report which forms a key part of the evidence base is deeply flawed and it has led the Neighbourhood Plan into error in excluding our clients’ site from the draft Plan. The first round of consultation, whilst inconclusive, ruled this site in, not out. We ask for it to be included again and we are happy to work with the Neighbourhood Plan Group to clarify heritage matters;</td>
<td></td>
<td>The Steering Group have met with and corresponded with Barwood Strategic Land and their representatives throughout the Neighbourhood Plan process. Their site has been assessed in the same thorough manner as every other site promoted for inclusion in the Neighbourhood Plan and has been repeatedly found to be an unsustainable location for housing at appeal.</td>
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<td>3. The merits of our clients’ proposals for sustainable housing development of their land have not been understood in the Neighbourhood Plan process. In particular, the planning application scheme refused by the Borough Council in August 2015 had specifically addressed the only objections raised by an earlier appeal Inspector and furthermore it attracted no objection from Historic England, yet these factors appear to have been disregarded; and</td>
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<td>The Joint Core Strategy sets a housing requirement of 150 dwellings for Irchester, with the Neighbourhood Plan is in accordance with.</td>
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<td>4. The Plan is not in conformity with the Joint Core Strategy which allows for more than 150 dwellings to be allocated to Irchester.</td>
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<td>The Steering Group note W W Old and Son’s support of the allocation of their land in the Neighbourhood Plan and the work undertaken by Sherwill Drake Forbes on behalf of W W Old and Son. This work has demonstrated that the land is available, suitable, achievable and viable for residential development such that it should</td>
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**Sherwill Drake Forbes (Austin Close Agent) on behalf of W W Old & Son (Austin Close Owner) 28.10.16**

We confirm that the land owned by W W Old & Son that forms part of the proposed Austin Close land allocation is available and deliverable for residential development. We also confirm that W W Old & Son support the emerging Neighbourhood Plan and the allocation of his land for residential development.

We confirm that the land owned by W W Old & Son that forms part of the proposed Austin Close land allocation is available and deliverable for residential development. We also confirm that W W Old & Son support the emerging Neighbourhood Plan and the allocation of his land for residential development.
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<td>In undertaking initial feasibility studies we have worked closely with Mr S Leveridge’s representative Rupert West of King West and, through the Steering Group, the Parish Council in respect of their individual land interests in the overall site. We have carried out investigations into the connections to services and confirm that these are available to serve the site through Western Power Distribution (electricity), Anglian Water (foul, surface and potable) and National Grid (gas). An investigation into a highway connection has also been undertaken following confirmation from Northants County Council that vehicular access of Austin Close may be acceptable with relatively minimal infrastructure subject to assessment. A subsequent assessment carried out by Matrix Transport and Infrastructure Consultants LTD has confirmed that a safe connection is possible off Austin Close with adequate visibility to serve the site. Further investigations include highways access statement undertaken by WSP UK. This tested inter alia the potential trip generation of the site and the impact on local highways. The report concluded that the volume of trips was unlikely to impact on the local highway network. Acoustic Air Limited carried out an assessment of the noise and vibration survey which demonstrated no significant impacts arising from the proximity of the proposed development to the railway. The report concluded that it would be possible to satisfy all internal and external noise standards subject to including mitigation measure where required; none of the mitigation measure are considered unusual for new developments near transportation sources.</td>
<td>be considered to be a deliverable housing site in accordance with footnote 11 to paragraph 49 of the NPPF.</td>
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### Consultee

**Turley (James Street Agent) on behalf of the F Saxby no 4 Settlement (James Street Owner)**

The Trustees have commissioned supporting work on transport and utilities which alongside the NHP evidence base documents, confirm that the site is deliverable. Work has also been progressing on proposed layout options which reflect the broad principles set out in Policy 4 of the NHP which allocates the site.

The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group must ensure that the Neighbourhood Plan meets the 'basic conditions' prescribed in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

Paragraph 2.18 of the NHP refers to housing need requirements, and identifies the requirement for Irchester to meet a housing requirement of 150 dwellings. We consider it would be beneficial to provide greater clarity on the difference between the Housing Needs Survey (2013) and the requirement set out in the North Northants JCS, as follows:

“A Housing Needs Survey was carried out in January 2013 and identified a total housing need of 39 dwellings in Irchester. These surveys provide a picture of the locally arising need at a specific point in time, and are normally reviewed every five years. Housing Needs Surveys are generally designed to identify the concealed households within a settlement and as such represents only part of the overall needs/demand for new houses in Irchester.

The North Northants JCS (2016) identifies a total requirement of 35,000 new dwellings across the Housing Market Area based on householder projections, with 7,000 dwellings required in the Borough of Wellingborough.

### Comments

The Steering Group note the work undertaken by Turley on behalf of the F Saxby no 4 Settlement. This work has demonstrated that the land is available, suitable, achievable and viable for residential development such that it should be considered to be a deliverable housing site in accordance with footnote 11 to paragraph 49 of the NPPF.

The submitted Neighbourhood Plan is accompanied by a basic conditions statements that demonstrates how it meets the 'basic conditions' prescribed in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

The Steering Group has reviewed paragraph 2.18 in light of this comment and made the following amendment to add extra clarity on the difference between the Housing Needs Survey (2013) and the requirement set out in the North Northants JCS.

“A Housing Needs Survey for the parish was completed by the Borough Council of Wellingborough in January 2013 and indicated that there was a housing need of 39 new dwellings (Irchester Rural Housing Survey, January 2013). This evidence was used to help identify the housing requirements for Irchester in the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy for the period 2011-2031, as outlined as paragraph 9.19 of the JCS. This paragraph states that the housing requirements for rural areas are aimed at meeting local needs and aspirations and have been identified from information provided by the local planning authorities on the scale of housing expected to take place in the Rural Areas, based on local needs surveys and/or assessment of development opportunities. Irchester is defined within the JCS area as one of the four largest villages within the Borough of Wellingborough. Policy 29 of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core
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<td>Irchester</td>
<td>Irchester is defined in the North Northants JCS as one of the four largest villages in Wellingborough, which is situated close to the Growth Towns, and therefore gives rise to a strategically significant level of locally arising housing need over the period to 2031. Therefore in order to meet the total housing requirement for the Borough, the Borough Council has identified a requirement of at least 150 dwellings for Irchester over the plan period. The Trustees support the proposed vision contained within the NHP which focusses on retaining, protecting and enhancing the distinctive characteristics of the Parish. We suggest that the vision should also recognise the need for sustainable growth of the village to support the future of the community and facilities.</td>
<td>Strategy identifies a housing requirement of 150 dwellings for the village of Irchester for the Plan period. It also identifies a requirement for 540 dwellings in the remainder of the Borough of Wellingborough outside of the four main villages (Earls Barton, Finedon, Wollaston and Irchester), this would include Little Irchester and Knuston. The Steering Group have considered this point and decided to add the following statement to the vision for the Parish: “We recognise the need for sustainable growth that will support the future of the community and its facilities.”</td>
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<td>POLICY 2: HERITAGE POLICY The second sentence in part two of the NHP policy 2 refers to the particular importance of historic landscape views from the High Street (Chester Road), Station Road, Wollaston Road and Farndish Road in Irchester. Views from Farndish Road and the land south of James Street will be considered as the allocation is brought forward, but the NHP should acknowledge that other locations (High Street and Station Road) are more sensitive, as evidenced by the MOLA Historic Landscape Assessment (March 2016) which forms part of the evidence base for the NHP. On this basis, we consider that Policy 2 should be reworded to reflect the different sensitivities of the cited locations in respect of potential impacts on the historic landscape.</td>
<td>The steering group have reviewed this point and amended the wording of this policy in line with the MOLA Historic Landscape Assessment as follows: “Protect and where possible enhance key views into and out of the settlement. In particular the historic landscape views obtained from village gateways by road and footpaths into and from High Street (Chester Road), Station Road, Wollaston Road and Farndish Road in Irchester. Of these, views in the proximity of High Street (Chester Road) and Station Road are considered to be highly sensitive to change.”</td>
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<td>POLICY 4: LAND SOUTH OF JAMES STREET We strongly support the allocation of 3.98ha of land south of James Street, as shown on the Policies Map, for housing development of approximately 75 dwellings, public open space and a 0.3ha area reserved for a future community facility.</td>
<td>The Steering Group note the support of F Saxby no 4 Settlement for the allocation of their land for development.</td>
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<td>Turley’s comments on Policy 4 include support for most of the principles identified in the draft policy allocating their client’s land, but suggested a change to Principle (i) as follow: “We acknowledge that bullet point 5 within Principle i states that an easement of 5m either side of the water main crossing the site shall be provided and incorporated into the site’s Public Open Space provision, and that the area reserved for community facilities should not form part of the easement. It has been envisaged that car parking for any community facility can be provided within the easement area, and on this basis we recommend that the policy is revised to reflect this.”</td>
<td>The Steering Group note this point, but consider that there is no good reason to amend this policy. While parking areas could be provided in the easement, the future use of this land is yet to be determined and it may be the case that there is no need for parking and the entire area would be required for community facilities. In this context it is felt that the future use of this land for the community should not be constrained by the water main easement.</td>
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| Public | A total of 8 comments were received from members of the public. 3 comments were received in support of the draft Neighbourhood Plan, 2 comments were neutral but raised some concerns and 3 comments objected to certain aspects of the plan or the entire plan. | The Steering Group note and are grateful of the comments of support. |

**Comments raised in support were:**
- At last we the residents of Irchester get to have a proper say in developments that effect our lives. Of recent years Developers have tried to impose developments on us that would ruin village life in Irchester and surrounding villages. We accept we need to grow and develop and this plan is the best way forward.
- A thoroughly professional job. It will be of great benefit to the village once it has been finalised and approved.
- Agree with locations for new development. I believe issues with sewage roads etc... can be ‘sorted’ as can amenities but you can’t move the church or replace the views across the valley/fields etc...
- I am delighted that the Planning Inspector dismissed the recent Station Road appeal. A major factor in the dismissal was the setting and views of the church. Neither of the possible developments has any impact on either the setting or views of the Church making them ideal locations.
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<td><strong>Concerns raised were:</strong></td>
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<td>The Steering Group note the concerns and can briefly answer the points as follows:</td>
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<td>• Policy 3 and Policy 4 are too prescriptive. The housing needs to be delivered by the market and agreed with both land owners and those responsible for planning.</td>
<td>We have consulted with landowners/agents for both of the sites in the developments of the Policy’s and they have confirmed they are deliverable.</td>
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<td>• Concerned regarding the delivery of access from Austin Close due to issues with parked cars and potential safety issues with children accessing the playground.</td>
<td>Highways concerns have already been raised with NCC Highways who advised on access points (see Highways Assessments). Highways issues will further be addressed as Planning Applications come forward.</td>
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<td>• Strongly objects to the proposed building of houses on the land south of James Street, and would prefer all of the houses to be built on the Austin Close site.</td>
<td>The outcome of a 50/50 split was the undertaken of the NHP Stage 2 Consultation.</td>
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<td>• If 150 houses are added to Irchester, how do they propose to improve the roads/doctors surgery etc to cope with all of the extra people.</td>
<td>Consultation has been undertaken with NCC Highways regarding the capacity of roads and likewise with NHS England and the Irchester Surgery. As part of any planning proposal funding will be advised for improvements to highways (NCC Highways) and for contributions towards healthcare (NHS England).</td>
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<td>• Concerned regarding constructions traffic impacts for residents on Austin Close.</td>
<td>This aspect will be considered at a Planning Application stage and conditions requiring management plans will be set by the Planning Authority.</td>
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<td>• Social housing will be placed near railway line.</td>
<td>The layout of the site will be considered at a Planning Application stage and a noise impact will be adequately mitigated (NHP Policy 3)</td>
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<td>• Worried about provision of turning head for future development.</td>
<td>This proposal is part of future proofing development (NHP Policy 3).</td>
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<td>• Access to Austin Close should be from Station Road</td>
<td>The Highways Assessment confirms access proposals are acceptable and that access from Station Road would not be possible.</td>
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<td>• An explanation for the rejections of IR5 is needed.</td>
<td>Evidence of the reasons for choosing the current sites can be found on the NHP website e.g. Environmental Assessment</td>
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<td>• Time frame of the plan is too short.</td>
<td>Report, Heritage Assessment, Highways Assessment and Sustainability Assessment. The timeframe of the Irchester NHP conforms with the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy 2011-2031</td>
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Appendix E: The Environment Agency Response to the SEA Consultation
20th March 2017

Nikki Daft
NHP Administrator
irchesterhnp@gmail.com

Our ref: AN/2014/119202/SE-02/SC1-L01
Your ref: 
Date: 20 March 2017

Dear Nikki

Irchester Neighbourhood Plan – Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Request

Thank you for your enquiry which was received on the 07 March 2017.

We have inspected the information submitted and consider that the Irchester Neighbourhood Plan is unlikely to have significant effects on the environment which are of interest to the Environment Agency.

Should you require any additional information, or wish to discuss these matters further, please do not hesitate to contact me on the number below.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Sharon Nolan
Sustainable Places Planning Advisor

Direct dial 020302 53625
Direct e-mail sharon.nolan@environment-agency.gov.uk

Awarded to Lincolnshire and Northamptonshire Area.

Environment Agency
Nene House (Pitcholey Lodge Industrial Estate),
Pitcholey Lodge Road, Kettering, Northants, NN15 6JQ
Email: planningkettering@environment-agency.gov.uk

End
Appendix F: Natural England Response to the SEA & HRA Consultation

4th April 2017

Date: 04 April 2017  
Our ref: 210349  
Your ref: Irchester Neighbourhood Plan SEA & HRA

Irchester Parish Council  
irchesterhpc@gmail.com

BY EMAIL ONLY

Dear Sir/Madam

Screening consultation: Irchester, Knuston and Little Irchester Neighbourhood Plan – Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitat Regulations Assessment.

Thank you for your consultation on the above dated and received by Natural England on 07 March 2017.

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.

Screening Request: Strategic Environmental Assessment  
It is our advice, on the basis of the material supplied with the consultation, that, in so far as our strategic environmental interests are concerned (including but not limited to statutory designated sites, landscapes and protected species, geology and soils), that there are unlikely to be significant environmental effects from the proposed plan.

We are not aware of significant populations of protected species which are likely to be affected by the policies / proposals within the plan. It remains the case, however, that the responsible authority should provide information supporting this screening decision, sufficient to assess whether protected species are likely to be affected.

Notwithstanding this advice, Natural England does not routinely maintain locally specific data on all potential environmental assets. As a result the responsible authority should raise environmental issues that we have not identified on local or national biodiversity action plan species and/or habitats, local wildlife sites or local landscape character, with its own ecological and/or landscape advisers, local record centre, recording society or wildlife body on the local landscape and biodiversity receptors that may be affected by this plan, before determining whether an SEA is necessary.

Please note that Natural England reserves the right to provide further comments on the environmental assessment of the plan beyond this SEA screening stage, should the responsible
authority seek our views on the scoping or environmental report stages. This includes any third party appeal against any screening decision you may make.

Habitats Regulation Assessment
I can also confirm that Natural England agrees with the report’s conclusions that the Irchester Neighbourhood Plan, is in line with the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy and will contribute to the mitigation strategy payments required for the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area (SPA). Thus the plan would not be likely to result in a significant effect on any European Site, either alone or in combination and therefore no further assessment work would be required.

For any queries relating to the specific advice in this letter only, please contact Kayleigh Cheese on 02080 260981. For any new consultations, or to provide further information on this consultation please send your correspondences to consultations@naturalengland.org.uk.

Yours sincerely

Kayleigh Cheese
Northamptonshire Local Delivery Team
Appendix G: Historic England Response to the SEA Consultation – 30th March 2017

BY EMAIL: irchesterhmhp@gmail.com

Our ref: PL00069963
Your ref:

Telephone: 07769 242872

30 March 2017
Dear Ms Daft

Request for screening for SEA - Irchester Neighbourhood Plan

Thank you for consulting Historic England on the above 07 March 2017.

For the purposes of this consultation, Historic England will confine its advice to the question ‘Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment?’ in respect of our area of concern, cultural heritage. We note the SEA screening statement considers that an SEA is not required.

We observe that the Plan proposes site allocations. Specifically, the current draft plan includes one housing allocation to the south of James Street which may impact upon the setting of heritage assets, including the Grade I Listed Church of St Katharine. This has not been subject to SA/SEA as part of the Local Plan process. As such there may be significant environmental effects upon the historic environment.

Therefore, we are of the view, at this time, that there may well be significant impacts on the historic environment and it is our view that a SEA is likely to be required. We understand that our views, together with the views of other statutory consultation bodies should be taken into account before the overall decision on the need for SEA is made. I should be pleased if you could send a copy of the determination when this is issued.

We would like to stress that this is based on the current information provided in the screening request and the current draft Neighbourhood Plan. To avoid any doubt, this does not reflect our obligation to provide further advice on the SEA process, and subsequent draft Plan’s.
Please do not hesitate to contact me if you wish to discuss any of these comments.

Yours sincerely

Emilie Carr (Mrs)
Historic Environment Planning Adviser
E-mail: Emilie.carr@HistoricEngland.org.uk
Appendix H: Historic England Revised Screening Opinion – 2nd May 2017

BY EMAIL:
SBateman@wellingborough.gov.uk

02 May 2017

Dear Ms Bateman

Request for screening for SEA – Irchester, Knuston and Little Irchester Neighbourhood Plan

Thank you for consulting Historic England on the above 07 March 2017 and for the further information submitted 07 April.

For the purposes of this consultation, Historic England will confine its advice to the question ‘Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment?’ in respect of our area of concern, cultural heritage. We note that the SEA screening statement considers that an SEA is not required. Following submission of more detailed information described above and with further consideration, we remain of the view that a rigorous assessment of the potential impact on the historic environment (both designated and non-designated assets and their settings) of a site allocation for 78 dwellings at land south of James Street is required. In this case, a more rigorous heritage impact assessment of the proposed housing site south of James Street would instead be acceptable.

We understand that our views, together with the views of other statutory consultation bodies should be taken into account before the overall decision on the need for SEA is made. I should be pleased if you could send a copy of the determination when this is issued.

We would like to stress that this is based on the current information provided in the screening request and the current draft Neighbourhood Plan. To avoid any doubt, this does not reflect our obligation to provide further advice on the SEA process, and subsequent draft Plan’s.

Yours sincerely

Emilie Carr (Mrs)
Historic Environment Planning Adviser
E-mail: Emilie.carr@HistoricEngland.org.uk
Appendix I: Historic England Response to the SEA Consultation

11th October 2017

Ms S Bateman
Borough Council of Wellingborough
Council Offices
Tithe Barn Road
Wellingborough
Northamptonshire
NN8 1BJ

11 October 2017

Dear Ms Bateman

Thank you for consulting Historic England on the heritage assessment of the site south of James Street.

We have no further comments to make.

Yours sincerely,

Clive Fletcher
Principal Adviser, Historic Places
clive.fletcher@HistoricEngland.org.uk