

## **Draft Strategic Environmental Assessment – Screening Statement for NA1, Houghton Barton Development Framework Plan**

### **1. Background**

- 1.1 The draft NA1 Houghton Barton, Newton Abbot Development Framework Plan (DFP) has been prepared in line with the Teignbridge Local Plan 2013 – 2033.
- 1.2 The draft DFP expands on the requirements set out in Policy NA1, for employment, housing, education, community facilities, link road between the A382 and the A383, green infrastructure, sustainable movement and Greater Horseshoe Bat mitigation. The DFP will be a material planning consideration in determining planning applications submitted for development of the site, ensuring that the overall policy requirements are met.
- 1.3 The draft DFP includes an Illustrative Masterplan for the NA1 allocation.

### **2. SEA Screening**

- 2.1 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is a process to identify likely significant effects of a plan or policy on the environment. The requirement to assess certain plans and programmes is set out in the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, which transpose the European Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (2001/42/EC). An SEA is required where plans may have significant environmental effects. Schedule 1 of the Regulations set out the criteria for determining whether an SEA is required and these are considered below:
  1. The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular, to—
    - a) the degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources;
    - b) the degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy;
    - c) the relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development;
    - d) environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme; and

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- e) the relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (for example, plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection).

### 2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to—

- a) the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects;
- b) the cumulative nature of the effects;
- c) the transboundary nature of the effects;
- d) the risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents);
- e) the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected);
- f) the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to—
  - i. special natural characteristics or cultural heritage;
  - ii. exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values; or
  - iii. intensive land-use; and
- g) the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.

2.2 The Draft DFP sets out additional detail on the implementation and delivery of Local Plan Policy NA1 Houghton Barton. This has already been subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA). The Local Plan assessment took account of the environmental characteristics of the site and area, which have not changed since those assessments were prepared. The draft DFP sets out a framework of delivery of the site's development. Therefore, whilst additional details are contained within the DFP, these are within the parameters of the policy framework, already set out in the Local Plan.

2.3 The DFP will not influence other plans in a hierarchy, but is itself, highly influenced by the Local Plan, which has already been subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment. The DFP does not differ from the Local Plan requirements.

2.4 The Local Plan has also been subject to assessment under the Habitats Regulations and the Local Plan policies contain appropriate requirements needed to mitigate any impacts on the South Hams SAC, prepared in conjunction with Natural England. The DFP has itself been screened for the purpose of Habitats Regulations Assessment. It includes mitigation measures that are necessary for the protection of Greater Horseshoe Bat flyways and foraging areas, which has been used to inform the layout of the site, as set out in the Illustrative Masterplan included within the DFP at Appendix C.

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2.5 The Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment accompanying the Proposed Submission Local Plan assessed the environmental impacts of Policy NA1. The following table demonstrates any implications or variations that have arisen from the draft DFP and which may require further SEA.

Table 1: SEA Screening

<b>SA/SEA Sustainability Objective</b>	<b>SA/SEA Comment on Policy NA1</b>	<b>Relevant DFP Details</b>	<b>Implications of DFP</b>	<b>Further SEA Req'd?</b>
<b>A. Natural Environment</b> To protect, conserve and enhance the area's natural environment	Site is predominately agricultural with a varied topography. There are trees and hedgerows throughout some of which are protected, these will need consideration in any development. Proposals have the potential to impact on bats, in particular the Greater Horseshoe Bat, their strategic flyways and sustenance zones as well as cirl buntings and their wintering and breeding territories. There may also be impacts on other protected species. Any impact on protected species will need to be assessed and appropriately mitigated and	The DFP provides further detail in relation to mitigation and compensation for biodiversity, specifically in relation to there being essential requirements in place to provide: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Greater Horseshoe Bat mitigation in accordance with the HRA screening;</li> <li>• Planting scheme;</li> <li>• Cirl bunting mitigation;</li> <li>• Retention and buffering of hedgerows, Devon banks, trees and woodland;</li> <li>• Net gains to biodiversity all supported by adequate and up to date species and habitat surveys. See paragraph 4.31 (IV - VIII) and 4.33-4.37.</li> </ul> The Illustrative Masterplan (Appendix C) shows how the proposed layout of development	The draft DFP provides a more detailed understanding of the site's constraints and sets out the necessary requirements to ensure the appropriate mitigation and compensation of biodiversity across the site. A separate HRA Screening for the South Hams Special Area of Conservation (SAC) has been undertaken which recommends a series of mitigation measures. On the basis that these are effectively implemented the screening assessment concludes 'no likely significant effect' on the SAC.	No

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	compensated for.	<p>has responded to the location of key biodiversity habitats.</p> <p>A blanket TPO covers all trees on the site.</p> <p>Minimal hedgerow removal proposed as per Appendix H. Proposed removals are not in locations of main bat flyways which remain protected.</p> <p>Paragraph 5.3 sets out the requirements and principles to be followed in relation to respecting landscape and views in and around the development area.</p>		
<p><b>B. Built Environment</b></p> <p>To preserve and improve the area's built environment and heritage assets</p>	<p>The area is primarily farmland on the edge of the town. A new connected neighbourhood would result in sustainable development. Sensitive and high quality design of new development with appropriate density will ensure it responds to its wider context.</p> <p>Incorporating landmark developments at gateway sites will also ensure a strong approach to the</p>	<p>The draft DFP requires the development to comply with the Council's emerging Design Guide SPD. In advance of this being adopted, it sets out some essential requirements relating to the design which seek to ensure an attractive, safe and accessible built environment with distinctive features and buildings and sufficient parking provision. See paragraphs 4.27-4.29.</p> <p>High quality design and layout is required, including active</p>	<p>The draft DFP sets out detailed requirements in relation to how the existing built environment will be protected and how new development can be built to a high standard of design and layout. The relevant essential requirements and general principles listed throughout the document provide a framework for good quality design and the Illustrative Masterplan responds to this direction in a way which seeks to achieve this.</p>	No

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	<p>town.</p> <p>There is the potential for the area to have archaeology interests, therefore appropriate assessments and mitigation will be required. The wider historical context of the site will also need consideration. There are a number of listed buildings and careful consideration will need to be given to the siting of development. However, it is considered that the impact can be mitigated by sensitive design, layout and landscaping. The connection between new development and Seale Hayne provides connections and focus for creating a new urban neighbourhood.</p>	<p>frontages, high densities and design quality, and focal buildings around green and public spaces and at prominent locations.</p> <p>The listed buildings, existing buildings and their settings around the site are respected through the proposed layout shown on the Illustrative Masterplan (Appendix C).</p> <p>Paragraph 5.4 requires appropriate archaeological surveys to inform any planning applications for development.</p> <p>Seale Hayne is to be connected to the development through the creation of a more direct road link to the campus via the main road. Its existing functions will be protected with support given to proposals within and around the campus that continue to support these functions.</p>		
<p><b>C. Climate Change</b></p> <p>To mitigate and adapt to possible effects of climate change</p>	<p>Includes need to consider generation of onsite renewable energy at a domestic and community scale. There are some areas of higher risk of flood</p>	<p>The draft DFP reiterates the Local Plan policy requirement for a Carbon Reduction Plan to be prepared. It references the possibility of a district heating scheme although it does not</p>	<p>A more detailed understanding of the site has refined the site's ability to deliver a comprehensive sustainable development with new community facilities, areas of food production and employment sites. These can be</p>	<p>No</p>

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	<p>but these areas can be incorporated with good design into open and green space. There are areas of potential surface flooding, however these could be managed through SUDS development and site planning and design. New and enhanced routes are proposed to facilitate walking and cycling and there is support for a wide range of local services and community facilities. Provision for allotments and community food production is included.</p>	<p>require this.</p> <p>Since adopting the Local Plan, the EA has remodelled the flood zones within the southern area of NA1 so that the flood zones no longer exist in this area. SuDS will be required as per paragraph 5.5-5.6 with an indicative SuDS network shown in Appendix I.</p> <p>A centralised neighbourhood hub with a range of facilities will help reduce the need to travel for some everyday goods and services.</p> <p>The development will be connected via a network of on- and off-road walking and cycling routes (Appendix D) to the different parts of the development as well as to main links to the town centre.</p> <p>Provision for 23 allotment plots is required.</p>	<p>accessed via a network of walking, cycling and bus routes which will also link to routes beyond the boundaries of the development.</p>	
<p><b>D. Resource Use</b> To minimise the loss or degradation of finite natural resources</p>	<p>The area is Greenfield with mainly lower grade agricultural land. There is source protection zone in the allocation area. The site is in a mineral consultation area, however</p>	<p>The draft DFP continues to direct employment uses to the area included within the 'mineral safeguarding area' as defined by the Devon Minerals Plan (due to be adopted 2017). This safeguarding area does not</p>	<p>The draft DFP confirms the location of employment development in the Mineral Safeguarding Area. No additional implications to those identified in the full SA/SEA for policy NA1 of the Local Plan.</p>	<p>No</p>

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	employment has been targeted for areas of known mineral resource to avoid sterilisation.	preclude development but means that proposals would have to meet certain criteria as specified by the relevant Minerals Plan policy (M2). Paragraph 4.45 sets out design requirements to mitigate the quarry's amenity impacts.		
<b>E. Jobs and Local Economy</b> To foster an entrepreneurial economy with improved productivity, providing a strong employment offer	There is significant employment provision including 20 hectares with a mix of uses and types to help create additional jobs, support the local economy as well as help to increase self containment. New housing will generate short term employment during build-out. New households will generate economic activity including supporting local shops and businesses.	NB: adopted Local Plan policy NA1 requires 18ha of employment land.  The draft DFP sets out how employment land will be provided across the site. This is primarily directed to land at Forches Cross, within and around the neighbourhood hub, Seale Hayne, and at Hele Park (permission already granted). Due to capacity issues identified during the preparation of the draft DFP, the proposed on site distribution of employment uses falls short of the Local Plan requirement by c. 7.4ha. Financial contributions equivalent to the development of serviced employment land is required in the event of any shortfall in on site provision.	Draft DFP does not meet policy requirement to deliver 18ha of employment land on site. However, if job densities can be achieved equivalent to 100 jobs per hectare then a smaller overall land requirement will be acceptable.  By seeking off site contributions equivalent to serviced employment land the Council can still deliver jobs in the area. The Council is active in investing in and promoting employment land in and around Newton Abbot.  There is flexibility within the draft DFP to enable additional employment land within the site if possible at the detailed planning application stage.	No
<b>F. Town Centres</b> To strengthen and safeguard the vitality and	Potential for additional expenditure to the town centre from new residents	The draft DFP sets out how links to the town centre will be provided and contains relevant clauses to ensure no unacceptable impact on	The draft DFP ensures adequate links to the town centre are created and that the town centre is not negatively affected by the proposed	No

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viability of our town centres		the town centre as a result of new retailing proposals.	development.	
<b>G. Housing</b> To provide and maintain a sufficient supply of good quality, mixed housing, including an appropriate level of affordable housing	Proposes a significant number of homes for all members of the community.	Paragraphs 4.9-4.15 set out requirements for a range of housing types and tenures, including affordable, custom build and gypsy and traveller pitches. Due to capacity issues identified during the preparation of the draft DFP, it is proposed that gypsy and traveller pitches will be provided off site. This will only be acceptable where the applicant has identified and funded the delivery of a more suitable and available site option(s). This will be considered under policy WE6 of the Local Plan.	Draft DFP demonstrates that the policy requirement of at least 1150 homes can be delivered on site, although due to the larger site areas required for gypsy and traveller plots these are likely to be provided off site. There are relevant clauses within the draft DFP to ensure that the development will only be acceptable if alternative sites for gypsy and traveller plots are provided.  NB: Local Plan policy requires at least 1800 homes. The Hele Park development which has planning consent for 650 homes forms the first phase of the allocation. The DFP is therefore concerned only with the remainder of the allocation.	No
<b>H. Health</b> To support healthy lifestyles and a healthy local living environment	It provides proximity and potential connectivity to existing health and social centres as well as incorporating new facilities within in. Provision of housing, jobs, recreational opportunities and increased sustainable travel opportunities will contribute to a general	Paragraphs 4.16-4.18 and Table 3 require a range of community and open space facilities, including a Multi Use Games Area, community centre, walking and cycling routes, parkland, natural green space, play areas and allotments. A proposed distribution of these uses is shown on the Illustrative Masterplan (Appendix C).	The draft DFP requires a range of onsite community facilities which will all have a positive bearing on health and wellbeing.	No



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	improvement in public health and wellbeing.			
<b>I. Infrastructure</b> To ensure sustainably balanced places are created or maintained, providing access to an appropriate mix of services and facilities	A significant range of infrastructure improvements will benefit the community, including; park and ride, new bus services, cycle lanes and footpaths, and facilities for generation of on-site renewable energy. There will also be a range of local shops & community facilities to support a new sustainable urban extension which will include schools, health care, faith facilities and a broad spectrum of open/play/green spaces. This includes significant investment and provision of green infrastructure.	Section 6 of the draft DFP contains a schedule of infrastructure for the site. This includes all NA1 policy requirements and provides up to date details (collected in consultation with infrastructure providers) as to how and when they will be delivered and who will be responsible for their delivery.	The draft DFP requires a range of infrastructure items which will all have a positive impact on the provision of services and facilities.	No

### 3. Variations

- 3.1 The SEA screening should assess any variations to the relevant policies that the SPD has introduced. There are a few aspects of the draft DFP which vary slightly from the detail contained in the Local Plan. These variations relate to the provision of some elements of the development offsite and are justified by further work and discussions, including changes in advice from expert consultees and detailed masterplanning work.

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3.2 The variations are influenced by a number of challenges which, if not effectively dealt with, risk delivery of the site. These include:

- mixture of gradients across the site with limited areas of flat land;
- presence of Greater Horseshoe Bats which are protected by European legislation through the South Hams Special Area of Conservation;
- two infrastructure corridors relating to overhead powerlines and an underground high pressure gas main;
- listed buildings at Seale Hayne and in Houghton;
- the requirement for a number of key infrastructure items and facilities, namely employment land, a primary school, multi-purpose community building, open spaces and play areas, local shops and a new road linking the A383 to the A382.

3.3 Developing a constrained site such as this is costly and the development therefore needs to maximise its potential for building higher value uses (i.e. housing) in order to fund the necessary infrastructure requirements. The variations therefore relate to the proposal to deliver some uses off site where there is a shortfall of provision on site to maximise the availability of the allocation area for housing and community uses. These uses are:

- gypsy and traveller pitches;
- replacement and additional playing pitches; and
- a proportion of the employment land offsite.

3.4 It is not considered that these variations lead to any conflict with higher tier policy and that, overall, the draft DFP sets out a framework for meeting the requirements of the Local Plan. The provision of the above uses can be provided in accordance with other relevant Local Plan policies, namely Policy WE6 for gypsy and traveler pitch provision, S2 and WE11 for replacement and additional playing pitches and EC3 for employment land.

## 4. Conclusion

4.1 The SEA screening indicates there are no new significant effects likely to arise through the implementation of the draft NA1 Houghton Barton Development Framework Plan that have not previously been identified through the full SA/SEA of the Teignbridge Local Plan. Therefore full Strategic Environmental Assessment of the NA1 Development Framework Plan is not required.