

**Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk screening report of the requirements for a Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) for the Grimston, Pott Row, Roydon and Congham Neighbourhood Plan 2017-2036**

**(submitted March 2023)**

**November 2023**

Borough Council of  
**King's Lynn &  
West Norfolk**



# **Borough Council of King’s Lynn & West Norfolk preliminary screening report for a Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) for the emerging Grimston, Pott Row, Roydon and Congham Neighbourhood Plan 2017-2036**

## **1.0 Introduction**

1.1 This screening report will determine whether or not the contents of the emerging Grimston, Pott Row, Roydon and Congham (GPRRC) Neighbourhood Plan require a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) in accordance with Article 6 (3) of the EU Habitats Directive and with the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017<sup>1</sup>; amended 2019<sup>2</sup>. A HRA would be required when the implementation of the contents of the Neighbourhood Plan are likely to cause significant negative effects on a designated protected European Site (Natura 2000 sites).

1.2 The GPRRC Neighbourhood Plan was submitted on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023. The submission documents included a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) screening report and Basic Conditions Statement (BCS)<sup>3</sup>. These documents incorporate elements of HRA in support of the Neighbourhood Plan. However, the Neighbourhood Plan Examiner concluded, in her interim findings, that:

*... on the basis of the information I have at the moment, that the Plan meets the basic conditions in respect of retained European Union obligations and the prescribed basic condition. In particular, there is insufficient information in respect of HRA and it is not clear whether the statutory bodies have been consulted in respect of both SEA and HRA.*

1.3 The SEA screening report was correctly consulted upon and supported by the relevant statutory consultees (Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England), over 4 weeks (1-29 October 2021, inclusive). Natural England concluded, with reference to the SEA screening request, that “*on the basis of the material supplied with the consultation, that, in so far as our strategic environmental interests (including but not limited to statutory designated sites, landscapes and protected species, geology and soils) are concerned, that there are unlikely to be significant environmental effects from the proposed plan*” (7 October 2021). This related to the SEA process, there being no explicit response from Natural England regarding the HRA.

1.4 The GPRRC, as submitted in March 2023 is appropriately supported by the SEA screening report. However, the supporting documentation, including the

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2017/1012/contents>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2019/579/contents/made>

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/info/20127/neighbourhood\\_plans/606/grimston\\_congham\\_and\\_roydon\\_neighbourhood\\_area](https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/info/20127/neighbourhood_plans/606/grimston_congham_and_roydon_neighbourhood_area)

screening report and BCS are considered insufficiently clear in respect of the legal requirements of the HRA process.

- 1.5 Accordingly, this report considers documentation produced in support of the submitted GPRRC Neighbourhood Plan. It seeks to collate relevant information in a single document to ensure that the requirements of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) are clearly met.

## **2.0 Legislative Background**

### **Habitat Regulation Assessment (HRA)**

- 2.1 HRA is a requirement of Article 6 (3) of the EU Habitats Directive and by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017/ 2019. The Regulations require that an appropriate assessment is carried out, with regard to the Conservation Objectives of the European Sites and with reference to other plans and projects to identify if any significant effect is likely for any European Site.
- 2.2 To fulfil the legal requirements to identify if likely significant effects will occur with the implementation of a neighbourhood plan upon the European Sites (Natura 2000 sites) a screening assessment has been undertaken.

## **3.0 HRA Preliminary Screening**

- 3.1 The SEA assessment process, as set out in the national guidance “A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive”, (Paragraph 2.18, Figure 2, ODPM, 2005<sup>4</sup>), includes specific questions pertaining to HRA. Relevant questions are extracted and considered, with reference to the Borough Council’s obligations under Regulation 63 of the 2017 Habitat Regulations<sup>5</sup>.
- 3.2 The tables below assess the submission documents with reference to specific SEA questions regarding the requirements of HRA and the Habitats Directive. This follows the template and process utilised for the adjacent Gayton and Gayton Thorpe Neighbourhood Plan SEA and HRA screening report (June 2021)<sup>6</sup>. The Gayton and Gayton Neighbourhood Plan Examiner concluded, with reference to the Habitat Regulations, that:

*“Having reviewed the information provided to me as part of the examination, I am satisfied that a proportionate process has been undertaken in accordance with the various regulations. In the absence of any evidence to the contrary, I*

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[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/7657/practicalguidesea.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/7657/practicalguidesea.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2017/1012/regulation/63>

<sup>6</sup> [https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/7688/gayton\\_np\\_screening\\_report.pdf](https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/7688/gayton_np_screening_report.pdf)

am entirely satisfied that the submitted Plan is compatible with this aspect of European obligations.” (Examiner’s Report, paragraph 6.17<sup>7</sup>).

3.3 Utilisation of the Gayton and Gayton Thorpe (adjacent Neighbourhood Area) template is therefore considered appropriate and proportionate, in undertaking HRA for the GPRRC Neighbourhood Plan. The Gayton and Gayton Thorpe template has therefore been adapted for this HRA. Relevant questions are addressed in the tables below.

### SEA screening stage 1: questions relevant to HRA

	SEA Directive question, relevant to HRA	Yes/ No	Reason
4.	Will the Neighbourhood Plan, in view of its likely effect on sites, require an assessment for future development under Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive? (Art. 3.2(b))	No	<p>A Neighbourhood Plan could potentially have impacts on sites covered by the Habitats Directive. The Neighbourhood Plan operates within a context of the designation of Grimston and Pott Row (with Gayton) as a Key Rural Service Centre (KRSC); i.e. a focus for growth within the rural area. The Local Plan proposes little/ no growth at Roydon and Congham, both of which are designated Smaller Villages and Hamlets (SVHs). The designation of Grimston/ Pott Row as a KRSC supports limited growth of an appropriate scale and nature to secure sustainability of each settlement, Grimston and Pott Row being regarded as a single settlement within the hierarchy (Policy CS02).</p> <p>The Plan (Vision) focuses upon:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• protecting the rural character and identity of the area, especially wildlife habitats, green infrastructure and landscape/ views</li> <li>• improvement to ecological network</li> <li>• ensure openness of/ access into the rural landscape</li> <li>• creating strong sense of place and belonging</li> </ul>

<sup>7</sup> [https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/8034/gayton\\_and\\_gayton\\_thorpe\\_ndp\\_-\\_examiners\\_report\\_final.pdf](https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/8034/gayton_and_gayton_thorpe_ndp_-_examiners_report_final.pdf)

	SEA Directive question, relevant to HRA	Yes/ No	Reason
			<p>In line with the Vision, the Neighbourhood Plan does not propose any additional development (site allocations) within the built-up areas of the four settlements. Instead, the focus of the Plan is effective development management, including protection and enhancement of biodiversity sites (SEA screening report, paragraph 6).</p> <p>On this basis the Plan is likely to require an assessment for future development under Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive.</p>
			<p><b>Submitted documents (Regulation 15) findings</b></p> <p>The SEA screening report considers the current state of SSSIs within the Plan area, with reference to 2021 Natural England information.</p> <p>The screening report also notes the designations of Roydon Common: Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Ramsar, Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and a National Nature Reserve (paragraph 12).</p> <p>This is not repeated in the first stage assessment. However, the SEA report clearly recognises the status of Roydon Common as a protected site of national and international importance.</p>

**SEA screening stage 2: questions relevant to HRA**

Criteria in Annex 11 of the SEA Directive	Response	Is there a significant effect
<b>(1) Characteristics of the plan and programmes, having regard in particular, to:</b>		

Criteria in Annex 11 of the SEA Directive	Response	Is there a significant effect
<b>(2) Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to:</b>		
The cumulative nature of the effects;	<p>It is considered unlikely that the Neighbourhood Plan, when combined with the current Local Plan and/ or emerging Local Plan review, will introduce significant environmental effects. Whilst both the Neighbourhood Plan and Local Plan review are being prepared, the Local Plan review has been subject to full SEA (including SA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment. It should be noted that the Local Plan has allocates land at Pott Row for the development of 23 dwellings (G41.2), which it is proposed to carry forward into the replacement Local Plan (revised/ reduced capacity 18 dwellings).</p> <p>The replacement Local Plan was subject to full HRA (<a href="#">Footprint Ecology, May 2021</a>), including detailed assessment of all European sites (including Roydon Common). The Neighbourhood Plan does not propose any further development, so it is not considered that the proposal could have any significant cumulative effects, beyond the adopted Local Plan.</p>	No
The risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents);	The GPRRC focuses upon managing development and environmental protection. Any development coming forward will be small scale and of local significance only. These are unlikely to produce any significant effects in relation to this criterion.	No
The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:		

Criteria in Annex 11 of the SEA Directive	Response	Is there a significant effect										
i) Special natural characteristics or cultural heritage;	<p><b>International sites</b></p> <p>The SEA screening report noted that Roydon Common is of national and international importance (paragraph 12). Roydon Common is considered one of the best examples of lowland mixed valley mire system in the country, forming the heart of the Gaywood Valley Living Landscape Area.</p> <p><b>National sites/ designations</b></p> <p>As well as being a Special Area of Conservation (SAC)/ Ramsar site, Roydon Common is also an SSSI and National Nature Reserve (SEA screening report, paragraph 12).</p> <p>The current condition/ baseline state of SSSIs (including Roydon Common) is set out in the SEA screening report (paragraph 15).</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="679 1077 1222 1413"> <thead> <tr> <th>SSSI</th> <th>Condition</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Roydon Common (area north of the Lynn Road)</td> <td>Unfavourable declining</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Roydon Common (area to the south of the Lynn Road)</td> <td>Unfavourable recovering</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Grimston Warren Pit</td> <td>Favourable</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Leziate, Derby and Sugar Fen</td> <td>Unfavourable recovering</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to incorporate further policies in relation to the natural environment, to enhance these statutory protections through the development management system measures.</p> <p>The GPRRC Neighbourhood Plan, by virtue of the “basic conditions”, will conform to strategic policies within the adopted Local Plan and its emerging replacement. The Local Plan provides protection to environmental characteristics across the Borough to ensure that they are not vulnerable to significant impacts from development.</p>	SSSI	Condition	Roydon Common (area north of the Lynn Road)	Unfavourable declining	Roydon Common (area to the south of the Lynn Road)	Unfavourable recovering	Grimston Warren Pit	Favourable	Leziate, Derby and Sugar Fen	Unfavourable recovering	No
SSSI	Condition											
Roydon Common (area north of the Lynn Road)	Unfavourable declining											
Roydon Common (area to the south of the Lynn Road)	Unfavourable recovering											
Grimston Warren Pit	Favourable											
Leziate, Derby and Sugar Fen	Unfavourable recovering											

Criteria in Annex 11 of the SEA Directive	Response	Is there a significant effect
<p>ii) Exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values</p> <p>iii) Intensive land use</p>	<p>Policies within the Neighbourhood Plan will bolster these protections.</p> <p>The Plan objectives are highlighted, including: <i>“To retain and extend the diversity of wildlife and habitats throughout the neighbourhood plan area, enhancing the ecological network”</i> (Objective C). This importance of Roydon Common is emphasised throughout the Neighbourhood Plan document.</p> <p>The Neighbourhood Plan is unlikely to result in exceedance of environmental quality standards, such as those relating to air, water, and soil quality. Effective application of plan policies may have positive impacts, in terms of HRA. The importance (role and status) of Roydon Common is recognised in the Plan, through the designation of the Roydon Common buffer zone, covering Roydon village and much of Pott Row (Figure 10/ Policy 8).</p> <p>The Neighbourhood Plan should not bring forward development of an extent that would result in a significant intensification of local land uses.</p> <p>Policies for Design and Landscaping (Policy 4), setting an appropriate scale of development (Policy 7), Roydon Common buffer zone (Policy 8), Biodiversity (Policy 9), Key Views (Policy 10), Local Green Space (Policy 11), Dark Skies (Policy 12) and Sustainable Transport (Policy 15) all function to minimise and/ or manage land use intensification. In terms of HRA, these should all deliver benefits/ positives.</p>	<p>No</p> <p>No</p>



## 4.0 Conclusions of the Habitat Regulations Assessment

4.1 The Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) refers to the assessment required for any plan or project to assess the potential impacts against the conservation objectives of Natura 2000 wildlife sites. The assessment must determine whether the plans would adversely affect, or are likely to affect, the integrity of a site(s) in terms of its nature conservation objectives. Where negative effects are identified other options should be examined to avoid any potential damaging effects.

4.2 The HRA process is generally divided into three stages:

1. The initial stage of the HRA process is called the screening stage and determines if there are any likely significant effects or risk of significant effects possible, as a result of the implementation of the plan.
2. The screening process should provide a description of the plan and an identification of the Natura 2000 sites which may be affected by the plan and assess the significance of any possible effects on the identified sites.
3. If it is determined (in consultation with Natural England) that have potential significant adverse effects, then the plan will need to be subject to an “Appropriate Assessment”, under the relevant provisions of the Habitat Regulations.

4.3 **Roydon Common (SAC/ Ramsar site)** covers much of the Plan area, to the west of Chapel Road (Pott Row) and Station Road (Roydon). This is immediately adjacent to the Pott Row and Roydon built up areas, as defined by the Pott Row development boundary in the current Local Plan (2016 Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan – Inset G41/ Policy DM2). Part of Roydon Common also adjoins the proposed Roydon development boundary in the emerging replacement Local Plan (submission Plan section 15).

4.4 The importance of biodiversity, ecology and the protection/ enhancement of is recognised throughout the Neighbourhood Plan and emphasised in the Plan vision. In particular, the following policies should all have positive implications for designated Natura 2000 sites:

- Policy 4: Design and Landscaping;
- Policy 7: Location of New Housing;
- Policy 8: Roydon Common buffer zone;
- Policy 9: Biodiversity;
- Policy 10: Key Views;
- Policy 11: Local Green Space;
- Policy 12: Dark Skies; and
- Policy 15: Sustainable Transport.

- 4.5 The SEA screening process also considered four SSSIs within the Plan area: Roydon Common (north and south of Lynn Road), Grimston Warren Pit, and Leziate, Derby and Sugar Fen. 14 County Wildlife Sites were also noted, and Policy 9 should deliver positives/ benefits for these, highlighting priority habitats (Figures 10 and 11).
- 4.6 A ‘Habitats Regulations Assessment of Detailed Policies and Sites Plan: Site Allocations and Development Management Policies – Proposed Submission Document’ was carried out and published in September 2015 by Wild Frontier Ecology to support the Local Plan (Site Allocations and Development Management Policies 2016). This considered the impacts of the housing growth arising from the Local Plan and any potential significant impacts upon the Natura 2000 sites. A Habitats Regulations Assessment was also prepared to accompany the emerging replacement Local Plan, which similarly provided an assessment of the implications of Plan policies for the Borough as a whole, including upon Natura 2000 sites.
- 4.7 The GPRRC Neighbourhood Plan seeks to be in conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan (Core Strategy 2011 and the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan 2016). Neither the Neighbourhood Plan or the emerging replacement Local Plan proposes an additional land for development, over and above the extant Local Plan allocation (G41.2). This approach is considered to be in conformity with the Local Plan (see BCS), which limits new development to specific identified needs only. (Policy CS02, with CS03, CS09, CS12), and the Neighbourhood Plan ‘basic conditions’; i.e. supporting sustainable development.
- 4.8 Notwithstanding, the Neighbourhood Plan Examiner raised concerns that the HRA process, as undertaken during preparation of the GPRRC Neighbourhood Plan is insufficiently clear and transparent. This paper has been prepared to address this concern and give clarity in ensuring compliance with the 2017 Habitat Regulations. The table below explains the process by which the three stages of the HRA process have been complied with during plan-making.

<b>HRA process stage</b>	<b>Previous work undertaken and/ or documentation submitted</b>
Stage 1 – screening	<p>Section 3.0 (above) was prepared, utilising the June 2021 SEA and HRA screening template for the adjacent Gayton and Gayton Thorpe Neighbourhood Plan. This was adapted, by removing all SEA screening questions that are not relevant to HRA (Stage 1).</p> <p>The section 3.0 tables set out the Borough Council’s response to each question.</p>
Stage 2 – Description/ background information	<p>The SEA screening report includes the following information, relevant to the HRA process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paragraph 6 – summarises outcomes/ goals of GPRRC Neighbourhood Plan policies</li> </ul>

HRA process stage	Previous work undertaken and/ or documentation submitted
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Paragraphs 12-16 – Biodiversity, flora and fauna – descriptions, including re Roydon Common</li> <li>• Figure 3 – Section 3.0 tables above provide additional analysis in response to SEA Directive Q4 (SEA Screening Stage 1)</li> <li>• Figure 4 – Section 3.0 tables above provide additional analysis in response to questions relevant to HRA (SEA Screening Stage 2)</li> </ul> <p>Supplemented by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Full Habitats Regulations Assessment (Appropriate Assessment) of pre-submission Local Plan (Footprint Ecology, May 2021<sup>8</sup>)</li> <li>• BCS (March 2023) – sections 6-7 (paragraphs 21-30)</li> </ul>
Stage 3 – consultation with Natural England	<p>Natural England was duly consulted at all relevant stages, of the Neighbourhood Plan process, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1-29 October 2021 – SEA screening – Natural England response (7 October 2021) included within Appendix Statutory Environmental Body Responses (SEA screening report)</li> <li>• 15 August – 7 October 2022 – Regulation 14 consultation – Natural England response: “<i>No specific comments on this draft neighbourhood plan</i>”</li> <li>• 19 May – 18 August 2023 – Regulation 16 consultation – Natural England response: “<i>Natural England does not have any specific comments on the Grimston, Pott Row, Roydon &amp; Congham Neighbourhood Plan 2017-2036</i>” (27 June 2023)</li> </ul>

4.9 It is clear from the assessment above, that the HRA requirements have been followed in a proportionate way, although it is accepted that some transparency is lacking, with reference to the process. The table above addresses this, identifying the range of supporting documentation that was used to inform the plan-making process.

4.10 Accordingly, after careful consideration and on balance based upon the above it is considered unlikely that a HRA will need to be undertaken. In general, it is

<sup>8</sup> [https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/6634/kings\\_lynn\\_and\\_west\\_norfolk\\_habitats\\_regulations\\_assessment\\_draft\\_document\\_270521.pdf](https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/6634/kings_lynn_and_west_norfolk_habitats_regulations_assessment_draft_document_270521.pdf)

noteworthy, that if a HRA is necessary automatically also a SEA has to be undertaken.

## 5.0 Screening Outcome

5.1 The Borough Council prepared this document retrospectively (i.e. post-submission), as an HRA screening opinion. Natural England (statutory consultation body) was consulted over 4 weeks (22 September – 20 October 2023, inclusive), to ensure an appropriate timeframe for them to respond, in accordance with the 2017 Habitat Regulations, Regulation 63. Natural England duly responded on 17 October 2023, confirming:

***“...on the basis of the material supplied with the consultation, that:***

- ***significant effects on statutorily designated nature conservation sites or landscapes are unlikely; and,***
- ***significant effects on Habitats sites<sup>1</sup>, either alone or in combination, are unlikely”.***

5.2 The full Natural England responses is attached in the Appendix to this document. Natural England had also responded at all previous stages of the plan-making process. The previous (7 October 2021 and 27 June 2023) consultation responses are appended in full to this report.

5.3 The assessments contained within this report are based upon the documentation submitted with the Neighbourhood Plan at Regulation 15 (Neighbourhood Planning Regulations, 2012). They identify that, based upon the information available; there is not the potential for significant environmental effects to arise from the implementation of the proposals in the emerging GPRRC Neighbourhood Plan.

5.4 Based upon the assessment above and the responses from the statutory consultation bodies (Natural England), the Borough Council has concluded that:

- **The Grimston, Pott Row, Roydon and Congham Neighbourhood Plan 2017-2036 does not require an Appropriate Assessment, under the Habitat Regulations.**

5.5 This report will be issued to Grimston Parish Council (appointed Qualifying Body) and copied to Natural England (after the end of the 4-weeks consultation). A copy of the report will be published on the GPRRC web page and made available to the independent examiner.

**Report agreed by:**

*Geoff Hall*

.....  
**Geoff Hall**  
**(on behalf of Executive Director Environment and Planning]**

.....  
**1 November 2023**

# Appendix: Natural England Consultation Responses

## Natural England – 17 October 2023

Date: 17 October 2023  
Our ref: 450889  
Your ref: Grimston, Pott Row, Roydon & Congham  
Neighbourhood Plan



XX XXXXXXXX XXXXXXXX  
King's Lynn & West Norfolk Borough Council

### BY EMAIL ONLY

[planning.policy@west-norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:planning.policy@west-norfolk.gov.uk)

Hornbeam House  
Crewe Business Park  
Electra Way  
Crewe  
Cheshire  
CW1 6GJ

T 0300 060 3900

Dear XX XXXXXXXX

### Grimston, Pott Row, Roydon & Congham Neighbourhood Plan 2017-2036 - HRA Screening Consultation

Thank you for your consultation on the above dated and received by Natural England on 22 September 2023.

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 (SEA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)

**It is Natural England's advice, on the basis of the material supplied with the consultation, that:**

- **significant effects on statutorily designated nature conservation sites or landscapes are unlikely; and,**
- **significant effects on Habitats sites<sup>1</sup>, either alone or in combination, are unlikely.**

The proposed neighbourhood plan is unlikely to significantly affect any Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ), Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection areas (SPA), Ramsar wetland or sites in the process of becoming SACs or SPAs ('candidate SACs', 'possible SACs', 'potential SPAs') or a Ramsar wetland. The plan area is unlikely to have a significant effect on a National Park, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty or Heritage Coast, and is unlikely to impact upon the purposes for which these areas are designated or defined.

<sup>1</sup> Habitats sites are those referred to in the [National Planning Policy Framework](#) (Annex 2 - glossary) as "any site which would be included within the definition at regulation 8 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 for the purpose of those regulations, including candidate Special Areas of Conservation, Sites of Community Importance, Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas and any relevant Marine Sites".

Guidance on the assessment of Neighbourhood Plans, in line with the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 is contained within the [Planning Practice Guidance](#). This identifies three triggers that may require the production of an SEA:

- a neighbourhood plan allocates sites for development
- the neighbourhood area contains sensitive natural or heritage assets that may be affected by the proposals in the plan
- the neighbourhood plan may have significant environmental effects that have not already been considered and dealt with through a sustainability appraisal of the Local Plan.

Natural England does not hold information on the location of significant populations of protected species, so is unable to advise whether this plan is likely to affect protected species to such an extent as to require an SEA. Further information is included in Natural England's [standing advice](#) on protected species.

Furthermore, Natural England does not routinely maintain locally specific data on all environmental assets. The plan may have environmental impacts on priority species and/or habitats, local wildlife sites, soils and best and most versatile agricultural land, or on local landscape character that may be sufficient to warrant an SEA. Information on ancient woodland, ancient and veteran trees is set out in Natural England/Forestry Commission [standing advice](#).

We therefore recommend that advice is sought from your ecological, landscape and soils advisers, local record centre, recording society or wildlife body on the local soils, best and most versatile agricultural land, landscape, geodiversity and biodiversity receptors that may be affected by the plan before determining whether a SEA is necessary.

Natural England reserves the right to provide further advice on the environmental assessment of the plan. This includes any third party appeal against any screening decision you may make. If a SEA is required, Natural England must be consulted at the scoping and environmental report stages.

Please send any new consultations, or further information on this consultation to [consultations@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:consultations@naturalengland.org.uk)

Yours sincerely

XXXXX XXXXXX  
Consultations Tea

**Natural England – 27 June 2023**

Date: 7 October 2021  
Our ref: 436639  
Your ref: Grimston, Pott Row, Roydon & Congham  
Neighbourhood Plan



XX XXXXXXXX XXXXXX  
West Norfolk Council

**BY EMAIL ONLY**

[planning.policy@west-norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:planning.policy@west-norfolk.gov.uk)

Hornbeam House  
Crewe Business Park  
Electra Way  
Crewe  
Cheshire  
CW1 6GJ

T 0300 060 3900

Dear XX XXXXXXX

**Grimston, Pott Row, Roydon & Congham Neighbourhood Plan 2017-2036 - Regulation 16 Consultation**

Thank you for your consultation on the above dated 17 May 2023.

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.

Natural England is a statutory consultee in neighbourhood planning and must be consulted on draft neighbourhood development plans by the Parish/Town Councils or Neighbourhood Forums where they consider our interests would be affected by the proposals made.

**Natural England does not have any specific comments on the Grimston, Pott Row, Roydon & Congham Neighbourhood Plan 2017-2036.**

For any further consultations on your plan, please contact:  
[consultations@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:consultations@naturalengland.org.uk).

Yours sincerely

XXXX XXXXXXX  
Consultations Team



## Natural England – 7 October 2021

Date: 7 October 2021  
Our ref: 369599



FAO XXXXXXXX XXXXXX

Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk

**BY EMAIL ONLY**

Hornbeam House  
Crewe Business Park  
Electra Way  
Crewe  
Cheshire  
CW1 6GJ

T 0300 060 3900

Dear XX XXXXXXX

### **Grimston, Congham and Roydon Neighbourhood Plan Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) screening**

Thank you for your consultation on the above dated and received by Natural England on 1 October 2021.

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 (SEA) Screening request**

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

### **Neighbourhood Plan**

Guidance on the assessment of Neighbourhood Plans, in light of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (as amended), is contained within the [National Planning Practice Guidance](#). The guidance highlights three triggers that may require the production of an SEA, for instance where:

- a neighbourhood plan allocates sites for development
- the neighbourhood area contains sensitive natural or heritage assets that may be affected by the proposals in the plan
- the neighbourhood plan may have significant environmental impacts that have not already been considered and dealt with through a sustainability appraisal of the Local Plan

We have checked our records and based on the information provided, we can confirm that in our view the proposals contained within the plan will not have significant effects on sensitive sites that Natural England has a statutory duty to protect.

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 the plan, before determining whether an SA/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/SA 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.

For any new consultations, or to provide further information on this consultation please send your correspondences to [consultations@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:consultations@naturalengland.org.uk).

Yours sincerely  
XXXX XXXXXXXX  
Consultations Team