Brereton Neighbourhood Plan

HRA, SA, and SEA Screening Assessment Report

April 2026

Enabling prosperity and wellbeing for all

Cheshire East Council

Contents

2 Introduction 4
Requirement for HRA, SA, and SEA 4
HRA 4
SA 4
SEA 4
Legislation 5
The Development Plan for Cheshire East 6
Screening Assessment Process 6
3 Summary 7
Brereton Neighbourhood Plan 7
Screening Report 8
Statutory Consultees 9
4 Brereton Neighbourhood Plan 9
Context 9
Vision 10
Objectives 10
Policies 10
5 Screening Assessment 11
Does the Brereton Neighbourhood Plan require HRA 11
HRA for the Local Plan 11
Protected Site within Proximity of the Brereton Neighbourhood Area 11
Potential Effects of the Brereton Neighbourhood Plan 11
Conclusion 13
Does the BNP require SA 13
Conclusion 14
Does the BNP require SEA 14
Stage 1 14
Stage 1 Conclusion 17
Stage 2 17
Stage 2 Conclusion 28
6 Conclusion 28

Monitoring of BNP 29
7 Appendices 30
Appendix A: Representations from Statutory Consultees 30
Environment Agency 31
Historic England 32
Natural England 33
Appendix B: Location of European Designations 34
Appendix C: Location of Natural Environment Designations 35
Appendix D: Location of Historic Environment Designations 36
Appendix E: Location of Flood Zone Designations 37

List of Tables

Table 1: BNP and Effect on European Designated Sites 11
Table 2: Effect on European Designated Sites Categories 12
Table 3: Assessment of Significant Effect on the Environment 14
Table 4: Does the BNP have a Significant Effect on the Environment 18
Table 5: Assessment of Likely Significant Effect 22

List of Figures

Figure 1: Application of the SEA Directive to plans and programmes. 7
Figure 2: European Designated Sites within 15km of Brereton 34
Figure 3: Natural Environment Designations in Brereton 35
Figure 4: Historic Environment Designations in Brereton 36
Figure 5: Flood Risk Zones in Brereton 37

2 Introduction

2.1 This screening assessment report sets out Cheshire East Council's (CEC) determination of whether the Brereton Neighbourhood Plan (BNP) requires Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA), Sustainability Appraisal (SA), and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) screening assessment report.

2.2 A screening assessment of the draft BNP must be undertaken by the responsible authority prior to adoption or submission to a legislative procedure, such as submission under Regulation 15[1]. In this case the 'responsible authority' is Brereton Parish Council, however, upon request, CEC has agreed to provide a screening assessment on the BNP to determine if HRA, SA, or SEA are required. If it is concluded that any are required, Brereton Parish Council will be responsible for its production, and it must form part of the material that is consulted on once the formal consultation stage is reached.

Requirement for HRA, SA, and SEA

HRA

2.3 In the context of neighbourhood planning, HRA is required where a neighbourhood plan (NP) is deemed likely to give rise to significant effects on protected European designated sites (Natura 2000 sites), because of the NP's implementation. If no significant effect is deemed likely, HRA is not required. Where HRA is undertaken, it is good practice to identify sites within 10-15km of the plan/project boundary and include them in HRA.

SA

2.4 The neighbourhood planning practice guidance[2] states that there is no legal requirement for a NP to be subject to SA. However, qualifying bodies may find this a useful approach for demonstrating how their draft plan or order meets the basic condition of contributing to sustainable development. Material produced as part of the SA of the local plan may be relevant to a NP.

SEA

2.5 Where a NP could have significant environmental effects, it may require SEA. Whether the BNP requires SEA and (if so), the level of detail needed, will depend on what is proposed in the draft BNP. SEA may be required for example when:

a) The NP allocates sites for development.

b) The neighbourhood area contains sensitive natural or heritage assets that may be affected by proposals in the plan.

[1] https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/637/contents
[2] https://www.gov.uk/guidance/neighbourhood-planning--2

c) The NP may have significant environmental effects that have not already been considered and dealt with through an SA of the local plan.

2.6 The main determining factor as to whether SEA is required on a NP is if it is likely to have a significant effect on the environment. Those NP's containing land allocations for development, which are not included in the local plan, are likely to require SEA. NP's that do not contain such allocations (or simply reflect allocations already identified as part of a local plan) are less likely to require SEA.

2.7 If SEA is required, Brereton Parish Council may wish to consider voluntarily expanding the scope so that it covers wider economic and social issues. This is the approach taken by CEC, whereby SEA is included within the SA of development plan documents. The advantage of undertaking an SA is that it can demonstrate the impact of the BNP on social, economic, and environmental factors and therefore demonstrate to an examiner that the BNP is the most sustainable given all alternatives.

Legislation

2.8 1.8. The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010[3] (known as the Habitats Regulations) transposes the requirements of the Habitats Directive (Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of wild fauna and flora) into UK Law, and establishes whether a plan, policy, project or programme is likely to have significant effects, whether alone or in combination with other plans or strategies, on internationally protected sites of biodiversity conservation importance (protected sites).

2.9 Schedule 2 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012[4] makes provision in relation to the Habitats Directive. The Directive requires that any plan or project likely to have a significant effect on a European site must be subject to an Appropriate Assessment. To achieve this, paragraph 1 prescribes a basic condition that the making of a NP is not likely to have a significant effect on a European designated site. Paragraphs 2 to 5 of the Schedule amend the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 to apply its provisions to neighbourhood development orders and NP's. Paragraph 4 inserts new regulation 78A, which provides that a neighbourhood development order may not grant planning permission for development that is likely to have a significant effect on a European designated site.

2.10 Schedule 3 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 makes provision in relation to the EIA Directive[5]. The Directive requires that EIA development must be subject to a development consent process. To enable this, Schedule 3 prescribes a basic condition that applies where development that is the subject of a proposal for a neighbourhood development order is of a type caught by the EIA Directive and applies to the relevant provisions of the Town and Country Planning

[3] https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2010/490/contents
[4] https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/637/contents
[5] https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=LEGISSUM:l28036

(Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2011(3)[6] ("the EIA Regulations") with appropriate modifications (regulation 33[7] and paragraphs 1 to 4 and 6 of Schedule 3[8]). Paragraphs 5 and 7 to 13 of Schedule 3 correct errors in the EIA regulations.

2.11 The basis for SA and SEA is the European Directive 2001/42/EC[9], which has subsequently been transposed into English law by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004[10] (SEA Regulations). The government has produced guidance in relation to these regulations, entitled 'A practical guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive'[11].

The Development Plan for Cheshire East

2.12 The basic conditions require the BNP to be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the relevant development plan.

2.13 The Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy (CELPS) (adopted on 27 July 2017) sets the strategic approach to development across the Borough. The CELPS was subject to HRA, and SA (incorporating SEA). This made sure that no likely significant effects were expected to arise from the implementation of the CELPS.

2.14 The Site Allocations and Development Policies Document (SADPD) (adopted on 14 December 2022) sets out non-strategic and detailed planning policies to guide planning decisions and allocate additional sites for development, where necessary, to assist in meeting the overall development requirements set out in the CELPS. It has been prepared to support the policies and proposals of the CELPS by providing additional policy detail. The SADPD was subject to HRA and SA (incorporating SEA). This made sure that no likely significant effects were expected to arise from the implementation of the SADPD.

2.15 On the 1 July 2022, it was resolved by CEC that the process of producing a new local plan would begin. An issues paper consultation was carried out between the 8 April 2024 and the 1 July 2024. A draft sustainability appraisal scoping report[12] was produced and consulted on at this time.

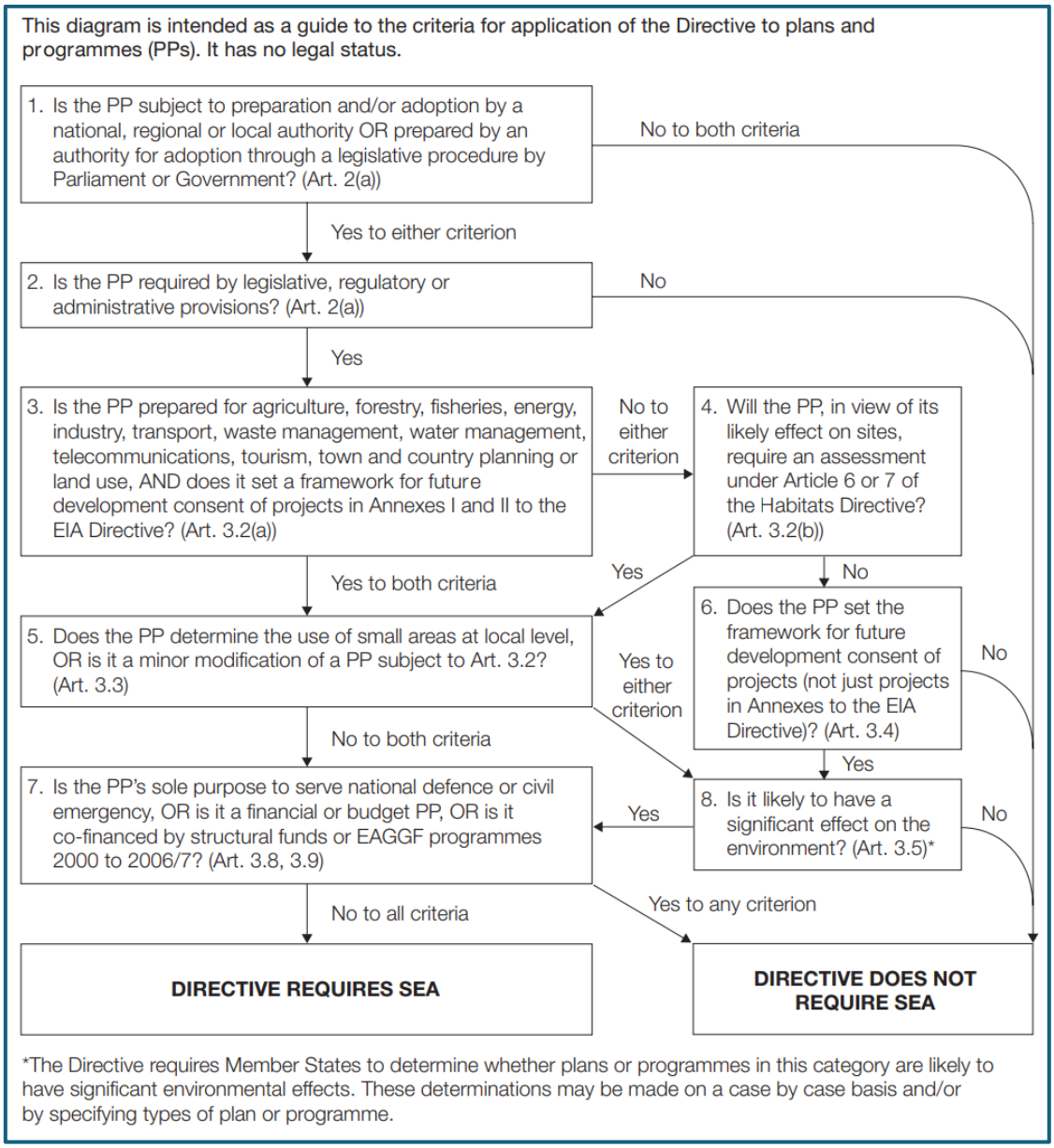
Screening Assessment Process

2.16 The screening assessment will be undertaken in three parts. First, an assessment will be made as to whether the BNP requires HRA. Second, an assessment as to whether SA is required. And third, an assessment as to whether SEA is required.

---

[6] https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2011/1824/contents
[7] https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2011/1824/regulation/33/made
[8] https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2011/1824/schedule/3/made
[9] https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=CELEX%3A32001L0042
[10] https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2004/1633/contents
[11] https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/7657/practicalguidesea.pdf
[12] https://localplan.cheshireeast.gov.uk/issues-consultation-2024/consultation-supporting-reports

Figure 1: Application of the SEA Directive to plans and programmes.



3 Summary

Brereton Neighbourhood Plan

3.1 The qualifying body for the BNP is Brereton Parish Council.

3.2 The Brereton Neighbourhood Area (BNA) covers Brereton Parish within Cheshire East (CE).

3.3 The themes and key issues of the BNP are:

a) Housing

b) Community

c) Business and economy

d) Rural environment

e) Transport and infrastructure

Screening Report

3.4 This report was undertaken by Tom Evans, Strategic and Environmental Planning Manager, and Greg Woolridge, Strategic Planning Officer, of CEC.

3.5 This report was carried out on 26/02/26.

3.6 The conclusion of this report is that HRA, SA, and SEA reports are not required.

3.7 The reasons for this conclusion are:

a) The BNP does not propose to allocate specific sites for future development and promotes criteria-based policies that seek to shape future development proposals, on a small-scale basis, which reduce and manage impact on the both the natural and built environment.
b) There is a European designated site located within the BNA, and within 15km (Appendix B). The European designation is Midlands Meres and Mosses Ramsar. The nearest site outside of the BNA but within 15km is Oakhanger Ramsar.
c) There are designations relating to the natural environment located within and immediately adjacent to the BNA (Appendix C), such as:
    i. Sites of Biological Interest
    ii. Site of Special Scientific Interest
    iii. Ancient Woodlands
    iv. Local Nature Reserve
d) There are designations relating to the historic environment located within the BNA (Appendix D), such as
    i. One Grade I Listed Buildings
    ii. Seventeen Grade II Listed Buildings
    iii. Three Grade II* Listed Buildings
e) There are designations relating to flood risk located within and immediately adjacent to the BNA (Appendix E), such as:
    i. Flood zones 2 and 3 towards the northern boundary and through the centre of the BNA.
f) The BNP does not introduce new policy that enables a significant effect on the environment to be implemented. As a lower tier plan all development proposals will be subject to assessment against the BNP and higher tier policies, plans and legislation that seek to protect locally, nationally, and internationally designated sites. The CELPS sets the strategic development framework for Brereton, including broad levels of growth appropriate to urban and rural areas, and has been tested through HRA, and SA (incorporating SEA) to make sure the effect of this growth is acceptable in environmental, social, and economic terms. The BNP does not propose additional growth at a significant scale beyond that already accepted in the CELPS, nor does it include specific proposals of a scale or intent large enough or with an impact significant enough, which would lead to additional significant effects on the environment

or designated sites. The policies in the BNP are criteria based and seek to safeguard existing assets, and the plan does not introduce policies that would significantly change the status of land beyond the planning framework in place.

Statutory Consultees

3.8 The Environment Agency expressed that it has had to prioritise its limited resource and focus on strategic plans where the environmental risks and opportunities are highest. A submitted advice note sets out its substantive response to NP consultations including SEA screening and scoping.

3.9 Historic England state that in the context of the criteria set out in Schedule 1 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 [Annex II of the SEA Directive], and on the basis of the information supplied, concur that the draft plan is unlikely to have significant environmental effects upon the historic environment, and so Historic England are of the view that SEA is unlikely to be required.

3.10 Natural England advise 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 sites1, either alone or in combination, are unlikely.

3.11 The full responses received from the statutory consultees can be found in Appendix A.

4 Brereton Neighbourhood Plan

Context

4.1 Brereton is a rural parish and for the purposes of the CELPS settlement hierarchy, falls within the category of 'OSRA'. Policies PG 1 and PG 2 of the CELPS set out the preferred development strategy and distribution of development for the Borough. The distribution of future development in the Borough is intended to be focused on the principal towns of Crewe and Macclesfield and the 9 KSCs.

4.2 The CELPS outlines that small growth to meet need and support the vitality of OSRA will be supported and identifies a need to deliver some in the order of 2,950 homes and 8ha of employment land (excluding 61ha at the Wardle Employment Improvement Area) in OSRAs.

4.3 The parish area is covered by CELPS Policy PG 6 'Open Countryside', which generally restricts development in the countryside but does identify development that would be considered acceptable. Also, Brereton has a designated village infill boundary under SADPD Policy PG 10 'Settlement boundaries', which is Brereton Green.

4.4 The BNA contains important natural habitats and waterbodies, hosts some larger scale residential development and some employment areas, and is located adjoining the parishes of Holmes Chapel, Twemlow, Swettenham, Somerford, Newbold Astbury,

Smallwood, Arclid, Sandbach, and Bradwall. As well as the Cheshire West and Chester Council Boundary.

4.5 The BNP does not allocate specific sites for development but instead identifies a series of criteria-based policies against which development proposals should be assessed within the BNA. Such criteria are designed to ensure the delivery of sustainable development to meet the objectives of the BNP.

4.6 Planning applications within the BNA will be assessed against the policies in the BNP, the CELPS, and the SADPD, and any other material planning considerations.

4.7 As specific development sites have not been identified in the BNP or in the CELPS and SADPD in this location, besides two Gypsy, Traveller, and Travelling Showpersons sites, and one employment site near to Holmes Chapel, no assessment of potential development sites has been undertaken as part of the BNP process.

Vision

4.8 The BNP document sets out a vision for the parish and what the NP should deliver:

4.9 By 2035 Brereton will be a vibrant, predominantly rural community encouraging prosperity for residents and local businesses alike. Local agriculture will remain a valued feature of local life. It will support high-quality development to meet local needs in keeping with the character of the area. It will provide outdoor recreation and open space to benefit people in our own and neighbouring areas. It will be a Green Gap, separating and balancing the continuing development of surrounding towns and villages. It will be a place where local people can live, work, play, and enjoy a high quality of life.

Objectives

4.10 To deliver the vision, the BNP has set out the objectives on the following subjects:

i. Deliver a sensitive housing strategy tailored to Brereton's needs, protecting the landscape and in keeping with the distinctive character of the area.

ii. Provide and improve local facilities to meet local demand.

iii. Strengthen and support local economic activity.

iv. Protect green space, the environment and the landscape, support nature conservation and encourage responsible rural recreation, rural tourism and sustainable modes of transport.

v. Seek ongoing improvements to transport, digital connectivity and utility services.

Policies

4.11 The BNP contains several policies that will be used to ensure the delivery of the vision and objectives and guide development management decisions. An assessment of the policies' impact on European sites has been carried out and concludes that no likely

adverse impact will arise. The full assessment and table of policies is included in Table 1.

4.12 The following sections assess whether the plan requires an HRA, SA or SEA due to its content and whether it is likely to give rise to a significant effect on designated sites or the environment.

5 Screening Assessment

Does the Brereton Neighbourhood Plan require HRA

5.1 To determine whether the BNP requires an HRA, the plan has been assessed in relation to several key considerations. These include the HRAs already undertaken for higher-tier plans under which the BNP sits, the integrity of protected sites within or near the BNA, and the potential effects and likelihood of the BNP impacting protected sites. The findings of this assessment are presented below.

HRA for the Local Plan

5.2 The CELPS and SADPD were subject to HRA. These assessments concluded that the documents would not have any significant effects on any protected sites.

Protected Site within Proximity of the Brereton Neighbourhood Area

5.3 There is one site within the BNA.

Potential Effects of the Brereton Neighbourhood Plan

5.4 Table 1 presents the proposed policies of the BNP and the extent to which they would have an effect on European designated sites. This is achieved by applying an effect category based on the policy's content.

Table 1: BNP and Effect on European Designated Sites

Proposed Policy	Effect
HOUS 01 Settlement and Infill Boundaries within Brereton	1D. No negative effect
HOUS 02 Exceptions to New Housing Development	1D. No negative effect
HOUS 03 Self-Build Schemes	1D. No negative effect
HOUS 04 Provision of Open Space in new Housing Development	1D. No negative effect
HOUS 05 Preservation of existing open spaces and recreational facilities	1B. No negative effect
HOUS 06 Housing Mix	1A. No negative effect
HOUS 07 Housing for Local People	1A. No negative effect

Proposed Policy	Effect
HOUS 08 Design Principles for Brereton	1A. No negative effect
COMMUN 01 (Aspiration) A new community hub for Brereton	1B. No negative effect
COMMUN 02 Existing Community Facilities	1B. No negative effect
COMMUN 03 Provision of New Community Facilities	1A. No negative effect
COMMUN 04 Provision of Allotments and Additional Car Parking	1C. No negative effect
ECON 01 Rural Economy	1D. No negative effect
ENVIR 01 Brereton's Landscape Character	1B. No negative effect
ENVIR 02 Nature Conservation	1B. No negative effect
ENVIR 03 Biodiversity and Geodiversity in Brereton	1B. No negative effect
ENVIR 04 Development, Landscape and Heritage	1B. No negative effect
ENVIR 05 Conservation and Sustainable Management of Soils	1B. No negative effect
TRANS 01 Transport Implications of New Development	1A. No negative effect
TRANS 02 Community Infrastructure	1A. No negative effect

Table 2: Effect on European Designated Sites Categories

Effect Category	Description
1A. No negative effect	The policy will not lead to development. For example, it relates to design or other qualitative criteria, or it is not a land-use planning policy.
1B. No negative effect	The policy intended to conserve or enhance the nature, built or historic environment, where enhancement measures will not be likely to have any negative effect on a European Site.
1C. No negative effect	The policy would have no effect because no development could occur through the policy itself, the development being

Effect Category	Description
	implemented through other policies in the same plan, which are more specific and therefore more appropriate to assess for their effects on European Sites and associated sensitive areas.
1D. No negative effect	The policy is like, or compliant with, the CELPS/SADPD policies, which have been assessed as having no negative effects by HRA/SA.
2. No significant effect	The policy would have no significant effect either alone or in combination with other plans or projects, because effects are trivial, minimal or mitigated through other policies in combination.
3. Likely significant effect alone	The policy could indirectly affect a European Site, because it provides for, or steers, a quantity or type of development that may be very close to it, or ecologically, hydrologically or physically connected to it, or it may increase disturbance because of increased recreational pressure.
4. Likely significant effects in combination	The policy alone would not be likely to have significant effects but if the effects are combined with the effects of other policies or proposals provided for or coordinated by the relevant plans or projects the cumulative effects would be likely to be significant.

Conclusion

5.5 Based on the assessment above, CEC determines that the BNP is unlikely to have a significant effect on European designated sites and therefore, HRA is not required.

Does the BNP require SA

5.6 SA is a process to assess the social, environmental, and economic effects of a Plan, and is performed alongside the production of the Plan.

5.7 The National Planning Policy Framework states that 'the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development'. It goes on to

say that 'there are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental'.

5.8 SA is required under The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004[13]; and The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, which places an obligation on the Council to undertake SEA on land use and spatial plans.

5.9 SA (including the requirements of SEA) has been undertaken on higher-tier plans within CE, such as the CELPS and SADPD, which the BNP will sit beneath, and with which it must be in general conformity.

5.10 As previously stated, the neighbourhood planning practice guidance confirms that there is no legal requirement for NPs to be subject to SA. However, it must be demonstrated how a plan will contribute to achieving sustainable development: the neighbourhood planning practice guidance suggests that a SA might be an appropriate way to do this and that the guidance on SA of local plans should be referred to.

Conclusion

5.11 As there is no legal requirement for SA to be undertaken on NPs, provided a simple assessment of the NPs performance against sustainability criteria is performed, including environmental, social, and economic factors. It is considered that this will be achieved within the production of the basic conditions statement at the submission stage. It is concluded that SA is not required for the BNP.

Does the BNP require SEA

Stage 1

5.12 Table 3 begins the SEA screening assessment with stage 1, which outlines whether the NP is likely to have a significant effect on the environment.

Table 3: Assessment of Significant Effect on the Environment

Stage	Y/N	Reason
1. Is the Neighbourhood Plan (NP) subject to preparation and/or adoption by a national, regional or local authority, OR prepared by an authority for adoption through a legislative procedure by Parliament or Government? (Art. 2(a))	Y	The preparation and adoption of the NP is allowed under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Localism Act 2011. The NP will be prepared by (as the 'relevant body') and will be 'made' by CEC as the local authority. The preparation of NPs is subject to the

[13] https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/5/contents

Stage	Y/N	Reason
		following regulations: The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 and The Neighbourhood Planning (referendums) Regulations 2012.
		GO TO STAGE 2
2. Is the NP required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions? (Art. 2(a))	Y	Whilst the NP is not a requirement and is optional under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning Act as amended by the Localism Act 2011, it will if 'made', form part of the Development Plan for the Borough. It is therefore important that the screening process considers whether it is likely to have significant environmental effects and hence whether an SEA is required under the Directive.
		GO TO STAGE 3
3. Is the NP prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, telecommunications, tourism, town and country planning or land use, AND does it set a framework for future development consent of projects in Annexes I and II to the EIA Directive? (Art. 3.2(a))	Y	The NP is being prepared for town and country planning, local transport, and land use as it makes proposals to manage the development of land for housing and employment uses. As such, the NP contains a framework for future development consent of urban development projects (listed as 10(b) in Annex II of the EIA Directive). The NP does not specifically

Stage	Y/N	Reason
		allocate any land for development purposes.
		GO TO STAGE 5
4. Will the NP, 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))	N	No, the policies in the NP are criteria-based and unlikely to directly affect designated sites.
5. Does the NP determine the use of small areas at local level OR is it a minor modification of a plan or programme subject to Art. 3.2? (Art. 3.3)	Y	The NP intends to support local development for residential and employment/commercial use through criteria-based policies. There is therefore the potential for an effect on the environment resulting from policies in the plan. However, policies are criteria-based and do not instigate changes to land use directly. Additionally, The NP sits within the wider framework of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the CELPS and the SADPD, therefore the NP will help to set the framework for projects that are localised in nature and are likely to have limited resource implications.
		GO TO STAGE 8
6. Does the NP set the framework for future development consent of projects (not just projects	Y	Yes, the NP contributes to establishing a local policy framework within which planning consent will be considered for a wide

Stage	Y/N	Reason
in annexes to the EIA Directive)? (Art. 3.4)		range of development proposals. Whilst the NP may establish very local criteria to enable development within criteria-based parameters, higher tier policies, plans and legislation exist to ensure that the NP is used within a framework with sufficient protection for environmental considerations.
7. Is the NP's sole purpose to serve the national defence or civil emergency, OR is it a financial or budget plan or programme, OR is it co-financed by structural funds or EAGGF programmes 2000 to 2006/7? (Art. 3.8, 3.9)	N	The NP does not fall into any of the criteria listed.
8. Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment? (Art 3.5)	N	See Assessment 2: Likely significant effects on the environment

Stage 1 Conclusion

5.13 Based on criterion 1, 2, 3, 5 and 6 in Table 3, it is necessary to assess whether the BNP is likely to have a significant effect on the environment. This assessment is undertaken through Stage 2.

Stage 2

5.14 The EIA Regulations include thresholds under which development proposals are not required to be screened to determine whether an EIA should be required. These are:

- the development includes more than 1ha of urban development that is not dwelling house development
- the development includes more than 150 dwellings
- the overall area of the development exceeds 5ha

5.15 Under these thresholds there is no obligation to screen urban development projects for an EIA.

5.16 The NP does not include more than 1ha of non-residential development; it does not allocate sites for more than 150 dwellings, and the overall area of the development does not exceed 5ha.

5.17 The BNP does not exceed any of the thresholds identified in the EIA regulations. It is therefore reasonable to suggest that the effects of the plan on the environment, in general, cannot be significant. However, there may be specific features or special characteristics in this location upon which the plan may have a significant effect. It is therefore important to understand if there is any specific reason the plan could be considered to give rise to a significant effect on the environment. Using Schedule 1 of the SEA regulations, the assessment set out in Table 4 has been undertaken to determine if there is any other reason why the BNP may give rise to a significant effect on the environment.

Table 4: Does the BNP have a Significant Effect on the Environment

Issue	Effect	Reason
Biodiversity	No significant effect	Whilst there are significant local assets, the policy framework provided by the NP alongside existing policy in the CELPS, and the SADPD provides sufficient protection. No proposed polices are likely to give rise to a substantially negative impact on biodiversity and natural assets.
Population	No significant effect	Brereton Parish has a population of 3,040 people (2021 Census). Most people are aged between 16 and 64, which may lead to a demand in the future for accommodation more suitable for an elderly population. Outside of committed sites there is no allocated land for residential development that may accommodate future housing need locally within the neighbourhood area. The

Issue	Effect	Reason
		policies in the NP anticipate this to some degree in policy HOUS 06 and are unlikely to exert a significant impact on population/demographic change but do seek to make sure an appropriate mix of housing is secured where it does come forward.
Human health	No significant effect	Housing is a key detriment of human health. On a limited basis, the plan seeks to provide housing suitable for the local population, which would result in a positive effect on human health and enable older residents to downsize within their community, and first-time buyers and families to access suitable housing, contributing to wellbeing. The Index of Multiple Deprivation shows Brereton Parish to be generally affluent (within 50% of least deprived neighbourhoods). The Joint Strategic Needs assessment for Brereton Ward (Brereton Rural) shows the population here is generally in good health with notable exceptions to health equality being admissions for new cases for lung, bowel and prostate cancer. The JNSA shows the over 65

Issue	Effect	Reason
		population is quite high. The NP introduces positive criteria based polices to assist in delivering the type of development that will contribute to addressing some of these issues. However, the policies included are unlikely to have a significant effect beyond the local area.
Fauna	No significant effect	Designated sites are subject to existing protection through other policies. The NP seeks to protect existing assets and does not introduce policies that are likely to harm local fauna
Flora	No significant effect	Designated sites are subject to existing protection through other policies. The NP seeks to protect existing assets and does not introduce policies that are likely to harm local flora.
Soil	No significant effect	Agricultural land classification grades 2 and 3 are present within the neighbourhood area. No development is proposed in the neighbourhood plan that would give rise to agricultural land. The best and most versatile agricultural land benefits from protection of existing policies.

Issue	Effect	Reason
Water	No significant effect	Flood zones 2 and 3 are present towards the northern edge and within the central part of the neighbourhood area. The polices proposed are unlikely to exert a significant impact on the existing approach to development in areas of flooding, and flooding issues are addressed by policies in the wider development plan/other legislation.
Air	No significant effect	There are no air quality management areas within the neighbourhood area. The policies contained in the plan are unlikely to significantly impact this issue.
Material assets	No significant effect	There are several areas of historic landfill within the neighbourhood area. The policies in the plan do not address such issues and are therefore unlikely to result in a significant effect on the environment. No other material assets are present.
Landscape	No significant effect	There is ancient woodland, sites of biological importance, site of special scientific interest, and a local nature reserve, and the Dane Valley Local Landscape designation within the neighbourhood area. BNP emerging policies seek to ensure

Issue	Effect	Reason
		that new development does not harm locally valued landscapes and the rural setting.
Cultural heritage, including architectural and archaeological heritage	No significant effect	There are heritage assets in Brereton Parish, such as Listed Buildings, some of which, particularly the settings, may be directly affected by new development across the Plan period. Nevertheless, policies exist in the NP that seek to protect heritage assets, alongside similar policies in the Development Plan. The policies are unlikely to enable the delivery of new development that would not already be possible under the existing local framework. As such the NP policies are unlikely to have a significant effect on heritage assets directly or on the approach taken to heritage assets in the development planning process.

Table 5: Assessment of Likely Significant Effect

Characteristics of the NP, regarding:	Cheshire East Council Assessment	Likely Significant Effect? (Y/N)
The degree to which the Plan sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating	The NP would, if made, form part of the statutory Development Plan and as such does contribute to the framework for future development consent of projects. The NP is	N

Characteristics of the NP, regarding:	Cheshire East Council Assessment	Likely Significant Effect? (Y/N)
conditions or by allocating resources.	expected to determine the use of small areas at a local level. The NP sits within the wider framework of the NPPF, the CELPS and the SADPD, therefore the projects for which this NP helps to set a framework are localised in nature but may have resource implications.	
The degree to which the Plan influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy.	The NP must be in conformity with the NPPF. The policies within the NP should also be in general conformity with policies in the CELPS and the SADPD. The BNP can exert a limited degree of influence over the formation of future strategic and non-strategic policies in the Development Plan, since these matters are now fully settled with adoption of the SADPD.	N
The relevance of the Plan for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development.	The NP is expected to work to protect and enhance the natural environment of the area within a wider policy framework including, but not limited to the NPPF, the CELPS, SADPD, and saved minerals and waste policies. The NP addresses a series of local environmental issues. Draft policies have been identified to provide a sustainable level of growth	N

Characteristics of the NP, regarding:	Cheshire East Council Assessment	Likely Significant Effect? (Y/N)
	within the parish and recognise the granting of recent consents to achieve this. In combination with other plans and legislation, it is considered that the NP will integrate environmental considerations and promote sustainable development but may also give rise to an effect on the environment through the identification of a growth location.	
Environmental problems relevant to the Plan.	There are no environmental problems relevant to the Plan. Where relevant, future development proposals will need to consider the impact of the plan on flood risk, designated sites and other primary and secondary impacts on the environment.	N
The relevance of the Plan for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (for example, plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection).	The NP is not directly relevant to the implementation of European legislation, although it will need to take the impact of the Water Framework Directive into account.	N
The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects of the Plan.	Whilst development may take place that is informed by the NP, the NP does not assist in instigating development directly through allocation of sites. There are therefore likely	N

Characteristics of the NP, regarding:	Cheshire East Council Assessment	Likely Significant Effect? (Y/N)
	to be short-term effects resulting from activity associated with the development of small scale, un-allocated sites within the neighbourhood area.	
	There may also be longer-term effects relevant to changes in land use, which may be positive, but on a limited scale may have a negative impact on environmental factors. The plan seeks to establish a local framework to address such issues and also relies on higher tier plans and policies to deliver mitigation of such negative impacts.	N
	Where proposals are received to develop small scale sites in accordance with draft NP policies, such proposals will also be subject to national and local policies in regard to environmental protection and mitigation of impacts.	N
The cumulative nature of the effects of the Plan.	The NP does not seek to bring forward allocation of small-scale sites that are not specifically detailed in the CELPS or already have planning permission granted. Given the limit levels of growth supported in the plan, such effects are likely to be limited.	N

Characteristics of the NP, regarding:	Cheshire East Council Assessment	Likely Significant Effect? (Y/N)
The trans-boundary nature of the effects of the Plan.	There are not expected to be any significant trans-boundary effects.	N
The risks to human health or the environment (e.g., due to accidents).	There are no significant risks to human health. Indeed, the NP is likely to improve human health through positive assertions on protection of natural assets and sustainable transport.	N
The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected) by the Plan.	BNP covers the parish of Brereton Parish. The NP is likely to affect a resident population of approximately 3,040 people over the life of the Plan across a parish located in a mainly rural area.	N
The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected by the Plan due to: special natural characteristics or cultural heritage; exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values; or intensive land use	The neighbourhood area contains a number of important cultural, natural and environmental assets both within and adjacent, however the limited levels of development supported, and existence of other mitigating policies seek to minimise impact here. The NP sets out to deliver new development within a framework supportive of small-scale development, implemented sensitively to preserve and enhance local natural, environmental and heritage assets. Given that the borough is generally	N

Characteristics of the NP, regarding:	Cheshire East Council Assessment	Likely Significant Effect? (Y/N)
	rural in nature, and Brereton Parish is predominantly a rural parish with a wealth of biodiversity and natural habitats, most proposed development will have an impact on the environment in the wider sense, and in some cases in a specific, locationally based sense that cannot yet be identified or assessed. Higher tier policies exist to offer adequate protection to the existing natural, cultural and environmental assets within and adjacent to the plan area.	
	The draft NP does not exceed environmental quality standards or limit values.	N
	Specific sites are not identified for development. Specific policies are included to make sure land is not over developed. Future development proposals will be assessed against policies in the Development Plan (which, in totality, should mitigate against the over-development of land).	N
The effects of the Plan on areas or landscapes which have recognised national,	There are areas of ancient woodland, biological interest, special scientific interest, local nature	N

Characteristics of the NP, regarding:	Cheshire East Council Assessment	Likely Significant Effect? (Y/N)
community or international protection status.	reserve, and RAMSAR located within the neighbourhood area. Policies are included in the NP that seek to preserve and protect biodiversity and habitats.	
	The neighbourhood area does include designated landscapes (Dane Valley); however the NP introduces policies that address landscapes, and views that may be locally sensitive to development.	N
	The location of these sites within the neighbourhood area makes their presence relevant, however the limited levels of growth and locations of sites do not give rise to a significant impact to the environment.	N

Stage 2 Conclusion

5.18 The BNP is unlikely to have a significant effect on the environment and does not require an SEA.

6 Conclusion

6.1 The BNP includes polices that support small scale development at a scale in conformity with the approach taken by the CELPS. It introduces criteria-based policies (that are yet to be finalised) that address local issues, but which alter the status of land to a degree, which would have a significant effect on the environment.

6.2 There are designated sites of European significance within the neighbourhood area; RAMSAR, however, due to the nature of the policies, and that the NP does not allocate sites for development, the effect of the plan on these sites is not considered to be significant. The BNP also seeks to make sure that any new development is addressed sensitively in the context of evidence prepared in relation to natural, heritage and

landscape assets, thus incorporating environmental protection in general and at specific designated locations.

6.3 The assessment therefore concludes that the BNP is unlikely to have a significant effect on the environment or on designated sites, and therefore an HRA, SA, and SEA are not required.

Monitoring of BNP

6.4 Whilst Brereton Parish Council is committed to the delivery of the objectives held within the NP, there may be circumstances where development will not come forward entirely as anticipated. CEC, as part of its monitoring of the Development Plan, including this NP, monitor performance through an Authority Monitoring Report, produced yearly. The BNP will also be monitored through this process with regards to procedural process progress and site allocations (if included). Generally, the outcome of the monitoring process will inform whether specific intervention actions should be pursued in the BNP. If these actions fail to address under performance, then other complementary plans and strategies should be reviewed.

7 Appendices

Appendix A: Representations from Statutory Consultees

Environment Agency

Neighbourhood Plan Advice Note

Updated: June 2025

Neighbourhood Plans provide a unique opportunity to deliver enhancements to the natural environment at the local level. This document sets out the key environmental issues, within our remit, which should be considered.

We have had to prioritise our limited resource and focus on strategic plans where the environmental risks and opportunities are highest. This advice note sets out our substantive response to Neighbourhood Plan consultations including Strategic Environmental Assessment screening and scoping.

Together with Natural England, English Heritage and Forestry Commission we have published joint advice on neighbourhood planning which sets out sources of environmental information and ideas on incorporating the environment into plans. This is available at: https://neighbourhoodplanning.org/toolkits-and- guidance/consider-environment-neighbourhood-plans/

Drawing up a neighbourhood plan is a fantastic opportunity to build community resilience to climate change and make the local natural environment better. Opportunities include:

- New green spaces and improvements to public space through new development. This could include planting trees, creating rainwater gardens or enhancing local waterways for water quality and biodiversity.

- Recognising the value of certain environmental features within a plan area, e.g. a floodplain, wetland habitat or rivers. Identify these features and outline how you intend to protect them and improve them.

- Helping a community to manage and adapt to the risk of flooding and climate change by incorporating natural features and green space to manage and store water, and supporting the use of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS).

- Promoting energy and water efficiency measures for new builds. These measures will reduce the cost of construction for developers and help to reduce utility bills for future occupiers. This will also help reduce unsustainable water consumption and carbon emissions.

We also recommend your Plan takes account of relevant Local Planning Authority's policies, plans and strategies including Local Planning Authority's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, flood risk strategies (https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/flood-risk-management-current-schemes-and-strategies), and your local River Basin Management Plan (https://www.gov.uk/guidance/river-basin-management-plans-updated-2022) as appropriate.

The information below explains the key issues we would consider in reviewing your Plan. We aim to reduce flood risk, while protecting and enhancing the water environment.

Infrastructure Delivery

We recommend that environmental infrastructure, including habitat enhancements, water storage areas, and green space, is taken into account if the Plan looks to fund local infrastructure.

Flood risk

Development must be safe and should not increase the risk of flooding.

Neighbourhood Plans should conform to national and local policies on flood risk:
If a Neighbourhood Plan is proposing sites for development please check whether there are any areas of Flood Zones 2 or 3 within the proposed site allocations. You can view a site's flood zone on the Flood Map for Planning on our website: https://flood-map-for-planning.service.gov.uk/

If the proposed allocation is located within Flood Zone 2 or 3 you should consult the Flood Risk and Coastal Change pages of the National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG): http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/blog/guidance/flood-risk-and-coastal-change/.

Here you can determine whether the flood risk vulnerability of the proposed development and the flood zone are compatible. In accordance with national planning policy the Sequential Test should be undertaken to ensure development is directed to the areas of lowest flood risk taking into account climate change. This should be informed by the Environment Agency's Flood Map for Planning and the Local Planning Authority's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA), if they have one. We recommend you contact the Local Planning Authority to discuss this requirement further.

If the Neighbourhood Plan proposes development in flood risk areas, any Strategic Environmental Assessment should include baseline information about the flood risks, and include it as a key sustainability issue and as an objective.

We would have concerns if development is allocated in this high risk flood zone without the Sequential Test being undertaken. It is important that your Plan also considers whether the flood risk issues associated with these sites can be safely managed to ensure development can come forward.

We can provide any flooding information which we have available – such as predicted flood levels and historical flood data. Please note that there may be a charge for this information. Please contact our Customers and Engagement Team at inforequests.gmmc@environment-agency.gov.uk for further details.

In addition to the above you should also check with the Local Planning Authority's Neighbourhood Planning team with regards to other sources of flooding (such as surface water, groundwater, sewers and historic flooding) as detailed in their Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA). The Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA), now has responsibility for local flood risk management and may hold flooding information that is not identified on our Flood Map.

Climate Change Allowances

The Local Authority's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment should indicate the extent of flood zones with likely climate change. On 19 February 2016, we published new guidance for planners and developers on how to use climate change allowances: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/flood-risk-assessments-climate-change- allowances

Flood Defences

Areas of your Neighbourhood Plan area, or proposed sites, may be given protection by a flood defence/alleviation scheme. Where this is the case the Plan should acknowledge this and identify the level of protection provided (including any climate change allowance). It should be noted that flood defences are intended to protect existing properties and are not to facilitate new development in areas that would otherwise be impacted by flooding. Any assessment of development behind flood defences should consider the impacts of a breach or overtopping. Where it is determined that new development should be behind a flood defence financial contributions may be sought to maintain or improve the structure.

Ecology and Water Management

Proximity to watercourse/ Ecology

Main rivers can be viewed on the Environment Agency's map: https://environment.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=17cd53dfc524433980cc333726a5 6386

The neighbourhood plan should draw upon evidence of designated or non-designated sites of nature conservation sites of international, national or local importance, and seek to ensure these sites are safeguarded and there is no degradation to these sites. The mitigation hierarchy of avoid mitigate and compensate should be followed to ensure this.

In accordance with national policy, any development proposal should avoid significant harm to biodiversity and seek to protect and enhance it; delivering **biodiversity net gain**. The Environment Act 2021 requires major developments from 12 February 2024 to demonstrate a minimum 10% biodiversity net gain using the Defra Biodiversity Metric 4.0, even where development proposals do not result in biodiversity loss. The Neighbourhood Plan could identify opportunities to incorporate requirements for achieving biodiversity and wider environmental net gains.

The provision of green infrastructure, particularly along rivers, can bring about benefits for people and wildlife. Creating networks of green space and habitats can also ensure wildlife are able to migrate and move across sites more easily enabling recovery and resilience of different wildlife species. The Neighbourhood Plan could play a role in helping to preserve, safeguard and establish green buffer zones along rivers by including policies or design guidance for their area. Even where buffer zones do not currently exist it is becoming more vital that we create them not just for the benefit of biodiversity but to reduce flood risk and increase our resilience to climate change.

This is a key way in which we can carry out our legal duty to further and promote the ecological and landscape value of rivers and land associated with them. In urban areas, in particular, rivers have often been degraded by past development, and we expect that any new development should go some way to redress the balance.

Neighbourhood Plans provide an opportunity to promote river restoration and enhancements helping us all to achieve the targets to improve waterbodies as part of the Water Framework Directive (WFD). There should be no deterioration in water quality and development should bring about improvements to the ecological status of any water body. Local WFD catchment data for the rivers in your area can be obtained from: http://environment.data.gov.uk/catchment-planning/RiverBasinDistrict/. We have identified WFD action measures for specific locations or whole reaches of watercourse (e.g. river bank restoration, improving fish passage, etc) and can be obtained from inforequests.gmmc@environment-agency.gov.uk on request.

Objectives to achieve WFD improvements across all sectors are outlined in the North West River Basin Management Plan (RBMP) (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/river-basin-management-plans-updated-2022-current-condition-and-environmental-objectives).

An assessment of the potential impacts of the Neighbourhood Plan on watercourses under WFD should be included within the SEA/SA appraisal, making use of the datasets available above.

Groundwater Quality

Development must not cause pollution to the water environment.

Aquifers and Source Protection Zones

Some of your local area, and specific potential site allocations, may be located upon or within aquifers and Source Protection Zones (link below). SPZ 1 is especially sensitive. You might consider these within your Plan and when allocating sites. The relevance of the designation and the potential implication upon development proposals should be seen with reference to our Groundwater Protection guidance: https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/groundwater-protection

To see if a proposed development is located within a Source Protection Zone, please use our online map: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/groundwater-source-protection-zones-spzs

Land Contamination

You must consider land contamination when preparing your plan. Managing it during development is key to addressing past contamination and preventing further impacts during development.

You can establish if a site may be contaminated in several ways. Your Local Authority may hold a register of sites it knows to be contaminated. A list of potentially contaminated sites can be accessed on the following link:
https://www.claire.co.uk/useful-government-legislation-and-guidance-by-country/76-key-documents/198- doe-industry-profiles

We recommend you contact your Local Authority's Environmental Health team who may hold records on known/potential land contamination. Please note our primary concern is with regards to water quality. Your Local Authority's Environmental Health team will advise you on issues related to human health.

Your plan may include areas which are located on aquifers and Source Protection Zones. These areas represent the most sensitive and highest risk in terms of potential pollution to protected groundwater supplies, some of which are used for drinking water. These should be considered within your plan if growth or development is proposed here. Further information can be accessed on the following links:

Guiding principles for the Land Contamination:
https://www.claire.co.uk/useful-government-legislation-and-guidance-by-country/192-guiding-principles-for- land-contamination-gplc

Approach to Groundwater Protection:
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/692989/ Envirnment-Agency-approach-to-groundwater-protection.pdf

Water supply and foul drainage

When allocating sites in you Plan, you will need to consider if the water supply and foul drainage infrastructure can accommodate the development. Your local water company can provide further information about water supply and sewerage capacity. The Neighbourhood Plan should consider what further measures could help the local area achieve water sustainability that are not already in the Local Plan, water efficiency standards and measures including the retrofitting of existing buildings.

Surface water drainage

The inclusion of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS) should always be a consideration within any development to reduce the risk of surface water flooding on and off site. The Lead Local Flood Authority, is the main contact for SUDS issues. However, we have interest in SUDS from a groundwater protection perspective and improving water quality.

The collection and dispersal of clean surface water to ground to recharge aquifer units and prevent localised drainage or surface systems flooding in heavy rainfall is encouraged. However, dispersal into the ground through soakaways or other infiltration systems requires a site-specific investigation and risk assessment. Generally, we would accept roof drainage going to soakaway (or other systems), but other surface drainage may need to go through treatment systems or to foul main, for instance vehicle parking. Infiltrating water has the potential to cause mobilisation of contaminants present in shallow soil/made ground which could ultimately cause pollution of underlying groundwater resources. Where contamination is known or suspected, remedial or other mitigating measures will likely be required so that it can be demonstrated that there is no resultant unacceptable risk to Controlled Waters.

We advise applicants to follow our guidance – Groundwater Protection. This is a report that highlights the importance of groundwater and encourages industry and other organisations to act responsibly and improve their practices. This can be found at: https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/groundwater- protection

The design of the drainage systems should be in line with G1, G9, G12 and G13 position statements: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/groundwater-protection-position-statements

Please note

This document is a response to a Neighbourhood Plan consultation and does not represent our final view in relation to any future planning application made in relation to any site. You should seek your own expert advice in relation to technical matters relevant to your neighbourhood plan before submission.

If you have any questions, please contact the Greater Manchester, Merseyside, and Cheshire Sustainable Places team: spplanning.rfh@environment-agency.gov.uk

Historic England

Historic England

Neighbourhood Planning Team
Cheshire East Council

Our ref: PL00801357

Direct Dial +441914031657
Date: 18 March 2026

Dear Neighbourhood Planning Team,

Brereton Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening Opinion 26 February 2026

We write in response to your e-mail of 26 February 2026, seeking a formal Screening Opinion from Historic England as to whether SEA is required for Brereton Neighbourhood Plan. As the public body that advises on England's historic environment, we are pleased to offer our comments.

For the purposes of this consultation, Historic England will confine the advice given to the question, "Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment?" in respect of our area of concern, cultural heritage. Our comments are based on the information supplied at this time within the Screening Report.

The Neighbourhood Plan area includes a number of designated heritage assets including listed buildings and Brereton is located within the Jodrell Bank Radio Telescope Consultation Zone which forms the buffer zone to the World Heritage Site. There are also likely to be other features of local historic, architectural or archaeological value.

In the context of the criteria set out in Schedule 1 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 [Annex II of the SEA Directive], and on the basis of the information supplied, we concur that the draft plan is unlikely to have significant environmental effects upon the historic environment, and so Historic England are of the view that SEA is unlikely to be required.

We would like to stress that this opinion is based on the information made available on 26 February 2026. To avoid any doubt, this decision does not preclude Historic England providing further advice on later stages of the SEA process, should this be required, nor objecting to

Historic England is subject to the Freedom of Information Act (2000) and Environmental Information Regulations (2004). Any information held by us may therefore become publicly available. For information about our use of your personal data visit: historicengland.org.uk/privacy

specific proposals that may subsequently arise (either as a result of this consultation or in later versions of the plan), where we consider that these would have an adverse effect upon the environment.

The views of all statutory consultation bodies should be taken into account before the overall decision on the need for SEA is made.

Historic England strongly advises that the conservation and archaeological staff of the Cheshire East Council and the Cheshire Archaeology Planning Advisory Service are closely involved throughout the preparation of the plan and its assessment. They are best placed to advise on: local historic environment issues and priorities, including access to data held in the HER (formerly SMR); how policies or proposals can be tailored to minimise potential adverse impacts on the historic environment; the nature and design of any required mitigation measures; and opportunities for securing wider benefits for the future conservation and management of historic assets.

We request that you please send Historic England a copy of the determination as required by Reg 11 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.

Yours sincerely,

Emma Grange

Historic Places Advisor
Emma.grange@historicengland.org.uk

Historic England is subject to the Freedom of Information Act (2000) and Environmental Information Regulations (2004). Any information held by us may therefore become publicly available. For information about our use of your personal data visit: historicengland.org.uk/privacy

Natural England

Date: 01 April 2026
Our ref: 542659
Your ref: Brereton Neighbourhood Plan Revised

Mr Greg Woolridge
Cheshire East Council

BY EMAIL ONLY
planningpolicy@cheshireeast.gov.uk

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

T 0300 060 3900

Dear Mr Woolridge

Brereton Neighbourhood Plan Revised - HRA/SEA Screening Assessment Consultation

Thank you for your consultation on the above dated and received by Natural England on 26 February 2026.

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[1], 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.

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

[1] 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".

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.

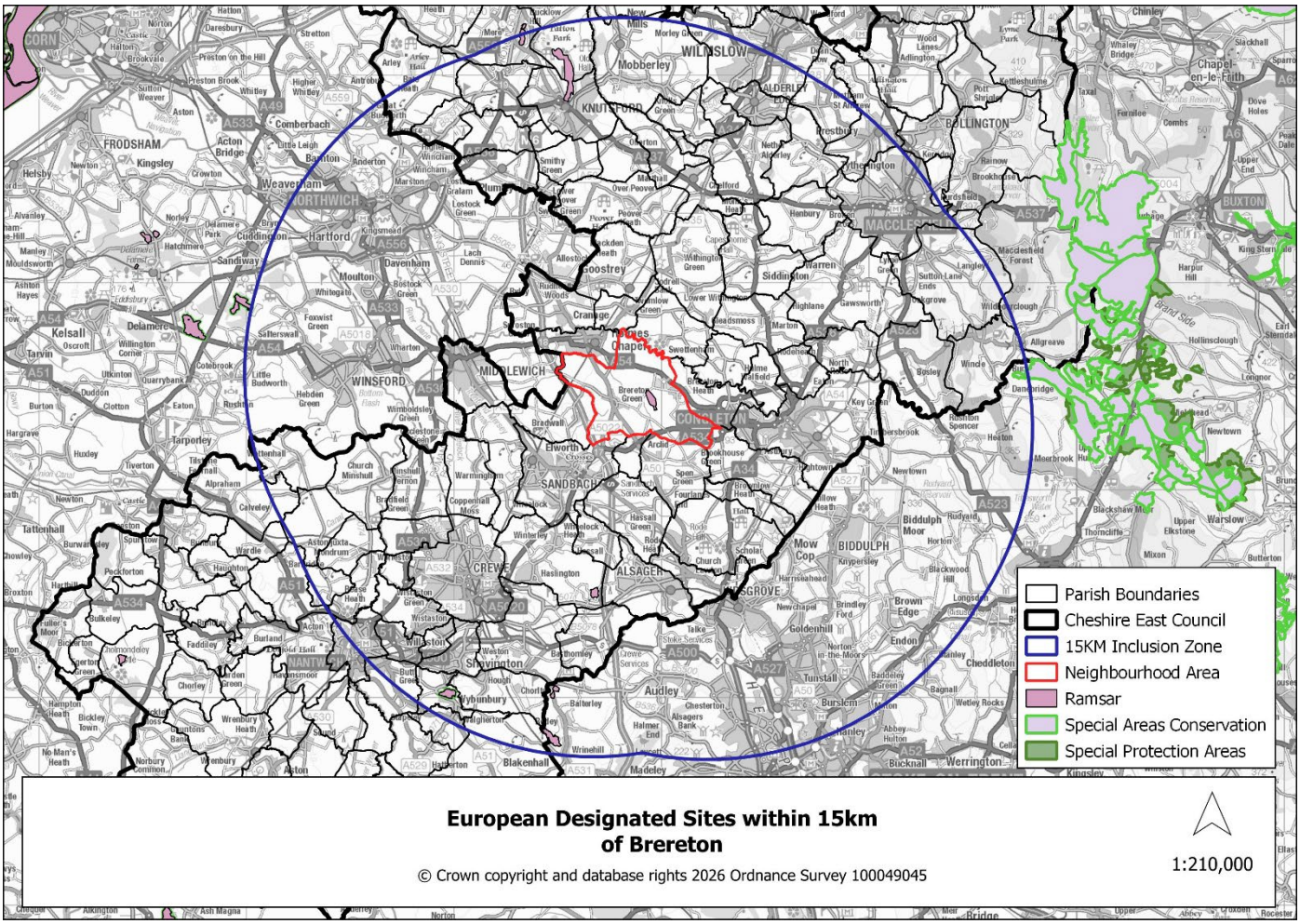
Please send any new consultations, or further information on this consultation to consultations@naturalengland.org.uk

Yours sincerely

Sally Wintle
Consultations Team

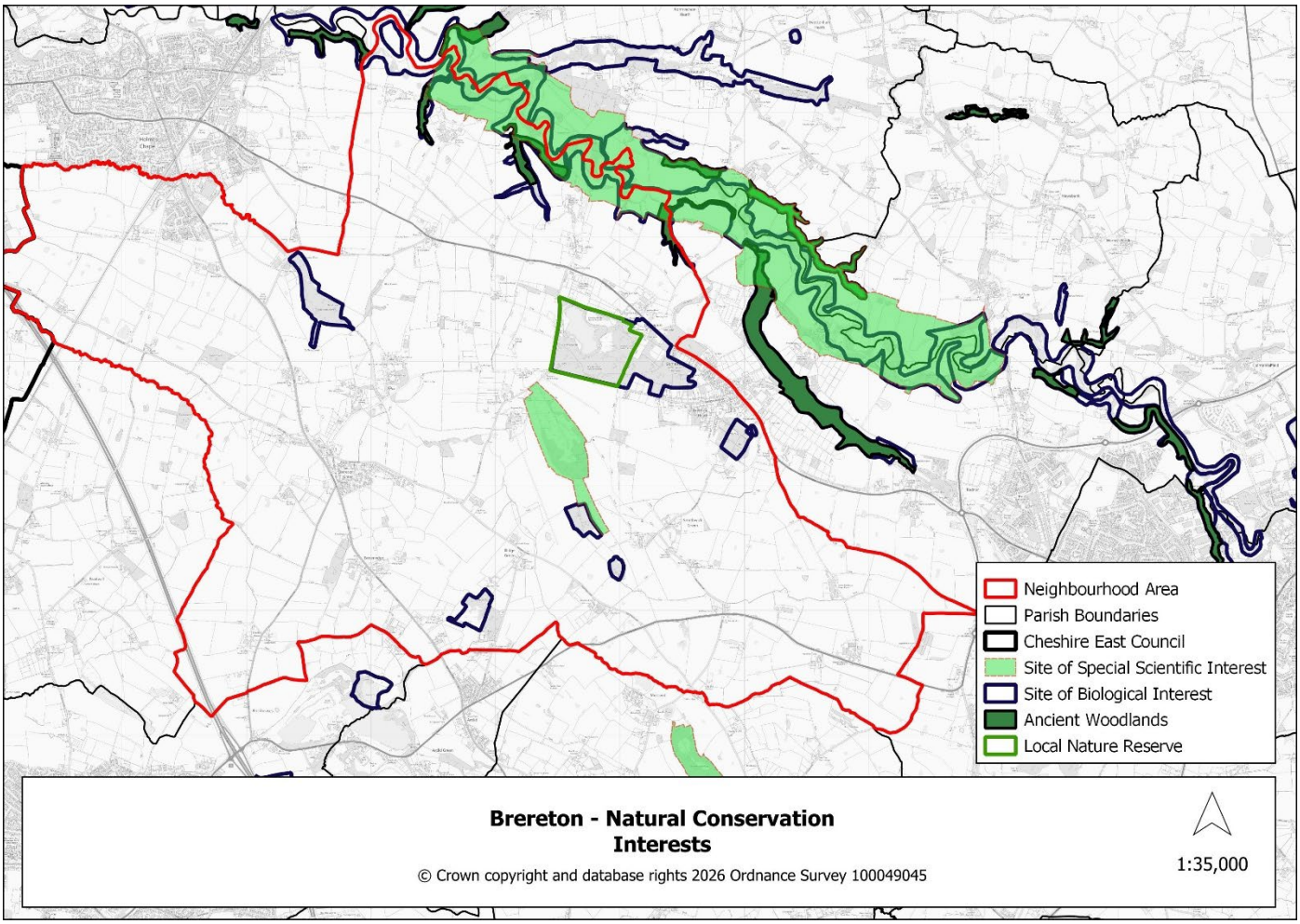
Appendix B: Location of European Designations

Figure 2: European Designated Sites within 15km of Brereton



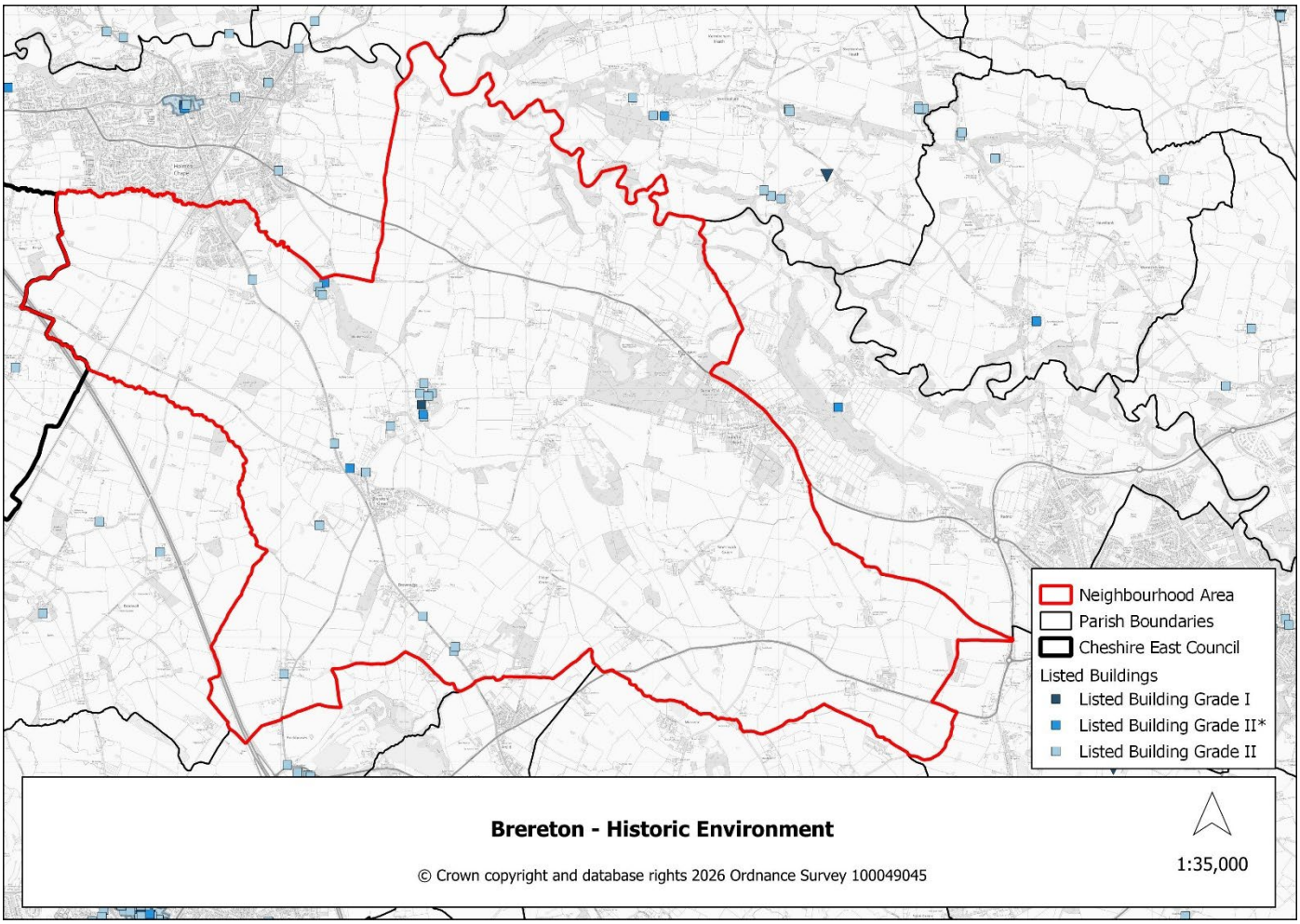
Appendix C: Location of Natural Environment Designations

Figure 3: Natural Environment Designations in Brereton



Appendix D: Location of Historic Environment Designations

Figure 4: Historic Environment Designations in Brereton



Appendix E: Location of Flood Zone Designations

Figure 5: Flood Risk Zones in Brereton

