

# The Walpoles Neighbourhood Plan 2022-2036



Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats  
Regulation Assessment Preliminary Screening May  
2024

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## Introduction

1. Walpole Parish Council is preparing a Neighbourhood Plan for the Walpoles parish, known as WNP throughout this document. The planning period will be 2022-2036. The designated area (**See Figure 1**) is located within King's Lynn & West Norfolk Borough Council area. [Collective Community Planning](#) has been appointed by the parish council to consider whether there is a need for a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) to be undertaken on WNP. This is required under European Directive 2001/42/EC (the SEA Directive), transposed into UK law through the SEA Regulations<sup>1</sup>.
2. SEA may be required for a Neighbourhood Plan if it is likely to have significant environmental effects. A Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is like an SEA but includes assessment of the likely significant effects of a plan or programme on economic and social factors, as well as environmental factors. Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) clarifies that there is no legal requirement for a Neighbourhood Plan to be subject to a SA, but that SA can be used to demonstrate how the plan will contribute to sustainable development.
3. This report will also determine whether or not the contents of the Neighbourhood Plan require a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) in accordance with Article 6 (3) of the EU Habitats Directive<sup>2</sup> and with Regulation 105 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017<sup>3</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).

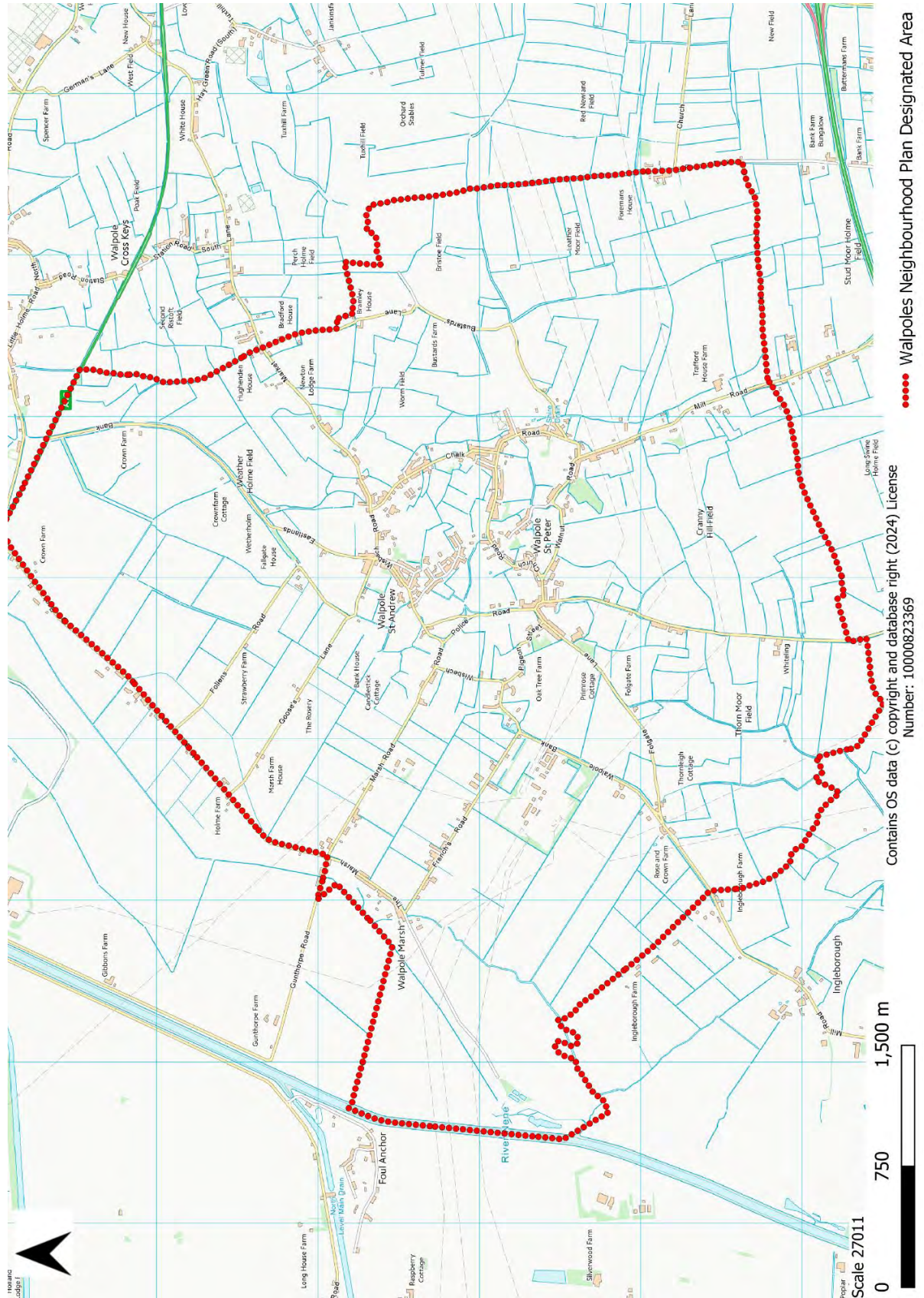
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<sup>1</sup> The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (SI 2004/1633), as amended by the Environmental Assessment and Miscellaneous Planning (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2018 (SI 2018/1232). It should be noted that the purpose of the amendments to the SEA Regulations is to ensure that the law functions correctly after the UK has left the European Union. No substantive changes are made to the way the SEA regime operates.

<sup>2</sup> [EUR-Lex - 31992L0043 - EN - EUR-Lex \(europa.eu\)](#)

<sup>3</sup> [The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)

**Figure 1: Designated Neighbourhood Area**



# SEA Screening

## Scope of the Walpoles Neighbourhood Plan

4. A draft (Regulation 14) version of WNP is currently being prepared. It is intended that this is subject to public consultation in spring/summer 2024. WNP includes a vision for the long-term future of Walpoles, along with aims to support delivery of this vision. The current draft vision is:

*The Walpoles retains its rural identity and ensures that any development coming forward in future years will strengthen the community by achieving a good balance of housing stock to meet local need, achieve high quality design whilst respecting our local character, strives to improve current local wildlife connectivity, will protect, and enhance our local environment including our natural, historical, and built assets such as trees, hedgerows, and community buildings.*

5. The draft plan currently includes five specific aims to deliver this vision:
  - A. Ensure future housing development, including the tenure mix and size of bedrooms, meets the needs of the local population to help retain residents in the Walpoles.
  - B. Protect and enhance the local character of the Walpoles, ensuring that new development is of a high-quality design and sensitively located in line with local design codes.
  - C. Protect and enhance the Walpoles natural environment, its dark skies, green spaces, trees, and hedgerows that are important for wildlife.
  - D. Reduce the impact of flooding and ensure that surface water flood risk is not exacerbated by new development.
  - E. Protect community facilities that meet the needs of the resident population.
6. WNP will have a range of non-strategic planning policies to realise and deliver the above vision and aims. This includes policies:
  - To ensure the housing mix, including affordable housing, on new development sites meets local need;
  - To achieve high quality design with the input of Walpoles design codes/guide, that reinforces and complements local distinctiveness;
  - Protect the natural environment such as trees/hedgerows and green spaces and biodiversity by providing criteria for biodiversity net gain and established green corridors for habitat enhancement;
  - Tackling light pollution through an appropriate dark skies policy;
  - Ensuring proposals will have due regard to surface water flooding, the incorporation of SuDS and maximising biodiversity opportunities;
  - To protect the loss of community facilities for the vitality of the parish.

7. **The plan does not allocate land for development.**

## Baseline Information

8. This section summarises baseline information for the WNP area, drawing on the Evidence Base which will accompany the Neighbourhood Plan.

### Context

9. Walpoles is a village in Kings Lynn & West Norfolk Borough, with a resident population of around 1900 according to Census 2021. Walpole is a large parish that includes the villages of Walpole St. Peter, Walpole St. Andrew, and Walpole Marsh. The villages lie to the north of the A47 approximately 10 miles southwest of King's Lynn and 6 miles northeast of Wisbech. There are a few core services including the primary school<sup>4</sup> and the 54 bus route which runs from Walpole St Peter to King's Lynn. There's a number of businesses in the parish such as ones based at home and within employment units including:

- **Core services-** Walpole Primary School, Walpole Community Centre, Crazy Dayz Oak Tree Farm School
- **Religious Worship-** St Andrew's Church, St Peter's Church
- **Agriculture services-** Farms
- **Food services-** Black Swan, Bakery, Just Jades Tea room
- **Tourism-** Entrim lodge campsite

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<sup>4</sup> [Walpoles Primary School - Home](#)

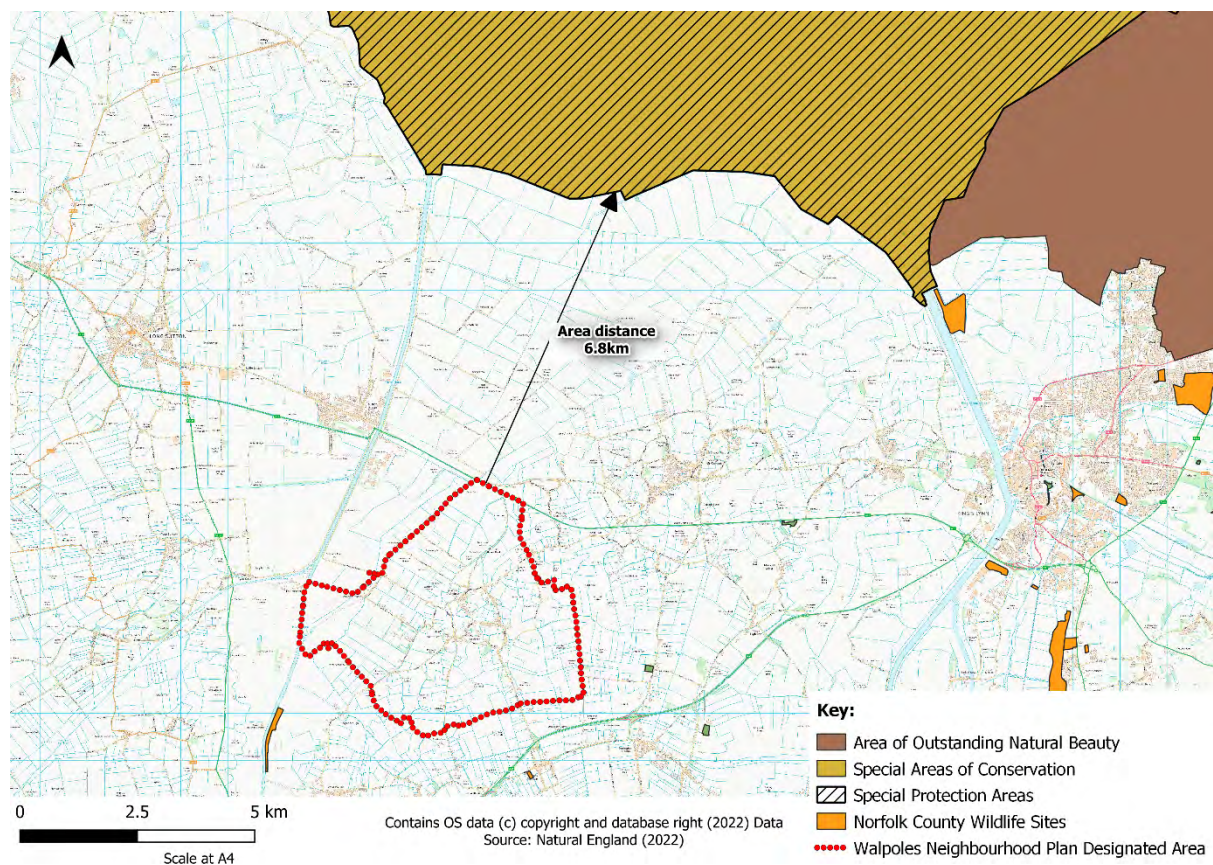
## Biodiversity, flora, and fauna

10. There are no European or Natural England statutory designated sites in the neighbourhood area, though there are a number of important European designations within approximately 7km to the north, this includes the southern boundary of the Greater Wash Special Protection Area (SPA) and Special Area of Conservation (SAC) shown in **Figure 2**.
11. **The Greater Wash** this is the UK's largest estuary system which contains extensive saltmarshes. The intertidal flats of The Wash form one of the largest intertidal areas in Britain, supporting high concentrations of marine invertebrates which in turn provide a food source for over 300,000 wintering wildfowl<sup>5</sup>. The Wash has been given multiple statutory designations by Natural England because of its importance for wildlife and geology. These designations are:
- National nature reserve (NNR)
  - Ramsar site
  - Special area of conservation (SAC)
  - Special protection area (SPA)
  - Site of special scientific interest (SSSI)
12. The Special Area of Conservation designation recognises the importance of The Wash's coastal saltmarsh, sand and mudflats habitat for wildlife including Common Seals, breeding birds and wintering passage birds. Ramsar sites are wetland areas of international significance for waterfowl. The Wash area has Ramsar status in part due to the number of qualifying species of wildlife found in the area, in particular wintering passage and breeding birdlife. Natural England describes the whole area as being "of exceptional biological interest", hence its multiple designations. They describe the intertidal mudflats and saltmarshes as one of Britain's most important winter-feeding areas for waders and wildfowl outside of the breeding season. The saltmarsh and shingle habitats are of considerable botanical interest and the Wash is also significant as a breeding ground for Common Seals. This designation sits to the north of the plan area.
13. There are no non-statutory designations, County Wildlife Sites, within the neighbourhood area. However, there are a few within approximately 1.5km to 6km of the neighbourhood area to the southwest and southeast. These fall within the parishes of Walton Highway and Walpole Highway.

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<sup>5</sup> JNCC Ramsar Information Sheet UK11072 [untitled \(jncc.gov.uk\)](#) – accessed 01/12/2021

**Figure 2-Wildlife Designations and Habitats**



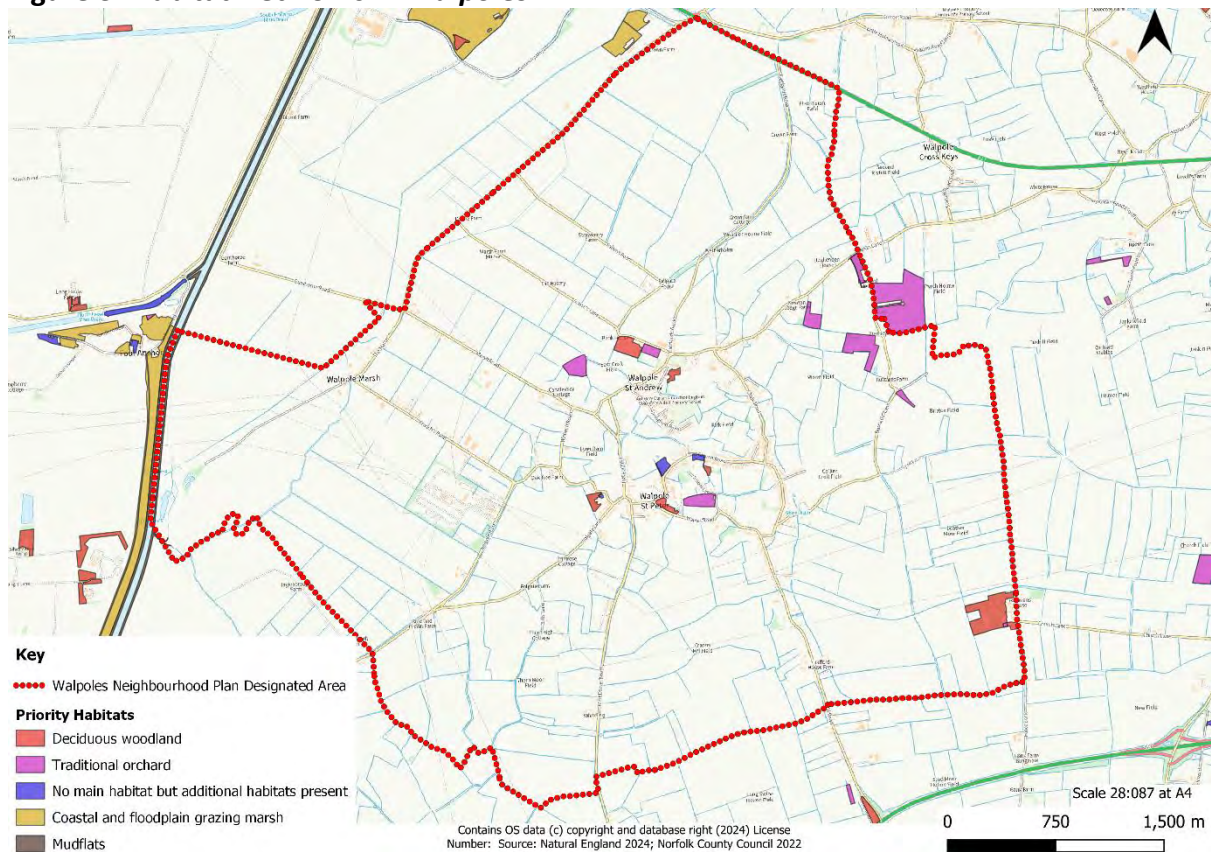
14. Parts of the parish contain Habitats of Principle Importance for biodiversity conservation, those which are most threatened, in greatest decline or where the UK holds a significant proportion of the world’s total population; these include Traditional Orchards and Deciduous Woodland<sup>66</sup> which are also classified as Priority Habitats<sup>77</sup>. The priority habitats in Walpole are mainly within the centre of the parish and to the eastern side of the boundary. Natural England identifies Priority habitats as being important habitat networks which could have the potential to help improve the ecological resilience for each of the habitats/habitat networks in the given area. Local authorities have a duty to consider the conservation of these habitats, and development that would adversely affect these would not normally be acceptable.

<sup>66</sup> [UK BAP Priority Habitats | JNCC - Adviser to Government on Nature Conservation](#)

<sup>77</sup> [UK BAP Priority Habitats | JNCC - Adviser to Government on Nature Conservation](#)



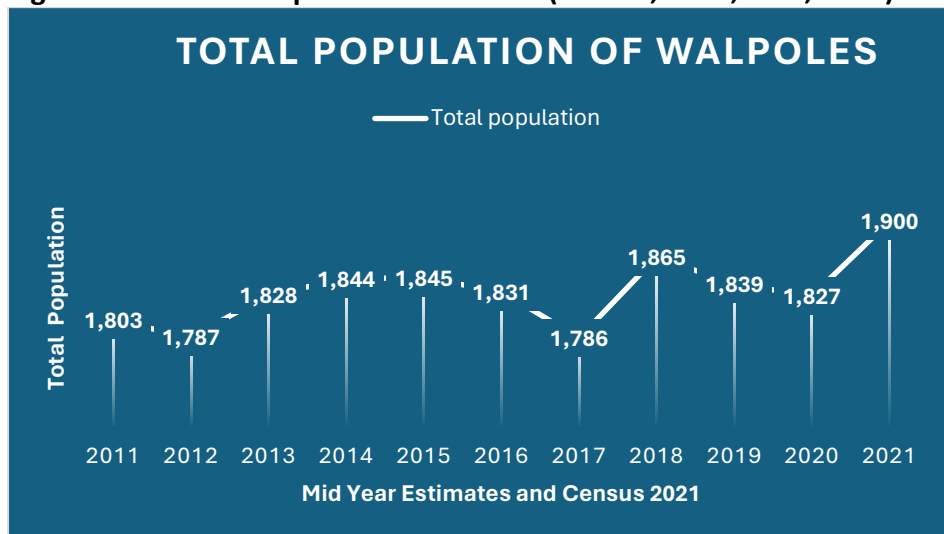
**Figure 3- Habitat Networks in Walpoles**



## Population

15. According to the Census 2021 Walpoles has a current population of 1900. **Figure 4** shows how the population has shown a fluctuating trend since 2011 although more recently it has been on the increase.

**Figure 4- Mid Year Population Estimates (Census, 2021; ONS, 2021)**



16. The Census 2021 data for Walpoles age profile shows that just over half of the population (52.5%) is made up of working age groups (25-64yrs) followed by younger age groups (25yrs and below) at 26.1% and then elderly groups at 21.2% (**Figure 5**).

**Figure 5- Age Profile from a local to national level (Census 2021)**

Age Profile (Yrs)	Walpoles (%)	Kings Lynn & West Norfolk District (%)	England (%)
0-14	16.5	15.5	17.3
15-24	9.6	9.4	11.7
25-44	21.5	22.2	26.6
45-64	31	27	25.8
65-79	16.6	18.8	13.5
80+	4.6	7.2	4.9

## Human Health

17. Provision of age-related services could become a consideration for the neighbourhood plan area over time as the proportion of over 65s makes up 21.2% of the parish profile.

## Air and Climatic Factors

18. As part of the National Air Quality Strategy all local authorities are obliged to establish air quality levels in their area that meet national air quality objectives. If an area does not meet these objectives Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) are declared. The King’s Lynn & West Norfolk Borough Council Air Quality Annual Status Report (2023) confirms that there are two Air Quality Management Areas in the borough these are within King’s Lynn at Gaywood Clock and Railway Road. Gaywood Clock and Railway Road AQMAs are approximately 9-10 miles east of the WNP area<sup>8</sup>. This would suggest that air quality is generally not of a concern in the WNP area, and indeed the report confirms that air quality could be improved but a number of measures have been put in place to improve local air quality.

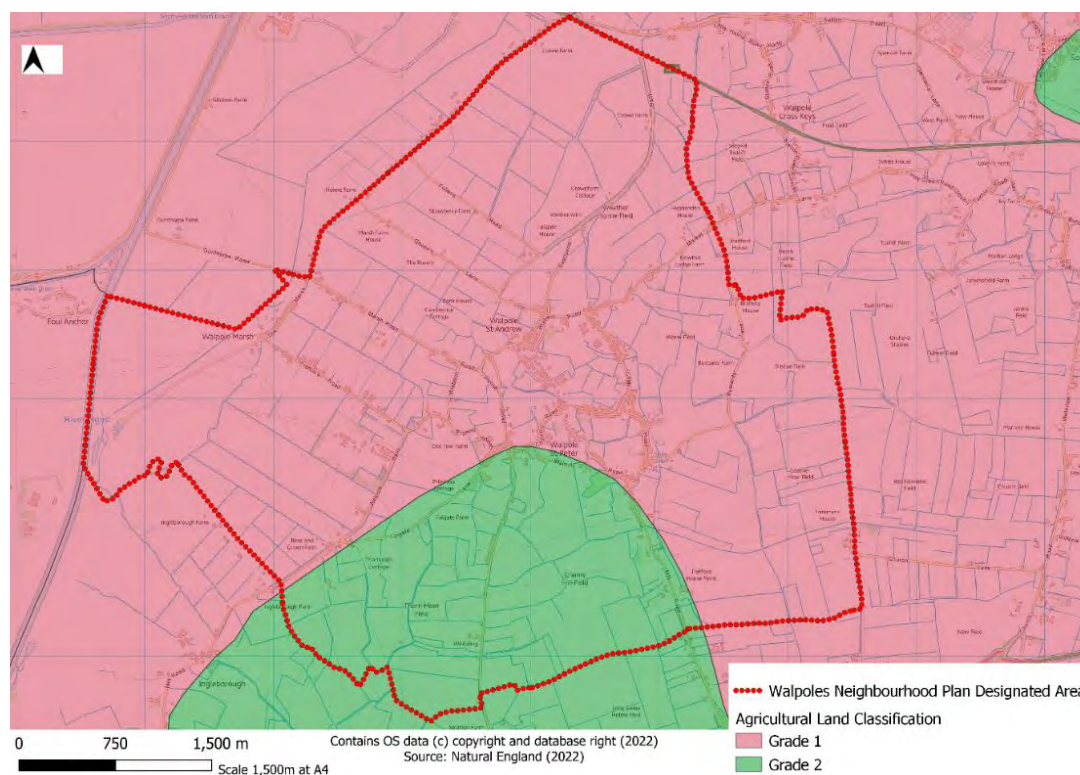
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<sup>8</sup>Borough Council of King’s Lynn & West Norfolk Air Quality Annual Status Report (2023) Available at: [Air quality annual status report 2023 | Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk \(west-norfolk.gov.uk\)](https://www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/air-quality/annual-status-report-2023)

## Soil

19. The parish contains the best and most versatile agricultural land in England, as identified by the Agricultural Land Classification Scale. A large proportion of the parish is identified as Grade 1 and to the south Grade 2 as shown on **Figure 6**. National policy is to retain high value land such as this for its economic and other benefits. Where land of this quality is in active farming use, it could constrain future growth within the parish.

**Figure 6-Agricultural Land Classification (Source, Natural England (2024))**



## Water

20. Part of the settlement is situated within Flood Zone 3a. The watercourse for flood warning in this area runs from the east of Wisbech along the A47 to Terrington St John and surrounding areas, from the River Great Ouse and from the Tidal River from Denver to south of King's Lynn<sup>9</sup>. As shown in **Figure 7**, Environment Agency future flood risk modelling shows that most of the neighbourhood area is at medium risk from fluvial flooding (sea and rivers), with a chance of between 1% and 3.3% each year considering any flood defences protecting or within the area. There are some patches of the parish which are at a very low risk including around Walpole St Peter's Church and north of part of French's road.

<sup>9</sup> [Flood risk assessment - Level 1 | Flood risk assessment - Level 1 | Borough Council of King's Lynn & West Norfolk \(west-norfolk.gov.uk\)](#)

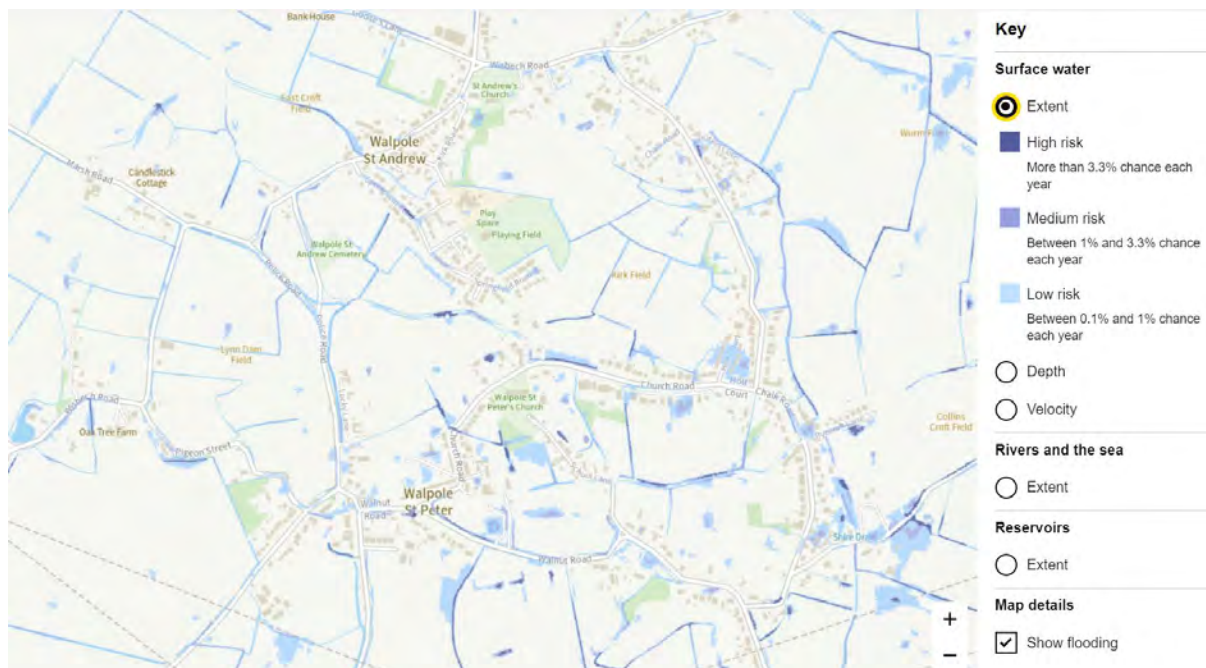
**Figure 7-Flood Risk from Rivers and Sea (Source Environment Agency, 2024<sup>10</sup>)**



21. The BCKLWN Strategic Flood risk Assessment Stage 1 (2017) states several watercourses that flow through / from the settlement are Ordinary Watercourses; in some cases, these are managed by an Internal Drainage Board. Such watercourses may not have been accounted for in the Environment Agency Flood Zone mapping. There is the potential that the settlement could flood from one or more of these watercourses, independently to tidal flooding. There are a series of embankments along the river Nene, which have a standard of protection of 0.67% AEP. However, there remains a residual risk of flooding should the defences be overtopped or fail.
  
22. Surface water flood risk in Walpole St Andrew and Walpole St Peter consists predominantly of water ponding on roads, gardens, and other open spaces throughout the village. **Figure 8** taken from the Environment Agency, demonstrates that there are patches of high, medium, and low flood risk across the parish, including within the built-up area around Church Road, Pyecroft Lane, Springfield Road, Walnut Road.

<sup>10</sup> [Learn more about this area's flood risk - GOV.UK \(check-long-term-flood-risk.service.gov.uk\)](https://check-long-term-flood-risk.service.gov.uk)

**Figure 8- Surface Water Flood Risk (Source Environment Agency, 2024)**



## Material Assets

23. The Walpoles contains a number of services in the parish as listed below:

- **Core services-** Walpole Primary School, Walpole Community Centre, Crazy Dayz Oak Tree Farm School
- **Religious Worship-** St Andrew's Church, St Peter's Church
- **Agriculture services-** Farms
- **Food services-** Black Swan, Bakery, Just Jades Tea room
- **Tourism-** Entrim lodge campsite

24. Unfortunately, Walpole Pre-School permanently closed in July 2023. The community centre and village hall is available for hire for events, social groups, commercial ventures and more. Walpoles has one bus service which runs through the parish which is the Lynx 54<sup>11</sup> which runs from Walpole St Peter to King's Lynn. There are permanent bus stops on Springfield Road and Holt Court in the parish according to the bus timetable and this route also goes down Church Rd, Walnut Rd, Wisbech Rd and Chalk Rd, however, these roads do not have a permanent listing on the website timetable so may not be well used.

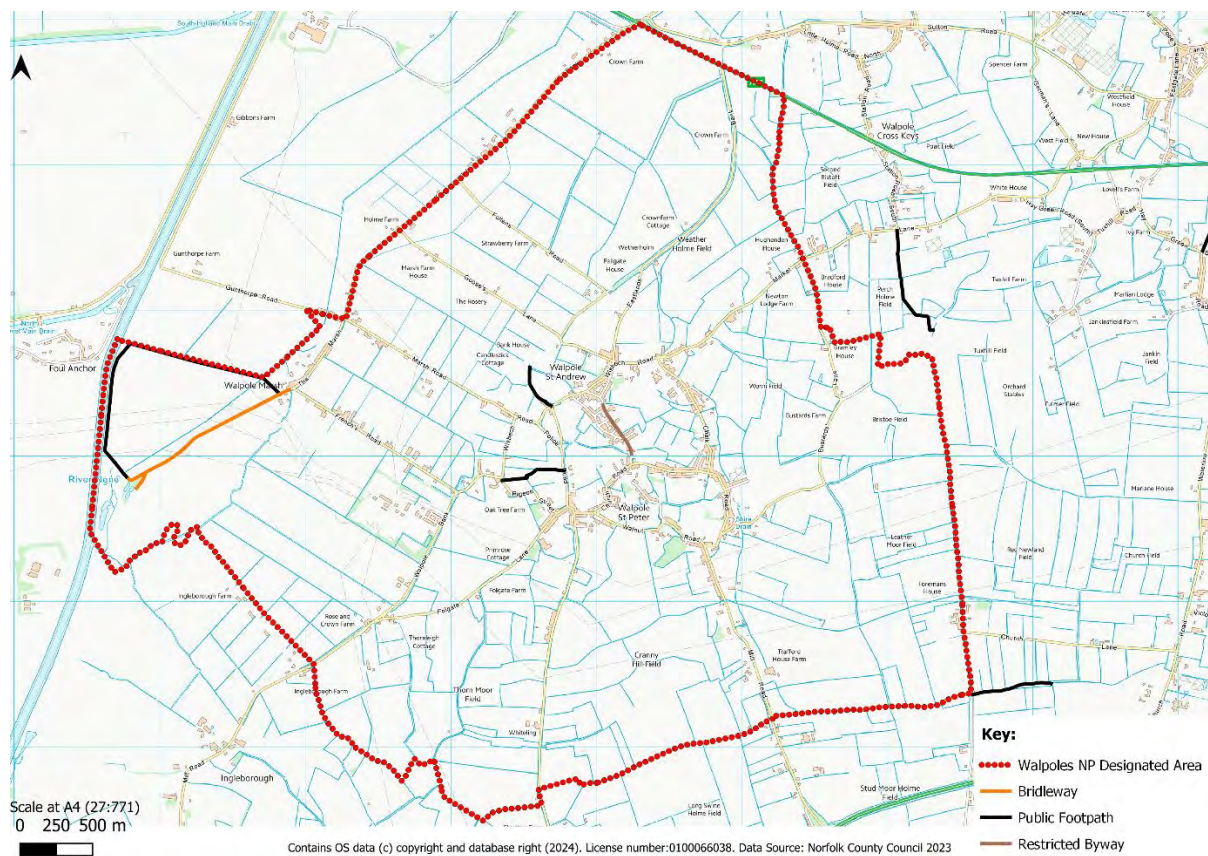
25. The bus stops on Wisbech Rd is an old brick bus shelter without seating and the bus stop on Walnut Rd has a shelter and a seat to rest on. Both roads have a narrow pathway on one side of the road leading to the bus stop. However, there are not pathways throughout the whole village which is not uncommon in rural localities. The roads are residential areas with a road speed of 30mph so pedestrians would have to be careful walking to the bus stop safely here.

<sup>11</sup> 54 | [Lynx \(lynxbus.co.uk\)](http://lynxbus.co.uk)

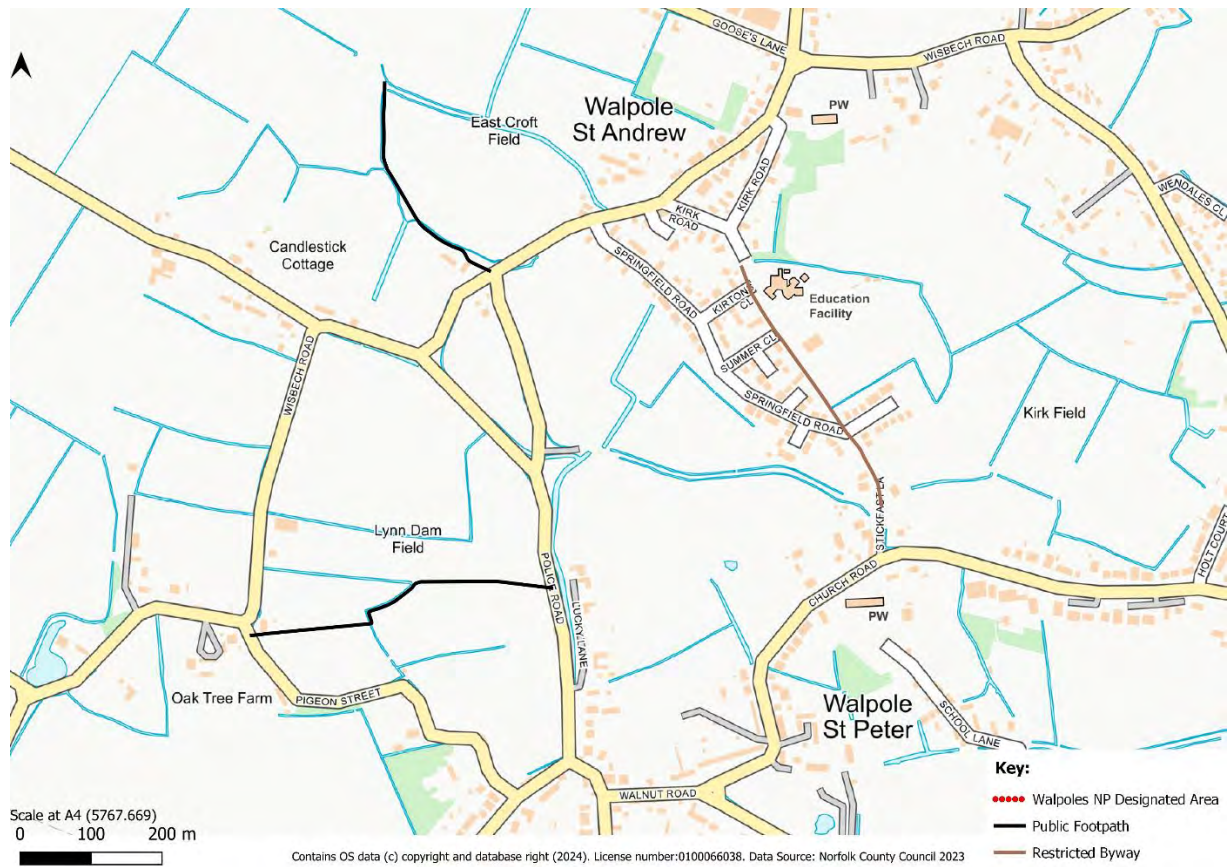
26. Due to the rural nature of the parish, there are not many footpaths present in the parish and many of the roads are narrow B roads such as Market Ln, Marsh Rd, and Police Rd, where one car would safely pass. The parish sits between two major A roads, the A17 is north of the Walpoles cutting through Walpole Cross Keys and the A17 sits to the south of the parish.

27. As shown in **Figures 9 and 10**, there are a few short Public Rights of Ways (PROW) within the parish, such as north-west of Wisbech Road and west of Police Road. Within Walpole Marsh there is a short circular route in the countryside to the boundary of the parish over a footpath and bridleway. These routes enable people to access the open countryside which is considered important for physical and mental wellbeing. However, the routes appear fragmented and short in distance and there is a lack of routes in other parts of the countryside or built-up settlements.

**Figure 9- Public Rights of Way in the parish**



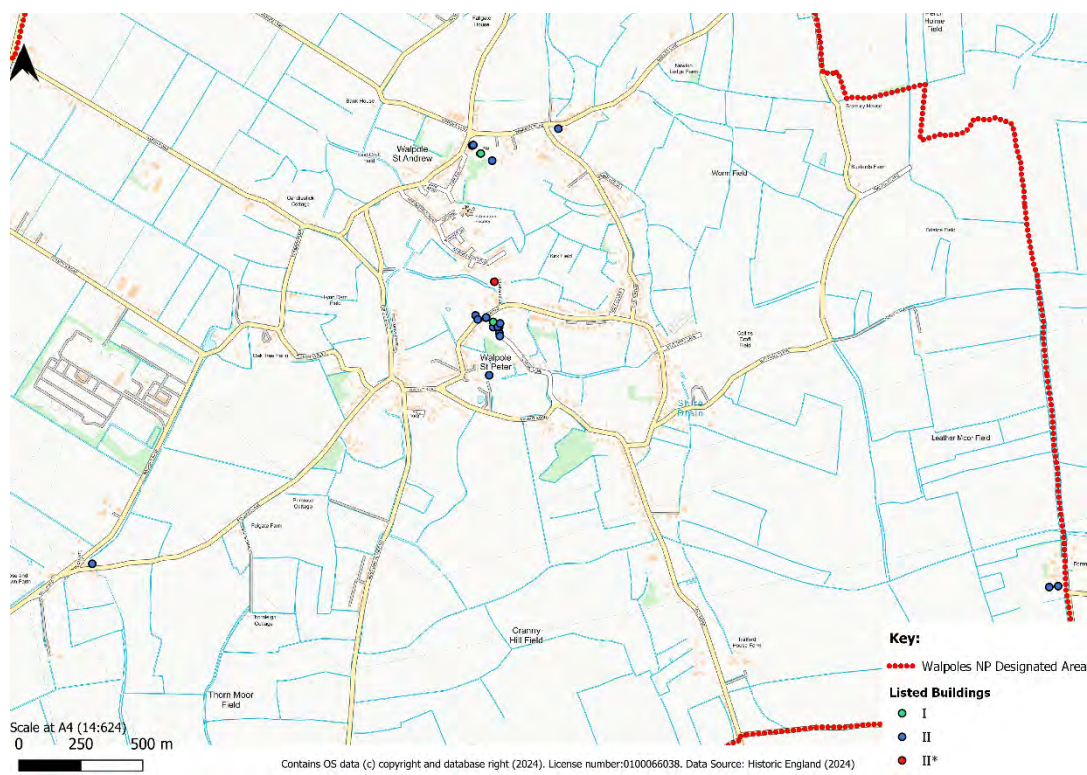
**Figure 10- Public Rights of Way in the built up settlement**



## Cultural Heritage

28. On the Norfolk Heritage Explorer, there are 182 entries regarding historic objects, structures, and buildings. These include assets from the prehistoric age, Bronze Age, Middle Saxon and Late Saxon, Roman, medieval, and post-medieval and 19<sup>th</sup> century. Many of the entries were discoveries from fieldwalking in 1984 by the Fenland Survey of Medieval pottery sherds and materials between the ages 1066AD- 1539 AD<sup>12</sup>.
29. There is no Conservation Area within the parish. However, there are 21 listed buildings within the neighbourhood plan area according to the latest data on the Historic England website<sup>13</sup>. These are mainly situated within Walpole St Andrew and Walpole St Peter (**Figures 11 and 12**). Most of the listed entries are Grade II. However, there are two Grade I buildings which are the Church of St Andrew and the Church of St Peter. There is one Grade II\* entry which is the Old Manor Farmhouse (List Entry- 1237330).

**Figure 11- Heritage Assets in The Walpoles**



<sup>12</sup> Walpole. Source: Norfolk Historic Environment Service (2024). [Your Search Results - Norfolk Heritage Explorer](#)

<sup>13</sup> Walpole Parish. Source: [Search the List: Map Search | Historic England](#) Accessed: 30/08/2022



Figure 12- Listed Buildings in The Walpoles



## Landscape

30. The West Norfolk Landscape Character Assessment<sup>14</sup> identifies that the neighbourhood area falls under ‘**The Fens, Settled Inland Marshes**’ character area. The character area is characterised by:

- A large-scale, low-lying landscape offering distant, panoramic views that evoke a sense of openness. This open character is less evident where settlements, shelterbelts and orchards occur.
- Simplistic terrain characterised by a distinctly flat landform providing wide horizons. Earthworks in the form of rivers and creek embankments bring topographic change and strong, straight lines of contrast.
- An intensively farmed arable landscape comprising predominantly geometric fields divided by straight drainage channels and dykes and underlain predominantly by silts. Field size is variable in places with small units defining settlement edges.
- Fruit orchards are a relatively common (yet declining) feature with rectangular plots ordered into rows. These rows often channel views and where orchards occur alongside roads, views across the landscape are more restricted. Conifer planting is also a relatively common feature.

<sup>14</sup> BCKLWN Landscape Character Assessment, Final Report March 2007, Chris Blandford Associates

- Buildings and storage associated with horticulture and food production industries, as well as power stations, pumping stations and sluices, provide visible human-built elements.
- Well served by a network of rural roads that follow an irregular path.
- The landscape appears well settled – with villages, town edges, large houses, individual farms and properties generally in view. Settlement is predominantly found aligning secondary roads and has a linear arrangement with villages often merging through ribbon development.
- The skyline appears cluttered in places due to the varied heights, forms and textures of vertical elements including trees, pylons and buildings.
- Lines of pylons are dominant features slicing diagonally across the field system. The pylons and posts carrying overhead wires are frequently in view.
- Views can be gained to the edge of King’s Lynn and Wisbech.
- The change to the adjacent Coastal Marshes and Open Inland Marsh landscapes is transitional and not always obvious.
- Large churches (which are often situated in an elevated position) within villages are key landmark features - visible from long distances.
- The main roads – the A17(T) and A47(T) are busy through routes and the operation of farm machinery brings constant movement to the landscape.
- The sense of remoteness and tranquillity varies and is largely dependent on proximity to roads and settlement edges.

**The Ecological Character for this character type is dominated by:**

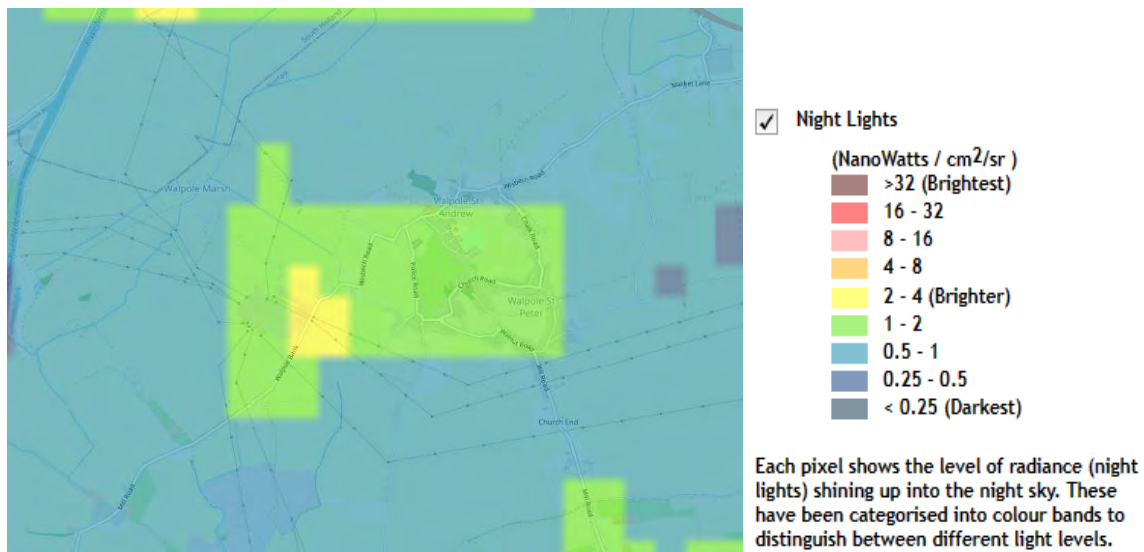
- Scattered mixed shelterbelts and clumps of mature trees.
- Poplar and willow rows.
- River corridors, including the River Great Ouse and The Well Creek.
- Network of drainage ditches (with grassy banks and lined with reeds and rushes).

**The key forces for change which could affect Walpoles are:**

- Loss of field margins and farm ponds through agricultural intensification.
- Intensification of arable farming practices, resulting in potential loss of curvilinear drainage patterns/ co-axial field systems.
- Potential decline in maintenance of river and drainage channels and pumps and associated potential flood risk.
- Soil erosion and shrinkage, resulting in changing agricultural landscape.
- Potential major road improvements associated with the A17.
- Risk of saline intrusion of agricultural farmland from rising sea levels.
- Potential farm diversification, with associated recreational pressures, such as parking and noise/ visual intrusion.
- Potential construction of new sluices.
- Loss of orchards.
- Introduction of large new sheds, haulage, or agricultural buildings

31. The CPRE Dark Skies Mapping<sup>15</sup> shows the majority of the neighbourhood designated area falls into the darkest categories, suggesting that as a whole the parish has relatively dark skies with very little light pollution. These skies ranged between 1 to <0.25. Additional intrusive external or internal lights associated with new development would be detrimental to the character of the village. It is noted that in many cases external and internal lights fall into permitted development, however, it is possible to influence lighting associated with new development and the evidence and national guidance of the benefits of sensitive lighting may encourage better design choices by others.

**Figure 13-Dark Skies (CPRE, 2024)**



<sup>15</sup> [England's Light Pollution and Dark Skies \(cpre.org.uk\)](https://www.cpre.org.uk)

# SEA Screening

## Legislative Background

### Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

32. The European Directive 2001/42/EC<sup>16</sup> is the basis for Strategic Environmental Assessments and Sustainability Appraisal legislation, which was transposed into English secondary legislation by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 otherwise known as the SEA Regulations. A SEA would be required if the implementation of the contents of the Walpoles Neighbourhood Plan are likely to cause significant environmental effects.
33. The assessment undertaken will follow and answer specific questions using criteria drawn from the European SEA Directive and Schedule 1 of the UK Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 when determining the likely significance of effects as shown in **Figure 14**<sup>17</sup>.
34. **Figure 15** presents the flow diagram entitled Application of the SEA Directive to plans and programmes which is taken from the Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive, published in September 2005<sup>18</sup>. **Figure 16** below assesses whether WNP will require a full SEA. The questions in the first column are drawn from **Figure 14** which sets out how the SEA Directive should be applied.

### Habitat Regulation Assessment (HRA)

35. It is required by Article 6 (3) of the EU Habitats Directive and by regulation 61 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended 2017) 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.
36. To fulfil the legal requirements 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.
37. An assessment has been undertaken to determine whether the draft WNP requires an SEA or HRA in accordance with the above regulations. The results can be viewed below.

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<sup>16</sup> [EUR-Lex - 32001L0042 - EN - EUR-Lex \(europa.eu\)](#)

<sup>17</sup> [The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)

<sup>18</sup>

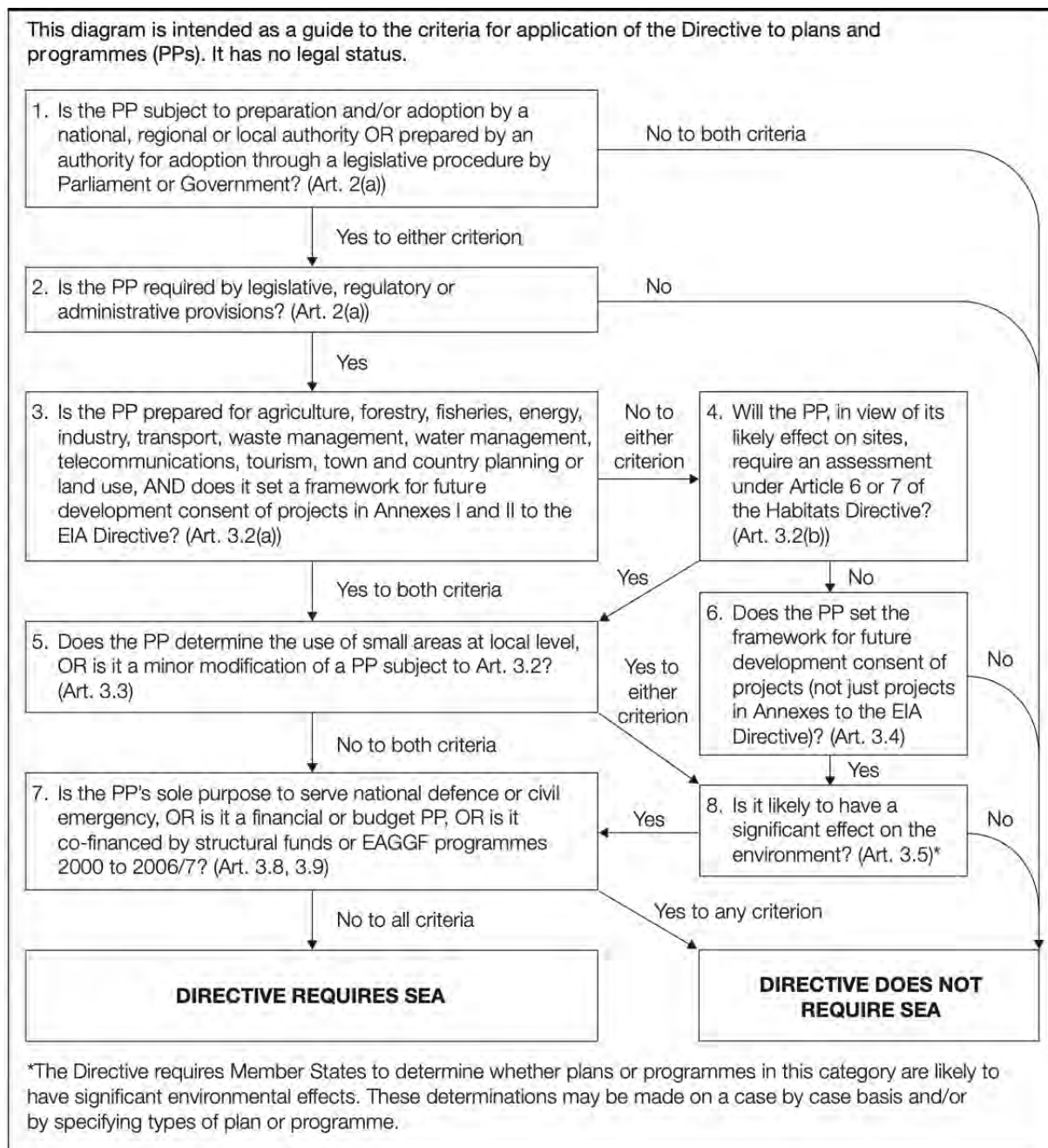
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/7657/practical\\_guidesea.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/7657/practical_guidesea.pdf)

**Figure 14-Schedule 1 Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects**

SCHEDULE 1- CRITERIA FOR DETERMINING THE LIKELY SIGNIFICANCE OF EFFECTS ON THE ENVIRONMENT

1. The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular, to:
  - a) the degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources;
  - b) the degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy;
  - c) the relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development;
  - d) environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme; and
  - e) the relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of [F1retained EU law] on the environment (for example, plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection).
  
2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to:
  - a) the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects;
  - b) the cumulative nature of the effects;
  - c) the transboundary nature of the effects;
  - d) the risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents);
  - e) the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected);
  - f) the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to—
    - (i) special natural characteristics or cultural heritage;
    - (ii) exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values; or
    - (iii) intensive land-use; and
  - g) the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.

**Figure 15-Application of the SEA Directive to plans and programmes**



## Figure 16-Application of SEA Directive to WNP

\*PP in this instance refers to Neighbourhood Plan Review

Stage		Y/N	Justification
1	Is the Neighbourhood Plan (PP) 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	<p>The NP is being prepared by the parish council (as the “relevant qualifying body”) and will be made by the Borough Council of King’s Lynn &amp; West Norfolk the local authority which falls within the designated area subject to Walpoles passing an independent examination and successful local community referendum.</p> <p>The preparation of the Walpoles Neighbourhood Plan is allowed under primary legislation: The Town and Country Planning Act (1990) as amended by the Localism Act (2011).</p> <p>The preparation of NP’s are subject to several relevant regulations as shown below (not intend to be a complete list):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012,</li> <li>• the Neighbourhood Planning (referendums) Regulations 2012</li> <li>• the Neighbourhood Planning (General)(Amendment) Regulations 2015</li> <li>• the Neighbourhood Planning (General)and Development Management Procedure (Amendment) Regulations 2016</li> <li>• the Neighbourhood Planning (General)and Development Management Procedure (Amendment) Regulations 2017</li> </ul> <p><b>GO TO STAGE 2</b></p>
2	Is the Neighbourhood Plan (PP) required by legislative, regulatory, or administrative provisions? (Art. 2(a))	Y	<p>Whilst it is not a requirement for a parish to create a Neighbourhood Plan under the Town and Country Planning Act (1990) and Localism Act (2011), the NP will eventually be “made” and form part of the Development Plan for the Borough Council of King’s Lynn &amp; West Norfolk. This authority is directed by legislative processes, and it is 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.</p>

	Stage	Y/N	Justification
			<b>GO TO STAGE 3</b>
3	Is the Neighbourhood Plan (PP) prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water 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/N	<p>Developments that fall within Annex I are ‘excluded’ development for Neighbourhood Plans (as set out in Section 61(k) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as subsequently amended)<sup>19</sup> and the Localism Act 2011 Schedule 9 Part 2 Para 7 Section 38 B (1)(b),(6)<sup>20</sup>.</p> <p>A Neighbourhood Plan is prepared for Town and Country Planning and Land use. The Walpoles neighbourhood plan can include at a neighbourhood level, through different policy areas, the framework for development that would fall within Annex II of the EIA Directive. This neighbourhood plan has not set out a framework to manage for future development of the scale and nature envisaged by Annex II of the EIA Directive.</p> <p>The Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared to set out a framework for town and country planning and land use within the Parish of Walpoles. Its intention is to complement the higher order strategic framework that already exists for land use planning across the Borough Council of King’s Lynn &amp; West Norfolk. The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to align and be in general conformity with the strategic framework.</p> <p>The Neighbourhood Plan is not allocating any development itself but anticipates being one of the key tools to manage future development of Walpoles.</p> <p><b>GO TO STAGE 4</b></p>
4	Will the Neighbourhood Plan (PP), in view of its likely effect on sites, require an assessment under Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive? (Art. 3.3)	N	<p>A Neighbourhood Plan could potentially have impacts on sites covered by the Habitats Directive. The Neighbourhood Plan is not proposing to make site allocations for residential housing or business purposes. <b>Please see chapter 5 of this report for further detail.</b></p> <p><b>GO TO STAGE 6</b></p>
5	Does the Neighbourhood Plan (PP) determine the use of small areas at local level, OR is it a minor	Y	<p>A Neighbourhood Plan can determine the use of small areas at a local level. The Walpoles Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate any sites for development. However, proposes to include a variety of policies to create</p>

<sup>19</sup> [Town and Country Planning Act 1990 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://legislation.gov.uk)

<sup>20</sup> [Localism Act 2011 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://legislation.gov.uk)



Stage		Y/N	Justification
	modification of a PP subject to Art. 3.2? (Art. 3.3)		sustainable development through location, design, and environmental protections such as designating local green spaces and green corridors for habitat enhancement.
6	Does the Neighbourhood Plan (PP) set the framework for future development consent of projects (not just projects in Annexes to the EIA Directive)? (Art. 3.4)	Y	Once a Neighbourhood Plan is adopted this forms part of the statutory Development Plan and will be used by the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk in the determination of planning applications. The intention is that the Neighbourhood Plan will provide a land use policy framework for future development at a local level.
7	Is the Neighbourhood Plan (PP)'s sole purpose to serve national defence or civil emergency, OR is it a financial or budget PP, OR is it co-financed by structural funds or EAGGF programmes 2000 to 2006/7? (Art. 3.8, 3.9)	<p><b>Does not apply to a Neighbourhood Plan.</b></p> <p><b>SKIPPED AS PER FIGURE 14.</b></p>	
8	Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment? (Art. 3.5)	N	<b>SEE FIGURE 14 – PLAN DOES NOT REQUIRE SEA</b>

38. Schedule 1 of the SEA Regulations sets out the criteria for determining the likely significance of effects. These are listed in **Figure 17** below along with comments on the extent to which the WNP meets these criteria.

Figure 17- Likely Significant Effects

SEA Directive Criteria (Annex II)	Comments	Likely Significant Effect? Y/N
<p><b>Characteristics of the plan and programmes, having regard in particular, to:</b></p>		
<p>a) The degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources</p>	<p>Once made, WNP will become part of the statutory development plan and will guide the delivery of development within the designated plan area.</p> <p>The parish of Walpoles falls within the district of King’s Lynn &amp; West Norfolk area. The King’s Lynn and West Norfolk 2011 Core Strategy designated Walpoles as a rural village.</p> <p>The Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan (2016) allocated two sites within the Walpoles- G109.1 and G109.2 which will total at least 20 dwellings. These allocations are being carried forward in the emerging local plan. However, one allocation is now built out.</p> <p><b>In terms of the degree to which WNP sets a framework, it does not allocate land for development.</b></p>	<p><b>N</b></p>
<p>b) The degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy</p>	<p>The Walpoles Neighbourhood Plan Review will be adopted alongside the higher order adopted Local Plans and National Planning Policy Framework and form part of the Borough Council’s Development Plans. The Neighbourhood Plan must be in general conformity to the strategic framework and will expand upon some of the Local Plan policies, providing supplementary information on a local scale.</p> <p>It does not have influence over other plans. However, once made WNP will form part of the statutory development plans for Walpoles and will be used in conjunction with the current development plans to determine planning applications.</p>	<p><b>N</b></p>

SEA Directive Criteria (Annex II)	Comments	Likely Significant Effect? Y/N
c) The relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development	One of the Basic Conditions which WNP must meet is to contribute towards sustainable development. Some of the policies within the plan will focus on environmental protection including designating local green spaces, creating green corridors for biodiversity/habitat enhancement, protecting existing trees/hedgerows, and avoiding unnecessary light pollution in a dark skies policy. These aim to ensure effects on the environment are minimised within the plan area and promote positive action. Given the non-strategic nature of the WNP this does not have the potential to restrict the delivery of other plans or programmes.	<b>N</b>
d) Environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme	<p>Baseline information relating to WNP was described earlier in this Screening Document. There are no European or Natural England statutory designated sites in the neighbourhood area, though there are a few important European designations within approximately 7km to the north, this includes the southern boundary of the Greater Wash Special Protection Area (SPA) and Special Area of Conservation (SAC).</p> <p><b>The plan itself will not specifically allocate land for development and will not exacerbate any significant known environmental problems.</b></p>	<b>N</b>
e) The relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of community legislation on the environment (eg plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection)	The implementation of community legislation is unlikely to be significantly compromised by the Neighbourhood Plan.	<b>N</b>

SEA Directive Criteria (Annex II)	Comments	Likely Significant Effect? Y/N
<b>Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to:</b>		
a) The probability, duration, frequency, and reversibility of the effects	WNP does not contain any site-specific development proposals that will result in complex, widespread, long lasting, or serious environmental effects.	<b>N</b>
b) The cumulative nature of the effects	As it will not allocate land for development WNP will not lead to any cumulative effects in combination with existing or emerging plans.	<b>N</b>
c) Transboundary nature of effects	The emerging WNP area provide supplementary policy areas on a local scale. The impacts for transboundary effects beyond the parish are unlikely to be significant.	<b>N</b>
d) The risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents)	WNP is unlikely to produce any significant effects to human health or the environment.	<b>N</b>
e) The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)	The WNP area has a total population of around 1900 (Census 2021). This sits within the context of a total population of 154,300 in King's Lynn & West Norfolk district. WNP remains a non-strategic plan and the principle of development that will take place has already been established within the King's Lynn & West Norfolk Local Plan.	<b>N</b>
f) The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to – i. Special natural characteristics or cultural heritage;	i) There are no statutory natural designations which fall within Walpoles. As the plan does not allocate land for development it is not anticipated to have likely significant effects on the natural characteristics of the area.  Regarding cultural heritage, there are 21 statutory listed buildings or monuments within the neighbourhood plan area according	<b>N</b>

SEA Directive Criteria (Annex II)	Comments	Likely Significant Effect? Y/N
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ii. Exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values; or</li> <li>iii. Intensive land-use</li> </ul>	<p>to the latest data on the Historic England website.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ii) WNP is unlikely to result in exceedance of environmental quality standards, such as those relating to air, water, and soil quality.</li> <li>iii) WNP is unlikely to bring forward development of an extent that would result in a significant intensification of Local land Use.</li> </ul> <p><b>The emerging WNP does not include site allocations and therefore are not anticipated to have likely significant effects on the parish.</b></p>	
<p>g) The effects on areas of landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status</p>	<p>The Neighbourhood Plan Area does not have any recognised international, national, or local protection status.</p> <p>The nearest international and national status landscape is The Greater Wash and North Norfolk Coast which is 7km north. The policies in this plan do not have an adverse effect on this landscape.</p> <p>WNP is not anticipated to have likely significant effects on designated landscapes given the plan cannot influence areas outside of the parish, it will not allocate land for development, and it contains some protective polices such as dark skies and local green spaces.</p> <p>The environmental effects on areas of biodiversity designations have been considered through the Local Plan but are not relevant to WNP.</p>	<b>N</b>

## HRA Screening assessment

39. It is required by Article 6 (3) of the EU Habitats Directive and by regulation 61 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended 2017) 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.
40. To fulfil the legal requirements 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.
41. An assessment has been undertaken to determine whether the draft WNP requires an SEA or HRA in accordance with the above regulations. **There are no designated European wildlife sites in the WNP area.**
42. This screening assessment has also considered the impact on European Sites within 20km of the plan area, as an in-combination assessment area.

**Figure 18- European Sites within 20km of Walpoles**

Special Areas of Conservation	Special Protection Areas	Ramsar Sites
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Roydon Common &amp; Dersingham Bog</li> <li>The Greater Wash &amp; North Norfolk Coast</li> <li>Ouse Washes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Roydon Common &amp; Dersingham Bog</li> <li>The Greater Wash &amp; North Norfolk Coast</li> <li>Ouse Washes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Roydon Common &amp; Dersingham Bog</li> <li>The Greater Wash &amp; North Norfolk Coast</li> <li>Ouse Washes</li> </ul>

43. Each European site has a set of interest features which are the ecological features for which the site is designated or classified, and the features for which Member States should ensure the site is maintained or where necessary restored. Each site also has a set of conservation objectives.
44. European sites are at risk if there are possible means by which any aspect of a plan can, when being taken forward for implementation, pose a potential threat to the wildlife interest of the sites. This is often referred to as the 'impact pathway'.
45. Potential impact pathways considered for this assessment include:
- Increased recreational pressure.
  - Air quality impacts
  - Water issues
  - Urban effects

46. WNP does not allocate land for development and therefore will not directly result in an increase in the number of new dwellings within the vicinity of European Sites. An assessment of potential impacts of draft policy contained within WNP is provided in **Figure 19**.

**Figure 19- HRA Screening Assessment**

<b>Policy</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Likely Significant Effects</b>	<b>Potential Risks</b>	<b>Recommendation at Screening Stage</b>
<b>Policy 1: Housing Mix</b>	Requirements that ensure future housing development meets the needs of local people.	No LSE – does not promote development but relates to qualitative criteria for development	N/A	None
<b>Policy 2: Affordable Housing</b>	Sets a tenure split for affordable housing in line with the Walpoles Housing Needs Assessment.	No LSE – policy does not promote land for development	N/A	None
<b>Policy 3: Design</b>	Requiring high quality design that accords with the Walpoles Design Codes/Guide	No LSE – policy is qualitative and does not promote development	N/A	None
<b>Policy 4: Biodiversity and Green Corridors</b>	Requirement to deliver at least a 10% net gain in ecological value and conservation of existing natural features and existing green spaces with regard to the mapped out green corridors.	No LSE – mitigation policy for growth	N/A	None
<b>Policy 5: Trees and Hedgerows</b>	Policy setting out detail/criteria on protecting existing trees and hedgerows in the parish, replacement trees and new tree planting.	No LSE – protective policy	N/A	None
<b>Policy 6: Local Green Spaces</b>	Protection of green spaces of local importance from future development.	No LSE – supports retention of green open spaces, conserving the natural environment	N/A	None
<b>Policy 7: Dark Skies</b>	Policy to protect unnecessary light pollution from new developments	No LSE – protective policy	N/A	None
<b>Policy 8: Water Management (SuDS)</b>	Protective policy requiring appropriate flood risk and ecological assessment	No LSE – protective policy	N/A	None

Policy	Description	Likely Significant Effects	Potential Risks	Recommendation at Screening Stage
<b>Policy 9: Protection of Community Facilities</b>	Policy protects the use of the listed community facilities	No LSE – does not promote development	N/A	None
<b>Policy 10: Renewable Energy, Low Carbon Technologies, and Associated Infrastructure</b>	This policy sets out criteria which applications for renewable energy or associated infrastructure should consider such as being well screened, undergoing a landscape visual assessment and addressing onsite parking.	No LSE – does not promote development but relates to qualitative criteria for development	N/A	None

## SEA and HRA Screening Conclusion

47. The HRA Screening Assessment concludes that no significant effects are likely to occur with regards to the integrity of European Wildlife Sites within 20km of the WNP area. For this reason, a full SEA/HRA and Appropriate Assessment is not required at this point and is **screened out**.