

The background of the cover page is a photograph of a natural landscape. In the foreground, there is a field of tall, golden-brown grass. Behind the grass, there is a dense line of green trees. In the distance, through the trees, the spires of a large, light-colored building, likely a cathedral or university hall, are visible against a pale blue sky.

# **Scothern Neighbourhood Plan Review**

**Submission Version - March 2023**

**Strategic Environmental  
Assessment  
Screening Opinion**

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## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 Only a Neighbourhood Plan that meets the basic conditions can be put to a referendum and be made. One of the basic conditions is that the making of the Neighbourhood Plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, obligations as set out in its relevant Directives including 2001/42/EC, 79/409/EEC, 92/43/EEC, and 2009/147/EC. These Directives necessitate that a Neighbourhood Plan be screened to determine whether it requires a Strategic Environmental Assessment and/or a Habitats Regulations Assessment.
- 1.2 A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is a process for evaluating, at the earliest appropriate stage, the environmental effects of a plan before it is made. The SEA screening determines whether the plan is likely to have significant environmental effects. If likely significant environmental effects are identified, an environmental report must be produced.
- 1.3 A Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) identifies whether a plan is likely to have a significant effect on a European site, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects. An HRA is required when it is deemed that likely negative significant effects may occur on protected European Sites (Natura 2000 sites) as a result of the implementation of a plan/project. The HRA screening will determine whether significant effects on a European site are likely.
- 1.4 This screening report determines whether the Scothern Neighbourhood Plan requires a SEA and/or HRA. The report's sections are:
  1. Introduction
  2. Overview of the Scothern Neighbourhood Plan
  3. SEA screening assessment
  4. SEA screening conclusion
  5. HRA screening assessment
  6. HRA screening conclusion
  7. Overall screening conclusions
  8. Consultation Responses (Environment Agency, Historic England & Natural England)
  9. Determination Statement (West Lindsey District Council)
- 1.5 This screening report will be submitted to West Lindsey District Council by Scothern Parish Council who are the qualifying body for the review of the Scothern Neighbourhood Plan. The assessment was undertaken on the post-Regulation 14 Draft Version of the Scothern Neighbourhood Plan.
- 1.6 The Screening Report was prepared in the context of the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan adopted in April 2017 and the emerging review Plan which both cover the Scothern Neighbourhood Plan area and whose policies were the subject of separate SEA and HRAs. The purpose of this screening report is to assess the policies of the Scothern Neighbourhood Plan only.



## 2. Overview of the Scothern Neighbourhood Plan

- 2.1 Whether the review Scothern Neighbourhood Plan requires a SEA and/or a HRA is dependent on what is being proposed by the plan itself. The review of the existing Plan has a vision with objectives and contains a set of locally specific planning policies and guidance for the area. The plan can be viewed with its supporting documents at:

<https://scothern.parish.lincolnshire.gov.uk/council-business/neighbourhood-plan>

- 2.2 Scothern is considered to be a 'medium village' respectively in the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan and lies in the district of West Lindsey just to the North of Lincoln. The Neighbourhood Plan has 13 formal planning policies, which are:

Policy H1: Location of New Residential Development  
Policy H2: Housing Type and Mix  
Policy H3: Site H1.4 Dunholme Road  
Policy H4: Site H1.5 Nettleham Road  
Policy D1: Design and Character  
Policy D2: Renewable Energy and Low Carbon Development  
Policy T1: Parking Standards  
Policy T2: Pedestrian and Cycle Routes  
Policy B1: Working from Home  
Policy E1: Local Green Spaces  
Policy E2: Biodiversity  
Policy E3: Scothern Beck Green Corridor  
Policy C1: Provision of new or improved Community Facilities

In addition, there are 8 Community Objectives, which reflects the views of local residents but these do not form part of the SEA screening.

- 2.3 The Neighbourhood Plan has criteria based policies on: sustainable development, residential development management, local connections, design and new housing. The proposed housing sites within the Plan are those allocated within the emerging review of the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan. Focusing on character, it contains four policies on local character. Open spaces (existing and proposed Local Green Spaces) are covered by three policies. Four further policies cover community facilities, shops, commercial premises and local employment. Connectivity issues are covered by two final policies. Existing constraints and designations in the Plan area include:

- The Scothern Beck Green Corridor
- Biodiversity
- Local Green Spaces

- 2.4 The only environmental site of significance is The Humber Estuary European Site which is outside the Plan area and located more than 19km away from the proposed development sites identified within the Neighbourhood plan.

### 3. SEA Screening Assessment

3.1 Figure 1 below illustrates the process for screening a planning document to ascertain whether a full SEA is required. The findings of the screening are given in Tables 1 to 4 which examine specifically the likely significant effect of the Plan on the environment.

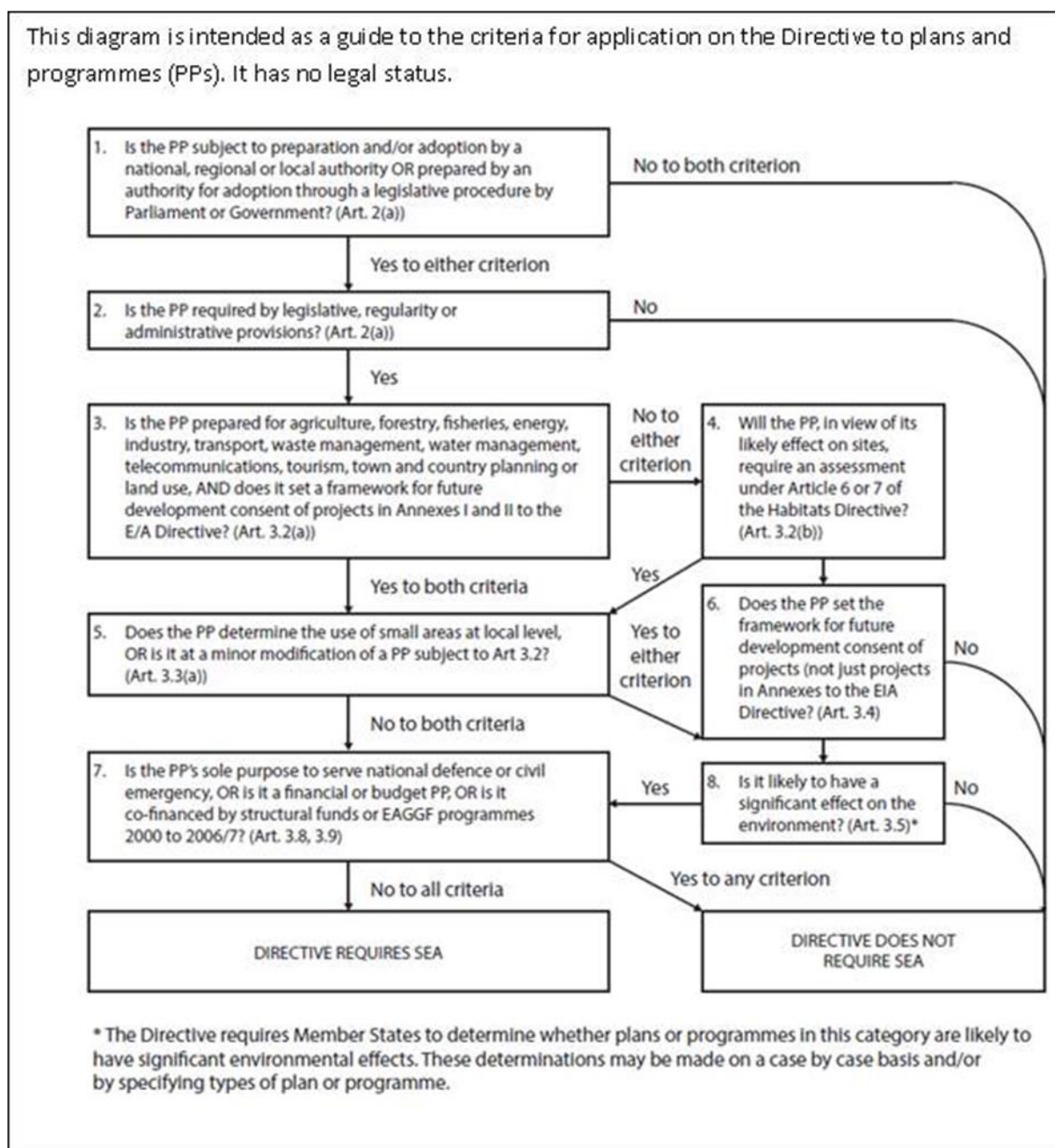


Figure 1: Application of the SEA Directive to Plans

**Table 1: Assessment of the Scothern Neighbourhood Plan against Figure 1**

<u>Criteria/Stage</u>	<u>Response:</u> <u>Yes/ No/</u> <u>Not</u> <u>applicable</u>	<u>Details</u>
1. Is the Neighbourhood Plan 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?	Yes	Neighbourhood Plans are made by a 'qualifying body' (e.g. parish/town council) under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Localism Act 2011. A neighbourhood plan is subject to an examination and referendum. If it receives 50% or more 'yes' votes cast at referendum, it will be 'made' by West Lindsey District Council as the local planning authority. GO TO STAGE 2
2. Is the Neighbourhood Plan required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions?	Yes	Communities have a right to be able to produce a neighbourhood plan but they are not required by legislative, regulatory or administrative purposes to produce one. GO TO STAGE 3
3. Is the Neighbourhood Plan 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?	Yes	The plan is being prepared for 'town and country planning and land use...' (Article 3(2) and, once adopted, will be part of the planning policy framework determining future development within the Neighbourhood Area. Developments that fall within Annex I are 'excluded' developments for Neighbourhood Plans (as set out in Section 61(k) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)). It is not anticipated that the Neighbourhood Plan would be the tool to manage development of the scale and nature envisaged by Annex I and Annex II of the EIA Directive. GO TO STAGE 5
4. Will the Neighbourhood Plan, in view of its likely effect on sites, require an assessment for future development under Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive?	No	See screening assessment for HRA in Section 5 and 6 of this report.
5. Does the Neighbourhood Plan determine the use of	Yes	Once made the Neighbourhood Plan will be part of the land use framework for the area and will help to determine

<p>small areas at local level, OR is it a minor modification of a Plan subject to Article 3.2?</p>		<p>the use of areas of land at a local level. The Plan recognises and supports the designation of local green spaces. It seeks to protect and enhance community facilities. It recognises its rural character highlighting the key features and attributes to guide the design of new development in the area.</p> <p>The plan is not a minor modification of a previous Neighbourhood Development Plan. GO TO STAGE 6</p>
<p>6. Does the Neighbourhood Plan set the framework for future development consent of projects (not just projects in annexes to the EIA Directive)?</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>The Neighbourhood Plan will provide a framework for the consent of any future development projects in the Neighbourhood Plan area. GO TO STAGE 8</p>
<p>7. Is the Neighbourhood Plan's sole purpose to serve the 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?</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>The Neighbourhood Plan does not deal with these issues.</p>
<p>8. Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment?</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>See Table 2: Assessment of the likely significant effects on the environment. Also see Tables 3 and 4 for detailed assessments by neighbourhood plan policy and environmental receptors respectively. Sections 5 and 6 of this report assess any likely significant effects on European sites</p>
<p>Outcome</p>	<p>SEA not required. See Tables 2,3,4 and sections 4 and 7.</p>	

**Table 2: Stage 8 of Table 1 Assessment of the likely significant effects on the environment**

SEA Directive criteria and Schedule 1 of Environmental Assessment of plans and programmes Regulations 2004	Assessment	Likely significant environmental effect?
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;	The neighbourhood plan will set a policy framework for the determination of planning applications for future development projects within the Designated Neighbourhood Area. Once made, the Plan will form part of the operative Development Plan.	No
(b) the degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy;	The Plan must be in general conformity with the operative Development Plan, i.e. the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan (adopted April 2017) and the emerging Central Lincolnshire Local Plan review 2023 and national planning policy, i.e. National Planning Policy Framework. It does not have any influence over other plans. Once made, the Plan will form part of the planning policy framework for the designated Neighbourhood Area and will be used in conjunction with the CLLP (and review) and other relevant policy and material considerations to determine planning applications.	No
(c) the relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development;	The achievement of sustainable development is one of the basic conditions that the Plan must meet. This review draft plan includes policy themes regarding the built and natural environment and, in particular, the provision of local green spaces, renewable energy and design codes for proposed allocated sites within the Neighbourhood Area.	No
(d) environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme; and	It is not considered that there are any particular environmental problems relevant to the Plan.  Also see assessment Tables 3 and 4.	No



(e) the relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (for example, plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection).	The Plan is not directly relevant to the implementation of any European legislation.	No
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;	<p>The Plan policies are designed to expect any new development to contribute to the sustainability of the Neighbourhood Area and minimise environmental impacts within the Plan Area where possible. The designation of local green spaces should create positive environmental outcomes. The Plan also provides a policy framework for local renewable energy and low carbon development.</p> <p>Also see assessment Tables 3 and 4.</p>	No
(b) the cumulative nature of the effects;	<p>The effects of the Plan need to be considered alongside the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan. The Plan is required to be in general conformity with this plan which was subject to full SEA and HRA assessments. These concluded that either the implementation of the Local Plan would not result in any likely significant environmental effects or sufficient mitigation measures were in place to address any effects. The Plan is in general conformity with the CLLP and the review plan.</p> <p>The Plan policies provide for protection of the character and setting of Scothern parish, including Scothern Beck, Biodiversity, green spaces and community facilities. The Plan is focussed on providing for the future sustainability of the village, and as such has the principles of sustainability at its core.</p> <p>Also see assessment Tables 3 and 4.</p>	No

(c) the transboundary nature of the effects;	The proposals within the Plan are unlikely to have a significant impact beyond the Neighbourhood Area boundary.	No
(d) the risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents);	There are no significant risks anticipated, and it is considered that the Plan will enhance human health and the environment. Health and safety mitigation measures will be dealt with on a procedural basis by prospective applicants.  Also see assessment Tables 3 and 4.	No
(e) the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected);	The potential for any environmental impacts are likely to be local, limited and minimal. The proposed housing site allocations will fall within Scothern Parish Council boundaries.  Also see assessment Tables 3 and 4.	No
(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	The Plan promotes the protection of the built and natural environment.  One draft policy actively seeks to ensure that development responds to the existing surrounding character.  Any effects of the plan are expected to be positive on these characteristics.  The Plan is unlikely to adversely affect the value and vulnerability of the area in relation to its special natural characteristics or cultural heritage. The policies within the plan seek to provide greater protection to the specific rural character of the area, as well as encouraging new developments to be in keeping with historically and culturally important design characteristics. As such there are unlikely to be any intensive land-use concerns.  Also see assessment Tables 3 and 4.	No
(g) the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or	It is not considered that the policies in the Plan will adversely affect any areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, community or international protection status. These	No

international protection status.	sites are towards the Lincolnshire Wolds, Coast and Humber Estuary.  Also see assessment Tables 3 and 4.	
<b>Table 3: Detailed assessment of the likely significant effects on the environment by neighbourhood plan policy</b>		
Plan policy with summary	Assessment- Likely significant effect?	
Policy H1: Location of New Residential Development	Policy H1 aims to add more detail criteria on in-fill sites through the character assessment. Simultaneously, the policy ensures that rural and environmentally valued sites in the countryside are protected from development pressure. This policy supports delivery of CLLP LPs 2 and 4 and review plan S3 and S4	
Policy H2: Housing Type and Mix	Policy H2 seeks to provide more local emphasis on the type of housing needed within the community. This is responding to local consultation and complements CLLP Policies LP10 and LP11. Also review policies S22 and S23.	
Policy H3: Site H1.4 Dunholme Road	Policy H3 aims to add more detail to the allocation of site off Dunholme Road. This site is already allocated through the CLLP review Plan. This Policy provides a detailed development criteria which focuses heavily on the design and layout of the development. This site has already been tested for sustainability and environmental impact through the site selection process of the Local Plan.	
Policy H4: Site H1.5 Nettleham Road	Policy H4 aims to add more detail to the allocation of site off Nettleham Road. This site is already allocated through the CLLP review Plan. This Policy provides a detailed development criteria which focuses heavily on the design and layout of the development. This site has already been tested for sustainability and environmental impact through the site selection process of the Local Plan.	
Policy D1: Design and Character	This policy provides a positive framework for decision-making, as required by the NPPF. Locally, the concept of character relates to the need	

	for sensitive design such that developments reflect the character of surroundings; meeting environmental, social, and economic objectives are met.
Policy D2: Renewable Energy and Low Carbon Development	This Policy seeks to complement both existing and emerging policies for renewable energy. In particular the emerging low carbon policies within the CLLP review Plan S6, S7, S8, S9.
Policy B1: Working from Home	Policy B1 seeks to encourage business development that provides space for working from home which is ideal for remote and small businesses. It conforms to the aspirations of CLLP and review plan and paragraphs 72, 83, 84 and 104 of the NPPF.
Policy T1: Parking Standards	Policy T1 seeks to provide local policy requirements for the level of off street parking on new developments. This is to reduce traffic congestion and parked cars blocking footways and cycleways.
Policy T2: Pedestrian and Cycle Routes	The NPPF identifies as a key priority the protection and enhancement of green infrastructure such as footpaths and cycleways. This policy set the local context of CLLP LP20.
Policy E1: Local Green Space	At the heart of all future developments this policy supports strongly the sustainability requirements of NPPF Chapter 15 as articulated in CLLP and the review plan by protecting valued green spaces from development.
Policy E2: Biodiversity	Policy E2 seeks to protect and enhance local biodiversity and is strongly linked to Policies H3 and H4. It is also reflective of National Policy and the requirement for development to make a net-gain in biodiversity.
Policy E3: Scothern Beck	Linked to Policy E2, Policy E3 seeks to protect the local environment around Scothern Beck where there is a rich variety in local wildlife.
Policy C1: Provision of new or improved Community Facilities	Policy C1 seeks to promote the development of new or improved community facilities where appropriate. This is in line with national policy and is to support the ongoing and future sustainability of the village.

**Table 4: Detailed assessment of the likely significant effects on the environment by environmental receptors as recognised in Annex 1(f) of the SEA Directive (2004)**

Environmental receptor	Assessment- Likely significant effect?
<p>Air quality Plans should prevent development from contributing to, or being put at risk by, air pollution.</p>	<p>Policies H3 and H4 seek to reduce the impact of development on air quality by supporting the use of electric vehicles and sustainable construction.</p>
<p>Biodiversity Plans should identify important biological features and work to protect and enhance these.</p>	<p>There appear to be no designated wildlife sites in the Plan area. The scale development is proposed in the Plan which is unlikely to have a significant impact on existing environmental assets. To enhance biodiversity in the area the plan is proposing to designate local green spaces through Policy E1 and has provided design codes for the proposed housing allocations in policies H3 and H4. These codes also identify requirements for biodiversity.</p>
<p>Landscape Development should seek to promote or reinforce local distinctive landscape features.</p>	<p>Policy D1 of the Plan encourages design in keeping with local development style and the features of local character areas as defined by the character assessment. The Plan area has no nationally important landscape designations.</p>
<p>Material Assets These refer to physical infrastructure including social infrastructure, transport infrastructure, water, and energy infrastructure.</p>	<p>The existing infrastructure in the Plan area and nearby appears to have the capacity to meet the likely demands as determined by the Central Lincolnshire Local Plan.</p>
<p>Population Plans should encourage development that adds to the overall quality of the area, establishes a strong sense of place, is visually attractive, and contributes to safe and accessible environments.</p>	<p>Policy D1 and the criteria in policies H3 and H4 will ensure that development of these sites will be in keeping with local character features and be in easy reach of existing facilities and also suitably linked to existing road and footpath networks.</p>
<p>Health Plans should promote healthy communities by emphasising the value of social and recreational facilities including open space and recreational facilities.</p>	<p>Policy C1 seeks to protect existing community facilities in the village and would support new ones where suitable. It supports the designation of local green spaces and identifies footpaths and cycleways in the plan area.</p>



<p>Natural resources Plans should protect and enhance soils particularly best and most versatile agricultural land. The plan should, where relevant, recognise the need for a sufficient supply of minerals and making best use of these finite resources.</p>	<p>Policy H1 seeks to minimise new development outside the existing developed footprint of the village and the proposed allocated sites. All development is therefore concentrated either on previously developed sites or on greenfield sites that will have the least impact to the countryside and to high-grade agricultural land.</p>
<p>Climate change Plans should try to reduce our contribution to, and better prepare for the effects of, climate change.</p>	<p>Policy D2 recognises that every effort in new constructions should not add to the existing flood risk and should conform to the national government's policy on reducing greenhouse gas emissions.</p>
<p>Water New and existing development should not contribute to or be put at risk from water pollution.</p>	<p>It is understood that the Plan's proposals are unlikely to contaminate any nearby water bodies or affect water supply or impact on any groundwater source protection zones that may exist in the Plan area. Policies H3 and H4 make provision for surface water and water quality.</p>

#### **4. SEA Screening Conclusion**

- 4.1 As a result of the evaluations carried out in Tables 2, 3 and 4 it is considered that it is unlikely that any significant environmental effects will arise as a result of the Scothern Neighbourhood Plan. Consequently, the assessment within Table 1 concludes that an SEA is not required when judged against the application of the SEA Directive criteria.
- 4.2 No sensitive natural or heritage assets will be significantly affected by policies contained in the Plan. The Plan's policies are in general conformity with those within the CLLP and review Plan. The Plan only promotes site allocations in line with the strategic Local Plan. It is not near or in a national or international designated area or contravenes significant elements of the CLLP and review Plan.

## **5. HRA Screening Assessment**

- 5.1 The HRA involves an assessment of any plan or project to establish if it has potential implications for European wildlife sites. The HRA will consider if the proposals in the neighbourhood plan have the potential to harm the habitats or species for which European wildlife sites are designated. European wildlife sites are:
- Special Protection Areas (SPA) designated under the Birds Directive (79/409/EEC)
  - Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) designated under the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC).
- 5.2 In addition to SPA and SAC sites, Ramsar sites are designated under the Ramsar Convention (Iran 1971 as amended by the Paris Protocol 1992). Although they are not covered by the Habitats Regulations, as a matter of Government Policy, Ramsar sites should be treated in the same way as European wildlife sites. European wildlife sites and Ramsar sites are collectively known as Natura 2000 sites.
- 5.3 The initial screening stage of the HRA process determines if there are any likely significant effects possible as a result of the implementation of the plan and if an appropriate assessment is needed. This stage should provide a description of the plan's policies (see Table 3) and an identification of the Natura 2000 sites which may be affected by the plan and assess the significance of any possible effects on the identified sites.
- 5.4 As a general 'rule of thumb' it is identified that sites with pathways of 10-15km of the plan boundary should be included within a HRA. However, there are no European sites within 15km of the Scothern neighbourhood plan boundary nor are there any sites within the Central Lincolnshire Area.
- 5.5 The neighbourhood plan also needs to be screened for the likelihood of combined effects with other plans and projects. For the purpose of this HRA, other plans and projects would include: national plans; local plans; neighbourhood plans; water resource management plans; catchment flood management plans; catchment abstraction management strategies; and river basin management plans. However as there are no European Sites affected by the neighbourhood plan it is not necessary to then screen the plan for likelihood of its combined effects with these identified other plans and projects.

## **6. HRA Screening Conclusion**

- 6.1 None of the policies in the Scothern Neighbourhood Plan are likely to have a significant effect on a European Site whether alone or in combination with other plans and projects. Consequently the plan is not considered to require further assessment under Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive (Art. 3.2(b)).

## **7. Overall Screening Conclusions**

- 7.1 A SEA and HRA screening report exercise has been undertaken for the Scothern Neighbourhood Plan. The assessments have concluded that the neighbourhood plan is unlikely to give rise to any significant environmental effects or have significant effects on a European site. Accordingly it is considered that a SEA or HRA assessment is not required for the neighbourhood plan.
- 7.2 It is important to note that this screening opinion is based on the post draft regulation 14 version of the Scothern Neighbourhood Plan. Consequently if the content of the neighbourhood plan should materially change then the SEA/HRA screening process will need to be re-assessed and updated.
- 7.3 It is a requirement of the screening process to consult certain consultation bodies when forming a view on whether a SEA and/or HRA are required and they are: Historic England, the Environment Agency and Natural England.