

Horncastle
Neighbourhood
Development Plan
Sustainability Review

March 2015

Contents:	Page:
1. Overview	1
2. Introduction – The Neighbourhood Plan process	6
3. Horncastle – A Profile	6
4. Neighbourhood Plan Vision and Objectives	8
5. Sustainability Review	10
6. Sustainable Development	11
The Sustainability Review Methodology	13
Step 1 – Selecting the criteria	13
Step 2 – Assessing each Neighbourhood Plan policy and aspiration against the criteria	15
Step 3 – Analysis and Recommendations	16
7. The Assessment Conclusions	16
8. Policy Assessment	17
Policy 1 – Sustainable Development	17
Policy 2 – Design Principles for New Development	18
Policy 3 – Car Parking on New Development	20
Policy 4 – Pre Application Consultation	21
Policy 5 – Protecting the Historic Environment	22
Policy 6 – Allocation of Affordable Housing	23
Policy 7 – Provision of Affordable Housing	24
Policy 8 – A Mix of Housing Types	25
Policy 9 – Green Infrastructure	26
Policy 10 – Developing a Green Wheel around Horncastle	27
Policy 11 – Designating Local Green Spaces	28
Policy 12 – Visual Connections with the countryside	29
Policy 13 – Strengthening the Retail Core	30
Policy 14 – Supporting Local Business Growth	31
Policy 15 – Reducing the Risk of Flooding	32
Appendix 1 - Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Opinion Letters	33
Appendix 2 – Background Documents	47

1.Overview

This document forms the Sustainability Review for the draft Horncastle Neighbourhood Development Plan (HNDP).

The purpose of the report is to ensure that the principles of sustainable development are incorporated into all levels of planning policy. A sustainability appraisal is a requirement of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. The British Government has stated that there is no legal requirement to prepare a Sustainability Appraisal in the case of Neighbourhood Development Plans, but the NDP must demonstrate how its plan will contribute to achieving Sustainable Development. There are EC directives on the assessment of the effect of certain plans and programmes on the environment. The European Directive 2001/42/EC, known as the Strategic Environmental Assessment or SEA Directive, requires that SEA are prepared for Plans and Programmes that (including other things) are prepared for town and country planning and/or which determine the use of small areas at a local level and which are likely to have significant environmental effects. This transposed into UK law through the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulation 2004, which applies to plans with significant environmental effects. Where required, Sustainability Appraisals incorporate the requirements of SEA.

The SA extends the concept of the SEA to encompass economic and social concerns. Under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, An SA should be undertaken for the constituent DPD's of the Local Plan. An SA therefore is a statutory requirement for a Local Plan, but not a Neighbourhood Development Plan.

However under national and European legislation, a SEA may be required when new planning policies are proposed, such as the introduction of a Neighbourhood Plan. A Screening Report has been produced by East Lindsey District Council which has determined that the contents of the Horncastle Neighbourhood Development Plan do not require a SEA in accordance with the above legislation.

A sustainability report would still be useful as a means to ensure and demonstrate that the principles of sustainable development as defined by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) have been taken into account in the preparation of the plan and will form part of the submission documents for the independent examination.

The Horncastle Neighbourhood Development Plan uses criteria based policies and does not allocate sites for development. The Steering Group believe that the policies in the Plan will not have significant environmental effects. To confirm the Steering Group's belief, East Lindsey District Council carried out a SEA Screening assessment

on whether the Horncastle Neighbourhood Development Plan had any significant environmental effects. East Lindsey District Council concluded that it is unlikely that there will be any significant environmental effects arising from the Horncastle Neighbourhood Development Plan. As such, the Horncastle Development Plan does not require a full SEA to be undertaken.

The Habitats Regulations 1994, as amended in 2006, require that all land use plans are subject to Appropriate Assessment (HRA). The purpose of HRA is to protect the integrity of sites protected, at a European level, for their nature conservation importance. The Horncastle Neighbourhood Development Plan does not allocate land for development and is therefore unlikely to have significant effects on a site of European wildlife importance. It was determined that a detailed Assessment was not required.

The full assessment and justification of each individual policy is set out in the report. In summary, the results of the sustainability review of the Horncastle Neighbourhood Development Plan suggest that introducing the Neighbourhood Plan will contribute to sustainable development.

The Horncastle Neighbourhood Development Plan must be in conformity with the NPPF and in general conformity with the policies of the Local Plan: currently these are the saved policies from the 1999 adopted Local Plan and the 1996 Sustainability Appraisal. A new Local Plan (the Core Strategy Document) is in preparation by East Lindsey District Council and early draft Sustainability Appraisal but as yet has no ratified policies.

In the absence of an up to date Local Plan / Strategic policy context, the key reference point for the policies within the HNNDP is the NPPF. Themes within the HNNDP can be found throughout the NPPF specifically sections: 1 Achieving sustainable development, 2 Ensuring the vitality of town centres, 3 Supporting a prosperous rural economy, 4 Promoting sustainable transport, 6 Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes, 7 Requiring good design, 8 Promoting healthy communities, 10 Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change 11 Conserving and enhancing the natural environment and Conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

As stated above the Core Strategy Document is in preparation by East Lindsey District Council which includes a draft Sustainability Appraisal. The policies within the emerging Core Strategy have been referenced in the sustainability review specifically in the assessment of the policies.

In addition the key sustainability and environmental issues identified during the scoping stage for the draft sustainability appraisal identify a number of common

issues with those identified by the HNRP these include: a significant shortage of affordable homes, poor quality housing and inappropriate design, limited access to green infrastructure, poor access and rural isolation, protection of sites with lower levels of statutory protection i.e. sites of nature conservation, protecting the character and integrity of historic buildings and adapting to flooding and climate change.

In addition the AECOM Sustainability Appraisal Report (September 2009) for East Lindsey District Council Core Strategy has been used to assist in the development of the planning policies contained within the Council's Core Strategy. The findings on issues / topics which are also contained within the HNRP are comparable to the findings within the Sustainability Appraisal report these include:

SP1 – A Sustainable Hierarchy of Places - likely to have a major positive effect on access to services and key facilities and in ensuring that local housing needs, including affordable housing, are met. The policy will also promote economic growth, which in turn will contribute to support inclusive, safe and vibrant communities. The policy is also likely to provide opportunities for healthy lifestyles facilities for urban population as well as the more rural communities.

The appraisal has also identified a number of potential negative effects including the following: Local changes in landscape or townscape within and adjacent to main towns (i.e. in particular those towns with Conservation Areas and high historic value).

SP3 – Sustainable Community Clusters - will have a major positive impact on supporting economic growth within the District. Most development would concentrate into the towns so as to build up the critical mass and economies of scale necessary to generate a wider range of community facilities, better public transport, business opportunities and wider retail offer that could not only support their own populations but also spread benefits to the surrounding rural communities.

SP4 – How Places will Grow - will have major positive impacts on a number of sustainability issues as it will help minimise the loss of best agricultural land and Greenfield sites; increase accessibility to services / facilities by consolidating development within existing settlements; and ensure the local housing needs are met. Beneficial effects on the communities, energy efficiency and sustainable development have also been identified. However, the policy may also negatively impact upon biodiversity, landscape / townscape, natural resources / pollution, flood risk, waste and climate change.

SP5 – Raising the Quality of our Places and Spaces - will make a positive contribution to the majority of sustainability appraisal objectives. In particular, the policy will

have a major beneficial effect on contributing to enhance the quality and distinctiveness of the area's landscapes, townscapes and historic environment.

SP6 – Providing Infrastructure - The appraisal has found that the policy will positively contribute towards economic growth, improving accessibility to key services / facilities and ensuring the housing needs are met. The policy is also likely to contribute to create more sustainable, inclusive and healthier communities.

SP7 – Housing - will have a major positive impact on ensuring that local housing needs are met and on improving accessibility to key services and facilities. The policy is also likely to positively contribute to local economic growth, the creation of inclusive and healthier communities and to sustainable development. A number of potentially negative effects have also been identified during the appraisal process, , including adverse effects on biodiversity, landscape / townscape, natural resources, flood risk, waste and climate change.

SP8 – Housing on Other Sites - will have a major positive impact on prioritising the re-use of previously developed land and minimising the loss of greenfield site, as it promotes the re-use of sites within urban areas. The policy will also have positive effects upon a number of other sustainability objectives including housing, flood risk and landscape / townscape. This policy may encourage business opportunities within smaller market towns and villages, at the expense of lower developer interest in the larger towns where economic diversification is most needed.

SP9 - Delivering Affordable Housing - will have a major positive effect ensuring that local housing needs are met. Provision of affordable housing also has the potential to positively contribute to create inclusive, vibrant, and cohesive communities.

SP17 – Town Centre Hierarchy - will contribute to improve the accessibility to key services for communities and will help to ensure that the distinctiveness, vitality and viability of town centres, in particular those of conservation or historic value, are protected and enhanced. The policy is also likely to positively contribute to the economic growth of local communities, which in turn will help support inclusive, safe and vibrant communities.

SP18 – Vitality and Viability of Town Centres – will positively contribute to the economic growth of local communities; as well as improving accessibility to key services, including public realm areas that may encourage pedestrian circulation, therefore contributing to promote walking (healthier lifestyles)

SP19 – Historic Market Towns Centres - will significantly contribute to the protection and enhancement of these historic environments, whilst contributing towards a more viable and diverse economic growth of these towns. The policy will also improve accessibility to key services and facilities.

SP20 – Local Shopping - likely to have a positive impact on supporting the local economy, in particular in rural locations; as well as ensure accessibility to key services (i.e. local village shop) and reducing the need to travel. New neighbourhood's shops and retailing outlets have the potential to impact upon the quality of the local townscape, in particular in the smaller villages which may have the largest historic interest.

SP22 – Creating Inclusive Communities - this policy will significantly contribute to improve access to key services and facilities (including health facilities, local nature reserves, community woodland etc.) and reduce the need to travel. This is likely to have positive impacts in supporting inclusive, safe and vibrant communities, and encouraging healthy lifestyles.

SP23 – Accessibility and Transport Strategy - likely to have major positive effects on a number of sustainability issues, including contributing to improve access to services / facilities, promote sustainable modes of transport and sustainable development, and promoting healthy lifestyles. The policy is also likely to have social and economic benefits.

SP25 – Getting the Best from our Landscapes - likely to have a major beneficial impact on maintaining the quality and distinctiveness of the area's landscapes, as well as contributing to improve the health and quality of life of rural communities.

SP27 – Historic Environment - will have a major positive impact upon the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment, and in particular of designated features such as Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings and Scheduled Monuments. This policy may also contribute to the local economy by maintaining and enhancing a high quality historic environment which may encourage business and investment in higher value activities.

SP28 – Reducing Flood Risk – will have a positive impact on avoiding the risk of flooding where possible (including the increased risk of flooding associated with climate change) and fully mitigating against the impact of flooding where it cannot be avoided. In addition, flood risk management measures to be incorporated as part of new developments may be unsightly and cause adverse effects on local townscapes and landscape character unless appropriately implemented.

The documents that form the background of the HNDR and Sustainability Review can be found in Appendix 2 – Background Documents.

2. Introduction – the Neighbourhood Plan process

Horncastle Town Council took the decision to seek Neighbourhood Plan status for Horncastle in late 2012 and the official letter seeking designation was sent to East Lindsey District Council. After the required consultation period East Lindsey District Council confirmed the designation of Horncastle as area of a Neighbourhood Development Plan. At two public meetings the Horncastle town council asked for volunteers for a Steering Group to prepare the Plan. The first meeting of the Steering Group was held in February 2013. The Group consisted of 6 residents of varying backgrounds and 2 Town Councillors. Of the residents, representatives of Horncastle Civic Society and Transition Horncastle are members.

Initially, in conjunction with East Lindsey District Council, the Steering Group sought to establish the evidence base for site allocation within the Parish. East Lindsey had identified fifty three SHLAA sites within Horncastle Parish ranging in development potential from one to nine hundred and seventy units. In late 2013 the decision was taken to change the nature of the Plan from site allocation to a design base. This decision was based on the following:

- a) East Lindsey District Council did not have a current Local Plan (Core Strategy document) and was unlikely to have one in place until 2015 at the earliest
- b) East Lindsey District Council did not have a five year housing supply
- c) Historically over 50% of housing developments in East Lindsey arise from windfall sites.

Moreover, in July 2013, East Lindsey District Council housing target for Horncastle Parish was around 550 over fifteen years. In July 2014, this proposed target had been increased to a minimum of 870 and may exceed 1200 houses over the fifteen years (ELDC Housing Growth Consultation - June 2014).

The lack of an up to date Local Plan and a five year housing supply in East Lindsey in conjunction with the attractiveness of Horncastle and the surrounding countryside has attracted the attention of developers. Planning applications and pre-application proposals for housing developments in Horncastle Parish have requested approval for in excess of 1100 units (ELDC planning database) in the last twelve months. More applications for housing are anticipated in the next twelve months and beyond.

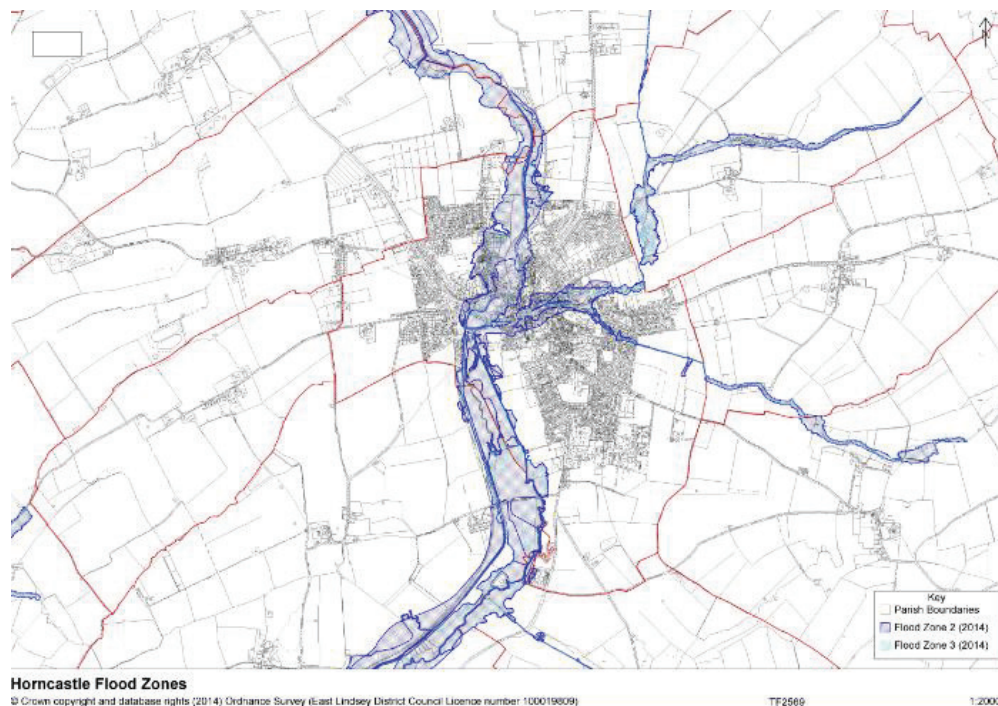
3. Horncastle – a Profile

Horncastle Parish is in the district of East Lindsey and is one of the five inland towns within the district. The Parish of Horncastle has a population of around 6900 living in approximately 3178 dwellings (2011 census). Population has increased by 12% since 2001 compared to a district wide increase of 4.5%. It is expected that by 2022 over 30% of the residents of the Parish will be older than 65 years. This has significant

implications for the design and integration of new development into the existing community.

Horncastle is a bustling and attractive historic market town, renowned for its antique shops and with a fine heritage. It is one of the 5 inland towns in East Lindsey and is classed as a secondary service centre serving a local catchment area. The town has a strong sense of community typified by the open friendliness and welcoming nature of the residents. This is a vibrant community with 90+ community organisations within the town run by local residents.

The Town lies in a valley with hills rising to the East and West: the rivers Bain and Waring running north to south. A disused canal runs southwards towards the River Witham. The multiplicity of waterways does have serious implications for the design and location of any developments. The Western side of Horncastle is historically affected by surface water flooding after heavy rainfall owing to run off from the hills to the West. The Eastern side of Horncastle does suffer from river flooding from the River Bain, River Waring, Thunker Drain and Ings Drain.



Horncastle is regarded as the Southern Gateway to the Lincolnshire Wolds, classed as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The Viking Way and the Spa Trail are two major footpaths into the surrounding countryside. However, whilst there are good opportunities for walking access to the countryside, the footpaths and cycle path network is disjointed. East Lindsey District Council have noted there is a significant deficiency of green space within the Town.

4 Neighbourhood Plan Vision and Objectives

The Horncastle Neighbourhood Development Plan will take a positive approach to development so long as it brings forward a balance of housing, employment, retail, community and leisure development to ensure Horncastle remains an attractive, vibrant place, providing all the amenities you would expect in a desirable town.

The Community Vision was defined by consultation with residents, Horncastle Town Council and East Lindsey District Council. The Community Vision is as follows

To preserve the essential character of Horncastle by ensuring that:

- a) all new development enhances the quality of life in the town whilst achieving integration into the existing community
- b) there is a balance between housing growth and the provision of community facilities for the benefit of all residents
- c) the rural nature of its setting and its open spaces are preserved and enhanced
- d) opportunities are maximised to support local businesses

The Community Objectives are more focussed covering different themes that local residents have highlighted as priorities for the Plan to address. The Community Objectives are the basis upon which the Neighbourhood Plan policies have been prepared.

The objectives cover a range of economic, social and environmental issues that together will ensure that the town can grow sustainably. The objectives reflect the key issues for the community and the changes the local community wants to see, especially in securing the long term future of those community and environmental assets most precious to local people. They also reflect the aspirations of Horncastle residents to see well designed, sensitively sited development in the town over the next 15 years.

Community Objective 1: The character and heritage of Horncastle is maintained and enhanced as the town grows.

Community Objective 2: Future housing growth must meet the needs of the local community whilst minimising the impact on the natural and built environment.

Community Objective 3: New housing developments must integrate easily with the existing settlement pattern whilst sustaining and enhancing local facilities for all residents

Community Objective 4: To create a more attractive shopping centre, a vibrant evening economy and to develop the tourist industry in the town.

Community Objective 5: All new development must relate positively in form and function, in particular with respect to materials, style, and connections where it will adjoin the existing settlement.

Community Objective 6: To ensure easy access to the countryside through green connections, protect and enhance local green spaces whilst supporting nature conservation

Community Objective 7: Any community funding arising from all developments is maximised for the benefit of the town.

Community Objective 8: Development proposals in and around the town must show how they have addressed the issues identified in the Horncastle Urban Structures Study.

Community Objective 9: The community are consulted early in the planning application process via the mechanisms outlined in this Neighbourhood Development Plan.

Community Objective 10: Creating an environment that makes it attractive for micro, small and medium sized businesses and shops to locate and flourish in the town.

Community Objective 11: The economic vitality of the town is supported by ensuring that

- a) future housing development is flexibly designed to support home working
- b) future development ensures that high speed broadband connectivity is accessible
- c) future development supports retail and commercial activity in the town centre.

The aims of the Community Vision and Community Objectives were incorporated into the policies defined within the Horncastle Neighbourhood Development Plan

5 Sustainability Review

This report forms the Sustainability Review for Horncastle Neighbourhood Development Plan. It appraises whether the plan contains projects, policies and aspirations that are likely to contribute to the delivery of sustainable development.

The Horncastle Neighbourhood Development Plan will become part of the Development Plan for the area if it meets the basic conditions, is supported by referendum and 'made' by East Lindsey District Council. It will cover a number of issues relating to the management of development of the neighbourhood plan area in the future.

A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) involves the systematic identification and evaluation of the environmental impacts of a strategic action. In 2001/42/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment (the 'SEA Directive'), the Directive entered into force in the UK in July 2004 and can apply to a range of plans and programmes including Local Plans and Neighbourhood Plans.

The SA extends the concept of the SEA to encompass economic and social concerns. Under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, An SA should be undertaken for the constituent DPD's of the Local Plan. An SA therefore is a statutory requirement for a Local Plan, but not a Neighbourhood Development Plan.

However under national and European legislation, a SEA may be required when new planning policies are proposed, such as the introduction of a Neighbourhood Plan. A Screening Report has been produced by East Lindsey District Council which has determined that the contents of the Horncastle Neighbourhood Development Plan does not require a SEA in accordance with the above legislation.

A sustainability report would still be useful as a means to ensure and demonstrate that the principles of sustainable development as defined by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) have been taken into account in the preparation of the plan and will form part of the submission documents for the independent examination.

This appraisal has been prepared by utilising templates from other plans, including Caistor and Allendale and with advice from Planning Aid England, and Locality.

6. Sustainable Development

The Government introduced legislation through the Localism Act (2011) which came into effect in April 2012 that allows communities to prepare a new type of planning document – a Neighbourhood Plan. Although the Neighbourhood Plan must conform to local and national planning policies, it can still contain policies on issues which are important to the community, especially those which are not adequately met by existing legislation. The Steering Group for the Horncastle Neighbourhood Development Plan has prepared such a Plan and which is now ready for public consultation.

One of the key issues in planning is the concept of sustainable development. The Government's main planning document The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2012, defines sustainable development as, 'meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'.

The NPPF defines there are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. These dimensions give rise to the need for the planning system, of which Horncastle Neighbourhood Development Plan will be a part, to perform a number of roles:

- An economic role – contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation; and by identifying the coordinating development requirements including the provision of structure;
- A social role – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by providing the supply of houses required to meet the needs of the present and future generations; and by creating high quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community's need and support its health, social and cultural well being; and
- An environmental role - contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; and, as part of this, helping to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change including moving to a low carbon economy.

Furthermore paragraphs 8 and 9 highlight the need to address these roles in an integrated way:

'These roles should not be undertaken in isolation, because they are mutually dependant. Economic growth can secure higher social and environmental standards, and well designed buildings and places can improve the lives of people and

communities. Therefore, to achieve sustainable development, economic, social and environmental gains should be sought jointly and simultaneously through the planning system. The planning system should play an active role in guiding development to sustainable solutions.

Pursuing sustainable development involves seeking positive improvements in the quality of the built, natural and historic environment, as well as in peoples quality of life, including (but not limited to):

- Making it easier for jobs to be created in cities, towns and villages;
- Moving from a net loss of bio-diversity to achieving net gains for nature
- Replacing poor design with better design
- Improving the conditions in which people live , work, travel and take leisure;
and
- Widening the choice of quality homes.

Once the Horncastle Neighbourhood Development Plan is 'made', it will become part of East Lindsey District Council's planning policies for the area and they will use it to determine planning applications. In the absence of an up to date Local Plan, the Neighbourhood Development Plan will be the key development plan document for Horncastle. The NPPF states that an application which can be shown to be sustainable should normally be permitted, unless there are important reasons not to do this. It is essential, therefore, to ensure that the Neighbourhood Plan's policies will promote sustainable development.

This scoping report shows how the Neighbourhood Development Plan policies contribute to sustainable development, particularly with regard to their environmental, social and economic impact. It ensures that the concept of sustainable development remains an important consideration throughout the entire planning process. The sustainability review ensures a robust planning document demonstrating conformity with national and other local planning policies.

The sustainability criteria have been adapted from the NPPF and East Lindsey Local Plan saved policies (1999) and reflects established practice.

Reflecting the NPPF the Horncastle Neighbourhood Development Plan includes polices which address:

- Environment
- Design
- Heritage
- Transport, and
- Community.

The Sustainability Review – Methodology

As stated in the Overview section (pages 1-2) a screening report was produced by East Lindsey District Council which determined that the contents of the Horncastle Neighbourhood Development Plan do not require a SEA in accordance with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. As a full sustainability appraisal is not required the sustainability review focuses and concentrates on the policies within the neighbourhood development plan and how the policies have a practical impact on the environment and contribute (or not) to sustainable development.

Section 4 Neighbourhood Plan and Vision of the sustainability review specifies the community vision for the neighbourhood development plan which has been defined by consultation with residents, Horncastle Town Council and East Lindsey District Council. In addition the 11 Community Objectives for the neighbourhood development plan are focused on key themes that residents have highlighted as priorities for the plan which cover a range of economic, social and environmental issues. The Vision and Community Objectives form the background and basis upon which the policies within the neighbourhood development plan have been prepared resulting in a well-defined and robust relationship connecting the vision, community objectives and policies.

The sustainability review shows how planning policies contribute to sustainable development, particularly with regard to their environmental, social and economic impact. It ensures that the concept of sustainable development remains an important consideration throughout the entire neighbourhood planning process.

There are three steps to the sustainability review:

1. Select the criteria which will be used to assess the sustainability of the neighbourhood plan's policies;
2. Using these criteria, measure the impact each policy will have on sustainability;
3. Analyse the results and make recommendations.

Step 1 – Selecting the Criteria

A set of criteria have been agreed that reflect key considerations of what contributes to sustainable development. These criteria have taken account of the core planning principles set out within the NPPF and from the East Lindsey draft Sustainability Appraisal which ensures a level of consistency with the emerging Core Strategy. These criteria also reflect key themes that have emerged through the Neighbourhood Plan process.

Criteria	Examples
Nature conservation	green spaces, hedges, trees, ponds, biodiversity, wildlife
Landscape & heritage	the area's character, views, attractive landscapes, archaeology
Air and climate	traffic levels, use of energy, production of renewable energy
Water	quality, provision, wastewater treatment, flooding
Soil	greenfield land, local food production, allotments
Population	affordable homes, social facilities such as community centres
Health and wellbeing	green areas, health centres, facilities for walking and cycling
Inclusiveness	the 'seldom heard' e.g. people with disabilities or older residents
Employment and skills	jobs, local/small businesses, skills and training
Infrastructure	energy, waste, transport, education, libraries

Key:

Economic
Social
Environmental

Horncastle Neighbourhood Development Plan Policies (2014)

Policies
Policy 1 – Sustainable Development
Policy 2 – Design Principles for New Development
Policy 3 – Car Parking on New Development
Policy 4 – Pre Application Consultation
Policy 5 – Protecting the Historic Environment
Policy 6 – Allocation of Affordable Housing
Policy 7 – Provision of Affordable Housing
Policy 8 – A Mix of Housing Types
Policy 9 – Green Infrastructure
Policy 10 – Developing a Green Wheel around Horncastle
Policy 11 – Designating Local Green Spaces
Policy 12 – Visual Connections with the countryside
Policy 13 – Strengthening the Retail Core
Policy 14 – Supporting Local Business Growth
Policy 15 – Reducing the Risk of Flooding

Step 2 – Assessing each Neighbourhood Plan policy and aspiration against the criteria

The sustainability review is based on a policy integration methodology by assessing each of the policies against the social, economic and environmental sustainability objectives and more detailed components of them. The Neighbourhood Plan is appraised to test whether it adequately addresses each of the objectives of sustainable development with the minimum harm to others according to the grading below:

++	significant positive benefit;
+	some positive benefit;
0	no overall impact, or not applicable;
-	some negative effects;
--	significant negative effects;
?	uncertain, may have either positive or negative influences.

When the plan does not help to achieve an objective a reason is given and where necessary opportunities to improve the plan are identified. It is not possible to achieve all sustainable development objectives and sometimes there may be conflicts between objectives, where these conflicts cannot be resolved the sustainability appraisal provides a means to be open and transparent about the reasons why.

This results in a summary of the overall assessment of the plan and its policies and aspirations in delivering sustainable development as shown in the table below.

Policies/ Criterion	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Nature conservation	++	?	0	+	0	0	0	0	++	++	++	++	0	0	++
Landscape and heritage	++	++	+	+	++	0	0	0	++	0	++	++	0	0	++
Air and climate	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	0	0	+	0	++
Water	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	++
Soil	0	?	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0
Population	++	++	0	0	0	++	++	++	0	0	0	0	0	+	0
Health and wellbeing	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	++	++	+	0	+	0	+
Inclusiveness	++	+	0	++	0	++	++	++	0	++	+	0	++	0	0
Infrastructure	+	++	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	++	0	0	++	+	0
Employment and skills	++	++	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	++	++	0

Step 3 - Analysis and Recommendations:

The final stage was to analyse the results. This was done in by looking at each row (criterion) and then each column (policies and aspirations).

7. The Assessment Conclusions

The full assessment and justification of each individual policy is set out in the following pages. In summary, the table above demonstrates that where there is an impact that impact is predominantly positive with the exception of policy 2 where there are a number of uncertainties regarding the development of sites for housing and employment. Some policies do have a neutral impact when judged against some of the scoring criteria. There is a high level of compatibility with the NPPF and the East Lindsey existing and emerging local plan policies.

The results of the sustainability review of the Horncastle Neighbourhood Development Plan suggest that introducing the Neighbourhood Plan will contribute to sustainable development.

8. Policy Assessment

The Neighbourhood Plan has been produced to ensure that policies address each key theme of the vision. Each policy has been assessed against the criteria using the scoring matrix. This enables the Neighbourhood Plan as well as each individual policy to be assessed against the principles of sustainability. Many policies are inter related but those linkages are not specifically addressed within the scoping report with each policy having been assessed in isolation - although they will invariably be used in conjunction with each other and other policies in Development Management decision making.

Policy 1 – Sustainable Development		
NPPF: Due to the wide ranging nature of this policy, its themes can be found throughout the NPPF. The policy supports growth, sustainable development, rural economy, tourism and quality design.		
ELDC Saved Policies (2007): Due to the wide ranging nature of this policy, its themes can be found throughout the plan.		
ELDC Draft Core Strategy: Due to the wide ranging nature of this policy, its themes can be found throughout the plan.		
This policy provides a commitment to the presumption in favour of sustainable development, promotes growth and sensitive, quality development.		
Sustainability Appraisal Criteria	Impact	Explanation
Nature conservation	++	Supports access to the countryside and open spaces and seeks to ensure new development does not adversely affect the natural heritage of Horncastle
Landscape and heritage	++	Seeks to ensure new development does not adversely affect the built and natural heritage of Horncastle
Air and climate	0	No overall impact
Water	0	No overall impact
Soil	0	No overall impact
Population	++	Supports housing growth (market and affordable) to meet local needs, and social / community facilities
Health and wellbeing	+	Supports access to the open space / countryside and associated infrastructure for new development promoting walking and cycling
Inclusiveness	++	Seeks to deliver appropriate social housing needs including a mix of housing
Infrastructure	+	Supports associated infrastructure for growth
Employment and skills	++	Supports economic growth including new and expanding business facilities and enhancing Horncastle town centre
Conclusion – The policy meets the objectives of growth and meets the objectives of sustainable development and does not introduce any negative impacts. It creates a framework for new development in the town to meet NPPF requirements to deliver development of good design while protecting/enhancing the natural and built environment.		

Policy 2 – Design Principles for New Development		
NPPF: Due to the wide ranging nature of this policy, its themes can be found throughout the NPPF. The policy supports growth, sustainable development and quality design.		
ELDC Saved Policies (2007) and Draft Core Strategy : Due to the wide ranging nature of this policy, its themes can be found throughout the plan specifically policies Policy A5 Quality and Design of Development, Policy H1 - Allocated Housing Sites and Policy H12 Design of New Housing.		
ELDC Draft Core Strategy: Due to the wide ranging nature of this policy, its themes can be found throughout the plan specifically policies Policy 5 Design Quality including Place-Making checklist and Policy 12 Transport and Accessibility.		
This policy positively addresses the need for development that is integrated, accessible and sustainable with connections to existing residential areas and Horncastle town centre, and reflects community views on the importance of character and identity to Horncastle including new development adhering to Horncastle Urban Structure Study (2014 – 2029) and BfL12.		
Sustainability Appraisal Criteria	Impact	Explanation
Nature conservation	?	Uncertain impacts ahead of specific development i.e. loss of open space proposals being considered but other policies should ensure the form of development meets sustainability objectives
Landscape and heritage	++	The Horncastle Urban Structure Study seeks to ensure that development is in keeping and sensitive to the character and identity of the town
Air and climate	+	Supports housing provision in and close to the town centre will reduce the number of car journeys to access town centre services
Water	0	No overall impact
Soil	?	Uncertain impacts ahead of specific development i.e. loss of open space proposals being considered but other policies should ensure the form of development meets sustainability objectives
Population	++	Supports growth through promotion of development sites within sustainable and

		accessible locations
Health and wellbeing	+	Supports infrastructure for new development promoting walking and cycling
Inclusiveness	+	Seeks to meet local housing needs
Infrastructure	++	Supports development of sites within sustainable and accessible locations and ensure new development is well integrated and promotes pedestrian movement
Employment and skills	++	Supports growth including employment uses and promotes the provision of strong connections to the town centre
<p>Conclusion – The policy meets the objectives of sustainable development specifically a positive approach to development including housing, employment, retail, community uses etc. It also creates a framework for new development to meet requirements for good design i.e. BfL12 and Horncastle Urban Structures and to be in keeping and enhance the character and identity of the town. The Policy introduces a number of uncertainties although other policies should ensure the form of development meets sustainability objectives</p>		

Policy 3– Car Parking on New Development		
NPPF: Section 7 Requiring Good Design of the NPPF specifically paragraph 58 which states that neighbourhood plans should develop robust and comprehensive policies that set out the quality of development that they will be expected for the area.		
ELDC Saved Policies (2007): There are no specific policies regarding car parking within the plan.		
ELDC Draft Core Strategy: Policy 5 Design Quality in particular the Place Making checklist specifies the importance of creating well-defined streets and Policy 12 Transport and Accessibility requires all housing developments to provide at a minimum one parking space per dwelling with the exception of town centre sites.		
This policy is intended to ensure that car parking is carefully considered and well integrated into new development.		
Sustainability Appraisal Criteria	Impact	Explanation
Nature conservation	0	No overall impact
Landscape and heritage	+	Seeks to ensure that car parking provision in new development meets specified standards and is sensitive to the character and identity of the town
Air and climate	0	No overall impact
Water	0	No overall impact
Soil	0	No overall impact
Population	0	No overall impact
Health and wellbeing	0	No overall impact
Inclusiveness	0	No overall impact
Infrastructure	+	Seeks to ensure that car parking is well integrated in new housing development
Employment and skills	0	No overall impact
Conclusion – The policy is considered to meet the objectives of sustainable development by meeting the NPPF requirements for good design.		

Policy 4– Pre Application Consultation		
NPPF: Paragraph 188 and 189 of the NPPF encourage early engagement at the pre application stage with the local community.		
ELDC Saved Policies (2007): There are no specific policies regarding pre application consultation within the plan.		
ELDC Draft Core Strategy: There are no specific policies regarding pre application consultation within the plan.		
This policy is intended for the community to have greater involvement and influence on major development proposals in Horncastle.		
Sustainability Appraisal Criteria	Impact	Explanation
Nature conservation	+	Seeks the provision of a development brief which may include green spaces
Landscape and heritage	+	Seeks the provision of a development brief to ensure well designed integrated development
Air and climate	0	No overall impact
Water	0	No overall impact
Soil	0	No overall impact
Population	0	No overall impact
Health and wellbeing	0	No overall impact
Inclusiveness	++	Specific requirement to engage with the local community and opportunity for community to input into decision making
Infrastructure	0	No overall impact
Employment and skills	0	No overall impact
Conclusion – The policy is considered to have a positive impact on sustainability by encouraging engagement on new residential development.		

Policy 5 – Protecting the Historic Environment		
NPPF: Section 12 Conserving and enhancing the historic environment recognises the importance of heritage assets and the requirement for local planning authorities to assess the significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal.		
ELDC Saved Policies (2007): Policy C5 Historic Buildings		
ELDC Draft Core Strategy: There is no specific policy referring to locally important heritage assets although Policy 5 Design Quality recognises the importance of retaining of historic context.		
This policy is intended to protect the reinforce the character and identity of Horncastle including the identification of locally important heritage assets.		
Sustainability Appraisal Criteria	Impact	Explanation
Nature conservation	0	No overall impact
Landscape and heritage	++	Identification and protection of locally important heritage assets, mitigation of new development on locally important heritage assets and proposals for the sympathetic development of buildings within the market place / historic core.
Air and climate	0	No overall impact
Water	0	No overall impact
Soil	0	No overall impact
Population	0	No overall impact
Health and wellbeing	0	No overall impact
Inclusiveness	0	No overall impact
Infrastructure	0	No overall impact
Employment and skills	0	No overall impact
Conclusion – The policy is considered to have a positive impact on sustainability by protecting local heritage assets and proposals for the sympathetic development of buildings within the market place / historic core.		

Policy 6 – Allocation of Affordable Housing		
NPPF: Paragraph 54 notes the importance of providing affordable housing in rural communities, including through the use of exceptions sites.		
ELDC Saved Policies (2007): Policy H6 Low Cost Housing - provision will be made for housing which meets the needs of those who do not have the means to afford open market housing.		
ELDC Draft Core Strategy: Policy 3 Rural Exceptions refers to the provision of low cost dwellings for local need.		
This policy is intended to meet the needs of existing residents in the plan area and those who have connections to the area and are currently unable to access housing at a cost they can afford, either to rent or buy.		
Sustainability Appraisal Criteria	Sustainability Appraisal Criteria	Sustainability Appraisal Criteria
Nature conservation	0	No overall impact
Landscape and heritage	0	No overall impact
Air and climate	0	No overall impact
Water	0	No overall impact
Soil	0	No overall impact
Population	++	Supports meeting local needs through a range of policy approaches (wider than detailed in current planning policies) offers scope for achieving positive impacts on access to local housing for those with local connections
Health and wellbeing	0	No overall impact
Inclusiveness	++	Seeks to deliver social housing needs
Infrastructure	0	No overall impact
Employment and skills	0	No overall impact
Conclusion – The policy meets the objectives of sustainable development and provides parameters to guide the provision of affordable housing to meet the needs of Horncastle and the adjacent parishes.		

Policy 7 – Provision of Affordable Housing		
NPPF: Paragraph 54 notes the importance of providing affordable housing in rural communities, including through the use of exceptions sites.		
ELDC Saved Policies (2007): Policy H6 Low Cost Housing - provision will be made for housing which meets the needs of those who do not have the means to afford open market housing.		
ELDC Draft Core Strategy: Policy 2 Delivering Affordable Housing and Policy 3 Rural Exceptions – recognises the importance of providing low cost dwellings and the need for the housing to meet policies regarding design quality.		
This policy is intended to deliver affordable housing at 20% in Horncastle including a mix of housing that is well integrated in new development.		
Sustainability Appraisal Criteria	Impact	Explanation
Nature conservation	0	No overall impact
Landscape and heritage	0	No overall impact
Air and climate	0	No overall impact
Water	0	No overall impact
Soil	0	No overall impact
Population	++	Seeks to deliver social housing needs that is well integrated with market housing.
Health and wellbeing	0	No overall impact
Inclusiveness	++	Seeks to deliver appropriate social housing needs including a mix of housing.
Infrastructure	0	No overall impact
Employment and skills	0	No overall impact
Conclusion – The policy meets the objectives of sustainable development and provides parameters to guide the provision of affordable housing to meet the needs of Horncastle and promotes design quality by ensuring the affordable housing is well integrating and not visually indistinguishable from the market housing.		

Policy 8 – A mix of housing types		
NPPF: Section 6. Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes specifically paragraph 50 on the importance of providing a mix of housing based on current and future demographic trends and the needs of different communities		
ELDC Saved Policies (2007): There is no specific policy regarding housing mix within the plan.		
ELDC Draft Core Strategy: There is no specific policy regarding housing mix within the plan.		
This policy is intended to meet the needs of the local population specifically the 65+ age group which in 2011 accounted for 26% of the population in East Lindsey and projected to reach 30% of the population by 2021 this includes integrating new development where there are existing connections and facilities etc.		
Sustainability Appraisal Criteria	Impact	Explanation
Nature conservation	0	No overall impact
Landscape and heritage	0	No overall impact
Air and climate	0	No overall impact
Water	0	No overall impact
Soil	0	No overall impact
Population	++	Strong emphasis on meeting the needs of the local population through a range of policy approaches (wider than detailed in current planning policies) offers scope for achieving positive impacts and the provision of a range of housing that meets future projections.
Health and wellbeing	0	No overall impact
Inclusiveness	++	Seeks to deliver housing to meet the needs of the local population including housing development for older / physically disadvantaged people close to the town centre.
Infrastructure	0	No overall impact
Employment and skills	0	No overall impact
Conclusion – The policy meets the objectives of sustainable development and provides parameters to guide the provision of a mix of housing to meet the needs of the local population.		

Policy 9 – Green Infrastructure		
NPPF: Due to the wide ranging nature of this policy, its themes can be found throughout the NPPF. The policy supports growth, sustainable development and quality design.		
ELDC Saved Policies (2007): Chapter 3 Protecting and Improving the Environment supports the protection of green / open spaces.		
ELDC Draft Core Strategy: Policy 15 Green Infrastructure specifies the importance of protecting and safeguarding greenspace, creating opportunities for new spaces and to connect existing and new spaces create a network of spaces.		
This policy is intended to protect existing green / open space and enhance / support green infrastructure proposals for the area which are important to the character and identity of Horncastle.		
Sustainability Appraisal Criteria	Impact	Explanation
Nature conservation	++	Seeks to retain and protect existing green spaces, mitigation of new development on open space and where development takes place to contribute towards green infrastructure
Landscape and heritage	++	Seeks to retain and protect existing green spaces and mitigation of new development on open space to protect the character and identity of the town
Air and climate	+	Positive impact on the reduction in carbon footprint impact
Water	+	Positive impact on the reduction in carbon footprint including the provisions of SuDs and SWALEs
Soil	+	Seeks to retain and protect existing green spaces
Population	+	Seeks to provide green infrastructure which will provide opportunities for social interaction
Health and wellbeing	++	Seeks to protect green spaces which provides areas for exercise and recreation
Inclusiveness	0	No overall impact
Infrastructure	0	No overall impact
Employment and skills	0	No overall impact
Conclusion – The policy has a positive impact on sustainability by protecting open green space and mitigation of new development on the identity and character of the town.		
Policy 10 – Developing a Green Wheel around Horncastle		
NPPF: Section 4 Promoting sustainable transport specifies the importance on the provision of sustainable modes of transport in reducing gas emissions and congestion.		

ELDC Saved Policies (2007): Chapter 12 Transport encourages greater use of public transport, cycling and walking and to reduce the need for car journeys although there is no specific policy.		
ELDC Draft Core Strategy: Policy 12 Transport and Accessibility supports development that gives pedestrian and cycle movements priority.		
This policy is intended for new development to contribute to the provision of a network of cycle paths and footways to support a Green Wheel around Horncastle.		
Sustainability Appraisal Criteria	Impact	Explanation
Nature conservation	+	Provision of a network of cycle and pedestrian routes will provide an opportunity for landscaping, green infrastructure and migratory routes for wildlife
Landscape and heritage	+	The network of cycle and pedestrian routes will provide an opportunity for landscaping and green infrastructure
Air and climate	+	Provision of a network of cycle and pedestrian routes will encourage sustainable transport and discourage car use and emissions
Water	0	No overall impact
Soil	0	No overall impact
Population	+	Supports the provision of a network of cycle and footpaths in and around the town which will increase opportunities for mobility, accessibility and aid social infrastructure
Health and wellbeing	++	Supports the provision of a network of cycle and footpaths in and around the town which will increase opportunities for walking and cycling.
Inclusiveness	++	Seeks to ensure that the footpaths are suitable for mobility scooter users and other social groups i.e. children and elderly
Infrastructure	++	Supports the provision of a network of cycle and footpaths in and around the town promoting sustainable transport
Employment and skills	0	No overall impact
Conclusion – The policy has a positive impact on sustainability by supporting the provision of a network of cycle and footpaths associated with new development and meets NPPF requirements for the provision of sustainable modes of transport.		

Policy 11 – Designating Local Green Spaces		
NPPF: Section 8 Promoting healthy communities of the NPPF, specifically paragraph 76, 77 and 78 specifies local communities through neighbourhood plans are able to designate land as Local Green Space and Section 11 Conserving and enhancing the natural environment of the NPPF, specifically paragraph 109 specifies the importance of protecting and enhancing valued landscapes.		
ELDC Saved Policies (2007): Chapter 3 Protecting and Improving the Environment supports the protection of green / open spaces and ENV24 allows the protection of open spaces that are not identified where they meet the criteria in the policy.		
ELDC Draft Core Strategy: Policy 14 Landscape and Policy 16 Biodiversity and Geodiversity seek to protect green / open spaces although there is no specific policy regarding designating local green spaces.		
This policy is intended to protect the local green spaces which are of importance in Horncastle from development.		
Sustainability Appraisal Criteria	Impact	Explanation
Nature conservation	++	Positive impact on green spaces and landscape features
Landscape and heritage	++	Protection of the green spaces and the mitigation of new development to ensure environmental sustainability and the protection of the character and identity of Horncastle.
Air and climate	0	No overall impact
Water	0	No overall impact
Soil	0	No overall impact
Population	+	The protection of the green spaces supports social infrastructure providing areas for recreation and social interaction
Health and wellbeing	+	The protection of the green spaces provides areas for recreation and exercise
Inclusiveness	+	Seeks to retain the local green space for use by the community
Infrastructure	0	No overall impact
Employment and skills	0	No overall impact
Conclusion – The policy is considered to have a positive impact on sustainability by protecting natural / landscape assets and mitigation of new development on the identity and character of the town.		

Policy 12 – Visual connections with the countryside		
NPPF: Section 12 Conserving and enhancing the built environment of the NPPF, specifically paragraph 109 specifies the importance of protecting and enhancing valued landscapes.		
ELDC Saved Policies (2007): There is no specific policy relating to views although the importance of views in Conservation areas and to AONB are specified.		
ELDC Draft Core Strategy: There is no specific policy relating to views.		
This policy is intended to protect key views and vistas to Horncastle which is a key characteristic of the town.		
Sustainability Appraisal Criteria	Impact	Explanation
Nature conservation	++	Protection of identified key views and vistas including those to and from the countryside and the mitigation of new development on these views
Landscape and heritage	++	Protection of identified key views and vistas, and the mitigation of new development ensure environmental sustainability and to protect the character and identity of Horncastle
Air and climate	0	No overall impact
Water	0	No overall impact
Soil	0	No overall impact
Population	0	No overall impact
Health and wellbeing	0	No overall impact
Inclusiveness	0	No overall impact
Infrastructure	0	No overall impact
Employment and skills	0	No overall impact
Conclusion – The policy has a positive impact on sustainability by protecting key views and vistas and mitigation of new development on the identity and character of the town.		

Policy 13 – Strengthening the Retail Core		
NPPF: Section 2 Ensuring the vitality of town centres of the NPPF, specifically paragraph 23 recognises the importance of town centres and policies to support their viability and vitality.		
ELDC Saved Policies (2007): Chapter 9 Shopping specifically Policy S1 Shopping in Towns and the importance of vibrant and viable town centres.		
ELDC Draft Core Strategy: Policy 8 Town / Village Centres and Shopping supports the expansion and improvement of town supports retail uses on primary shopping frontages.		
This policy is intended to support and strengthen Horncastle town centre.		
Sustainability Appraisal Criteria	Impact	Explanation
Nature conservation	0	No overall impact
Landscape and heritage	0	No overall impact
Air and climate	+	Supports the pedestrianisation of part of St Lawrence Street which will promote pedestrian movement removing vehicles and reducing emissions from this route
Water	0	No overall impact
Soil	0	No overall impact
Population	0	No overall impact
Health and wellbeing	+	Supports the pedestrianisation of part of St Lawrence Street which promotes pedestrian movement
Inclusiveness	++	Supports the pedestrianisation of part of St Lawrence Street which will improve pedestrian safety and access i.e. mobility scooters
Infrastructure	++	Supports the pedestrianisation of St Lawrence Street and promotes pedestrian movement
Employment and skills	++	Designates Primary Shopping Frontages and supports growth new retail development and loss of retail uses supporting local / small business and vitality of the town centre
Conclusion – The policy meets the objectives of sustainable development by supporting economic / retail growth in the town centre and meets NPPF requirements for vital and viable town centres.		

Policy 14 – Supporting Local Business Growth		
NPPF: Section 3 Supporting a prosperous local economy of the NPPF, specifically planning policies should support economic growth in rural areas to create jobs and prosperity and the development of sustainable tourism and Section 5 supporting high quality communications infrastructure.		
ELDC Saved Policies (2007): Chapter 6 provides policies that support the local economy.		
ELDC Draft Core Strategy: Policy 7 Inland Employment supports growth and the local economy specifying Horncastle.		
This policy is intended to retain employment sites, tourism and support broadband access.		
Sustainability Appraisal Criteria	Impact	Explanation
Nature conservation	0	No overall impact
Landscape and heritage	0	No overall impact
Air and climate	0	No overall impact
Water	0	No overall impact
Soil	0	No overall impact
Population	+	Positive impact on local labour markets
Health and wellbeing	0	No overall impact
Inclusiveness	0	No overall impact
Infrastructure	+	Supports the local economy
Employment and skills	++	Supports key sites to remain in employment use and protects the loss of employment land. Promotes superfast broadband and opportunities to work from home
Conclusion – The policy meets the objectives of sustainable development by retaining employment uses.		

Policy 15 – Reducing the risk of flooding		
NPPF: Section 10 Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change specifically paragraph 99 and 100.		
ELDC Saved Policies (2007): Chapter 3 Protecting and improving the environment is relevant although does not contain specific policies regarding flooding.		
ELDC Draft Core Strategy: Policy 10 Inland Flood Risk supports development for business, leisure and commercial uses in areas of inland flood risk providing it incorporates flood mitigation measures in its design.		
Sustainability Appraisal Criteria	Impact	Explanation
Nature conservation	++	Seeks to ensure flood attenuation measures enhance and contribute to public realm and biodiversity including provision of a linear park along Thunker drain
Landscape and heritage	++	Seeks to ensure flood attenuation measures enhance and contribute to public realm including provision of a linear park along Thunker drain and protects the town from future flooding
Air and climate	++	Plans positively for climate change by providing criteria for new development within flood sensitive areas
Water	++	Provides criteria to ensure new development within flood sensitive areas to reduce the overall level of flood risk, restricts development in flood attenuation areas to ensure the ability of these areas to alleviate flooding and protects open water courses
Soil	0	No overall impact
Population	+	Seeks to protect the population of Horncastle from flood risk and the impact of flood water
Health and wellbeing	+	Seeks to ensure flood attenuation measures enhance and contribute to public realm including provision of a linear park along Thunker drain promoting public use and benefit of open space
Inclusiveness	0	No overall impact
Infrastructure	0	No overall impact
Employment and skills	0	No overall impact
Conclusion – The policy meets the objectives of sustainable development and positively plans to protect the town from future flooding meeting NPPF requirements.		

APPENDIX 1 - Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Opinion Letters



**SCREENING OPINION FOR HORNCastle
NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

Screening Opinion Horncastle Neighbourhood Development Plan

1. Introduction

1.1 This screening opinion is intended to determine whether or not the content of the Horncastle Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) requires a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in accordance with the European Directive 2001/42/EC and associated Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.

1.2 The purpose of the Horncastle NDP is to establish planning policies for the development and use of land within the town. Some NDPs will allocate land for development, others will be primarily policy based. In the case of Horncastle, the NDP is policy based and does not allocate or in any other way identify sites for development.

1.3 Below is an outline of the legislation behind the need for this screening opinion. This is then followed by the assessment of the likely significant environmental effects of the NDP and the determination of whether there is the need for a full SEA.

2. Legislation

2.1 The legislation pertaining to Strategic Environmental Assessments and Sustainability Appraisal is European Directive 2001/42/EC. This was transposed into English law by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, commonly referred to as the SEA Regulations. The Government published 'A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive' (ODPM 2005), which provides more detailed guidance on how an SEA should be carried out.

2.2 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 also requires that a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is prepared for all spatial plans. It is considered best practice to incorporate requirements of the SEA Directive into an SA.

2.3 The Government has stated that Sustainability Appraisal is not needed for NDPs, but has said that it must be demonstrated how the NDP contributes to the achievement of sustainable development in the area.

2.4 Schedule 2 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 refers 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. Paragraphs 2 – 5 of Schedule 2 amend the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 so that its provisions apply to NDOs and NDPs. The regulations do state that the making of an NDP is not likely to have a significant effect on a site designated at European level for its biodiversity, however, this needs to be ascertained and this can be done at the time the screening opinion is being sought.

2.5 This report focuses on screening for SEA and the criteria for establishing whether a full assessment is needed.

3. Criteria for Assessing the Effects of a Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP)

3.1 Schedule 1 of The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 sets out the criteria to be used for determining the likely significance of effects on the environment. These are:

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 Community legislation on the environment (for example, plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection).

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

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

4. Assessment

4.1 The diagram below illustrates the process for screening a planning document to ascertain whether a full SEA is required.

1. Is the PP (plan or programme) 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 of the Horncastle NDP is allowed under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Localism Act 2011. The Horncastle NDP will be "made" (adopted) by East Lindsey District Council once it had passed through the formal stages of its preparation under the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. Go to Stage 2
2. Is the PP required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions? (Art. 2(a))	Y	The preparation of an NDP is not a requirement of legislation, but is an option for communities under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Localism Act 2011. If the NDP passes all the stages required under the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, it will be "made" by the District Council and will become part of the development plan for the District. It therefore has to conform to the appropriate legislative, regulatory and administrative procedures. Go to Stage 3
3. Is the 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))	N	The NDP is being prepared for town and country planning purposes. However, it does not set a framework for future development consent of projects, does not allocate sites for development or indicate the preferred location for future development, not does it set the scale and nature of development in Annexes I and II to the EIA Directive (Art 3.2(a)). Go to 4
4. Will the PP, 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	Horncastle is located approximately 28.5km (17.7 miles) from the nearest European site, which is The Wash (Ramsar Site, Special Area of Conservation and Special Protection Area). The Horncastle NDP does not allocate sites for development or indicate the preferred location for future development, not does it set the scale and nature of development so does not require an assessment under the Habitats

		Directive. Go to 6
5. Does the PP Determine the use of small areas at local level, OR is it a minor modification of a PP subject to Art. 3.2? (Art. 3.3)	N/A	N/A
6. Does the PP set the framework for future development consent of projects (not just projects in annexes to the EIA Directive)? (Art 3.4)	N	Horncastle NDP does not set a framework for future development consent of projects, does not allocate sites for development or indicate the preferred location for future development, not does it set the scale and nature of development. Go to 8
7. Is the PP'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? (Art 3.8, 3.9)	N/A	N/A
8. Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment? (Art. 3.5)	N	The Horncastle NDP is unlikely to have a significant effect on the environment. The only policies which are likely to directly influence the environment are in relation to SUDs, the creation and enhancement of greenspace and cultural heritage. However, these will have a positive environmental outcome.

5. Screening Outcome

5.1 As a result of the assessment in section 4, it is unlikely there will be any significant environmental effects arising from the Horncastle Neighbourhood Development Plan that will not covered in the sustainability assessment of the NDP. As such, the Horncastle Neighbourhood Development Plan does not require a full SEA to be undertaken.



ENGLISH HERITAGE

EAST MIDLANDS

BY EMAIL: kay.turton@e-lindsey.gov.uk

Our Ref: H/DP5310

Your Ref:

Telephone: 01604 735450

25th November 2014

Dear Sirs

Screening Opinion for Horncastle Neighbourhood Development Plan

Thank you for your email dated 21st October 2014 to my colleague Claire Searson.

Our comments are as follows.

General comments

English Heritage has a statutory role in the development plan process and there is a

duty to consult English Heritage on any Neighbourhood Plan where our interests are

considered to be affected, as well as a duty to consult us on all Neighbourhood

Development Orders and Community Right to Build Orders. In line with national

planning policy, it will be important that the strategy for these area safeguards those

elements which contribute to the significance of these assets so that they can be

enjoyed by future generations of the area.

Horncastle has extensive designated and non-designated heritage assets.

Designated heritage assets are as follows:

6 Grade I Listed buildings

2 Grade II* Listed buildings

110 Grade II Listed buildings

1 Conservation area

Banovallum remains of Roman wall scheduled monument.

For the purposes of this consultation, English Heritage will confine its advice to the following criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Schedule 1 of SEA Regulations) in respect of our area of concern, cultural heritage:

‘The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to: special natural characteristics or cultural heritage;’

English Heritage notes that in the Council’s Assessment, the answer to the question ‘does the plan or programme set the framework for future development consent of projects?’ is ‘No’ and also the answer to the question

'Is it (the plan or programme) likely to have a significant effect on the environment?' with regard to this criteria is 'No.'

Screening Opinion

1. Introduction

1.2

It is noted that for Horncastle, the neighbourhood development plan is policy based and does not allocate or in any other way identify sites for development.

4. Assessment

4.2

We further note the council's conclusion in respect of stages 6 and 8 of the Assessment that the Horncastle NDP does not set a framework for future development consent of projects, does not allocate sites for development, nor does it set the scale and nature of development. We also note the conclusion that the Horncastle NDP is unlikely to have a significant effect on the environment. It is noted that the only policies which are likely to directly influence the environment include enhancement of cultural heritage which will have a positive environmental outcome.

We welcome this conclusion.

5.1 Screening Outcome

5.1

We note the Council's conclusion that it is unlikely there will be any significant environmental effects arising from the Horncastle Neighbourhood Development Plan that was not covered in the sustainability assessment of the NDP and that as such the Horncastle NDP does not require a full SEA to be undertaken. We understand, following your e-mail dated 25th November 2014, that this sustainability assessment will take a "light touch" approach and will be testing both the objectives and the subsequent policies of the Neighbourhood Plan against sustainability objectives and looking at cumulative impacts and that it is proposed to use East Lindsey's Sustainability objectives.

As per our letter dated 21st June 2013, English Heritage supports this approach.

Conclusion

On the basis of the information supplied, and in the context of the criteria set out in Schedule 1 of the Environmental Assessment Regulations [Annex II of 'SEA' Directive], English Heritage concurs with the Council that the preparation of a full Strategic Environmental Assessment is not required; we agree with the conclusions of the Screening Report.

We would request that we are fully consulted on future iterations of the Horncastle Neighbourhood Development Plan; English Heritage wishes to ensure that an understanding of historic environment, including designated heritage assets and locally important assets, and the contribution that the historic environment makes to local character, is fully considered when Neighbourhood Plans are being prepared.

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

I should be pleased if you could send a copy of the determination as required by

REG 11 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations

2004.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you wish to discuss any of these comments.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark White', is written above a single horizontal line that extends across the width of the signature.

Mark White

Historic Environment Planning Adviser

E-mail: mark.white@english-heritage.org.uk



Ms Kay Turton
Senior Planning Officer
East Lindsey District Council
Planning Policy and Conservation
Tedder Hall
Manby Park
Louth
Lincolnshire
LN11 8UP

Our ref: AN/2006/000139/SE-
01/SC1-L01
Your ref: KT
Date: 21 November 2014

Dear Kay

SEA Screening Opinion for Neighbourhood Development Plans at Horncastle, Holton Le Clay, Tetney and Woodhall Spa

Thank you for consulting us on your Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening Opinions for the above plans.

I can confirm that we are in agreement with the Screening Opinions for each of the plans.

We would like to point out that there appears to be a misinterpretation of the Schedule 2 criteria in respect of transboundary effects. The SEA Directive and The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 refer to transboundary issue relating to other Member States, rather than local neighbouring areas. We are of the opinion that the Neighbourhood Plans will not result in transboundary impacts to other Member States. We do, however, endorse that it is good practice for the Plan Groups to work closely with their neighbours.

Should you require any additional information, or wish to discuss these matters further, please do not hesitate to contact me on the number below.

Yours sincerely

Annette Hewitson
Principal Planning Adviser

Direct dial 01522 785889
Direct e-mail annette.hewitson@environment-agency.gov.uk

Waterside House, Waterside North, Lincoln, LN2 5HA
Customer services line: 03708 506 506
Email: PlanL.Lincoln2.AN@environment-agency.gov.uk
www.gov.uk/environment-agency
End

Calls to 03 numbers cost no more than national rate calls to 01 or 02 numbers and count towards any inclusive minutes in the same way. This applies to calls from any type of line including mobile.

Date: 10 November 2014
Our ref: 135337, 135339, 135343, 135346
Your ref: None



K. Turton
Senior Planning Officer
Planning Policy and Conservation

kav.turton@e-lindsey.gov.uk

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

T 0300 060 3900

BY EMAIL ONLY

Dear Ms Turton

Planning consultation: East Lindsey Neighbourhood Plans – SEA Screening

Thank you for your consultation on the above document which was received by Natural England on 06 October 2014

Natural England is a non-departmental public body. Our statutory purpose is to ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced, and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development.

Natural England welcomes the Screening Reports which assess the requirement for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) for the following Neighbourhood Plans: Horncastle, Woodhall Spa, Tetney and Holton le Clay. We have reviewed the four screening reports and have set out our comments below:

Horncastle and Woodhall Spa

The Screening Reports which assess the requirement for SEA for both Horncastle and Woodhall Spa Neighbourhood Plans conclude that as these plans are not allocating any development that no significant environmental effects would result. I can therefore confirm that Natural England agrees with this conclusion.

Tetney and Holton le Clay

The Screening Reports demonstrate that as both the Tetney and Holton le Clay Neighbourhood Plans will be allocating development that would not be covered by the Sustainability Appraisal of the East Lindsey Core Strategy and therefore significant environmental effects could result. Furthermore both of these settlements are located in close proximity to both international and national sites of nature conservation interest which could be affected by the development proposed in these neighbourhood plans. The sites concerned are:

- the Humber Special Protection Area (SPA), Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Ramsar and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI); and
- the Tetney Blow Holes SSSI,

Natural England therefore agrees with the Council's conclusion that both of these Neighbourhood Plans would require Strategic Environmental Assessment.

We also advise that a Habitats Regulations Assessment screening should be carried out for both these plans, given the close proximity of these two neighbourhood plan areas to international sites of nature conservation interest. One of the basic conditions that will be tested at Examination is

Page 1 of 2



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APPENDIX 2 – Background Documents

Document	Date
The National Planning Policy Framework	2012
Horncastle Urban Structures Study	2014-2029
Green Infrastructure Study: How to create a Green Wheel for Horncastle	
East Lindsey Adopted Local Plan	1999
East Lindsey Sustainability Appraisal	1996
East Lindsey / AECOM Sustainability Appraisal Report	2009
East Lindsey – Draft Core Strategy	2012
East Lindsey – Core Strategy draft Sustainability Appraisal	2012