

Campbell Park Neighbourhood Plan
Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Statement
Appropriate Assessment Screening
February 2017

1. Introduction

1.1 What is the screening statement?

1.2 This report has been produced following consultation on a screening opinion prepared in order to determine the need for a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in accordance with the European Directive 2001/42/EC and associated Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.

1.3 This document also addresses the need for Appropriate Assessment, in accordance with European Directive 92/43/EEC, commonly known as the Habitats Directive.

1.4 Following consultation with the Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England, it is the conclusion of Milton Keynes Council that an SEA is not required for the Campbell Park Neighbourhood Plan.

1.5 What is the Neighbourhood Plan trying to achieve?

1.6 The Neighbourhood Area covers the whole of the Campbell Park Parish, which lies centrally within the Milton Keynes urban area, located on the southern and eastern edges of the city's main shopping, employment and leisure area, Central Milton Keynes. The parish comprises 7 grid squares, 5 of which are primarily residential, one mainly in employment use and the other mainly developed for leisure purposes. The Plan allocates a number of small sites within the existing built-up area for new dwellings, some of these sites are very small and the total number of new dwellings likely to be delivered through the plan is minimal at around 30 at most.

1.7 The plan is available online on the Campbell Park Parish council website at: <http://www.campbell-park.gov.uk/assets/campbell-park---neighbourhood-plan-web.pdf>

2. Policy context

2.1 The Milton Keynes Local Plan was formally adopted December 2005. Along with the Core Strategy (see below) the Local Plan provides the statutory land use planning framework for Milton Keynes.

2.2 The Council's Core Strategy was adopted in July 2013. The document contains the vision, objectives and strategic policies for the future of Milton Keynes to 2026, replacing the strategic elements of the Core Strategy.

2.3 Although the Neighbourhood Plan must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan and the Core Strategy, it can promote more development, but must not propose less. It will also provide a more local context to the non-strategic policies of the Local Plan.

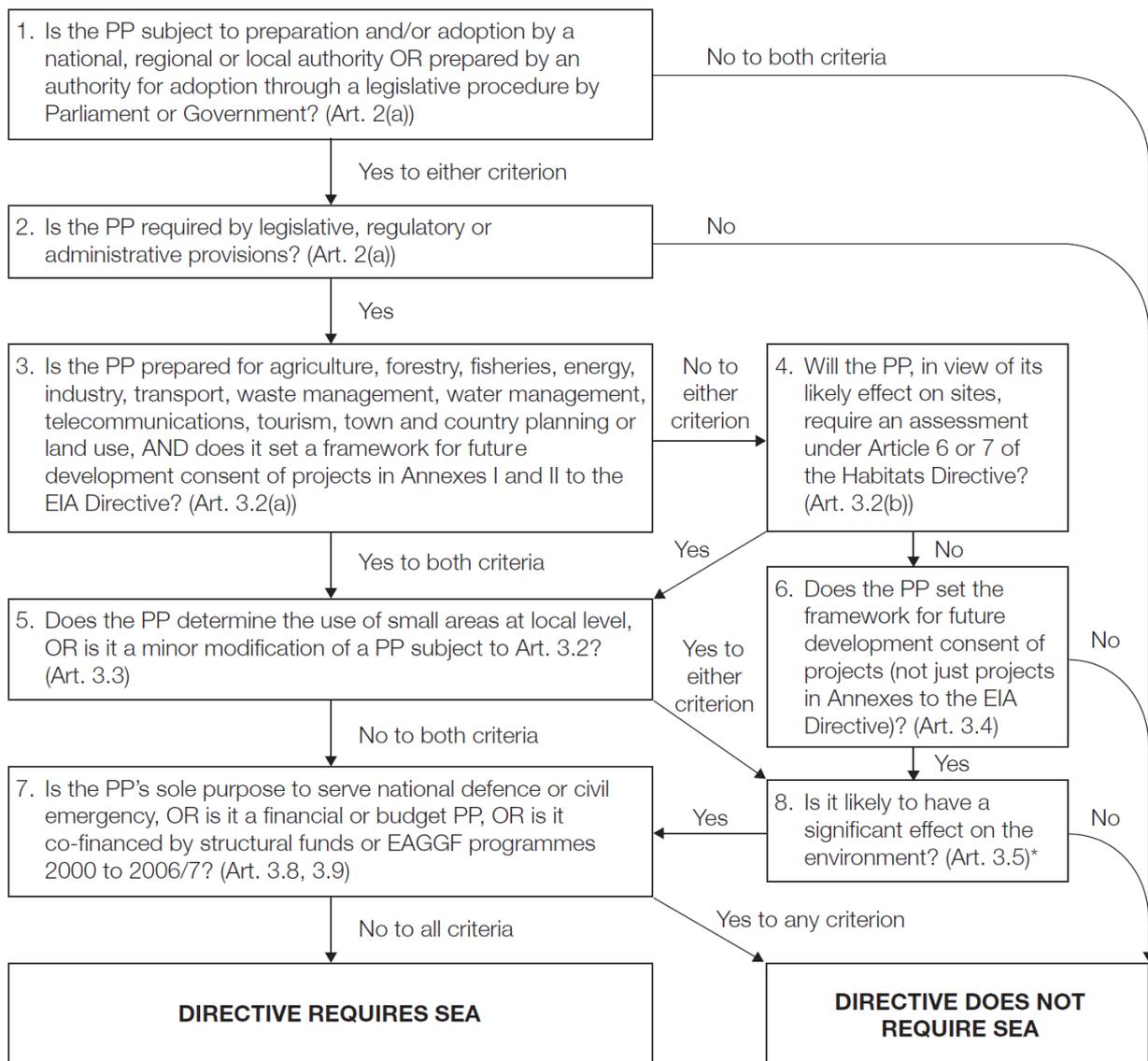
2.4 The Neighbourhood Plan will be subject to public consultation in accordance with the relevant regulations prior to its adoption.

3. SEA Screening

3.1 The requirement for a Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA) is set out in the “Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004”. There is also practical guidance on applying European Directive 2001/42/EC produced by the ODPM (now DCLG)¹. These documents have been used as the basis for this screening report.

3.2 Neighbourhood Plans must be screened to establish whether or not they will require Strategic Environmental Assessment. The ODPM practical guidance provides a checklist approach based on the SEA regulations to help determine whether SEA is required. This guide has been used as the basis on which to assess the need for SEA as set out below.

Figure 1: Establishing the need for SEA



*The Directive requires Member States to determine whether plans or programmes in this category are likely to have significant environmental effects. These determinations may be made on a case by case basis and/or by specifying types of plan or programme.

¹ A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (2005) (ODPM)

Figure 2: Establishing the need for SEA of the Neighbourhood Plan

Stage	Answer	Reason
1. Is the NP subject to preparation and/or adoption by a national, regional or local authority OR prepared by an authority for adoption through a legislative procedure by Parliament of Government? (Article 2(a))	Yes	It will be prepared by the Parish Council and adopted by Milton Keynes Council under the 2012 Neighbourhood Planning Regulations.
2. Is the NP required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions? (Article 2(a))	Yes	Although there is no requirement to produce a Neighbourhood Plan, they are subject to formal procedures and regulations laid down by national government. In light the European Court of Justice ruling in the Case C-567/10 it is considered that this means the NP is 'required'.
3. Is the NP 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))	No	The NP is prepared for town and country planning purposes but does not explicitly set a framework for future development consent of projects in Annexes I or II of the EIA Directive.
4. Will the plan in view of its likely effect on sites, require an assessment under Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats directive?	No	The Core Strategy was screened and it was concluded that appropriate assessment was not required. The Neighbourhood Plan must be in general conformity with the Core Strategy and, although it can propose more development, it is unlikely to be significant enough to require assessment under the Habitats Directive.
6. Does the plan set the framework for future development consent of projects?	Yes	The Neighbourhood Plan will provide a framework for future development consent of projects in the area.
8. Is the NP likely to have a significant effect on the environment?	See results of Figure 3: Determining the likely significance of effects	

Figure 3: Determining the likely significance of effects

SEA Directive Annex II: Criteria for determining likely significance of effects referred to in Article 3(5)		
Criteria	✓/x/?	MKC Comment
<i>The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular, to:</i>		
1a) 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 NP will set a framework for future development projects, in terms of location, nature and scale/size. However, the plan will need to be in general conformity with higher level plans. Furthermore, the plan area is largely 'complete' being within the established urban area, so the scope of the plan to fully influence projects and activities is somewhat limited.
1b) The degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy	✓	The NP will form part of the statutory development plan for MK with the same status in decision making as development plan documents.
1c) The relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development	✓	Sustainable development will be at the heart of NPs and policies could make a significant contribution to promoting sustainable development, particularly ensuring any greenfield allocations are planned in a sustainable way.
1d) Environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme	x	It is not considered that there are any particular environmental problems relevant to the plan.
1e) The relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (e.g. plans and programmes linked to waste-management or water protection).	x	The NP is unlikely to be directly relevant in regard to this criterion.
<i>Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to:</i>		
2a) The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects	✓/?	The potential for significant alterations to the existing urban environment are limited with the likely focus of the plan to be on maintaining and improving the existing rather than redevelopment. The effects of the plan are therefore likely to be reversible, as they will influence the general evolution of the townscape, which has been established since the development of the New Town.
2b) The cumulative nature of the effects	x	The cumulative impact of the effects of the plan on the environment is not expected to be any greater than the individual parts.
2c) The trans-boundary nature of	x	Any impacts are only likely to be felt by the

the effects		local area.
2d) The risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents)	x	It is unlikely that the nature of any development proposed would impact on human health.
2e) The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)	x	The effects of the plan are unlikely to be felt in a spatial area wider than the plan area. The plan is also unlikely to affect any population outside the plan area.
2f) 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 III. intensive land-use	✓/?	The NP covers an area which is largely urban already and does not have any particular natural or cultural heritage. The value of the open and green space is something the plan will seek to protect rather than change.
2g) The effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, community or international protection status	x	There are no areas or landscapes with these designations in Milton Keynes.

4. SEA Conclusion

- 4.1 The Campbell Park Neighbourhood Plan will provide a planning policy framework to be used when considering planning applications in the Neighbourhood Area, including a policy allocating a number of very small sites for the development of new homes.
- 4.2 The Plan's effects are unlikely to have any significant impacts beyond the Neighbourhood Area beyond the plan boundary and it is considered that overall the plan will not have significant effects on the environment. It is, therefore, concluded that the Campbell Park Neighbourhood Plan does not need to be subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment.

5. Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening

- 5.1 Legal protection is afforded to habitats and species of European importance through Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and Wild Flora and Fauna - known as the 'Habitats Directive'. Articles 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive require AA of plans to be undertaken. This involves assessing the contents of plans to ensure that their policies and proposals maintain the integrity of Natura 2000 sites. The assessment must determine whether the plan would adversely affect the nature conservation objectives of each site. Where negative effects can be identified, other options should be examined to avoid any potential damaging effects.
- 5.2 The application of the precautionary principle through the Habitats Directive means that plans can only be permitted once it is shown that there will be no adverse effect on the integrity of any Natura 2000 sites. In the rare case of there being no alternatives available or over-riding reasons of public interest why a plan needs to be implemented, plans that do have negative impacts may still be approved.

6. Appropriate Assessment Conclusion

- 6.1 Given the role of Neighbourhood Plans and very minimal level of new development being proposed in the Campbell Park Neighbourhood Plan, it is considered that Appropriate Assessment of the plan is not required.

7. Consultation Outcome

7.1 The three statutory bodies for the purposes of SEA Screening are English Heritage, the Environment Agency and Natural England. Following consultation with these bodies, the Environment Agency agreed with the conclusions in this screening opinion.

7.2 Natural England agreed with the screening opinion and commented that where green field areas are used for development, appropriate ecological assessment will need to be undertaken for these sites. Additionally, Natural England highlighted that removal of green space in favour of development may have serious impacts on biodiversity and connected habitat (and therefore species ability to adapt to climate change). We recommend that the final local plan include:

- Policies around connected green space within the parish. Open green space, wild green space and Green Infrastructure can all be used to create connected green space suitable for species adaptation to climate change. Annex A provides examples of Green Infrastructure;
- A measure of biodiversity net loss or gain should be provided for the plan.
- Also policies around the use of a biodiversity measure for development proposals. Suitable methods can include the Defra biodiversity offsetting metric¹ and the environment bank biodiversity impact calculator.

8. Contact

Further information can be obtained from:

Development Plans
Planning and Transport
Civic Offices
1 Saxon Gate East
Central Milton Keynes
MK9 3EJ

W: www.miltonkeynes.gov.uk/planning-policy

T: 01908 252358

E: development.plans@milton-keynes.gov.uk