

Mansfield Local Plan

Habitat Regulations Assessment

Mansfield District Council

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Quality information

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

AECOM has been appointed by Mansfield District Council (MDC) to undertake a Habitats Regulations Assessments (HRA) of the Mansfield Local Plan. The objective of an HRA is to identify any aspects of a Plan that may result in Likely Significant Effects (LSEs) and, where relevant, adverse effects on the integrity of Habitats (previously European) sites (Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and, as a matter of Government policy, Ramsar sites), either in isolation or in combination with other plans and projects. The HRA also advises, as necessary, on appropriate policy mechanisms for delivering mitigation where adverse effects on integrity are identified. Under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended), an Appropriate Assessment of impact pathways is required, where a plan or project is likely to have a Likely Significant Effect (LSE) upon a Habitats Site, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects.

The new Mansfield Local Plan will cover the years 2023 to 2043. The Plan will allocate land for housing, employment, mixed-use development and other purposes. For example, 9,900 new dwellings and 41.06ha of employment floorspace will be delivered in the authority over the Plan period. The Plan also sets out the policies and proposals to guide the future development in the district during this period. At the same time, the document seeks to protect Mansfield's important natural assets, including Habitats sites that are designated for internationally important habitats and species.

An initial assessment of the designated sites within and surrounding Mansfield District, and the impact pathways linking to the proposed growth, highlights Birklands & Bilhaugh SAC and Sherwood possible proposed SPA (ppSPA) as sites that require consideration.

1.2 Legislation

The UK left the European Union (EU) on 31 January 2020 under the terms set out in the European Union (Withdrawal Agreement) Act 2020 ("the Withdrawal Act"). While the UK is no longer a member of the EU, a requirement for Habitats Regulations Assessment continues, as set out in the Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019².

The HRA process applies the 'Precautionary Principle'³ to Habitats sites. Plans and projects can only be permitted having ascertained that there will be no adverse effect on the integrity of the Habitats site(s) in question. To ascertain whether or not site integrity will be affected, an Appropriate Assessment should be undertaken of the Plan or project in question. Figure 1 below sets out the legislative basis for Appropriate Assessment.

Plans and projects that are associated with potential adverse impacts on Habitats sites may still be permitted if there are no reasonable alternatives and there are Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest (IROPI) as to why they should go ahead. In such cases, compensation would be necessary to ensure the overall integrity of the site network.

² These don't replace the 2017 Regulations but are just another set of amendments.

³ The Precautionary Principle, which is referenced in Article 191 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, has been defined by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO, 2005) as: "*When human activities may lead to morally unacceptable harm [to the environment] that is scientifically plausible but uncertain, actions shall be taken to avoid or diminish that harm. The judgement of plausibility should be grounded in scientific analysis.*"

Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended)

The Regulations state that:

“A competent authority, before deciding to ... give any consent for a plan or project which is likely to have a significant effect on a European site ... shall make an appropriate assessment of the implications for the site in view of that sites conservation objectives... The authority shall agree to the plan or project only after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the European site”.

Figure 1: The legislative basis for Appropriate Assessment

Over time the phrase ‘Habitats Regulations Assessment’ (HRA) has come into wide currency to describe the overall process set out in the Regulations from screening through to IROPI. This has arisen in order to distinguish the process from the individual stage described in the law as an ‘Appropriate Assessment’.

In spring 2018 the ‘Sweetman’ European Court of Justice ruling⁴ clarified that ‘mitigation’ (i.e. measures that are specifically introduced to avoid or reduce a harmful effect on a Habitats site that would otherwise arise) should **not** be taken into account when forming a view on Likely Significant Effects. Mitigation should instead only be considered at the Appropriate Assessment stage. This HRA has been cognisant of that ruling.

1.3 Scope of the Project

There is no pre-defined guidance that dictates the physical scope of an HRA of a Plan document. Current guidance suggests that the following Habitats sites should be included in the scope of an HRA assessment:

- All Habitats sites within the boundary of Mansfield District; and,
- Other Habitats sites within 10km shown to be linked to development in Mansfield through a known ‘pathway’ (discussed below).

Generally, it is uncommon for development plans to have significant impacts on Habitats sites situated more than 10km from areas of growth. For example, most core recreational catchments (except for some coastal sites) are under 10km in size and the average vehicle commuting distance of a UK resident is approx. 10km. It should be noted that the presence of a conceivable impact pathway linking a Plan to a Habitats site does not mean that Likely Significant Effects (LSEs) will occur.

In some cases, development impacts can extend beyond 10km, particularly where hydrological pathways are involved, which is why the source-pathway-receptor concept is also used to help determine whether there are potential pathways connecting development to Habitats sites. This takes site-specific sensitivities into account, including issues such as nutrient neutrality or water levels, quantity and flow.

Briefly defined, impact pathways are routes by which the implementation of a policy within a Local Plan document can lead to an effect upon a Habitats site. An example of this would be new residential development resulting in an increased population and thus increased recreational pressure, which could affect Habitats sites through, for example, disturbance of ground-nesting birds.

Given an initial assessment of the relevant Habitats sites and the impact pathways present, this HRA will discuss (at least as far as the LSEs stage) the following Habitats sites:

- Birklands & Bilhaugh SAC
- Sherwood ppSPA

For the HRA, the views of the statutory nature conservation advisors, namely Natural England, will be sought as part of the consultation process on the scope of the Habitats sites assessed. An introduction to, the qualifying features (species and habitats), Conservation Objectives, and threats and pressures to the integrity of these Habitats sites are set out in Chapter 3.

⁴ People Over Wind and Sweetman v Coillte Teoranta (C-323/17)

In order to fully inform the screening for LSEs stage, several studies and online information databases have been consulted. These include:

- Future development proposed (and, where available, HRAs) for the adjoining authorities;
- Road traffic statistics from the Department for Transport (<https://roadtraffic.dft.gov.uk>);
- Journey-to-work data from the Population Census 2011 (<https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/census/2011/WU03UK>);
- Severn Trent Drainage and Wastewater Management Plan 2023;
- Severn Trent Water Resources Management Plan 2024;
- The HRAs produced for the adopted Mansfield Local Plan and those of adjoining authorities;
- Site Improvement Plans and Supplementary Conservation Advice Notes for relevant Habitats sites published by Natural England;
- The UK Air Pollution Information System (www.apis.ac.uk); and
- Multi Agency Geographic Information for the Countryside (MAGIC) and its links to SSSI citations and the JNCC website (www.magic.gov.uk).

1.4 Quality Assurance

This report was undertaken in line with AECOM's Integrated Management System (IMS). Our IMS places great emphasis on professionalism, technical excellence, quality, environmental and Health and Safety management. All staff members are committed to establishing and maintaining our certification to the international standards BS EN ISO 9001:2008 and 14001:2004 and BS OHSAS 18001:2007. In addition, our IMS requires careful selection and monitoring of the performance of all sub-consultants and contractors.

All AECOM Ecologists working on this project are members (at the appropriate level) of the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM) and follow their code of professional conduct (CIEEM, 2019)

2. Methodology

2.1 Introduction

The HRA has been carried out with reference to the general EC guidance on HRA⁵ and general guidance on HRA published by government in July 2019 and 2021⁶. AECOM has also been mindful of the implications of European case law in 2018, notably the Holohan ruling and the People over Wind ruling, both discussed below.

Figure 2 below outlines the stages of HRA. The stages are essentially iterative, being revisited as necessary in response to more detailed information, recommendations and any relevant changes to the Plan until no significant adverse effects remain.

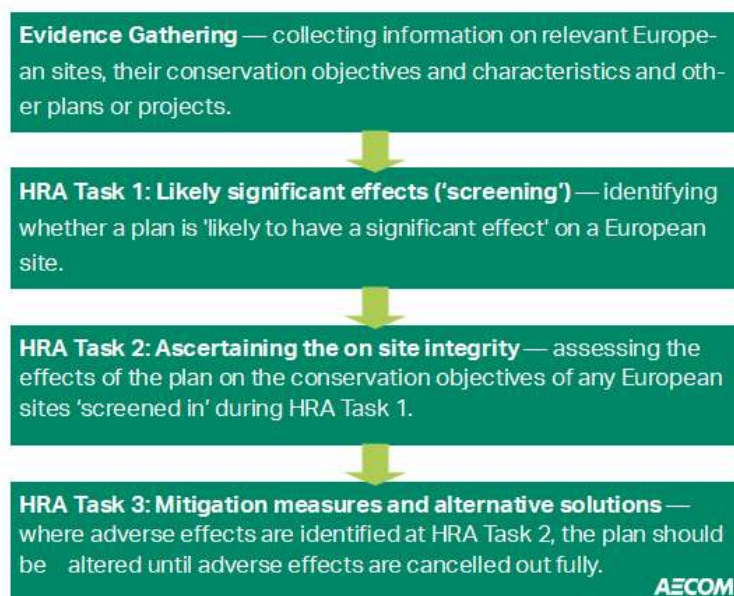


Figure 2: Four Stage Approach to Habitats Regulations Assessment.

2.2 Description of HRA Tasks

2.2.1 HRA Task 1 – Screening for Likely Significant Effects (LSEs)

Following evidence gathering, the first stage of any Habitats Regulations Assessment is the screening for Likely Significant Effects (LSEs), essentially a high-level assessment to decide whether the full subsequent stage known as Appropriate Assessment is required. The essential question is:

“Is the project, either alone or in combination with other relevant projects and plans, likely to result in a significant effect upon Habitats sites?”

The objective is to filter out those Plans and projects that can, without any detailed appraisal, be concluded to be unlikely to result in any impacts upon Habitats sites, usually because there is no mechanism for a negative interaction.

⁵ European Commission (2021): Assessment of plans and projects significantly affecting Natura 2000 Sites: Methodological Guidance on the Provisions of Article 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive.

⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/appropriate-assessment> and <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/habitats-regulations-assessments-protecting-a-european-site>

2.2.2 HRA Task 2 – Appropriate Assessment (AA)

Where it is determined that a conclusion of ‘no Likely Significant Effects (LSEs)’ cannot be drawn, the analysis proceeds to the next stage of HRA known as Appropriate Assessment. Case law has clarified that ‘Appropriate Assessment’ is not a technical term. In other words, there are no particular technical analyses, or level of technical analysis, that are classified by law as belonging to Appropriate Assessment compared to the screening stage.

By virtue of the fact that it follows screening for LSEs, there is a clear implication that the analysis will be more detailed than undertaken at the previous stage. One of the key considerations during Appropriate Assessment is whether there is available mitigation that would entirely address the potential effect. In practice, the Appropriate Assessment would take any policies or allocations that could not be dismissed following the high-level screening and assess the potential for an effect in more detail, with a view to concluding whether there would be a potential for an adverse effect on site integrity (in other words, disruption of the coherent structure and function of the Habitats site(s)). A decision by the European Court of Justice⁷ concluded that measures intended to avoid or reduce the harmful effects of a proposed Plan or project on a Habitats site may no longer be considered by competent authorities at the screening for LSEs stage of HRA. That ruling has been taken into account in producing this HRA.

Also, in 2018, the Holohan ruling⁸ was handed down by the European Court of Justice. Among other provisions paragraph 39 of the ruling states that ‘*As regards other habitat types or species, which are present on the site, but for which that site has not been listed, and with respect to habitat types and species located outside that site, ... typical habitats or species must be included in the appropriate assessment, if they are necessary to the conservation of the habitat types and species listed for the protected area*’ [emphasis added].

HRA Task 3 – Avoidance and Mitigation

Where necessary, measures are recommended for incorporation into the Plan in order to mitigate and / or avoid adverse effects on Habitats sites. There is considerable precedent concerning the level of detail that a Local Plan document needs to contain regarding mitigation for impact pathways on Habitats sites (e.g. regarding recreational pressure). The implication of this precedent is that it is not necessary for all measures to be fully developed prior to adoption of the Plan, but the Plan must provide an adequate policy framework within which these measures can be delivered.

When discussing mitigation for a Local Plan, one is concerned primarily with the policy framework to enable the delivery of such mitigation rather than the detail of the mitigation measures themselves since a Local Plan document is a high-level policy document.

In any Local Plan, there are numerous policies for which there is a limit to the degree of assessment that is possible at the Plan level. This is because either:

- The policy in question does not contain any specifics as to what will be delivered or where, and so cannot be assessed in detail at the Plan level. In these cases, the Appropriate Assessment focusses on precautionary mitigation that can be included in the plan to ensure that whatever proposals come forward will not result in adverse effects on integrity; or
- The nature of potential impacts (e.g. visual and noise disturbance arising from construction or loss of functionally linked habitat) are related to how the development will be designed and constructed, and therefore cannot be assessed in detail at the plan level. In these instances, the Appropriate Assessment focusses on available mitigation measures, the extent to which such measures would be achievable and effective, and whether an adequate protective framework exists to ensure that the policy would not lead to an adverse effect on the integrity of any internationally designated sites.

There are several court rulings of relevance to the level of detail required in the HRA for a plan. The Court of Appeal⁹ has ruled that providing the Council (competent authority) is duly satisfied that proposed mitigation could be ‘achieved in practice’ to satisfy that the proposed development would have no adverse effect, then this would suffice. This ruling has since been applied to planning permissions (rather than a Plan level document)¹⁰. In this

⁷ People Over Wind and Sweetman v Coillte Teoranta (C-323/17)

⁸ Case C-461/17

⁹ No Adastral New Town Ltd (NANT) v Suffolk Coastal District Council Court of Appeal, 17th February 2015

¹⁰ High Court case of R (Devon Wildlife Trust) v Teignbridge District Council, 28 July 2015

case the High Court ruled that for ‘a multistage process, so long as there is sufficient information at any particular stage to enable the authority to be satisfied that the proposed mitigation can be achieved in practice it is not necessary for all matters concerning mitigation to be fully resolved before a decision maker is able to conclude that a development will satisfy the requirements of Reg 61 of the Habitats Regulations’.

The same principle has also been applied in Buckinghamshire with regard to the former Wycombe District Local Plan. In paragraph 175 of his ruling in case [2020] EWHC 1984 (Admin), 2020 WL 04248573 (Keep Bourne End Green v Buckinghamshire Council (formerly Wycombe District Council), The Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government v Catesby Estates Plc, Leopold Noe) when a policy in this plan was challenged for being insufficiently detailed regarding mitigation for Habitats sites, Mr Justice Holgate noted that ‘I accept the Council’s submission that, as a matter of law, the wording of Policy BE2 did not need to go further [and provide full details regarding the mitigation for impacts on a European site that would be required]. It was appropriate for the Plan as a development plan forming part of a multi-stage decision-making process, which includes a more detailed application for the grant of a development consent and a further HRA at that point. It was sufficient for the examination and adoption of the Plan that there was sufficient information before the Council enabling it to be satisfied, as it was, that the proposed mitigation could be achieved in practice... The requirement of s.106 contributions to a “suitable natural alternative green space” (“SANG”) is a well-established form of mitigation under the 2017 Regulations for dealing with recreational pressure on a European protected site. The wording of Policy BE2, understood within the multi-stage nature of the statutory scheme, complies with the requirements of the Habitats Directive’.

In these instances, the advice of Advocate-General Kokott¹¹ is also worth considering. She commented that: ‘It would ...hardly be proper to require a greater level of detail in preceding plans [rather than planning applications] or the abolition of multi-stage planning and approval procedures so that the assessment of implications can be concentrated on one point in the procedure. Rather, adverse effects on areas of conservation must be assessed at every relevant stage of the procedure **to the extent possible on the basis of the precision of the plan. This assessment is to be updated with increasing specificity in subsequent stages of the procedure**’ [emphasis added].

3. Habitats Sites

3.1 Birklands & Bilhaugh SAC

3.1.1 Introduction¹²

Covering an approximate area of 271.84 hectares, Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC is a landscape-remnant of the historic Sherwood Forest, which is of World renowned cultural significance due to the high concentration of ancient oak trees and associated folklore. The trees and open woodland- pasture habitat have been utilised over the centuries as a medieval Royal hunting forest, as a source of timber for the construction of cathedrals and English naval fleets, and more recently for public amenity, recreation and tourism. There is high public usage across the SAC supported by a network of Public Rights of Way and permissive paths. Part of the SAC forms part of the Sherwood Forest National Nature Reserve.

Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC is located in central Nottinghamshire and sits in the Pennine rain shadow with just 62.5cm precipitation per annum on average. The SAC is protected from extreme weather conditions however due to the sandy nature of the soils, stored heat is readily exchanged during the night and can result in a sudden fall in temperature, the consequence of which are frequent frosts even within summer months although drought conditions occur frequently. Average yearly temperatures are 9.4°C with maximum temperatures in July, with January the coldest.

The highest point of the SAC is 95 metres above sea level with the lowest of 55m. Soils are derived mainly from the underlying Sherwood Sandstones and in part from glacial deposits resulting in nutrient poor, light pebbly soils which are mainly acidic and excessively free draining and often only comprise a very thin humus layer overlying the mineral deposit. The sandstone is free draining to precipitation and surface water

¹¹ Opinion of Advocate General Kokott, 9th June 2005, Case C-6/04. Commission of the European Communities v United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, paragraph 49 <http://curia.europa.eu/juris/document/document.jsf?docid=58359&doclang=EN>

¹² <https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/ConservationAdvice.aspx?SiteCode=UK0012740> [Accessed on 06/08/2026]

which is able to percolate quickly to the Sherwood aquifer some depths below. Surface water is not found on site, and the water table is currently 15-20m below the surface.

3.1.2 Qualifying Features¹³

Annex I habitats that are a primary reason for selection of this site:

- Old acidophilous oak woods with *Quercus robur* on sandy plains

3.1.3 Conservation Objectives¹⁴

The site's conservation objectives apply to the site and the individual species and/or assemblage of species for which the site has been classified (the 'Qualifying features' listed above).

The objectives are to ensure that, subject to natural change, the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its qualifying features, by maintaining or restoring:

- the extent and distribution of qualifying natural habitats and habitats of the qualifying species
- the structure and function (including typical species) of qualifying natural habitats
- the structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying species
- the supporting processes on which qualifying natural habitats and the habitats of qualifying species rely
- the populations of each of the qualifying species
- the distribution of qualifying species within the site

3.1.4 Threats / Pressures to Site Integrity¹⁵

The following threats / pressures to the integrity of the SAC have been identified in Natural England's Site Improvement Plan and Supplementary Advice on Conservation Objectives:

- Public access / disturbance
- Planning permission: general
- Change in land management
- Physical modification
- Air pollution: Impact of atmospheric nitrogen deposition
- Disease
- Invasive species

3.2 Sherwood Possible Proposed SPA

3.2.1 Introduction

A portion of the Sherwood Forest area is currently being considered as a possible potential Special Protection Area, with regard to birds of European importance (nightjar and woodlark) that this area supports. It is referred in this document as Sherwood ppSPA. Based on 2004-2006 survey results, the Sherwood Area contains greater than 1% of the UK's population of each of these species. That has been reaffirmed by more recent data; for example, the 2016 Sherwood Forest nightjar survey recorded 88 nightjar territories, while data cited by RSPB indicates approximately 70 pairs. Irrespective of the figure used this is between 1% and 2% of the UK population of approximately 4,600 churring males. Percentage is a first step (Stage 1) towards considering if an area qualifies as an SPA or potential SPA (pSPA). This information is currently being assessed along-side a UK-wide

¹³ Available at: <https://sac.jncc.gov.uk/site/UK0012740> [Accessed on the 06/08/2026]

¹⁴ Available at: <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6183967367626752> [Accessed on the 21/10/2021]

¹⁵ Available at: <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5793096570765312> [Accessed on the 21/10/2021]

review programme led by Defra. The full SPA selection process has yet to be formally implemented and the formal UK Review of the existing suite of sites for nightjar and woodlark is pending. Accordingly, the Review Panel (JNCC) has not yet formed a view on whether a site within the Sherwood Forest region is one of the 'most suitable territories' for these species and therefore has not so far provided any advice to the Secretary of State on the selection of any SPA in the Sherwood Forest Area.

If the area were to be formally proposed as a potential Special Protection Area (pSPA), meaning it is on its way to becoming a formally classified SPA, plans and projects would have to be subject by law to the provisions under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) that apply to assessment of impacts on all Habitats sites. This is because the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF 2019) requires authorities to afford the same protection to pSPAs as they do to formal SPAs (see paragraph 176).

Until the Sherwood Forest area is formally proposed by government as a pSPA there is no legal obligation to undertake HRA. However, Natural England (NE) still advises that in order to reduce future risks should the site ever be proposed, it is logical for Local Authorities to satisfy themselves that current planning applications contain 'sufficient objective information to ensure that all potential impacts on the breeding nightjar and woodlark populations have been adequately avoided or minimised'. In doing so, NE advises that this should be done 'using appropriate measures and safeguards', in order to 'ensure that any future need to review outstanding permissions under the 2010 Regulations is met with a robust set of measures in place' (letter from Natural England, 28 June 2010 updated July 2011, September 2012, March 2014 and November 2025). Natural England's Advice Note to Local Planning Authorities regarding the consideration of likely effects on the breeding population of nightjar and woodlark in the Sherwood Forest region, has been used to inform the following section regarding the ppSPA¹⁶.

In addressing the above, Natural England advises that local authorities take a 'risk-based approach' to forward planning and decision making, such that, development plans and proposals are accompanied by an 'additional and robust assessment of the likely impacts arising from the proposals on any breeding nightjar and woodlark in the Sherwood Forest area.'

3.2.2 Likely Conservation Objectives

'To maintain the species features in favourable condition, which is defined in part in relation to their population attributes. On this site favourable condition requires the maintenance of the population of each species feature. Maintenance also implies restoration, if evidence from condition assessment suggests a reduction in size of population.';

3.2.3 Likely Qualifying Features

With regard to the ppSPA, Natural England has stated that the following species should be considered as likely qualifying species:

- Woodlark (*Lullula Arborea*); and
- Nightjar (*Caprimulgus europaeus*);

3.2.4 Likely Environmental Vulnerabilities

Natural England suggests that in taking a risk-based approach to development plan making and decision-making, LPAs seek to ensure that plans and proposals are accompanied by an additional and robust assessment of the likely impacts arising from the proposals on breeding nightjar and woodlark in the Sherwood Forest area. This should ideally cover the potential direct, indirect and cumulative impacts which may include, but may not be limited to, the following;

- Disturbance to breeding birds from people, their pets and traffic (Public disturbance);
- Loss, fragmentation and/or damage to breeding and/or feeding habitat (Direct habitat and Loss of functionally linked land);
- Bird mortality arising from domestic pets and/or predatory mammals and birds; and
- Bird mortality arising from road traffic and/or wind turbines; and,

¹⁶ https://www.gedling.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2026-04/Sherwood%20Nightjar%20and%20Woodlark%20Advice%20Note%20-%20Revised%20-%20Dec%2025_0.pdf [Accessed 01/09/2026]

- pollution and/or nutrient enrichment of breeding habitats (Air Pollution: impact of atmospheric nitrogen deposition).

3.2.5 Status of Sherwood Forest ppSPA

It is noted that while no decision has been made about the future classification of parts of Sherwood Forest as a Special Protection Area (SPA) Natural England advise those affected Local Planning Authorities adopt a precautionary approach to ensure that reasonable and proportionate steps have been taken in order to avoid or minimise, as far as possible, any potential adverse effects from development on the breeding populations of nightjar and woodlark in the Sherwood Forest area. This will help to ensure that any future need for LPAs to comply with the provisions of the Habitats Regulations is met with a robust set of measures already in place.

Given the potential for Sherwood Forest to be designated as an SPA, it is recommended that the MLP should be reviewed should the status of Sherwood Forest ppSPA change. Policy IM1 sets conditions under which the council will consider a review or partial review of the MLP. While changes in the status of Sherwood Forest ppSPA could be considered under the listed circumstances, **it is recommended that this be clarified with the inclusion of “Changes to the status of Sherwood Forest ppSPA” to the list of conditions that may result in a partial review of the MLP in point 2 of policy IM1**

4. Background to Impact Pathways

In carrying out an HRA it is important to avoid confining oneself to effectively arbitrary boundaries (such as Local Authority or parish boundaries), but to use an understanding of the various ways in which Land Use Plans can impact Habitat sites to evaluate whether development is connected with Habitat sites, in some cases many kilometres distant. Briefly defined, impact pathways are routes by which a change in activity associated with a development can lead to an effect upon a Habitat site. As highlighted earlier, it is also important to bear in mind MHCLG guidance which states that the AA should be '*proportionate to the geographical scope of the [plan policy]*' and that '*an AA need not be done in any more detail, or using more resources, than is useful for its purpose*' (MHCLG, 2019, ¹⁷).

Based upon data available in the Designated Sites View¹⁸ provided by Natural England (including pressures for the site and the current condition of the features), Natural England's Site Improvement Plans (SIPs), Supplementary Advice for Conservation Objectives and professional judgement, the impact pathways listed in **Table 4-1** require consideration when assessing site allocations in the MLP.

Table 4-1. Possible impact pathways

Habitat Site	Possible Impact Pathways
Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC	Public Access / Disturbance (Recreational Pressure) Air pollution: Impact of atmospheric nitrogen deposition Water quality Water quantity, level and flow
Sherwood Forest ppSPA	Public Access / Disturbance (Recreational Pressure) Air pollution: Impact of atmospheric nitrogen deposition Loss of functionally linked habitat Direct loss of habitat Urbanisation Water quality Water quantity, level and flow

4.1 Background to Atmospheric Pollution

The main pollutants of concern for Habitats sites are oxides of nitrogen (NOx), ammonia (NH₃) and Sulphur dioxide (SO₂) and are summarised in **Table 4-2**.

Table 4-2. Main sources and effects of air pollutants on habitats and species.

Pollutant	Source	Effects on habitats and species
Sulphur dioxide (SO ₂)	The main sources of SO ₂ are electricity generation, and industrial and domestic fuel combustion. However, total SO ₂ emissions in the UK have decreased substantially since the 1980's.	Wet and dry deposition of SO ₂ acidifies soils and freshwater and may alter the composition of plant and animal communities.

¹⁷ Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government. 2019. *Appropriate Assessment*.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/appropriate-assessment#:~:text=an%20appropriate%20assessment%20must%20identify,boundaries%20of%20that%20site%20and>

¹⁸ Available at <https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/>

Pollutant	Source	Effects on habitats and species
	Another origin of Sulphur dioxide is the shipping industry and high atmospheric concentrations of SO₂ have been documented in busy ports. In future years shipping is likely to become one of the most important contributors to SO₂ emissions in the UK.	The magnitude of effects depends on levels of deposition, the buffering capacity of soils and the sensitivity of impacted species. However, SO₂ background levels have fallen considerably since the 1970's and are now not regarded a threat to plant communities. For example, decreases in Sulphur dioxide concentrations have been linked to returning lichen species and improved tree health in London.
Acid deposition	Leads to acidification of soils and freshwater via atmospheric deposition of SO₂, NO_x, ammonia and hydrochloric acid. Acid deposition from rain has declined by 85% in the last 20 years, which most of this contributed by lower sulphate levels. Although future trends in Sulphur (S) emissions and subsequent deposition to terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems will continue to decline, increased N emissions may cancel out any gains produced by reduced S levels.	Gaseous precursors (e.g., SO₂) can cause direct damage to sensitive vegetation, such as lichen, upon deposition. Can affect habitats and species through both wet (acid rain) and dry deposition. The effects of acidification include lowering of soil pH, leaf chlorosis, reduced decomposition rates, and compromised reproduction in birds / plants. Not all sites are equally susceptible to acidification. This varies depending on soil type, bed rock geology, weathering rate and buffering capacity. For example, sites with an underlying geology of granite, gneiss and quartz rich rocks tend to be more susceptible.
Ammonia (NH ₃)	Ammonia is a reactive, soluble alkaline gas that is released following decomposition and volatilisation of animal wastes and from some chemical processes and vehicle exhausts. It is a naturally occurring trace gas, but ammonia concentrations are directly related to the distribution of livestock. Ammonia reacts with acid pollutants such as the products of SO₂ and NO_x emissions to produce fine ammonium (NH₄⁺) - containing aerosol. Due to its significantly longer lifetime, NH₄⁺ may be transferred much longer distances (and can therefore be a significant trans-boundary issue). While ammonia deposition may be estimated from its atmospheric concentration, the deposition rates are strongly influenced by meteorology and ecosystem type.	The negative effect of NH₄⁺ may occur via direct toxicity when uptake exceeds detoxification capacity and via N accumulation. Its main adverse effect is eutrophication, leading to species assemblages that are dominated by fast-growing and tall species. For example, a shift in dominance from heath species (lichens, mosses) to grasses is often seen. As emissions mostly occur at ground level in the rural environment and NH₃ is rapidly deposited, some of the most acute problems of NH₃ deposition are for small relict nature reserves located in intensive agricultural landscapes.
Nitrogen oxides (NO _x)	Nitrogen oxides are mostly produced in combustion processes. Half of NO_x emissions in the UK derive from motor vehicles, one quarter from power stations and the rest from other industrial and domestic combustion processes.	Direct toxicity effects of gaseous nitrates are likely to be important in areas close to the source (e.g. roadside verges). A critical level of NO_x for all vegetation types has been set to 30 ug/m³. Deposition of nitrogen compounds (nitrates (NO₃), nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) and nitric acid (HNO₃)) contributes to the total nitrogen deposition and may lead to both soil and freshwater acidification. In addition, NO_x contributes to the eutrophication of soils and water, altering the species composition of plant communities at the expense of sensitive species.
Nitrogen deposition	The pollutants that contribute to the total nitrogen deposition derive mainly from oxidized (e.g. NO_x) or reduced (e.g. NH₃) nitrogen emissions (described separately above). While oxidized nitrogen mainly	All plants require nitrogen compounds to grow, but too much overall N is regarded as the major driver of biodiversity change globally.

Pollutant	Source	Effects on habitats and species
	originates from major conurbations or highways, reduced nitrogen mostly derives from farming practices. The N pollutants together are a large contributor to acidification (see above).	Species-rich plant communities with high proportions of slow-growing perennial species and bryophytes are most at risk from N eutrophication. This is because many semi-natural plants cannot assimilate the surplus N as well as many graminoid (grass) species. N deposition can also increase the risk of damage from abiotic factors, e.g. drought and frost.
Ozone (O ₃)	A secondary pollutant generated by photochemical reactions involving NO_x, volatile organic compounds (VOCs) and sunlight. These precursors are mainly released by the combustion of fossil fuels (as discussed above). Increasing anthropogenic emissions of ozone precursors in the UK have led to an increased number of days when ozone levels rise above 40 parts per billion (ppb) ('episodes' or 'smog'). Reducing ozone pollution is believed to require action at international level to reduce levels of the precursors that form ozone.	Concentrations of O₃ above 40 ppb can be toxic to both humans and wildlife and can affect buildings. High O₃ concentrations are widely documented to cause damage to vegetation, including visible leaf damage, reduction in floral biomass, reduction in crop yield (e.g. cereal grains, tomato, potato), reduction in the number of flowers, decrease in forest production and altered species composition in semi-natural plant communities.

Source: Information summarised from the Air Pollution Information System (<http://www.apis.ac.uk/>)

SO₂ emissions are overwhelmingly influenced by the output of power stations and industrial processes that require the combustion of coal and oil. As such, it is unlikely that material increases in SO₂ emissions will be associated with the MLP. NH₃ emissions are dominated by agriculture, with some chemical processes also making notable contributions.

NH₃ can have a directly toxic effect upon vegetation, particularly at close distances to the source such as near road verges¹⁹. NO_x can also be toxic at high concentrations (far above the annual average Critical Level) but generally only in the presence of elevated SO₂ which is very rare in the UK.

NO_x emissions, however, are dominated by the output of vehicle exhausts (more than half of all emissions). Within a 'typical' housing development, by far the largest contribution to NO_x (92%) will be made by the associated road traffic. Other sources, although relevant, are of minor importance (8%) in comparison²⁰. Emissions of NO_x could therefore be reasonably expected to increase as a result of greater vehicle use due to the MLP. High levels of NO_x and NH₃ are likely to increase the total N deposition to soils, potentially leading to deleterious knock-on effects in resident ecosystems. Increases in nitrogen deposition from the atmosphere can, if sufficiently great, enhance soil fertility and lead to eutrophication. This often has adverse effects on community composition and the quality of semi-natural, nitrogen-limited terrestrial and aquatic habitats^{21, 22}.

According to the World Health Organisation, the critical NO_x concentration (critical threshold) for the protection of vegetation is 30 µgm⁻³. In addition, ecological studies have determined 'Critical Loads' (CLs)²³ of atmospheric N deposition (that is, NO_x combined with ammonia NH₃) for key habitats within Habitats sites.

According to the Department of Transport's Transport Analysis Guidance, "Beyond 200m, the contribution of vehicle emissions from the roadside to local pollution levels *is not significant*"²⁴ (see Figure 3).

¹⁹ http://www.apis.ac.uk/overview/pollutants/overview_NOx.htm.

²⁰ Proportions calculated based upon data presented in Dore CJ et al. 2005. UK Emissions of Air Pollutants 1970 – 2003. UK National Atmospheric Emissions Inventory. <http://www.airquality.co.uk/archive/index.php>

²¹ Wolseley, P. A.; James, P. W.; Theobald, M. R.; Sutton, M. A. 2006. Detecting changes in epiphytic lichen communities at sites affected by atmospheric ammonia from agricultural sources. *Lichenologist* 38: 161-176

²² Dijk, N. 2011. Dry deposition of ammonia gas drives species change faster than wet deposition of ammonium ions: evidence from a long-term field manipulation *Global Change Biology* 17: 3589-3607

²³ The critical load is the rate of deposition beyond which research indicates that adverse effects can reasonably be expected to occur

²⁴ www.webtag.org.uk/archive/feb04/pdf/feb04-333.pdf

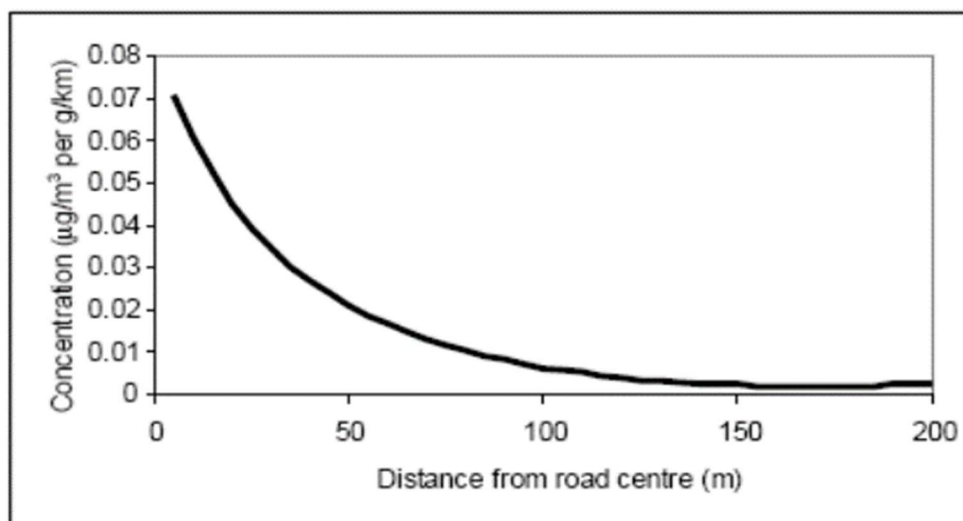


Figure 3: Traffic contribution to concentrations of pollutants at different distances from a road²⁵

4.2 Background to Direct Loss of Habitat

Most Habitats sites have been geographically defined to encompass the key features that are necessary for coherence of their structure and function, and the support of their qualifying features. Loss of land within a Habitats site therefore has the potential to either directly remove qualifying features (habitats) or to indirectly impact qualifying features (species) which rely on those habitats.

Generally speaking, development does not happen within the boundary of a Habitats site due to the potential impact on the site. However, in this instance the protections afforded to Habitats Sites are not in place for the ppSPA. The Sherwood Forest ppSPA is being reviewed as a Habitats Site within this report and current site allocations do include land within the zone defined for the ppSPA.

4.3 Background to Loss of Functionally Linked Habitat

While most Habitats sites have been geographically defined to encompass the key features that are necessary for coherence of their structure and function, and the support of their qualifying features, this is not necessarily the case. A diverse array of qualifying species including birds, bats and amphibians are not always confined to the boundary of designated sites.

For example, the highly mobile nature of both wader and waterfowl species implies that areas of habitat of crucial importance to the integrity of their populations lie outside the physical limits of Habitats sites. Despite not being part of the formal designation, these habitats are integral to the maintenance of the structure and function of the designated site, for example by encompassing important foraging grounds. Therefore, land use plans that may affect such functionally linked habitat require further assessment.

There is now an abundance of authoritative examples of HRA cases on plans affecting bird populations, where Natural England recognised the potential importance of functionally linked habitat. For example, bird surveys in relation to a previous HRA established that approximately 25% of the golden plover population in the Somerset Levels and Moors SPA were affected while on functionally linked land, and this required the inclusion of mitigation measures in the relevant plan policy wording. Another important case study originates from the Mersey Estuary SPA / Ramsar, where adjacently located functionally linked land had a peak survey count of 108% of the 5 year mean peak population of golden plover. This finding led to considerable amendments in the planning proposal to ensure that the site integrity was not adversely affected.

The identification of an area as functionally linked habitat is not always a straightforward process. The importance of non-designated land parcels may not be apparent and thus might require the analysis of existing data sources

²⁵ Source available at: www.dft.gov.uk/ha/standards/dmrb/vol11/section3/ha20707.pdf

(e.g. Bird Atlases or data from records centres) to be firmly established. In some instances, data may not be available at all, requiring further survey work.

An area may be considered as functionally linked if:

- It is of a type likely to be used by a receptor (for example, a bird species) such as grazing salt marsh;
- The area is within the usual foraging range of the bird species in question (as measured from the habitats site);
- There is sufficient habitat that the area is of value;
- The area conforms to other characteristics required by the receptor species, for example, clear line of site to avoid predation; and
- There is insufficient equivalent habitat closer to the Habitats site in question.

4.4 Background to Recreational Pressure

There is growing concern over the cumulative impacts of recreation on key nature conservation sites in the UK, as most sites must fulfil Conservation Objectives while also providing recreational opportunity. Various studies have provided compelling links between increases in housing development and access levels²⁶, and resulting impacts in Habitat sites^{27 28}.

Recreational use of a site has the potential to:

- Cause disturbance to sensitive species such as ground-nesting birds and wintering wildfowl;
- Prevent appropriate management or exacerbate existing management difficulties;
- Cause damage through erosion, trampling and fragmentation; and
- Cause eutrophication due to dog fouling.

Different types of Habitat sites (e.g., heathland, freshwater, chalk grassland) have a range of vulnerabilities and are sensitive to different types of recreational pressures. Studies across a range of species have shown that the effects from recreation can be complex.

4.4.1 Bird Disturbance

Disturbance effects can have negative impacts on qualifying birds in various ways, with reduced chick provisioning and increased nest predation due to adults being flushed from the nest and deterred from returning. A literature review on the effects of human disturbance on breeding birds found that 36 out of 40 studies reported reduced breeding success due to disturbance²⁹. The main reasons given for the reduction in breeding success were nest abandonment and increased predation of eggs or young. Studies of other species have shown that birds nest at lower densities in disturbed areas, particularly when there is weekday as well as weekend pressure³⁰. Recreational disturbance effects on ground-nesting birds are particularly severe, with many studies concluding that urban sites support lower densities of key species, such as stone curlew (*Numenius Arquata*) and nightjar (*Caprimulgus europaeus*)^{31 32}.

²⁶ Weitowitz D.C., Panter C., Hoskin R. & Liley D. 2019. The effect of urban development on visitor numbers to nearby protected nature conservation sites. *Journal of Urban Ecology* 5. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jue/juz019>

²⁷ Liley D, Clarke R.T., Mallord J.W., Bullock J.M. (2006a). The effect of urban development and human disturbance on the distribution and abundance of nightjars on the Thames Basin and Dorset Heaths. Natural England / Footprint Ecology.

²⁸ Liley D., Clarke R.T., Underhill-Day J., Tyldesley D.T. (2006b). Evidence to support the appropriate Assessment of development plans and projects in south-east Dorset. Footprint Ecology / Dorset County Council.

²⁹ Hockin D.M., Oundsted M., Gorman D., Hill V. & Barker M.A. (1992). Examination of the effects of disturbance on birds with reference to its importance in ecological assessments. *Journal of Environmental Management* 36: 253-286.

³⁰ Van der Zande A.N., Berkhuijsen J.C., van Letesteyn H.C., ter Keurs W.J. & Poppelaars A.J. (1984). Impact of outdoor recreation on the density of a number of breeding bird species in woods adjacent to urban residential areas. *Biological Conservation* 30: 1-39.

³¹ Clarke R.T., Liley D., Sharp J.M. & Green R.E. (2013). Building development and roads: Implications for the distribution of stone curlews across the Brecks. *PLOS ONE*. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0072984>.

³² Liley D. & Clarke R.T. (2003). The impact of urban development and human disturbance on the numbers of nightjar *Caprimulgus europaeus* on heathlands in Dorset, England. *Biological Conservation* 114: 219-230.

Direct evidence for bird disturbance has been collected in many field studies. For example, observations of bird disturbance were undertaken by Footprint Ecology in North Kent in 2010 / 2011. The study focused on recreational disturbance to wintering waterfowl on intertidal habitats along the North Kent shoreline, stretching between Gravesend and Whitstable, and encompassing three SPAs. From 1,400 events (records of visitors in the bird survey areas) occurring within 200m of the birds, 3,248 species-specific observations were noted, which included no response (74% of observations), major flight (13%), minor flight (5%), short evasive walks away from the stimulus (5%) and alertness (3%).

In heathland sites in Dorset, dog walking accounted for 55% of all major flight observations, with a further 15% attributed to walkers without dogs. After controlling for distance, major flights were more likely to occur when activities took place on the intertidal zone (compared to water-based or onshore events), when dogs were present, and a higher number of dogs were present in visitor groups. One study found that there was a significant negative correlation between the degree of urban development and the number of nightjar territories in Dorset heathland sites, but no such impacts were found for woodlark (*Lullula arborea*) and Dartford warbler (*Curruca undata*)³³.

A long-term (10 year) study on nightjar habitat in the Sherwood Forest area compared a heavily visited area (containing a café, shops, an adventure ropes course and 28.3 km of walking and cycling tracks) with a more lightly visited area (containing no amenities and only 3.3km of tracks). The study found that overall, nightjar density was significantly lower and there were significantly fewer breeding pairs in the heavily disturbed habitat compared with the less disturbed habitat, although, average breeding success per pair, in terms of eggs and fledglings produced, was not significantly different between the two sections (heavily visited and lightly visited) across years, either because of different behavioural tolerance levels to disturbance or through confounding effects due to population density. The study concluded that, while male birds were largely unaffected, females more actively avoid settling in heavily disturbed areas. The report concluded that managing access patterns by the public to heathland areas during critical nesting periods could reduce the effects of disturbance. Previous studies have suggested that the control of dogs and restriction of access to dog walkers would be particularly important considerations. The research also reported a recent model that predicted that the extent to which visitors spread out across a site may have a greater negative impact on populations of ground-nesting birds than simple visitor numbers. The research concluded that creating an increased number of potential nest sites for female nightjars (i.e. habitat areas) may also help reduce the effects of recreational disturbance, particularly if they are in areas where human access can be managed to keep disturbance levels low³⁴.

However, bird disturbance studies need to be treated with care. For instance, the magnitude of disturbance is not necessarily correlated with the impact of disturbance, i.e., the most easily disturbed species are not necessarily those that will suffer the greatest impacts. For example, it has been shown in some cases, that the most easily disturbed birds simply move to alternative feeding sites, while others remain (likely due to an absence of suitable alternative foraging areas) and thus suffer greater population-level impacts³⁵. A recent literature review undertaken for the RSPB³⁶ also urges caution when extrapolating the results of disturbance studies because responses differ between species and may be impacted by local environmental conditions. This should be considered when predicting the potential impacts of future recreational pressure on Habitat sites.

It should also be emphasised that recreational use is not necessarily a problem. Many Habitat sites are also National Nature Reserves or nature reserves managed by Wildlife Trusts and the RSPB. At these sites, access is encouraged, and resources are deployed to ensure that recreational use is managed appropriately. Bird abundances in many of these sites remain stable or, in some cases, are increasing despite high visitor numbers.

4.4.2 Trampling Damage

Most terrestrial habitats (including heathland, grassland and woodland) can be affected by trampling and other mechanical damage, which dislodges individual plants, leads to soil compaction and erosion. A general effect of trampling on vegetation is reduced species and structural diversity, since only dominant and tolerant plant

³³ Liley D. & Clarke R.T. (2002). Urban development adjacent to heathland sites in Dorset: The effect on the density and settlement patterns of Annex I bird species. English Nature Research Reports, No 463. English Nature, Peterborough. 33pp.

³⁴ Lowe, A., A. C. Rogers, and K. L. Durrant. 2014. Effect of human disturbance on long-term habitat use and breeding success of the European Nightjar, *Caprimulgus europaeus*. Avian Conservation and Ecology 9(2): 6. <http://dx.doi.org/10.5751/ACE-00690-090206>

³⁵ Gill et al. (2001). Why behavioural responses may not reflect the population consequences of human disturbance. *Biological Conservation* 97: 265-268.

³⁶ Woodfield & Langston. (2004). Literature review on the impact on bird population of disturbance due to human access on foot. *RSPB Research Report* No. 9.

species persist³⁷. However, many parameters (e.g. vegetation type, recreational activity, weather, and ground conditions) can have marked impacts on the degree of trampling damage. The following provides a brief overview of the impacts of trampling associated with different recreational activities in different habitats:

- A study on experimental trampling of different heathland types under varying weather conditions in Brittany (France) showed that dry heath was more resistant to trampling damage than wet heath³⁸. Equally, both heathland habitats showed greater resilience to trampling under dry than wet conditions.
- Wilson & Seney³⁹ examined the degree of track erosion caused by hikers, motorcyclists, horse riders and cyclists in 108 plots along tracks in the Gallatin National Forest, Montana. Although the results proved difficult to interpret, it was concluded that horses and hikers disturbed more sediment on wet tracks, and therefore caused more erosion, than motorcycles and bicycles.
- Cole et al⁴⁰ conducted experimental off-track trampling in 18 closed forest, dwarf scrub and meadow & grassland communities (each trampled between 0 – 500 times) over five mountain regions in the US. Vegetation cover was assessed two weeks and one year after trampling, and a negative correlation with trampling intensity was discovered. This relationship was weaker after one year than two weeks, indicating some vegetation recovery. Differences in plant morphology was found to explain more variation in response than soil and topographic factors. Low-growing, mat-forming grasses regained their cover best after two weeks and were considered most resistant to trampling, while tall forbs (non-woody vascular plants other than grasses, sedges, rushes and ferns) were considered least resistant. The cover of hemicryptophytes and geophytes (plants with buds below the soil surface) was heavily reduced after two weeks but had recovered well after one year and as such these were considered most resilient to trampling. Chamaephytes (plants with buds above the soil surface) were considered least tolerant to regular trampling disturbance.
- Cole⁴¹ conducted a follow-up study (across four vegetation types) in which shoe type (trainers or walking boots) and trampling weight were varied. Although immediate damage was greater with walking boots, there was no significant difference after one year. Heavier trampers caused a greater reduction in vegetation height than lighter trampers, but there was no differential impact on vegetation cover.
- Cole & Spildie⁴² experimentally compared the effects of off-track trampling by hikers and horse riders (at two intensities – 25 and 150 passes) in two woodland vegetation types (one with an erect forb understorey and one with a low shrub understorey). Generally, it was shown that higher trampling intensities caused greater levels of disturbance. Horse trampling resulted in a larger reduction in vegetation cover than hiking. While the forb-dominated vegetation suffered greater disturbance impacts, it recovered rapidly.

In heathland sites, trampling damage can affect the value of a site to wildlife. For example, heavy use of sandy tracks loosens and continuously disturbs sand particles, reducing the habitat's suitability for invertebrates⁴³. Species that burrow into flat surfaces such as the centres of paths, are likely to be particularly vulnerable, as the loose sediment can no longer maintain their burrow. In some instances, nature conservation bodies and local authorities resort to hardening paths to prevent further erosion. However, this is concomitant with the loss of habitat used by wildlife, such as sand lizards (*Lacerta agilis*) and burrowing invertebrates.

³⁷ Santoro R. et.al. (2012). Effects of Trampling Limitation on Coastal Dune Plant Communities. Environmental Management DOI 10.1007/s00267-012-9809-6.

³⁸ Gallet S. & Roze F. (2002). Long-term effects of trampling on Atlantic heathland in Brittany (France): Influence of vegetation type, season and weather conditions. *Biological Conservation* **103**: 267-275.

³⁹ Wilson, J.P. & J.P. Seney. (1994). Erosional impact of hikers, horses, motorcycles and off-road bicycles on mountain trails in Montana. *Mountain Research and Development* **14**:77-88.

⁴⁰ Cole, D.N. (1995a). Experimental trampling of vegetation. I. Relationship between trampling intensity and vegetation response. *Journal of Applied Ecology* **32**: 203-214

Cole, D.N. (1995b). Experimental trampling of vegetation. II. Predictors of resistance and resilience. *Journal of Applied Ecology* **32**: 215-224

⁴¹ Cole, D.N. (1995c). Recreational trampling experiments: effects of trampler weight and shoe type. Research Note INT-RN-425. U.S. Forest Service, Intermountain Research Station, Utah.

⁴² Cole, D.N., Spildie, D.R. (1998). Hiker, horse and llama trampling effects on native vegetation in Montana, USA. *Journal of Environmental Management* **53**: 61-71

⁴³ Taylor K., Anderson P., Liley D. & Underhill-Day J.C. (2006). Promoting positive access management to sites of nature conservation value: A guide to good practice. English Nature / Countryside Agency, Peterborough and Cheltenham.

4.4.3 Nutrient Enrichment

A major concern for nutrient-poor terrestrial habitats such as dune systems is nutrient enrichment associated with dog fouling, which has been addressed in various reviews (e.g.,⁴⁴). It is estimated that dogs will defecate within 10 minutes of starting a walk and therefore most nutrient enrichment arising from dog faeces will occur within 400m of a site entrance. In contrast, dogs will urinate at frequent intervals during a walk, resulting in a spread-out distribution of urine. For example, in Burnham Beeches National Nature Reserve it is estimated that 30,000 litres of urine and 60 tonnes of dog faeces are deposited annually⁴⁵. While there is little information on the chemical constituents of dog faeces, nitrogen is one of the main components⁴⁶. Nutrient levels are the major determinant of plant community composition and the effect of dog defecation in sensitive habitats is comparable to a high-level application of fertiliser, potentially resulting in the shift to plant communities that are more typical of improved grasslands.

A recent study has published further compelling evidence on the relative impact of nitrogen (N) and phosphorus (P) deposition arising from dogs. Using 487 direct-count censuses from four peri-urban forests and nature reserves, the modelling data suggested that canine fertilisation rates amount to 11 kg N and 5 kg P per hectare per year respectively⁴⁷. These amounts are significant when compared to atmospheric nitrogen deposition rates and the offsetting achievable through traditional habitat management techniques (e.g. cutting and removal of hay). The nitrogen deposition by dogs is particularly significant given the nitrogen Critical Load (CL) of 10-20 kg N/ha/yr provided for European dry heath and Northern Atlantic wet heath (qualifying feature of the Dorset Heaths SAC) on the Air Pollution Information System (APIS). This implies that the minimum CL of a site may be exceeded by N nitrogen deposition from dogs alone, before atmospheric sources are considered. Nutrient availability is the major determinant of plant community composition and the effect of dog defecation in sensitive habitats is comparable to a high-level application of fertiliser, potentially resulting in a shift towards plant communities that are more typical of improved grasslands.

4.4.4 Summary

Where increased recreational use is predicted to cause adverse impacts on a site, avoidance and mitigation should be considered. Avoidance of recreational impacts at Habitat sites involves locating new residential development further away (where possible). Strategic plans, such as Local Plans provide the mechanism for this. Where avoidance of impacts is not possible, mitigation will usually involve a mix of access management, habitat management and provision of alternative recreational space.

4.5 Background to Water Quality

The quality of the water that feeds Habitats sites is an important determinant of the nature of their habitats and the species they support. Poor water quality can have a range of environmental impacts:

- At high levels, toxic chemicals and metals can result in immediate death of aquatic life, and can have detrimental effects even at lower levels, including increased vulnerability to disease and changes in wildlife behaviour.
- Eutrophication, the enrichment of plant nutrients in water, increases plant growth and consequently results in oxygen depletion. Algal blooms, which commonly result from eutrophication, increase turbidity and decrease light penetration. The decomposition of organic wastes that often accompanies eutrophication deoxygenates water further, augmenting the oxygen depleting effects of eutrophication. In the marine environment, nitrogen is the limiting plant nutrient, and so eutrophication is associated with discharges containing available nitrogen.
- Some pesticides, industrial chemicals, and components of sewage effluent are suspected to interfere with the functioning of the endocrine system, possibly having negative effects on the reproduction and development of aquatic life.

⁴⁴ Taylor K., Anderson P., Taylor R.P., Longden K. & Fisher P. (2005). Dogs, access and nature conservation. English Nature Research Report, Peterborough.

⁴⁵ Barnard A. (2003). Getting the facts – Dog walking and visitor number surveys at Burnham Beeches and their implications for the management process. *Countryside Recreation* 11:16-19.

⁴⁶ Taylor K., Anderson P., Liley D. & Underhill-Day J.C. (2006). Promoting positive access management to sites of nature conservation value: A guide to good practice. English Nature / Countryside Agency, Peterborough and Cheltenham.

⁴⁷ De Frenne P., Cougnon M., Janssens G.P.J. & Vangansbeke P. (2022). Nutrient fertilization by dogs in peri-urban ecosystems. *Ecological Solutions and Evidence* 3, <https://doi.org/10.1002/2688-8319.12128>

The main risk associated with the Mansfield Local Plan is the discharge of treated sewage effluent from Wastewater Treatment Works (WwTWs) serving the Plan area. This could increase the nutrient concentrations in the water feeding Habitats Sites that are hydrologically linked to waterbodies that receive treated wastewater.

4.6 Background to Water Quantity, Level and Flow

The water level, its flow rates and the mixing conditions are important determinants of the condition of Habitats sites and their qualifying features. Hydrological processes are critical in influencing habitat characteristics in wetlands, terrestrial systems that have hydrological associations (e.g. wet heath) and coastal waters, including current velocity, water depth, dissolved oxygen levels, salinity and water temperature. In turn these parameters determine the short- and long-term viability of plant and animal species, as well as overall ecosystem composition.

A highly cited review paper summarised the ecological effects of reduced flow in rivers and connected water-dependent ecosystems. Droughts (ranging in their magnitude from flow reduction to a complete loss of surface water) have both direct and indirect effects on dependent floral and faunal communities. For example, the unique nature of wetlands combines shallow water and conditions that are ideal for the growth of organisms at the basal level of food webs, which feed many species of birds, mammals, fish and amphibians.

Maintaining a steady water supply is of critical importance for many hydrologically dependent SPAs, SACs and Ramsar sites. For example, in many freshwater bodies and wetlands the hydrological regime is essential for sustaining a variety of foraging habitats for SPA / Ramsar waterfowl species. However, different species vary in their requirements for specific water levels. Splash and / or shallow flooding is required to provide suitable feeding areas and roosting sites for ducks and waders. In contrast, deeper flooding is essential to provide foraging and loafing habitats for Bewick's swans and whooper swans.

Wetland habitats rely on hydrological connections with other surface waters, such as rivers, streams and lakes. A constant supply of water is fundamental to maintaining the ecological integrity of sites. However, while the natural fluctuation of water levels within narrow limits is desirable, excess or too little water supply might cause the water level to be outside of the required range of qualifying birds, invertebrate or plant species. This might lead to the loss of the structure and functioning of wetland habitats. There are two mechanisms through which urban development might negatively affect the water level in Habitats Sites:

- The supply of new housing with potable water will require increased abstraction of water from surface water and groundwater bodies. Depending on the level of water stress in the geographic region, this may reduce the water levels in Habitats Sites sharing the same catchment.
- The proliferation of impermeable surfaces in urban areas increases the volume and speed of surface water runoff. As traditional drainage systems often cannot cope with the volume of stormwater, sewer overflows are designed to discharge excess water directly into watercourses. Often this pluvial flooding results in downstream inundation of watercourses and the potential flooding of wetland habitats.

4.7 Background to Urbanisation

The natural environment is complex; most plants and wildlife rely on either a particular habitat type (e.g. broadleaved woodland, heathland) or a particular combination of habitats (habitat mosaic) to thrive. In addition to habitat type, habitat conditions and structure (e.g. south facing slope, dead standing wood, patches of bare soil, or areas of scrub adjacent to open areas of heathland etc.) are important factors for survival. Smaller organisms' (e.g. insects and fungi) immediate requirements are often on a more localised scale, for example a single tree, whereas other wildlife like birds may need vast areas for foraging in a single night.

Wildlife needs to be able to move around in order to find food and suitable places to live, breed and raise young; they must also be able to move in order to survive changes in their environment, for example disturbances caused by climate change or development. Movement is also important for the exchanging of genes, the building blocks for diversity and survival. Without this, generations of wildlife may become weaker and lack the ability to thrive.

Urbanisation essentially involves development encroaching on open spaces to such an extent that there is a regular background level of impact (whether recreational activity, cat predation, fly tipping of garden waste and other activities) due to the very close proximity of large amounts of housing, or simply construction-related noise and lighting in close proximity (e.g. within 200m) of sites designated for birds. This can have a negative effect on

wildlife causing them to retreat further into the body of a site and abandon the edge habitats or impacting on their breeding success.

5. Test of Likely Significant Effects

5.1 Introduction

When seeking to identify relevant Habitat sites, consideration has been given primarily to identified impact pathways and the source-pathway-receptor approach, rather than adopting purely a 'zones'-based approach. The source-pathway-receptor approach is a standard tool in environmental assessment. In order for an effect to occur, all three elements of this mechanism must be in place, whereas the absence of one or more of the elements means there is no possibility for an effect. Furthermore, even where an impact is predicted to occur, it may not result in significant effects (i.e., those which undermine the Conservation Objectives of a Habitat site).

The likely zone of impact (also referred to as the likely Zone of Influence, Zol) of a plan or project is the geographic extent over which significant ecological effects are likely to occur. The Zol of a plan or project will vary depending on the specifics of a particular proposal and must be determined on a case-by-case basis with reference to a variety of criteria, including:

- the nature, size / scale and location of the plan;
- the connectivity between the plan and Habitat sites, for example through hydrological connections or because of the natural movement of qualifying species;
- the sensitivity of ecological features under consideration; and,
- the potential for in-combination effects.

This section outlines the results of the assessment of likely significant effects, without taking account of mitigation, for both Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC and Sherwood Forest ppSPA. It takes into consideration possible in-combination effects (i.e. impacts from this plan alongside others). Appendix A provides the screening table covering all policies.

The screening process consisted of an analysis of every proposed policy and proposed development site, as set out in the Mansfield District Council Local Plan. Any policies or development sites that could not be immediately screened out were subject to appropriate assessment, as discussed in the following chapter. The identification of whether the impacts of the Local Plan's policies and proposed developments are likely to significantly affect the sites in question, depends on whether or not a clear 'pathway' can be identified. A 'pathway' in this context is a direct or indirect relationship between the key issue and the site's sensitive qualifying features.

In summary, the following policies were deemed to have Likely Significant Effects (i.e. the possibility of an effect requires further investigation) prior to more detailed investigation or consideration of mitigation:

Table 5-1. MLP policies with likely significant effects

Local plan policy	Likely significant effects	Rationale
S2 (Spatial Strategy)	• Atmospheric pollution • Recreational pressure • Water Quantity, Level and Flow • Urbanisation	Policy sets out the quantity residential and employment development. This development will lead to increased road journeys, increased local population and therefore recreational pressure, increased water usage, and residential development within 400m of Sherwood Forest ppSPA and therefore risk of impacts from urbanisation
H1 (Housing Allocations)	• Atmospheric pollution • Recreational pressure • Water Quantity, Level and Flow • Urbanisation	Policy allocates sites for residential development. This development will lead to increased road journeys, increased local population and therefore recreational pressure, increased water usage, and residential development within 400m of Sherwood Forest ppSPA and therefore risk of impacts from urbanisation

Local plan policy	Likely significant effects	Rationale
H8 (Accommodation for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople)	- Atmospheric pollution - Recreational pressure - Water Quantity, Level and Flow - Urbanisation	Policy sets out the quantity of accommodation for gypsies, travellers and travelling showpeople to be developed. This development will lead to increased road journeys, increased local population and therefore recreational pressure, increased water usage, and the potential for residential development within 400m of Sherwood Forest ppSPA and therefore risk of impacts from urbanisation.
E2 (Sites Allocated as New Employment Areas)	- Atmospheric pollution - Water Quantity, Level and Flow	Policy allocates sites for employment development. This development will lead to increased road journeys and water usage. Given this does not include residential development it does not lead to increased recreational pressure or risks of urbanisation
RT6 (Retail and Leisure Allocations).	- Atmospheric pollution - Water Quantity, Level and Flow	Policy allocates sites for retail and leisure development. This development will lead to increased road journeys and water usage. Given this does not include residential development it does not lead to increased recreational pressure or risks of urbanisation
SUE1 (Pleasley Hill Farm)	- Atmospheric pollution - Recreational pressure - Water Quantity, Level and Flow	Policy allocates land at Pleasley Hill Farm for mixed use development. This development will lead to increased road journeys, increased local population and therefore recreational pressure and increased water usage. Given this site is over 400m from Sherwood Forest ppSPA, there are not risks from the impacts of urbanisation.
SUE2 (Land off Jubilee Way)	- Atmospheric pollution - Recreational pressure - Water Quantity, Level and Flow	Policy allocates the site Land off Jubilee Way for mixed use development. This development will lead to increased road journeys, increased local population and therefore recreational pressure and increased water usage. Given this site is over 400m from Sherwood Forest ppSPA, there are not risks from the impacts of urbanisation.
SUE3 (Land at Berry Hill)	- Atmospheric pollution - Recreational pressure - Water Quantity, Level and Flow - Urbanisation	Policy allocates the site Land off Jubilee Way for mixed use development. This development will lead to increased road journeys, increased local population and therefore recreational pressure, increased water usage, and residential development within 400m of Sherwood Forest ppSPA and therefore risk of impacts from urbanisation.

5.2 Atmospheric Pollution (Nitrogen Deposition)

There is a standard method for assessing the impacts of road traffic on Habitats sites that is used by Natural England⁴⁸. This involves:

- Considering the probable in combination change in vehicle flows, as a result of new development, on any roads within 200m of the Habitats site is likely to exceed 1,000 Annual Average Daily Traffic (i.e. average vehicle movements per day) or 200 Heavy Duty Vehicles per day;
- Considering whether the contribution of a given plan (such as the Mansfield Local Plan) to that additional traffic would be essentially nominal (as case law has established that if the contribution of a given Local Plan is 'very small indeed' it can be legitimately excluded from further assessment);

⁴⁸

<https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/4720542048845824#:~:text=This%20internal%20operational%20Guidance%20Note%20describes%20how%20Natural,air%20which%20are%20capable%20of%20affecting%20European%20Sites.>

- Considering whether the habitat and species that might be affected would be likely to be affected by an increase in nitrogen deposition, ammonia concentrations and NOx concentrations; and
- If so, then air quality calculations can be undertaken to determine if the change in nitrogen oxide (NOx) concentration, ammonia concentration, or nitrogen deposition rate will exceed relevant thresholds (critical level/load).

If the change in vehicle flows due to the proposed increase in development during the Local Plan period is expected to be nominal, it is reasonable to conclude that the Local Plan's impact (and its contribution to any in combination effects) can be considered essentially neutral.

Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC

In accordance with Natural England Guidance NEA001⁴⁹ a 200m buffer around the SAC was used to identify the potential area that could be affected by nitrogen deposition from road traffic. No such roads were identified within Mansfield District. There are also no new road infrastructure projects planned during the Local Plan's period that would be within 200m of the SAC.

The only road within 200m of the SAC is Swinecote Road (B6034) located in the town of Edwinstowe in Newark and Sherwood District. This is unlikely to be a commuter route for traffic arising from Mansfield since it does not link any significant work destinations with any settlements in Mansfield. Trips arising from Mansfield are thus most likely to be recreational visitors to the Sherwood Forest visitor centre, but they are very unlikely to be sufficiently numerous for average daily flows to increase by more than a nominal extent. As such, the B6034 is very unlikely to experience a significant change in flows as a result of the Mansfield District Local Plan. Air quality considerations therefore do not need to be taken further for the SAC.

The Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC is therefore screened out for Appropriate Assessment for the impact pathway Atmospheric Pollution.

Sherwood Forest ppSPA

The following site allocations may result in increased traffic on roads within 200m of the ppSPA are therefore screened in for Appropriate Assessment for the impact pathway of Atmospheric Pollution.

- All sites when considered in combination, since it is the general increase in traffic on the road network that is relevant to air quality impacts on specific road links

Policy Screening

A review of the MLP indicates that LSEs in relation to atmospheric pollution cannot be excluded due to the allocation of residential / employment growth and the concomitant increase in commuter traffic. The following policies need to be taken forward to Appropriate Assessment:

- S2 (Spatial Strategy)
- H1 (Housing Allocations)
- H8 (Accommodation for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople)
- E2 (Sites Allocated as New Employment Areas)
- RT6 (Retail and Leisure Allocations).
- SUE1 (Pleasley Hill Farm)
- SUE2 (Land off Jubilee Way)
- SUE3 (Land at Berry Hill)

⁴⁹ Available at <https://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/file/5431868963160064> [Accessed 04/06/2025]

²⁸ Habitats Regulations assessment of the Newark and Sherwood Publication Amended Core Strategy: Appropriate Assessment (June 2018).

5.3 Recreational Pressure

5.3.1 Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC

A Footprint Ecology Report⁵⁰ assessed the zone of influence for recreational pressure on the SAC as 8.9km defined by the straight-line distance from home to interview location within the SAC of walkers and dog walkers carrying out a day visit from home (and who visit at least once a month). Within that 8.9km zone of influence the report notes that there will be a differential effect relating to distance, such that new development closer to the SAC/NNR is likely to result in proportionally greater impact. Housing development within this zone is considered as having a potential LSE on the Habitats Sites. There are multiple residential allocations within this zone and therefore this is screened in for appropriate assessment

5.3.2 Sherwood Forest ppSPA

A Footprint Ecology Report⁵¹ assessed the zone of influence for recreational pressure on the Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC as 8.9km. The ppSPA includes this SAC and other areas of the ppSPA are of similar habitat type with similar interest to visitors from a recreational pressure point of view. It is reasonable therefore to maintain the 8.9 km zone of influence for housing development as having a potential LSE on the Habitats Sites. All site allocations are within 8.9km of the ppSPA and are therefore screened in for Appropriate Assessment for Recreational Pressure.

5.3.3 Policy Screening

A review of the MLP indicates that LSEs in relation to recreational pressure cannot be excluded for several policies due to the allocation of residential growth and a concomitant increase in the local population. The following policies need to be taken forward to Appropriate Assessment:

- S2 (Spatial Strategy)
- H1 (Housing Allocations)
- H8 (Accommodation for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople)
- SUE1 (Pleasley Hill Farm)
- SUE2 (Land off Jubilee Way)
- SUE3 (Land at Berry Hill)

5.4 Loss of functionally linked land

Heathland, acid grassland and managed plantation are preferred habitats for nesting woodlark and nightjar. Neither nightjar or woodlark has highly specialised prey requirements, eating a wide range of insects; as such the evidence indicates that they forage in a wide range of habitats including heathland, early-stage plantation, deciduous woodland, rough pasture, arable land and grassland margins; wherever they can obtain a supply of insects (and seeds in the case of woodlark) of sufficient size. There is therefore much less pressure on foraging habitat for these species, as opposed to nesting habitat. As such, the impact assessments for nightjar and woodlark have focussed on their nesting habitat, for which they do have very precise requirements.

Given the availability of suitable land for the likely qualifying species to the west and south of the allocations it is unlikely that sites allocated in the MLP would be functionally linked to the ppSPA. There are no proposed sites on Heathland⁵² or on lowland acid grassland⁵³. Therefore, it is considered that there will be no likely significant effects due to Loss of functionally linked land as a result of the MLP.

⁵⁰ Sauders, P., Lake, S. and Liley, D. "Birklands & BilhaughSAC Recreational Impact Report" Available at https://www.newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk/sites/default/files/pdf_imports/ENV-4-Final-Birklands-%26-Bilhaugh-SAC-RIA.pdf Accessed [25/08/2026]

⁵¹ Sauders, P., Lake, S. and Liley, D. "Birklands & BilhaughSAC Recreational Impact Report" Available at https://www.newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk/sites/default/files/pdf_imports/ENV-4-Final-Birklands-%26-Bilhaugh-SAC-RIA.pdf Accessed [25/08/2026]

⁵² <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.html>

⁵³ ibid

5.5 Water Quality

The Severn Trent Drainage and Wastewater Management Plan (DWMP)⁵⁴ sets out the plan for wastewater management in the region which includes the catchment for these Habitats sites and is based on robust population projections. It is the responsibility of the water companies to meet the needs of the area without adverse effect and it is acceptable for a competent authority (such as Mansfield Council) to make use of HRAs undertaken by other authorities (such as Severn Trent) where those other authorities are responsible for the regulatory process and where the assessment is appropriate. This is explained in a recent (2026) Defra consultation on amendments to Habitats Regulations Assessment guidance (https://consult.defra.gov.uk/protected-sites/8c7b61c8/user_uploads/draft-hra-guidance-text.pdf). The DWMP must be subject to HRA and cannot be adopted with adverse effects on the integrity of Habitats sites unless subsequent derogation tests can be passed. Subsequent Environmental Agency permitting processes also ensure adherence to the requirement to prevent detrimental impact on Habitats sites. The DWMP and subsequent permitting arrangements provide a mechanism to ensure wastewater infrastructure is delivered without adverse effects, subject to the normal project-level assessment and regulatory controls.

Moreover, in 2023 Natural England published detailed information on Habitats sites that were suffering from detrimental nutrient inputs and thus required a 'nutrient neutrality' approach to consenting new development. There are no catchments or Habitats sites identified in that list within a 10km radius of the Mansfield District. Developers are required to ensure that there is no adverse impact on water quality (pollution) from construction works.

Given the above, the Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC and Sherwood Forest ppSPA are therefore screened out from Appropriate Assessment for the impact pathway Water Quality.

5.6 Water Quantity, Level and Flow

The Mansfield Local Plan will lead to an increased requirement for potable water consumption for households and industrial sites. If this requirement is met by an increase in consented abstraction volumes or the development of new water resources, this can result in changes to the integrity of hydrologically connected Habitats sites, such as through reduced water levels or flows. Runoff from impermeable urban surfaces can also lead to increased volumes of surface water input and flash floods in nearby nature conservation sites.

The habitats within both Birklands & Bilhaugh SAC and Sherwood Forest ppSPA are not specifically reliant on water for their biological functioning as there is little to no open water on the site. These habitats are vulnerable to stress if groundwater levels are significantly altered, especially in relation to veteran trees.

A review of the MLP indicates that LSEs in relation to water quantity, level and flow cannot be excluded for several policies due to the allocation of residential growth and a concomitant increase in the local population. The following policies need to be taken forward to Appropriate Assessment:

- S2 (Spatial Strategy)
- H1 (Housing Allocations)
- H8 (Accommodation for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople)
- E2 (Sites Allocated as New Employment Areas)
- RT6 (Retail and Leisure Allocations).
- SUE1 (Pleasley Hill Farm)
- SUE2 (Land off Jubilee Way)
- SUE3 (Land at Berry Hill)

⁵⁴ Available at <https://www.severntrent.com/about-us/our-plans/drainage-wastewater-management-plan/> [Accessed 25/08/2026]

5.7 Urbanisation

For the purposes of this assessment 'urbanisation' is used to refer to all potential impact pathways that stem from the close proximity new development other than those considered elsewhere in this report e.g. lighting, noise, cat predation, fly tipping, inadvertent arson and other pathways. In general, it is considered that a zone of 400 m is sufficient for impacts of urbanisation, for example, lighting, sound and fly tipping impacts.

Given that Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC is located 700m outside of the local plan area, there are no likely significant effects on the SAC as a result of urbanisation.

Regarding Sherwood Forest ppSPA, there are multiple sites allocated for development in the MLP that lie within 400m of the ppSPA boundary. As such, the following policies are brought forward for appropriate assessment:

- S2 (Spatial Strategy)
- H1 (Housing Allocations)
- H8 (Accommodation for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople)
- SUE3 (Land at Berry Hill)

6. Appropriate Assessment

6.1 Atmospheric Pollution

It has long been established that nitrogen is an essential element for all living organisms and is the main growth-limiting nutrient in terrestrial plants. Consequently, it is known that plants are highly sensitive to changes in concentration of available nitrogen. Gaseous nitrogen is highly unreactive, so plants principally depend on oxidised and reduced nitrogen (e.g. NO_x and NH₃). These forms of nitrogen are primarily linked to anthropogenic activities, with vehicle emissions being a major source of nitrogen oxides and, to a lesser extent, ammonia. The primary impact of increased dry / wet nitrogen deposition is a fertilisation effect, favouring plant species that are better adapted to assimilate bioavailable nitrogen. The resulting effect on botanical communities is often one of declining species richness and increasing abundance of more competitive species.

Effects of nitrogen on vegetation may be direct or indirect, while interacting with a host of abiotic and biotic factors, such as species-specific sensitivities. The primary fertilising effect of increased nitrogen deposition increases overall plant biomass. The growth of less competitive, more desirable, species is impeded by increased shading and the disappearance of bare ground. More competitive species are then able to encroach.

The primary route by which the Mansfield Local Plan could result in negative effects on the Sherwood Forest ppSPA is via an increase in traffic due to an increase in population. A link road is also suggested in Policy SUE2 (Land Off Jubilee Way) that may fall within the ppSPA as currently defined. However, it is over 200m from the nearest existing area of heathland within the ppSPA. There will also be an overall increase in employment development and housing via Policy S2 and associated policies. As such, there will generally be an increase in traffic flows in Mansfield district, although there are existing bus linkages from Mansfield to the business parks and also cycle routes that offer non-car modes of transport which are likely to provide an overall positive effect on air quality.

Table 6-1 summarises the existing roads that fall within 200m of the ppSPA, within, and adjacent to, Mansfield District.

Table 6-1 Sections of existing road that lie within 200m of Sherwood Forest ppSPA

Section of road	Relevance to the ppSPA
The A60 at Harlow and Thieves Woods	The A60 is one of the most frequently used roads in Mansfield District with local and county level traffic. It lies within 200m of areas of woodland within the ppSPA. The potential for impacts on those parts of the ppSPA that are primarily woodland and plantation are discussed below this table.
The A617 MARR at Rainworth Heath SSSI	The A617 is one of the most frequently used roads in Mansfield District with local and county level traffic. It lies within 200m of areas of woodland within the ppSPA, immediately to the east of Mansfield district in the vicinity of Rainworth Heath SSSI. The potential for impacts on those parts of the ppSPA that are primarily woodland and plantation are discussed below this table.
Jubilee Way South north of and west of Ransomwood Business Park / Ratcher Hill Quarry	Jubilee Way South is situated within 200m of a part of the ppSPA which was a working quarry until 2016. In the future, this area has plans to implement nature conservation improvements, including heathland habitat creation. Therefore, despite being contained within the ppSPA, the zone within 200m of Jubilee Way South does not constitute nesting or foraging habitat for nightjar or woodlark. Although there are plans to restore this area to heathland in the future there is no way of knowing whether the restored area will be used by nesting nightjar or woodlark and the presence of a road within 200m will not prevent the heathland restoration (there are many areas of functional heathland within 200m of roads across the country).
Eakring Road at Sherwood Forest Golf Course SSSI / restored Mansfield Colliery	Eakring Road carries very little traffic as it only leads to a small area of development (approximately 50 houses), the restored Mansfield Colliery (now green space and has

no official car park facilities), Mansfield Rugby Club, and the Sherwood Forest Golf Course which is also a SSSI.

Crown Farm Way	Crown Farm Way currently serves the Crown Farm Industrial estate and also links Pump Hollow Road/Violet Hill (A6117) with Clipstone Road East. The Mansfield Transport Study (Stage 2) predicts significant increases in traffic flows along Crown Farm Way, in relation to planned development. According to MAGIC there is no heathland within 200m of the roadside. Moreover, the policy for new allocation H1Mr (Land South of Clipstone Road East), which is to be accessed from Crown Farm Way, sets out requirements for pedestrian and cyclist connectivity, to support active transport in the local area. This will help to address impacts from traffic flows. This also applies to existing H1a allocation (from the adopted Local Plan) Clipstone Road East.
Newlands Road	Currently serves existing residential development, and thus carries only local traffic. Allocation H1Mr (Land South of Clipstone Road East) and existing H1a allocation (from the adopted Local Plan) Clipstone Road East are located to the north of this road but access is planned from Crown Farm Way. No likely significant increases in traffic; moreover, according to MAGIC there is no heathland within 200m of the roadside.
The A6191 (Southwell Road) north of Sherwood Oaks Business Park	There are areas of woodland within the ppSPA within 200m of this road at Ransomwood Business Park. Potential effects on woodland are therefore discussed below this table.
The A6075 at Peafield Plantation, between Mansfield Woodhouse and Warsop	The A6075 (Mansfield Woodhouse to Warsop) and A6075 (Warsop to Edwinstowe) are used mainly for local travel.
The A6075 between Warsop and Kings Clipstone past Windmill Plantation / Birklands West and Ollerton Corner	There are areas of woodland within the ppSPA within 200m of these roads. Potential effects on woodland are therefore discussed below this table.
The B6035 between Warsop and Edwinstowe past Windmill Plantation / Birklands West and Ollerton Corner	

In summary, therefore, there are areas of ppSPA heathland within 200m of some of the above roads, but these are narrow disturbed belts that would be unsuitable for nesting nightjar or woodlark and/or lie beyond the principal zone within which NO_x and ammonia due to the road will be concentrated. Neither nightjar or woodlark has highly specialised prey requirements, eating a wide range of insects; as such the evidence indicates that they forage in a wide range of habitats including heathland, early-stage plantation, deciduous woodland, rough pasture, arable land and grassland margins; wherever they can obtain a supply of insects (and seeds in the case of woodlark) of sufficient size. As such, the value of habitat for foraging will not be affected by the presence of any road within 200m. For this reason, the impact assessments for nightjar and woodlark have focussed on their nesting habitat, for which they do have very precise requirements.

There are several areas of ppSPA plantation or woodland which also lie within 200m of five of the aforementioned roads (The A60, the A617, the A6191 (Southwell Road), the A6075 and the B6035), and within 200m of the proposed new link road associated with Policy SUE2, that merit further consideration.

Whether any significant ecological effect will actually occur from increased nitrogen deposition depends on a wide range of factors, particularly site management. As identified in Table 5.1 the majority of the ppSPA within 200m of these roads is either:

- Permanent woodland (particularly next to the road) which is likely to be unsuitable habitat for nesting nightjar and woodlark, or

- Plantation woodland, which is felled and replanted on a regular cycle and therefore does provide suitable open habitat for these species on a temporary basis before the tree canopy is well-developed and the ground becomes unsuitable for nesting⁵⁵.

In the first case, the fact that neither nightjar nor woodlark will be present in the permanent woodland means that increased nitrogen deposition would not affect either bird species. In the second case, there are three elements that are very likely to prevent any adverse effects occurring on nightjar or woodlark as a result of an increase in nitrogen deposition:

- Firstly, the belt of permanent woodland next to the road is very likely to reduce dispersal of the emitted pollutants into the ppSPA⁵⁶ (or suitable nightjar/woodlark habitat area);
- Secondly, most of the time the emitted pollutants will deposit to semi-mature or mature plantation at a time when nightjar and woodlark will be absent; and
- Finally, the process of planting and felling the trees on a fifty to sixty year cycle, as well as plantation management (such as weed suppression), is likely to have a much greater and long-term effect on ground vegetation in this area (and therefore its suitability for use by nightjar and woodlark) than atmospheric nitrogen deposition.

For all these reasons it is considered that an adverse effect on the integrity of nightjar and woodlark populations in areas of plantation would not arise from air quality, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects.

The area of Ratcher Hill Quarry within 200m of Jubilee Road (South) and the area of the former Mansfield Colliery within 200m of the proposed Eakring Road to Crown Farm Way link road (associated with SUE2) do not currently support heathland but are proposed for heathland restoration. Since the sites have not yet been restored, and nightjar and woodlark do not nest in all areas of available heathland, it is impossible to know either the botanical composition or structure of the restored heathland, or whether nesting will occur in the restored areas. While it is possible that the botanical characteristics of the areas of new heathland within 200m of these roads may differ from those exhibited in the absence of such roads, it is equally possible no noticeable difference will arise since the botanical composition of a given area of newly created heathland is dictated by a wide range of factors, many of which (such as seed mix, sowing method, soil structure, soil type, soil chemistry, drainage and management) have a much greater effect on botanical composition and structure. Moreover, in order to minimise air quality issues generally, the Local Plan contains a series of policies aimed at minimising reliance on private cars and focussing on improving access to public transport overall and this will also benefit the ppSPA. Policies NE2, E2a and SUE2 also specifically require further project level assessment and mitigation to protect nightjar and woodlark populations.

Additionally, unrelated to any need to protect the ppSPA, Policies IN7 (Protecting and Improving the Sustainable Transport Network) and IN8 (Impact of Development on the Transport Network) and NE3 (Pollution and land instability) all set out a strong policy framework for Mansfield Council to encourage and facilitate delivery and use of sustainable transport and public transport, which given the potential for reduction in reliance on private vehicles could reduce emissions across the local transport network. Equally, Policy CC1 (Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Generation) promotes sustainable energy generation which may contribute towards improving the overall background air quality in the district.

Considering the information above and existing positive policies to improve local air quality and reduce private vehicle use, it is considered that the Mansfield Local Plan (alone and in combination) will not affect the pollution-sensitive habitats on which the ppSPA birds depend.

⁵⁵ Most plantations are managed on a 50-60 year cycle of felling and replanting as part of standard Forestry Commission practice. Generally, new plantation is suitable for nesting woodlark for the first six years before the tree growth becomes too dense and the birds move elsewhere to nest, while new plantation is suitable for nightjar for its first twenty years.

⁵⁶ Xu, Y. (2008) Modelling the effects of roadside trees, results and conclusions. Report for the London Borough of Harrow. AEA, Harwell, Oxon.

Air pollution removal by urban trees and shrubs in the United States (2006). David J. Nowak, Daniel E. Crane, Jack C. Stevens. Urban Forestry & Urban Greening 4 115–123

Freer-Smith, P.H., Beckett, K.P. and Taylor, G. (2005). Deposition velocities to *Sorbus aria*, *Acer campestre*, *Populus deltoides* x *trichocarpa* 'Beaupre', *Pinus nigra* and x *Cupressocyparis leylandii* for coarse, fine and ultra-fine particles in the urban environment. Environmental Pollution 133, 157–167.

6.2 Recreational Pressure

6.2.1 Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC

The conservation objectives for this SAC include avoiding deterioration of habitats and species for which the site was designated and avoiding disturbance of these species. According to the condition report for the Birklands and Bilhaugh SSSI, most of the areas also within the SAC designation are classified as 'unfavourable but recovering', except for Unit 9 which is recorded as 'unfavourable no change'. Unfavourable conditions at unit 12 is attributable to recreational pressure with the condition assessment noting that areas of the woodland and heathland have been replaced with areas of hardstanding, buildings and surfaced walkways. A new visitor centre has now been built at Sherwood Country Park and National Nature Reserve (NNR) near the cricket ground in Edwinstowe and to create a new visitor attraction designed and delivered by a consortium including the RSPB. The location of the new visitors' centre and new car park are located outside, but adjacent to, the SAC. Natural England's Supplementary Advice notes that the SAC is sensitive to high levels of recreational pressure. It states that *"The condition of the soil surrounding such [ancient] trees will affect their roots, associated mycorrhizal fungi and growth. Plants have difficulty in compacted soil because the mineral grains are pressed together, leaving little space for air and water which are essential for root growth. Unless carefully managed, activities such as construction, forestry management and trampling by grazing livestock and human feet during recreational activity may all contribute to excessive soil compaction around ancient trees. Parts of this SAC are undergoing recovery from historic high levels of recreational trampling"*

People straying from paths can cause ground compaction and trampling of vegetation and micro-habitats important for supporting invertebrates and fungi. Most paths are within close proximity to the visitor's centre, the Major Oak (a popular attraction) and the car park. Measures (e.g. signage, fencing) have already been put in place to keep people on designated paths around these areas, minimising harmful impact on the woodlands.

A Footprint Ecology Report⁵⁷ assessed the zone of influence for recreational pressure on the SAC as 8.9km defined by the straight-line distance from home to interview location within the SAC of walkers and dog walkers carrying out a day visit from home (and who visit at least once a month). Within that 8.9km zone of influence the report notes that there will be a differential effect relating to distance, such that new development closer to the SAC/NNR is likely to result in proportionally greater impact. This zone of influence covers much of the district. Residential site allocations (including SUE1 Pleasley Hill Farm) beyond this distance would not lead to adverse impacts. The following residential allocations without extant planning permission, totalling 3,707 net new dwellings, lie within the zone of influence:

Table 6-2 Residential allocations within the recreational Zol for Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC

Site Reference	Site Name	No. of Dwellings	Approx. Distance to the Birklands & Bilhaugh SAC (km)
H1Mc	Bellamy Road	40	8.9km NE
H1Mf	Land off Holly Road	16	6.4km NE
H1Mg	Former Abbey Primary School	62	7.7km NE
H1Mj	Land north of Peafield Lane	330	5.6km NE
H1Mk	Land south of Peafield Lane	254	5.7km NE
H1Mp	Shirland Drive Boiler House	7	8.2km NE
H1Mq	Land off Helmsley Road	170	8.3km N
H1Mr	Land south of Clipstone Road East	315	4.9km NE
H1Mt	Land between Old Mill Lane and New Mill Lane	370	6.4km NE
H1Mu	Bridleways Guest House and Holiday Homes	5	5.2km NE
H1Mu	Toothill Lane Car Park (south)	11	8.9km NE
H1Mw	Former Sherwood Hall School	52	7.25km NE
H1Mx	Clipstone Miners Welfare (Lido Ground)	130	4.7km NE
H1WPb	Land off Netherfield Lane	107	3.2km E
H1WPc	Melville Court	13	3.0km E
H1WPd	Land south east of Mansfield Road	295	4.2km E
SUE2	Land off Jubilee Way	800	6.2km NE
SUE3	Land at Berry Hill	730	8.6km NE

⁵⁷ Sauders, P., Lake, S. and Liley, D. "Birklands & Bilhaugh SAC Recreational Impact Report" Available at https://www.newark-sherwooddc.gov.uk/sites/default/files/pdf_imports/ENV-4-Final-Birklands-%26-Bilhaugh-SAC-RIA.pdf Accessed [25/08/2026]

Based on the prior mentioned Footprint Ecology report, the majority (76%) of respondents had visited Sherwood Forest before; this is similar to previous survey results. This highlights that it is a popular tourist destination. The SAC has been a key location for visitors in the Country Park largely due to the presence of the visitor centre near to the SAC. Although the Country Park is a popular visitor destination for the region, there is no indication that visitor pressure is currently damaging the interest of the SAC or that it is expected to become unmanageable in the near future.

Sherwood Forest Country Park has well established footpaths, and a majority of visitors don't stray from them. Although a popular reason for visiting the Sherwood Country Park is the 'forest', a large portion of people took in the Major Oak during their visit, with 8% of visitors citing it as their primary reason to visit the site, indicating that most people visit key attractions accessed from established paths. It is noted that the RSPB announced in June of this year that the Major Oak has died. It is unclear at this time to what extent this will alter visitor behaviour on the site going forwards.

The most damaging activity recreational visitors could undertake regarding the interest features of the SAC is off-track recreation involving high ground-pressure such as heavy footfall activities (e.g. paintballing) or those involving vehicles. This is highly unlikely given that the main recreational activity permitted within the country park is walking. Horse riding is also permitted but only on designated bridleways.

Moreover, the residents of Mansfield district have access to a good choice of accessible woodlands outside the SAC and other areas of nearby natural green space with visitor facilities (e.g. café and toilets). Many of these are closer to Mansfield district residents than the Sherwood Forest Country Park. Examples of nearby accessible woodland and heathland include⁵⁸:

- Spa Ponds Nature Reserve in Forest Town between Mansfield and Clipstone
- Oxclose Wood near to the Mansfield Woodhouse train station
- Shirebrook Wood west of Sookholme, accessed from Longster Lane
- Shining Cliff Plantation, High Oakham, south-west Mansfield
- Cauldwell Plantation and Stonehills Plantation (south of Shining Cliff Plantation in Ashfield District)
- Black Scotch Plantation/Ponds Plantation/Lichfield Wood within and adjacent to Berry Hill Park
- Oak Tree Heath Nature Reserve
- Woods surrounding and north of Warsop Vale
- Woods west of Church Warsop; and
- Other wooded green corridors along rivers and restored mineral railway lines (some with heathland) within easy walking distances of the district's urban areas.

Examples of large natural areas with visitor facilities (other than the Sherwood Forest Country Park within the SAC) located within easy reach of Mansfield residents include:

- Vicar Water Country Park
- Pleasely Pit Country Park
- Newstead Abbey; and
- Sherwood Pines Forest Park

Natural England has previously indicated to Mansfield District Council that the Sherwood Forest Country Park (incorporating the SAC) is a major regional attraction. Within this context, the prior relocation of the visitor centre in Newark & Sherwood District is expected to result in reduced in visitor activity within the more sensitive areas of the SAC part of the Country Park.

In addition to Mansfield district, the recreational catchment includes areas of Bassetlaw, Newark and Sherwood, and Bolsover District Council areas. The Bassetlaw Local Plan allocates 3,377 new homes; however, no sites are allocated within the recreational catchment of the SAC. The Newark and Sherwood Local Plan allocates 732

⁵⁸ <http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/visiting-woods/>. This weblink (last accessed 31/01/18) contains interactive mapping displaying the location of some of these woodlands. Others are depicted on Appendix B.4.

dwellings and 27 pitches within the ZOI. The Bolsover Local Plan was adopted in 2020 and aims to deliver 5,168 dwellings over the plan period. However, only the far eastern area of Bolsover District falls within the SAC ZOI. A review of policies maps indicates that there are a limited number of allocations within the ZOI buffer area, with only one allocation for 54 units in Shirebrook.

Mansfield District Council has no control over access within, or the management of, the SAC. However, incidentally to any need to protect the SAC, the Council is creating and promoting a strong green infrastructure network through Policy IN2 (Green Infrastructure) and the Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity supplementary planning document (SPD). Outside of Mansfield town itself, the district is largely rural and also has very good access to natural areas within the urban area, including green corridors and other areas of accessible forestry, as illustrated earlier in this section.

The Council, through the Local Plan, is making a strong contribution towards the protection and enhancement of integrated green infrastructure networks. Policy IN4 (Creation of Community Open Space and Outdoor Sports Provision) requires development to provide new on-site open space or off-site contributions in accordance with this assessment and the Mansfield Green Space Standard which includes improving access to natural green space. Generally, this will ensure an adequate supply of accessible semi-natural greenspace within its own boundaries. **Given the potential for new development arising from the MLP to result in increased recreational pressure it is recommended that the following or equivalent text be added to policy NE2 or other appropriate local plan policy: ‘Net new housing development within an 8.9km radius of Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC must provide appropriate mitigation for recreational pressure, including Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANGS) where appropriate, either on-site or through an off-site solution. Where required, SANGS shall be designed to be present and functional in perpetuity (typically 80 years) to relieve recreational pressure on the SAC. Their quantity and quality shall be developed and agreed in conjunction with the District Council and Natural England. In circumstances where site characteristics mean on site SANGS is not possible, bespoke off-site solutions will be considered provided they satisfy the District Council and Natural England that they are contributing to relieving recreational pressure on the SAC’.** This would be consistent with the approach taken in the Newark & Sherwood Site Allocations Local Plan and its HRA.

With this amendment made, it is concluded that, with the inclusion of the above recommendation, an adverse effect on the integrity of the SAC will not arise (either alone or in combination) via recreation due to new housing in Mansfield district.

6.2.2 Sherwood Forest ppSPA

Disturbance of ground nesting birds by people and dogs can leave nests vulnerable to predation and can influence nesting behaviour⁵⁹ and, as a result, breeding success. Recreational pressures on areas supporting nightjar and woodlark are likely to increase with increasing numbers of residential developments. A proportion of new residents will likely pursue recreational activities on nearby areas of green and open space including open countryside, heathlands and woodlands within and surrounding these areas.

A long-term (10 year) study on nightjar habitat in the Sherwood Forest area compared a heavily visited area (containing a café, shops, an adventure ropes course and 28.3 km of walking and cycling tracks) with a more lightly visited area (containing no amenities and only 3.3km of tracks). The study found that overall, nightjar density was significantly lower and there were significantly fewer breeding pairs in the heavily disturbed habitat compared with the less disturbed habitat, although, average breeding success per pair, in terms of eggs and fledglings produced, was not significantly different between the two sections (heavily visited and lightly visited) across years, either because of different behavioural tolerance levels to disturbance or through confounding effects due to population density. The study concluded that, while male birds were largely unaffected, females more actively avoid settling in heavily disturbed areas. The report concluded that managing access patterns by the public to heathland areas during critical nesting periods could reduce the effects of disturbance. Previous studies have suggested that the control of dogs and restriction of access to dog walkers would be particularly important considerations. The research also reported a recent model that predicted that the extent to which

⁵⁹ Underhill-Day, J.C. (2005). A literature review of urban effects on lowland heaths and their wildlife, Report No. 624. English Nature, Peterborough.

Murison, G. (2002) The impact of human disturbance on the breeding success of nightjar *Caprimulgus europaeus* on heathlands in south Dorset, England. English Nature, Peterborough.

Ruddock, M. & Whitfield, D.P. (2007) A Review of Disturbance Distances in Selected Bird Species, A report from Natural Research (Projects) Ltd to Scottish Natural Heritage

Miller, Scott G., Richard L. Knight, and Clinton K. Miller. "Wildlife responses to pedestrians and dogs." *Wildlife Society Bulletin* (2001): 124-132.

visitors spread out across a site may have a greater negative impact on populations of ground-nesting birds than simple visitor numbers. The research concluded by stating that creating an increased number of potential nest sites for female nightjars (i.e. habitat areas) may also help reduce the effects of recreational disturbance, particularly if they are in areas where human access can be managed to keep disturbance levels low⁶⁰.

The previously mentioned visitor survey data for Birklands & Bilhaugh indicates that visitor origins are spread over a large geographic area. Residents of Mansfield are a significant source of visitors, as are residents of Nottingham, which is unsurprising given these are the two largest settlements in Nottinghamshire. Other than the Country Park (which is not likely to be representative of the rest of the ppSPA since it is a 'showpiece' site) survey results from the Mansfield District Citizens Panel (Sept 2010) suggested that Clipstone Forest, Vicar Water and Sherwood Pines are the most visited heathland/forest sites. Although that survey is now over ten years old, it is unlikely that residents' behaviour patterns have fundamentally changed and these remain very popular sites. Many of these results were from a geographically uniform distribution of respondents (in other words, people did not necessarily visit the area closest to them), suggesting that sites with visitor facilities (e.g. car parks, café, toilets) generally attract people from all areas of the district. More local sites without visitor facilities such as Strawberry Hills Heath SSSI and Rainworth Heath, Birklands and Budby Heath were visited in lower numbers and generally by residents who live near these areas.

While trampling effects on the SAC are likely to be avoided through relocation of the visitor centre (see earlier), an increase in recreational activity may increase disturbance of nesting nightjar and woodlark in heathland and plantation clearings in absence of counter-balancing site management, access management or other mitigation.

As already discussed in the section on Birklands & Bilhaugh SAC, Mansfield district has numerous large accessible woodlands (including areas with visitor facilities and those without) which are publicly accessible but lie outside the SAC or ppSPA. There are also other large areas of natural green space accessible to the public outside the ppSPA boundary, namely along rivers and restored mineral railway lines. Larger natural green spaces also include nine Local Nature Reserves, as well as former collieries restored to green space (e.g. Oxclose Wood, Shirebrook open space, restored Welbeck colliery in Meden Vale, Vicar Water Country Park, etc.).

These areas of greenspace are well distributed around Mansfield district and many of them are in close proximity to the Mansfield urban area (the focus of the district's population). Many of them are also already connected via major trails or public rights of way. In terms of overall quantity, more of the accessible natural greenspace and woodland within Mansfield district is located outside the ppSPA designation than within it. Mansfield district is therefore in a good position to join up these areas of accessible natural greenspace (woodland and other habitats) and expand upon them in identified areas of deficiency to provide a strong GI network including accessible woodlands and heathlands outside the ppSPA but within easy access to residents.

The Local Plan includes a policy on green and blue infrastructure (IN2) aimed at protecting and enhancing green infrastructure (GI) network and core areas and promoting new GI linkages. In addition to the existing commitment to a strong GI network, new applications for large housing developments (over 50 dwellings) located within 400m of parts of the ppSPA likely to be used by nightjar and woodlark may need to include an appropriate bespoke mitigation package for recreational pressure on the ppSPA, depending on whether existing disturbance levels are low and access to alternative semi-natural green infrastructure is limited.

Policy NE2 (Biodiversity and Geodiversity) is the policy which would also apply to the Sherwood Forest ppSPA as it would afford protection to nightjar and woodlark habitat wherever they occur. Policy NE2 states that '*Where development is proposed within 400 meters of the non-designated Sherwood Forest ppSPA, a risk based approach, as set out in Natural England's Advice Note to Local Planning Authorities, will be adopted to all planning applications in relation to the possible potential Special Protection Area for the Sherwood Forest region*'.

Policy NE2 therefore provides the policy hook for impacts on the ppSPA to be taken into account in planning decisions and along with the aforementioned policy on green and blue infrastructure (IN2), implementation of the Mansfield District Council Green Infrastructure Study and the existing Green Infrastructure & Biodiversity SPD, will ensure that no adverse effect on the integrity of the ppSPA arises through recreational pressure.

In the long term, if Sherwood Forest is formally proposed as an SPA (pSPA), it is considered that the visitor evidence base would benefit from improvement. In that event, the Nottinghamshire authorities should consider jointly commissioning bespoke visitor surveys of the main access points across the pSPA (in addition to the Sherwood Forest Country Park) to determine which parts of the pSPA are visited most heavily, clarify what

⁶⁰ Lowe, A., A. C. Rogers, and K. L. Durrant. 2014. Effect of human disturbance on long-term habitat use and breeding success of the European Nightjar, *Caprimulgus europaeus*. Avian Conservation and Ecology 9(2): 6. <http://dx.doi.org/10.5751/ACE-00690-090206>

proportion of visitors come from each district and identify potential access management (or other management) interventions on a parcel-by-parcel basis. At the moment, the data for the Sherwood Forest Country Park is relatively good but the data for other parts of the ppSPA are variable. It is recognised that this is not something that Mansfield District Council would implement unilaterally but would need to involve all the relevant Nottinghamshire councils. It is also recognised that this would only be appropriate if a formal pSPA or SPA designation is made.

It can be concluded that Policy NE2 and Policy IN2 between them provide an adequate policy framework in place to enable a proportionate response to the protection of the nightjar and woodlark habitat in the ppSPA from recreational pressure (and thus avoiding an adverse effect on the integrity of the ppSPA), given that the ppSPA is not a formal designation and within the context of the large amount of existing accessible semi-natural greenspace, outside the ppSPA area in Mansfield. They do this by developing and promoting of a strong managed green infrastructure network through the Green Infrastructure & Biodiversity SPD facilitated by Policy IN2 and through ensuring specific large developments close to the ppSPA provide bespoke mitigation as necessary.

6.3 Water Quantity, Level and Flow

The main way in which the MLP may impact upon the water level in Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC and Sherwood Forest ppSPA is through abstraction of groundwater from Sherwood Sandstone Aquifer for the public water supply. If the regional water resources were sufficiently depleted, this would likely lead to a reduction in the water supply to the sites with knock-on effects on their plant and invertebrate communities. Notably, public water supply is only considered to be an issue where new housing will require increases to existing Environment Agency (EA) abstraction consents or the use of previously unexploited water sources. This is because existing consents have already undergone the EA's Review of Consents (RoC) process, which considers the Conservation Objectives of Habitats sites.

Severn Trent is responsible for providing drinking water throughout the district. This water is split between ground water sources, rivers and reservoirs. Water supplies in the Nottinghamshire zone come from a combination of local groundwater sources and links to the Strategic Grid zone (the name given by the water company to their largest supply zone, which covers an area from Derbyshire down to Gloucestershire). In Nottinghamshire, 80% of public supply is abstracted from the Sherwood Sandstone Aquifer, thus playing a strategic role in water use. The aquifer in Nottinghamshire is classified as 'over-abstracted' by the Environment Agency's (EA) Catchment Abstraction Management Strategies (CAMS March 2007), which means that further abstraction from the aquifer is unlikely to be permitted.

Without new investment, the Severn Trent Strategic Grid and Nottinghamshire zones face some significant supply shortfalls in the long term as a result of the need to reduce abstraction from unsustainable sources and the potential impacts of climate change which could by themselves result in increased drought and a lowering of water levels in the sandstone aquifer. These two zones will therefore require new sources of water supply. Severn Trent Water's strategy for the Nottinghamshire zone, as reflected in their adopted Water Resource Management Plan (2024), which takes the effects of climate change into account, is based around reducing leakage and demand for water, and relying more on water transfer from the Strategic Grid zone.

The main new supply schemes for this zone are therefore to provide major treated water links to the Strategic Grid zone which will allow for a more flexible supply system better able to transfer water from that zone into Nottinghamshire in response to drought conditions (such as might arise more frequently due to climate change). Increased abstraction from the Sherwood Sandstone Aquifer (beyond current licenced levels) is not part of the future water supply solution and there is therefore no reason to expect any lowering of the groundwater levels in this area and thus any change in water levels within the designated sites.

Given this it can be concluded that the MLP will not result in adverse effects on Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC and Sherwood Forest ppSPA due to changes in water quantity, level and flow, either alone or in combination.

6.4 Urbanisation

Development within 400 m of Sherwood Forest ppSPA may need to undergo appropriate assessment depending on their quantum and nature. The following sites within 400m of the ppSPA are designated for residential or mixed-use development:

Table 6-3 Residential and mixed use allocations within 400 m of Sherwood Forest ppSPA

Site Reference	Site Name	Land Use type	No. of Dwellings	Approx. Distance to the Sherwood Forest ppSPA (km)
H1Mc	Bellamy Road	Residential	40	0.5km NE
H1Mp	Shirland Drive Boiler House	Residential	7	0.2km S
H1Mq	Land off Helmsley Road	Residential	170	0.24km NE
H1Mr	Land south of Clipstone Road East	Residential	315	Partially within ppSPA
H1Mu	Bridleways Guest House and Holiday Homes	Residential	5	0.1km W
H1WPd	Land south east of Mansfield Road	Residential	295	0.3km SE
SUE2	Land off Jubilee Way	SUE	800	Partially within ppSPA
SUE3	Land at Berry Hill	SUE	730	Partially within ppSPA

Natural and man-made barriers can reduce the impact of urbanisation within 400 m by casual access. For example, where a large river or motorway is between the development and the Habitats sites, impacts from urbanisation are unlikely to occur. Policy NE2 requires that development within 400 metres of the non-designated Sherwood Forest ppSPA adopt a risk based approach, as set out in Natural England's Advice Note to Local Planning Authorities. This approach⁶¹ states that plans and proposals should be accompanied by an additional and robust assessment of the likely impacts arising from the proposals on breeding nightjar and woodlark in the Sherwood Forest area. This should ideally cover the potential direct, indirect and cumulative impacts which may include, but may not be limited to, the following;

- disturbance to breeding birds from people, their pets and traffic
- loss, fragmentation and/or damage to breeding and/or feeding habitat
- bird mortality arising from domestic pets and/or predatory mammals and birds
- bird mortality arising from road traffic and/or wind turbines (although nightjar and woodlark are not at high collision risk compared to other bird species)
- pollution and/or nutrient enrichment of breeding habitats

Even for non-residential development (or development without turbines) it may be necessary to time construction to take place outside the nesting season if noise levels at the ppSPA (where nightjar and woodlark have been recorded) cannot be rendered non-disturbing through mitigation measures or visual screens. With the provision of the policy text within the Local Plan, it can be concluded that no adverse effects on Sherwood Forest ppSPA will result from urbanisation.

7. Conclusions & Recommendations

This HRA assessed the potential implications of the policies and site allocations included in the Mansfield Local Plan on Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC and Sherwood Forest ppSPA.

Following the Test of Likely Significant Effects, the following plan policies were found to have potential likely significant effects:

- S2 (Spatial Strategy)
- H1 (Housing Allocations)
- H8 (Accommodation for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople)
- E2 (Sites Allocated as New Employment Areas)
- RT6 (Retail and Leisure Allocations).

⁶¹ <https://www.mansfield.gov.uk/downloads/file/482/natural-england-s-advice-notes-on-the-sherwood-ppspa-2014> [Accessed 26/08/2026]

- SUE1 (Pleasley Hill Farm)
- SUE2 (Land off Jubilee Way)
- SUE3 (Land at Berry Hill)

Appropriate Assessment was undertaken of potential linking impact pathways that could not be screened out and were identified to potentially result in an adverse effect on the integrity of the SAC or the ppSPA. Appropriate Assessment was undertaken regarding the following:

- Atmospheric Pollution on:
 - Sherwood Forest ppSPA
- Recreational Pressure on:
 - Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC
 - Sherwood Forest ppSPA
- Water Quantity level and Flow on:
 - Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC
 - Sherwood Forest ppSPA

7.1 Atmospheric Pollution

There are areas of ppSPA heathland within 200m of roads in proximity to Sherwood Forest ppSPA, but these are narrow disturbed belts that would be unsuitable for nesting nightjar or woodlark and/or lie beyond the principal zone within which NO_x and ammonia due to the road will be concentrated. The value of habitat for foraging will not be affected by the presence of any road within 200m. For this reason, the impact assessments for nightjar and woodlark have focussed on their nesting habitat, for which they do have very precise requirements.

There are several areas of ppSPA plantation or woodland which also lie within 200m of major roads (The A60, the A617, the A6191 (Southwell Road), the A6075 and the B6035), and within 200m of the proposed new link road associated with Policy SUE2, that merit further consideration.

Whether any significant ecological effect will actually occur from increased nitrogen deposition depends on a wide range of factors, particularly site management. The majority of the ppSPA within 200m of these roads is either:

- Permanent woodland (particularly next to the road) which is likely to be unsuitable habitat for nesting nightjar and woodlark, or
- Plantation woodland, which is felled and replanted on a regular cycle and therefore does provide suitable open habitat for these species on a temporary basis before the tree canopy is well-developed and the ground becomes unsuitable for nesting⁶².

In the first case, the fact that neither nightjar nor woodlark will be present in the permanent woodland means that increased nitrogen deposition would not affect either bird species. In the second case, there are three elements that are very likely to prevent any adverse effects occurring on nightjar or woodlark as a result of an increase in nitrogen deposition:

- Firstly, the belt of permanent woodland next to the road is very likely to reduce dispersal of the emitted pollutants into the ppSPA⁶³ (or suitable nightjar/woodlark habitat area);

⁶² Most plantations are managed on a 50-60 year cycle of felling and replanting as part of standard Forestry Commission practice. Generally, new plantation is suitable for nesting woodlark for the first six years before the tree growth becomes too dense and the birds move elsewhere to nest, while new plantation is suitable for nightjar for its first twenty years.

⁶³ Xu, Y. (2008) Modelling the effects of roadside trees, results and conclusions. Report for the London Borough of Harrow. AEA, Harwell, Oxon.

Air pollution removal by urban trees and shrubs in the United States (2006). David J. Nowak, Daniel E. Crane, Jack C. Stevens. Urban Forestry & Urban Greening 4 115–123

Freer-Smith, P.H., Beckett, K.P. and Taylor, G. (2005). Deposition velocities to *Sorbus aria*, *Acer campestre*, *Populus deltoides* x *trichocarpa* 'Beaupre', *Pinus nigra* and x *Cupressocyparis leylandii* for coarse, fine and ultra-fine particles in the urban environment. Environmental Pollution 133, 157–167.

- Secondly, most of the time the emitted pollutants will deposit to semi-mature or mature plantation at a time when nightjar and woodlark will be absent; and
- Finally, the process of planting and felling the trees on a fifty to sixty year cycle, as well as plantation management (such as weed suppression), is likely to have a much greater and long-term effect on ground vegetation in this area (and therefore its suitability for use by nightjar and woodlark) than atmospheric nitrogen deposition.

Considering the information above and existing positive policies to improve local air quality and reduce private vehicle use, it is considered that an adverse effect on the integrity of nightjar and woodlark populations would not arise from air quality, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects.

7.2 Recreational Pressure

A new visitor centre has now been built at Sherwood Country Park and National Nature Reserve (NNR) near the cricket ground in Edwinstowe and to create a new visitor attraction designed and delivered by a consortium including the RSPB. The location of the new visitor's centre and new car park are located outside, but adjacent to the SAC.

The SAC has been a key location for visitors in the Country Park largely due to the presence of the visitor centre near to the SAC. Although the Country Park is a popular visitor destination for the region, there is no indication that visitor pressure is currently damaging the interest of the SAC or that it is expected to become unmanageable in the near future.

The most damaging activity recreational visitors could undertake regarding the interest features of the SAC is off-track recreation involving high ground-pressure such as heavy footfall activities (e.g. paintballing) or those involving vehicles. This is highly unlikely given that the main recreational activity permitted within the country park is walking. Horse riding is also permitted but only on designated bridleways.

Moreover, the residents of Mansfield district have access to a good choice of accessible woodlands outside the SAC and other areas of nearby natural green space with visitor facilities (e.g. café and toilets). Many of these are closer to Mansfield district residents than the Sherwood Forest Country Park. Examples of nearby accessible woodland and heathland include⁶⁴:

- Spa Ponds Nature Reserve in Forest Town between Mansfield and Clipstone
- Oxclose Wood near to the Mansfield Woodhouse train station
- Shirebrook Wood west of Sookholme, accessed from Longster Lane
- Shining Cliff Plantation, High Oakham, south-west Mansfield
- Cauldwell Plantation and Stonehills Plantation (south of Shining Cliff Plantation in Ashfield District)
- Black Scotch Plantation/Ponds Plantation/Lichfield Wood within and adjacent to Berry Hill Park
- Oak Tree Heath Nature Reserve
- Woods surrounding and north of Warsop Vale
- Woods west of Church Warsop; and
- Other wooded green corridors along rivers and restored mineral railway lines (some with heathland) within easy walking distances of the district's urban areas.

Examples of large natural areas with visitor facilities (other than the Sherwood Forest Country Park within the SAC) located within easy reach of Mansfield residents include:

- Vicar Water Country Park
- Pleasely Pit Country Park
- Newstead Abbey; and
- Sherwood Pines Forest Park

⁶⁴ <http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/visiting-woods/>. This weblink (last accessed 31/01/18) contains interactive mapping displaying the location of some of these woodlands. Others are depicted on Appendix B.4.

Mansfield District Council has no control over access within, or the management of, the SAC. However, incidentally to any need to protect the SAC, the Council is creating and promoting a strong green infrastructure network through Policy IN2 (Green Infrastructure) and the Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity supplementary planning document (SPD). Outside of Mansfield town itself, the district is largely rural and also has very good access to natural areas within the urban area, including green corridors and other areas of accessible forestry. The Council, through the Local Plan, is making a strong contribution towards the protection and enhancement of integrated green infrastructure networks. Policy IN4 (Creation of Community Open Space and Outdoor Sports Provision) requires development to provide new on-site open space or off-site contributions in accordance with this assessment and the Mansfield Green Space Standard which includes improving access to natural green space. Generally, this will ensure an adequate supply of accessible semi-natural greenspace within its own boundaries. Given the potential for new development arising from the MLP to result in increased recreational pressure it is recommended that the following or equivalent text be added to policy NE2 or other appropriate local plan policy: *'Public open space provided in connection within new development (including allocations) in settlements within a 8.9km radius of Birklands & Bilhaugh Special Area of Conservation, shall be designed to reflect the need to provide SANGS in perpetuity to relieve pressure on the SAC. Where SANGS are proposed, their quantity and quality shall be developed and agreed in conjunction with the District Council and Natural England. In circumstances where site characteristics mean on site SANGS is not possible, bespoke off-site solutions will be considered provided they satisfy the District Council and Natural England that they are contributing to relieving recreational pressure on the SAC'*.

It is concluded that, with the inclusion of the above recommendation, an adverse effect on the integrity of the SAC will not arise (either alone or in combination) via recreation due to new housing in Mansfield district.

Policy NE2 (Biodiversity and Geodiversity) is the policy which would also apply to the Sherwood Forest ppSPA as it would afford protection to nightjar and woodlark habitat wherever they occur. Policy NE2 states that *'Where development is proposed within 400 meters of the non-designated Sherwood Forest ppSPA, a risk based approach, as set out in Natural England's Advice Note to Local Planning Authorities, will be adopted to all planning applications in relation to the possible potential Special Protection Area for the Sherwood Forest region'*.

It can be concluded that Policy NE2 and Policy IN2 between them provide an adequate policy framework in place to enable a proportionate response to the protection of the nightjar and woodlark habitat in the ppSPA from recreational pressure (and thus avoiding an adverse effect on the integrity of the ppSPA), given that the ppSPA is not a formal designation and within the context of the large amount of existing accessible semi-natural greenspace, outside the ppSPA area in Mansfield. They do this by developing and promoting of a strong managed green infrastructure network through the Green Infrastructure & Biodiversity SPD facilitated by Policy IN2 and through ensuring specific large developments close to the ppSPA provide bespoke mitigation as necessary.

Therefore, it can be concluded that, with the recommendation suggested above, the Plan will provide sufficient protective policy framework to ensure no adverse effects on the integrity of these sites with regards to increased recreational pressure as a result of the MLP.

7.3 Water Quantity Level and Flow

The main way in which the MLP may impact upon the water level in Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC and Sherwood Forest ppSPA is through abstraction of groundwater from Sherwood Sandstone Aquifer for the public water supply. Severn Trent is responsible for providing drinking water throughout the district. This water is split between ground water sources, rivers and reservoirs. Water supplies in the Nottinghamshire zone come from a combination of local groundwater sources and links to the Strategic Grid zone. In Nottinghamshire, 80% of public supply is abstracted from the Sherwood Sandstone Aquifer, thus playing a strategic role in water use. The aquifer in Nottinghamshire is classified as 'over-abstracted' by the Environment Agency's (EA) Catchment Abstraction Management Strategies (CAMS March 2007), which means that further abstraction from the aquifer is unlikely to be permitted. The main new supply schemes for this zone are therefore to provide major treated water links to the Strategic Grid zone which will allow for a more flexible supply system better able to transfer water from that zone into Nottinghamshire in response to drought conditions (such as might arise more frequently due to climate change). Increased abstraction from the Sherwood Sandstone Aquifer (beyond current licenced levels) is not part of the future water supply solution and there is therefore no reason to expect any lowering of the groundwater levels in this area and thus any change in water levels within the designated sites. Given this it can be concluded that the MLP will not result in adverse effects on Birklands and Bilhaugh SAC and Sherwood Forest ppSPA due to changes in water quantity, level and flow, either alone or in combination.

7.4 Urbanisation

Development within 400 m of Sherwood Forest ppSPA may need to undergo appropriate assessment depending on their quantum and nature. The following sites within 400m of the ppSPA are designated for residential or mixed-use development:

Site Reference	Site Name	Land Use type	No. of Dwellings	Approx. Distance to the Sherwood Forest ppSPA (km)
H1Mc	Bellamy Road	Residential	40	0.5km NE
H1Mp	Shirland Drive Boiler House	Residential	7	0.2km S
H1Mq	Land off Helmsley Road	Residential	170	0.24km NE
H1Mr	Land south of Clipstone Road East	Residential	315	Partially within ppSPA
H1Mu	Bridleways Guest House and Holiday Homes	Residential	5	0.1km W
H1WPd	Land south east of Mansfield Road	Residential	295	0.3km SE
SUE2	Land off Jubilee Way	SUE	800	Partially within ppSPA
SUE3	Land at Berry Hill	SUE	730	Partially within ppSPA

Natural and man-made barriers can reduce the impact of urbanisation within 400 m by casual access. For example, where a large river or motorway is between the development and the Habitats sites, impacts from urbanisation are unlikely to occur. Policy NE2 requires that development within 400 metres of the non-designated Sherwood Forest ppSPA adopt a risk based approach, as set out in Natural England's Advice Note to Local Planning Authorities. This approach⁶⁵ states that plans and proposals should be accompanied by an additional and robust assessment of the likely impacts arising from the proposals on breeding nightjar and woodlark in the Sherwood Forest area. This should ideally cover the potential direct, indirect and cumulative impacts which may include, but may not be limited to, the following:

- disturbance to breeding birds from people, their pets and traffic
- loss, fragmentation and/or damage to breeding and/or feeding habitat
- bird mortality arising from domestic pets and/or predatory mammals and birds
- bird mortality arising from road traffic and/or wind turbines
- pollution and/or nutrient enrichment of breeding habitats

With the provision of the policy text within the Local Plan, it can be concluded that no adverse effects on the integrity of Sherwood Forest ppSPA will result from urbanisation.

7.5 Status of Sherwood Forest ppSPA

It is noted that while no decision has been made about the future classification of parts of Sherwood Forest as a Special Protection Area (SPA) Natural England advise those affected Local Planning Authorities adopt a precautionary approach to ensure that reasonable and proportionate steps have been taken in order to avoid or minimise, as far as possible, any potential adverse effects from development on the breeding populations of nightjar and woodlark in the Sherwood Forest area. This will help to ensure that any future need for LPAs to comply with the provisions of the Habitats Regulations is met with a robust set of measures already in place.

Given the potential for Sherwood Forest to be designated as an SPA, it is recommended that the MLP should be reviewed should the status of Sherwood Forest ppSPA change. Policy IM1 sets conditions under which the council will consider a review or partial review of the MLP. While changes in the status of Sherwood Forest ppSPA could be considered under the listed circumstances, **it is recommended that this be clarified with the inclusion of "Changes to the status of Sherwood Forest ppSPA" to the list of conditions that may result in a partial review of the MLP in point 2 of policy IM1.**

⁶⁵ <https://www.mansfield.gov.uk/downloads/file/482/natural-england-s-advice-notes-on-the-sherwood-ppspa-2014> [Accessed 26/08/2026]

Appendix A Screening of Policy and Allocations

Table 7-1 LSE assessment of local plan policies

Policy Reference	Change to Policy	Test of Likely Significant Effects
S1 Presumption in favour of sustainable development	- The council will work proactively with applicants and other stakeholders to seek solutions to ensure that proposals contribute to sustainable development and can be approved wherever possible, and will contribute towards improvements to the economic, social and environmental conditions in Mansfield district. - Planning applications that accord with the policies in this Local Plan Review will be approved without delay, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. - If there are no policies relevant to the application or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out of date at the time of making the decision, then planning permission will be granted unless material considerations indicate otherwise – taking into account whether: - any adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework taken as a whole; or - the application of policies within the National Planning Policy Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed.	No likely significant effect. This is a broad policy in favour of sustainable development and requiring the council to undertake its responsibilities regarding planning permissions and implementation of this local plan. This policy does not in itself lead directly to any development. There are no impact pathways by which this policy change could impact Habitats sites.
S2 The spatial strategy	Most new development proposals are concentrated within the Mansfield urban area (including Rainworth, Pleasley and Clipstone) on brownfield sites, other under-utilised land and sustainable greenfield sites on the edge of the town. Development opportunities in the Mansfield urban area are focused, as far as possible, on locations which have good access to the MARR to improve connections with Greater Nottingham and the M1. Particular regeneration opportunities within and adjacent to Mansfield town centre will be a priority for delivery. The local development needs arising in Warsop Parish are much smaller. The majority of this growth is directed to the main town of Market Warsop with a lesser scale of development accommodated at. Limited growth is directed to the settlements of Church Warsop, Meden Vale, Warsop Vale and Spion Kop. Housing, commercial and retail developments during the period 2023 to 2043 aim to include: - Residential: 9,900 (minimum) new dwellings 90% or 8,910 (minimum) of these new homes will be within the Mansfield Area; and 10% or 990 (minimum) of these new homes will be within the Warsop Parish. - Employment: at least 41.06 ha of employment land	Likely significant effect. This policy sets the quantity of development for both residential and employment development within the district and as such has the potential to impact Habitats sites through the following pathways: - Atmospheric pollution - Recreational pressure - Water quantity, level and flow - Urbanisation

S3 Development in the Countryside

Land outside the Mansfield urban area and other settlement boundary is identified as countryside. Uses within the countryside where listed within this policy will be supported, subject to conditions set out in the below criteria.

- c. agricultural, including agricultural workers' dwellings;
- d. the re-use and adaptation of buildings for appropriate uses;
- e. the redevelopment of previously developed land;
- f. flood protection;
- g. the limited extension and replacement of dwellings;
- h. expansion of all types of business and enterprise in rural areas, through conversion and extension of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings;
- i. sites for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople in accordance with Policy H8;
- j. small-scale employment generating development or farm diversification;
- k. development by statutory undertakers or public utility providers;
- l. recreation and tourism;
- m. individual dwellings of exceptional design that are in accordance with the NPPF;
- n. community services and facilities meeting a proven local need;
- o. renewable energy in accordance with Policy CC1;
- p. transport infrastructure;
- q. employment land in accordance with the provisions of Policy E4; or
- r. sites which are physically well-related to a railway station or a settlement within which the station is located

Development in accordance with (a) to (o) above will be supported where:

- a. The appearance and character of the landscape is safeguarded and where practical enhanced;
- b. It does not undermine the physical and perceived separation between nearby settlements;
- c. It does not create or exacerbate ribbon development;
- d. It is well integrated with existing and the reuse of existing buildings has been explored where appropriate;
- e. It is accessible or will be made accessible;
- f. Takes account of agricultural land classifications, avoiding the best and most versatile land where possible.

No likely significant effect.

This is a development management policy and does not in itself lead directly to any development.

There are no impact pathways by which this policy change could impact Habitats sites.

S4 Urban regeneration

Development proposals which help reuse previously developed or other surplus or derelict land within the Mansfield and Market Warsop urban areas will be supported, particularly where they:

- a. bring forward high quality housing and mixed-use development;
- b. facilitate the upgrading of older/less popular areas of housing through selective refurbishment, demolition and replacement of properties;

No likely significant effect.

This is a development management policy and does not in itself lead directly to any development.

	c. provide economic development that diversifies the local economy; d. enhance townscape, civic spaces and heritage assets and their setting; e. improve the appearance of key gateways and other prominent sites by providing well designed landmark buildings which help create a positive image of the district and give it a sense of identity; f. improve resilience to flooding and climate change, taking opportunities to restore the river ecology of the River Maun; g. improve traffic arrangements, including the reduction of vehicle/pedestrian conflict and the barrier effect of the Mansfield town centre ring road; h. create stronger walking and cycling links including within the central residential and commercial areas of the town centres and where relevant to the green infrastructure, footpath and cycle networks; or i. create green and blue infrastructure, including open space and wildlife corridors.	There are no impact pathways by which this policy change could impact Habitats sites.
P1 Achieving High Quality Design	All new development proposals (including new build, conversions and extensions) will be supported where the applicants demonstrate that they have: a. undertaken a thorough and robust site and context analysis, identifying and responding to opportunities and constraints, including heritage and historic assets; and b. responded positively to the Mansfield's Place Making Principles and / or Building for a Healthy Life. For major development proposals, applicants will need to demonstrate that they have: a. involved local communities and key stakeholders, including the local planning authority, at an early stage in the development of design solutions by summarising the process of engagement, it's outcomes and how they informed the proposals; and b. engaged with and responded to the recommendations of a design review if / when a design review takes place. Where schemes are assessed as having performed well against Buildings for a Healthy Life or successor scheme, they will be deemed also to have accorded with Policies P2 and P3. Where possible all schemes within Mansfield town centre should be in accordance with the Mansfield Town Centre Masterplan and Mansfield Town Centre Design Code.	No likely significant effect. This is a development management policy and does not in itself lead directly to any development. There are no impact pathways by which this policy change could impact Habitats sites.
P2 Safe, healthy and attractive development	1. Development will be supported provided it creates a strong sense of place and is inclusive and accessible and appropriate to its context in terms of layout, scale, density, detailing and materials through: a. responding positively to existing patterns of development which contribute to the character of the area; b. retaining, integrating and enhancing existing built and natural features which contribute to creating a distinctive identity; c. taking opportunities to create new public open spaces, landmark buildings, landscape features (including street trees), views and public art as an integral part of the design;	No likely significant effect. This is a development management policy and does not in itself lead directly to any development. There are no impact pathways by which this policy change could impact Habitats sites.

	d. taking opportunities to promote physical activity; e. demonstrating how opportunities for crime have been minimised by designing according to Secure by Design principles (or equivalent); f. providing adequate and accessible external storage space for waste, recycling and bicycles; g. avoiding obtrusive skyline views; and h. ensuring that any tall buildings are appropriate to their location, are of high quality design and do not detract from key views or heritage assets and their settings, nor create unacceptable local environmental conditions. 2. Major developments must also demonstrate that: a. urban design parameters such as massing, building lines, scale and appearance have been used to achieve variation and they respond to existing site assets and features, incorporating heritage assets; b. place hierarchy has been achieved by making spatial variation clear through the use of design choices that help indicate transitions in the sense of place and levels of vibrancy across different zones of the scheme. 3. A health impact assessment checklist, as set out in Appendix 3, will be required for applications for: a. residential development of 50 dwellings or more; non-residential developments of 1,000 square metres or more; b. and other developments, including hot food takeaways, which are likely to have a significant impact on health and wellbeing. Where a significant adverse impact is identified through a Health Impact Assessment, measures to substantially mitigate the impact will be required.	
P3 Connected developments	1. Development will be supported provided it takes opportunities to encourage people to walk, cycle and use public transport through: a. creating a network of routes and spaces which are safe, attractive, convenient and easy for all people to understand and use; b. connecting to existing and proposed street and path networks, public transport and places where people want to go in obvious and direct ways, and where necessary improving existing routes and public transport facilities; c. connecting existing public/green/blue places through a well considered network of new places that complement existing provision in the area, ensuring residents and users of both the new and existing zones can enjoy the whole integrated public realm network; and d. designing new public/green/blue places with reference to existing local history, culture and heritage to celebrate local identity and to reinforce a sense of place.	No likely significant effect. This is a development management policy and does not in itself lead directly to any development. There are no impact pathways by which this policy change could impact Habitats sites.
P4 Comprehensive development	1. Development proposals will be supported provided they do not jeopardise the comprehensive delivery of allocated sites or sites with existing planning permission or their associated infrastructure, and in all cases must not: a. prejudice the development of adjoining land with longer term potential; or b. lead to piecemeal forms of development.	No likely significant effect. This is a development management policy and does not in itself lead directly to any development.

	2. For sites of five hectares or more, or 150 dwellings or more: a. a masterplan for the whole site should be submitted as part of any planning application in accordance with the masterplanning requirements within Appendix 7; and b. sites which may be developed in phases must demonstrate how the whole scheme will work as one ensuring that: i. open space contributes to the wider green infrastructure network; ii. any cumulative infrastructure requirements can be delivered; and iii. access arrangements are suitable for the total scale of development. 3. This policy also applies to sites in adjacent districts which straddle local authority boundaries	There are no impact pathways by which this policy change could impact Habitats sites.
P5 Climate change and new development	1. Development proposals will be supported where it can be satisfactorily demonstrated that it incorporates high standards of design and construction to reduce, mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change by incorporating the following measures, where practical and viable, having regard to the type, location and size of the proposal: a. sustainable design and layout that optimises energy performance. In new-build developments of 1 or more homes or 100+sqm floorspace, applications are encouraged to demonstrate how their designs have followed the energy hierarchy by pursuing the following steps into the design in the following order of priority: i. maximising energy efficiency (reducing energy demand) while avoiding overheating risks; ii. utilising clean and efficient energy supply, especially for heating; iii. Incorporating renewable and/or low carbon energy technologies or scope for their future provision; b. green / blue infrastructure, biodiversity and landscaping (which, in schemes that include a significant landscape element, should make reference to how the proposed green/blue features support the Local Nature Recovery Strategy and meet policy IN2); c. sustainable drainage and water management measures (which should achieve the Building Regulations Part G enhanced target of 110 litres/person/day water use unless unviable, and major schemes should also demonstrate how the proposed drainage scheme would be resilient to the future changes in rainfall); d. appropriate flexibility to allow for future adaptation; e. sustainable waste management facilities; f. sustainable transport and travel facilities; and g. construction designs and materials to minimise embodied carbon emissions. 2. Towards the achievement of points 1a.i, 1b, 1c, and 1d, major developments are strongly encouraged to demonstrate climate adaptation by taking into account the relevant future changes in climate conditions in a 2050 2° global warming scenario, in particular with regards to overheating risk, flood risk and infrastructure resilience.	No likely significant effect. This is a development management policy and does not in itself lead directly to any development. There are no impact pathways by which this policy change could impact Habitats sites.

	3. Proposals that would deliver significant improvements to the energy/carbon performance or climate adaptation performance of an existing building will be granted material weight in favour of the development in proportion to the improvement that is quantitatively demonstrated. These benefits will be part of the overall planning balance in combination with heritage protection requirements outlined in policy HE1	
P6 Home extensions and alterations	Development proposals to extend and/or alter an existing dwelling, including the provision of separate buildings within the curtilage for habitable or other purposes related to the domestic use of the property will be supported, provided that there is: - no significant adverse impact on the character and appearance of the dwelling or street scene, or the wider surrounding area; - no significantly reduced residential amenity of nearby existing occupiers or future occupiers of the property itself; and - sufficient parking and outdoor amenity space.	No likely significant effect. This is a development management policy and does not in itself lead directly to any development. There are no impact pathways by which this policy change could impact Habitats sites.
P7 Amenity	Proposals for development will be designed and constructed to avoid and minimise impacts on the amenity of both existing and future users, alone and in combination, within the development and close to it. As such, development proposals will be expected to: - not have a significant adverse effect on the living conditions of existing and new residents and future occupiers of the proposed development through loss of privacy, excessive overshadowing or overbearing impact; and - not generate a level of activity, noise, light, air quality, odour, vibration or other pollution which cannot be mitigated to an appropriate standard.	No likely significant effect. This is a development management policy and does not in itself lead directly to any development. There are no impact pathways by which this policy change could impact Habitats sites.
P8 Shop front design and signage	- New, and alterations to existing, shop fronts will be supported where they: - respect the scale, proportions, character and materials of the whole building and where appropriate, adjoining buildings and the wider street scene; - retain any existing independent access to upper floors and take opportunities to provide such access from the street where none currently exists; - provide fully accessible entrances for all users where appropriate to do so; - respect the design of individual units when combining two or more units; - avoid the provision of external shutters and the use of external roller shutter boxes unless this can be fully justified in appropriate circumstances; and - avoid creating recessed areas within the façade, as per the Secured by Design guidance. - Where proposals affect heritage assets, changes to shop fronts and signage will not be permitted if they fail to preserve or enhance the area's character, appearance and setting. The following considerations will also apply to advertisement proposals: - they should be appropriate in size and scale to the building on which they are to be attached especially those associated with listed buildings and conservation areas; - any illuminated advertisements should conserve and enhance the appearance of the heritage asset and surrounding area	No likely significant effect. This is a development management policy and does not in itself lead directly to any development. There are no impact pathways by which this policy change could impact Habitats sites.

H1 The following sites, as shown on the Policies Map, are allocated for housing development	This policy details Multiple housing allocations within the Mansfield Urban area and Warsop Parish. These allocations are included in a separate table later in this appendix.	Likely significant effect. This policy refers to allocations and locations and as such has the potential to impact Habitats sites through the following pathways: • Atmospheric pollution • Recreational pressure • Water quantity, level and flow • Urbanisation
H2 Committed housing sites	This policy details existing committed housing sites with planning permission. This comprises 13 sites with the Mansfield Urban Area, totalling 787 dwellings, and 3 sites within Warsop Parish, totalling 96 dwellings.	No likely significant effect. This policy refers to allocations and locations that already have extant planning permission and therefore will not lead to new likely significant effects. While these sites already have planning permission, they will need to be considered in the context of potential in combination effects with the allocations made in the MLP.
H3 Housing density and mix	- Development proposals of ten or more dwellings will be expected to: - be built at a density that makes efficient use of the site with layouts that respect the character and appearance of the local area; and - provide a range of dwelling sizes and types reflective of housing needs and the achievement of mixed and balanced communities.	No likely significant effect. This is a development management policy and does not in itself lead directly to any development. There are no impact pathways by which this policy change could impact Habitats sites.
H4 Affordable housing	- The proportions of affordable housing required on market housing sites are: 10% on greenfield land and 5% on brownfield land within Zone 1; and 20% on greenfield land and 5% on brownfield land within Zone 2 - These proportions apply to sites of: 10 or more dwellings; or, - where the site area is 0.5 hectares or more. - The council will seek affordable housing in the following tenure split, unless a different split is justified by up-to-date evidence of local need and viability: 60% Social Rent; 20% affordable housing to rent; and 20% other affordable routes to home ownership (for example shared ownership and/rent to buy). - Off-site commuted sums of an equivalent value may be made in lieu of on-site provision (in total or in part) where: - on-site provision is satisfactorily demonstrated not to be justified; - such off-site contributions can be shown to contribute to the successful development of other affordable housing and or regeneration schemes within the district; - fewer than ten affordable homes are required to be provided on-site; or - no Registered Provider is willing or able to take on the affordable homes required on-site	No likely significant effect. This is a development management policy and does not in itself lead directly to any development. There are no impact pathways by which this policy change could impact Habitats sites.

	5. Proposals which do not meet the above policy requirements will only be acceptable, where it is satisfactorily demonstrated, that a different level or mix of affordable housing is required to make the development viable and the approach contributes towards creating mixed and balanced communities.	
H5 Custom and self-build homes	1. Proposals for self-build and/or custom housing will be supported provided the following criteria are met: a. it is within the boundary of a settlement or accords with Policy S3 (Development in the countryside); b. it is of a high standard of design and does not adversely affect the area by reason of its scale, bulk, form, layout or materials; c. it would not cause a significant adverse impact on the amenity of nearby residents or occupiers; d. there is no significant adverse impact on highway safety and appropriate provision for parking is made; and e. the plot is, or can be, connected to existing walking, cycling and public transport infrastructure, where available or appropriate.	No likely significant effect. This is a development management policy and does not in itself lead directly to any development. There are no impact pathways by which this policy change could impact Habitats sites.
H6 Specialist housing	1. Development proposals for specialist housing which falls within Use Class C2, such as sheltered and extra care accommodation, will be supported on sites within existing or proposed residential areas provided they: a. are conveniently situated in relation to local retail, community services and public transport facilities; b. are of a design, layout and accessibility suitable for occupation by people with disabilities and people with care needs; and c. provide sufficient car parking, cycle parking and parking for mobility scooters, based on the demonstrable requirements of residents and staff.	No likely significant effect. This is a development management policy and does not in itself lead directly to any development. There are no impact pathways by which this policy change could impact Habitats sites.
H7 Houses in multiple occupation and bedsit accommodation	1. Development proposals relating to the multiple residential occupation of buildings, including apartments and/or bedsit accommodation, will be supported where it would: a. be appropriate in respect of the characteristics of the site, including whether the proposal would result in the re-use of a vacant building or disused land in accordance with wider regeneration benefits; b. contribute to the achievement of mixed and balanced communities and not lead to an existing residential property being sandwiched by an HMO / bedsit on both sides; c. provide adequate internal accommodation and external private amenity space without causing any significantly adverse impact on the amenity enjoyed by the occupiers of adjacent properties; and d. provide adequate car parking and secure undercover cycle parking.	No likely significant effect. This is a development management policy and does not in itself lead directly to any development. There are no impact pathways by which this policy change could impact Habitats sites.
H8 Accommodation for Gypsies, Travelers and Travelling Showpeople	1. The accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers between 2023 and 2043 is identified for a minimum of: a. 2025-30: 6 pitches; b. 2031-43: 3 pitches; and	Likely significant effect. This policy refers to allocations and locations and as such has the potential to impact Habitats sites through the following pathways:

	c. 3 travelling showpeople plots over the plan period. 2. Proposals for new sites, and extensions/improvements to existing permitted or lawful sites to meet this need, will be supported where they meet the following criteria: a. the site is located with reasonable access to a range of services, such as shops, schools, welfare facilities or public transport; b. the site is proportionate to the scale of the nearest settlement; its local services and infrastructure; c. there is suitable and safe highway access, and is not detrimental to public highway safety; d. provides for adequate on-site parking and turning areas as well as appropriate facilities and space for servicing and storage, and in the case of a travelling showpeople site, has sufficient space for fairground equipment maintenance; e. the proposal includes the provision of adequate services including water supply, power, drainage, sewage disposal and waste disposal facilities; f. be compatible with landscape, environment, heritage and biodiversity as well as the physical and visual character of the area; g. would not significantly harm the amenities of neighbouring properties and land uses; and h. would be appropriately located in terms of flood risk. 3. Authorised existing, new sites and yards will be safeguarded for Gypsy, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople groups unless they are no longer required to meet identified need. This includes: a. Longster Lane Showpeople's Yard b. Ley Lane Showpeople's Yard	• Atmospheric pollution • Recreational pressure • Water quantity, level and flow • Urbanisation						
E1 Enabling economic development	1. Proposals for economic development will be supported, especially when they involve: a. major inward investment into the district; b. meeting the needs of the modern economy; c. the creation of substantial new employment, particularly with skilled jobs; and d. a contribution to the achievement of wider regeneration initiatives. 2. Major proposals are expected to be located on sites allocated as new employment areas or on undeveloped land or vacant buildings within existing key or general employment areas but may also be appropriate on other sites subject to the provisions of Policy E4. 3. Smaller proposals, including premises designed for business start-ups, will be supported in closer proximity to residential areas and as part of mixed use schemes, subject to meeting policies P7 and NE3.	No likely significant effect. This is a development management policy and does not in itself lead directly to any development. There are no impact pathways by which this policy change could impact Habitats sites.						
E2 Sites allocated as new employment areas	This policy details two employment allocations. These allocations are: <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Reference</th><th>Site Name</th><th>Size (Ha)</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td><td></td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Reference	Site Name	Size (Ha)				Likely significant effect. This policy refers to allocations and locations for employment use and as such has the potential to impact Habitats sites through the following pathways:
Reference	Site Name	Size (Ha)						

	E2a Ratcher Hill Quarry employment area 3.45	• Atmospheric pollution • Water quantity, level and flow
	E2b Oakfield Lane, Market Warsop 2.2	
E3 Retaining land for employment uses	1. Within the existing key or general employment areas and allocated employment areas, development proposals will be supported provided that the proposal falls within Use Class B2, B8 or E(g) 2. Within existing key and general employment areas, alternative uses (outside the B2, B8 or E(g) use classes) will be supported provided that they: a. are complementary to B2, B8 or E(g) Use Classes; b. are small scale; c. would accommodate a significant number of jobs and be compatible with the character and function of the area; it must be demonstrated that the site has been vacant for at least 12 months and; i. it has been subject to genuine marketing for commercial (B class and E(g) class) uses for at least 12 months, at reasonable market values, and which has proved unsuccessful; ii. where the existing use is economically unviable; iii. the site is no longer capable of meeting the needs of modern businesses; or iv. continuation in employment use would be inappropriate in terms of adjoining uses or the amenity of the wider area; and v. it would not prejudice the wider redevelopment or regeneration of the area. 3. On sites allocated for employment development under Policies E2, SUE1, SUE2 and SUE3, alternative developments will only be allowed provided the land has been marketed for at least 5 years for B and E(g) class uses.	No likely significant effect. This is a development management policy and does not in itself lead directly to any development. There are no impact pathways by which this policy change could impact Habitats sites.
Policy E4 Other industrial and business development	1. Development proposals within Use Classes B2, B8, E(g)(ii) and E(g)(iii) that are outside areas identified within Policies E2 and E3 will be supported where: a. the site lies within or on the edge of the Mansfield or Market Warsop urban areas or settlement boundaries; b. the proposal is for the expansion of an existing business; c. it would provide high quality employment floor space for an identified end user; or d. it is for the redevelopment of established industrial or business land or premises. 2. In all cases development proposals will be expected to: a. be appropriately related to the strategic road network, accessible for HGV's and capable of being developed without severe highway impacts; b. be accessible to public transport services and connected by convenient walking and cycling routes to residential areas; c. be in scale with the built and natural features of the local area; and	No likely significant effect. This is a development management policy and does not in itself lead directly to any development. There are no impact pathways by which this policy change could impact Habitats sites.

	d. have no significant adverse effects on the amenity of adjoining uses. 3. Small scale employment development or farm diversification in rural areas will be supported subject to meeting the requirements of Policy S3.	
Policy E5 Improving skills and economic inclusion	1. The council will seek to negotiate planning agreements to secure local labour agreements for developments: a. of 10 or more dwellings; b. on 0.5 or more hectares of land; or c. that will create more than full time equivalent 15 jobs.	No likely significant effect. This is a development management policy and does not in itself lead directly to any development. There are no impact pathways by which this policy change could impact Habitats sites.
RT1 Main town centre uses	1. Main town centre uses (as defined in the NPPF) will be supported within the town centres set out below and shown on the Policies Map provided that they: a. are of a scale and character which reflects the role, function and distinctive qualities of the town centre; and b. would not harm the vitality and viability of a town centre. 2. The hierarchy of town centres is: (Table setting out hierarchy of town centres) 3. Development proposals for main town centre uses outside of these town centres, including extensions to existing facilities, will be supported if they will meet the day to day convenience needs of the immediate area, are an office use proposed within a key / general or allocated employment site, or, following a sequential test, it can be satisfactorily demonstrated that: a. the development could not be accommodated on a suitable and available site within a nearby centre, or then on an edge of centre site, having shown appropriate flexibility in the format and scale of development proposed; and b. the development is within an accessible and well connected location. 4. Retail and leisure developments over 350 sqm (gross) which are proposed in edge of centre and out of centre locations which are not allocated in the Local Plan for such purposes, will be required to satisfactorily demonstrate, through an impact assessment, that there will be no significant adverse impacts upon relevant town centres (including within adjoining local authorities).	No likely significant effect. This is a development management policy and does not in itself lead directly to any development. There are no impact pathways by which this policy change could impact Habitats sites.
RT2 Mansfield town centre strategy	1. The council will work in partnership with developers and town centre stakeholders to help deliver the town centre vision by: a. focusing the development of main town centre uses which serve the wider area within Mansfield town centre, through allocating suitable sites to help meet the district's retail floorspace requirements, and applying a town centre first approach when considering planning applications; b. enabling a range of main town centre uses to operate within the primary shopping area to maximise the vitality and viability of the centre; c. negotiating developer contributions towards public realm improvements and public art; d. encouraging residential and office use of upper floors, and on appropriate sites outside of the primary shopping area; e. improving accessibility by seeking improvements to pedestrian priority, cycle routes, flow of traffic and locating any new car parks on the edge of the town centre; and	No likely significant effect. This is a development management policy and does not in itself lead directly to any development. There are no impact pathways by which this policy change could impact Habitats sites.

	f. implementing the Mansfield Town Centre Masterplan.	
RT3 Mansfield town centre primary shopping area	1. Development proposals for main town centre uses, which help to diversify the primary shopping area and increase its attractiveness as a place to visit, socialise, live and work, will be supported particularly where the development proposed is a retail use. The primary shopping area is defined on the Policies Map. 2. To help ensure the vitality and viability of the primary shopping area proposals should: a. maintain an active frontage(s) to the unit, such as a display of visual interest, or views into the unit; and b. if not retail, positively contribute to the broadening of the town centre's daytime and evening economies, including uses which are family orientated. 3. Proposals for hot-food takeaways will need to satisfactorily demonstrate that there would be a positive impact upon both the town centre's daytime and evening economies. They will also need to meet policy RT10.	No likely significant effect. This is a development management policy and does not in itself lead directly to any development. There are no impact pathways by which this policy change could impact Habitats sites.
RT4 Mansfield town centre improvements	1. Development proposals which help improve the vitality and environment of Mansfield town centre, will be supported, particularly where they involve: a. appropriate development of any sites identified by policy RT6; b. enhancement of townscape, civic and open spaces and heritage assets and their setting; c. improvement of the appearance of key gateways, by providing well designed landmark buildings which help create a positive image of the town and give it a sense of identity; d. improvements to Mansfield's market; e. enhancements to the Old Town Hall which support its reuse and ensure its conservation; f. improvements to energy efficiency and resilience to flooding and climate change, and adoption of low carbon technologies including electric vehicle charging points, where applicable; g. improvements to traffic arrangements, including the reduction of vehicle / pedestrian conflict and the barrier effect of the Mansfield town centre ring road; h. provision of cycle parking and facilities as set out in Policy RT5; i. creation of stronger walking, cycling and other green infrastructure links within, and to, the town centre, including opening up of the River Maun to create an attractive riverside walk; j. refurbishment of key premises, in particular the Four Seasons Shopping Centre; k. shopfront refurbishments (in accordance with Policy P8) and remodelling of floor plans, where appropriate, to create more attractive and usable retail units; l. conversion of upper floors of properties within the primary shopping area for office or residential use;	No likely significant effect. This is a development management policy and does not in itself lead directly to any development. There are no impact pathways by which this policy change could impact Habitats sites.

	m. provision of new accessible car parking spaces, including replacement for any lost through redevelopment; or n. appropriate security and crime prevention measures. 2. All development proposals within Mansfield town centre should demonstrate how the proposal: a. helps to achieve the aims of this policy, where relevant and proportionate to the scale and nature of the proposed development; and b. meets the aims and objectives of the Mansfield Town Centre Masterplan and Mansfield Town Centre Design Code.	
RT5 Accessing Mansfield town centre	1. Major development proposals in or on the edge of Mansfield town centre will be supported where they make relevant improvements to the accessibility of the town centre, prioritising: a. pedestrians and cyclists; then b. users of public transport and taxis, and green and blue badge holders; and finally c. private car users	No likely significant effect. There are no new development sites introduced by this change. There are no impact pathways by which this policy change could impact Habitats sites.
RT6 Retail and leisure allocations	This policy details retail and leisure facilities that are allocated by the Mansfield Local Plan.	Likely significant effect. This policy refers to allocations and locations for employment use and as such has the potential to impact Habitats sites through the following pathways: • Atmospheric pollution • Water quantity, level and flow
RT7 Retail and leisure commitments	This policy details existing committed retail and leisure facilities with planning permission.	No likely significant effect. This policy refers to allocations and locations that already have extant planning permission and therefore will not lead to new likely significant effects. While these sites already have planning permission, they will need to be considered in the context of potential in combination effects with the allocations made in the MLP.
RT8 District and Local Centres	1. Development proposals within district and local centres, as shown on the Policies Map, which help to sustain and enhance the range of retail and community provision, will be supported, particularly for retail uses, where they contribute to the quality of the physical environment and vitality of the centres through one or more of the following measures: a. public realm improvements; b. reinstatement and enhancement of historic architectural detail; c. reuse of vacant units; d. shop front refurbishments; e. conversions that enable the use of upper floors of premises; f. improving the pedestrian environment / reducing the impact of vehicular traffic; g. creation of a key focal point; h. reduction of visual clutter through the rationalisation of street furniture, lighting columns, traffic signage, road markings and pedestrian guard rails; and	No likely significant effect. This is a development management policy and does not in itself lead directly to any development. There are no impact pathways by which this policy change could impact Habitats sites.

	i. improvements to cycle parking provision.	
RT9 Neighbourhood parades	1. Neighbourhood parades, as shown on the Policies Map, will be protected as areas which provide for the local day-to-day needs of the community, with a presumption against their loss. Proposals for the change of use and extensions to existing units will be supported where they will enhance the vitality and viability of the parade. 2. The development of new neighbourhood parades of an appropriate design and type will be supported where they meet the immediate local needs of new residential development but do not undermine existing town centres.	No likely significant effect. This is a development management policy and does not in itself lead directly to any development. There are no impact pathways by which this policy change could impact Habitats sites.
RT10 Hot food takeaways and exclusion zones	1. Proposals for hot food takeaways will be supported provided that they a. are not within a hot food takeaway exclusion zone as shown on the policies map (within a 400m radius from the main access point to any primary or secondary school or college) or within 400m of other locations where children and young people congregate, unless the proposal is within a designated town centre. b. do not result in a cluster of such uses, taking account of the concentration and proximity of existing establishments in the immediate area. 2. In all cases, hot food takeaways must not cause significant harm to residential amenity in terms of noise, vibration, odour, traffic disturbance, litter, hours of operation or anti-social behaviour.	No likely significant effect. This is a development management policy and does not in itself lead directly to any development. There are no impact pathways by which this policy change could impact Habitats sites.
RT11 Visitor Economy	1. Development proposals for visitor facilities, accommodation and sporting attractions, including proposals for temporary permission in support of the promotion of events, will be supported provided that they: a. benefit both local communities and visitors; and b. respect and enhance the natural and built environmental qualities of the area and are appropriate in scale and nature. 2. Development should be located within the existing Mansfield urban area boundary, Market Warsop urban area or village boundaries, or as part of strategic sites, unless it can be demonstrated that: a. such locations are unsuitable for the nature of the proposal; b. there is an overriding benefit to the local economy and/or community and/or environment for locating away from the urban areas; and c. the criteria within Policy S3 can be met; or d. it relates to a suitably located existing visitor facility which is appropriate for redevelopment or expansion. 3. Development of town centre uses shall also be in accordance with Policy RT1.	No likely significant effect. This is a development management policy and does not in itself lead directly to any development. There are no impact pathways by which this policy change could impact Habitats sites.
SUE1 Pleasley Hill Farm – strategic urban expansion	1. Land at Pleasley Hill forms part of a wider strategic urban extension. The remaining land without planning permission is allocated and will deliver approximately 75 new homes. 2. This new neighbourhood will be developed comprehensively in accordance with an agreed masterplan, including delivery and phasing arrangements and informed by key design principles, independent design review and community/stakeholder consultation. The layout of this development should allow access to adjoining part of the SUE that has planning permission.	Likely significant effect. This policy refers to allocations and locations and as such has the potential to impact Habitats sites through the following pathways: • Atmospheric pollution • Recreational pressure • Water quantity, level and flow

	3. The development will create a sustainable and high quality living environment, including the provision of: a. a network of green infrastructure linking into the rest of the SUE and surrounding area; b. adequate SuDS to meet the needs of the development; c. on-site open space and play facilities in locations which are accessible from surrounding areas; and d. the protection of areas of archaeological significance informed by a Geophysical Survey. 4. A field evaluation, incorporating a systematic walking survey, geophysical survey and intrusive trial trenching will be required to be carried out prior to determining a planning application. 5. Development will be expected to provide, or contribute towards, the provision of: a. measures to directly mitigate the impacts of the development and make it acceptable in planning terms; and b. contribute towards the delivery of infrastructure identified in the IDP.	
SUE2 Land off Jubilee Way	1. Land off Jubilee Way is allocated as a strategic sustainable urban extension delivering: a. approximately 800 new homes; b. a new neighbourhood parade; c. provision of a new primary school on site; and d. a minimum of 1.6ha (developable area) extension to Crown Farm Way Industrial Estate. 2. This new neighbourhood will be developed comprehensively in accordance with an agreed masterplan, including delivery and phasing arrangements and informed by key design principles, an independent design review and community/stakeholder consultation. This masterplan will be incorporated into an outline planning application and supporting section 106 agreement. 3. An application specific assessment will be required to identify and address impacts on nightjar and woodlark and their habitats. 4. A Nitrogen Deposition Study will be required to assess the impact on sites of biodiversity importance nearby. 5. Any development proposal would need to be supported by a detailed desk based assessment and the results of a staged pre-determination programme of archaeological investigation on the basis of an approved Written Scheme of Investigation. 6. Development will be expected to provide, or contribute towards, the provision of: a. measures to directly mitigate the impacts of the development and make it acceptable in planning terms; and b. contribute towards the delivery of infrastructure* identified in the IDP. 7. The masterplan will create a sustainable and high quality living environment, including the provision of:	Likely significant effect. This policy refers to allocations and locations and as such has the potential to impact Habitats sites through the following pathways: • Atmospheric pollution • Recreational pressure • Water quantity, level and flow

	- cycle and walking links to the adjoining housing development and to the wider area including Timberland Trail, Oak Tree LNR, the restored Mansfield colliery and Vicar Water (strategic GI area #10) and the wider Sherwood Forest (strategic GI area #6); - a network of green infrastructure including new habitats adjacent to the SSSIs/LWSs; - measures to prevent any loss of value of the LWS and ensure the protection of Section 41 habitats and species; - the appropriate protection of adjacent heathland and SSSIs; - appropriate account taken of the ppSPA in line with the recommendations of the application specific assessment including measures to protect nightjar and woodlark and their habitats; - adequate SuDS and improving the flows and water quality of Vicar Water; - the identification and appropriate protection of areas of potential archaeological importance; and - enhancement and integration of the former mineral railway line along Jubilee Way North, as a wooded landscaped buffer, where feasible.	
SUE3 Land at Berry Hill	- Land at Berry Hill forms part of a wider strategic urban extension. The remaining land without planning permission is allocated and will deliver: - approximately 730 / 1230 new homes (including 10% on site affordable housing); - new neighbourhood centre; - up to 18.8 ha / 15.7 ha (developable area) of mixed employment uses; 3.1 hectares commercial / leisure use; - a new primary school; and - a community park, outdoor play space and equipped children's play provision. - Further delivery of this new neighbourhood will need to be developed comprehensively in accordance with a new agreed masterplan, including delivery and phasing arrangements and informed by key design principles, independent design review and community / stakeholder consultation. The layout of this development should allow access to adjoining land to enable this to come forward in the future, if appropriate. - Development will be expected to provide, or contribute towards, the provision of: - measures to directly mitigate the impacts of the development and make it acceptable in planning terms; and - contribute towards the delivery of infrastructure identified in the IDP.	Likely significant effect. This policy refers to allocations and locations and as such has the potential to impact Habitats sites through the following pathways: • Atmospheric pollution • Recreational pressure • Water quantity, level and flow • Urbanisation
IN1 Infrastructure Delivery	- All development proposals will be expected to: - meet all reasonable costs associated with new infrastructure required as a consequence of the proposal; - where appropriate, contribute to the delivery of necessary related infrastructure to enable the cumulative infrastructure impacts of developments to be managed, including identified transport infrastructure requirements;	No likely significant effect. This is a development management policy and does not in itself lead directly to any development.

	c. provide for the future maintenance of facilities delivered as a result of the development; and d. where appropriate and necessary, enter into clawback agreements. 2. When determining the nature and scale of any planning obligations sought, account will be taken of any evidence of viability, specific site conditions, priorities in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan and other material considerations. 3. Where appropriate, developer contributions will be pooled to allow the provision of strategic infrastructure that will serve more than one scheme.	There are no impact pathways by which this policy change could impact Habitats sites.
IN2 Green infrastructure	1. Development proposals within or adjoining areas of strategic green infrastructure (as shown on the Policies Map) will be supported, provided it can be satisfactorily demonstrated that: a. the functions and key assets of the green infrastructure network are protected and reasonable opportunities for enhancement of these are secured to deliver a diverse range of benefits for people and wildlife; b. good quality connections are maintained to, and within, the green infrastructure network for people and wildlife and, where practical, improve accessibility to ensure new links are created and / or gaps restored; c. significant adverse impacts on sensitive landscape, ecological and heritage assets and their setting are avoided where possible or at least minimised, including through the use of buffer strips; d. opportunities are secured, where feasible, to improve resilience to the impacts of climate change; e. the quality of the green infrastructure network is improved, such that it supports improved ecosystem networks and services, healthy neighbourhoods and supports the delivery of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy; and f. future management of any features created is financially secured through an agreed management plan. This includes those relating to Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG). 2. On and off-site contributions for new, and where appropriate enhancements to existing, provision will be secured through developer contributions or conditions. Where appropriate, this may contribute towards the provision of mandatory BNG. 3. Development outside, and not adjoining, the strategic green infrastructure network should, where appropriate, create local green infrastructure or provide links to the strategic network.	No likely significant effect. This is a development management policy and does not in itself lead directly to any development. There are no impact pathways by which this policy change could impact Habitats sites.
IN3 Community open space and outdoor sports provision	<u>Protection of community open space and outdoor sports provision</u> 1. All areas of community open space shown on the policies map, outdoor sports provision identified in Appendix 9, and any additional future provision made as part of new development will be protected, unless it is satisfactorily demonstrated that: a. the proposed development is ancillary to the existing recreational use of the site or is for alternative sports and recreation provision, the benefits of which clearly outweigh the loss of the current or former use; b. the open space or outdoor sports provision is surplus to requirements, as set out in Part 2 of this policy;	No likely significant effect. This is a development management policy and does not in itself lead directly to any development. There are no impact pathways by which this policy change could impact Habitats sites.

	c. alternative provision of an equivalent or greater standard, in terms of quantity and quality, will be provided in an accessible location nearby, or accessibility is improved to existing provision, such that the Mansfield Green Space Standard and sports provision requirements are met; or d. the development proposals involve the loss of a small area of a protected community open space or outdoor sports provision, and would lead to an improvement to the remaining area whilst maintaining its overall function and contribution to meeting the Mansfield Green Space Standard or appropriate sports provision requirements. In all cases development should avoid the fragmentation of open space into smaller parcels. 2. Development proposals involving the loss of open space are required to provide an assessment of need, identifying proposed enhancements and/or replacement facilities, as relevant. This should: a. incorporate relevant findings from the council's open space study and playing pitch strategy, including application of the Mansfield Green Space Standard (Appendix 10); and b. satisfactorily demonstrate that the development will not prejudice community use for existing or future outdoor sport, in terms of quality, quantity or access as set out in the council's playing pitch strategy. Sites may be subject to review, and regard will be had to any updates in the council's open space study. Any new green spaces developed after the Local Plan Review is adopted will be protected under this policy. <u>New community open space and outdoor sports provision</u> 3. New residential development of 10 or more dwellings (net) will be required to contribute towards: a. the creation of new community open space (including play) and outdoor sports provision; and/or b. improving the quality of and/or accessibility to existing community open space, natural green space, play and outdoor sports provision. 4. New on-site provision and/or contributions towards enhancements to existing provision should: a. be informed by the council's open space study and playing pitch strategy, including the Mansfield Green Space Standard and Sport England Playing Pitch Calculator; b. be proportionate to the size of the development; c. be multi-functional, accessible, of good quality and fit for purpose; and d. have appropriate mechanisms to ensure their future satisfactory maintenance, management and sustained community use	
IN4 Allotments	<u>Protection of existing provision</u> 1. All existing allotments as shown on the Policies Map, and any future provision, will be safeguarded from development unless it can be satisfactorily demonstrated that:	No likely significant effect. This is a development management policy and does not in itself lead directly to any development.

	a. the whole of the allotment, or the proportion proposed to be developed, is surplus to requirements based on existing and known future demand; b. alternative equivalent, or better, replacement provision is being provided*; or c. the development is for alternative sports, play or other recreational provision, the benefits of which clearly outweigh the loss of the allotment. <u>Creation of new allotments</u> 2. The creation of new allotments will be supported provided that management and maintenance conditions are secured.	There are no impact pathways by which this policy change could impact Habitats sites.
IN5 Designated local green space	1. Other than in very special circumstances, proposals will only be supported for development on a site designated as local green space, as shown on the Policies Map, where the development would clearly enhance or be ancillary to the reason/s why it was designated. 2. Development proposed within close proximity to a local green space will only be supported where it can be clearly and satisfactorily demonstrated that the development would not significantly harm the purpose/s for which the local green space was designated.	No likely significant effect. This is a development management policy and does not in itself lead directly to any development. There are no impact pathways by which this policy change could impact Habitats sites.
IN6 Local shops, community and cultural facilities	<u>Protection of existing local facilities (excluding indoor sports facilities)</u> 1. Development proposals which involve the loss of local facilities will only be supported where it is satisfactorily demonstrated that: a. appropriate replacement facilities will be provided in a suitable alternative location; b. the facility is no longer viable, and this can be justified through adequate marketing of the premises at a reasonable price for its current or former use for at least six months; or c. the facility will be reinstated and enhanced as part of any redevelopment of the building or site. <u>Protection of existing indoor sports facilities</u> 2. Development proposals which involve the loss of indoor sports facilities will only be supported where it is satisfactorily demonstrated that: a. the proposed development is ancillary to the existing recreational use of the site or is for alternative sports and recreation provision, the benefits of which clearly outweigh the loss of the current or former use; b. the indoor sports provision is surplus to requirements; or c. alternative provision of an equivalent or greater standard, in terms of quantity and / or quality, will be provided in an accessible location nearby, or accessibility is improved to existing provision, such that sports provision requirements are met. <u>New or extended local facilities (all)</u> 3. Proposals will be supported for small scale local shops that meet the day to day convenience needs of the immediate area, or for other community and cultural facilities, provided: a. they are within settlement boundaries;	No likely significant effect. This is a development management policy and does not in itself lead directly to any development. There are no impact pathways by which this policy change could impact Habitats sites.

	b. the proposed facilities are of a type and scale appropriate to the character of the area and settlement size; c. the proposal would not result in significantly adverse impact on public amenity; and d. where appropriate, the new building is capable of accommodating multiple uses without the necessity of structural conversion.	
IN7 Protecting and improving the sustainable transport network	1. Development proposals which enhance the existing sustainable transport network will be supported where they facilitate a reduction in the need to travel by private car, promote trip internalisation, and reduce journey lengths by, where relevant: a. protecting and improving access to and along multi-user trails network across the district especially the Maun Valley Trail, Mansfield Way, Timberland Trail, Meden Trail, Dukeries Trail, Clipstone to Warsop, the National Cycle Route 6 and the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) strategic cycle network; b. providing or contributing towards new and/or improved sustainable transport measures such as pedestrian and cycle routes (in line with the LCWIP), public transport facilities and services, and provision for community transport and taxis; c. assisting the extension of the Robin Hood railway line for passengers between Shirebrook and Ollerton, including the former Market Warsop railway station; d. facilitating the shift towards the use of ultra-low emissions vehicles; and e. facilitating the delivery of highway improvement schemes / sustainable transport solutions along the district's main arterial routes and public transport corridors as set out in the EMCCA Mayor's Transport Plan. 2. Proposals for development which do not adequately safeguard the following schemes (as shown on the Policies Map) will not be approved: a. A6191 Ratcliffe Gate improvement (bus priority); b. A60 Nottingham Road (bus priority); c. A60 Woodhouse Road improvements (bus priority); d. A6075 Abbott Road (carriageway widening and realignment); e. A60 Nottingham Road / Baums Lane / Park Lane (junction upgrade); f. A60 Nottingham Road / Cauldwell Road (new signalised junction); g. A60 Leeming Lane North / Warsop Road (signalisation of junction); h. A60 Church Road / Eastlands Lane (widening of junction); i. A617 Rainworth bypass / A6191 Southwell Road (signalised junction); j. A60 Nottingham Road / Derby Road (enlarged signals and additional lane); k. Oak Tree Lane / Violet Hill / Eakring Road (upgrade of signals); and l. Robin Hood Line extension (rail).	No likely significant effect. This is a development management policy and does not in itself lead directly to any development. There are no impact pathways by which this policy change could impact Habitats sites.
IN8 Impact of development on the transport network	1. Development proposals will be supported provided: a. they do not endanger highway safety, and allow for satisfactory access and egress from the highway and internal movements within the site; b. any significant impacts on the highway network can be suitably mitigated; and	No likely significant effect. This is a development management policy and does not in itself lead directly to any development.

	c. they do not impact on the safe operation of the rail network. 2. Development proposals that generate significant levels of movements are required to: a. be supported by a transport assessment or statement, together with a travel plan which demonstrates how sustainable transport measures set out in IN7 have been addressed; and b. be situated within settlement boundaries, as shown on the Policies Map, or in locations that are, or can be, well served by the full range of transport modes including public transport.	There are no impact pathways by which this policy change could impact Habitats sites.
IN9 Car and cycle parking	1. Development proposals will be supported where there is appropriate provision for vehicle and cycle parking, including meeting the needs of the disabled. Provision should be designed so that it is an integral part of the development, does not dominate the public realm and: a. meets the minimum standards and design requirements set out in adopted guidance; b. includes electric car charging provision appropriate to the scale and use of the proposed development; c. incorporates sustainable urban drainage paving systems where appropriate.	No likely significant effect. This is a development management policy and does not in itself lead directly to any development. There are no impact pathways by which this policy change could impact Habitats sites.
IN10 Telecommunications and broadband	1. Applications for major residential and employment development should be supported by a connectivity strategy that delivers future-proofed infrastructure and supports sustainable communications services having regard to the latest relevant industry guidance. Development proposals will be supported where adequate broadband infrastructure is to be made available to all residents and / or users of the development. This includes making provision for: a. installation of appropriate cabling within each dwelling or unit as well as a fully enabled connection of the developed area to the full main telecommunications network; and b. sufficient ducting space for future digital connectivity infrastructure (such as small cell antenna and ducts for cables, that support fixed and mobile connectivity and underpin smart technologies) where appropriate. 2. Other forms of infrastructure, such as facilities supporting mobile broadband and Wi-Fi, should be included in major development proposals and designed in a sympathetic and appropriate way in order to reflect the character of the surrounding area. 3. Telecommunications development proposals will be permitted where: a. there is no significant impact on the character or appearance of the building on which, or space in which, the equipment is located, including not contributing to street clutter; b. the significance, appearance, character and setting of heritage assets are conserved; c. there is no significant adverse impact upon biodiversity, ecology, geodiversity or best and most versatile agricultural land; d. all options for sharing of existing equipment, and erecting masts on existing tall buildings or other structures have been fully explored;	No likely significant effect. This is a development management policy and does not in itself lead directly to any development. There are no impact pathways by which this policy change could impact Habitats sites.

	e. they are appropriately designed, minimising size and scale and camouflaging appearance wherever possible; f. all masts and additions to existing masts are self-certified to meet International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) standards; and g. provision is made to ensure that equipment that has become obsolete or that is no longer in use is removed as soon as practicable and the site restored to its former condition.	
NE1 Protection and enhancement of landscape character	1. Development proposals will be supported where they are informed by and are sympathetic to the area's landscape character as defined in the Mansfield District Council Landscape Character Assessment 2010 and Addendum 2015, including relevant addendums and national character area profiles (Sherwood and Southern Magnesian Limestone). 2. Development within in a landscape policy zone will be supported where it can be satisfactorily demonstrated, where appropriate and feasible, that it: a. positively contributes towards meeting the defined landscape policy actions for the relevant landscape policy zone(s) (LPZ) and national character profile(s); b. is designed to conserve and enhance important landforms, historic assets and their settings and landscape features; c. identifies and mitigates any likely individual and cumulative impacts on the sensitivity and condition of the appropriate LPZ(s); d. identifies and mitigates visual impacts on character and amenity having regard to the mitigation opportunities set out in the Mansfield Landscape Sensitivity Study (LSS); and e. restores the landscape or removes any detracting features. 3. Development proposed outside but adjoining a landscape policy zone will be required to satisfactorily demonstrate that it will: a. create no significant adverse visual impact on the character and appearance of the LPZ(s); and b. where feasible, contribute to the enhancement of landscape character.	No likely significant effect. This is a development management policy and does not in itself lead directly to any development. There are no impact pathways by which this policy change could impact Habitats sites.
NE2 Biodiversity and geodiversity	<u>Biodiversity and geodiversity</u> 1. Development proposals will be supported where, commensurate with their scale, location and type, they: a. protect, enhance and contribute to the management of the ecological network of habitats and sites of European, national and local importance (statutory and non-statutory); b. avoid and/or minimise adverse individual and or cumulative impacts, on biodiversity, geodiversity and ecosystem services; and c. prioritise the de-fragmentation, restoration, retention and sensitive management of habitats and landscape features, to allow for the movement of wildlife. <u>Designated European habitat sites</u>	No likely significant effect. This is a development management policy and does not in itself lead directly to any development. There are no impact pathways by which this policy change could impact Habitats sites.

2. Development proposals will not be permitted where they would have an adverse impact on the integrity of a habitat site of European significance unless it has been demonstrated that there:
 - a. are no alternatives;
 - b. are imperative reasons of overriding public interest; and
 - c. all necessary compensatory measures will be required to ensure the overall coherence of the network of European habitat sites, as a whole, is protected.

Designated national habitat sites

3. Development proposals will not be permitted where they would have an adverse impact on a designated national habitat site. Exceptions will only be considered where the benefits of the development clearly outweigh both the adverse impacts on the designated national habitat site and the national network of such sites.
4. A Recreational Impact Assessment (RIA) is required for planning applications for residential development for 50 or more dwellings falling within 10km of Clumber Park SSSI, setting out the appropriate measures to mitigate any adverse impacts e.g. alternative open space provision.

Designated local habitat sites

5. Development proposals will not be permitted where they will have a significant adverse impact on a designated local wildlife site, local nature reserve, or local geological site. Exceptions will only be considered where the reasons for, and benefits of, the proposed development clearly outweigh the adverse impact on the loss or deterioration of the designated habitat site.

Sherwood Forest possible potential Special Protection Area (ppSPA)

6. Where development is proposed within 400 metres of the non-designated Sherwood Forest ppSPA, a risk based approach, as set out in Natural England's Advice Note to Local Planning Authorities, will be adopted to all planning applications in relation to the possible potential special protection area for the Sherwood Forest region.

Irreplaceable habitats

7. Planning permission will be refused for development resulting in the loss, deterioration and/or fragmentation of irreplaceable habitats, including ancient woodland and veteran trees, unless there are wholly exceptional reasons and a suitable compensation plan exists.

Avoidance, mitigation and compensation of adverse impacts on nature conservation

8. In exceptional circumstances where adverse impacts on designated sites and irreplaceable habitats are demonstrated to be unavoidable and the benefits outweigh the harm, as set out in 2 to 6 above, development proposals will only be permitted where:
 - a. impacts are appropriately mitigated, with compensation measures towards loss used as a last resort where mitigation is not possible; and
 - b. appropriate provision for management is made.

Species, habitats, landscape features

	9. On sites supporting protected species, important landscape features, and priority habitats and species (as defined by legislation), development proposals will only be supported where: a. it can be demonstrated that the benefits of the development clearly outweighs the impact on species, habitats, important landscape features; and b. that appropriate avoidance, mitigation, enhancement and management measures can be satisfactorily secured.	
NE3 Pollution and land instability	1. Development proposals will be supported where they are sited, designed and constructed to avoid adversely impacting on human health and wellbeing, amenity and the natural environment through unacceptable levels of soil, air, light, water or noise pollution or land instability. 2. Development proposed to be located where such unacceptable levels of pollution or land instability already exist will only be supported in exceptional circumstances and it can be satisfactorily demonstrated that the risks of adverse impacts have been fully assessed and mitigated to an acceptable level. 3. Development proposals for remediating and mitigating existing occurrences of despoiled, degraded, derelict, potentially contaminated and unstable land or for reducing air, water, light or noise pollution will be supported.	No likely significant effect. This is a development management policy and does not in itself lead directly to any development. There are no impact pathways by which this policy change could impact Habitats sites.
NE4 Mineral safeguarding areas	1. In minerals safeguarding areas, the minerals planning authority will be consulted on non-exempt development proposals. 2. Planning permission in minerals safeguarding areas will not be granted for non-exempt development unless the requirements set out in the minerals safeguarding policies of the Minerals Local Plan have been met.	No likely significant effect. This is a development management policy and does not in itself lead directly to any development. There are no impact pathways by which this policy change could impact Habitats sites.
HE1 Historic Environment	1. As part of ensuring the conservation and enhancement of Mansfield district's irreplaceable historic environment, development proposals should avoid causing harm to a heritage asset (whether designated or non-designated) including any contribution made by its setting. Where such harm cannot be firstly avoided or secondly mitigated, development proposals should be refused unless there are substantial public benefits. Where a development proposal would affect the significance of a heritage asset, it should be informed by proportionate historic environment assessments and evaluations (such as heritage impact assessments, desk-based appraisals, field evaluation and historic building reports) that: a. identify all heritage assets likely to be affected by the proposal and their significance; b. explain the nature and degree of any effect on elements that contribute to their significance and demonstrating how any harm will be avoided, minimised or mitigated; c. provide a clear explanation and justification for the proposal in order for the harm to be weighed against public benefits; and d. demonstrate that all reasonable efforts have been made to sustain the existing use, find new uses or mitigate the extent of the harm to the significance of the asset; and whether the works proposed are the minimum required to secure the long term use of the asset.	No likely significant effect. This is a development management policy and does not in itself lead directly to any development. There are no impact pathways by which this policy change could impact Habitats sites.

	2. Development proposals affecting conservation areas will be permitted where they make a positive contribution to the character, distinctiveness and appearance of the conservation area and its setting, and preserve or enhance its significance, including settlement patterns, important buildings, important spaces, landscapes, walls, trees and significant views within, into and out of the conservation area. Proposals will also be required to demonstrate they are consistent with the special character as described in the statement or appraisal for that area. 3. Development proposals affecting listed buildings, scheduled monuments or registered parks and gardens will be permitted where they conserve or enhance the significance of the heritage asset(s) and their settings 4. Development affecting non-designated heritage assets (including those identified through the planning process and archaeological sites) will be considered according to the significance of the asset and the contribution that setting makes to the significance. A balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset. Where development proposals are likely to affect non-designated archaeological sites, including sites with archaeological potential, the developer should submit sufficient information to allow the significance of the potential archaeological remains and the impacts of the proposals to be understood. Appropriate measures should be taken to ensure the protection of archaeological sites in-situ and for satisfactory provision to be made for evaluation, excavation, recording and interpretation of the remains before and during the commencement of the development.	
HE2 Pleasley Vale regeneration area	1. The council will support development proposals for the Pleasley Vale area which preserve and/or enhance the special appearance and character of the area, and provide a long term future for the existing buildings, preferably featuring employment, commercial, and tourism uses. 2. Proposals for development in this area will need to show how they have carefully considered and addressed issues related to: a. access, highways and public transport improvements; b. the environmental impact of any proposals on the nature conservation site and the wider area, in particular the Pleasley Vale Railway SSSI; c. listed buildings, conservation area and archaeological issues; and d. flooding alongside the watercourse.	No likely significant effect. This is a development management policy and does not in itself lead directly to any development. There are no impact pathways by which this policy change could impact Habitats sites.
CC1 Renewable and low carbon energy generation	1. Development proposals for renewable and low carbon energy schemes and supporting energy infrastructure will be permitted where their impact (including cumulative impact) is, or can be made, acceptable. In determining applications for renewable and low carbon energy, and associated infrastructure, the following issues will be considered: a. landscape character and visual effects when considered in conjunction with nearby developments and permitted proposals within the district or adjoining local authority areas; b. ecology, biodiversity (including bird flight paths), and geodiversity; c. pollution and emissions; d. amenity of nearby residential and non-residential uses;	No likely significant effect. This is a development management policy and does not in itself lead directly to any development. There are no impact pathways by which this policy change could impact Habitats sites.

	e. the built and natural environment resulting from the construction, operation and decommissioning of any equipment/infrastructure; f. loss of best and most versatile agricultural land; g. flooding; h. operation of telecommunication systems; i. aircraft safety; j. highway safety and traffic; k. heritage assets and their setting; l. the contribution of the proposals, in the light of the council's pledge to be carbon neutral by 2040, to cutting greenhouse gas emissions and decarbonising our energy system; m. the direct benefits to the area and local community; and n. the additional benefit of utilising an established site where the re-powering and life-extension of an existing site is proposed. 2. Conditions will be applied to ensure scheme decommissioning and reinstatement of the previous use of land (if appropriate) when no longer in operation. 3. Particular support will be given to renewable and low carbon energy generation developments that are led by, or meet the needs of local communities. 4. Ground-mounted solar energy developments are more likely to be supported in areas identified as suitable in principle as set out on the Policies Map. Outside these areas, applicants will need to provide a clear justification for the suitability of the chosen development site for solar development at the relevant scale. Ground-mounted solar developments are more likely to be supported if they fall within Landscape Character Areas of lower sensitivity to the relevant development scale.	
CC2 Flood Risk	1. Development proposals in areas at risk of flooding will only be supported where it is satisfactorily demonstrated, through a site specific flood risk assessment, that: a. the development is an appropriate use having regard to its Flood Zone and Flood Risk Vulnerability Classification, as set out in Annex 3 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Table 2 of the Planning Practice Guidance on Flood Risk and Coastal Change; b. the sequential test and, if required, the exception test have been met; c. the development will remain flood resistant, resilient and safe throughout its lifetime, taking account of increases in flood levels due to climate change; d. it will not increase flood risk on site or elsewhere and where possible reduce it; e. water management measures are incorporated, on and / or off-site to reduce and manage flood risk in accordance with Policy CC3; f. a minimum 10-metre buffer is provided to the top of the bank of a main river or ordinary watercourse, free from built development, and, where applicable, the development provides a safe, dry means of access and egress; g. open access to flood defences are retained; and h. where applicable, the functioning and integrity of natural systems or areas that benefit from flooding are not prejudiced, and opportunities to incorporate	No likely significant effect. This is a development management policy and does not in itself lead directly to any development. There are no impact pathways by which this policy change could impact Habitats sites.

	natural flood management (NFM) and the re-naturalisation of watercourses are supported wherever possible. 2. Where development is proposed in an area at risk of residual flooding - including land downstream of a reservoir (such as Kings Mill Reservoir) or where culvert blockage could increase flood depths or extents - the flood risk assessment should also address this residual risk, informed by advice from the Environment Agency and Nottinghamshire's emergency planning partners, with appropriate mitigation incorporated into the design.	
CC3 Sustainable Drainage Systems	1. All development proposals should, wherever possible, incorporate measures to reduce and manage surface water through appropriate sustainable drainage systems (SuDS), designed in accordance with the government's National Standards for Sustainable Drainage Systems and the surface water drainage hierarchy, so as to minimise and manage flooding, improve water quality, complement water efficiency, and enhance biodiversity, place shaping and amenity. To be supported, proposals are required to satisfactorily demonstrate all of the following: a. that sustainable drainage systems have been incorporated in the development design, discharging surface water as high up the drainage hierarchy as possible, prioritising collection for re-use (such as rainwater harvesting), then infiltration, followed by an attenuated discharge to a watercourse, surface water sewer or, as a last resort, a combined sewer, unless: i. for major developments, a SuDS is inappropriate and surface water run-off can be alternatively managed in an appropriate manner; or ii. for minor developments a SuDS is not viable or technically feasible and surface water run-off can be alternatively managed in an appropriate manner; and b. where infiltration SuDS are not achievable, that surface water run-off rates and volumes are controlled so as not to exceed the equivalent greenfield rate of run-off (or, for previously developed sites, seek betterment on the site's existing rate of run-off, particularly where local drainage capacity is constrained); c. that the design and location of any infiltration SuDS avoids the transfer of pollutants to groundwater, in accordance with Policy NE3, and has regard to the wider catchment and ultimate destination of surface water discharge, including the potential for an appropriately balanced and treated discharge to low flow watercourses; d. that adequate arrangements have been made for the adoption, management and maintenance of any SuDS provided over the lifetime of the development; e. that the discharge of surface run-off is as high up the SuDS hierarchy of drainage as possible; and f. that the design and location of SuDS avoids adverse impacts on known or potential buried and waterlogged archaeological remains. 2. Proposals for retrofitting of sustainable drainage systems will be supported.	No likely significant effect. This is a development management policy and does not in itself lead directly to any development. There are no impact pathways by which this policy change could impact Habitats sites.

CC4 River and waterbody corridors

1. Development proposals will be supported where they:
 - a. lead to the de-culverting and naturalising of watercourses which improves the overall connectivity for wildlife, provided this is supported by hydraulic modelling which demonstrates there would be no detrimental third-party flood risk impacts;
 - b. avoid the culverting of watercourses and not prejudicing future opportunities for de-culverting;
 - c. provide or retain a minimum 10 metre natural or semi-natural habitat buffer to a watercourse, on both sides, consistent with the riparian zone used to assess Biodiversity Net Gain and include a long term landscape and ecological management plan for this buffer; and
 - d. contribute to the creation and / or enhancement of blue-green infrastructure, including green SuDS priority areas and low water flow restoration areas, and native riparian tree and shrub buffer planting to form blue-green wildlife corridors; and
 - e. contribute to the recovery, expansion and protection of riparian and aquatic species, and avoid adverse impacts on locally, regionally or nationally important populations.
2. Development proposals which would have a significant adverse impact on the water quality, functions and setting of any watercourse and its associated corridor, or on riparian or aquatic habitats and species, will not be supported.
3. Where development affects, or is in proximity to, land with archaeological potential, the design of any watercourse restoration, buffer planting or associated works should have regard to the management of waterlogged archaeological remains.

No likely significant effect.

This is a development management policy and does not in itself lead directly to any development.

There are no impact pathways by which this policy change could impact Habitats sites.

IM1 Monitoring and Review of the Local Plan

1. The council will monitor the delivery and effectiveness of policies of this Local Plan Review against specific performance indicators and targets set out in the Local Plan monitoring framework.
2. The council will commence a review of the Local Plan Review no later than five years from the date of adoption. The council will also consider a partial review of the Local Plan Review, or other actions considered necessary in the following circumstances:
 - a. the number of homes built falls below 50% of the annual requirement on a three year rolling average;
 - b. the supply of deliverable housing sites is below four years for three years in a row;
 - c. changes in Government planning policy;
 - d. changes to strategic priorities arising from local government reorganisation and / or an emerging Spatial Development Strategy;
 - e. significant new evidence becomes available; or
 - f. significant implementation delays or issues are identified as part of the Authority Monitoring Report.

No likely significant effect.

This is a development management policy and does not in itself lead directly to any development.

There are no impact pathways by which this policy change could impact Habitats sites.

Table 7-2 Site allocations within the MLP

Site Reference	Site Name	Land Use type	Size (Ha)	No. of Dwellings	Approx. Distance to the Birklands & Bilhaugh SAC (km)	Approx. Distance to the Sherwood Forest ppSPA (km)
H1Ma	Land off Skegby Lane	Residential	12.6	350	11.1km NE	3.0km SE
H1Mb	Abbot Road	Residential	5.5	102	10.6km NE	3.9km SE
H1Mc	Bellamy Road	Residential	2.1	40	8.9km NE	0.5km NE
H1Md	Ladybrook Lane / Tuckers Lane	Residential	1.1	33	9.4km NE	3.6km S
H1Me	High Oakham Farm East	Residential	6.6	40	10.6km NE	0.9km S
H1Mf	Land off Holly Road	Residential	0.5	16	6.4km NE	0.8km SE
H1Mg	Former Abbey Primary School	Residential	2.1	62	7.7km NE	1.1km E
H1Mh	Former Victoria Court Flats	Residential	2.1	62	9.9km NE	2.5km S
H1Mi	Land north of Skegby Lane	Residential	7.6	350	11.0km NE	3.4km SE
H1Mj	Land north of Peafield Lane	Residential	13.4	330	5.6km NE	0.7km E
H1Mk	Land south of Peafield Lane	Residential	11.2	254	5.7km NE	0.7km NE
H1Ml	Gregory Quarry	Residential	3.8	117	10.0km NE	2.0km S
H1Mm	Grove Street Car Park	Residential	0.3	10	9.4km NE	2.8km S
H1Mn	Former Kirkland Avenue Allotments	Residential	1.4	42	10.1km NE	3.1km S
H1Mo	Land off Forest Road	Residential	1.2	42	9.9km NE	1.9km S
H1Mp	Shirland Drive Boiler House	Residential	0.2	7	8.2km NE	0.2km S
H1Mq	Land off Helmsley Road	Residential	6.3	170	8.3km N	0.24km NE
H1Mr	Land south of Clipstone Road East	Residential	45.3	315	4.9km NE	Partially within ppSPA
H1Ms	Land north of Jenford Street	Residential	6.2	120	10.1km NE	3.2km S
H1Mt	Land between Old Mill Lane and New Mill Lane	Residential	18.9	370	6.4km NE	1.4km NE
H1Mu	Bridleways Guest House and Holiday Homes	Residential	1.2	5	5.2km NE	0.1km W
H1Mu	Toothill Lane Car Park (south)	Residential	0.3	11	8.9km NE	2.7km E

H1Mv	Land at Lindley Street	Residential	0.2	8	9.1km NE	3.2km E
H1Mw	Former Sherwood Hall School	Residential	3.2	52	7.25km NE	0.7km E
H1Mx	Clipstone Miners Welfare (Lido Ground)	Residential	4.8	130	4.7km NE	0.5km S
H1My	Former Rosebrook Primary School	Residential	5.1	134	10.2km NE	4.2km SE
H1WPa	Land west of Mansfield Road	Residential	15.7	300	4.6km E	1.1km SE
H1WPb	Land off Netherfield Lane	Residential	4.9	107	3.2km E	1.4km SE
H1WPc	Melville Court	Residential	0.4	13	3.0km E	1.4km SE
H1WPd	Land south east of Mansfield Road	Residential	15.7	295	4.2km E	0.3km SE
SUE1	Pleasley Hill Farm	SUE	41.8	75	9.9km NE	5.1km SE
SUE2	Land off Jubilee Way	SUE	46.9	800	6.2km NE	Partially within ppSPA
SUE3	Land at Berry Hill	SUE	145.3	730	8.6km NE	Partially within ppSPA

