Taverham Neighbourhood Plan

Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Report

June 2019

Amended September 2019
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1. Introduction

The purpose of this report is to determine whether the Taverham Neighbourhood Plan requires a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) through a process known as SEA screening.

The Taverham Neighbourhood Plan has been commissioned by Taverham Parish Council and developed by a Steering Group of residents. A map showing the Neighbourhood Plan area for Taverham is in Appendix A. The first draft of the Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared for ‘pre-submission consultation’ for the six-week period starting on July 6th 2019.


This report provides details of the proposed Taverham Neighbourhood Plan and explains the legislative background to SEA screening, before providing an account of the SEA screening exercise for the Taverham Neighbourhood Plan.

Broadland District Council advocates the Sustainability Appraisal process to check emerging policies and alternative options in Neighbourhood Plans, and to offer a useful form of demonstrating that sustainability has been considered within the process, as set out within the basic conditions. A Sustainability Appraisal for the draft Neighbourhood Plan has been produced. A Sustainability Appraisal looks at the possible economic, environmental and social impacts of an emerging plan and should result in a final plan which has the least negative impact possible in an area.

A scoping report for the Sustainability Appraisal for the Taverham Neighbourhood Plan has been completed and updated following consultation with the Environment Agency, Natural England, Historic England, Broadland District Council, the Broads Authority and Norfolk County Council from 8th November 2017 to 14th December 2018. The scoping report contains information on the environmental conditions that are used in this report to assess the need for SEA.

1.1 The Taverham Neighbourhood Plan

The Taverham Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group has developed the aims, vision, objectives and draft policies of the Neighbourhood Plan through extensive community consultation. The purposes of the draft Neighbourhood Plan policies are to build upon policy in the adopted Broadland Local Plan and the emerging Greater Norwich Local Plan specifically for the parish of Taverham.

Aims of the Neighbourhood Plan

- Give a voice to residents to shape development.
- Allow the village to grow sustainably.
- Enhance the sense of community.
• Protect and maintain the natural environment.
• Identify community needs for the use of developer contributions.

**The vision of the Neighbourhood Plan**

By 2040 Taverham will remain a distinct, well connected, viable and appropriately designed semi-rural village, with a strong integrated community. Recognising the parish heritage, it will have excellent services, a variety of quality homes, flourishing businesses, valued countryside and wooded areas. Taverham will be a safe and sustainable place where people want to live, work and play.

**The objectives and draft policies within the Neighbourhood Plan**

The references within the policies relate to the relevant appendix or figure in the Taverham Neighbourhood Plan.

**Objective 1: To enable appropriate locations for growth, which provide for a sustainable and integrated community**

**Policy TAV1: Location of new housing**

New housing development should be focused in the northeast of the parish close to the Broadland Northway, in locations which offer the greatest opportunities for integration with existing development, close to amenities, where they can be developed comprehensively, and where they can benefit from good public transport connections and easy road access to the Broadland Northway.

New development should be located to avoid sensitive landscapes, wildlife habitats and flood plain of the River Wensum Corridor in the south and west of the parish. (Also see Policy TAV8)

**Objective 2: To provide high quality, diverse, affordable and innovative housing within Taverham**

**Policy TAV2: Housing mix**

Development proposals that cater for a wide range of housing types enabling a mixed and inclusive community and meeting local needs will be supported.

The mix of housing should, where appropriate, include:
• Retirement living housing (e.g. supported housing, bungalows and retirement complexes, sheltered housing, warden-controlled schemes)
• Family housing 3-4 beds - both private and affordable
• Starter homes/first time buyers
• Adaptable, ‘life-time’ homes
• Affordable housing
• Self-build
Eco Housing

In order to encourage integration within the development the affordable Housing should be ‘pepper potted’ around the site and not grouped in clusters. *It should be noted that the above housing types may not be suitably accommodated on every site.

Objective 3: To ensure that the design, density and layout of new development reflects and enhances the character and distinctiveness of Taverham

Policy TAV3: Well-designed new development

All new development should reflect Taverham’s local distinctiveness and character as identified in the Character Appraisal (Appendix B) and seek to enhance its quality.

All proposals for new development should respect the scale, materials and character of the existing and surrounding buildings of the relevant Character Area (as highlighted in the Character Appraisal), reinforcing local development patterns, the form, scale, massing and character of adjacent properties where this provides a positive contribution.

New housing developments irrespective of scale, should also, where appropriate:

a) Provide for a density compatible with that existing in the immediate locality and the relevant character area;

b) Respect the established building ‘set-back’ and arrangements of residential front gardens, walls, railings or hedges;

c) Ensure that the proposed heights of buildings are appropriate to the character of the area;

d) Avoid overdevelopment by ensuring that a residential plot can accommodate the needs of modern dwellings with useable garden space and that the rear garden can be accessed without going through the house;

e) Provide sufficient external amenity space for refuse and recycling storage,

f) Minimise the loss of trees and hedgerows to enable necessary road access and visibility splays;

g) Meet the requirements of Secure by Design to minimise the likelihood and fear of crime;

h) Provide for adequate parking for residents and visitors, whilst seeking to minimise the visual impact of the car.

Outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area should be encouraged.

Policy TAV4: Larger scale housing development

In addition to the criteria set out in policy TAV3 above, proposals for new residential developments of 5 dwellings or more should:

a) Include soft well landscaped boundary edges where adjacent to open countryside or edge of settlement;

b) Retain existing tree belts and hedgerows making a feature of them as part of the development;
c) Incorporate significant landscaping areas including the use of native species in new planting;
d) Integrate with existing developments, in terms of footpaths and cycle connections;
e) Should be designed, to include more than one road access to the development to prevent traffic congestion and ensure the safe access and egress for the flow of traffic in the event of an accident.

Any new larger housing developments of 500 dwellings or more should include a heart or focal point (for example, a useable open space or a community building) that will act as an attraction for the community and is easily accessible from the rest of the development.

Policy TAV5: Non-designated heritage assets

The following buildings or structures (as shown in figure 13) are identified as non-designated heritage assets due to their locally important character and historic features:
1. Wall surrounding Taverham Park and east and west lodges
2. Old School and adjoining house
3. Old Rectory and coach house
4. Church Farm barns
5. Blacksmith Cottage, Sandy Lane
6. Park Cottages, 1, 3 & 5 The Street
7. School Cottages, 2-12 The Street
8. Park Wall Cottage, 27 The Street
9. Lilac Cottage, 33, The Street
10. Dory’s Cottage, 35 The Street
11. 41 The Street
12. Greenway, 43 The Street
13. Well Cottage, 40 The Street
14. Leighside, 42 The Street
15. Hill Cottage, 44 The Street
16. Village sign, Fakenham Road
17. 72 Sandy Lane, former Game Keeper’s Cottage
18. Parish sign, north west of junction of Fakenham Road and Sandy Lane
19. Marriott’s Way sign and time capsule
20. Lady Charlotte’s Cottage

Development proposals should avoid harm to these heritage assets having regard to their character, important features, setting and relationship with surrounding buildings or uses. Proposals should demonstrate the consideration that has been given to retaining:
a) The important character building or historic feature itself;
b) Its most distinctive and important features;
c) The positive elements of its setting and its relationship to its immediate surroundings; and
d) The contribution that the building or historic feature and its setting makes to the character of the local area.
Objective 4: To provide the infrastructure to encourage safe walking, cycling and the use of public transport within and beyond Taverham parish

Policy TAV6: Walking and cycling

Where new development takes place, opportunities should be taken to create new footpaths and cycle routes. New footpaths and cycle ways should connect to village services and existing routes and should form part of a safe, accessible and coherent network in and around the parish.

Where appropriate, new development adjacent to the Marriott’s Way should provide appropriate pedestrian and cycle links to enable increased access to the adjacent retail on Fir Covert Road and Marriott’s Way.

Objective 5: To provide adequate private and public parking

Policy TAV7: Parking

Parking should be located to be discreet, accessible, and appropriate to the character of the proposed development.

Taking into account, the proposal and its location, parking provision should include adequate off-street parking for the size of the dwelling. Where garages are proposed they should be of a size to accommodate and provide easy access to and from a range of modern vehicles.

Parking areas should not be disconnected from the dwelling and be located to promote natural surveillance and security; where appropriate, specific provision should also be made for layby parking and visitor parking.

Objective 6: To protect and enable access to green areas within Taverham and the surrounding countryside and woodland

Policy TAV8: River Wensum Green Corridor

The visual, scenic and undeveloped character of the River Wensum Green Corridor (shown on figure 18) will be protected from unsuitable development that may adversely affect its nature conservation value, its landscape character or its function as an important piece of green infrastructure and its contribution to the wider network of green spaces in the Greater Norwich area.

Policy TAV9: Local Green Spaces

The following areas are designated as Local Green Space for special protection (as shown in figure 19):
1. Broadland Greenway
2. Marriott’s Way
Development on designated Local Green Space will only be supported in very special circumstances where the harm resulting from the proposal is clearly outweighed by other considerations. Development adjacent to a Local Green Space that would adversely impact upon its special qualities will not be supported.

Policy TAV10: Protection of important public local views
The following views and vistas (as shown on figure 20 and figure 21) are identified as important public local views:
1. Views from Macks Lane towards the Church, Taverham Hall and the Old Rectory.
2. Views down to and across the Wensum Valley from Penn Road.
3. Views from Taverham Junior School across the Wensum Valley Farmland towards Macks Farm.

Development proposals, which would adversely affect an Important local view, will not be supported.

**Objective 7: To improve and provide high quality public spaces in the parish**

**Policy TAV11: New open spaces**

Proposals for new residential development should make sufficient provision for open space in accordance with the current adopted standards. Proposals for open space that include each of the following requirements will be supported.

The open space should:
- Be located within the development itself not separate from it.
- Be designed for a range of age groups, unless specifically intended to meet the needs of a specific age range.
- Be accessible from all areas of the development and/or in a central location within the development.
- Have good natural surveillance.
- Include provision for waste disposal.

Social spaces for stopping and sitting should be incorporated within the overall provision of outdoor spaces as required by the first part of this policy.

**Objective 8: To provide enough land, buildings and infrastructure to support local economic development**

**Policy TAV12: Existing employment**

The following main existing employment sites (as shown in figure 22) will be retained in current employment use:
2. Longs Business Centre, Fakenham Road.
3. Fir Covert Road (South), including Taverham Nursery Centre.
4. Fir Covert Road (North), three areas

Proposals for the expansion of existing businesses including small scale extensions will be supported provided they do not have a significant adverse impact upon the character of the area, or the amenity of local residents, either, through their built form, proposed use or traffic generated.
Proposals for larger new businesses/employment generating uses will be directed to these existing employment sites (as set out in the first part of the policy above where there is good access to the Broadland Northway.

**Objective 9: To ensure enough school and medical facilities exist within Taverham to meet community requirements**

**Policy TAV13: Community infrastructure**

Proposals that provide for space(s), that support health and social care services, new or improved school provision, meeting spaces, community cafés and other community infrastructure will be supported.

New development will be expected to include community infrastructure commensurate with scale of the proposed development and based on the expected needs of the new communities, which they are to serve. These facilities should be clustered together to enable opportunities for shared spaces and promote accessibility.

**Existing community facilities**

Proposals that would result in the loss of an existing community building or facility as shown on figure 23 will not be supported unless:

a. It can be demonstrated that the need for the building or facility no longer exists or it is no longer viable;

b. It can be demonstrated that suitable alternative provision exists in an equally accessible location elsewhere within the parish and this would avoid a duplication of facilities;

c. Suitable alternative provision will be delivered by new development.

**Objective 10: To ensure sufficient school and health facilities exist within Taverham to meet community requirements**

**Policy TAV14: New and improved sports provision**

Proposals for new or improved sports and leisure facilities in Taverham such as new sports pitch provision and multi-use all weather games areas, will be supported. Particular support will be given to proposals that provide facilities for:

- Football pitches;
- Multi-purpose courts that can be used for a range of sports including, tennis, basketball and netball;
- Changing facilities.

New sports and leisure facilities should be centrally located in close proximity to, and within easy access of, the community that they serve. Such facilities should be accessible by pedestrians, cyclists and public transport as well as providing for sufficient car parking.
2. Legislative Background

European Directive 2001/42/EC on the Assessment of the Effects of Certain Plans and Programmes on the Environment (‘SEA Directive’) introduces the need to undertake a strategic environmental assessment (‘SEA’) during the development of some plans and programmes. The main purpose of SEA, according to Article 1 of the SEA Directive, is:

‘to provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes with a view to promoting sustainable development.’

The SEA Directive is transcribed into UK law through the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, which establishes the requirement to undertake a sustainability appraisal (SA) for some documents used for planning purposes. The SA process incorporates the requirement for SEA, but typically has a broader scope and considers the social and economic issues in addition to the environmental effects.

The requirement to undertake SA of supplementary planning documents (SPD) was removed by the Planning Act 2008. However, the need to establish whether the planning document requires SEA, through the SEA Directive, remains.

Articles 2 and 3 of the SEA Directive explain which plans and programmes require SEA. The Government’s Planning Practice Guidance, suggests that an SPD will only require an SEA in exceptional circumstances, if they are likely to have significant environmental effects that have not already been assessed through the preparation of the Local Plan.

The Neighbourhood Planning (General) (Amendment) Regulations 2015 amends the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2013 to provide clarification on the SEA related documents which must be submitted alongside neighbourhood planning proposals. Regulation 2(4) of the amendment regulations 2015 adds to the list of documents that a neighbourhood planning group must submit to a local planning authority with a proposal for a neighbourhood plan, which is presented in regulation 6 of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012. The additional document which must be submitted is either an environmental report, should SEA be required, or a statement of reasons why an environmental assessment is not required.
3. An overview of the screening assessment

Figure 1 below is taken from ‘A practical guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive’ and illustrates the process for screening a Neighbourhood Plan to ascertain whether a full SEA is required (Article numbers relate to European Directive 2001/42/EC).

The screening for the Taverham Neighbourhood Plan is highlighted in orange. To carry out the screening process it is necessary to consider each of the criteria set out in Figure 1, this is done in Table 1 on the following page.

Table 2 addresses criteria 8 by considering if the Neighbourhood plan is likely to have a significant effect on the environment. This is done by considering the Plan against the criteria for determining the likely significance of effects referred to in the Directive\(^1\). The criteria are listed in Table 2 of this document.

Once the process set out in Figure 1 has been completed, a screening outcome can be reached and the conclusion can be found in section 5.

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1 Article 3.5 of European Directive 2001
4. The assessment of Taverham Neighbourhood Plan

Table 1 below assesses the need for full SEA of the Taverham Neighbourhood Plan. The criteria in Table 1 are drawn from Figure 1 which sets out how the SEA Directive should be applied.

Table 1: Assessment of the Need for SEA for the Taverham Neighbourhood Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assessment Criteria</th>
<th>Assessment</th>
<th>Justification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Is the Plan subject to preparation and/or adoption by a national, regional or local authority OR prepared by an authority for adoption through a legislative procedure by Parliament or Government? (Art. 2(a))</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>The intention is for the Taverham Neighbourhood Plan to be adopted by Broadland District Council through a legislative procedure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Is the Plan required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions? (Art. 2(a))</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>The Taverham Neighbourhood Plan would be a statutory document, prepared in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 as amended.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Is the Plan prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism, town and country planning or land use, AND does it set a framework for future development consent of projects in Annexes I and II to the EIX Directive?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>The Taverham Neighbourhood Plan is a document prepared for town and country planning purposes. It aims to support development for residential use to meet local needs and promote business use and new and extended recreation facilities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Does the plan determine the use of small areas at local level, OR is it a minor modification of a Plan or Programme subject to Art. 3.2?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>The Taverham Neighbourhood Plan will determine the use of small areas at a local level.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment (Article 3.5)?</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Justification is given for this decision in Table 2.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The final question in the SEA screening process for the Taverham Neighbourhood Plan was question 8: Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment? In asking this question, the SEA Directive refers to Article 3.5, which states that the relevant criteria in Annex II of the SEA Directive shall be considered when determining whether there are likely to be significant effects. Table 2 below, uses the criteria in Annex II to determine if the Taverham Neighbourhood Plan requires SEA.
Table 2: Determining the Likely Significant Effects of the Taverham Neighbourhood Plan on the Environment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria in Annex II of the SEA Directive</th>
<th>Assessment</th>
<th>Is there a Significant Environmental effect?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1) Characteristics of the plan and programmes, having regard, in particular, to:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources.</td>
<td>The framework for development within the Taverham Neighbourhood Plan is set by the Broadland Local Plan and the emerging Greater Norwich Local Plan, which give details of the location, size and nature of proposed development in this area. The Taverham Neighbourhood Plan builds upon this framework by providing some additional details of the nature of development and supplements the existing policy on a local scale only.</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans or programmes including those in a hierarchy.</td>
<td>The Taverham Neighbourhood Plan will be adopted alongside the Broadland Local Plan and provides supplementary information on a local scale rather than influencing the overall direction of the Local Plan.</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The relevance of the plan for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development.</td>
<td>Any development which comes forward through the Taverham Neighbourhood Plan will be subject to the environmental considerations of the Broadland Local Plan. These policies have been subject to sustainability appraisal and are in place to ensure that sustainable development is achieved.</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme.</td>
<td>The Taverham Neighbourhood Plan will protect and enhance the parish of Taverham and surrounding areas. Policies will contribute to conserving and enhancing the area and measures to reduce traffic congestion and volume will be expected. Development that detracts from the landscape and ecological value of the River.</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of community legislation on the environment (e.g. plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection).</td>
<td>The Neighbourhood Plan is in conformity with the Broadland Local Plan and is therefore not directly relevant to the implementation of other European legislation.</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard to: | |
| --- | --- | --- |
| The probability, duration, frequency, and reversibility of the effects. | The overall impacts of the Neighbourhood Plan will be in accordance with the Local Plan and unlikely to have significant effect. | No |
| The cumulative nature of the effects. | The Neighbourhood Plan should not lead to significant cumulative effects. | No |
| The transboundary nature of the effects. | The Neighbourhood Plan is unlikely to have an impact on neighbouring parishes. The Taverham Neighbourhood Plan aims to reduce the impact of traffic; new housing development should be focused in the northeast of the parish close to the Broadland Northway, in locations which offer the greatest opportunities for integration with existing development, close to amenities, where they can be developed comprehensively, and where they can benefit from good public transport connections and easy road access to the Broadland Northway. | No |
| The risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents). | The Neighbourhood Plan is unlikely to introduce significant risks to human health or the environment. | No |
| The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected.) | The Neighbourhood Plan area covers the civil parish of Taverham, which has a resident population of 10,142 (2011 Census). The Neighbourhood Plan policies are unlikely to have a significant impact on a wider geographical area or population. | No |
| The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected by the plan due to: | The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to protect the natural characteristics and cultural heritage of Taverham. | No |
- Spatial natural characteristics or cultural heritage
- Exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values
- Intensive land use
- The effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.

| parish. The River Wensum is a Natura 2000 site. The River Wensum Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and the River Wensum Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) cover the same area in the parish of Taverham. The SSSI impact zone covers the whole of the parish of Taverham. The policies within the Taverham Neighbourhood Plan will protect and enhance these natural characteristics. Policy TAV1 states that new development should be located to avoid sensitive landscapes, wildlife habitats and flood plain of the River Wensum Corridor in the south and west of the parish. Policy TAV8 protects the River Wensum Green Corridor from unsuitable development that may adversely affect its nature conservation value, its landscape character or it function as an important piece of green infrastructure and its contribution to the wider network of green spaces in the Greater Norwich area. Policy TAV5 protects Non-Designated Heritage Assets, TAV9 protects local green spaces and policy TAV10 protects important public local views. Policy TAV3 ensures that proposals for new development should respect the scale, materials and character of the existing and surrounding buildings of the relevant character area. |

5. Screening Outcome

As a result of the findings in Table 1 and Table 2, it is concluded that the Taverham Neighbourhood Plan is not likely to have significant environmental effects and a full SEA is not required.

The three statutory consultation bodies, Historic England, Natural England and the Environment Agency were consulted in June and July 2019 and are in agreement with the
screening outcomes of this report, in accordance with regulation 9(2) of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004. The responses are in Appendix B.

Although not required, a Sustainability Appraisal of the Taverham Neighbourhood Plan has been completed to assess the environmental, social and economic effects of the draft Neighbourhood Plan policies. Broadland District Council advocates the Sustainability Appraisal process to ensure that the policies within the Neighbourhood Plan are tested and assessed for their environmental, social and economic effects.
Appendix A: Map showing the Taverham Neighbourhood Plan Area
Source: Broadland District Council
The red line denotes Taverham’s Parish Boundary.
Appendix B: Consultation responses from the Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England

Mr R Squires  
Broadland District Council  
Thorpe Lodge (1) Yarmouth Road  
Norwich  
Norfolk  
NR7 0DU

Our ref: AE/2019/124242/01-L01  
Your ref: NHP SEA  
Date: 18 July 2019

Dear Mr Squires

TAVERHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN - SEA SCREENING ASSESSMENT

Thank you for consulting us on the SEA screening Assessment for the Taverham Neighbourhood plan.

We have reviewed the document as submitted and can confirm that we do not disagree with the conclusion that the screening assessment concludes.

While there are Source Protection Zones and Flood Zones within the boundary of the Neighbourhood site, there are no allocated sites and thus the risk to the environment is reduced. The Neighbourhood plan also builds on the Framework of the Greater Norwich Local Plan and the Broadland Local Plan which has already undertaken environmental assessments.

We trust this advice is useful.

Yours sincerely

Miss Natalie Kermath  
Planning Advisor
RE: Taverham Neighbourhood Plan SEA Screening

Thank you for your email of 13 June 2019 regarding the above consultation. As the Government’s adviser on the historic environment Historic England is keen to ensure that the protection of the historic environment is fully taken into account at all stages and levels of the local planning process. Therefore we welcome this opportunity to review the Screening Report for this plan. For the purposes of this consultation, Historic England will confine its advice to the question, “Is it (the Taverham Neighbourhood Plan) likely to have a significant effect on the historic environment?”. Our comments are based on the information supplied with the Screening Opinion.

The Screening Report indicates that the Council considers that the plan will not have any significant effects on the historic environment. We note that the plan does not propose to specifically allocate any sites for development, but instead encourages development to take place in the northeast of the parish under the provisions of policy TAV1.

On the basis of the information supplied, and in the context of the criteria set out in Schedule 1 of the Environmental Assessment Regulations [Annex II of ‘SEA’ Directive], Historic England concurs with the Council that the preparation of a Strategic Environmental Assessment is not required.

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

I should be pleased if you can send a copy of the determination as required by REG 11 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.

We should like to stress that this opinion is based on the information provided by you with your correspondence dated 13 June. To avoid any doubt, this does not reflect our obligation to provide further advice on later stages of the SEA process and, potentially, object to specific proposals which may subsequently arise (either as a result of this
consultation or in later versions of the plan/guidance) where we consider that, despite the SEA, these would have an adverse effect upon the environment.

Historic England strongly advises that the conservation and archaeological staff of the relevant local authorities are closely involved throughout the preparation of the plan and its assessment. They are best placed to advise on; local historic environment issues and priorities, including access to data held in the Historic Environment Record (HER), how the allocation, policy or proposal can be tailored to minimise potential adverse impacts on the historic environment; the nature and design of any required mitigation measures; and opportunities for securing wider benefits for the future conservation and management of heritage assets.

Please do contact me, either via email or the number above, if you have any queries.

Yours sincerely,

Edward James
Historic Places Advisor, East of England
Edward.James@HistoricEngland.org.uk

cc:
Dear Mr Squires

**Taverham Neighbourhood Plan - Strategic Environmental Assessment - Screening**

Thank you for your consultation dated and received on 13 June 2019. Please accept my apologies for the delay in replying.

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

It is our advice, on the basis of the material supplied with the consultation, that, in so far as our strategic environmental interests are concerned (including but not limited to statutory designated sites, landscapes and protected species, geology and soils) are concerned, that there are unlikely to be significant environmental effects from the proposed plan.

**Neighbourhood Plan**

Where Neighbourhood Plans could have significant environmental effects, they may require a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) under the Environment Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (as amended). Further guidance on deciding whether the proposals are likely to have significant environmental effects and the requirements for consulting Natural England on SEA are set out in the [planning practice guidance](#). Planning practice guidance also outlines that if an appropriate assessment is required for your neighbourhood plan this will also engage the need for a SEA. One of the basic conditions that will be tested by the independent examiner is whether the neighbourhood plan is compatible with European obligations, including those under the SEA Directive. Where a SEA is required it should be prepared in accordance with regulation 12 of the SEA Regulations.

Guidance on the assessment of Neighbourhood Plans in light of the SEA Directive is contained within the National Planning Practice Guidance. The guidance highlights three triggers that may require the production of an SEA, for instance where:

- a neighbourhood plan allocates sites for development
- the neighbourhood area contains sensitive natural or heritage assets that may be affected by the proposals in the plan
- the neighbourhood plan may have significant environmental effects that have not already been considered and dealt with through a sustainability appraisal of the Local Plan.

We have checked our records and based on the information provided, we can confirm that in our view the proposals contained within the plan will not have significant effects on sensitive sites that Natural England has a statutory duty to protect.
We are not aware of significant populations of protected species which are likely to be affected by the policies / proposals within the plan. It remains the case, however, that the responsible authority should provide information supporting this screening decision, sufficient to assess whether protected species are likely to be affected.

Notwithstanding this advice, Natural England does not routinely maintain locally specific data on all potential environmental assets. As a result the responsible authority should raise environmental issues that we have not identified on local or national biodiversity action plan species and/or habitats, local wildlife sites or local landscape character, with its own ecological and/or landscape advisers, local record centre, recording society or wildlife body on the local landscape and biodiversity receptors that may be affected by this plan, before determining whether an SA/SEA is necessary.

Please note that Natural England reserves the right to provide further comments on the environmental assessment of the plan beyond this SEA/SA screening stage, should the responsible authority seek our views on the scoping or environmental report stages. This includes any third party appeal against any screening decision you may make.

For any queries relating to the specific advice in this letter, any new consultations, or to provide further information on this consultation please send your correspondences to consultations@naturalengland.org.uk.

Yours sincerely

Louise Oliver

Louise Oliver
Lead Adviser – Norfolk & Suffolk Team
Natural England
Dragonfly House, 2 Gilders Way, Norwich, NR3 1UB
T: 020802 64893  M: 07920 086653