

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) for the Harberton Parish Neighbourhood Plan

Scoping Report

Harberton Parish Council

March 2023

Quality information

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| V1 | February 2023 | Draft for internal review | C.B. | Principal Environmental Planner |
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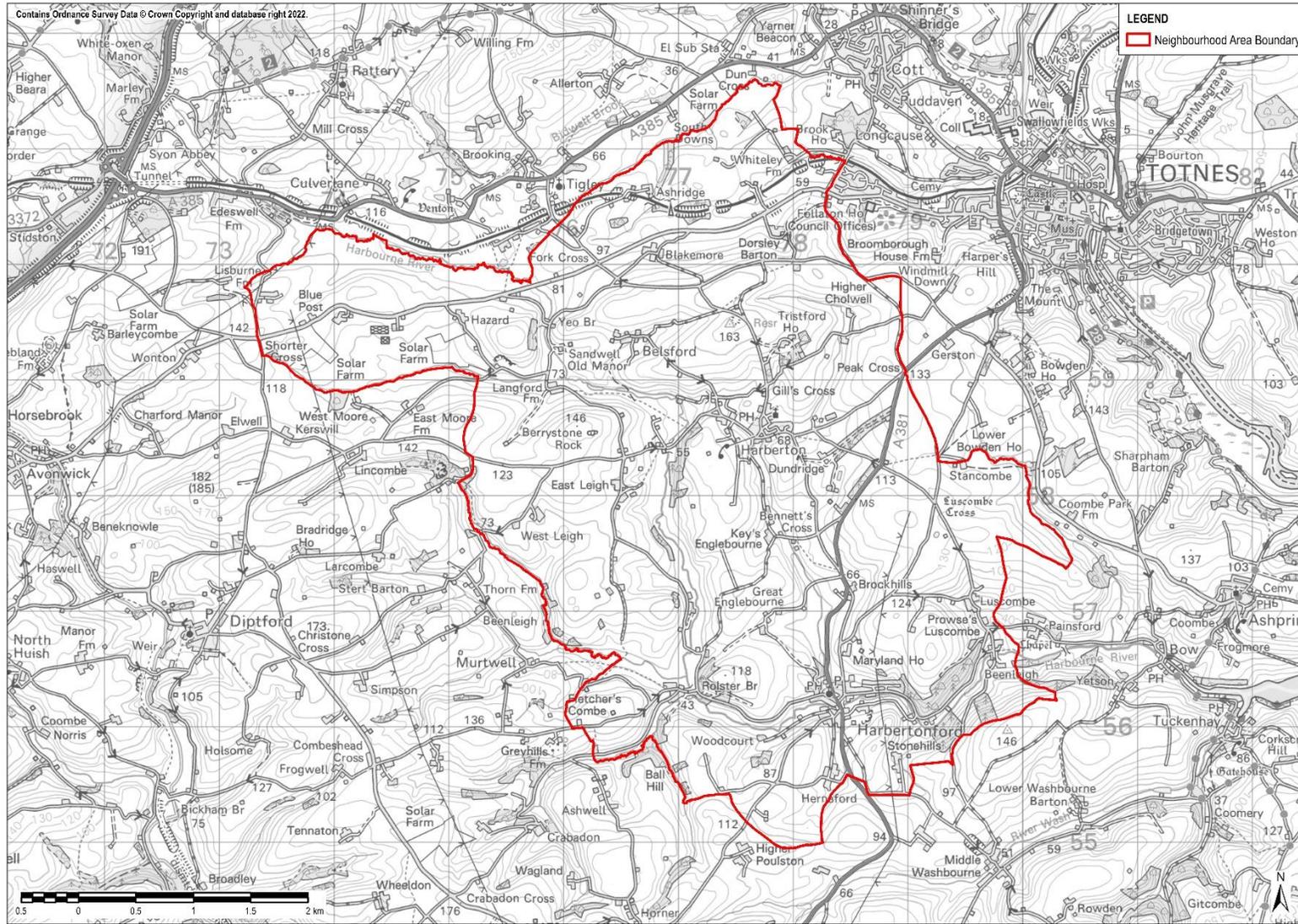


Figure 1.1: HPNP Neighbourhood Area

1. Introduction

Background

- 1.1 AECOM has been commissioned to undertake an independent Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in support of the emerging Harberton Parish Neighbourhood Plan (HPNP).
- 1.2 The HPNP is being prepared under the Localism Act 2011¹ and the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012², and in the context of the Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan 2014-2034³. The key information relating to the HPNP is presented in **Table 1.1** below and the neighbourhood area is depicted in the figure above.

Table 1.1 Key information relating to the Harberton Parish Neighbourhood Plan

| | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Name of Responsible Authority | South Hams District Council |
| Title of Plan | Harberton Parish Neighbourhood Plan (HPNP) |
| Subject | Neighbourhood planning |
| Purpose | <p>The HPNP is being prepared as a neighbourhood plan under the Localism Act 2011 and Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. The HPNP is being prepared in the context of the Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan 2014-2034.</p> <p>The HPNP will be used to guide and shape development within the neighbourhood area.</p> |
| Timescale | Up to 2034 |
| Area covered by the plan | The neighbourhood area covers the civil parish of Harberton, located in South Devon (South Hams District), as shown in the figure above. |
| Summary of content | The HPNP will set out a vision, strategy, and range of policies for the neighbourhood area. |
| Plan contact point | <p>Cat Radford, Clerk</p> <p>Email: clerk@harbertonparishcouncil.org</p> |

Planning policy context

- 1.3 The Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan (JLP) 2014-2034 was adopted in 2019 and forms part of the development plan for the administrative areas of Plymouth, South Hams, and West Devon. Within the ‘Thriving Towns and Villages’ chapter, the JLP identifies the two key settlements within the neighbourhood area – Harberton and Harbertonford - as sustainable villages which have a *“limited but vital provision of services and amenities”*.

¹ UK Government (2011) ‘Localism Act 2011’ can be accessed [here](#).

² UK Government (2012) ‘The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012’ can be accessed [here](#).

³ Plymouth Council (2019) ‘Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan 2014-2034’ can be accessed [here](#).

- 1.4 The JLP supports growth in these sustainable villages to meet local needs and encourages communities to identify sites to meet these needs (particularly through the preparation of neighbourhood plans). The JLP indicates that Harbertonford can accommodate 30 new dwellings, and Harberton 20 new dwellings, totalling 50 dwellings across the neighbourhood area.
- 1.5 Neighbourhood plans will form part of the development plan for South Hams, alongside, but not as a replacement for the JLP. Neighbourhood Plans are required to be in general conformity with the JLP and can develop policies and proposals to address local place-based issues. In this way it is intended for the JLP to provide a clear overall strategic direction for development in South Hams, whilst enabling finer detail to be determined through the neighbourhood planning process where appropriate.

SEA for the Harberton Parish Neighbourhood Plan

SEA screening for the Harberton Parish Neighbourhood Plan

- 1.6 A Neighbourhood Plan requires SEA where it is likely to have significant environmental effects. In this respect, Neighbourhood Plans are more likely to be screened in as requiring an SEA if both the following apply:
 - 1) the Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared within a neighbourhood area with significant environmental constraints, such as, for example, Special Areas of Conservation, Sites of Special Scientific Interest, or large concentrations of heritage assets; and
 - 2) the Neighbourhood Plan is likely to allocate sites for development⁴.
- 1.7 In November 2022 South Hams District Council confirmed SEA is required for the HPNP given it is looking to bring forward site allocations for housing development in an area with significant environmental constraints. This includes conservation areas, ancient woodland, scheduled monuments and listed building, as well as being in proximity to international biodiversity and geodiversity designations and nationally protected landscapes.
- 1.8 In light of this outcome, an SEA process is being undertaken to meet the specific requirements prescribed by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (the SEA Regulations).

SEA explained

- 1.9 SEA is a mechanism for considering and communicating the potential impacts of an emerging plan, and potential alternatives in terms of key environmental issues.
- 1.10 The aim of SEA is to inform and influence the plan-making process with a view to avoiding and mitigating potential negative impacts and maximising the potential for positive effects. Through this approach, the SEA for the HPNP seeks to maximise the emerging plan's contribution to sustainable development.

⁴ DLUHC (February 2022): Chief Planner's Newsletter, February 2022 "Strategic Environmental Assessment for Neighbourhood Plans: Timely and effective screening" accessible [here](#)

1.11 Two key procedural requirements of the SEA Regulations are that:

- i. When deciding on ‘the scope and level of detail of the information’ which must be included in the Environmental Report there is a consultation with nationally designated authorities concerned with environmental issues;
- ii. A report (the ‘Environmental Report’) is published for consultation alongside the draft plan (i.e. the draft HPNP) that presents outcomes from the environmental assessment (i.e. discusses ‘likely significant effects’ that would result from plan implementation) and reasonable alternatives.

SEA scoping explained

1.12 Developing the draft scope for the SEA as presented in this report has involved the following steps:

- Exploring the policy context for the HPNP and SEA to summarise the key messages arising.
- Establishing the baseline for the SEA (i.e. the current and future situation in the area in the absence of the HPNP) to help identify the plan’s likely significant effects.
- Identifying particular problems or opportunities (‘issues’) that should be a particular focus of the SEA; and
- Considering this information to develop an SEA Framework comprising SEA objectives and assessment questions, which can then be used as a guiding framework for the subsequent assessment.

1.13 The scope is explored and presented under a series of key environmental themes as follows:

- Air quality
- Biodiversity and geodiversity
- Climate change (including flood risk)
- Community wellbeing
- Historic environment
- Land, soil, and water resources
- Landscape
- Transportation

1.14 The selected environmental themes incorporate the ‘SEA topics’ suggested by Annex I (f) of the SEA Directive⁵. These were refined to reflect a broad understanding of the anticipated scope of plan effects. The discussion of the scoping information for each theme is presented in **Chapters 2 to 9**, along with a summary of the key issues and the proposed SEA Framework of objectives and assessment questions. Each proposal within the emerging HPNP will be assessed consistently using this Framework.

⁵ The SEA Directive (Directive 2001/42/EC) is ‘of a procedural nature’ (para 9 of the Directive preamble) and does not set out to prescribe particular issues that should and should not be a focus, beyond requiring a focus on ‘the environment, including on issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors’

2. Air quality

Focus of theme

2.1 This chapter presents the policy context and baseline summary in relation to the air quality SEA theme. The theme focuses on air pollution sources, air quality hotspots, and air quality management within and surrounding the neighbourhood area. This information is used to identify key issues (both constraints and opportunities) before proposing a relevant SEA objective and supporting assessment questions.

Policy context

2.2 **Table 2.1** below presents the most relevant documents identified in the policy review for the purposes of the SEA.

Table 2.1: Plans, policies and strategies reviewed in relation to the air quality SEA theme

| Document title | Year of publication |
|---|---------------------|
| Environment Act | 2021 |
| National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) | 2021 |
| The Clean Air Strategy | 2019 |
| A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment | 2018 |
| UK plan for tackling roadside nitrogen dioxide concentrations | 2017 |
| Environment Act 1995 | 1995 |
| Environment Act 2021 | 2021 |
| South Hams 2021 Air Quality Annual Status Report (ASR) | 2021 |
| Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan 2014-2034 | 2019 |

2.3 The key messages emerging from the review are summarised below:

- The HPNP will need to consider the principles outlined in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which seek to reduce or mitigate air quality impacts during development whilst simultaneously taking advantage of opportunities to improve air quality. Measures include, but are not limited to; sustainable transport solutions, limiting the need to travel, compliance with pollutant limits or objectives, and the enhancement of green infrastructure. Smaller-scale development should consider the potential for cumulative effects in relation to air quality. The NPPF also states that planning policies should contribute towards compliance with pollutant limit levels or national objectives, acknowledging air quality management areas, clean air zones and the cumulative impacts from individual sites in local areas. Moreover, the NPPF indicates that new and existing developments should be prevented from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of air pollution.
- The Clean Air Strategy outlines how the government will tackle all sources of air pollution. The strategy proposes goals to cut public exposure to particulate matter pollution and outlines required action to meet these

goals. Furthermore, it seeks to recognise wider sources that cause poor air quality, such as diffuse sources and smaller contributors. The proposed measures include new legislation and local powers to act in areas with air pollution issues.

- The 25 Year Environment Plan establishes how the government will expand net gain approaches to include air quality improvements, such as planting more trees in urban areas and changing fuel supplies. In particular, ‘Goal 1 Clean air’ and the policies contained within ‘Chapter 4: Increasing resource efficiency and reducing pollution and waste’ directly relate to the air quality SEA theme.
- The UK plan for tackling roadside nitrogen dioxide is focused on lowering nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) emissions to statutory limits as quickly as possible. The plan acknowledges that an improvement in air quality and a reduction in emissions is important and aims to position the UK at the forefront of vehicle innovation by making motoring cleaner.
- Local authorities are required to monitor air quality across the district, report regularly to Defra and act where nationally set levels and limits of pollutants are likely to be exceeded under Section 82 of the Environment Act (1995). Monitoring is undertaken to assess levels of nitrogen dioxide, sulphur dioxide, ozone, benzene, and particulates. Where exceedances exist, areas are declared as air quality management areas (AQMAs) and local authorities are required to produce an air quality action plan (AQAP) to improve air quality in the area. Under Schedule 11 of the Environment Act (2021), a local authority must identify any parts of its area in which it appears air quality standards or objectives are not likely to be achieved within the relevant period. Additionally, local authorities must also identify relevant sources of emissions that are considered partly or wholly responsible for failing to achieve air quality standards or objectives in the area. As such, the South Hams 2021 Air Quality Annual Status Report (ASR) is the last available report for the neighbourhood area; fulfilling the requirements of the local air quality management (LAQM) as set out in Section 82 of the Environment Act (1995).
- The HPNP will also need to consider the relevant policies that are outlined in the Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan. In particular, this includes:
 - Policy DEV2 – Air, water, soil, noise, land and light.
 - Policy DEV13 – Consideration of sites for Travellers and Travelling Showpeople; and
 - Policy DEV29 – Specific provisions relating to transport.

Baseline summary

Current baseline

2.4 According to the South Hams 2021 Air Quality ASR, there are no AQMAs or action plans in the neighbourhood area. The AQMAs within South Hams cover areas within Ivybridge, Totnes and Dean Prior. The Totnes AQMA is located within the Totnes neighbourhood area, which is located adjacent to the HPNP

neighbourhood area to the north-east. As the A381 connects the HPNP neighbourhood area to the Totnes AQMA, it is likely development in the neighbourhood area will impact on this AQMA through increased traffic levels going to, travelling through, and coming from Totnes.

- 2.5 Air quality monitoring in the South Hams is undertaken for nitrogen dioxide (NO₂); the main source for this is local traffic emissions, which has an annual national objective of not exceeding 40 ug/m³. Other than NO₂, there are no other pollutants of concern in the South Hams area.
- 2.6 The Totnes AQMA had recorded NO₂ levels around the national objective with no obvious change until 2019, when it lowered to 37 ug/m³. Levels lowered again in 2020, however this may reflect the period of enforced lockdowns during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 2.7 South Hams District Council, in partnership with West Devon Borough Council, is actively taking measures to reduce pollution to below the current objective levels. Measures which are proposed include ensuring that greener travel options are encouraged, implementing further low emission vehicle infrastructure, and ensuring any potential air pollution problems caused by development are appropriately identified and addressed through planning.
- 2.8 It is noted there is no mains gas supply in the village of Harberton; as such, smoke from heating homes using coal and wood is likely to be higher. It is likely the level of smoke increases at peak times of day (e.g., early morning and the evening).
- 2.9 The A381 road running through the HPNP neighbourhood area is considered to have increased air pollution levels in comparison to other roads passing through the parish, and is highlighted as a point of concern by residents.

Future baseline

- 2.10 Future development in the neighbourhood area has the potential to increase traffic, congestion, and their associated emissions. Additionally, it has the potential to negatively impact on the Totnes AQMA to the north-east, again through potentially increasing emissions that will lead to an exceedance in pollutant levels. In the absence of suitable planning and mitigation, this could lead to a deterioration in air quality. Therefore, mitigation measures should be incorporated into the design of new development areas to maintain (and where possible, improve) air quality.
- 2.11 It is considered that the present shift towards the use of sustainable transportation, including active travel modes and electric vehicle use, has the potential to support longer term air quality improvements. Furthermore, as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic there has been a shift towards employees working from home, which also contributes to emissions reduction. Planning for these factors during development will have a positive impact on air quality.

Key issues

- 2.12 Following the consideration of the baseline information and policy context review, the following key issues within the neighbourhood area are identified in relation to air quality:

- The HPNP neighbourhood area is within proximity to the Totnes AQMA, which could be negatively impacted as a result of future development. Therefore, it will be important that the HPNP addresses how future development will mitigate any negative effects.
- The main pollutant of concern is NO₂, which is largely linked to emissions from vehicles. The effects of the HPNP in relation to traffic and congestion will be explored further under the Transportation SEA theme.
- The HPNP presents opportunities to improve accessibility and support public transport and active travel. These opportunities will be explored further within the Community Wellbeing and Transportation SEA themes.

Proposed SEA objective

2.13 Based on the key issues discussed above, it is proposed that the SEA should include the following objective:

| SEA theme | SEA objective |
|-------------|---|
| Air quality | Support objectives to improve air quality within and surrounding the neighbourhood area and minimise sources of nitrogen dioxide. |

2.14 Supporting assessment questions include (will the option / proposal...):

- Improve air quality in the Totnes AQMA that is in proximity to the neighbourhood area?
- Implement measures (such as green infrastructure) which will help to support good air quality in the neighbourhood area?
- Promote and encourage more sustainable transport options, including the provision of electric vehicle charging points?
- Encourage development which reduces the need to travel?

3. Biodiversity and geodiversity

Focus of theme

3.1 This chapter presents the policy context and baseline summary in relation to the biodiversity and geodiversity SEA theme. The theme focuses on nature conservation designations, geological sites, and habitats and species in the neighbourhood area. This information is used to identify key issues (both constraints and opportunities) before proposing a relevant SEA objective and supporting assessment questions.

Policy context

3.2 **Table 3.1** below presents the most relevant documents identified in the policy review for the purposes of the SEA.

Table 3.1: Plans, policies and strategies reviewed in relation to the biodiversity and geodiversity SEA theme

| Document title | Year of publication |
|--|---------------------|
| Environment Act 2021 | 2021 |
| National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) | 2021 |
| A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment | 2018 |
| UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework | 2012 |
| The Natural Choice: securing the value of nature (Natural Environment White Paper) | 2011 |
| Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services | 2011 |
| Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act | 2006 |
| UK Biodiversity Action Plan | 1994 |
| Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan 2014-2034 | 2019 |

3.3 The key messages emerging from the review are summarised below:

- The Environment Act makes provision for biodiversity gain to be a condition of planning permission in England, in addition to creating biodiversity gain site registers and biodiversity credits. It recognises there is a duty to conserve and enhance biodiversity and encourages the identification of suitable areas through biodiversity reports and local nature recovery strategies. Furthermore, habitat maps are expected to include recovery and enhancement areas which are currently, or could become, important for biodiversity.
- The HPNP will need to consider the principles set out in the NPPF, which indicate that planning policies and decisions should protect and enhance soils and sites of biodiversity and / or geological value. Plans should also identify, map, and safeguard components of wider ecological networks, promote positive action for priority habitats and species, and pursue opportunities to secure biodiversity net gains. The NPPF also states that if

development causes substantial harm and cannot be avoided, adequately mitigated, or compensated, then planning permission should be refused.

- The NPPF also supports the establishment and enhancement of habitat networks and green infrastructure to allow for more resilience to current and future pressures for biodiversity.
- The 25 Year Environment Plan places importance on improvements to the natural environment, such as achieving clean air and water, reducing environmental hazard risk, and encouraging sustainable resource use. This will be accomplished through a variety of actions including implementing sustainable land management, engaging in nature recovery, and connecting people to the environment.
- The UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) is a response to the Convention on Biological Diversity, which calls for the development and enforcement of national strategies and associated action plans to identify, conserve and protect existing biological diversity, and to enhance it wherever possible. In particular, the BAP identifies priority species and habitats that are most threatened and require conservation action. The UK BAP is succeeded by the UK Post-2010 Biodiversity Framework, which aims to ensure that biodiversity is valued, conserved, restored, and wisely used, and ecosystem services are maintained. This helps to sustain a healthy planet that delivers essential benefits for everyone.
- The Natural Environment White Paper (NEWP) sets out the importance of a healthy, functioning natural environment to sustaining economic growth, prospering communities, and personal wellbeing. It adopts a landscape approach to protect and enhance biodiversity and aims to create a green economy, whereby the economic growth and the health of natural resources sustain each other.
- Reflecting the commitments within the NEWP, Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services aims to stop overall biodiversity loss, support healthy and well-functioning ecosystems, and establish coherent ecological networks.
- The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act details nature protection in the UK, which includes wildlife, Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), and National Parks. It extends the UK Government's duty to biodiversity and establishes the role of Natural England, which is responsible for safeguarding England's natural environment, making sure it is protected and improved whilst ensuring people enjoy, understand, and access it.
- The HPNP will also need to consider the relevant policies that are outlined in the Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan. In particular, this includes:
 - Policy SPT12 – Strategic approach to the natural environment.
 - Policy DEV26 – Protecting and enhancing biodiversity and geological conservation; and
 - Policy DEV28 – Trees, woodlands, and hedgerows.

Baseline summary

Current baseline

Special Areas of Conservation

3.4 The Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (known as the Ramsar Convention) is an intergovernmental treaty that provides the framework for the conservation and appropriate use of wetlands and their resources⁶. In the UK, many Ramsar sites were also designated as Special Protection Areas (SPAs) under the European Birds Directive (79/409/EEC)⁷. To ensure European Directives were operable in the UK after the EU transition period, changes were made through the implementation of the Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019⁸. In doing so, SPAs and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) form a national site network within the UK⁹, comprising of sites already designated under the Nature Directives (i.e., 79/409/EEC and 92/43/EEC) and any additional sites designated under the 2019 Regulations.

3.5 Whilst there are no Ramsar sites or SPAs within or in proximity to the neighbourhood area, there is a section of the South Hams SAC within 3 km to the north – shown in a figure at the end of this chapter. The South Hams SAC¹⁰ covers approximately 126.87 ha and is characterised by:

- Coastal sand dunes, sand beaches, machair (2%).
- Shingle, sea cliffs, islets (5%).
- Heath, scrub, maquis and garrigue, phygrana (10%).
- Dry grassland, steppes (10%).
- Improved grassland (10%).
- Other arable land (5%).
- Broad-leaved deciduous woodland (25%).
- Coniferous woodland (5%).
- Mixed woodland (10%).
- Inland rocks, screes, sands, permanent snow and ice (3%); and
- Other land (including towns, villages, roads, waste places, mines, industrial sites) (15%).

3.6 The neighbourhood area is also within the Landscape Connectivity Zone associated with the South Hams SAC. This Landscape Connectivity Zone indicates the areas which Greater horseshoe bats are likely to move through to reach recorded Sustenance Zones. As such, proposals that can restrict this

⁶ Ramsar Convention (2014) 'Introducing the Convention on Wetlands' can be accessed [here](#).

⁷ EU (1979) 'The European Birds Directive (79/209/EEC)' can be accessed [here](#).

⁸ UK Government (2019) 'The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019' can be accessed [here](#).

⁹ Defra (2021) 'Policy Paper: Changes to the Habitats Regulations 2017' can be accessed [here](#).

¹⁰ JNCC (2015) 'South Hams SAC' can be accessed [here](#).

movement may have an impact on the South Hams SAC Greater horseshoe bat population¹¹.

Priority habitats and species

- 3.7 There are a variety of Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) Priority habitats within and in proximity to the neighbourhood area. This includes good quality semi-improved grassland, lowland meadows, ancient woodland, deciduous woodland, and traditional orchards. The location of these habitats is shown in a figure at the end of this chapter.
- 3.8 Ancient woodland takes hundreds of years to establish. It is considered important for its wildlife (often including rare and threatened species), and soils. Ancient woodland includes land that has been wooded continuously since at least 1600 AD. This means the following is included under its designation:
- Ancient semi-natural woodland mainly made up of trees and shrubs native to the site, usually arising from natural regeneration; and
 - Plantations on ancient woodland sites - replanted with conifer and broadleaved trees that retain ancient woodland features, such as undisturbed soil, ground flora and fungi¹².
- 3.9 In the HPNP neighbourhood area, the area of ancient woodland is Leigh Bridge Copse, located within proximity to the Harberton settlement to the west.
- 3.10 In terms of the national habitat network, isolated parts of the neighbourhood area are covered by areas of Network Enhancement Zones 1 and 2¹³; these areas are concentrated in the south-east, south-west and north-east corners of the neighbourhood area. Network Enhancement Zone 1 is deemed most suitable for habitat re-creation supporting the primary habitat, whilst Zone 2 is most suitable for new habitats and green infrastructure. Additionally, the area around the Hawthornwells Copse to the south-west of the neighbourhood area falls within a Network Expansion Zone¹⁴. These areas are identified as suitable locations for connecting and linking up habitats across a landscape with new habitat creation.
- 3.11 The Devon Biodiversity Record Centre¹⁵ contains archives of protected and notable species within Devon, including those species protected by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981¹⁶ and under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006. The BAP Priority Habitats and ecological designations within and surrounding the neighbourhood area are likely to support populations of protected species.

Future baseline

- 3.12 Habitats and species will potentially face increasing pressures from future development within the neighbourhood area, with the potential for negative impacts on the wider ecological network. This may include a loss of habitats

¹¹ South Hams SAC Steering Group (2019) 'South Hams Special Area of Conservation (SAC) Greater Horseshoe Bats Habitats Regulation Assessment Guidance' can be accessed [here](#).

¹² GOV.UK (2022) 'Ancient woodland, ancient trees and veteran trees: advice for making planning decisions' can be accessed [here](#).

¹³ Natural England (2020) 'National Habitat Network Maps' can be accessed [here](#).

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ The Devon Biodiversity Record Centre website can be accessed [here](#).

¹⁶ UK Government (1981) 'The Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981' can be accessed [here](#).

and impacts on biodiversity networks, which may be exacerbated by the effects of climate change. This has the potential to lead to changes in the distribution and abundance of species and changes to the composition of habitats.

3.13 The neighbourhood area presents an opportunity to maximise benefits for biodiversity by including consideration of important habitats, species, and designated sites at an early stage of planning for future growth. To maintain and improve the condition of biodiversity in the future, it will be important to not only protect and enhance important habitats, but also the connections between them. It will be crucial to effectively coordinate the delivery of new development to ensure that opportunities to improve green infrastructure and ecological corridors are maximised within the neighbourhood area.

Key issues

3.14 Considering the baseline information and policy context review, the following key issues are identified in relation to biodiversity and geodiversity:

- Internationally designated sites within proximity to the neighbourhood area includes the South Hams SAC. The neighbourhood area sits within the Landscape Connectivity Zone associated with the South Hams SAC.
- There are several BAP Priority Habitat types within the neighbourhood area, including good quality semi-improved grassland, lowland meadows, deciduous woodland and traditional orchards.
- There is ancient woodland within the neighbourhood area – the Leigh Bridge copse, which is considered important for its wildlife and soils.
- There are areas of Network Enhancement Zones 1 and 2 and Network Expansion Zone that indicate areas most suitable for habitat re-creation, new habitats and green infrastructure and habitat linking.

Proposed SEA objective

3.15 Based on the key issues discussed above, it is proposed that the SEA should include the following objective:

| SEA theme | SEA objective |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Biodiversity and geodiversity | Protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity within and surrounding the neighbourhood area. |

3.16 Supporting assessment questions include (will the option / proposal...):

- Avoid or, if not possible, minimise impacts on biodiversity and geodiversity, including internationally and nationally designated sites, and provide net gains where possible?
- Support the integrity of the designated sites for biodiversity and geodiversity located within proximity to the neighbourhood area?
- Protect and enhance priority habitats, semi-natural habitats, species, and the ecological network connecting them?
- Support the national habitat network, particularly Network Enhancement Zones and identified restorable habitat?

- Achieve biodiversity net gains and support the delivery of ecosystem services and multifunctional green infrastructure services?
- Increase the resilience of biodiversity in the area to the effects of climate change, including through enhancements to ecological networks?
- Support and promote access to and interpretation and understanding of biodiversity and geodiversity?

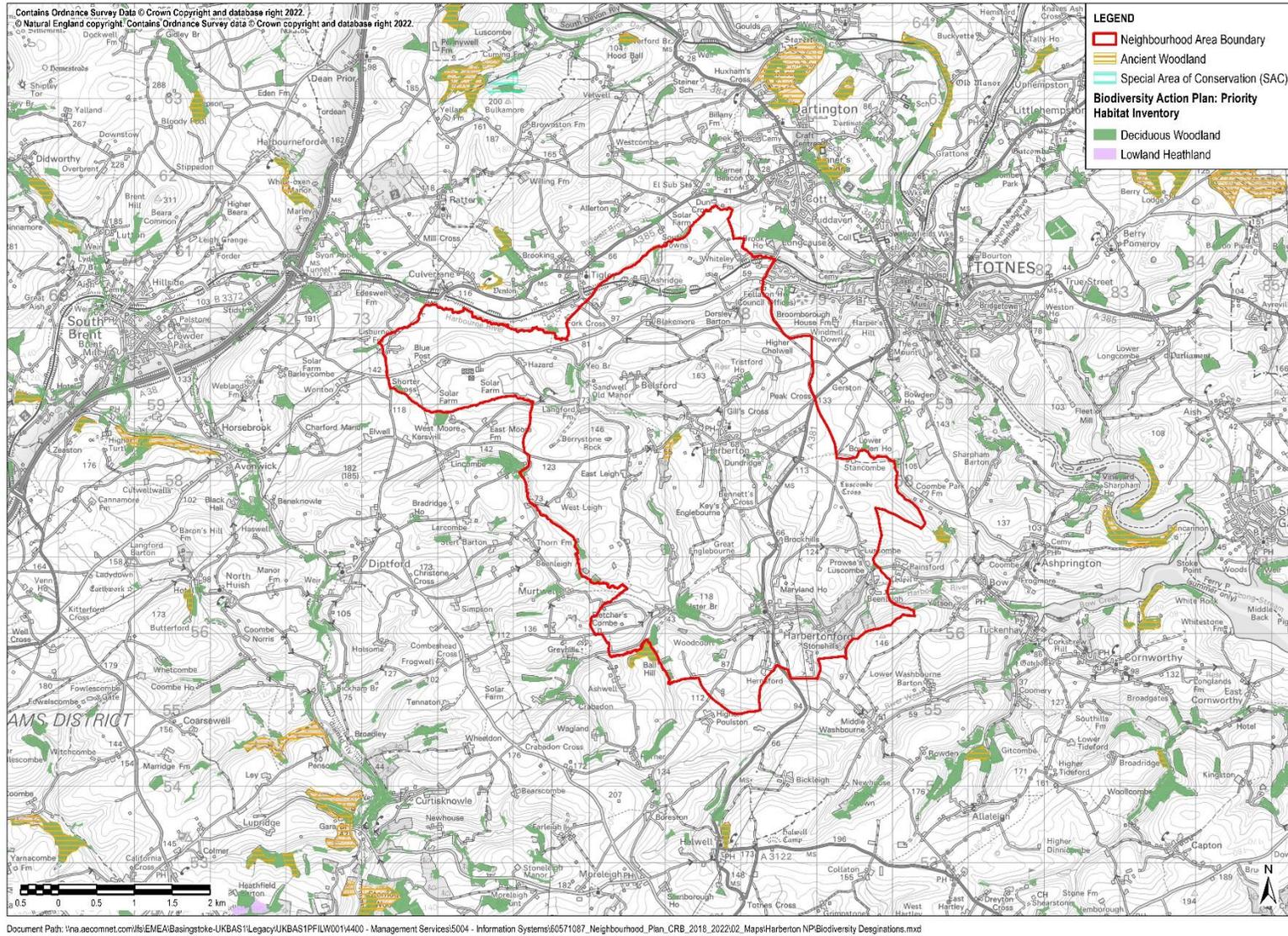


Figure 3.1: Biodiversity and geodiversity designations and habitats within the HPNP area

4. Climate change (including flood risk)

Focus of theme

4.1 This chapter presents the policy context and baseline summary in relation to the climate change SEA theme. The theme focuses on contributions to climate change, the effects of climate change, climate change adaptation, and flood risk in the neighbourhood area. This information is used to identify key issues (both constraints and opportunities) before proposing a relevant SEA objective and supporting assessment questions.

Policy context

4.2 **Table 4.1** below presents the most relevant documents identified in the policy review for the purposes of the SEA.

Table 4.1: Plans, policies and strategies reviewed in relation to the climate change SEA theme

| Document title | Year of publication |
|---|---------------------|
| National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) | 2021 |
| Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener | 2021 |
| National Infrastructure Assessment | 2021 |
| The UK Sixth Carbon Budget | 2020 |
| The Clean Air Strategy 2019 | 2019 |
| The National Adaptation Programme and the Third Strategy for Climate Adaptation Reporting | 2018 |
| A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment | 2018 |
| The Clean Growth Strategy | 2017 |
| UK Climate Change Risk Assessment 2017 | 2017 |
| Flood and Water Management Act 2010 | 2010 |
| Climate Change Act 2008 | 2008 |
| Devon County Council Carbon Reduction Plan 2020-2030 | 2020 |
| Devon Climate Emergency Interim Devon Carbon Plan | 2020 |
| South Hams District Council Climate Change and Biodiversity Strategy | 2020 |
| Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan 2014-2034 | 2019 |
| Devon County Council Climate Change Strategy | 2018 |
| Emerging Devon Climate Emergency Adaptation Plan | Emerging |

4.3 The key messages emerging from the review are summarised below:

- The HPNP will need to consider the principles set out in the NPPF, including adopting a proactive planning approach to both mitigate and adapt to climate change. Planning policies are expected to improve the resilience of communities and infrastructure to climate change impacts, avoid inappropriate development in the flood plain zone, and support the move to a low carbon economy. The NPPF recognises the potential for

planning to shape places to better contribute to reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and deliver long-term resilience.

- The Clean Growth Strategy, Clean Air Strategy and the Net Zero Strategy are a collection of documents seeking to progress the government's commitment to becoming net zero by 2050 under the UK Climate Change Act 2008. The documents outline how the government will tackle air pollution sources whilst maintaining an affordable energy supply and increasing economic growth. This parallels with the 25 Year Environment Plan, which seeks to manage land resources sustainably, recover and reinstate nature, protect soils and habitats, increase resource efficiency, improve water quality, and connect people with the environment. Of note in the 25 Year Environment Plan are the following: 'Chapter 1: Using and managing land sustainably', 'Chapter 6: Protecting and improving the global environment', 'Goal 4: A reduced risk of harm from environmental hazards such as flooding and drought', and 'Goal 7: Mitigating and adapting to climate change'.
- The National Infrastructure Assessment is published every five years and analyses the UK's long-term economic infrastructure needs to create a strategic vision and recommendations. The baseline report states that climate change will increase pressures on all sectors, including economic infrastructure.
- The National Adaptation Programme outlines the government's response to the second Climate Change Risk Assessment, demonstrating the actions the government is currently taking and actions it will be taking in the future. It outlines risks that fit within the priority areas identified by the UK Climate Change Risk Assessment 2017:
 - Flooding and coastal change risks to communities, businesses, and infrastructure.
 - Risks to health, well-being, and productivity from high temperatures.
 - Risk of shortages in the public water supply, and for agriculture, energy generation, and industry.
 - Risks to natural capital, including terrestrial, coastal, marine and freshwater ecosystems, soils, and biodiversity.
 - Risks to domestic and international food production and trade; and
 - New and emerging pests and diseases, and invasive non-native species, affecting people, plants, and animals.
- The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 provides for better and more comprehensive management of flood risk for people, homes, and businesses, in addition to aiding in safeguarding community groups from unaffordable rises in surface water drainage charges and protecting consumer water supplies. It also highlights alternatives to traditional engineering to flood risk management.
- The UK Climate Change Act 2008 establishes a framework to develop an economically viable emissions reduction path. The Climate Change Act 2008 (2050 Target Amendment) Order of 2019 put in place the legally binding target of achieving net-zero emissions by 2050. The Climate Change Act includes the following:

- The UK Government must reduce greenhouse gas emissions by a minimum of 100% of 1990 levels by 2050.
- The document requires the government to produce legally binding carbon budgets – a cap on the amount of greenhouse gases emitted in the UK over a five-year period.
- The Act requires the government to assess and prepare for the risks and opportunities linked to climate change for the UK.
- The Sixth Carbon Budget is the legal limit of UK net greenhouse gas emissions and requires the country to reduce emissions by 78% by 2035 relative to 1990 levels. This puts the country on track to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050 at the latest.
- The Devon County Council Carbon Reduction Plan 2020-2030 outlines how the council will reduce carbon emissions – reducing the 2012 / 13 corporate carbon footprint by a minimum of 70% by 2030 / 31 and how emissions will be reduced following that deadline.
- The Devon County Council Climate Change Strategy sets out how the council will prioritise its activity to continue to work towards achieving a local low carbon society. It states that Devon County Council will contribute to reducing greenhouse gas emissions from buildings, transport, waste and energy through a variety of schemes, for example – identifying new business models and opportunities for investment and prioritising new energy technologies that allow for more efficient use of energy already in circulation.
- Local authorities and various organisations in Devon have come together to form the Devon Climate Emergency Response Group with the aim to help the county reach net zero, reverse impacts of climate change on biodiversity and prepare for future risks. The group is producing a Devon Adaption Plan and a Devon Carbon Plan. The interim carbon plan has been published and outlines eight objectives to strive towards achieving lower emissions. These eight objectives include a move to a more circular economy, minimising energy consumption and engaging with communities.
- The South Hams District Council Climate Change and Biodiversity Strategy outlines how the area will become net zero by 2050, including reducing resource consumption, supporting a move away from finite energy resources in favour of renewable sources, increasing tree canopy cover on council owned land and supporting working virtually following the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The HPNP will also need to consider the relevant policies that are outlined in the Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan. In particular, this includes:
 - Policy SPT1 – Delivering sustainable development.
 - Policy SO11 – Delivering high quality development.
 - Policy DEV28 – Trees, woodlands and hedgerows.
 - Policy DEV32 – Delivering low carbon development; and
 - Policy DEV35 – Managing flood risk and water quality impacts.

Baseline summary

Current baseline

Contribution to climate change

- 4.4 In June 2019 South Hams District Council declared a climate emergency¹⁷. Additionally, the Harberton Parish Council have declared a climate emergency in response to the concerns of the local community.
- 4.5 The Climate Change Act 2008 (2050 Target Amendment) Order of 2019 requires carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions from the built environment to be monitored and recorded at the local authority level. The CO₂ emissions shown in **Figures 4.1** and **Figure 4.2** below are derived from data supplied by the Department for Business, Energy, and Industrial Strategy¹⁸.
- 4.6 As demonstrated in **Figure 4.1**, the largest contributing sector with regards to CO₂ emissions in Devon was the industry and commercial sector until 2014, after which the transport sector contributed more. The transport sector continues to contribute the highest levels of CO₂ across the three sectors in the region, though it has shown a decrease between 2017-2018.

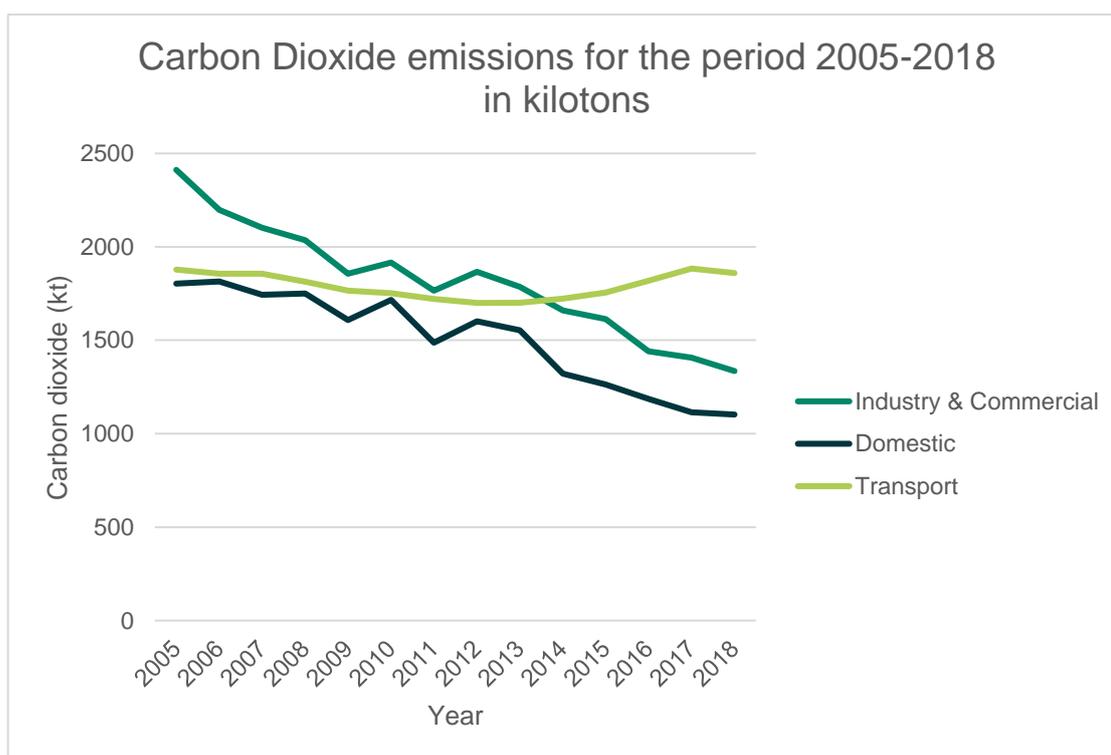


Figure 4.1: CO₂ emissions in kilotons per year for each sector in Devon (2005-2018)¹⁹

- 4.7 The introduction and uptake of Ultra Low Emission Vehicles (ULEVs) will contribute positively towards the reduction of road transport related emissions. In line with assumptions made by the Department for Transport's 'Road to Zero'

¹⁷ South Hams Climate Change and Biodiversity Emergency (no date) 'Devon Climate Declaration' can be accessed [here](#).

¹⁸ Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (2020) 'UK local authority and regional carbon dioxide emissions national statistics: 2005-2008' can be accessed [here](#). The data tables used to generate Figures 4.1 and 4.2 can be downloaded from this page.

¹⁹ Ibid.

report (2018)²⁰, it is assumed that ULEV uptake will increase rapidly in the coming decade. Therefore, all vehicles could be ultra-low emission (powered either by hydrogen or electricity) by 2030, thus the CO₂ emissions from the transport sector have the potential to decrease.

4.8 **Figure 4.2** below indicates that CO₂ emissions per capita for Devon have been generally lower than the average for England during 2005-2018, but have been higher than the average for the South West region. Devon has experienced the lowest decrease in per capita emissions over the examined period; a decrease of an average 3.1 tons per capita. This is in comparison to an average of 3.2 tons per capita in the South West region and 3.5 tons per capita for England.

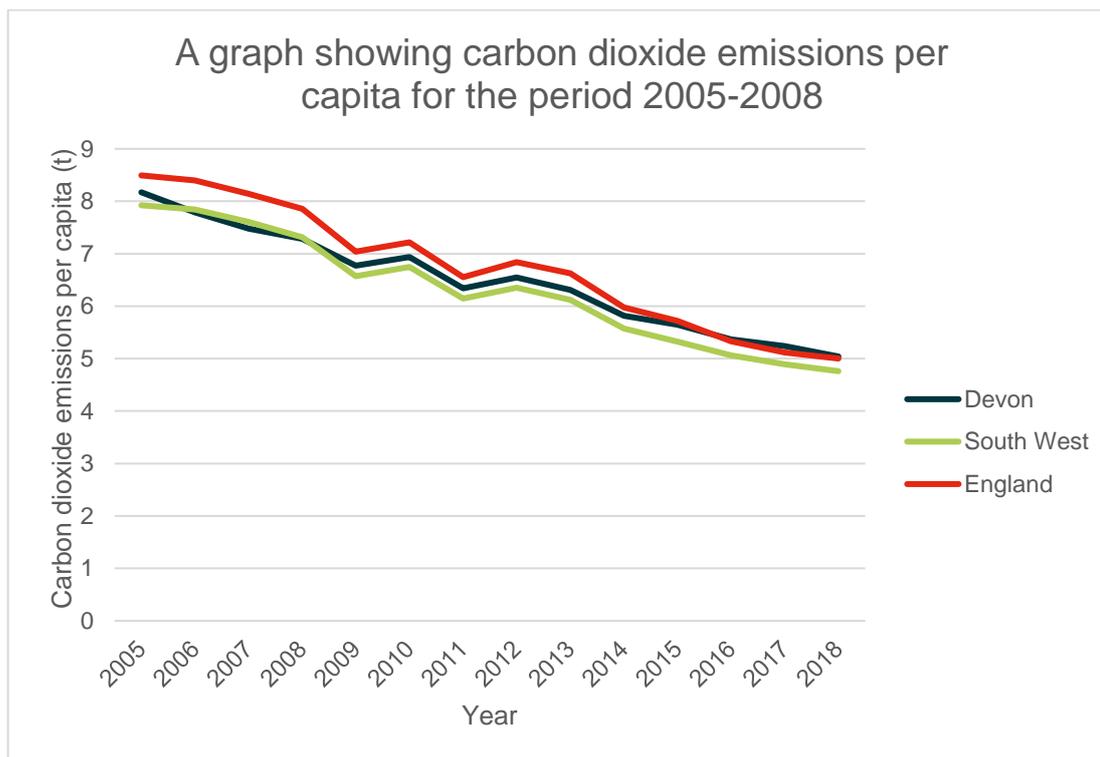


Figure 4.2: CO₂ emissions per capita (in tons) for Devon, the South West region and England (2005-2018)²¹

Potential effects of climate change

4.9 The UK Climate Projections (UKCP18) programme is a climate analysis tool that provides the most up-to-date assessment on potential future climatic changes in the UK based on climate model simulations²². Projections can be downscaled to a regional level across the UK, allowing for specific evaluations of a selected area. The UKCP18 projections conclude the effects of climate change under a high emissions ‘worst case’ scenario known as the ‘business as usual’ scenario RCP8.5²³. The UKCP18 projection conclusions for the South West are shown in the figures overleaf.

²⁰ Department for Transport (2018) ‘The Road to Zero’ can be accessed [here](#).

²¹ Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (2020) ‘UK local authority and regional carbon dioxide emissions national statistics: 2005-2008’ can be accessed [here](#)

²² Met Office (no date) ‘UK Climate Projections (UKCP)’ can be accessed [here](#).

²³ The RCP8.5 emissions scenario assumes there is fast population growth, low technical development rate, slow GDP growth, a massive increase in world poverty and high energy use and emissions. It also assumes no climate change mitigation or adaptation techniques are engaged with.

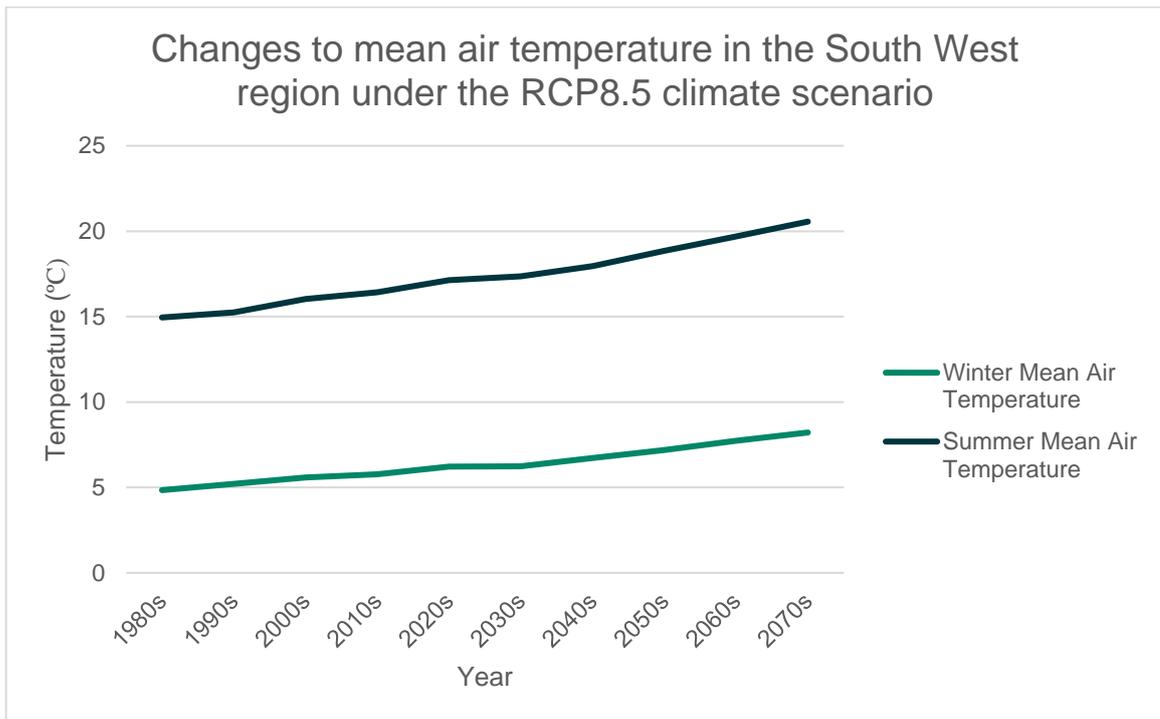


Figure 4.3: UKCP18 projections for mean air temperature in the South West region

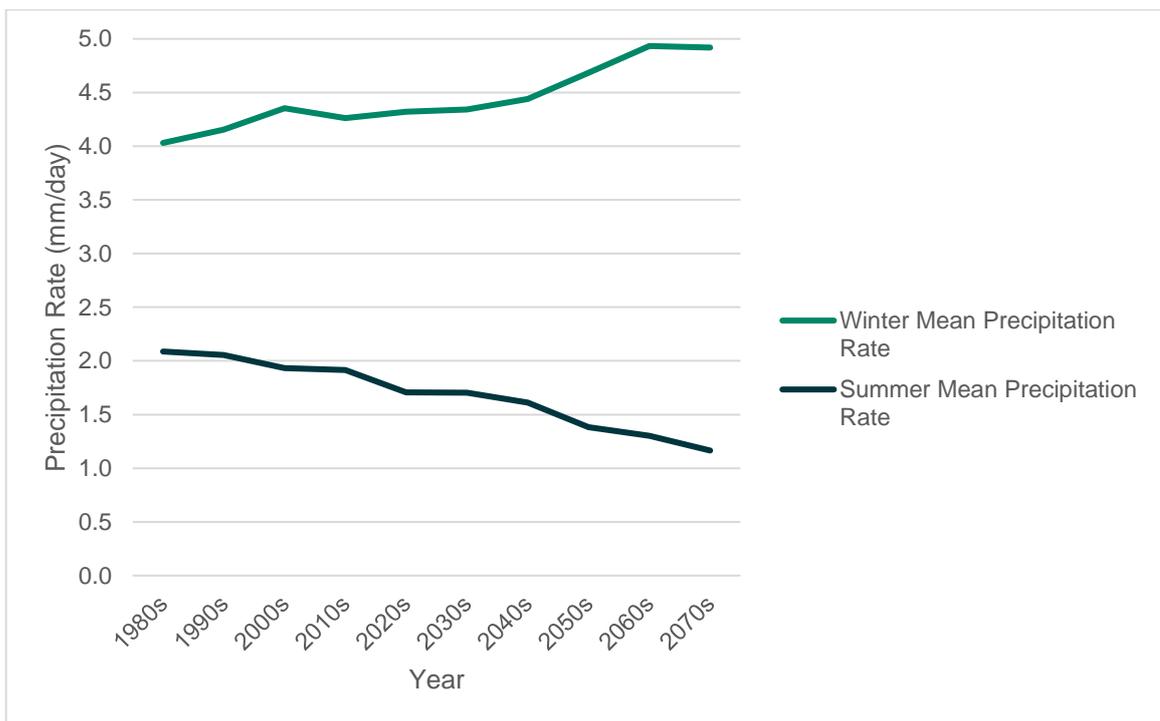


Figure 4.4: UKCP18 projections for mean precipitation rate in the South West region

4.10 The UKCP18 projections indicate there will be an approximate 3°C increase in mean winter air temperature between 1981-2080 and a 5.1°C in mean summer air temperature for the same period. It also predicts a 0.9mm / day increase in mean winter precipitation rate, a 0.9 mm / day decrease in mean summer precipitation rate, a 0.7% decrease in mean winter relative humidity and an 8% decrease in mean summer relative humidity. If these changes occur, the neighbourhood area may face a range of risks, including:

- Increases in cases of heat related illnesses and deaths during the summer period as well as illnesses and deaths related to exposure to sunlight.
- An increase in the risk of injuries and deaths caused by storm events, due to both the increase in quantity and magnitude.
- Changes to water resources, in terms of quality and quantity.
- An increased risk of flooding, including changes in vulnerability to 1 in 100-year floods, and a need to upgrade flood defences.
- Soil erosion due to flash flooding.
- Loss of species that are at the edge of their distribution, particularly their southern edge, and a spread of species at the northern edge of their distribution.
- Increased drought events, both in quantity and magnitude; and
- Heat related impacts to local infrastructure, e.g., road surfaces melting.

Flood risk

4.11 **Figure 4.5** overleaf indicates the majority of the neighbourhood area is within Flood Zone 1, with areas of Flood Zones 2 and 3 following the course of the Harbourne River to the north-west, west and south, and a drain / stream to the east and south. There is also a water storage area on the south-eastern corner of the neighbourhood area.

4.12 **Figure 4.6** overleaf demonstrates that similar areas are at risk of surface water flooding, in particular the areas adjacent to watercourses are at most risk. It is likely the local road network experiences disruption due to this flooding, especially around Harbertonford.

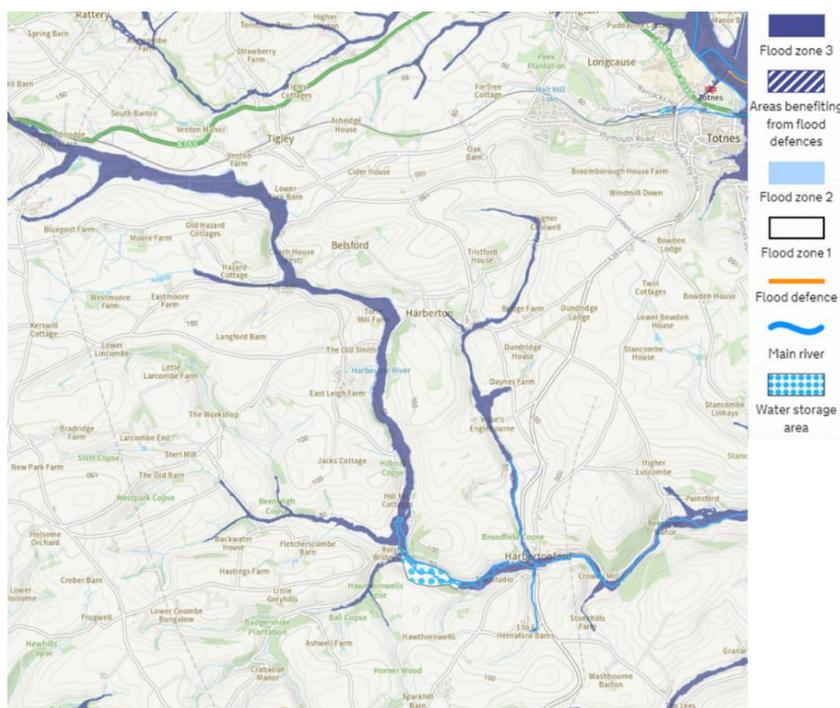


Figure 4.5: Fluvial flood risk within the HPNP neighbourhood area²⁴

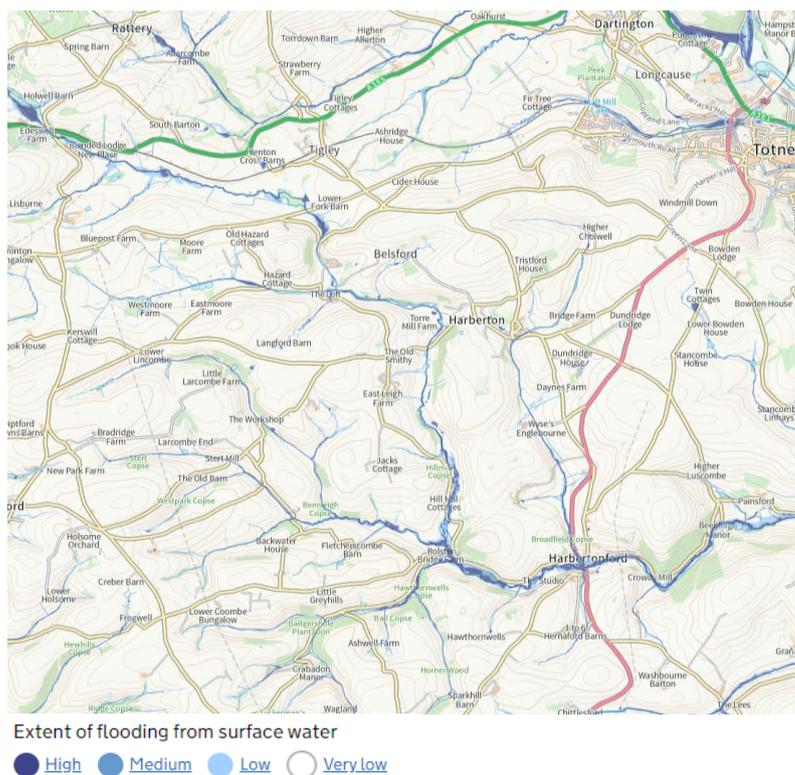


Figure 4.6: Surface water flood risks within the HPNP neighbourhood area²⁵

²⁴ GOV.UK (2021) 'Flood map for planning' can be accessed [here](#).

²⁵ GOV.UK (2019) 'Check your long term flood risk' can be accessed [here](#).

Future baseline

- 4.13 Climate change has the potential to increase the occurrence of extreme weather events in the neighbourhood area. In turn it is likely the neighbourhood area will experience an amplified level of risk associated with climate change and a subsequent increase in need for resilience and adaptation measures. New development has the potential to increase flood risk through changing surface and ground water flows, overloading existing inputs to the drainage and wastewater networks, and / or increasing the number of residents exposed to areas of existing flood risk.
- 4.14 It is recognised that the River Harbourne flooded around January / February 2023 for the first time since the new flood protection scheme was installed. There is concern from HPNP neighbourhood area residents that new builds in flood plain areas will exacerbate this flood risk, and new run off pathways will be created by new development.
- 4.15 In terms of climate change contribution, greenhouse gas emissions generated in the neighbourhood area may continue to decrease with the wider adoption of energy efficiency measures, renewable energy production, and new technologies. While some increases are considered likely with or without the HPNP, a design code associated with the HPNP offers an opportunity to encourage development that minimises them.

Key issues

- 4.16 Considering the baseline information and the policy context, the following key issues are identified in relation to climate change and flood risk:
- South Hams District Council has declared a climate change and biodiversity emergency, resolving to support local authorities (and, by extension, neighbourhood groups) to help tackle climate change through plan-making where possible. The Harberton Parish Council have also declared a climate emergency.
 - The transport sector continues to be a key challenge in terms of reducing emissions. The HPNP provides opportunities to guide development towards the most accessible locations in the neighbourhood area and require local infrastructure (including walking and cycling infrastructure) improvements where appropriate.
 - Opportunities to influence per capita emissions could be sought through the HPNP process, particularly by planning for integrated and connected development, which reduces the need to travel and supports opportunities to travel by more sustainable modes. The HPNP can also influence design features of individual developments so as to minimise emissions involved both in the construction and ongoing operation.
 - The neighbourhood area is at risk of varying levels of surface water flooding and a small proportion of the total area is within Flood Zone 2 and Flood Zone 3. These areas largely follow the Holbourne River and associated streams / drainage. Surface water run-off from development can exacerbate the risk of flooding by increasing the run-off from land to watercourses. Currently, Harbertonford experiences a higher level of surface water flooding, which also impacts the local road network in this

part of the neighbourhood area. It is noted that the River Harbourne flooded around January / February 2023 for the first time since the new flood scheme was implemented – and there is concern over how new development will impact flood risk in the area.

- Opportunities to enhance the resilience of both the neighbourhood area and its residents to the effects of climate change should be sought. This can include adaptation strategies, green infrastructure enhancement, flood betterment measures, infrastructure development, and increased renewable energy sources.

Proposed SEA objective

4.17 Based on the key issues discussed above, it is proposed that the SEA should include the following objectives:

| SEA theme | SEA objective |
|----------------|--|
| Climate change | Reduce the contribution to climate change made by activities within the neighbourhood area and increase resilience to the potential effects of climate change, including flooding. |

4.18 Supporting assessment questions include (will the option / proposal...):

- Reduce the number of journeys made and reduce the need to travel?
- Promote the use of more sustainable modes of transport, including walking, cycling, public transport, and EV infrastructure?
- Increase the number of new developments meeting or exceeding sustainable design criteria (including, but not limited to, Passiv House insulation levels, solar panels on roofs, and low carbon heating energy)?
- Generate energy from low or zero carbon sources (including, but not limited to, wind turbines, solar panels and biomass), or reduce energy consumption from non-renewable resources?
- Ensure that inappropriate development does not take place in areas at higher risk of flooding, considering the likely future effects of climate change?
- Improve and extend green infrastructure networks in the neighbourhood area?
- Sustainably manage water run-off, reducing runoff where possible?
- Increase the resilience of biodiversity in the area to the effects of climate change, including through enhancements to ecological networks?

5. Community wellbeing

Focus of theme

5.1 This chapter presents the policy context and baseline summary in relation to the community wellbeing SEA theme. The theme focuses on population and age structure, deprivation levels, housing mix and affordability, community assets and infrastructure, and influences on health and wellbeing for residents in the neighbourhood area. This information is used to identify key issues (both constraints and opportunities) before proposing a relevant SEA objective and supporting assessment questions.

Policy context

5.2 **Table 5.1** below presents the most relevant documents identified in the policy review for the purposes of the SEA.

Table 5.1: Plans, policies and strategies reviewed in relation to the community wellbeing SEA theme

| Document title | Year of publication |
|---|---------------------|
| National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) | 2021 |
| Health Equity in England: The Marmot Review 10 Years On | 2020 |
| Healthy and Safe Communities Planning practice guidance | 2019 |
| Planning for Sport Guidance | 2019 |
| A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment | 2018 |
| South Hams and West Devon Homelessness Strategy 2022-2027 | 2022 |
| Devon Moving Together 2022-32 Strategy Framework | 2022 |
| Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan 2014-2034 | 2019 |

5.3 The key messages emerging from the review are summarised below:

- The HPNP will need to consider the principles outlined in the NPPF, which seek to retain and enhance access to community services and facilities. The NPPF recognises the benefits of having a range of local provision to support community needs. In addition, the NPPF recognises the benefits of creating cohesive communities in safe environments where the fear of crime (and crime itself) does not undermine resident quality of life.
- The NPPF recognises the role of development plans in helping to deliver access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity, therefore contributing to the health and wellbeing of communities. The health benefits of access to nature, green spaces and green infrastructure are further reiterated in the 25 Year Environment Plan. Additional guidance is available through the Healthy and Safe Communities Planning practice guidance.
- The 2020 Health Equity in England Report identifies a health gap between less and more deprived areas, which has grown in the last decade. This means an increased amount of people can expect to spend more of their lives in poor health with a stalled, or even declining, life expectancy.

- The Planning for Sport Guidance seeks to help the planning system provide formal and informal opportunities for everyone to take part in sport and be physically active, setting out twelve principles.
- The South Hams and West Devon Homelessness Strategy aims to address the current levels of homelessness, examine factors likely to impact on future levels of homelessness, ensure there is sufficient accommodation for all, provide services to prevent homelessness and promote a cultural change so homelessness is viewed in a wider context than just lack of accommodation.
- The Devon Moving Together strategy aims to help ensure everyone in Devon is active for life and to help change people's lives through movement. It outlines three long-term aims: positive experiences, reduced inequalities, and committed partners.
- The HPNP will also need to consider the relevant policies that are outlined in the Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan. In particular, this includes:
 - Policy DEV1 – Protecting health and amenity.
 - Policy DEV3 – Sport and recreation.
 - Policy DEV4 – Playing pitches.
 - Policy DEV5 – Community food growing and allotments.
 - Policy DEV8 – Meeting local housing need in the Thriving Towns and Villages Policy Area.
 - Policy DEV9 – Meeting local housing need in the Plan Area.
 - Policy DEV13 – Consideration of sites for Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.
 - Policy DEV15 – Supporting the rural economy.
 - Policy DEV27 – Green and play spaces; and
 - Policy DEV30 – Meeting the community infrastructure needs of new homes.

Baseline summary

Current baseline

Population and age structure

5.4 According to data from the 2021 census²⁶, the HPNP neighbourhood area had a population of 1,400 (rounded to the nearest 100 people). This is an increase from the time of the 2011 census, when the area had a population of 1,303. A growing population had the potential to impact upon the vitality of the local community.

5.5 In terms of age structure, the largest age group in the HPNP neighbourhood area is the 60-64 age group, which makes up 11.1% of the population. This is a significantly higher percentage than the average for England for this age

²⁶ ONS (2021): 'Profile preview: Harberton', [online] available to access via [this link](#)

group, which is 5.8%. In this respect, Harberton parish has an aging population, which could lead to strains on health and care facilities in the neighbourhood area, as well as the wider area.

Index of Multiple Deprivation

5.6 The Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019 (IMD) is an overall relative measure of deprivation and is the combination of seven different domains as described below:

- **Income:** the proportion of the population experiencing a deprivation relating to low income. There are a further two subsets of this measure:
 - **Income deprivation affecting children:** the proportion of children aged 0-15 living in income deprived families; and
 - **Income deprivation affecting older people:** the proportion of all adults aged 60 and above that experience income deprivation.
- **Employment:** the proportion of the working-age population involuntarily excluded from the labour market, including those who want to work but cannot.
- **Education, skills, and training:** the lack of attainment and skills in the population.
- **Health deprivation and disability:** the risk of premature death and the impairment of quality of life through poor physical or mental health.
- **Crime:** the risk of personal and material victimisation at the local level.
- **Barriers to housing and services:** the physical and financial accessibility of housing and local services, split into 'geographical barriers' linked to physical proximity and 'wider barriers' linked to access to housing.
- **Living environment:** the quality of the local environment, categorised into 'indoors living environment' to measure the quality of housing and 'outdoors living environment' to measure indicators like air quality and road traffic accidents.

5.7 Lower super output areas (LSOAs)²⁷ are designed to improve the reporting of small area statistics in England and Wales. They are standardised geographies intended to be as consistent as possible, with each LSOA containing approximately 1,000 to 1,500 people. In relation to the IMD 2019, LSOAs are ranked out of the 32,844 in England and Wales, with the first being the most deprived.

5.8 The HPNP neighbourhood area falls with the South Hams 006B LSOA, which is amongst the 50% least deprived neighbourhoods across the country. In terms of specific domains, South Hams 006B is within the 20% most deprived neighbourhoods for the 'Barriers to Housing and Services domain' and within the 10% most deprived for the 'Living Environment Deprivation domain'. This indicates that the physical and financial accessibility of housing and local services, and the quality of the local environment, is poor in the neighbourhood area.

²⁷ The Indices of Deprivation Explorer can be accessed [here](#).

Housing tenure and affordability

- 5.9 In terms of housing tenure, and according to data from the 2021 census, 44.7% of residents in the neighbourhood area own their home outright, which is a much higher percentage than the average for England (32.5%). Meanwhile, 24.7% of residents own their home with a mortgage/ loan/ shared ownership, 7.9% live in socially rented accommodation, and 22.7% live in privately rented accommodation or live rent free. This figure for socially rented accommodation is much lower than the average for England (17.1%). The Housing Needs Assessment (HNA) for the HPNP neighbourhood area indicates in 2011 65% of tenures were ownership types, with private renting totalling 23%, social renting 9% and shared ownership totalling 2%²⁸.
- 5.10 As reported by Zoopla²⁹, the average house price in Devon is £347,066. Furthermore, according to Zoopla³⁰, the average house price in the HPNP neighbourhood area is £391,250. This suggests that the neighbourhood area has a higher-than-average house price in comparison to the region as a whole.
- 5.11 Data from the Office for National Statistics (ONS)³¹ shows that the median house price in Devon was £290,000 in the year ending September 2021. This represents a 10.5% increase on the previous year, when the median house price was £262,500. Comparing this to the more recent data from Zoopla, it is evident that house prices in the area are continuing to increase rapidly.
- 5.12 The ratio of median house price to median gross annual workplace-based earnings in Devon was 10.57 in 2021. This means that full-time employees could typically expect to spend around 10.57 times their workplace-based annual earnings on purchasing a home. Notably, this ratio stood at 9.78 in 2022, marking an 8.1% increase in housing affordability in Devon in a year.
- 5.13 The high rate of ownership tenures in the HPNP area, alongside a rising house price, has resulted in Harberton parish becoming a challenging area to get onto the property ladder. The HPNP HNA indicates affordable housing tenures will be necessary in the neighbourhood area, with first homes, shared ownership, rent to buy and affordable and social rent options being suggested.

Housing type and size

- 5.14 In terms of housing type, a very high proportion (92.9%) of the neighbourhood area comprises whole houses or bungalows. In comparison, the average for England is only 77.4%. Only 6.4% of the neighbourhood area comprises flats, maisonettes or apartments, whilst 0.7% comprises caravans or other mobile or temporary structures.
- 5.15 In terms of housing size, 40.8% of households in the neighbourhood area comprise of two people, representing the biggest share. Following this, 31.3% of households consist of one person, 14.8% consist of four or more people, and 13% consist of 3 people. This suggests that there are few families living in the neighbourhood area.
- 5.16 The HPNP HNA indicates the current mix of housing type is well placed to serve the current and future needs. However, to achieve an 'ideal' housing mix

²⁸ AECOM (2022) 'Housing Needs Assessment' can be accessed [here](#).

²⁹ Zoopla (2023) 'House prices in Devon' can be accessed [here](#).

³⁰ Zoopla (2023) 'House prices in Harberton, Devon' can be accessed [here](#).

³¹ ONS (2022): 'Housing price to workplace-based earnings ratio', [online] available to access via [this link](#)

by 2037, future housing development should focus on providing a higher proportion of three bedroom dwellings, flats and five or more bedroom dwellings.

Employment

5.17 According to data from the 2021 census, 57.5% of the population of the HPNP neighbourhood area is economically active and in employment, which is in line with the average for England (57.4%). Only 2.2% of the population is economically active and unemployed, which is slightly lower than the average for England (2.2%). Finally, 40.3% of the population is economically inactive, which is only slightly higher than the average for England (39.1%).¹

5.18 In terms of employment history, and as of the time of the 2021 census, of those who are not in employment, 10.8% worked in the last 12 months, 76.7% have not worked in the last 12 months, and 12.5% have never worked.

Education

5.19 According to data from the 2021 census, 13.6% of the population of the HPNP neighbourhood area are students, which is lower than the average for England (20.4%). As with the housing size data presented above, this suggests that there are few families living in the neighbourhood area.

Health and wellbeing

5.20 According to data from the 2021 Census, 51.9% of the population of the HPNP neighbourhood area are in 'very good health', 32.0% are in 'good health', and 11.6% are in 'fair health'. Meanwhile, 3.7% are in 'bad health' and 0.9% are in 'very bad health'. Considering the age structure of the neighbourhood area, which skews towards the older age groups, these figures indicate that the population is generally in good health despite its aging population.

Community assets and infrastructure

5.21 An overview of the services and facilities within the neighbourhood area is provided below³²:

- Harberton Parish Hall and Harbertonford Village Hall;
- The Church House Inn;
- St Andrew's Church and St Peter's Church;
- Hotels and Bed and Breakfasts, including The Old Print Shed and Preston Farm;
- Daynes Farm Shop;
- Harberton Cricket Club;
- Harbertonford Post Office;
- Harbourne filling station;
- Nkuku – a lifestyle warehouse / café / online shop that employs some local people; and

³² The review of the services, facilities and amenities was conducted via a high-level Google maps search – focusing on each area in turn and making a note of the different features.

- Harberton C of E Primary School.

Green infrastructure networks

5.22 Access to gardens, parks, woodlands, and rivers has played a huge part in helping people through the COVID-19 pandemic. Almost nine in ten adults surveyed by Natural England reported that being in nature makes them feel happy, and nearly three quarters of adults were concerned about biodiversity loss in England³³.

5.23 Within the neighbourhood area, green spaces include:

- Harberton playing field;
- St Andrew's Churchyard;
- Allotments in both settlements;
- Harbertonford green (acts as a community gathering area);
- Harberton square (acts as a community gathering area);
- St Peter's Church;
- Palmer's Dam;
- Harbertonford play park; and
- Harbertonford Football Club playing grounds.

Future baseline

5.24 As the population of the neighbourhood area increases, there is likely to be increasing pressure on services outside of the neighbourhood area. This is due to a lack of education and health and care facilities within the neighbourhood area.

5.25 There is a need to support the retention of the limited existing facilities in the area, including open green space, which has been increasingly used and valued through the COVID-19 pandemic. These factors are more likely to be appropriately considered and addressed through planned development rather than unplanned development.

5.26 The suitability and affordability of housing for local requirements depends on the implementation of appropriate housing policies throughout the neighbourhood area. Unplanned development may have wider implications in terms of transport and access to infrastructure, or the natural environment.

5.27 The COVID-19 pandemic has also changed the way people work and shop. For many people, working from home is likely to continue to form part of a more flexible approach. The effects of increased levels of home working are further discussed under the 'Transportation' SEA theme in **Chapter 9**.

Key issues

5.28 Considering the baseline information and policy context review, the following key issues are identified in relation to community wellbeing:

³³ Natural England (2020) People and Nature survey can be accessed [here](#).

- The services, facilities and amenities within the neighbourhood area contribute to the community vitality and quality of life of the existing residents. However, these are limited and result in residents travelling out of the HPNP neighbourhood area. As such, development in the neighbourhood area will need to consider how it could cause place pressure on external services.
- As the requirements of the working population continue to change, particularly in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, there is likely to be a need for adaptable dwellings which can accommodate more flexible working practices.
- Based on the 2019 IMD data, the South Hams 006B LSOA is within the 20% most deprived neighbourhoods for 'Barriers to Housing and Services' and within the 10% most deprived neighbourhoods for 'Living Environment'.

Proposed SEA objective

5.29 Based on the key issues discussed above, it is proposed that the SEA should include the following objective:

| SEA theme | SEA objective |
|---------------------|--|
| Community wellbeing | Ensure growth in the neighbourhood area is aligned with the needs of all residents, improving accessibility, anticipating future needs and specialist requirements, reducing deprivation, and supporting cohesive and inclusive communities. |

5.30 Supporting assessment questions include (will the option / proposal...):

- Provide everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality, affordable housing?
- Support the provision of a range of house types and sizes?
- Meet the needs of all sectors of the community?
- Provide flexible and adaptable homes that meet people's needs, particularly the needs of an ageing population?
- Improve the availability and accessibility of key local facilities, including specialist services for disabled and older people?
- Encourage and promote social cohesion and active involvement of local people in community activities?
- Facilitate green infrastructure enhancements?
- Promote the use of sustainable building techniques, including use of sustainable building materials in construction?
- Minimise fuel poverty?
- Maintain or enhance the quality of life of existing residents?

6. Historic environment

Focus of theme

6.1 This chapter presents the policy context and baseline summary in relation to the historic environment SEA theme. The theme focuses on designated and non-designated assets, the setting, special qualities, and significance of heritage assets, locally important heritage features, and the historic character of the neighbourhood area. This information is used to identify key issues (both constraints and opportunities) before proposing a relevant SEA objective and supporting assessment questions.

Policy context

6.2 **Table 6.1** below presents the most relevant documents identified in the policy review for the purposes of the SEA.

Table 6.1: Plans, policies and strategies reviewed in relation to the historic environment SEA theme

| Document title | Year of publication |
|--|---------------------|
| Historic England Advice Note 11 (Second Edition): Neighbourhood Planning and the Historic Environment | 2022 |
| Historic England: Heritage and Climate Change | 2022 |
| National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) | 2021 |
| National Model Design Code | 2021 |
| The National Design Guide | 2019 |
| Historic England Advice Note 1: Conservation Area Appraisal Designation and Management | 2019 |
| A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment | 2018 |
| Historic England Good Practice Advice in Planning: The Setting of Heritage Assets | 2017 |
| Historic England Advice Note 8: Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) | 2016 |
| Historic England Advice Note 3: The Historic Environment and Site Allocations in Local Plans | 2015 |
| Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan 2014-2034 | 2019 |

6.3 The key messages emerging from the review are summarised below:

- The key principles for the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment are as follows:
 - The historic environment is a shared resource;
 - Everyone should be able to participate in sustaining the historic environment;
 - Understanding the significance of places is vital;
 - Important places should be managed to sustain their values;

- Decisions about change must be reasonable, transparent, and consistent; and
- Documenting and learning from decisions is essential³⁴.
- The significance of a place is the crucial element that supports the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment. Significance is the collective term for the sum of all the heritage values attached to a place, no matter what form the place takes. This means a singular building, an archaeological site, or a larger historic area, such as a whole village or landscape, can be important.
- The HPNP will need to consider the principles set out in the NPPF, which seek to conserve and enhance historic environment assets in a way that compliments and works with their significance. The NPPF pursues planning policies and decisions that are understanding to local character and history without preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation and change. The NPPF supports the use of area-based character assessments, design guides and codes, and masterplans to help ensure that land is used efficiently while also creating beautiful and sustainable places.
- The NPPF indicates proposed plans should ensure the design of streets, parking areas and other transport elements reflect current national guidance including the National Design Guide and the National Model Design Code. Design codes can set out a necessary level of detail in sensitive locations. In the case of the historic environment, they can indicate specific ways to maintain local character.
- The 25 Year Environment Plan and the National Design Guide recognise and reiterate the role of the historic environment in supporting healthy and thriving ecosystems, landscapes, and cultural values. Of note in the 25 Year Environment Plan is ‘Goal 6: Enhanced beauty, heritage, and engagement with the natural environment’.
- Historic England’s Heritage and Climate Change strategy document details the impacts climate change could have on heritage in the future and highlights the role of heritage in climate action. The vision of the document is to ensure the role of heritage in the global fight to limit climate change and its impact on people and places by 2040 – working to mitigate, manage risk and adapt.
- Historic England’s Advice Notes provide further guidance on the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment. Of relevance for the HPNP is the emphasis on the importance of:
 - Understanding the different types of special architectural and historic interest that underpin designations and the consideration of how settings and / or views contribute to the significance of heritage assets.
 - Recognising the value of implementing controls through neighbourhood development plans, conservation area appraisals and management plans; and

³⁴ Historic England (2008) ‘Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance for the sustainable management of the historic environment’ can be accessed [here](#).

- Appropriate evidence gathering, including the clear identification of any issues that threaten an area, asset character, or appearance that merit the introduction of management measures.
- The HPNP will also need to consider the relevant policies that are outlined in the Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan. In particular, this includes:
 - Policy SPT11 – Strategic approach to the historic environment; and
 - Policy DEV21 – Development affecting the historic environment.

Baseline summary

Current baseline

Listed buildings

- 6.4 Listed buildings are nationally designated heritage assets that are protected through the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990³⁵. According to the National Heritage List for England provided by Historic England³⁶, there are 103 listed buildings in the neighbourhood area: one Grade I, three Grade II* and 99 Grade II listed buildings.
- 6.5 The Grade I listed building is the Church of St Andrew (Historic England List Entry Number [1108222](#)), which is the parish church – components of which were built through the 14th century to the 16th century, and restored in the late 1800s.
- 6.6 The Grade II* listed buildings include Church House Inn (Historic England List Entry Number [1108225](#)), Gate House immediately south east Beenleigh (Historic England List Entry Number [1108281](#)) and Beenleigh (Historic England List Entry Number [1214051](#)).

Scheduled monuments

- 6.7 The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act (1979)³⁷ allows for the investigation, presentation, and recording of matters of archaeological or historical interest, making provision for the regulation of operations or activities that could affect ancient monuments and archaeological areas. Scheduled monuments are nationally designated sites which are protected under this legislation.
- 6.8 According to the National Heritage List for England, there are two scheduled monuments in the neighbourhood area: Medieval churchyard cross, 6m south east of the porch of St Andrew's Church (Historic England List Entry Number [1019234](#)), and Luscombe Cross (Historic England List Entry Number [1019235](#)).

Conservation areas

- 6.9 Conservation areas are designated because of their special architectural and historic interest. Conservation area appraisals are a tool to demonstrate the area's special interest, explaining the reasons for designation and providing a

³⁵ UK Government (1990) 'Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act' can be accessed [here](#).

³⁶ Historic England (no date) 'National Heritage List for England – Search the List – Advanced Search' can be accessed [here](#). Select which heritage categories you'd like to view and enter 'Devon' into the 'County' box and then 'Harberton' into the 'Parish (Civil / Non-civil)' box and press the search button at the bottom of the page.

³⁷ UK Government (1979) 'Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act' can be accessed [here](#).

greater understanding and articulation of its character - mentioned within the 'Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management' advice note by Historic England.

6.10 In the HPNP neighbourhood area, there are two conservation areas; Harberton³⁸ and Harbertonford³⁹, both designated in 1976. The Harberton Conservation Area covers most of the settlement; extending northwards along Tristford Road, stopping short of the hall, and extending southwards towards the sewage treatment works. The Harbertonford Conservation Area covers the centre of the settlement, extending eastwards and westwards along the Harbourne River, south along the A381 and northwards along Old Road, stopping short of the primary school. Whilst there are conservation area maps available for both of these designations, there are no conservation area appraisals or management plans, which reflects a gap in the baseline.

Registered parks and gardens

6.11 Historic England's 'Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England', established in 1983, currently identifies over 1,600 sites assessed to be of significance.

6.12 Though not in the neighbourhood area, the Grade II* listed Sharpham House⁴⁰ is approximately 1km east of the parish. It is described as a mid-20th century formal terraced gardens and 19th century pleasure grounds, set in 18th century parkland. A summary of the principal reasons for its designation as a registered park and garden is provided below:

- Location, area, boundaries, landform and setting: Sharpham House sits on the west bank of the River Dart, comprising approximately 120ha of land, with 16ha of gardens and pleasure grounds and 104ha of parkland and plantations. As it overlooks the River Dart, the designation has a long view up towards Totnes and across the valley to Paignton in the south-west.
- Entrances and approaches: Sharpham House is approached from a minor road from Ashprington and has a tarmac drive bordered by trees, evergreen shrubs and exposed rocks. It represents a late 18th or early 19th century remodelling of an existing approach. It is also approached from a minor road that connects to Totnes, which incorporates walks and hedges on the sides and offers views of the river to the east.
- Principal building: Sharpham House was constructed in the 18th century – the present structure stands on the site of an earlier house that could date from the 16th century. It is a restrained Palladian stone structure.
- Gardens and pleasure grounds: the gardens and pleasure grounds are separated from the park by late 18th century or early 19th century slate rubble. The gardens and pleasure grounds present a variety of structures and plants.
- Park: pasture enclosures have scattered trees, and plantations on higher ground offer long views of the surrounding landscape. Part of the parkland

³⁸ South Hams (2023) 'Harberton Conservation Area' can be accessed [here](#).

³⁹ South Hams (2023) 'Harbertonford Conservation Area' can be accessed [here](#).

⁴⁰ Historic England (2023) 'Sharpham House' can be accessed [here](#).

was developed as vineyards in the late 20th century, with an additional section being cultivated into an orchard which is now scrub and woodland.

- Kitchen garden: the garden lies 50m west of the main house and remains in use as a fruit and vegetable garden, with a mid-20th century swimming pool and a mid-20th century conservatory.

Locally important heritage features

6.13 It is noted that not all of the neighbourhood area's historic environment features are subject to statutory designations and non-designated features contribute a large part of what people interact with on a day-to-day basis. Although not designated, many buildings and areas are of historic interest and are important to local communities.

6.14 The Devon and Dartmoor Historic Environment Record (HER) identifies important and distinctive structures or features that positively contribute to the local sense of place and distinctiveness of the county. Following a high-level review of the HER via the Heritage Gateway⁴¹, it was found that there are 311 documented local records within the neighbourhood area, including (but not limited to) weirs, field boundaries, boundary stones, quarry features and built structures. During the subsequent stages of the SEA process, the Devon and Dartmoor HER shall be explored in further detail to consider the potential impacts associated with the plan proposals on these assets.

6.15 It is noted that a range of finds and findspots have been uncovered and identified in the neighbourhood area, but these lack legal protection.

Heritage at risk

6.16 Since 2008, Historic England has produced an annual Heritage at Risk Register, which highlights historic environment assets that are seen to be 'at risk'. According to the 2022 Heritage at Risk Register for the South West⁴², there are no heritage assets within the HPNP neighbourhood area that are considered to be at risk.

6.17 However, it is important to recognise that Heritage at Risk registers for areas outside of London do not contain information about the status of Grade II listed buildings. As such, it is currently not possible to determine whether any of the Grade II listed buildings within the neighbourhood area are at risk.

Future baseline

6.18 New development in the neighbourhood area has the potential to impact on the fabric and setting of heritage assets; for example, through inappropriate design and / or layout. It should be noted, however, that existing historic environment designations offer a level of protection to heritage assets and their settings. Additionally, the planning system has in place tools to offer a degree of protection to heritage assets and their settings, reducing the potential impacts of development to some degree.

6.19 It is recognised that planning for development could provide opportunities for positive effects for the historic environment. This may include: the delivery of

⁴¹ Heritage Gateway (2021) 'More Detailed Search' can be accessed [here](#). Open the link, change the tab from 'map' to 'admin location', type 'Harberton' into the administrative location search bar and press the search button at the bottom of the page.

⁴² Historic England (2022) 'Heritage at Risk Register 2021 – South West' can be accessed [here](#).

appraisals and management plans for the conservation areas (as well as an updated evidence base to compliment information and data associated with them), management plans for local heritage assets or Grade II listed buildings seen to be ‘at risk’, public realm and access improvements, or opportunities to better reveal the significance of an asset or increase enjoyment of the historic environment.

Key issues

6.20 Considering the baseline information and policy context review, the following key issues are identified in relation to the historic environment:

- There are a variety of designated heritage assets within and surrounding the neighbourhood area, including listed buildings, scheduled monuments, conservation areas and a registered park and garden. Development of the HPNP provides an opportunity to deliver a spatial strategy that avoids or minimises impacts for the historic environment.
- The HPNP provides an opportunity to develop the existing evidence base in relation to the historic environment. This is especially true for the Harberton and Harbertonford conservation areas, both of which do not have an appraisal or management plan associated with them. It also poses an opportunity to further heritage understanding in the neighbourhood area through exploring the heritage assets in the area.
- It will be important to ensure that future development avoids/ minimises impacts upon the historic environment and maximises opportunities to improve the public realm and green infrastructure, to the indirect benefit of heritage settings.

Proposed SEA objective

6.21 Based on the key issues discussed above, it is proposed that the SEA should include the following objective:

| SEA theme | SEA objective |
|----------------------|--|
| Historic environment | Protect, conserve, and enhance the historic environment within and surrounding the neighbourhood area. |

6.22 Supporting assessment questions include (will the option / proposal...):

- Conserve and enhance buildings, structures, and areas of architectural or historic interest, both designated and non-designated, and their settings?
- Support access to and the interpretation and understanding of the historic environment?
- Support the undertaking of archaeological investigations and, where appropriate, recommend mitigation strategies?
- Protect the integrity and the historic setting of key finds of cultural heritage interest as listed in the Devon and Dartmoor HER?

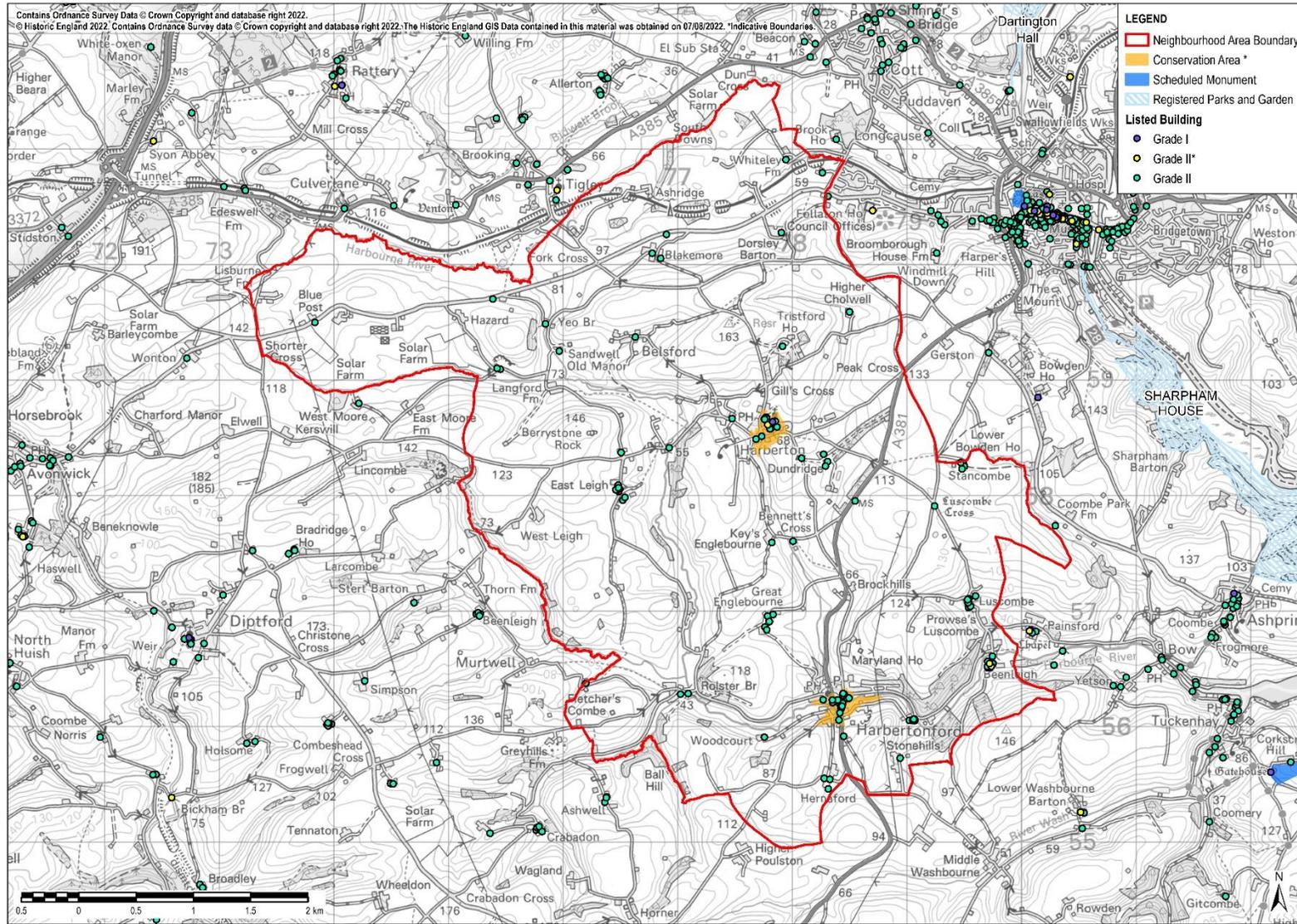


Figure 6.1: Historic environment designations within and in proximity to the HPNP area

7. Land, soil and water resources

Focus of theme

7.1 This chapter presents the policy context and baseline summary in relation to the land, soil, and water resources SEA theme. The theme focuses on quality of agricultural land, extent of mineral resources, and water resources and water quality. This information is used to identify key issues (both constraints and opportunities) before proposing a relevant SEA objective and supporting assessment questions.

Policy context

7.2 **Table 7.1** below presents the most relevant documents identified in the policy review for the purposes of the SEA.

Table 7.1: Plans, policies and strategies reviewed in relation to the land, soil, and water resources SEA theme

| Document title | Year of publication |
|---|---------------------|
| National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) | 2021 |
| A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment | 2018 |
| Waste Management Plan for England | 2013 |
| Future Water: The Government's water strategy for England | 2011 |
| Water for Life | 2011 |
| Safeguarding our Soils: A Strategy for England | 2009 |
| South West Water - Water Resources Management Plan (WRMP) | 2019 |
| Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan 2014-2034 | 2019 |
| Devon Minerals Plan 2011-2033 | 2017 |
| Devon Waste Plan | 2014 |

7.3 The key messages emerging from the review are summarised below:

- The HPNP will need to consider the principles outlined in the NPPF which pursue the protection of high-quality soil resources and the improvement of the water environment. It recognises the wider benefits of natural capital and the need to consider the long-term implications of climate change and ways in which to build resilience in this respect. The NPPF encourages efficient land use, utilising brownfield land opportunities and land remediation schemes where appropriate and delivering environmental gains.
- The 25 Year Environment Plan discusses measures to improve soil quality, restore and protect peatlands, use water more sustainably, reduce pollution, maximise resource efficiency and minimise environmental impacts. Of note is 'Chapter 1: Using and managing land sustainably', 'Chapter 4: Increasing resource efficiency, and reducing pollution and waste', 'Goal 2: Clean and plentiful water', 'Goal 5: Using resources from nature more sustainably and efficiently', and 'Goal 8: Minimising waste'.

- **Future Water:** The Government's water strategy for England sets out how the water sector will look by 2030 for both people and wildlife. The vision also includes valuing and protecting water resources and delivering water to customers in a fair, affordable, and cost-reflective manner. Water for Life highlights the Government's vision for a more resilient water sector. It details the measures that will be deployed to tackle issues such as poorly performing ecosystems, and the combined impacts of climate change and population growth on stressed water resources.
- The Safeguarding our Soils: A Strategy for England policy paper seeks to ensure that all soils in England will be managed sustainably, and degradation threats minimised successfully by 2030. This policy paper also seeks to secure sustainable and resilient water resources in addition to the improvement in waterbody quality. The Waste Management Plan for England identifies measures being taken to move towards a zero-waste economy. This includes the national waste plan, which seeks to identify measures being taken to move towards a circular economy in which resources are kept in use for longer. To do this, there needs to be a maximisation in the value of resources used and a minimisation in the waste created.
- South West Water's WRMP outlines its priority to ensure a resilient and high-quality water supply system. It also details how mitigation of impacts on water, like population growth and climate change, will be carried out over the plan period.
- The HPNP will also need to consider the relevant policies that are outlined in the Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan. In particular, this includes:
 - Policy DEV2 – Air, water, soil, noise, land, and light; and
 - Policy DEV32 – Waste management.
- The HPNP will also be required to be in general conformity with the Devon Minerals Plan and the Devon Waste Plan. These plans identify and safeguard sites and resources important to the continued sustainable management of mineral extractions and waste arisings.

Baseline summary

Current baseline

Soil resources

- 7.4 The Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) classifies land into six grades (plus 'non-agricultural land' and 'urban'), where Grades 1 to 3a are recognised as being the 'best and most versatile' (BMV) land and Grades 3b to 5 are of poorer quality. In this context, there is a need to avoid loss of higher quality BMV agricultural land.
- 7.5 As shown in the left-hand image in **Figure 7.1** overleaf, the neighbourhood area is mostly underlain by Grade 3 ('Good to Moderate') agricultural land and Grade 4 ('Poor') agricultural land. There is also a small area of Grade 2 ('Very

Good') agricultural land in the eastern part of the neighbourhood area⁴³. In the absence of a detailed assessment, it is not possible to determine whether the Grade 3 land is Grade 3a (BMV land) or Grade 3b (not BMV land).

7.6 **Figure 7.1** also shows the results of Natural England's 'Predictive Best and Most Versatile (BMV) Land Assessment' for the South West region in the right-hand image⁴⁴. It indicates that the majority of the undeveloped land in the neighbourhood area has a low likelihood of being underlain by BMV land. However, a small area in the eastern part of the neighbourhood area has a high likelihood of being underlain by BMV land. This area is the same area that is Grade 2 ('Very Good') agricultural land.

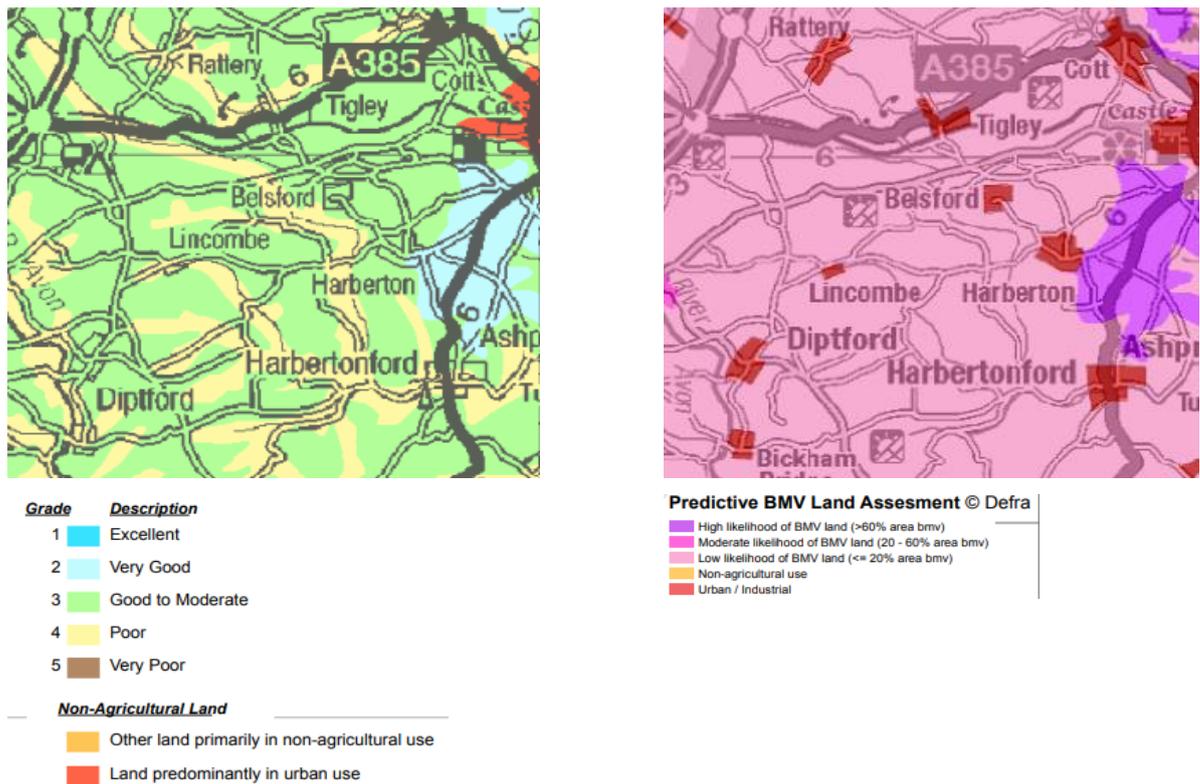


Figure 7.1: ALC and the likelihood of BMV land within the neighbourhood area.

Mineral resources

7.7 Mineral resources are defined as natural concentrations of minerals or bodies of rock that have the potential to be of economic interest in the present or the future due to their inherent properties. As minerals are a non-renewable resource, minerals safeguarding is deployed as the process through which it is ensured that non-minerals development does not needlessly prevent the future extraction of mineral resources⁴⁵.

7.8 Mineral Safeguarding Areas (MSAs) cover areas of known mineral resources that are of sufficient value to warrant protection for future generations. MSAs ensure that such resources are adequately and effectively considered in land-use planning decisions so that they are not needlessly sterilised.

⁴³ Natural England (2010) 'Agricultural Land Classification Map South West Region' can be accessed [here](#).

⁴⁴ Natural England (2017) 'Likelihood of Best and Most Versatile (BMV) Agricultural Land – Strategic scale map South West Region' can be accessed [here](#).

⁴⁵ UK Government (2014) 'Guidance: Minerals' can be accessed [here](#).

7.9 A section of the northern part of the neighbourhood area (north of Blakemore around Higher Ashridge and Lower Ashridge) overlaps with a MSA for aggregates. Any potential development in this area will need to consult with Devon Stone Federation.

Water quality

7.10 The neighbourhood area is located within the South West River Basin District. Specifically, within the Devon South management catchment and within the Dart Start Bay and Torbay operational catchment⁴⁶. There are two main waterbodies and their associated tributaries within the neighbourhood area:

- The Harbourne River Water Body⁴⁷, which was awarded a good ecological status in 2019.
- The Bidwell Brook Water Body⁴⁸, which was awarded a moderate ecological status in 2019.

7.11 It is important to note that all waterbodies in the UK were awarded a failed chemical status in 2019 following a change in the methodology used to assess chemical water quality⁴⁹.

7.12 Sustainable Harbourne Valley has been carrying out water quality monitoring along the Harbourne River as part of the Westcountry Rivers Trust Citizen Science Investigations project, and have consistently found the water to be contaminated. It is likely a result of waste water discharge both from private homes and the local water authority.

7.13 The HPNP neighbourhood area does not overlap with a nitrate vulnerability zone (NVZ), a drinking water safeguarding zone (for ground water or surface water), nor does it overlap with a groundwater source protection zone (SPZ).

Future baseline

7.14 New development in the HPNP neighbourhood area has a low likelihood of impacting areas of BMV agricultural land as long as it is focused away from the eastern part of the neighbourhood area. Even so, there could be opportunities to avoid developing Grade 3a agricultural land by directing development toward areas of Grade 3b and Grade 4 agricultural land where this is available. Furthermore, the regeneration of brownfield sites is encouraged wherever possible.

7.15 Future development has the potential to affect water quality and availability through increased consumption and pollution, wastewater discharges, water runoff and modification. It is recognised that the water company covering the neighbourhood area (South West Water) plays a key role in maintaining adequate water services over the plan period. Therefore, it will be important for new development to avoid negative impacts on water quality, and instead contribute to reducing consumption and improving efficiency.

⁴⁶ Environment Agency (2022) 'Dart Start Bay and Torbay Operational Catchment' can be accessed [here](#).

⁴⁷ Environment Agency (2022) 'Harbourne River Water Body' can be accessed [here](#).

⁴⁸ Environment Agency (2022) 'Bidwell Brook Water Body' can be accessed [here](#).

⁴⁹ Environment Agency (2023) 'How to use Catchment Data Explorer' can be accessed [here](#).

Key issues

7.16 Considering the baseline information and policy context review, the following key issues are identified in relation to land, soil, and water resources:

- The provisional ALC data indicates that the neighbourhood area is underlain by areas of Grade 3 and Grade 4 agricultural land. However, the data does not differentiate between Grade 3a and Grade 3b land. As a finite resource, Grade 3a (BMV land) should be protected where possible. The neighbourhood area has a low likelihood of being underlain by BMV land.
- The neighbourhood area overlaps with a MSA for aggregates in the north. Consultation with Devon Stone Federation may be required.
- The Harbourne River and the Bidwell Brook waterbodies, and their associated tributaries, run through the neighbourhood area. Development should avoid impacts to water quality for both these waterbodies.
- Plan-making should consider how local decisions affect water supply, such as water accessibility issues, and ensure that appropriate drainage infrastructure is in place to accommodate new development areas.

Proposed SEA objective

7.17 Based on the key issues discussed above, it is proposed that the SEA should include the following objectives:

| SEA theme | SEA objective |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Land, soil, and water resources | Ensure the efficient and effective use of land, and protect and enhance water quality, using water resources in a sustainable manner. |

7.18 Supporting assessment questions include (will the option / proposal...):

- Promote the use of previously developed land, including the regeneration of underutilised brownfield land?
- Support the minimisation, reuse, and recycling of waste?
- Avoid any negative impacts on water quality and support improvements to water quality?
- Ensure appropriate drainage and mitigation is delivered alongside proposed development?
- Protect waterbodies from pollution?
- Maximise water efficiency and opportunities for water harvesting and/or water recycling?

8. Landscape

Focus of theme

8.1 This chapter presents the policy context and baseline summary in relation to the landscape SEA theme. The theme focuses on nationally protected landscapes, landscape character and quality, and visual amenity in the neighbourhood area. This information is used to identify key issues (both constraints and opportunities) before proposing a relevant SEA objective and supporting assessment questions.

Policy context

8.2 **Table 8.1** below presents the most relevant documents identified in the policy review for the purposes of the SEA.

Table 8.1: Plans, policies, and strategies reviewed in relation to the landscape SEA theme

| Document title | Year of publication |
|--|---------------------|
| National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) | 2021 |
| National Model Design Code | 2021 |
| The National Design Guide | 2019 |
| A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment | 2018 |
| A Landscape Character Assessment for South Hams and West Devon | 2017 |
| Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan 2014-2034 | 2019 |

8.3 The key messages emerging from the review are summarised below:

- The HPNP should consider the principles outlined in the NPPF, which gives great weight to conserving and enhancing protected landscapes, landscape character, and scenic beauty. The scale and extent of development within these areas should be limited and development within their setting should be mindfully located and designed to avoid/ minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas.
- The NPPF also recognises the role of green infrastructure in landscape settings, as well as the positive contribution that land remediation can have on despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated, and unstable land.
- The 25 Year Environment Plan and National Design Guide outline the same aims as one another, focusing on creating a cleaner, greener country that puts the environment first and celebrates the variety of natural landscapes and habitats present in the UK. Design is focused on creating beautiful, enduring, and successful places, which respond to local character and provide a network of high quality and green open spaces. Of note is 'Chapter 2: Recovering nature and enhancing the beauty of landscapes' and 'Goal 6: Enhanced beauty, heritage and engagement with the natural environment'.
- The National Model Design Code states that all design codes should include a landscape and open space strategy that incorporates the existing

natural features and new structural elements. It recognises that landscapes can be major drivers in the design process. The HPNP will also need to consider the relevant policies that are outlined in the Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan. In particular, this includes:

- Policy DEV23 – Landscape character.
 - Policy DEV25 – Nationally protected landscapes; and
 - Policy DEV28 – Trees, woodlands, and hedgerows.
- The Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) for South Hams and West Devon forms part of the evidence base for the Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan. The LCA is intended to provide context for policies and proposals within the Joint Local Plan, inform the determination of planning applications and the management of future change so that it is in sympathy with local variations in landscape character in order to conserve and enhance the special qualities of the rural area within South Hams and West Devon.

Baseline summary

Current baseline

Nationally protected landscapes

8.4 Whilst there are no nationally protected landscapes within the neighbourhood area (i.e., Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONBs) or National Parks), the HPNP neighbourhood area is approximately 1.5km south-east of the Dartmoor National Park and is within 2km of the South Devon AONB to the east and west. In this respect, it is likely the neighbourhood area provides an element of landscape setting for these designations.

8.5 The Dartmoor National Park was first designated in 1951 and has a variety of special qualities, including (but not limited to): upland moors, sheltered valleys, enclosed farmland, a varied geology and traditional farming practices. This landscape is threatened by many forces of change, including the effects of climate change and biodiversity decline. Though outside of the designation, the HPNP could incorporate details from the Dartmoor Partnership Plan⁵⁰ to maintain and enhance its setting.

8.6 The South Devon AONB was designated in 1960 and has a variety of special qualities, including: the coastline, ria estuaries, the deeply incised landscape, a wide range of significant habitats and a diverse setting. Threats to this designation include damage to local habitats and species due to invasive species, features at risk through scrub encroachment and burrowing animals, and changing farming culture and practices. Whilst outside of the neighbourhood area, the HPNP could incorporate details from the South Devon AONB Management Plan⁵¹ to maintain and enhance its setting.

⁵⁰ Dartmoor National Park (2021) 'Dartmoor Partnership Plan 2021-26' can be accessed [here](#).

⁵¹ South Devon AONB (2019) 'South Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan 2019024' can be accessed [here](#).

National Character Areas

- 8.7 National Character Areas (NCAs) are areas that share similar landscape characteristics, and which follow natural lines in the landscape rather than administrative boundaries. This makes them valuable in creating decision-making frameworks for the natural environment.
- 8.8 The neighbourhood area falls within NCA 151 'South Devon'. This NCA⁵² wraps around the southern and western edge of Dartmoor – the boundary marked by the A38. Key characteristics of this NCA include rounded hills separated by steep and intricate wooded valleys, drowned river valleys, arable and pasture fields, wildflower rich hedge banks that are often treeless, and settlements positioned in sheltered valley locations. The patchwork nature of this NCA has resulted in a rich and complex mosaic of habitats that support many species.

Local landscape and townscape character

- 8.9 Landscape and townscape character play an important role in understanding the relationship between people and place, identifying recognisable and distinct patterns in the landscape which make one area different from another. Landscape and townscape character can help identify the likely significance of effects of change resulting from development, including the potential loss of visual and amenity value. Assessments often provide indications of the overall landscape sensitivity and landscape capacities for key areas.
- 8.10 Following a review of the Devon County Council Environment Viewer⁵³ and the Devon Landscape Character Assessment⁵⁴, it is concluded the HPNP neighbourhood area sits within one character area – the Mid Dart Valley and Slopes. Additionally, the landscape character assessment map⁵⁵ for the South Hams indicates the neighbourhood area is indicative of two landscape types: 3G River valley slopes and combes and 5A Inland elevated undulating land.
- 8.11 The Mid Dart Valley and Slopes character area⁵⁶ comprises the River Dart Valley and its tributaries and its surrounding hills and slopes. The area has narrow valleys with limited tree cover, and has distinctive limestone geology, semi-natural habitats, mixed and broadleaved woodland, and good quality agricultural land. Threats to this landscape include the increase in domestic tourism, building development, agricultural intensification and renewable energy installations.

Visual amenity

- 8.12 It is useful to note that views of and across the neighbourhood area are also an important factor to consider in the planning process, as the scale, height, and mass of development can ultimately impact on important views. Changes like development and landscape change can see these important views and vistas degraded overtime.

⁵² Natural England (2014) 'NCA Profile: 151 South Devon (NE338)' can be accessed [here](#).

⁵³ Devon County Council Environment Viewer (2021) can be accessed [here](#).

⁵⁴ Devon County Council (no date) 'Devon's landscape character assessment (DLCA) can be accessed [here](#).

⁵⁵ South Hams (2018) 'Landscape Character Assessment' can be accessed [here](#). Download the Overview Map for the South Hams from the Downloads box.

⁵⁶ Devon County Council (no date) 'Mid Dart Valley and Slopes' can be accessed [here](#).

8.13 Views that are identified locally as being important within the HPNP neighbourhood area include (but are not limited to): views of Dartmoor National Park, panoramic views from the cricket club field and the reservoir, Harbourne valley, Luscombe cross and both churches.

Tree Preservation Orders

8.14 Implemented by Local Planning Authorities (LPAs), Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) are designated to protect specific trees, groups of trees or woodlands in the interests of their amenity value. When considering amenity, the LPA will likely take into consideration the following criteria⁵⁷:

- **Visibility:** the extent to which the trees or woodlands can be seen by the public.
- **Individual, collective, and wider impact:** considering the importance of the trees or woodlands in relation to their cultural or historic value, contribution to and relationship with the landscape and/or their contribution to the character or appearance of a conservation area.

8.15 Spatial data on TPOs within the South Hams District can be found [here](#). This will be explored in more detail during the next stage of the SEA process.

Future baseline

8.16 New development has the potential to lead to small, incremental, but cumulative changes in the landscape character and quality within the neighbourhood area. This includes the loss or damage of features and areas with an important visual amenity value. The HPNP can help guide development so that it does not negatively impact upon the landscape and visual features which contribute to the distinctive character of the area. This will also help to reduce any potential impacts on nearby national designations.

8.17 It should be noted that the planning system has tools in place to offer a degree of protection to the landscape. Therefore, new development will not necessarily result in harm. Furthermore, locally distinctive landscape features, characteristics and special qualities can be protected, managed, and enhanced through appropriate planning policies. It is further recognised that new development that is appropriately designed and landscape-led could support the area's intrinsic landscape character and quality. This could include regeneration that improves the setting of the villages, delivering green infrastructure improvements and / or new recreational opportunities and the identification and / or enhanced framing of important views.

Key issues

8.18 Considering the baseline information and policy context review, the following key issues are identified in relation to landscape:

- Whilst the HPNP neighbourhood area does not sit within a nationally designated landscape, it is located in close proximity to the Dartmoor National Park and the South Devon AONB. As such, it is likely the

⁵⁷ GOV.UK (2014): 'Tree Preservation Orders – General', [online] available to access via [this link](#)

neighbourhood area contributes to the setting of these nationally important landscapes through its character and quality.

- The relationship between the settlements and the open countryside is an important part of the character and special qualities of the neighbourhood area.
- New development has the potential to lead to incremental change in landscape and villagescape character and visual amenity.

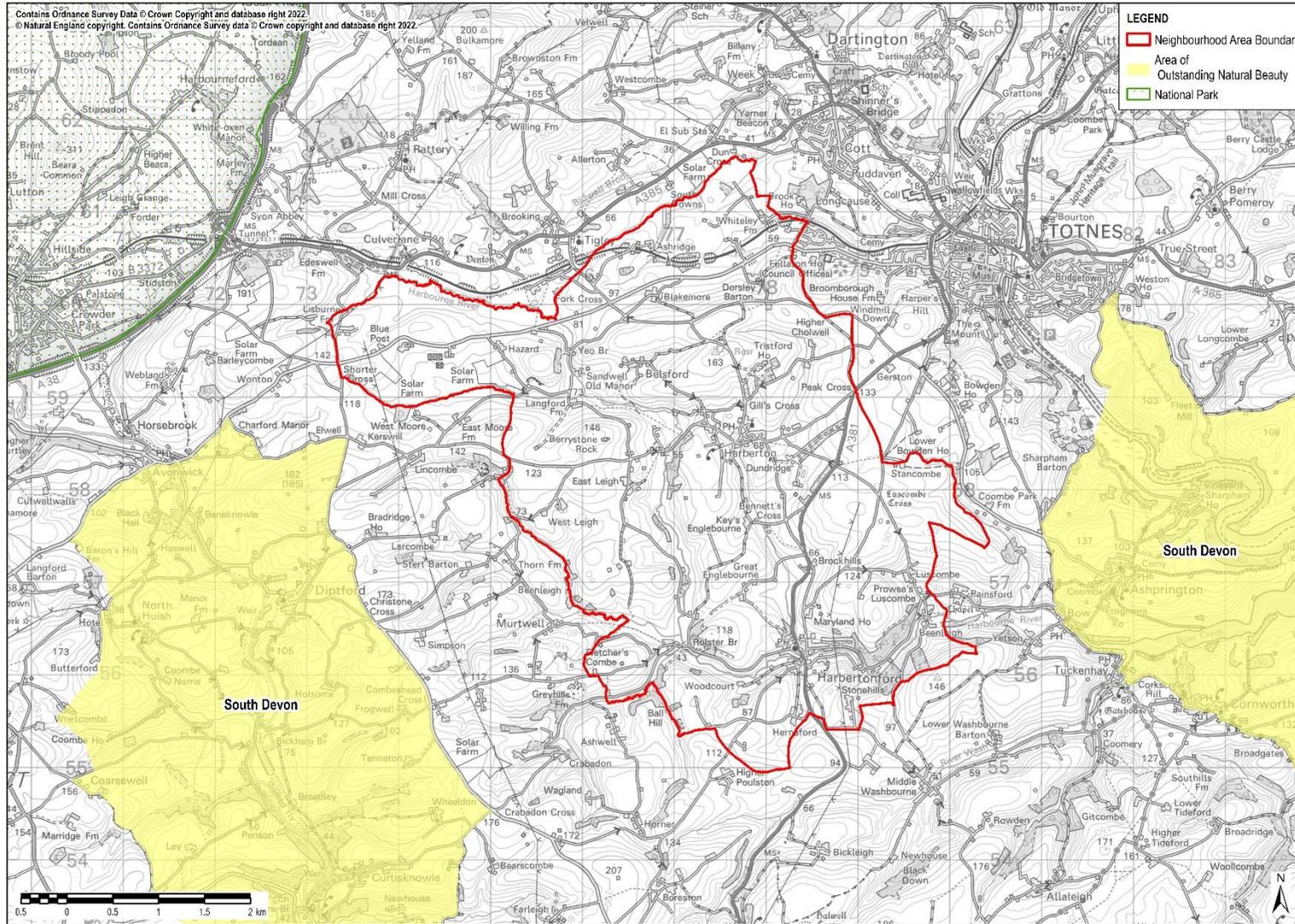
Proposed SEA objective

8.19 Based on the key issues discussed above, it is proposed that the SEA should include the following objective:

| SEA theme | SEA objective |
|-----------|--|
| Landscape | Protect and enhance the character and quality of the immediate and surrounding landscape and villagescape. |

8.20 Supporting assessment questions include (will the option / proposal...):

- Protect and enhance the local landscape and villagescape character, key sensitivities and features, and quality of place?
- Conserve and enhance local identity, diversity, and settlement character?
- Protect visual amenity and locally important views in the neighbourhood area?
- Support the integrity of the landscape in the neighbourhood area in accordance with the Devon Landscape Character Assessment?
- Protect and enhance the landscape in line with the Dartmoor National Park and South Devon AONB management plans?



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Figure 8.1: Landscape designations in proximity to the HPNP area

9. Transportation

Focus of theme

9.1 This chapter presents the policy context and baseline summary in relation to the transportation SEA theme. The theme focuses on transport infrastructure, transport use, traffic flows and congestion, accessibility, and active travel opportunities within and surrounding the neighbourhood area. This information is used to identify key issues (both constraints and opportunities) before proposing a relevant SEA objective and supporting assessment questions.

Policy context

9.2 **Table 9.1** below presents the most relevant documents identified in the policy review for the purposes of the SEA.

Table 9.1: Plans, policies, and strategies reviewed in relation to the transportation SEA theme

| Document title | Year of publication |
|--|---------------------|
| National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) | 2021 |
| Decarbonising Transport: A Better, Greener Britain | 2021 |
| Transport Investment Strategy | 2017 |
| Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan 2014-2034 | 2019 |
| Devon and Torbay Local Transport Plan 3 2011-2026 - Strategy | 2011 |

9.3 The key messages emerging from the review are summarised below:

- The HPNP will need to consider the principles outlined in the NPPF, which influence plans and development proposals to ensure they consider transport issues from the earliest stages, address any known issues, and maximise opportunities to increase accessibility to sustainable transport. Larger developments are expected to limit the need to travel and offer a genuine choice of transport modes. However, it is recognised that sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural environments.
- Decarbonising Transport: A Better, Greener Britain sets out how the UK Government will deliver emission reductions and associated benefits in the country; presenting the path to net-zero transport in the UK and the commitments and actions necessary to make progress on this path.
- The Transport Investment Strategy sets out investment priorities to improve the connectivity, effectiveness and reliability of transport network whilst simultaneously reducing impacts on the natural environment. Furthermore, the document places great emphasis on making cycling and walking the natural choice for shorter journeys, or as part of longer journeys.
- The HPNP will also need to consider the relevant policies that are outlined in the Plymouth and South West Devon Joint Local Plan. In particular, this includes:
 - Policy SPT8 – Strategic connectivity; and

- Policy SPT9 – Strategic principles for transport planning and strategy.
- The Devon and Torbay Local Transport Plan 2011-2026, sets out proposed transport solutions for the county up to 2026 with a focus on greater efficiency in the transport system, better use of resources, providing for a growing population and their demands, reducing non-renewable energy resources, and lowering carbon emissions. In this respect, the HPNP should seek to align with the strategic policy aims of this plan.

Baseline summary

Current baseline

Car ownership and commuting patterns

- 9.4 According to 2021 census data, 44.4% of households own one car/ van, 33.2% own two cars/ vans, and 15.5% own three or more cars/ vans. Only 6.9% of households do not own a car/ van.
- 9.5 Of the working population in HPNP neighbourhood area, 45.8% drive a car/ van to work, whilst 43.7% work mainly at or from home. The remainder comprises: on foot (3.5%), passenger in a car/ van (2.6%), bus (1.2%), train (0.9%), other methods (0.9%), motorcycle/ scooter/ moped (0.8%), bicycle (0.5%), and taxi (0.3%).
- 9.6 In terms of distance travelled to work, 43.9% of the working population work mainly from home, 19.0% travel 10-30km, 16% travel less than 10km, and 4.4% travel 30km and over. The remaining 16.7% falls under 'other'.

Rail network

- 9.7 Whilst there are no rail stations within the neighbourhood area, Totnes Railway Station is located in the neighbouring parish – 2km from the eastern boundary of the neighbourhood area. Operated by Great Western Railway, this station⁵⁸ offers regular services to regional and national destinations, including services to Plymouth and Cornwall, Newton Abbot, Exeter and Taunton, and to destinations further afield including Bristol, London Paddington, Reading, Cardiff Central, Birmingham, the north of England and Scotland.

Bus network

- 9.8 Limited bus services run through the HPNP neighbourhood area. These are:
- Route 164 (Salcombe – Totnes via Kingsbridge), run by Tally Ho. This service runs Monday through Friday and stops at Harbertonford approximately once per hour; and twice before 10:20, once at 13:15 and once at the end of the school day in Harberton village. On a Saturday it stops in Harbertonford approximately once per hour, and on Sundays and public holidays it only stops once every three hours during the afternoon⁵⁹. This service also takes request stops on the A381.
 - Route 92 (Dartmouth – Totnes) is run by Stagecoach and stops in Harbertonford once every two hours Monday through Saturday. On

⁵⁸ Great Western Railway (2023) 'Totnes' can be accessed [here](#).

⁵⁹ Travel Devon (2022) 'South Hams Bus Times E-Booklet (from 30th October 2022)' can be accessed [here](#).

Sundays and public holidays this service stops in Harbertonford once at 12:45 and again at 18:00⁶⁰.

- 9.9 There was an additional community bus service, known as Bob the Bus, running in the HPNP neighbourhood area. However due to the timetable being too similar to other bus services, there was a lack of use and the service was halted.
- 9.10 According to a survey undertaken in 2015, 135 respondents indicated they use the local bus service, and 238 respondents indicated they do not. When asked if they would use the bus service if it were more frequent, 195 respondents indicated they would, and 153 respondents indicated they would not⁶¹

Road network

- 9.11 The HPNP neighbourhood area is within proximity to the A38 and the A385, which are strategic roads located to the north of the neighbourhood area. The A385 connects Totnes to the A38, which is one of the primary transport routes in and out of the South West, connecting to the M5 in Exeter.
- 9.12 Within the neighbourhood area, the main roads are the A381 and Plymouth Road. The A381 runs north-south through the eastern part of the neighbourhood area. It connects Totnes (to the north-east of the neighbourhood area) with Salcombe (to the south of the neighbourhood area), via Halwell and Kingsbridge. Plymouth Road runs east-west through the northern part of the neighbourhood area. It connects to Totnes in the east and to the A38 in the west.
- 9.13 The A381 is a cause of concern for Harbertonford village residents. The volume and speed of vehicles passing through on this road has led to concerns over safety, and as such is considered to be a threat. In Harberton village there are three exits onto this road that are considered to be high risk, linked to limited road visibility.
- 9.14 There are also minor local roads that provide access in and around the neighbourhood area. These tend to be one lane roads. There is limited pedestrian and cycle provision.
- 9.15 It is recognised that there is limited pedestrian and cycle provision on the roads in the HPNP neighbourhood area.

Public Rights of Way

- 9.16 According to the Devon County Council Environment Viewer⁶², public rights of way (PRoWs) in the HPNP neighbourhood area are limited to footpaths, with one byway on the eastern neighbourhood area boundary. This network provides opportunities for safe and active transportation for residents of the HPNP neighbourhood area.
- 9.17 There are also green lanes within the HPNP neighbourhood area that are managed by Devon County Council, allowing for recreational activity and connection within Harberton parish. Some of these green lanes connect

⁶⁰ Stagecoach (2022) '92 Dartmouth-Totnes' can be accessed [here](#).

⁶¹ Harberton Neighbourhood Plan (2015) 'Questionnaire Initial Results' can be accessed [here](#).

⁶² Devon County Council Environment Viewer (2021) can be accessed [here](#).

Harberton village with Harbertonford village; though it is noted these green lanes are in various states of repair.

- 9.18 The Devon and Torbay LTP outlines that it will seek to deliver improved links to Totnes, for example by completing part of the National Cycle Network between Paignton and Totnes, which could be beneficial to the neighbourhood area. Notably, the HPNP neighbourhood area is approximately 4.5km from Totnes, or an 18-minute bicycle ride.

Future baseline

- 9.19 Given the options for sustainable transport within the HPNP neighbourhood area are limited, new development is likely to lead to increased road users as a result of continued reliance on private vehicles for travel. This could have an impact on the local road network, including causing congestion issues and exacerbating the road issues on the A381.
- 9.20 There may be opportunities to support enhancements to pedestrian and cycle links across the parish, supporting active travel uptake and improved road safety.
- 9.21 As discussed in previous chapters, considering the COVID-19 pandemic and changing working habits, the provision of infrastructure to facilitate working from home is likely to positively contribute towards transport management. Whilst negative effects of new development on the transport network are likely to be mitigated in part by new infrastructure, there will be a continuing need for development to be situated in accessible locations.

Key issues

- 9.22 Considering the baseline information and policy context review, the following key issues are identified in relation to transportation:
- Sustainable transport opportunities in the HPNP neighbourhood area are limited. The nearest train station in the neighbourhood area is Totnes Railway Station, which offers links to a variety of locations around the UK, but it is 2km from the neighbourhood area and would require residents to travel to the station by private vehicle. There is a limited bus service in the HPNP neighbourhood area and as such development is likely to lead to an increase in private vehicle usage.
 - There are public footpaths in the HPNP neighbourhood area that could facilitate safe and active sustainable transportation opportunities.
 - The recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic has the potential to lead to changing travel patterns, most notably resulting from increased levels of working from home.

Proposed SEA objective

- 9.23 Based on the key issues discussed above, it is proposed that the SEA should include the following objective:

| SEA theme | SEA objective |
|----------------|--|
| Transportation | Promote sustainable transport use and active travel opportunities and reduce the need to travel. |

9.24 Supporting assessment questions include (will the option / proposal...):

- Support the objectives within the Devon and Torbay Local Transport Plan to encourage the use of more sustainable transport modes?
- Encourage a shift to more sustainable forms of travel and enable sustainable transport infrastructure enhancements, including electric vehicle charging points?
- Improve local connectivity and pedestrian and cyclist movement?
- Facilitate working from home to reduce the use of private vehicles to access workplaces outside of the neighbourhood area?
- Reduce the impact of the transport sector on climate change?
- Improve road safety?
- Reduce the impact on residents from the road network?
- Encourage the measurement of progress of transport schemes linked to new development (for example, traffic calming measures)?

10. Proposed SEA Framework and Methodology

10.1 The proposed SEA objectives, established through the identification of key issues and environmental objectives as part of the scoping exercise, are brought together to create one framework, the SEA Framework, and are presented in **Table 10.1** below.

Table 10.1: Proposed SEA Framework

| SEA theme | SEA objective |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Air quality | Support objectives to improve air quality within and surrounding the neighbourhood area and minimise sources of nitrogen dioxide. |
| Biodiversity and geodiversity | Protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity within and surrounding the neighbourhood area. |
| Climate change | Reduce the contribution to climate change made by activities within the neighbourhood area and increase resilience to the potential effects of climate change, including flooding. |
| Community wellbeing | Ensure growth in the neighbourhood area is aligned with the needs of all residents, improving accessibility, anticipating future needs and specialist requirements, reducing deprivation, and supporting cohesive and inclusive communities. |
| Historic environment | Protect, conserve, and enhance the historic environment within and surrounding the neighbourhood area. |
| Land, soil, and water resources | Ensure the efficient and effective use of land, and protect and enhance water quality, using water resources in a sustainable manner. |
| Landscape | Protect and enhance the character and quality of the immediate and surrounding landscape and villagescape. |
| Transportation | Promote sustainable transport use and active travel opportunities and reduce the need to travel. |

10.2 The SEA Framework provides a methodology and consistent approach for the appraisal of the emerging HPNP. The proposed SEA Framework will be used to appraise the options and proposals emerging for the draft plan, and findings will be fed back to the neighbourhood group to inform plan development.

11. Next steps

Subsequent stages for the SEA process

11.1 The next stage will involve exploring reasonable alternatives for the HPNP. The findings of this work will be fed back to the neighbourhood group so that they might be taken into consideration when finalising the Neighbourhood Plan. The draft version of the Neighbourhood Plan will then be subject to appraisal, and the SEA Environmental Report will be prepared for consultation alongside it.

Consultation on the Scoping Report

11.2 Public involvement through consultation is a key element of the SEA process. At this scoping stage, the SEA Regulations require consultation with statutory consultation bodies but not full consultation with the public.

11.3 The statutory consultation bodies are the Environment Agency, Historic England, and Natural England. This scoping report has been released to these three statutory consultees.

11.4 Consultees are invited to comment on the content of this scoping report, particularly the evidence base for the SEA, the identified key issues, and the proposed SEA Framework.

11.5 The consultation period runs from 13th March 2023 to 17th April 2023. Comments on the Scoping Report should be sent to:

Emily Baker, AECOM

Email address: emily.baker@aecom.com

11.6 All comments received on the scoping report will be reviewed and will influence the development of the SEA where appropriate.