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NESTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN
**DRAFT SUSTAINABILITY
APPRAISAL REPORT**

on behalf of



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1 Introduction

- 1.1 Planning Policy Guidance advises that there is no legal requirement for a neighbourhood plan to have a sustainability appraisal as set out in Section 19 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. However, a qualifying body must demonstrate how its plan will contribute to achieving sustainable development. As such a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is a useful approach.
- 1.2 This is the Draft SA for the Neston Neighbourhood Plan (NNP). It follows on from a Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report.
- 1.3 The Draft SA provides support to the plan-making process and helps to ensure that the principles of sustainable development are considered throughout.
- 1.4 The Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report has:
 - Identified other relevant policies, plans and programmes
 - Provided an account of the existing environmental, economic and social baseline for the NNP area
 - Identified sustainability issues for Neston
 - Developed a SA framework
 - Been subject to consultation.
- 1.5 The Draft SA has been undertaken by the project team charged with producing the NNP. This has ensured that there has been an interactive relationship between plan-making and issues that have arisen as a result of the SA process.

2 Scoping Report Consultation

- 2.1 The NNP Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report was available for consultation in the six week period from 29 October 2014 to 10 December 2014. The consultation was managed by Cheshire West and Chester Council. The following organisations have been consulted:
- Environment Agency
 - English Heritage
 - Natural England
 - Natural Resources Wales
 - CADW.
- 2.2 In parallel with the consultation on the NNP Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report the same organisations were asked to comment on the Draft Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulation Assessment (ARA) for the NNP. This was drafted by Cheshire West and Chester Council. Appendix 1 is a copy of the screening assessment.
- 2.3 In relation to the SEA the screening concludes that it will be unlikely that there will be any significant environmental effects arising from the NNP. A Strategic Environmental Assessment of the NNP is not required.
- 2.4 It also concludes that the NNP is unlikely to have an adverse effect on a European site (as defined in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2010(d)) alone or in combination with other plans and projects.
- 2.5 English Heritage, Natural England and Natural Resources Wales responded to the consultation. They all agree with the conclusion that the NNP should not have significant adverse effects on the environment and that the SEA process is not required. There is also agreement with the conclusion that the NNP should not have significant adverse effects on European Sites of nature conservation importance and that HRA is not needed.
- 2.6 In addition, Natural England welcomes the detail provided in the Scoping Report. It feels that the matrix highlights uncertain and negative impacts 'which is usual at this stage and can be used as the plan progresses to ensure that there are no outstanding uncertain or negative impacts'.

3 Sustainability Appraisal Framework and the Neston Neighbourhood Plan Objectives

- 3.1 The SA framework was developed in the Scoping Report. It is the principal way of appraising the NNP. The SA framework is shown below.
- 3.2 It is based on the Chester West and Chester (CWaC) Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Reports for the Core Strategy and the Local Plan Part 2 as these are relevant to Neston. Where it is possible to make the sustainability objectives more specific and relevant to Neston this has been done.

The SA Framework

Borough-Wide Sustainability Objective	Sustainability Appraisal for Neston
1 Address the need to mitigate and adapt to climate change	To help to minimise and reduce the emission of greenhouse gases, in particular CO ₂ . Focus new development on accessible locations in order to reduce car borne travel and/or encourage sustainable forms of travel The enhancement and promotion of green infrastructure Adapt to climate change through the provision of high quality and diverse natural habitats
2 To reduce energy consumption and promote energy efficiency and increase the use of energy from renewable resources	Reduce energy consumption and promote energy efficiency Increase energy use from renewable sources
3 To protect and enhance the borough's biodiversity and wildlife habitats	The protection given in the NNP to nature conservation sites and promotion of management of these sites. Opportunities for the enhancement of habitats and the creation of new habitats for conservation, diversity and resilience to climate change. The opportunity to maintain, enhance and increase tree cover and woodland.
4 To minimise the risk of flooding	Minimise the risk of flooding by ensuring that design measures such as SUDS are incorporated.
5 To protect, maintain and improve the quality of water resources, minimise the risk of pollution and improve water efficiency.	Protect, maintain and improve the quality of water resources and minimise the risk of pollution. Encourage measures in new development that will improve the efficient use of water.
6 To protect air quality where it is of a high standard and to improve it elsewhere.	Insignificant effects or an improvement in local air quality ensuring a minimum impact on health. Encourage a move towards more sustainable modes of travel.

7	To reduce the consumption of natural resources.	The prudent use of natural resources. Promotion of the use of secondary/recycled aggregates.
8	To protect and enhance land and soil quality	The degree of impact on the extent and quality of soils.
9	To optimise the re-use of previously developed land and buildings	The degree to which development will be promoted on previously developed land and through the re-use of buildings.
10	Achieve sustainable waste management by reducing the production of waste, increasing the opportunities for recycling and reducing the amount of waste being sent for final disposal to landfill	The encouragement of new facilities for the management and recycling of waste
11	To preserve and enhance sites, features, areas and setting of archaeological, historical and cultural heritage importance	Ensure the continued protection and enhancement of heritage assets and their particular settings.
12	To protect, enhance and manage the character and appearance of the townscape and landscape, maintaining distinctive qualities and the sense of place	Protect and enhance the particular landscape character and setting of the NNP area. Opportunities to protect and enhance the particular qualities of the townscape which give it a distinctive character. Take the chance to address deficiencies in open space provision.
13	Improve health and social inclusion whilst reducing inequality and valuing diversity and equality	Improvements in access to health facilities and other services. Improvements to social inclusion.
14	Provide sufficient housing to meet identified needs	Housing to meet identified needs.
15	To create a safe environment to live in and reduce the fear of crime	Reduction in opportunities for crime and in the fear of crime. Extent to which road safety is improved.
16	To support sustainable economic growth and competitiveness and to provide opportunities for ongoing private sector investment	Need to ensure a balanced portfolio of employment land. Ensure that employment land is in a sustainable location. Create opportunities for new businesses and minimise disruption to existing businesses. Meet employment needs in the rural and urban areas. Support for sustainable growth in the economy.
17	To develop and enhance the visitor economy/tourism	Promotion of tourism and the visitor economy.

18 To promote regeneration particularly of deprived areas	Delivery of urban/rural regeneration. Improve economic conditions, particularly in deprived areas. Support rural diversification.
19 To maintain and improve the vitality and viability of centres	Safeguarding of shops and services in the existing centres. Safeguard and improve the retail, leisure and service provision. Provide improved physical, social and environmental infrastructure in centres.

Testing the NNP Objectives

3.3 There are a number of key attributes and strengths across the NNP area that have been identified by the community. These provide the basis for a vision for the NNP Plan. The attributes and strengths are:

- The close inter-relationships and inter-dependencies that the various settlements within the Neighbourhood Plan Area (NPA) have with one another.
- Neston's traditional role as a historic market town providing a centre for the local community as well as the surrounding area.
- The importance of the visitor economy to the Area's prosperity.
- The importance of the quality of the Area's historic and natural environment.
- The close relationship that the settlements have with the countryside and the estuary.

3.4 It follows that the vision for the NNP is:

'A diverse and thriving settlement with the historic market town at its centre around which other key economic, historic and environmental assets will evolve and expand whilst retaining and reflecting the Area's unique and distinctive character to provide an outstanding quality of life for current and future residents'.

3.5 To secure this vision, the following objectives for the NNP have been identified:

- Maintain the existing Green Belt boundaries and protect the Green Belt from inappropriate development.
- Accommodate future housing provision within the existing settlement limits and ensure that provision meets local housing need both in terms of the market and social sector.
- Strengthen and support economic activity in the traditional employment, information technology and the visitor economy sectors.
- Strengthen and support retail provision to meet local need.
- Seek improvements to cycling provision, public transport services and transport infrastructure.
- Strengthen and support the visitor economy infrastructure and facilities.
- Ensure new development protects and enriches the existing townscape and landscape.
- Protect and enhance the Area's coastline, its nature conservation assets and local greenspaces.
- Protect and enhance health and wellbeing amongst the community.

- Sustain and improve local facilities and services.

3.6 As part of the SA process the objectives of the NNP have been tested against the SA framework to gauge to what degree the principles of sustainable development are embedded. The outcome of this testing is shown below.

3.7 It can be seen that the objectives of the NNP are positively compatible with or have a neutral effect on the SA framework.

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Matrix to Show the Compatibility of the NNP Objectives against the SA Framework

SA Objectives	NNP Objectives									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1 Address the need to mitigate and adapt to climate change	0	✓	✓	✓	✓	0	✓	✓	0	0
2 To reduce energy consumption and promote energy efficiency and increase the use of energy from renewable resources	0	✓	✓	✓	✓	0	✓	0	0	✓
3 To protect and enhance the borough's biodiversity and wildlife habitats	✓	✓	0	0	0	0	✓	✓	✓	0
4 To minimise the risk of flooding	✓	0	0	0	0	0	✓	✓	✓	0
5 To protect, maintain and improve the quality of water resources, minimise the risk of pollution and improve water efficiency	0	0	0	0	0	0	✓	✓	✓	0
6 To protect air quality where it is of a high standard and to improve it elsewhere	0	0	✓	0	✓	0	✓	✓	✓	0
7 To reduce the consumption of natural resources	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	0	✓	0	✓	✓
8 To protect and enhance land and soil quality	✓	✓	✓	0	0	0	✓	✓	✓	0
9 To optimise the re-use of previously developed land and buildings	✓	✓	✓	✓	0	0	✓	✓	0	0
10 Achieve sustainable waste management by reducing the production of waste, increasing the opportunities for recycling and reducing the amount of waste being sent for final disposal to landfill	0	0	✓	0	0	0	✓	0	✓	0
11 To preserve and enhance sites, features, areas and setting of archaeological, historical and cultural heritage importance	✓	✓	0	0	0	✓	✓	✓	0	0
12 To protect, enhance and manage the character and appearance of the townscape and landscape, maintaining distinctive qualities and the sense of place	0	✓	0	0	0	✓	✓	✓	✓	0
13 Improve health and social inclusion whilst reducing inequality and valuing diversity and equality	0	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	0	✓	✓	✓
14 Provide sufficient housing to meet identified needs	0	✓	0	0	0	0	0	0	✓	✓
15 To create a safe environment to live in and reduce the fear of crime	0	✓	0	0	✓	0	✓	0	✓	0
16 To support sustainable economic growth and competitiveness and to provide opportunities for ongoing private sector investment	0	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	0	0	✓	✓
17 To develop and enhance the visitor economy/tourism	✓	0	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	0	✓
18 To promote regeneration particularly of deprived areas	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	0	✓	✓
19 To maintain and improve the vitality and viability of centres	0	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	0	0	✓

- ✓ Positively compatible
- 0 Neutral/no effect
- X Negatively compatible

1	Maintain the existing Green Belt boundaries and protect the Green Belt from inappropriate development
2	Accommodate future housing provision within the existing settlement limits and ensure that provision meets local housing need both in terms of the market and social sector
3	Strengthen and support economic activity in the traditional employment, information technology and the visitor economy sectors
4	Strengthen and support retail provision to meet local need
5	Seek improvements to cycling provision, public transport services and transport infrastructure
6	Strengthen and support the visitor economy infrastructure and facilities
7	Ensure new development protects and enriches the existing townscape and landscape
8	Protect and enhance the Area's coastline, its nature conservation assets and local greenspaces
9	Protect and enhance health and wellbeing amongst the community
10	Sustain and improve local facilities and services

4 Sustainability Appraisal Method and Outcome

- 4.1 The appraisal of the NNP has been undertaken as a 'whole plan' assessment. The NNP, including the constituent policies, are assessed against the SA framework.
- 4.2 The assessment is qualitative in nature. It is based on the measures set out below.

Assessment Measures

Effect	Measure
Positive	NNP contributes to securing the sustainability objective
Neutral	NNP has no effect on achieving the sustainability objective
Negative	NNP detracts from the ability to secure the sustainability objective
No Relationship	There is no clear relationship between the NNP and achieving the objective

- 4.3 The making of the NNP has been an iterative process informed by feedback on key issues from the local community and a distinct vision for Neston. The NNP is based on incremental change but does not choose the allocation of land for new development. Because of this it has not been appropriate or necessary to identify, assess and test spatial options.
- 4.4 The appraisal of NNP as a whole and its constituent policies against the SA framework has been undertaken using the assessment measures. The appraisal has also been informed by the review of the existing environmental, economic and social baseline for Neston set out in the SA Scoping Report. The constituent policies of NNP are set out in Appendix 2.

Borough-Wide Sustainability Objective	Sustainability Appraisal for Neston	NNP Relevant Policies (Appendix 1)	Likely Effect	Commentary
1 Address the need to mitigate and adapt to climate change	<p>To help to minimise and reduce the emission of greenhouse gases, in particular CO₂.</p> <p>Focus new development on accessible locations in order to reduce car borne travel and/or encourage sustainable forms of travel</p> <p>The enhancement and promotion of green infrastructure</p> <p>Adapt to climate change through the provision of high quality and diverse natural habitats</p>	<p>NNR1</p> <p>NNM1</p> <p>NNM2</p> <p>NNM3</p> <p>NND4</p> <p>NNLE2</p> <p>NNLE3</p>	Positive	<p>The design, location and mix of new development will account for energy efficiency and the concomitant reduction in CO₂ emission. New development is required to incorporate measures to improve the energy efficiency of building fabric and to provide for renewable energy generation. The compact form of the town and the emphasis on progressive change through infill development together with a closely related mix of uses and activities will assist in reducing the need to travel, particularly by vehicles. Opportunities should be taken to improve green infrastructure and the links between green spaces, green corridors and development. Trees, habitats and special landscapes are all given protection.</p>
2 To reduce energy consumption and promote energy efficiency and increase the use of energy from renewable resources	<p>Reduce energy consumption and promote energy efficiency</p> <p>Increase energy use from renewable sources</p>	<p>NND4</p>	Positive	<p>There is a requirement to incorporate energy efficiency measures and provisions for renewable energy into new developments, including proposals for the change of use of buildings.</p>
3 To protect and enhance the borough's biodiversity and wildlife habitats	<p>The protection given in the NNP to nature conservation sites and promotion of management of these sites.</p> <p>Opportunities for the enhancement of habitats and the creation of new habitats for conservation, diversity and resilience to climate change.</p> <p>The opportunity to maintain, enhance and increase tree cover and woodland.</p>	<p>NNLE1</p> <p>NNLE3</p> <p>NNLE4</p> <p>NNLE6</p>	Positive	<p>The countryside and coastal setting of Neston places an importance and significance on the need to protect and enhance wildlife habitats and natural places or features that add to biodiversity. The relevant policies of the NNP seek to strengthen the protection of the special areas of landscape and the high order nature conservation designations in the Dee Coastal Zone. Beyond this, the policies recognise the need to preserve and improve local sites of wildlife significance, local greenspaces and individual trees. Every encouragement is given to increasing tree cover as part of the development process.</p>
4 To minimise the risk of flooding	<p>Minimise the risk of flooding by ensuring that design measures such as SUDS are incorporated.</p>	<p>No specific policies</p>	Neutral	<p>There is no specific policy in the NNP relating to flooding. The adopted and emerging Local Plans address flooding and new development. There is no particular need to repeat the advice and requirements in the NNP.</p>

5	To protect, maintain and improve the quality of water resources, minimise the risk of pollution and improve water efficiency.	Protect, maintain and improve the quality of water resources and minimise the risk of pollution. Encourage measures in new development that will improve the efficient use of water.	No specific policies	Neutral	The quality of the water resource and water pollution are not directly addressed in the NNP. These are matters which are covered in adopted and emerging Local Plans. There is a tangential relationship with the NNP in that it encourages the protection and enhancement of the green infrastructure resource. In an indirect way this can benefit water quality and mitigate water pollution.
6	To protect air quality where it is of a high standard and to improve it elsewhere.	Insignificant effects or an improvement in local air quality ensuring a minimum impact on health. Encourage a move towards more sustainable modes of travel.	NNH1 NNE1 NNE3 NNR1 NNR2 NNT2 NNT3 NNM1 NNM2 NNM3 NNM4	Neutral	The policies that relate to new development (housing, employment, tourism and retail) have the potential to impact on air quality and emissions. The same is true of policies on car parking as they have a direct relationship to vehicle movement and circulation. However, there is no Air Quality Management Area in Neston to suggest a significant air quality issue. There is also encouragement for sustainable modes of travel in general and associated with new development. The policies of the NNP are not likely to significantly impact on air quality – a neutral measure is the outcome.
7	To reduce the consumption of natural resources.	The prudent use of natural resources. Promotion of the use of secondary/recycled aggregates.	No specific policies	No relationship	There is no relationship between this objective and the policies of the NNP. It is a matter that is addressed in borough-wide plans.
8	To protect and enhance land and soil quality	The degree of impact on the extent and quality of soils.	NNH1 NNE1 NND3 NNLE2 NNLE3 NNLE6	Neutral	The impact on soil quality will be limited. New development could cause some detrimental impact on soils in the built up area but there are no allocations to impact on the soil character of significant open areas. There will be no detriment to best and most versatile agricultural land. The policies that aim to enhance the landscape, including green corridors, have the potential to improve the quality of soils at a local level.
9	To optimise the re-use of previously developed land and buildings	The degree to which development will be promoted on previously developed land and through the re-use of buildings.	NNH1 NNE1 NNE2 NNE3 NNR2 NNR3 NNC2	Positive	The focus for new development is on the existing urban area. For housing, employment, retail, tourism and community uses the NNP promotes the recycling of land where possible and provides opportunities and encouragement for the reuse of existing buildings.
10	Achieve sustainable waste management by reducing the production of waste, increasing the opportunities for recycling and reducing the amount of waste being sent for final disposal to landfill	The encouragement of new facilities for the management and recycling of waste	No specific policies	No relationship	This is a matter which is more appropriately addressed on a borough-wide scale.

11	To preserve and enhance sites, features, areas and setting of archaeological, historical and cultural heritage importance	Ensure the continued protection and enhancement of heritage assets and their particular settings.	NNLE5 NND1		Positive	There is a requirement to conserve both the special historical or architectural character of listed buildings and the setting of those buildings. Beyond this there is a recognition that there are non-listed buildings or structures which are of value to the local community. These are to be identified on a Local List. There will be heritage assets which will merit a degree of protection from demolition or alteration.
12	To protect, enhance and manage the character and appearance of the townscape and landscape, maintaining distinctive qualities and the sense of place	Protect and enhance the particular landscape character and setting of the NNP area. Opportunities to protect and enhance the particular qualities of the townscape which give it a distinctive character. Take the chance to address deficiencies in open space provision.	NND1 NND3 NNLE1 NNLE2 NNLE3 NNLE4 NNLE5		Positive	The emphasis on high quality design to reinforce local character and the particular requirements for high quality, well-considered design in Neston Town Centre and the Parkgate Seafront will help to preserve and improve the distinctive townscape qualities of the area. The particular protection given to heritage assets will give another layer of policy geared towards the conservation and enhancement of the townscape. Policies to conserve and enhance the Area of Special County Value for Landscape, local green spaces, trees and woodland and the Dee Coastal Zone will meet the objective of protecting the particular landscape character of the NNP area. The policy on environmental improvement corridors will assist on improving both the landscape and townscape at a local level. There is provision to safeguard existing local green spaces and encouragement to take opportunities to expand the network and the links between different spaces.
13	Improve health and social inclusion whilst reducing inequality and valuing diversity and equality	Improvements in access to health facilities and other services. Improvements to social inclusion.	NNC1 NNC2 NNC3	NNC4	Positive	The NNP includes particular policies to preserve existing community infrastructure, to facilitate the considered redevelopment of Neston High School and improvements to Neston Recreation Centre. These will all assist in engendering social inclusion. In addition, there is a requirement for Health Impact Assessments for certain developments to investigate potential impacts on health and to identify if mitigation measures are necessary.
14	Provide sufficient housing to meet identified needs	Housing to meet identified needs.	NNH1 NNH2		Positive	The NNP makes provision to meet identified housing need. There is a requirement to take particular account of the identified local shortfall in small family homes and a target for affordable housing.
15	To create a safe environment to live in and reduce the fear of crime	Reduction in opportunities for crime and in the fear of crime. Extent to which road safety is improved.	NNM2 NNM3 NND1 NND2		Positive	Improvements to transport corridors, especially for the benefit of pedestrians and cyclists, together with the support for better public transport will serve to create a safer environment. The design of new development should make a positive contribution to community safety.

16	To support sustainable economic growth and competitiveness and to provide opportunities for ongoing private sector investment	Need to ensure a balanced portfolio of employment land. Ensure that employment land is in a sustainable location. Create opportunities for new businesses and minimise disruption to existing businesses. Meet employment needs in the rural and urban areas. Support for sustainable growth in the economy.	NNE1 NNE2 NNE3 NNE4 NNR1 NNR2 NNR3	Positive	The NNP promotes and supports a thriving local economy. It gives encouragement to new employment development at the Clayhill Business Park but also recognises that small scale employment uses can be accommodated elsewhere in the NNP area. It recognises the importance of high quality communications infrastructure to business. It also gives encouragement to the improvement of Neston Town Centre as the focal point for retail and service uses and recognises the significance of local centres, seeking to preserve and strengthen their retail function.
17	To develop and enhance the visitor economy/tourism	Promotion of tourism and the visitor economy.	NNT1 NNT2 NNT3	Positive	The NNP is a positive response to this objective. It recognises the positive role of tourism and visitors on the local economy, giving encouragement to new tourism opportunities and the particular enhancement of Parkgate Seafront. Support for a new car park at Station Road will provide another valuable facility for visitors.
18	To promote regeneration particularly of deprived areas	Delivery of urban/rural regeneration. Improve economic conditions, particularly in deprived areas. Support rural diversification.	No direct policies	No relationship	There are no policies that directly target regeneration of deprived areas. The support given to employment growth, new housing, improvements to the Town Centre and a stronger visitor economy could all have a positive impact on reducing social and economic equalities.
19	To maintain and improve the vitality and viability of centres	Safeguarding of shops and services in the existing centres. Safeguard and improve the retail, leisure and service provision. Provide improved physical, social and environmental infrastructure in centres.	NNR1 NNR2 NNR3	Positive	Support is given to initiatives to improve the environment and amenity of Neston Town Centre and to maintain a vibrant mix of appropriate town centre uses. It is also recognised that there is potential for new development in part of the Town Centre which could strengthen its offer and overall vitality and viability. The importance of local retail areas is recognised and reasonable measures are outlined with the aim of retaining retail uses in these town centres.

Summary Outcomes from the Appraisal

4.5 The appraisal shows that the NNP, when measured sustainability objectives for the borough and for the NNP area, will play a positive role in bringing about sustainable development.

4.6 The positive impact of the NNP relates to each of the dimensions of sustainable development:

Environmental: The policies of the NNP are particularly strong when it comes to the preservation and enhancement of the environmental assets of the NNP area. The policies recognise the importance of the natural setting of the town and seek to protect and enhance this. They also identify that assets within the town such as local green spaces, environmental corridors and listed buildings are an important part of the character and identity of the place. These are afforded protection and encouragement is given to enhancement where possible. Design quality is an important environmental consideration which is given weight in the range of policies of the NNP. There is a cross cutting theme which seeks to enhance the particular character of the environment of the NNP area. Another environmental angle is the promotion of sustainable new development. The policies seek energy efficiency in new building and encourage the use of renewable sources of energy.

Economic: A strong local economy is an objective of the NNP. Provision is made for this in policies which seek to strengthen the role of Clayhill Business Park, Neston Town Centre and local retail centres as focal points for employment uses, including retail uses in the case of the latter two. It is recognised that the visitor economy has a significant role to play. There is general support for the existing visitor infrastructure but also encouragement for appropriate new facilities. The movement infrastructure in Neston will give added support to economic activity. Encouragement of improvements to routes and movement corridors as well as public transport provision will assist in meeting local economic objectives.

Social: The social dimension of sustainability is supported in different ways. New housing, including affordable housing, will help to meet local needs whilst support for employment generating land uses will create job opportunities. The protection and enhancement of community resources should serve to strengthen social cohesion whilst better routes for pedestrians and cyclists along with improved public transport will help to address social inequalities. The emphasis on health and safety has important social benefits for the local community as will the policies to improve and, where possible, extend local green spaces and the links between them.

5 Monitoring

- 5.1 The NNP contains provisions to ensure that it is actively monitored and reviewed on an annual basis following its adoption. It is intended that the outcome of monitoring will be reported to the Neston Town Council Annual General Meeting. There will also be an element of monitoring by the Town Council's Planning and Environment Committee on a monthly basis to coincide with the consideration of local planning applications submitted to Cheshire West and Chester Council.
- 5.2 The Local Plan for Cheshire West and Chester will also be subject to monitoring. In part, this will be undertaken against monitoring indicators suggested in the Sustainability Appraisal Report for the borough-wide Local Plan.
- 5.3 The monitoring of the NNP and the Local Plan should be considered alongside one another. However, there is also an advantage in setting down a number of monitoring indicators to be used in assessing the NNP in the light of the sustainability appraisal objectives.
- 5.4 Targeted information can be collected to inform the process of monitoring the NNP. This might include:
- (1) Number of planning applications for each of the main land uses.
 - (2) Energy efficiency/renewable energy provisions for new development.
 - (3) New development completions (by main land uses) on brownfield/greenfield land.
 - (4) Number of affordable housing units completed.
 - (5) Completed additional employment floorspace (by type)
 - (6) Changes in the number of vacant retail/commercial units.
 - (7) Changes in the number of listed buildings/buildings at risk/locally listed buildings and structures.
 - (8) Changes in the amount of open space per 1,000 resident population (ha).
 - (9) Areas of new woodland created or new individual trees planted/number of trees lost due to development.
- 5.5 The monitoring information can be used to provide a review of how the NNP, on an annual basis, is influencing decisions on development and the form and quality of new development in Neston. In this way the effectiveness of the NNP in meeting the objectives of sustainable development can be subject to regular monitoring.

ENVIRONMENTAL SCREENING AND HABITATS REGULATION ASSESSMENT
STATEMENT FOR NESTON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

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Environmental Screening and Habitats
Regulation Assessment Statement for Neston
Neighbourhood Plan

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1.0 Introduction

This screening statement determines whether or not the draft Neston Neighbourhood Plan requires a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), and/or a Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) in accordance with the European Directive 2001/42/EC, and the requirements of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended in 2012).

Location and profile of the Neston Neighbourhood Plan

The Neston Neighbourhood Area follows the boundary of the area covered by Neston Town Council (see Map 1). It covers the areas of Neston, Parkgate, Ness, Riverside, Little Neston, and the surrounding rural hinterland. Whilst many of these areas retain some individual characters, they form a single town environment with shared resources, facilities, and town centre. The area represents a coherent community contained within the boundaries of the Town Council.

The Neston Neighbourhood Area has a population of approximately 15,200 residents, and a predominantly ageing demographic profile. There are a number of services and businesses within the area, including four Primary Schools and a Secondary School, employment units, retail/restaurant units, and a number of venues for community uses.

Relationship to other plans and programmes

Once made the Neston Neighbourhood Plan will form part of development plan for Cheshire West and Chester. The policy framework once made will not work in isolation. The Neighbourhood Plan will work alongside the adopted Local Plan policies in place at the time it is made.

The Neighbourhood Plan must have regard to national policy; be in general conformity with the strategic policies in the adopted Local Plan; must contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and meet EU obligations and human rights requirements.

The current adopted Local Plan for the area is the Ellesmere Port & Neston Local Plan (adopted 2002).

Cheshire West and Chester Council are currently preparing a new Local Plan for the borough. This is to be developed in two parts; Part One: Strategic Policies and Part Two: Land Allocations and Detailed Policies. The Local Plan (Part One) Strategic Policies has been through its EIP and is now well advanced. It sets out the overall vision, strategic objectives, spatial strategy and strategic planning policies for the borough to 2030. Several of the policies in the existing Ellesmere Port & Neston

Local Plan are to be retained alongside the Local Plan (Part One) until such time that they are to be replaced by the Local Plan (Part Two). Preparation of the Local Plan (Part Two) is currently underway.

It is anticipated that the Neston Neighbourhood Plan will be made following the adoption of the Local Part (Part One).

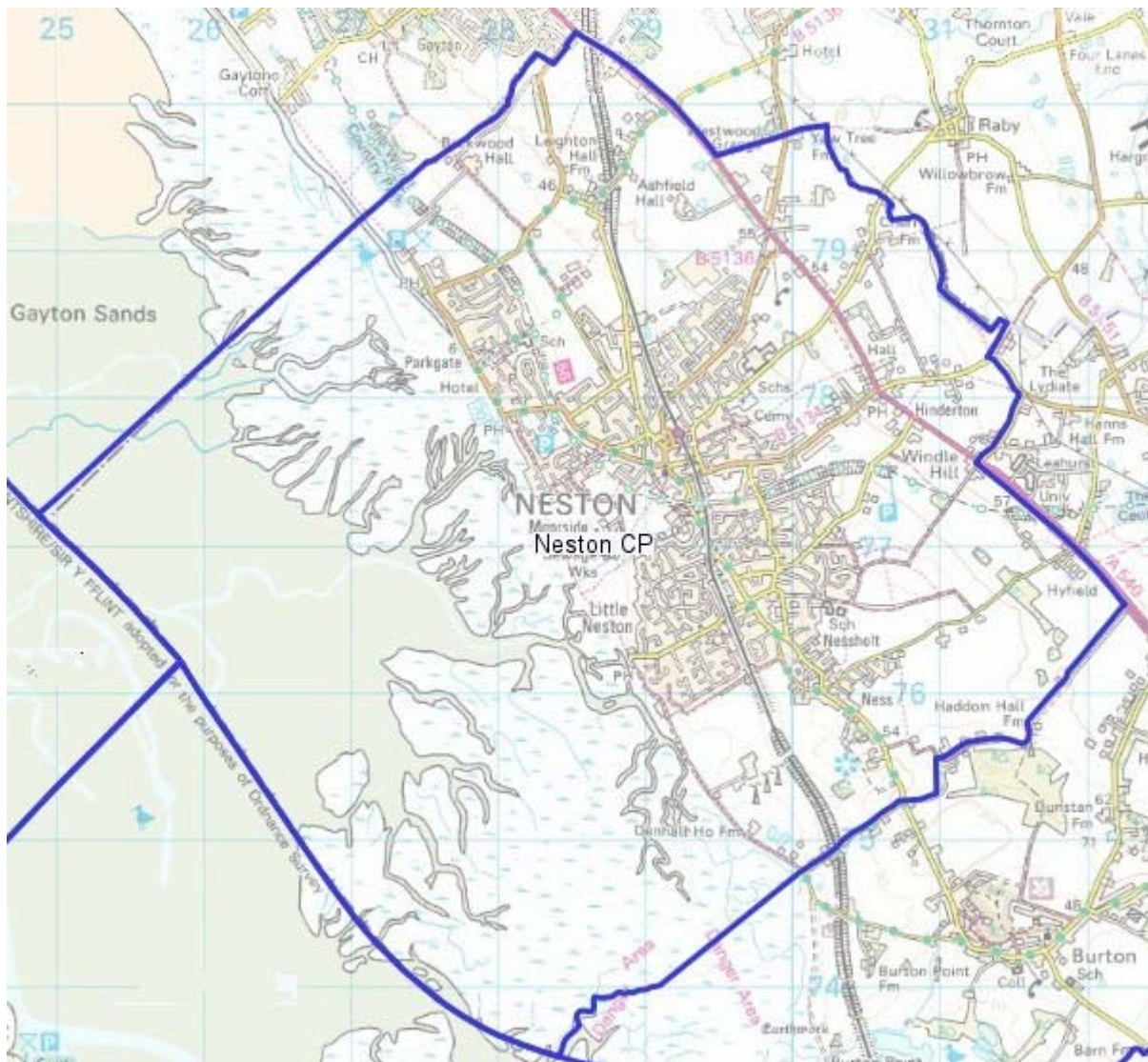
The existing and emerging Local Plan policy framework has been taken into account in the carrying out the screening exercise. This forms the baseline for the SEA and HRA screening assessment. It has considered the potential effects of the Neighbourhood Plan over and above the current adopted Local Plan and the Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan Publication Draft (Part One).

Scope of Neighbourhood Plan

The draft plan includes a suite of policies covering the following topics:

- Housing
- Employment
- Retail
- Tourism
- Movement and Travel
- Design
- Landscape and Environment
- Community

Map 1 – Neston Neighbourhood Plan Area



2.0 Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening

Legislative Background and Methodology

European Directive 2001/42/EC requires a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA Directive) to be carried out for certain plans and programmes to assess their effects on the environment. This Directive was transposed in law by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.

Neighbourhood Development Plans fall within the scope of this legislation. They are a plan as defined by Article 3(2) of the SEA regulations and Regulation 5 paragraph 2 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004. However, Neighbourhood Plans are land use planning documents prepared at the local level to determine land use in a small area.

Under Article 3(2) of the SEA Directive and Regulation 5 paragraph 6 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is only required for documents that determine land use in small areas at the local level where it is considered that they are likely to have 'significant environmental effects'. This is carried out through a screening determination.

Screening methodology

The role of the screening exercise is to determine whether the effect of the implementation of a plan or programme is likely to have a significant effect on the environment.

The criteria for assessing whether a plan or programme is likely to have a significant environmental effect are set out in Annex II of the SEA Directive and Schedule 2 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.

The assessment criteria used to determine whether a plan or programme will have significant environmental effects are separated into two categories:

- those relating to the characteristics of the plan; and
- those relating to the characteristics of the plan's effects and of the area likely to be affected.

The assessment of the draft Neighbourhood Plan against these criteria is set out in Table 1.

A key part of the Neighbourhood Plan screening has been to consider the context of its preparation and its interaction with the emerging Local Plan (Part One): Strategic Policies for Cheshire West and Chester. In order to inform this assessment a review

of the anticipated effects of the draft policies and their relationship to policies at the Local Plan level was carried out. This is set out in Appendix 1 to this report.

Table 1: Testing of Significant Effects

	Significance Test
<p>The degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources,</p>	<p>The Neighbourhood Plan is a local level land use planning document to determine land use in a small area. Once made, it will work within the planning policy framework of the Local Plan for the borough.</p> <p>The Neighbourhood Plan will provide a local planning policy framework for Neston that will become part of the development plan for Cheshire West and Chester. It is required to be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the adopted Local Plan. The Neston Neighbourhood Plan will not impact on the strategic location, nature, size and operating conditions of new development over and above that set by current adopted Local Plan or the emerging Local Plan for the borough. It will provide local level guidance within the strategic framework on the nature of development in the Neston Neighbourhood Area. The Neighbourhood Plan policies will work alongside the strategic policies in the development plan; other development management measures and environmental protection legislation.</p>
<p>The degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy.</p>	<p>The Neighbourhood Plan will be the lowest level of planning policy for the area. It has to be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the adopted Local Plan and must contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. It will therefore have limited influence over changing the policies in plans at the higher strategic level.</p>
<p>The relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development,</p>	<p>The Neighbourhood Plan is required, as one of the basic condition tests, to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Whether this basic condition is met will be tested during the examination of the Neighbourhood Plan. However, the framework for the promotion of sustainable development is set by the Government's Strategy for Sustainable Development, the National Planning Policy Framework and the policies in the adopted and emerging Local Plan's for the borough. The Neighbourhood Plan will have limited influence over changing the sustainable development policies in plans and policies at the higher strategic level.</p>
<p>What are the environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme?</p>	<p>The Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report for the Local Plan (Part One): Strategic Policies is a comprehensive overview of the issues in Cheshire west and Chester. There are no specific additional environmental problems identified for the Neston area.</p>
<p>The relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (e.g. plans and programmes linked to waste-management or water protection).</p>	<p>The Neighbourhood Plan will have no direct role in the delivery of community legislation on the environment. It does include policies on these matters. The Neighbourhood Plan has been subject to Habitats Regulation Assessment screening as set out in Part Two of this document.</p>

Identified effects	the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects,	the cumulative nature of the effects	the transboundary nature of the effects,	the risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents),	the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected),	Effect on special natural characteristics or cultural heritage,	Effect on environmental quality standards or limit values,	Effect on intensity of land-use.	the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.	Significance of the effects?
Greenfield loss, particularly amenity space	Low probability as limited number of unprotected greenspaces within the settlement area. Low frequency as little need for additional housing (as at 1 April 2014 there was a requirement for 14 additional dwellings to meet the Local Plan Part One target of 200 by 2030). Impacts would be permanent.	Each new development has the potential to add to Greenfield loss. There is a potential small cumulative effect with other development in borough and neighbouring Wirral.	None	None	Local, small scale impact, at neighbourhood level.	None	None	None	None identified – see HRA screening and no impact on Conservation Area.	No
Greenfield gain	Low probability and frequency as limited number of undeveloped areas within the settlement. Some scope for improvements and	Each new development has the potential to add to Greenfield provision. There is a potential small cumulative effect with other	None	None	Local, small scale impact, at neighbourhood level.	None	None	None	None identified – see HRA screening and no impact on Conservation Area.	No

Identified effects	the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects,	the cumulative nature of the effects	the transboundary nature of the effects,	the risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents),	the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected),	Effect on special natural characteristics or cultural heritage,	Effect on environmental quality standards or limit values,	Effect on intensity of land-use.	the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.	Significance of the effects?
	enhancements . Effects would be permanent.	development in borough and neighbouring Wirral.								
Benefits to population and human health	Low probability and frequency as limited number of undeveloped areas within the settlement. However, any development has the scope to improve and enhance this. Effects would be permanent.	Each new development has the potential to contribute benefits to population and human health. There is a potential small cumulative effect with other development in borough and neighbouring Wirral.	None	None	Local, small scale impact, at neighbourhood level.	None	None	None	None identified – see HRA screening and no impact on Conservation Area.	No
Negative impacts on cultural heritage or landscape	Low probability and frequency as limited amount of development likely within the settlement. However, any development has the scope to affect this. Effects would be permanent.	Each new development has the potential to have a detrimental impact on cultural heritage and landscape. There is a potential small cumulative effect with other development in	None	None	Local, small scale impact, at neighbourhood level.	None	None	None	None identified – see HRA screening and no likely significant impact on Conservation Area.	No

Identified effects	the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects,	the cumulative nature of the effects	the transboundary nature of the effects,	the risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents),	the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected),	Effect on special natural characteristics or cultural heritage,	Effect on environmental quality standards or limit values,	Effect on intensity of land-use.	the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.	Significance of the effects?
		borough and neighbouring Wirral.								
Positive impacts on cultural heritage or landscape	Low probability and frequency as limited number of undeveloped areas within the settlement. However, any development has the scope to improve and enhance this. Effects would be permanent.	Each new development has the potential to positively affect cultural heritage and landscape. There is a potential small cumulative effect with other development in borough and neighbouring Wirral.	None	None	Local, small scale impact, at neighbourhood level.	None	None	None	None identified – see HRA screening and no likely significant impact on Conservation Area.	No
Biodiversity loss	Low probability and frequency as limited amount of development likely within the settlement. However, any development has the scope to affect this. Effects would be permanent.	Each new development has the potential to negatively impact on biodiversity. There is a potential small cumulative effect with other development in borough and neighbouring Wirral.	None	None	Local, small scale impact, at neighbourhood level.	None	None	None	None identified – see HRA screening and no impact on Conservation Area.	No

Identified effects	the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects,	the cumulative nature of the effects	the transboundary nature of the effects,	the risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents),	the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected),	Effect on special natural characteristics or cultural heritage,	Effect on environmental quality standards or limit values,	Effect on intensity of land-use.	the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.	Significance of the effects?
Biodiversity gain	Low probability and frequency as limited amount of development likely within the settlement. However, any development has the scope to improve and enhance this. Effects would be permanent.	Each new development has the potential to positively affect biodiversity. There is a potential small cumulative effect with other development in borough and neighbouring Wirral.	None	None	Local, small scale impact, at neighbourhood level.	None	None	None	None identified – see HRA screening and no impact on Conservation Area.	No
Green Infrastructure gain	Low probability and frequency as limited amount of development likely within the settlement. However, any development has the scope to improve and enhance this. Effects would be permanent.	Each new development has the potential to provide additional GI. There is a potential small cumulative effect with other development in borough and neighbouring Wirral.	None	None	Local, small scale impact, at neighbourhood level.	None	None	None	None identified – see HRA screening and no impact on Conservation Area.	No
Potential loss of soils	Low probability and frequency as limited amount of development likely within or on the edge of	Each new development has the potential to negatively impact upon soils and soil	None	None	Local, small scale impact, at neighbourhood level.	None	None	None	None identified – see HRA screening and no impact on Conservation Area.	No

Identified effects	the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects,	the cumulative nature of the effects	the transboundary nature of the effects,	the risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents),	the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected),	Effect on special natural characteristics or cultural heritage,	Effect on environmental quality standards or limit values,	Effect on intensity of land-use.	the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.	Significance of the effects?
	the settlement. Effects would be permanent.	quality. There is a potential small cumulative effect with other development in borough and neighbouring Wirral.								
Benefits to climatic factors	Low probability and frequency as limited amount of development likely within the settlement. However, any development has the scope to improve and enhance this. Effects would be permanent.	There are likely to be only a small number of additional developments within the plan period. As such there is likely to be only a small cumulative effect with other development in borough and neighbouring Wirral.	None	None	Local, small scale impact, at neighbourhood level.	None	None	None	None identified – see HRA screening and no impact on Conservation Area.	No
Negative impacts on air quality	Low probability and frequency as limited amount of development likely within the settlement. However, any development has the scope	Each new development has the potential to have negative impacts on air quality. There is a potential small cumulative	None	None	Local, small scale impact, at neighbourhood level.	None	None	None	None identified – see HRA screening and no impact on Conservation Area.	No

Identified effects	the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects,	the cumulative nature of the effects	the transboundary nature of the effects,	the risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents),	the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected),	Effect on special natural characteristics or cultural heritage,	Effect on environmental quality standards or limit values,	Effect on intensity of land-use.	the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.	Significance of the effects?
	to affect this. Effects would be permanent.	effect with other development in borough and neighbouring Wirral.								
Positive impacts on air quality	Low probability and frequency as limited amount of development likely within the settlement. However, any development has the scope to improve and enhance this. Effects would be permanent.	Each new development has the potential to have a positive impact on air quality. There is a potential small cumulative effect with other development in borough and neighbouring Wirral.	None	None	Local, small scale impact, at neighbourhood level.	None	None	None	None identified – see HRA screening and no impact on Conservation Area.	No

Conclusion

As a result of the screening assessment it is considered unlikely there will be any significant environmental effects arising from the Neston Neighbourhood Plan.

A Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Neston Neighbourhood Plan is not required.

3.0 Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening

Legislative Background

The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended in 2012) transpose the requirements of the European Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC into UK law. The Habitats Directive and Regulations afford protection to plants, animals and habitats that are rare and vulnerable in a European context.

Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) is a systematic process through which the performance of a plan or project can be assessed for its likely impact on the integrity of a European Site. European Sites, also referred to as Natura 2000 sites, consist of Special Protection Areas (SPA), Special Areas of Conservation (SAC); Potential Special Protection Areas and candidate Special Areas of Conservation (pSPA and cSAC); and listed or proposed Ramsar sites.

Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive states: 'Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans and projects, shall be subject to appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site's conservation objectives'.

The first stage of HRA is to screen a plan or programme to identify if there are likely to be any significant effects on Natura 2000 sites. This will indicate whether a full Appropriate Assessment is required. The regulations require that the impacts and effects of any land use plan being assessed are considered in combination with other plans and projects that may also be affecting the relevant European site(s).

Inter-relationship with the Local Plan HRA

The Local Plan has already been through the HRA process, and the results detailed in the Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan Publication Draft (Part 1) Strategic Policies Habitat Regulations Assessment Screening Report. Each of the sites within 15km of Neston were assessed at the Local Plan level. This appraisal forms the baseline for the HRA screening assessment of the Neston Neighbourhood Plan with the prime consideration being the potential effects of the Neighbourhood Plan over and above those of the already assessed for the Local Plan. The Local Plan was screened out through this process, as not leading to a likely significant effect on European Sites.

It is considered that as long as the proposed policies of a Neighbourhood Plan do not alter the strategic policy framework assessed in the Local Plan Part One Habitats Regulation Assessment Screening Report then an additional separate full screening

exercise on the Neighbourhood Plan will not be required. However, if the Neighbourhood Plan does change the strategic policy framework then a separate Habitats Regulation Assessment Screening Report to assess the effect on European Sites would be required.

Context

There are 6 European designated sites identified within a 15km buffer from the boundaries of the Neston Neighbourhood Plan. There are 2 Ramsar sites, 2 SAC's, and 2 SPA's. This is slightly complicated by the Dee Estuary being a SPA, SAC and Ramsar, and the Mersey Estuary being both a Ramsar and a SPA. These have been counted as separate designated sites for the purposes of this appraisal. The remaining site is the River Dee and Bala Lake SAC.

These are shown in Map 2.

Outcome of high level screening

- Is the Neighbourhood Plan directly connected with, or necessary to the management of a European site for nature conservation?

No

- Does the Neighbourhood Plan propose new development or allocate sites for development?

No

- *Are there any other projects or plans that together with the Neighbourhood Plan that could impact on the integrity of a European Site?*

Yes, the existing Ellesmere Port & Neston Local Plan and the Local Plan: Part One.

- *Are there any potential impacts on the integrity of a European Site?*

The Neighbourhood Plan will not work in isolation and will be used alongside other development plan policies including the Local Plan Part One and retained policies in the existing Ellesmere Port & Neston Local Plan for determining planning applications for new development. The quantum of development to come forward in Neston in the future will be set by Local Plan policy. The Neighbourhood Plan will guide how this should come forward locally.

Whether the Neighbourhood Plan alters the policy position for the area is set out in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Screening of policies for altering Local Plan Policy

Policy	Change in policy position in emerging Local Plan and policies to be retained? Y/N
NNDS1: Neston Development Strategy	N
NNH1: New Residential Development	N
NNH2: Affordable Social Housing	N
NNH3: Rural Exception Sites	N
NNE1: Employment	N
NNE2: Small Scale Employment in the Town Centre	N
NNE3: Promoting Local Employment Growth	N
NNE4: High Quality Communications Infrastructure	N
NNR1: Neston Town Centre	N
NNR2: Neston Town Centre development Opportunity	N
NNR3: Town Lane and West Vale Local Retail Areas	N
NNT1: Parkgate Seafront	N
NNT2: Visitor Economy	N
NNT3: Station Car Park	N
NNM1: Transport and Development	N
NNM2: Enhancing Pedestrian and Cycling Routes	N
NNM3: Public Transport Improvements	N
NNM4: Car Parking	N
NND1: New Development	N
NND2: Design in the Town Centre and Seafront	N
NND3: Environmental Improvement Corridors	N
NND4: Sustainable Design	N
NNLE1: Special Landscape Areas	N

NNLE2: Local Green Space	N
NNLE3: Trees and Woodland and Development	N
NNLE4: Dee Coastal Zone	N
NNLE5: Heritage Assets	N
NNLE6: Nature Conservation Assets	N
NNC1: Community Infrastructure	N
NNC2: Neston High School	N
NNC3: Neston Recreation Centre	N
NNC4: Healthy Communities	N

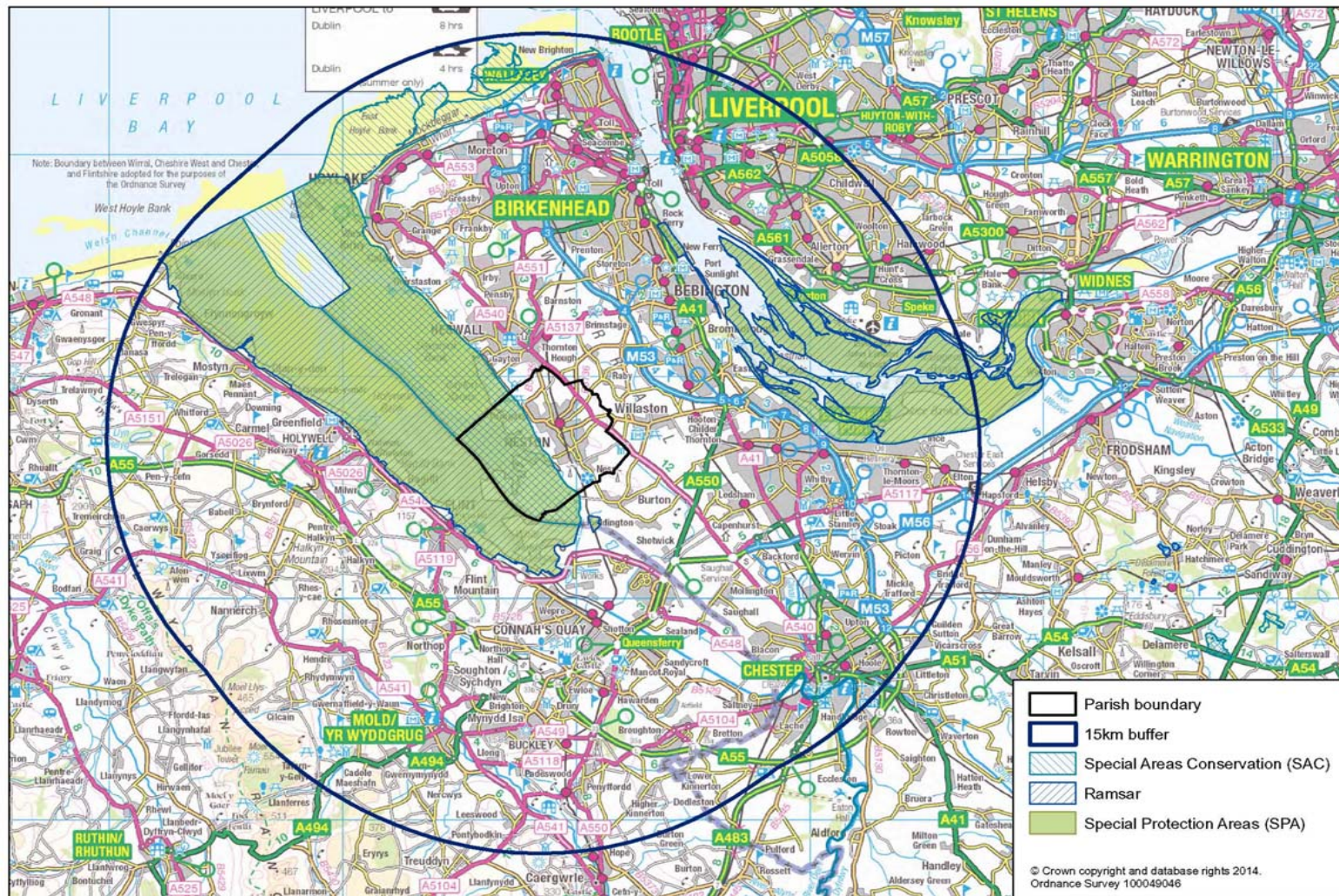
There are no specific issues highlighted in the HRA of the emerging Local Plan in relation to Neston, although there are other more general potential impacts highlighted as a result of the quantum and location of development proposed for the borough as a whole in the Local Plan Part One. However, it is considered there are sufficient mitigation and control measures in the policy framework of the Local Plan Part One to avoid and mitigate any of these adverse effects on the integrity of European in the emerging Local Plan.

Therefore, it is considered that any proposals coming forward for Neston in accordance with the Neighbourhood Plan would not result in a likely significant effect on a European site than already identified and assessed through the Local Plan Part One Habitats Regulation Assessment Report.

Conclusion

The Neston Neighbourhood Plan is unlikely to have an adverse effect on a European site (as defined in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (d)), alone or in combination with other plans and projects.

Map 2- European Designations within a 15km distance of the Neston Neighbourhood Plan



Appendix 1: Overview of Policies and Identified Effects of the Neston Neighbourhood Plan.

Plan elements	Policy Content	Identified potential effects of policy (taking into account SEA topics of Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna; Population; Human Health; Soil; Water; Air; Climatic Factors; Material Assets; Cultural Heritage; Landscape)	Relationship to emerging Local Plan (Part One); Strategic Policies and policies to be retained in the Ellesmere Port & Neston Local Plan.
NNDS1: Neston Development Strategy	Development to meet local housing, employment, retail, tourism and community needs will be restricted to locations within the existing settlements limits of the Neighbourhood Plan Area. The extents of the Green Belt around the existing settlement limits will be retained and protected from inappropriate development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greenfield loss, particularly amenity space, • Benefits to population and human health; • Negative or positive impacts on cultural heritage or landscape; 	This policy reiterates the policy in STRAT 9 in the Local Plan (Part One) and the NPPF in regards to the protection of the Green Belt.
NNH1: New Residential Development	<p>Provision for new residential development of at least 200 dwellings will be allowed within the existing settlement limits of the Neighbourhood Plan Area provided that it accords with other relevant policies of the Neighbourhood Plan and the Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan.</p> <p>In order to provide a more balanced and sustainable community, proposals for new residential development must take account of local need and specifically provide for small family homes to assist households into home ownership and for older people who may wish to downsize. An assessment of how proposals meet local need will be provided as part of application submissions. This should be in the form of a Local Housing Provision Statement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greenfield loss, particularly amenity space, • Benefits to population and human health; • Negative or positive impacts on cultural heritage or landscape; 	<p>This policy reiterates the housing numbers and the requirement to meet local needs identified in STRAT 8 of the Local Plan (Part One).</p> <p>The identification of new buyers and older people is set out in SOC3 of the Local Plan (Part One).</p>
NNH2: Affordable Social Housing	All new residential development of three or more dwellings or on a site with an area of 0.1 hectares or more will provide up to a target of 30% affordable houses as required by 'Delivering Affordable Housing' policy within the Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan (Policy SOC1). The type, tenure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefits to population and human health; • Negative or positive impacts on cultural heritage or landscape; 	This policy reiterates the policy in SOC 1 of the Local Plan (Part One).

	<p>and size of affordable housing will be based on the most up-to-date assessment of local affordable housing needs. The proportion of affordable housing will take account of viability and deliverability issues. If less than 30% affordable housing is to be provided a viability appraisal will need to demonstrate the impact this has on deliverability and viability of the proposed development.</p>		
<p>NNH3: Rural Exception Sites</p>	<p>Where necessary to meet local affordable housing needs, schemes for 100% affordable housing may be permitted on small sites which would otherwise not be appropriate for housing adjacent to the NPA within the Green Belt.</p> <p>Rural Exception Sites will only be allowed following a thorough assessment of potential sites within the settlement limits and once appropriate sites in the Green Belt have been identified through a Borough-wide assessment. These may be allocated within the Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan Part Two: Land Allocations and Detailed Policies Document.</p> <p>If Rural Exception Sites are to be brought forward all of the following criteria relating to the Green Belt will apply:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 The site will be well-contained in relation to the existing settlement area 2 The development should preserve the integrity of the essential gap provided by the Green Belt between neighbouring settlements 3 The development should not detract from the site's contribution to the setting and special character of the settlement 4 There should be no suitable developable sites within the urban area to meet the affordable housing needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biodiversity loss • Greenfield loss, • Potential loss of soils • Benefits to population and human health; • Negative or positive impacts on cultural heritage or landscape; 	<p>This policy reiterates the policy in SOC 2 of the Local Plan (Part One).</p> <p>This policy does introduce 10 criteria to the assessment of a Rural Exception Site. All these criteria, with the exception of criteria 5, are reiterations of NPPF and Local Plan (Part One) policies STRAT 1, STRAT 8, STRAT 9, STRAT 10, SOC2, ENV 2, ENV 3 and ENV6.</p>

	<p>In addition all of the following spatial considerations will apply:</p> <p>5 The development will be limited to 20 dwellings on up to 0.6ha of land</p> <p>6 The site will be located on the immediate edge of the settlement boundary</p> <p>7 The site will have good access to public transport and other local amenities</p> <p>8 The design of the development will reinforce the character of the area and connect with the adjacent settlement and countryside</p> <p>9 The development will be appropriate in terms of impact on the landscape and visual amenity of the area</p> <p>10 The development will include structural landscaping along any boundary to open countryside or greenspace.</p> <p>Where it is necessary to enable the delivery of affordable housing a subsidiary element of no more than 30% of the units may be market housing.</p>		
<p>NNE1: Employment</p>	<p>Clayhill Business Park will be the key employment area for new employment development consisting of light and general industrial and storage and distribution uses (Use Classes B1(c), B2 and B8). Uses outside of these Use Classes will only be allowed in exceptional circumstances where it can be demonstrated that the proposed use:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would be compatible with existing retained employment uses. • Would not limit the range, choice and quality of employment land available to meet future employment needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefits to population and human health; • Negative or positive impacts on cultural heritage or landscape; 	<p>This policy provides local level detail to support Local Plan (Part One) policies STRAT 8, ECON 1, ECON 2, as well as retained policy EMP1 of the Ellesmere Port & Neston Local Plan, and NPPF.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not impact on the vitality and viability of Neston Town Centre. <p>Additionally, proposals must demonstrate that the continued use of the premises or site for employment use is no longer commercially viable and that the site or premises has been marketed for at least 12 months for that or any other suitable employment use.</p> <p>The Town Council will support proposals to upgrade or redevelop parts of the Clayhill Business Park provided that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is no net loss to employment provision. • It provides landscape and environmental improvements • It enhances pedestrian and cycle access. • It enhances access to bus stops. • It enhances the safety and security of users. • It does not have an adverse impact on the amenities of surrounding uses. 		
<p>NNE2: Small Scale Employment in the Town Centre</p>	<p>Proposals for the redevelopment or change of use of redundant buildings or sites in employment use (Use Class B1) or Financial and Professional Services (A2 Use Class) to non-employment use, with the exception of Use Class A1, A3 – A5 (Shops, Restaurants and Cafes, Drinking Establishments and Hot Food Takeaways) will only be permitted if the existing use is no longer economically viable and the property or site has been marketed for at least 12 months without restriction.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefits to population and human health; • Negative or positive impacts on cultural heritage or landscape; 	<p>This policy is in line with ECON 2 of the Local Plan (Part One).</p>
<p>NNE3: Promoting Local Employment Growth</p>	<p>Proposals for small scale new build development and the conversion of existing buildings for small scale businesses will be supported. All such development should respect the character of its</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefits to population and human health; • Negative or positive impacts on cultural heritage 	<p>This policy is in line with ECON 1 of the Local Plan (Part One).</p>

	surroundings and not harm residential amenity and highway safety.	or landscape;	
NNE4: High Quality Communications Infrastructure	Development of new, high speed broadband infrastructure to serve the Parish will be supported. Infrastructure to support telecommunications installations will be supported provided that the need is justified and that the equipment is sympathetically designed and does not detract from the character of the local area or harm the amenity of local residents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefits to population and human health; 	This policy is in line with STRAT 11 of the Local Plan (Part One), and retained policies GEN 7 and GEN 8 of the Ellesmere Port & Neston Local Plan.
NNR1: Neston Town Centre	<p>Permission will be granted for new Town Centre uses (Use Classes A1 – A5) and appropriately sized social and cultural and services uses (Use Classes D1 and D2) within Neston Town Centre (as defined in Figure ___) provided that they accord with other relevant policies of the Neighbourhood Plan and the Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan and do not have a detrimental impact on the amenities of residents living within or adjacent to the area.</p> <p>Neston Town Council will seek to work with key stakeholders on a number of initiatives to improve the environment within the Town Centre:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvements to the market square to enable enhancements to and the possible extension of the retail market. • Continued programme of public realm improvements. • Improved signage and interpretation. • Retention and enhancement of car parking. • Improved transport facilities including cycle provision and a public transport hub. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefits to population and human health; • Negative or positive impacts on cultural heritage or landscape; • Negative or positive impacts on air quality 	This policy reiterates the policy in ECON 2 of the Local Plan (Part One), and adds further local detail and aspirations.
NNR2: Neston Town Centre development	Proposals for uses including retail, leisure, residential and commercial development at the Development Opportunity Site identified in Plan ___	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefits to population and human health; • Negative or positive impacts on cultural heritage 	This policy reiterates the policy in ECON 2 of the Local Plan (Part One), and adds further local detail to

Opportunity	will be supported in principle. Proposals will need to ensure the retention and enhancement of the existing Town Centre car park and provide improvements to the public realm and townscape within this part of the Town Centre. Proposals must provide links to existing pedestrian and cycle routes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • or landscape; • Negative or positive impacts on air quality 	bring a vacant and derelict building back into use.
NNR3: Town Lane and West Vale Local Retail Areas	Proposals for the change of use of units in A1 Use Class (shops) within these local retail areas (LRA) to non-A1 uses will only be permitted if it can be demonstrated that it is no longer commercially viable, that the premises have been marketed for that or any other suitable retail use for at least 12 months and that it will not have a detrimental impact on the vitality and viability of the parade and on the amenities of residents living within or adjacent to the LRAs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefits to population and human health; • Negative or positive impacts on cultural heritage or landscape; 	This policy is in line with the policy in ECON 2 of the Local Plan (Part One), and adds further local detail.
NNT1: Parkgate Seafront	Permission will be granted for development that maintains and enhances Parkgate Seafront's visitor function as designated on Plan ___ provided that it accords with other relevant policies of the Neighbourhood Plan and the Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan and does not have a detrimental impact on the amenities of residents living within or adjacent to the area.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefits to population and human health; • Negative or positive impacts on cultural heritage or landscape; 	This policy supports policy SOC 3 of the Local Plan (Part One), and adds further local detail.
NNT2: Visitor Economy	<p>Proposals to enhance the existing tourism assets and the creation of new tourism opportunities within the Neighbourhood Plan Area will be supported in principle provided that it accords with other relevant policies of the Neighbourhood Plan and the Cheshire West and Chester Local Plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposals for improvements to Ness Botanic Gardens including improved transport and access arrangements to the facility. • A proposal for a visitor centre at the site of the 'old' Parkgate rail station or at another appropriate site within Neston and Parkgate with direct links to the Wirral Way, Neston Town Centre and Parkgate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefits to population and human health; • Negative or positive impacts on cultural heritage or landscape; • Negative or positive impacts on air quality 	This policy supports policy SOC 3 of the Local Plan (Part One), and adds further local detail and aspirations.

	<p>Seafront.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposals for improvements to the visitor experience at Parkgate Seafront including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enhancements to The Parade to improve pedestrian and cycle access and reduce vehicle and parking congestion. - Enhancements to the existing car parks and opportunities for additional car parking. - The provision of dedicated cycle routes from the Wirral Way. - The provision of information boards and interpretation signage. • The provision of visitor information kiosks and/or interpretative panels and maps within Neston Town Centre, Parkgate Seafront, Ness Gardens and the Wirral Way. 		
NNT3: Station Car Park	<p>The Town Council will work with stakeholders to create a small scale visitor cycle hub at the Station Road car park. This facility could provide a useful stopping point for visitors to visit the Town Centre and other assets within the Town.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefits to population and human health; • Positive impacts on air quality 	<p>This policy supports policy SOC 3 of the Local Plan (Part One), and adds further local detail to provide an existing site with relevant facilities.</p>
NNM1: Transport and Development	<p>For all new development, including change of use, it will be necessary to assess the impact of generated traffic on the local highway network in terms of capacity, road safety, parking, pedestrian and cyclist movement and on residential amenity. Where appropriate, measures will be included to mitigate any identified adverse impacts. Every opportunity must be taken to integrate new development within the existing network of cycle and pedestrian routes. Within the development provision will be made for the safe movement of the mobility impaired, pedestrians and cyclists. Cycle parking will be provided alongside meeting the parking needs of</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negative or positive impacts on air quality 	<p>This policy supports policy STRAT 10 of the Local Plan (Part One), and adds further local detail.</p>

	vehicles in accordance with adopted standards.		
NNM2: Enhancing Pedestrian and Cycling Routes	<p>Proposals to provide an off-road link between the Wirral Way across Station Road in Parkgate will be supported.</p> <p>Proposals to improve and extend pedestrian and cycle routes across the Neighbourhood Plan Area will be supported. Routes identified include between:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Wirral Way and the Burton Marsh Greenway • Neston Town Centre and Parkgate Seafront • The Wirral Way and Neston Town Centre • The Wirral Way and Ness Gardens • Ness Gardens and the Burton Marsh Greenway • Neston High School and the Neston Town Centre, Parkgate Seafront, Little Neston and Ness. <p>The Town Council will support proposals to reduce speed limits along the above on-road routes to 20 mph and create Home Zones to provide a safer environment for cyclists and pedestrians.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefits to population and human health; • Green Infrastructure gain • Negative or positive impacts on air quality 	This policy supports policy STRAT 10 and SOC 5 of the Local Plan (Part One), and adds further local detail and aspirations.
NNM3: Public Transport Improvements	<p>The Town Council will support proposals to enhance bus and rail services and associated infrastructure within the Neighbourhood Plan Area. The Town Council will seek to work with the relevant public transport infrastructure and operating companies to improve public transport provision in the area including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The electrification of the Borderlands railway line between Bidston and Wrexham. • The provision of a public transport hub, located around the rail station within Neston Town Centre for rail, bus and cycle provision. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefits to population and human health; • Negative or positive impacts on air quality 	This policy supports policy STRAT 10 of the Local Plan (Part One), and adds further local detail and aspirations.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The provision of a rail halt in South Neston providing improved access to little Neston, Ness and Ness Gardens. • Improving and enhancing bus services through provision of bus shelters, real time information, increased routes and more frequent services. 		
NNM4: Car Parking	The Town Council will work with its stakeholders to maintain and improve car parking provision in Neston Town Centre and Parkgate Seafront in order to support the vitality and viability of the Town Centre and the Area's tourism function.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negative or positive impacts on air quality 	This policy supports policy STRAT 10 of the Local Plan (Part One), and adds further local detail and aspirations.
NND1: New Development	Proposals that are of sustainable high quality design and construction will be supported and encouraged. There is an overriding objective to secure new forms of development that are both innovative in design and respond to and reflect local character. Proposals will need to demonstrate within a Design and Access Statement how the surrounding context has informed the scale, density, massing, height, landscape, layout, materials and access of the proposed development. Positive attributes identified within the area must be integrated into the design for new developments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive impacts on cultural heritage or landscape; 	This policy supports policy ENV 6 of the Local Plan (Part One), and adds further local detail.
NND2: Design in the Town Centre and Seafront	In Neston Town Centre and Parkgate Seafront alterations to buildings, including shopfronts, will be assessed against the overarching need to make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness. Advertisement displays in these locations will be carefully controlled in order to ensure that they are of a sympathetic design and are made of appropriate materials.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negative or positive impacts on cultural heritage or landscape; 	This policy supports policy ENV 6 of the Local Plan (Part One), and is in line with retained policy SHOP 6 of the Ellesmere Port & Neston Local Plan.
NND3: Environmental Improvement Corridors	Along identified routes and gateways proposals for innovative landscape and public realm improvements to help reinforce or create local character and identity within the Neighbourhood Plan Area will be supported. The following Environment Improvement Corridors are identified in	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green Infrastructure gain. • Benefits to population and human health; • Negative or positive impacts on cultural heritage 	This policy supports policy ENV 3 of the Local Plan (Part One), and adds further local detail and aspirations.

	<p>the Neighbourhood Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Borderlands railway line • Liverpool Road • Burton Road • Boathouse Lane • Raby Park Road • The Wirral Way and the Burton Marsh Greenway. 	<p>or landscape;</p>	
NND4: Sustainable Design	<p>All new developments, including change of use, will contribute towards achieving national renewable energy targets through incorporating measures that improve energy efficiency and provide for renewable energy generation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefits to climatic factors; • Positive impacts on air quality 	<p>This policy supports policy STRAT 1, ENV 6 and ENV 7 of the Local Plan (Part One), and adds further local aspirations.</p>
NNLE1: Special Landscape Areas	<p>The distinct landscape character in the Area of Special County Value for Landscape (ASCV) will be conserved. Any development that will adversely affect this character will not be permitted. Any new development will make strong reference to the traditional buildings and landscape character of the ASCV. Within the ASCV every opportunity will be taken to preserve and enhance those features which give it a special landscape character including sandstone walls, areas of woodland, individual trees, hedges, field patterns and field ponds.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive impacts on landscape; • Green Infrastructure gain 	<p>This policy supports policy ENV 2 of the Local Plan (Part One) and policy ENV 6 of the Ellesmere Port & Neston Local Plan.</p>
NNLE2: Local Green Space	<p>Local Green Spaces within the built up area will be safeguarded from any development that would harm its landscape, environmental, recreational or conservation value. Opportunities will be taken to expand the network of Local Green Spaces with a particular emphasis on the provision of allotments and the creation of links between green spaces to provide a Local Green Infrastructure network.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greenfield benefits • Benefits to population and human health; • Green Infrastructure gain 	<p>This policy supports policy ENV 2, ENV 3, SOC 5 and SOC 6 of the Local Plan (Part One), and policy ENV 8 and REC 2 of the Ellesmere Port & Neston Local Plan, adding further local detail.</p>

<p>NNLE3: Trees and Woodland and Development</p>	<p>Developments which involve the loss of woodlands, individual trees or significant lengths of boundary hedges will not generally be allowed unless adequate compensatory measures are put in place which will result in a net gain to the overall quality of the environment.</p> <p>Adequate tree survey information should be provided to assess the value of the existing trees and the impact of the proposals on the trees.</p> <p>Trees not to be retained as a result of the development are to be replaced at a ratio of at least 2:1. Additional, new trees should be planted at a minimum of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 trees for each dwelling for residential development; or • 1 tree per 50 sq m floorspace for non-residential development. <p>Where it is not possible to secure this new or replacement tree planting on site, trees should be planted at a suitable location outside the site.</p> <p>Planning conditions or legal agreements will be used to secure the above.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biodiversity gain • Benefits to population and human health; • Negative or positive impacts on cultural heritage or landscape; • Green Infrastructure gain 	<p>This policy supports policy ENV 2, ENV 3 and ENV 4 of the Local Plan (Part One), and policy ENV 8, and ENV 10 of the Ellesmere Port & Neston Local Plan, adding further local detail.</p>
<p>NNLE4: Dee Coastal Zone</p>	<p>The Dee Coastal Zone consists of Green Belt and the existing built up area of Parkgate. Planning policies relating to the Green Belt are paramount but in addition appropriate development will only be permitted within the Coastal Zone where it can be demonstrated that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It will be safe over its planned lifetime and includes climate change adaptation measures where appropriate. • The character of the coast including its nature conservation designations is not compromised. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefits to population and human health; • Negative or positive impacts on cultural heritage or landscape; 	<p>This policy supports policy STRAT 9, ENV 2, and ENV 4 of the Local Plan (Part One), and policy ENV 12 of the Ellesmere Port & Neston Local Plan, adding further local detail.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It provides wider sustainability benefits, and • It does not have a detrimental impact on the Burton Marsh Greenway and the Wirral Way 		
NNLE5: Heritage Assets	<p>The special historical or architectural character of listed buildings should be conserved. Demolition or partial demolition of listed buildings will not gain consent other than in exceptional circumstances. Every opportunity will be taken to ensure that listed buildings are protected from neglect or damage. The setting of a listed building is also of significant importance. Any development that harms the particular setting of a listed building will not be allowed.</p> <p>In the Neighbourhood Plan Area (NPA) there are individual or groups of non-listed buildings and structures (nondesignated heritage assets) which individually or collectively make a particular contribution to identity and character. These will be identified on a Local List. Changes to the identified buildings or structures will have regard to their architectural and historic character. Demolition or partial demolition of the identified buildings will not be allowed other than in exceptional circumstances where it is demonstrated that substantial public benefits achieved by the proposal outweigh the harm or loss to these heritage assets.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefits to population and human health; • Positive impacts on cultural heritage or landscape; 	This policy supports policy ENV 5, of the Local Plan (Part One), and policy ENV 13, ENV 14, ENV 15, ENV 16, and ENV17 of the Ellesmere Port & Neston Local Plan, adding further local detail.
NNLE6: Nature Conservation Assets	<p>There are a number of sites within the Neighbourhood Plan Area that have important nature conservation value and need to be afforded protection from development and the impact of development. New development will protect and enhance wildlife value within the proposed site and also within the surrounding area.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biodiversity gain • Benefits to population and human health; • Positive impacts on cultural heritage or landscape; 	This policy supports policy ENV 3, and ENV 4 of the Local Plan (Part One), and policy ENV 5, and ENV 9 of the Ellesmere Port & Neston Local Plan, adding further local detail.
NNC1: Community Infrastructure	<p>The loss of facilities and services for the local community will be resisted unless it can be demonstrated that all reasonable efforts have been made to secure their continued use for these</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefits to population and human health; 	This policy supports policy STRAT 8 of the Local Plan (Part One), and adds further local detail and aspirations.

	<p>purposes. The Town Council will seek to designate important community facilities as Assets of Community Value under the provisions of the Assets of Community Value (England) Regulations 2012.</p>		
<p>NNC2: Neston High School</p>	<p>Proposals to redevelop Neston High School for continued and improved education, recreation and community use will be supported in principle providing it does not impact on existing residents and the local highway. The redeveloped school will be of high aesthetic value and visually attractive architecture that raises the standard of design in the area. The Town Council will work with the school and other stakeholders to maximise the opportunities for community benefits resulting from the redevelopment of the site such as the provision of affordable housing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefits to population and human health; 	<p>This policy supports policy STRAT 8 of the Local Plan (Part One), and adds further local detail and aspirations.</p>
<p>NNC3: Neston Recreation Centre</p>	<p>The Town Council will work with relevant stakeholders to seek opportunities to refurbish, extend and/or redevelop the Recreation Centre for continued recreation and leisure uses. The Town Council will also support improvements to the provision of the playing fields adjacent to the Recreation Centre.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greenfield gain, particularly amenity space, • Benefits to population and human health; 	<p>This policy supports policy STRAT 8 and SOC 6 of the Local Plan (Part One), and adds further local detail and aspirations.</p>
<p>NNC4: Healthy Communities</p>	<p>Major developments, 10 dwellings or more or over 1,000 sqm floor area, within the Neighbourhood Plan Area will be accompanied by a Health Impact Assessment which provides an analysis of how the development may impact on the health of the population within the NPA. The HIA will also recommend possible mitigation measures to minimise any potential negative health impacts.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefits to population and human health; 	<p>This policy supports policy STRAT 8 and SOC 5 of the Local Plan (Part One), and adds further local detail and aspirations.</p>

APPENDIX 2

LIST OF POLICIES

Development Strategy

Policy NNDS1: Neston Development Strategy

Housing

NNH1: New Residential Development

NNH2: Social Affordable Housing

NNH3: Rural Exception Sites

Employment

NNE1: Employment

NNE2: Small Scale Employment in the Town Centre

NNE3: Promoting Local Employment Growth

NNE4: High Quality Communications Infrastructure

Retail

NNR1: Neston Town Centre

NNR2: Neston Town Centre Development Opportunity

NNR3: Town Lane and West Vale Shopping Parades

Tourism

NNT1: Parkgate Seafront

NNT2: Visitor Economy

NNT3: Station Road Car Park

Movement

NNM1: Transport and Development

NNM2: Enhancing Pedestrian and Cycle Routes

NNM3: Public Transport Improvements

NNM4: Car Parking

Design

NND1: New Development

NND2: Design in the Town Centre and Seafront

NND3: Environmental Improvement Corridors

NND4: Sustainable Design

Landscape and Environment

NNLE1: Special Landscape Areas

NNLE2: Local Green Space

NNLE3: Trees and Woodland and Development

NNLE4: Dee Coastal Zone

NNLE5: Heritage Assets

NNLE6: Nature Conservation Assets

Community

NNC1: Community Infrastructure

NNC2: Neston High School

NNC3: Neston Recreation Centre

NNC4: Healthy Communities