

# Public Notice

As required by European Directive 2001/42/EC (Strategic Environmental Assessment) and the UK Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations (Statutory Instrument 2004 No.1633) and

The European Directive (92/43/EEC) on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and Wild Flora and Fauna (the Habitats Directive)

Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017) (as amended)

## **Broadland District Council / South Norfolk Council / Norwich City Council**

Hereby gives notice of its decision not to undertake a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) nor Habitat Regulation Assessment (HRA) for the Draft GNLP Policy 2: Sustainable Communities Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) on the basis that the parent policy GNLP 2 has been subject to SEA and HRA.

The Draft GNLP Policy 2: Sustainable Communities (SPD) is not likely to cause significant environmental effects. This determination is based on the (SEA) criteria for determining the likely significance of effects on the environment as part of screening report. In addition, it will not have an effect on protected Habitats sites either alone, or in combination with other plans or projects based on the HRA criteria.

The decision has been taken by the Place Shaping Manager following consideration of a detailed screening report and has been subject to formal consultation with the Environment Agency, English Heritage, and Natural England. Members of the public wishing to find out more should contact:

Place Shaping Team - Broadland District Council T: (01603) 430567 or email:

[localplan.bdc@southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk](mailto:localplan.bdc@southnorfolkandbroadland.gov.uk)

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**Policy 2: Sustainable Communities Supplementary  
Planning Document (SPD)  
Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening  
Report and  
Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening Report**

**July 2025**



## Table of Contents

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| <b>1. Introduction .....</b>   | <b>1</b>  |
| <b>2. The need for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening.....</b> | <b>2</b>  |
| <b>3. The need for Habitats and Species Regulation (HRA) Screening .....</b>   | <b>2</b>  |
| <b>4. Policy Context .....</b>   | <b>3</b>  |
| <b>5. Methodology .....</b>  | <b>3</b>  |
| <b>Sustainability Appraisal Methodology.....</b>                               | <b>3</b>  |
| <b>Strategic Environmental Assessment – Regulatory Requirements .....</b>      | <b>3</b>  |
| <b>HRA Screening Assessment .....</b>  | <b>8</b>  |
| <b>6. Conclusion.....</b>  | <b>11</b> |



## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The **GNL Policy 2: Sustainable Communities Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)** (draft) has been produced by Broadland District Council, Norwich City Council and South Norfolk Council. The SPD will apply to the whole of the Broadland District, Norwich and South Norfolk Council areas, excluding the Broads National Park, for which the Broads Authority is the local planning authority.
- 1.2 The purpose of the GNL Policy 2 SPD is to provide detailed guidance to applicants and planners on how to address the ten key social, economic and environmental issues outlined in Policy 2. By doing so, it ensures that new developments contribute to the creation of sustainable communities across the Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk Council area.
- 1.3 This screening report reviews the GNL Policy 2: Sustainable Communities (SPD) (draft) and is designed to test whether or not the contents of the draft SPD require:
- (a) a full Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). The legislative background to SEA is set out in Section 2 of this report and Section 5 provides a screening assessment of the likely significant effects of the SPD and whether there is need for a full SEA.
  - (b) a full Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA). The legislative background to HRA is set out in Section 3 of this report and Section 5 provides a screening assessment to highlight if there are any risks of the SPD having a significant effect on protected Habitat sites, either on its own or in combination with other proposals. The protected sites covered by this report are:

| Habitats Site                           |
|---|
| Breckland SPA                           |
| Breckland SAC                           |
| The Wash SPA                            |
| The Wash and North Norfolk Coast SAC    |
| The Wash Ramsar                         |
| North Norfolk Coast SAC                 |
| North Norfolk Coast SPA                 |
| North Norfolk Coast Ramsar              |
| Norfolk Valley Fens SAC                 |
| Winterton – Horsey Dunes SAC            |
| Great Yarmouth North Denes SPA          |
| Broadland SPA                           |
| Broadland Ramsar                        |
| Breydon Water SPA                       |
| The Broads SAC                          |
| Redgrave & South Lopham Fens Ramsar     |
| Waveney and Little Ouse Valley Fens SAC |

## 2. The need for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening

- 2.1 Paragraph 008 of the [Planning Practice Guidance: Strategic environmental Assessment and sustainability appraisal](#) states that ‘Supplementary planning documents do not require a sustainability appraisal but may in exceptional circumstances require a strategic environmental assessment if they are likely to have significant environmental effects that have not already have been assessed during the preparation of the relevant strategic policies.
- 2.2 A strategic environmental assessment is unlikely to be required where a supplementary planning document deals only with a small area at a local level (see [regulation 5\(6\) of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004](#)), unless it is considered that there are likely to be significant environmental effects.
- 2.3 Before deciding whether significant environment effects are likely, the local planning authority will need to take into account the criteria specified in [schedule 1 to the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004](#) and consult the consultation bodies’.
- 2.4 Therefore, the purpose of this document is to screen the GNLP Policy 2: Sustainable Communities (SPD) (draft) to determine whether there are likely to be any significant environmental effects, which would require an SEA. The three consultation bodies (Historic England, Environment Agency and Natural England) will be consulted to determine whether they agree with the conclusions of this report.

## 3. The need for Habitats and Species Regulation (HRA) Screening

- 3.1 The requirement to undertake Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) of plans and projects is set out in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (2017) (as amended). [Regulation 105 of the Habitats Regulations](#) requires consideration to be given to whether a plan will have an effect on protected habitats sites either alone, or in combination with other plans or projects. As per the [Habitat regulations assessment guidance](#) the process can have up to 3 stages: the first of which is screening to check if the proposal is likely to have a significant effect on the site’s conservation objectives. If no significant effect is identified there is no need to go through the subsequent stages of Appropriate Assessment or Derogation. The GNLP was subject to full Habitat Regulations Assessment. Where screening identified a likely significant effect, Appropriate Assessment was undertaken and the mitigation measures identified were incorporated within the plan, resulting in the conclusion that the GNLP would not lead to any adverse effects on habitat sites within the Greater Norwich area.
- 3.2 Therefore, the purpose of this document is to screen the **Policy 2: Sustainable Communities SPD** (Draft) to ensure that it will not lead to any adverse effects on protected Habitats sites not already identified and mitigated for by the wider GNLP HRA.

## 4. Policy Context

- 4.1 The Sustainable Communities SPD, once adopted, will be supplementary to GNLP Policy 2: Sustainable Communities.
- 4.2 Policy 2 of the GNLP sets out ten key requirements that enable sustainable communities. These include ensuring access to services and facilities, integrating new technologies, providing green infrastructure, applying appropriate densities, incorporating good design, promoting resilient safe inclusive communities, ensuring environmental protection, preventing flood risk, ensuring water efficiency measures, and promoting low carbon development.
- 4.3 Major developments are required through policy 2 to submit a Sustainability Statement to show, on a site-by-site basis, how the varied aspects of policy 2 are addressed. This draft SPD outlines what the Sustainability Statements must cover to meet the policy requirements, the information expected to be provided as part of planning applications, and points to useful sources of information and best practice examples where appropriate. It will also be helpful in providing guidance on how non-major developments can meet policy requirements. In addition, the SPD provides guidance regarding the submission of Health Impact Assessments, Delivery Plans and master-planning as required by policy 2.
- 4.4 The SPD will assist landowners, developers and applicants to check all the requirements for new development are met and should help applicants demonstrate how proposals are policy compliant. Well written Sustainability Statement will assist decision makers and may help speed up the planning application process.

## 5. Methodology

### **Sustainability Appraisal Methodology**

- 5.1 The SPD is supplementary to policy 2 of the GNLP which has undergone full Sustainability Appraisal. Therefore, there is no need to further assess this policy against the SA Objectives.

### **Strategic Environmental Assessment – Regulatory Requirements**

- 5.2 To assess whether an SEA is required the local authority must undertake a screening process based on a standard set of criteria. This screening must be subject to consultation with Historic England, the Environment Agency and Natural England. Following consultation, the results of the screening process must be detailed in a Screening Statement, which is required to be made available to the public.
- 5.3 Using the criteria, detailed in [Schedule 1 of the Environmental Assessment of plans and Programmes Regulations 2004](#), for determining the likely significance of effects on the environment, the following assessments have been made in Tables 1 and 2.

**Table 1: Establishing the need for SEA**

| <b>Assessment criteria</b>  | <b>Assessment</b> | <b>Reason</b>  |
|---|-------------------|--|
| 1) Is the Plan subject to preparation and/or adoption by a national, regional or local authority OR prepared by an authority for adoption through a legislative procedure by Parliament of Government? (Article 2(a))   | Yes               | The SPD is to be prepared and adopted by the local authorities Broadland District Council, Norwich City Council and South Norfolk Council.   |
| 2) Is the SPD required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions? (Article 2(a))  | Yes               | Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) are optional; there is no legislative or regulatory requirement to prepare them. SPDs can be prepared and adopted by Local Planning Authorities provided the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 are met. This SPD has been produced to supplement the Greater Norwich Local Plan. |
| 3) Is the SPD prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism, town and country planning or land use, AND does it set a framework for future development consent of projects in Annexes I and II to the EIA Directive? (Article 3.2(a)) | Yes               | The SPD is for town and country planning purposes and sets a framework of guidance for future development consents.  |
| 4) Will the SPD, in view of its likely effect on sites, require an assessment for future development under Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive (Art. 3.2(b))   | No                | The policy that the SPD is supplementing has been subject to Habitats Regulations Assessment. A Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening Assessment has also  |

|   |     |   |
|---|-----|---|
|   |     | been carried out of this SPD (see table 3 of this report).  |
| 5) Does the SPD determine the use of small areas at local level, OR is it a minor modification of a PP subject to Article 3.2? (Article 3.3)  | No  | Not applicable  |
| 6) Does the SPD set the framework for future development consent of projects (not just projects in annexes to the EIA Directive)? (Art. 3.4)  | Yes | The SPD provides further guidance to supplement GNLP policy 2. Whilst not allocating land, the SPD provides a framework for future development.   |
| 7) Is the SPD's sole purpose to serve national defence or civil emergency, OR is a financial or budget PP, OR is it co-financed by structural funds or EAGGF programmes 2000 to 2006/7? | No  | The SPD does not serve national defence or civil emergency, nor is it co-financed by structural funds or EAGGF programmes.  |
| 8) Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment? (Art. 3.5)   | No  | The purpose of the SPD is to provide guidance to assist in the interpretation of policy 2 of the GNLP. The GNLP was subject to SEA (incorporated within the Sustainability Appraisal), and no significant effects were expected. Therefore, the SPD will not have any significant effects on the environment. |

**Table 2: SEA Criteria for Determining the Likely Significance of Effects on the Environment**

| Criteria   | Assessment  | Likely significant environmental effect (Yes / No) |
|--|---|--|
| 1) The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular, to:  |   |  |
| <p><b>a)</b>The degree to which the plan 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 SPD is supplementary to the GNLP Policy 2 and as such will only advise as to what is expected to be provided as part of any planning application, and point to useful sources of information and best practice examples to address the ten key social, economic and environmental issues outlined in Policy 2. While the SPD will include additional considerations, it does not determine the detail of the framework i.e., it does not establish policy.</p> | <p>No</p>  |
| <p><b>b)</b> The degree to which the plan influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy</p>   | <p>The SPD supplements policy 2 of the GNLP rather than influencing the overall direction of the GNLP. It will provide additional practical guidance to policy 2 which has already been scrutinised and consulted upon through the plan making process including SA/ SEA.</p>   | <p>No</p>  |
| <p><b>c)</b> The relevance of the plan for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development</p>  | <p>The SPD assists in the promotion of sustainable development together with other policies within the GNLP. The SPD will provide more detailed</p>   | <p>No</p>  |

|   |   |    |
|---|---|----|
|   | guidance on the creation of sustainable communities across the Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk Council areas by requiring applicants to demonstrate through sustainability statements that the ten key social, economic and environmental issues outlined in Policy 2 have been met.   |    |
| <b>(d)</b> Environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme   | There are no environmental problems that are specific to this SPD. The SPD is supplementary to GNLP Policy 2 which seeks to ensure that new developments contributes to the creation of sustainable communities across the Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk Council areas. It is anticipated this will result in a positive environmental impact. | No |
| <b>e)</b> The relevance of the plan for the implementation of [European] Community legislation on the environment (e.g. plans and programmes linked to waste-management or water protection). | GNLP Policy 2 and this SPD seek to ensure that new developments contribute to the creation of sustainable communities which should have a positive environmental impact in relation to water protection and waste management.   | No |
| <b>2) Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to:</b>   |   |    |
| <b>(a)</b> The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects  | The SPD seeks to ensure the effective and consistent delivery of GNLP policy 2 with respect to creating sustainable   | No |

|  |  |    |
|--|--|----|
|  | communities, therefore the overall impacts will be in accordance with the GNLP and it is not expected to give rise to any significant environmental effects.   |    |
| <b>(b)</b> The cumulative nature of the effects  | The SPD is not considered to have any significant cumulative negative effects.   | No |
| <b>(c)</b> The transboundary nature of the effects   | The SPD is not expected to give rise to transboundary effects.   | No |
| <b>(d)</b> The risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents)  | The SPD is unlikely to introduce significant risks to human health or the environment.   | No |
| <b>(e)</b> The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)  | The SPD supplements policy 2 of the GNLP and therefore the overall impacts will be in accordance with the GNLP.  | No |
| <b>(f)</b> The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to: i. Special natural characteristics or cultural heritage;<br>ii. Exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values;<br>iii. Intensive land use. | The SPD is not anticipated to adversely affect any special natural characteristic or cultural heritage. Nor would the SPD be expected to lead to exceeded environmental quality standards or result in intensive land use. | No |
| <b>(g)</b> the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, community or international protection status.  | The SPD is not expected to have any adverse effects on areas with national community or international protection.  | No |

### HRA Screening Assessment

- 5.4 To assess whether an Appropriate Assessment as a part of the HRA is required the local authority must undertake a screening process based on a standard set of criteria. This must be subject to consultation with Natural England. Table 3 considers each relevant section of the draft GNLP Policy 2: Sustainable Communities Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) in relation to whether there is potential for a likely significant effect on protected Habitat sites. This constitutes Stage 1 Screening as set out under paragraph 3.1 above. Consideration is given to the characteristics and location of the protected sites. The relevant sections are considered within the context of the GNLP policy 2 from which it supplements, and which has itself been subject to Habitats Regulations Assessment, as set out in section 3.

**Table 3: HRA Screening for Likely significant effects of the GNLP Policy 2: Sustainable Communities**

| <b>Section</b>                            | <b>Assessment of potential impact on Habitat sites</b>   | <b>Habitat sites that could possibly be affected</b> | <b>Likely significant effect identified</b> | <b>AA needed?</b> |
|---|--|--|---|-------------------|
| 1. Introduction                           | This section outlines the need to address ten social, economic, and environmental issues from GNLP Policy 2.   | None   | None  | No                |
| 2. Purpose of the SPD                     | This section outlines the benefits of preparing the supporting statements required by policy 2.  | None   | None  | No                |
| 3. Statements Required to support Policy. | This section outlines the scale and type of applications that will require Sustainability Statements, Health Impact Assessments, Delivery Plans, and master-planning as required by GNLP policy 2. | None   | None  | No                |
| 4. Sustainability Statements              | This section outlines the purpose of Sustainability Statements and how the statements should be structured.  | None   | None  | No                |

|  |  |      |      |    |
|--|--|------|------|----|
| 5. Statements of Community Involvement             | This section provides guidance on preparing Statements of Community Involvement for sites on which master-planning is required.  | None | None | No |
| 6. Health Impact Assessment                        | This section provides guidance on what Health Impact Assessment should cover.  | None | None | No |
| 7. Delivery Statements                             | This section sets out the purpose of Delivery Statements and the information that should be included within them.  | None | None | No |
| 8. Issues to consider in Sustainability Statements | This section includes a table setting out the key requirements for Policy 2 as well as, guidance on the type of information and evidence that should be submitted with a planning application in order to demonstrate policy compliance.                                       | None | None | No |
| 9. Appendix 1: Water efficiency advice note.       | This appendix sets out details of the legislative background for achieving water efficiency in new developments and thus creating sustainable communities. The guidance aims to support applicants and will therefore not lead to likely significant effects on Habitat Sites. | None | None | No |

## 6. Conclusions and Statement of Reasons for Determination

- 6.1 The **Policy 2: Sustainable Communities SPD (draft)** does not introduce new policies or proposals outside the scope of the adopted Greater Norwich Local Plan (GNLP). Instead, it supplements policies in the GNLP by providing further detailed and specific guidance on how to address the ten key social, economic and environmental issues outlined in GNLP Policy 2. It also provides further guidance regarding the submission of Sustainability Statements, Health Impact Assessments, Delivery Plans and master-planning as required by the policy which has already been subject to HRA and SA/SEA.
- 6.2 The overall conclusions of the HRA undertaken for the adopted GNLP (supported by the results of the screening undertaken for the SPD in this document) state that the plan is not likely to have adverse effect on the integrity of the European sites (Natura 2000 and Ramsar site(s)), either alone or in-combination with other plans or projects. Therefore further 'Appropriate Assessment as per stage 2 of the HRA is not considered necessary or required for the SPD.
- 6.3 Furthermore, in accordance with [Part 2\(9\) of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004](#) (as Amended including through EU exit legislation or SEA Regulations), Broadland District Council, Norwich City Council and South Norfolk Council, as the competent authorities consider that the **Policy 2: Sustainable Communities (SPD) (draft)** is unlikely to have any significant environmental effects that have not already been assessed as part of the Greater Norwich Local Plan. Therefore, the Councils consider that a Strategic Environmental Assessment is not required for this SPD.
- 6.4 The Council(s) have consulted on this screening opinion with Historic England, Natural England and the Environment Agency from 3 July until 8 August 2025 as per the HRA/ SEA regulations before the screening opinion is confirmed final. Therefore, this determination notice will be published on our website alongside the SPD consultation.



Isabel Appleyard  
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Your ref:

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Dear Isabel

**Consultation on Policy 2: Sustainable Communities (Joint) Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (Draft) – SEA /HRA Screening Report Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and HRA Screening Opinion**

Thank you for consulting Historic England about the above Screening Opinion.

**SEA Screening**

In terms of our area of interest, given the nature of the SPD, we would concur with your assessment that the document is unlikely to result in any significant environmental effects and will simply provide additional guidance on existing Policies contained within an Adopted Development Plan Document which has already been subject to a Sustainability Appraisal. As a result, we would endorse the Authority's conclusions that it is not necessary to undertake a Strategic Environmental Assessment of this particular SPD.

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

**HRA Screening**

We defer to the other statutory consultees in relation to the HRA Screening.

If you have any queries about this matter or would like to discuss anything further, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Debbie Mack  
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Date: 30<sup>th</sup> July 2025  
Our ref: 518400  
Your ref: South Norfolk, Broadland and Norwich Council – SEA & HRA Screening for the GNL (Policy 2) Sustainable Communities SPD



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Dear Ms Appleyard

**SEA & HRA Screening for GNL Policy 2, the Sustainable Communities Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for the South Norfolk, Broadland & Norwich Council.**

Thank you for your consultation request on the above dated and received by Natural England on 4th July 2025.

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

Our remit includes protected sites and landscapes, biodiversity, geodiversity, soils, protected species, landscape character, green infrastructure and access to and enjoyment of nature.

**Natural England does not have any specific comments on the SEA & HRA Screening Report for GNL Policy 2, Sustainable Communities Supplementary Planning Document for Broadland, Norwich and South Norfolk Councils’.**

The lack of comment from Natural England should not be interpreted as a statement that there are no impacts on the natural environment. Other bodies and individuals may wish to make comments that might help the Local Planning Authority (LPA) to fully take account of any environmental risks and opportunities relating to this document.

**Strategic Environmental Assessment/Habitats Regulations Assessment**

A SPD requires a Strategic Environmental Assessment only in exceptional circumstances as set out in the Planning Practice Guidance [here](#). While SPDs are unlikely to give rise to likely significant effects on European Sites, they should be considered as a plan under the Habitats Regulations in the same way as any other plan or project. If your SPD requires a Strategic Environmental Assessment or Habitats Regulation Assessment, you are required to consult us at certain stages as set out in the Planning Practice Guidance.

If you disagree with our assessment of this proposal as low risk, or should the proposal be amended in a way which significantly affects its impact on the natural environment, then in accordance with Section 4 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, please consult Natural England again.

For any further consultations on your plan, please contact: [consultations@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:consultations@naturalengland.org.uk)

Yours sincerely

Sharon Jenkins  
Consultation Team  
Natural England



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**Our ref:** AE/2025/130706/01-L01

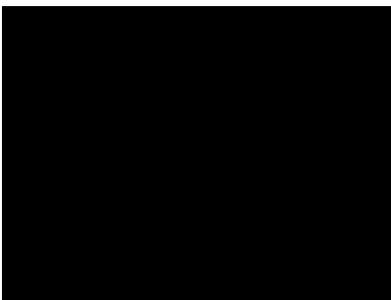
**Date:** 08 August 2025

Dear Sir/Madam

**CONSULTATION ON SEA SCREENING AND HRA SCREENING FOR GNLP POLICY 2: SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT (SPD) (DRAFT)**

Thank you for consulting us on the combined Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) screening and Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) screening for GNLP Policy 2: Sustainable Communities Supplementary Planning Document (Draft). We have reviewed the screening assessments and do not disagree with the conclusions reached.

Yours faithfully



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