

Cranage Neighbourhood Development Plan

Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Report

Crnage Parish Council Neighbourhood Development Plan SEA Screening Report

Prepared by Cheshire East Council, June 2023

Abbreviations	
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
CEC	Cheshire East Council
CELPS	Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy (2017)
SADPD	Site Allocations and Development Policies Document (2022)
NDP	Neighbourhood Development Plan
NA	Neighbourhood Area
CNDP	Crnage Neighbourhood Development Plan
CNA	Crnage Neighbourhood Area
OSRA	Other Settlements and Rural Areas

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. The SEA is a way of ensuring the environmental implications of decisions are considered before any such decisions are made. The need for environmental assessment of plans and programmes is set out in the EU Directive 2001/42/EC – known as the SEA Directive. Under this Directive, Neighbourhood Plans may require SEA – but this will depend on the content of each Neighbourhood Plan. The SEA Directive makes SEA a mandatory requirement for:

Plans which are prepared for town and country planning or land use and which set the framework for future development consent of projects listed in the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Directive; or Plans which have been determined to require an assessment under the Habitats Directive.

- 1.2. A screening of a draft plan must be undertaken by the responsible authority prior to adoption or submission to the legislative procedure. In this case the ‘responsible authority’ is Cranage Parish Council however Cheshire East Council, upon request, has agreed to provide a screening opinion on the CNDP to determine if an SEA is required. If it is concluded that an SEA is required, Cranage Parish Council are responsible for its production, and it must form part of the material that is consulted on once the formal consultation stage is reached.
- 1.3. The main determining factor as to whether an SEA is required on an NDP is if it is likely to have a significant effect on the environment. Those NDPs containing land allocations for development, which are not included in the local authority’s plan, are likely to require an SEA. NDPs which do not contain such allocations (or simply reflect allocations already identified as part of a local authority plan) are less likely to require an SEA.
- 1.4. If an SEA is required, Cranage Parish Council may wish to consider voluntarily expanding the scope so that it covers wider economic and social issues. This is the approach taken by Cheshire East Council, whereby an SEA is included within the broader Sustainability Appraisal of plans. The advantage of undertaking a Sustainability Appraisal is that it can demonstrate the impact of the NDP on social, economic, and environmental factors and therefore demonstrate to an examiner that the Plan that has been prepared is the most sustainable given all alternatives.

Requirement for an SEA

- 1.5. Where an NDP could have significant environmental effects, it may require an SEA.
- 1.6. Whether an NDP requires an SEA and (if so), the level of detail needed, will depend on what is proposed in the draft NDP. An SEA may be required for example when:
1. An NDP allocates sites for development.
 2. The NA contains sensitive natural or heritage assets that may be affected by proposals in the plan.
 3. The NDP may have significant environmental effects that have not already been considered and dealt with via a sustainability appraisal of the Local Plan.

Requirement for a HRA

- 1.7. In the context of neighbourhood planning, a Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) is required where an NDP is deemed likely to give rise to significant effects on

protected European Sites (Natura 2000 sites), as a result of the plan's implementation. If no significant effect is deemed likely, a HRA is not required. Where a HRA is undertaken, it is good practice to identify sites within 10-15km of the plan/project boundary and include them in a HRA.

Legislative Background

- 1.8. The basis for a Strategic Environmental Assessments and Sustainability Appraisal is the [European Directive 2001/42/EC](#) which has subsequently been transposed into English law by the [Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004](#), or SEA Regulations. The government has produced guidance in relation to these regulations, entitled '[A practical guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive](#)'.
- 1.9. Schedule 2 of the [Neighbourhood Planning \(General\) Regulations 2012](#) makes provision in relation to the Habitats Directive. The Directive requires that any plan or project likely to have a significant effect on a European site must be subject to an Appropriate Assessment. To achieve this, paragraph 1 prescribes a basic condition that the making of a neighbourhood plan is not likely to have a significant effect on a European Site. Paragraphs 2 to 5 of the Schedule amend the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 so as to apply its provisions to neighbourhood development orders and neighbourhood plans. In particular, paragraph 4 inserts new regulation 78A which provides that a neighbourhood development order may not grant planning permission for development which is likely to have a significant effect on a European site.
- 1.10. Schedule 3 of the [Neighbourhood Planning \(General\) Regulations 2012](#) makes provision in relation to the [Environmental Impact Assessment \(EIA\) Directive](#). The Directive requires that EIA development must be subject to a development consent process. To enable this, Schedule 3 prescribes a basic condition that applies where development which is the subject of a proposal for a neighbourhood development order is of a type caught by the EIA Directive, and applies to the relevant provisions of the [Town and Country Planning \(Environmental Impact Assessment\) Regulations 2011\(3\)](#) ("the EIA Regulations") with appropriate modifications ([regulation 33](#) and paragraphs [1 to 4 and 6 of Schedule 3](#)). Paragraphs 5 and 7 to 13 of Schedule 3 correct errors in the EIA regulations.
- 1.11. This report seeks to determine if the CNDP is likely to have a significant effect on the environment.

The Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy

- 1.12. The basic conditions require an NDP to be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority.
- 1.13. The CELPS was adopted on the 27th of July 2017 and sets the strategic approach to development across the Borough.
- 1.14. The CELPS was subject to a full Sustainability Appraisal which included an SEA. This ensured that no likely significant effects are expected to arise from the implementation of the CELPS or the delivery of the quantum of development identified in it.
- 1.15. The SADPD was adopted on the 14th of December 2022 and sets out non-strategic

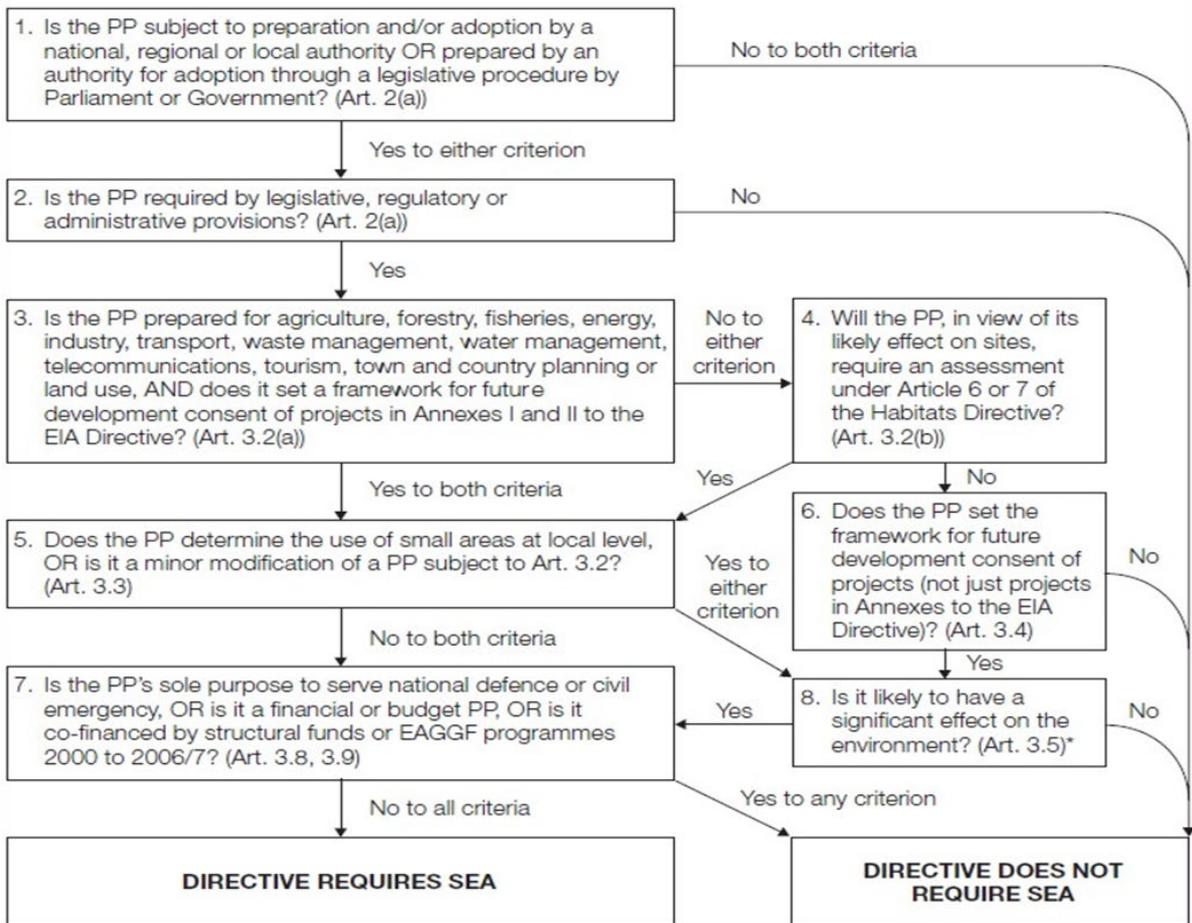
and detailed planning policies to guide planning decisions and allocate additional sites for development, where necessary, to assist in meeting the overall development requirements set out in the CELPS. It has been prepared to support the policies and proposals of the CELPS by providing additional policy detail.

- 1.16. The SADPD was subject to a full Sustainability Appraisal which included an SEA. This ensured that no likely significant effects are expected to arise from the implementation of the SADPD or the delivery of the quantum of development identified in it.

Screening Process

- 1.17. Cranage Parish Council has requested an SEA screening report of its NDP. It is the qualifying body's responsibility to undertake an assessment of whether their proposed policies are likely to have 'significant environmental effects' however on request, CEC will undertake such an assessment on behalf of the qualifying body. The Plan does not have to be at a final draft stage to be assessed.
- 1.18. The screening opinion assessment is undertaken in two parts: the first part will assess whether the plan requires an SEA (as per the flow chart which follows); and the second part of the assessment will consider whether the NDP is likely to have a significant effect on the environment, using criteria drawn from [Schedule 1 of the EU SEA Directive](#) and the UK Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (see section 5).
- 1.19. The three statutory consultation bodies (English Heritage, Environment Agency, and Natural England) have been consulted to establish whether the Parish name Neighbourhood Plan requires SEA and whether the plan may have a 'significant environmental effect' on the environment. Should it be concluded that an SEA is required, Cranage Parish Council will need to undertake an SEA with an SEA screening report exercise as the first stage.
- 1.20. The government guidance '[A practical guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive](#)' sets out the following approach to be taken in determining whether SEA is required:

This diagram is intended as a guide to the criteria for application of the Directive to plans and programmes (PPs). It has no legal status.



*The Directive requires Member States to determine whether plans or programmes in this category are likely to have significant environmental effects. These determinations may be made on a case by case basis and/or by specifying types of plan or programme.

Summary of the Screening Report

Summary of the NDP	
Name	Cranage Parish Council NDP
Geographic coverage	Cranage Parish
Key themes/scope of the NDP	Natural environment, community, design,
Key issues of the NDP	Rural parish, open countryside
Summary of the Screening Report	
Name and job title of the officer undertaking the screening report	Tom Evans, Neighbourhood Planning Manager
Date of report	26/06/2023
Conclusion of the report	An SEA is not required
Reason for conclusion	<p>The NDP does not propose to allocate specific sites for future development and promotes criteria-based policies that seek to shape future development proposals, on a small-scale basis, that reduce and manage impact on the environment (both natural and built).</p> <p><u>European designated site within the CNA:</u> There are no European designated sites located within the neighbourhood area, although designated sites are located within a 15km proximity to the neighbourhood area (Appendix B).</p> <p><u>Designated sites within the CNA:</u> There are Sites of Biological Importance within the CNA. (Appendix C).</p> <p><u>Designated heritage assets within the CNA:</u> The total amount of Listed Buildings within the neighbourhood area are listed below (Appendix D). No other heritage designations are present.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 11 Grade II Listed Buildings • 1 Grade II* Listed Buildings • 5 Scheduled Monuments <p><u>Flood Risk zones within the CNA:</u> The Flood Risk Zones present within the NA, as well as their location, are listed below (Appendix E).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flood Risk Zone 2 and 3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Southern NA boundary <p><u>Effect on the environment:</u> The CNDP does not introduce new policy that enables a significant effect on the environment to be implemented. As a lower tier plan all development proposals will be subject to assessment against the NDP and higher tier policies, plans and legislation that seek to protect locally, nationally and internationally designated sites. The CELPS sets the strategic development framework for Cranage, including broad levels of growth appropriate to rural areas, and has been tested through integrated SEA to ensure the effect of this growth is</p>

	<p>acceptable in environmental terms. The CNDP does not propose additional growth at a significant scale beyond that already accepted in the CELPS, nor does it include specific proposals of a scale or intent large enough or with an impact significant enough, that would lead to additional significant effects on the environment or designated sites. The policies in the NDP are criteria based and seek to safeguard existing assets and the plan does not introduce policies which would significantly change the status of land beyond the planning framework in place, therefore SEA is not required.</p>
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Summary of Responses from Statutory Consultees

Historic England	RESPONSE RECEIVED
Environment Agency	NO RESPONSE
Natural England	RESPONSE RECEIVED

This SEA Screening Report was carried out using the Regulation 14 draft Cranage Neighbourhood Plan. It is noted that there have been some changes following the Regulation 14 consultation, however, it is not considered that the nature of the plan or policies have changed so much so that a new SEA Screening is required.

2. Plan Context

- 2.1. Cranage is a rural parish and for the purposes of the CELPS Settlement Hierarchy, falls within the category of 'OSRA'. Policies PG1 and PG2 of the CELPS set out the preferred development strategy and distribution of development for the Borough. The distribution of future development in the Borough is intended to be focused on the Principal Towns of Crewe and Macclesfield and the nine Key Service Centres.
- 2.2. The parish area is covered by Policy PG3 Green Belt and PG6 Open Countryside which generally restricts development in the countryside but does also identify development which would be considered acceptable.
- 2.3. The CELPS outlines that a small quantum of growth to meet need and support the vitality of Other Settlements and Rural Areas (OSRA) will be supported and identifies a need to deliver some 2950 homes and 8ha of employment land (outside of a 61ha allocation at Wardle) in OSRAs.
- 2.4. The CNA contains important natural habitats and waterbodies, hosts some larger scale residential development and some employment areas, and is located adjoining the parishes of Holmes Chapel, Twemlow, and Goostrey.
- 2.5. The CNDP does not allocate specific sites for development and instead identifies a series of criteria-based policies against which development proposals should be assessed within the NA. Such criteria are designed to ensure the delivery of sustainable development to meet the objectives of the CNDP.
- 2.6. Planning applications within the CNA will be assessed against the policies in the CNDP, the CELPS, the SADPD, and any other material planning considerations.
- 2.7. As specific development sites have not been identified in the CNDP or in the CELPS or SADPD in this location, no assessment of potential development sites has been undertaken as part of the CNDP process.

Vision of the Plan

- 2.8. The CNDP document sets out a vision for the parish and what the NDP should deliver.
- 2.9. Cranage will be a peaceful, rural Parish, set within the open countryside, with excellent access to the surrounding countryside and a wide range of well-maintained and safe walking and cycling routes. The valued landscape, natural environment and green spaces which make a positive contribution to the character of Cranage will be protected and enhanced. Any new development will be appropriate to the infill village and open countryside status of Cranage, and will be of a high standard of design. The local economy and agriculture will be thriving, and improved infrastructure, community facilities and sustainable transport will enhance the life of residents of all ages.

Objectives of the Plan

- 2.10. To deliver their vision, the CNDP has set out the objectives on the following subjects:

- 2.11. To improve access to and enjoyment of the countryside
- 2.12. To protect and enhance the natural environment, trees, hedgerows and watercourses
- 2.13. To improve and support community and recreational facilities and infrastructure
- 2.14. To support and encourage the local economy and agriculture
- 2.15. To ensure new development is well located and well designed, and the Parish retains its peaceful rural character

Policies of the Plan

- 2.16. The CNDP contains several policies that will be used to ensure the delivery of the vision and objectives and guide individual development management decisions. An assessment of these policies impact on European sites has been carried out and concludes that no likely adverse impact will arise. The full assessment and table of policies is included at Table 3 below.
- 2.17. The following sections assess whether the plan requires an SEA due to its content and whether it is likely to give rise to a significant effect on designated sites or the environment.

Designated Sites within the NA

- 2.18. There are no European Designated Sites within the NA. The nearest designated site is a RAMSAR site (Oakhanger Moss).

3. Screening Assessment

3.1. Assessment 1: Does the NDP require an SEA?

Stage	Y/N	Reason
1. Is the Neighbourhood Plan (NP) subject to preparation and/or adoption by a national, regional or local authority, OR prepared by an authority for adoption through a legislative procedure by Parliament or Government? (Art. 2(a))	Y	The preparation and adoption of the NDP is allowed under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Localism Act 2011. The NDP will be prepared by (as the 'relevant body') and will be 'made' by CEC as the local authority. The preparation of NDPs is subject to the following regulations: The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 and The Neighbourhood Planning (referendums) Regulations 2012. GO TO STAGE 2
2. Is the NP required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions? (Art. 2(a))	Y	Whilst the NDP is not a requirement and is optional under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning Act as amended by the Localism Act 2011, it will if 'made', form part of the Development Plan for the Borough. It is therefore important that the screening process considers whether it is likely to have significant environmental effects and hence whether an SEA is required under the Directive. GO TO STAGE 3
3. Is the NP prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste 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? (Art. 3.2(a))	Y	The NDP is being prepared for town and country planning, local transport, and land use as it makes proposals to manage the development of land for housing and employment uses. As such, the NDP contains a framework for future development consent of urban development projects (listed as 10(b) in Annex II of the EIA Directive). The NDP does not specifically allocate any land for development purposes. GO TO STAGE 5
4. Will the NP, 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))	N	No, the policies in the NDP are criteria-based and unlikely to directly affect designated sites.
5. Does the NP determine the use of small areas at local level OR is it a minor modification of a plan or programme subject to Art. 3.2? (Art. 3.3)	Y	The NDP intends to support local development for residential and employment/commercial use through criteria-based policies. There is therefore the potential for an effect on the environment resulting from policies in the plan.

		However, policies are criteria-based and do not instigate changes to land use directly. Additionally, The NDP sits within the wider framework of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the adopted CELPS (2017) and the SADPD (2022), therefore the NDP will help to set the framework for projects that are localised in nature and are likely to have limited resource implications. GO TO STAGE 8
6. Does the NP set the framework for future development consent of projects (not just projects in annexes to the EIA Directive)? (Art. 3.4)	Y	Yes, the NDP contributes to establishing a local policy framework within which planning consent will be considered for a wide range of development proposals. Whilst the NDP may establish very local criteria to enable development within criteria-based parameters, higher tier policies, plans and legislation exist to ensure that the NDP is used within a framework with sufficient protection for environmental considerations.
7. Is the NP's sole purpose to serve the national defence or civil emergency, OR is it a financial or budget plan or programme, OR is it co- financed by structural funds or EAGGF programmes 2000 to 2006/7? (Art. 3.8, 3.9)	N	The NDP does not fall into any of the criteria listed.
8. Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment? (Art 3.5)	N	See Assessment 2: Likely significant effects on the environment

Table 1

Assessment 1 Conclusion

3.2. Based on criterion 1, 2, 3, 5 and 6 above, it is necessary to assess whether the NDP is likely to have a significant effect on the environment. This assessment is undertaken through Assessment 2 below.

3.3. Assessment 2: Is the NDP likely to have a Significant Effect on the Environment?

3.4. The EIA Regulations include thresholds under which development proposals are not required to be screened to determine whether an EIA should be required. These are:

- The development includes more than 1hectare of urban development which is not dwelling house development
- The development includes more than 150 dwellings
- The overall area of the development exceeds 5 hectares.

- 3.5. Under these thresholds there is no obligation to screen urban development projects for an EIA.
- 3.6. The NDP does not include more than 1 hectare of non-residential development; it does not allocate sites for more than 150 dwellings and the overall area of the development does not exceed 5 hectares
- 3.7. The CNDP does not exceed any of the thresholds identified in the EIA regulations. It is therefore reasonable to suggest that the effects of the plan on the environment, in general, cannot be significant. However, there may be specific features or special characteristics in this location upon which the plan may have a significant effect. It is therefore important to understand if there is any specific reason the plan could be considered to give rise to a significant effect on the environment. Using Schedule 1 of the SEA regulations, the following assessment has been undertaken to determine if there is any other reason why the CNDP may give rise to a significant effect on the environment.

Issue	Effect	Reason
Biodiversity	No significant effect	Whilst there are significant local assets, the policy framework provided by the neighbourhood plan, alongside existing policy held in the CELPS, and the wider Development Plan provides sufficient protection. No proposed policies are likely to give rise to a substantially negative impact on biodiversity and natural assets.
Population	No significant effect	Cranage Parish has a population of 1288 people (2021 Census). Most people are aged between 55 and 59 which may lead to a demand in the future for accommodation more suitable for an elderly population. Outside of committed sites there is no allocated land for residential development that may accommodate future housing need locally within the neighbourhood area. The policies in the neighbourhood plan anticipate this to some degree in policy DES1 and are unlikely to exert a significant impact on population/demographic change but do seek to ensure an appropriate mix of housing is secured where it does come forward
Human health	No significant effect	Housing is a key detriment of human health. On a limited basis, the plan seeks to provide housing suitable for the local population which would result in a positive effect on human health and enable older residents to downsize within their community, and first-time buyers and families to access suitable housing contributing to wellbeing. The Index of Multiple Deprivation shows Cranage Parish to be generally affluent (within 10% of least deprived neighbourhoods). The Joint Strategic Needs assessment for Cranage Parish Wards (Dane Valley) shows the population here is generally in good health with notable exceptions to health equality being admissions for injury age 0-4, new cases of bowel and prostate cancer. The JNSA shows the over 65 population is high. The neighbourhood plan introduces positive

		criteria based polices to assist in delivering the type of development that will contribute to addressing some of these issues. However, the policies included are unlikely to have a significant effect beyond the local area.
Fauna	No significant effect	Designated sites are subject to existing protection via other policies. The neighbourhood plan seeks to protect existing assets and does not introduce policies that are likely to harm local fauna.
Flora	No significant effect	Designated sites are subject to existing protection via other policies. The neighbourhood plan seeks to protect existing assets and does not introduce policies that are likely to harm local flora.
Soil	No significant effect	Agricultural land classification grades 2 and 3 are present within the neighbourhood area. No development is proposed in the neighbourhood plan that would give rise to agricultural land.
Water	No significant effect	Flood zones three are present towards the southern edge of the neighbourhood area. The polices proposed are unlikely to exert a significant impact on the existing approach to development in areas of flooding, and flooding issues are addressed by policies in the wider development plan/other legislation.
Air	No significant effect	There are no air quality management areas within the neighbourhood area. The policies contained in the plan are unlikely to significantly impact this issue.
Material assets	No significant effect	There are no areas of historic landfill within the neighbourhood area. The policies in the plan do not address such issues and are therefore unlikely to result in a significant effect on the environment. No other material assets are present.
Landscape	No significant effect	There are sites of biological importance within the CNA. CNDP emerging policies seek to ensure that new development does not harm locally valued landscapes and the rural setting.
Cultural heritage, including architectural and archaeological heritage	No significant effect	There are multiple heritage assets in Cranage Parish, some of which, particularly the settings, may be directly affected by new development across the Plan period. Nevertheless, policies exist in the NDP which seek to protect heritage assets, alongside similar policies in the Development Plan and therefore the policies overall are unlikely to enable the delivery of new development which would not already be possible under the existing local framework. As such the NDP policies are unlikely to have a significant effect on heritage assets directly or on the approach taken to heritage assets in the development planning process.

Table 2

Characteristics of the NDP, regarding:	Cheshire East Council Assessment	Likely Significant Effect? (Y/N)
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.	The NDP would, if made, form part of the statutory Development Plan and as such does contribute to the framework for future development consent of projects. The NDP is expected to determine the use of small areas at a local level. The NDP sits within the wider framework of the National Planning Policy Framework (2012), the CEC Local Plan Strategy (2017) and the SADPD (2022), therefore the projects for which this NDP helps to set a framework are localised in nature but may have resource implications.	N
The degree to which the Plan influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy.	The NDP must be in conformity with the National Planning Policy Framework. The policies within the NP should also be in general conformity with any strategic policies held within the CELPS and detailed development policies of the SADPD. The CNDP can exert a limited degree of influence over the formation of future strategic and non-strategic policies in the Development Plan, since these matters are now fully settled with adoption of the part two plan, the SADPD.	N
The relevance of the Plan for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development.	The NP is expected to work to protect and enhance the natural environment of the area within a wider policy framework including, but not limited to the NPPF, the saved policies of the Development Plan for Cheshire East Council and the Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy. The NP addresses a series of local environmental issues. Draft policies have been identified to provide a sustainable level of growth within the parish and recognise the granting of recent consents to achieve this. In combination with other plans and legislation, it is considered that the NP will integrate environmental considerations and promote sustainable development but may also give rise to an effect on the environment through the identification of a growth location.	N
Environmental problems relevant to the Plan.	There are no environmental problems relevant to the Plan.	N

	Where relevant, future development proposals will need to consider the impact of the plan on flood risk, designated sites and other primary and secondary impacts on the environment.	
The relevance of the Plan for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (for example, plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection).	The NP is not directly relevant to the implementation of European legislation, although it will need to take the impact of the Water Framework Directive into account.	N
The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects of the Plan.	Whilst development may take place, which is informed by the NP, the NP does not assist in instigating development directly through allocation of sites. There are therefore likely to be short-term effects resulting from activity associated with the development of small scale, un-allocated sites within the NA.	N
	There may also be longer-term effects relevant to changes in land use which may be positive but on a limited scale may have a negative impact on environmental factors. The plan seeks to establish a local framework to address such issues and also relies on higher tier plans and policies to deliver mitigation of such negative impacts.	N
	Where proposals are received to develop small scale sites in accordance with draft NP policies, such proposals will also be subject to national and local policies in regard to environmental protection and mitigation of impacts.	N
The cumulative nature of the effects of the Plan.	The NDP does not seek to bring forward allocation of small-scale sites that are not specifically detailed in the CELPS or already have planning permission granted. Given the limit levels of growth supported in the plan, such effects are likely to be limited.	N
The trans-boundary nature of the effects of the Plan.	There are not expected to be any significant trans-boundary effects.	N
The risks to human health or the environment (e.g., due to accidents).	There are no significant risks to human health. Indeed, the NDP is likely to improve human health through positive assertions on protection of natural assets and sustainable	N

	transport.	
The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected) by the Plan.	CNDP covers the parish of Cranage Parish. The NDP is likely to affect a resident population of approximately 1288 people over the life of the Plan across a parish located in a mainly rural area. The population within the parish is expected to grow.	N
The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected by the Plan due to: Special natural characteristics or cultural heritage; Exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values; or intensive land use	The NA contains a number of important cultural, natural and environmental assets both within and adjacent to the plan area however the limited levels of development supported, and existence of other mitigating policies seek to minimise impact here. The NDP sets out to deliver new development within framework supportive of small-scale development, implemented sensitively to preserve and enhance local natural, environmental and heritage assets. Given that the Borough is generally rural in nature, and Cranage Parish is predominantly a rural parish with a wealth of biodiversity and natural habitats, most proposed development will have an impact on the environment in the wider sense, and in some cases in a specific, locationally based sense that cannot yet be identified or assessed. Higher tier policies exist to offer adequate protection to the existing natural, cultural and environmental assets within and adjacent to the plan area.	N
	The draft NDP does not exceed environmental quality standards or limit values.	N
	Specific sites are identified for development and an assessment has been undertaken to ensure that those sites selected make the best and most efficient use of land – not to intensively use the land for development. Specific policies are included to ensure land is not over developed. Future development proposals will be assessed against other policies within the Development Plan (which, in totality, should mitigate against the over-development of land).	N
The effects of the Plan on areas or	There are areas of biological importance located within the	N

landscapes which have recognised national, community or international protection status.	NA. Policies are included in the NDP that seek to preserve and protect biodiversity and habitats.	
	The NA does not include designated landscapes however introduces policies that address landscapes, and views, that may be locally sensitive to development.	N
	The location of these sites within the NDP area makes their presence relevant however the limited levels of growth and locations of sites do not give rise to a significant impact to the environment.	N

Table 3

Assessment 2 Conclusion

3.8. The CNDP is unlikely to have a significant effect on the environment and Directive does not require an SEA.

3.5. Determining whether the NDP is likely to have a Significant Effect on Designated Sites

NDP Policy	Effect on European Designation
POLICY ENV1 – FOOTPATHS AND BRIDLEWAYS	1B. No negative effect
POLICY ENV2 – WILDLIFE SITES, WILDLIFE CORRIDORS AND BIODIVERSITY	1B. No negative effect
POLICY ENV3 – TREES, HEDGEROWS AND WATERCOURSES	1B. No negative effect
POLICY COM1 – LOCAL GREEN SPACES	1B. No negative effect
POLICY COM2 – COMMUNITY FACILITIES	1B. No negative effect
POLICY COM3 – LEISURE AND COUNTRYSIDE PURSUITS	1B. No negative effect
POLICY RE1 – RURAL ECONOMY	1A. No negative effect
POLICY DES1 – RESIDENTIAL DESIGN	1A. No negative effect
POLICY DES2 – LANDSCAPE CHARACTER	1B. No negative effect

Table 4

'Effect' Category	Description
1A. No negative effect	Policy will not lead to development. For example, it relates to design or other qualitative criteria, or it is not a land-use planning policy.
1B. No negative effect	Policy intended to conserve or enhance the nature, built or historic environment, where enhancement measures will not be likely to have any negative effect on a European Site.
1C. No negative effect	Policy would have no effect because no development could occur through the policy itself, the development being implemented through other policies in the same plan, which are more specific and therefore more appropriate to assess for their effects on European Sites and associated sensitive areas.
1D. No negative effect	Policy is similar to, or compliant with, The Cheshire East Local Plan Strategy policy which has been assessed as having no negative effects by a HRA/SA.
2. No significant effect	No significant effect either alone or in combination with other plans or projects, because effects are trivial, minimal or mitigated through other policies in combination.
3. Likely significant effect alone	Policy could indirectly affect a European Site, because it provides for, or steers, a quantity or type of development that may be very close to it, or ecologically, hydrologically or physically connected to it, or it may increase disturbance as a result of increased recreational pressure.
4. Likely significant effects in combination	The policy alone would not be likely to have significant effects but if the effects are combined with the effects of other policies or proposals provided for or coordinated by the relevant plans or projects the cumulative effects would be likely to be significant.

Table 5

4. Screening Assessment Conclusion

- 4.1. The CNDP includes policies that support small scale development at a scale in conformity with the approach taken by the CELPS. It introduces criteria-based policies (that are yet to be finalised) that address local issues, but which do alter the status of land to a degree which would have a significant effect on the environment.
- 4.2. There are no designated sites of European significance within the NA but there is one within a 15km proximity, however, due to the nature of the policies, and that the NDP does not allocate sites for development, the effect of the plan on these sites is not considered to be significant. The CNDP also seeks to ensure that any new development is addressed sensitively in the context of evidence prepared in relation to natural, heritage and landscape assets thus incorporating environmental protection in general and at specific designated locations.
- 4.3. The assessment therefore concludes that the CNDP is unlikely to have a significant effect on the environment or on designated sites and therefore an HRA and SEA are not required.

4.4. Monitoring of the NDP Policies

- 4.5. Whilst Cranage Parish Council is committed to the delivery of the objectives held within the NDP, there may be circumstances where development will not come forward entirely as anticipated. CEC, as part of its monitoring of the Development Plan, including this NDP, monitor performance through a Monitoring Report produced annually. The CNDP will also be monitored through this process. Generally, the outcome of the monitoring process will inform whether specific intervention actions should be pursued in the CNDP. If these actions fail to address under performance, then other complementary plans and strategies should be reviewed.

5. Appendices

Appendix A: Responses from Statutory Consultees

Historic England



Neighbourhood Planning Team
Cheshire East Council
Westfields
Sandbach
Cheshire
CW11 1HZ

Direct Dial: 0161 242 1445

Our ref: PL00793446

3 July 2023

Dear Neighbourhood Planning

Cranage Neighbourhood Development Plan SEA Screening Report (June 2023)

We write in response to your e-mail of 29 June 2023, seeking a formal screening opinion from Historic England on the need to prepare a SEA of Cranage Neighbourhood Development Plan.

Historic England has produced a document that you might find helpful in providing guidance on the effective assessment of the historic environment in Strategic Environmental Assessments. This can be found at:
<<https://www.historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/sustainability-appraisal-and-strategic-environmental-assessment-advice-note-8/>>

For the purposes of this consultation, Historic England will confine the advice given to the question, "Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment?", in respect to our area of concern, cultural heritage.

In the context of the criteria set out in Schedule 1 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 [Annex II of SEA Directive], and on the basis of the information supplied, it is considered that the plan appears to propose no site allocations or policies that would have significant environmental effects upon the historic environment, and so Historic England concur with your conclusion that SEA is not required.

We would like to stress that this opinion is based on the information made available in the email dated 29 June 2023. To avoid any doubt, this decision does not preclude Historic England providing further advice on later stages of the SEA process, should this be required, nor objecting to specific proposals that may subsequently arise (either as a result of this consultation or in later versions of the plan/guidance), where we consider that these would have an adverse effect upon the historic environment. We note that the views of the other statutory consultation bodies should be taken into



SUITES 3.3 AND 3.4 CANADA HOUSE 3 CHEPSTOW STREET MANCHESTER M1 5FW
Telephone 0161 242 1416
HistoricEngland.org.uk



Historic England is subject to both the Freedom of Information Act (2000) and Environmental Information Regulations (2004). Any information held by the organisation can be requested for release under this legislation.

account before the overall decision on the need for SEA is made.

Historic England strongly advises that the conservation and archaeological staff of the Cheshire East Council and the Cheshire Archaeology Planning Advisory Service are closely involved in the plan's development. They are best placed to advise on: local historic environment issues and priorities, including access to data held in the HER (formerly SMR); how the policies or proposals can be tailored to minimise potential adverse impacts on the historic environment; the nature and design of any required mitigation measures; and opportunities for securing wider benefits for the future conservation and management of historic assets.

Thank you for consulting Historic England. We request that you please send us a copy of the determination as required by Reg 11 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.

Yours sincerely,

Pippa Brown
Historic Places Adviser
Pippa.Brown@historicengland.org.uk

cc:

Environment Agency

Natural England

Date: 02 August 2023
Our ref: 440838
Your ref: Cranage Neighbourhood Plan



Neighbourhood Planning
Cheshire East Council

Horbeam House
Crewe Business Park
Electra Way
Crewe
Cheshire
CW1 6GJ

BY EMAIL ONLY
neighbourhoods@cheshireeast.gov.uk

T 0300 060 3900

Dear Sir/Madam

Cranage Neighbourhood Plan - SEA Screening Opinion Consultation

Thank you for your consultation on the above dated and received by Natural England on 29 June 2023.

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.

Screening Request: Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

It is Natural England's advice, on the basis of the material supplied with the consultation, that significant effects on statutorily designated nature conservation sites or landscapes are unlikely.

The proposed neighbourhood plan is unlikely to significantly affect any Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ), Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection area (SPA), Ramsar wetland or sites in the process of becoming SACs or SPAs ('candidate SACs', 'possible SACs', 'potential SPAs') or a Ramsar wetland. The plan area is unlikely to have a significant effect on a National Park, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty or Heritage Coast, and is unlikely to impact upon the purposes for which these areas are designated or defined.

Guidance on the assessment of Neighbourhood Plans, in line with the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 is contained within the [Planning Practice Guidance](#). This identifies three triggers that may require the production of an SEA:

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

Natural England does not hold information on the location of significant populations of protected species, so is unable to advise whether this plan is likely to affect protected species to such an extent as to require an SEA. Further information is included in Natural England's [standing advice](#) on protected species.

Furthermore, Natural England does not routinely maintain locally specific data on all environmental assets. The plan may have environmental impacts on priority species and/or habitats, local wildlife sites, soils and best and most versatile agricultural land, or on local landscape character that may be sufficient to warrant an SEA. Information on ancient woodland, ancient and veteran trees is set out in

Natural England/Forestry Commission [standing advice](#).

We therefore recommend that advice is sought from your ecological, landscape and soils advisers, local record centre, recording society or wildlife body on the local soils, best and most versatile agricultural land, landscape, geodiversity and biodiversity receptors that may be affected by the plan before determining whether a SEA is necessary.

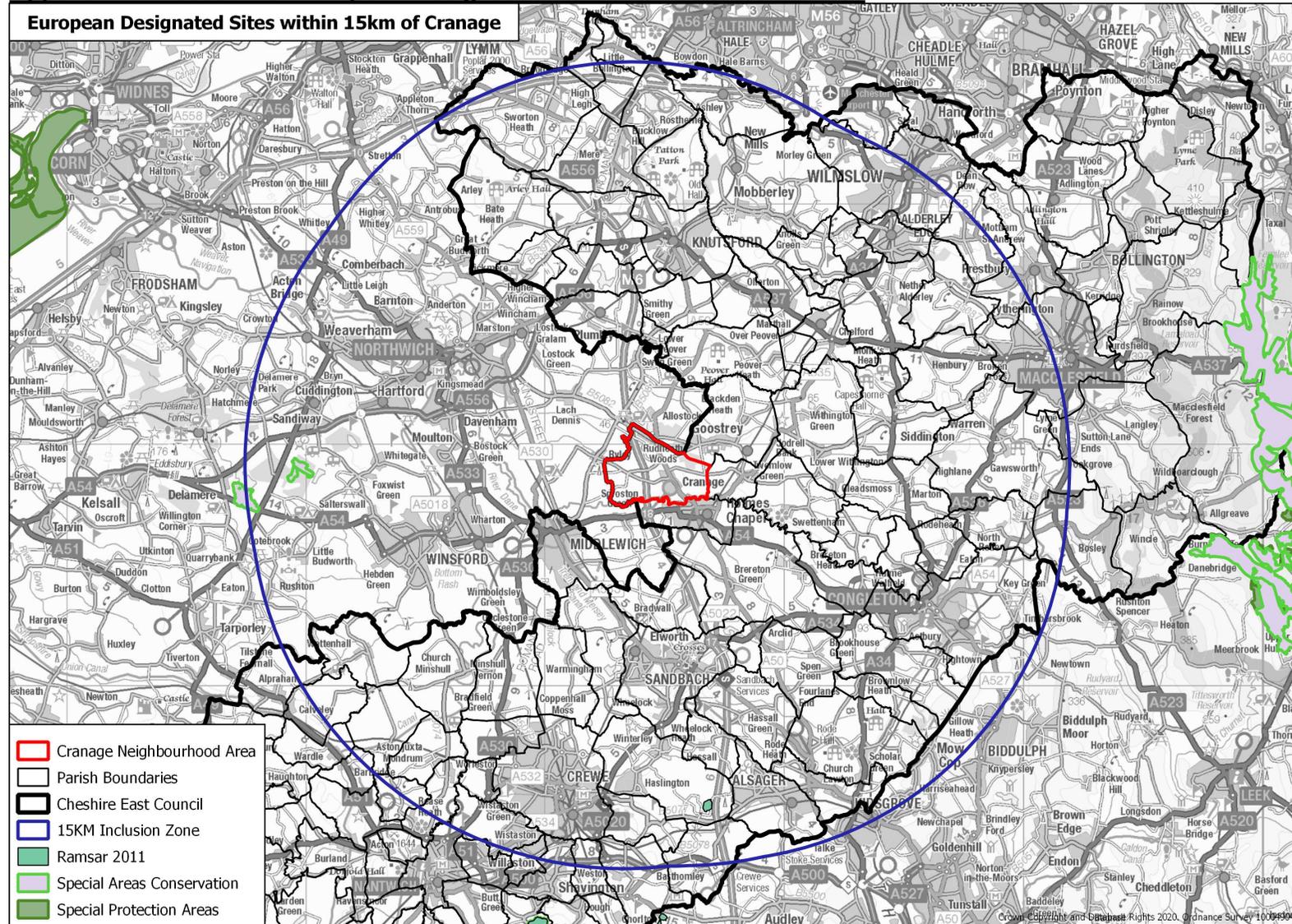
Natural England reserves the right to provide further advice on the environmental assessment of the plan. This includes any third party appeal against any screening decision you may make. If a SEA is required, Natural England must be consulted at the scoping and environmental report stages.

Please send any new consultations, or further information on this consultation to consultations@naturalengland.org.uk.

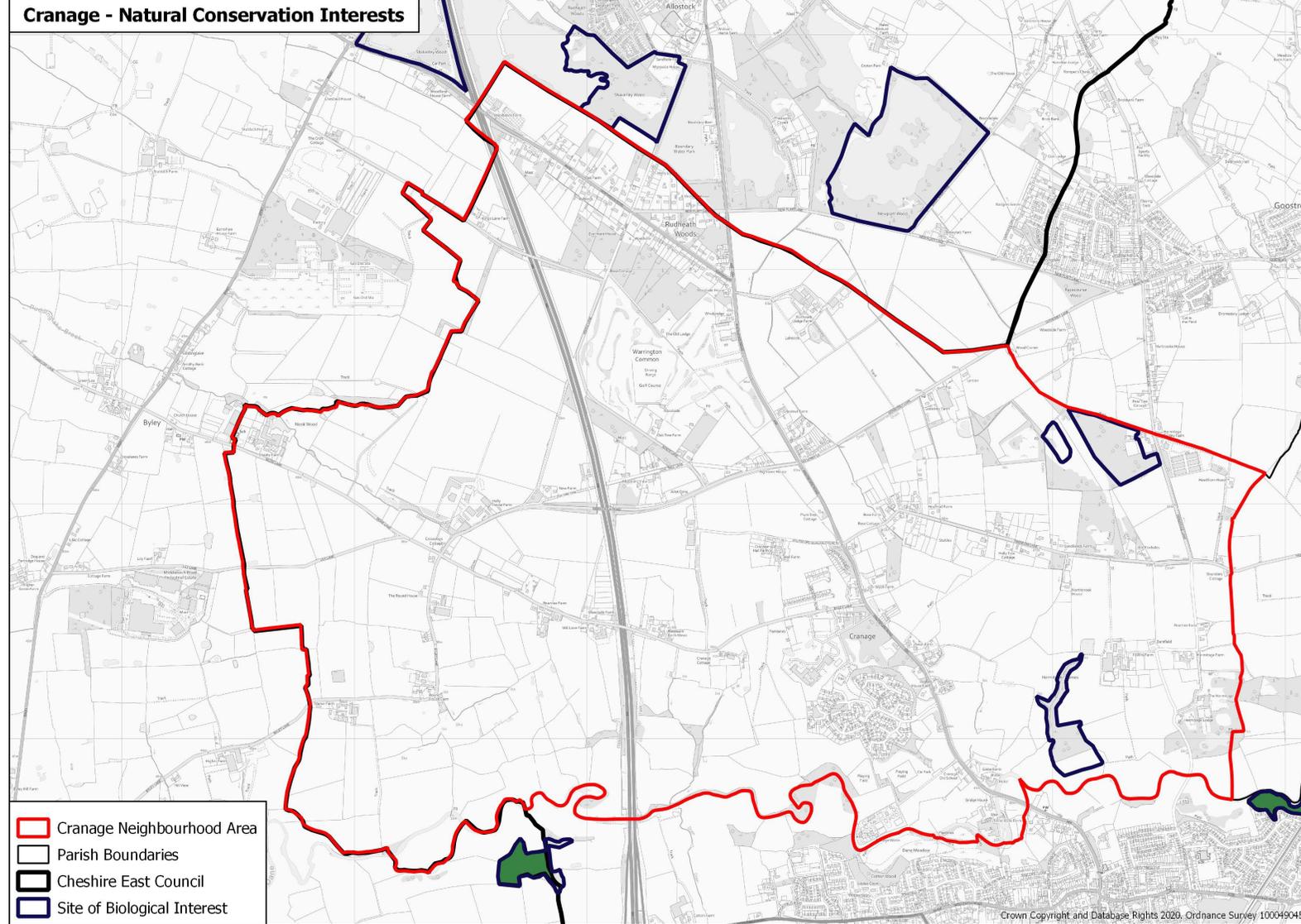
Yours faithfully

Sally Wintle
Consultations Team

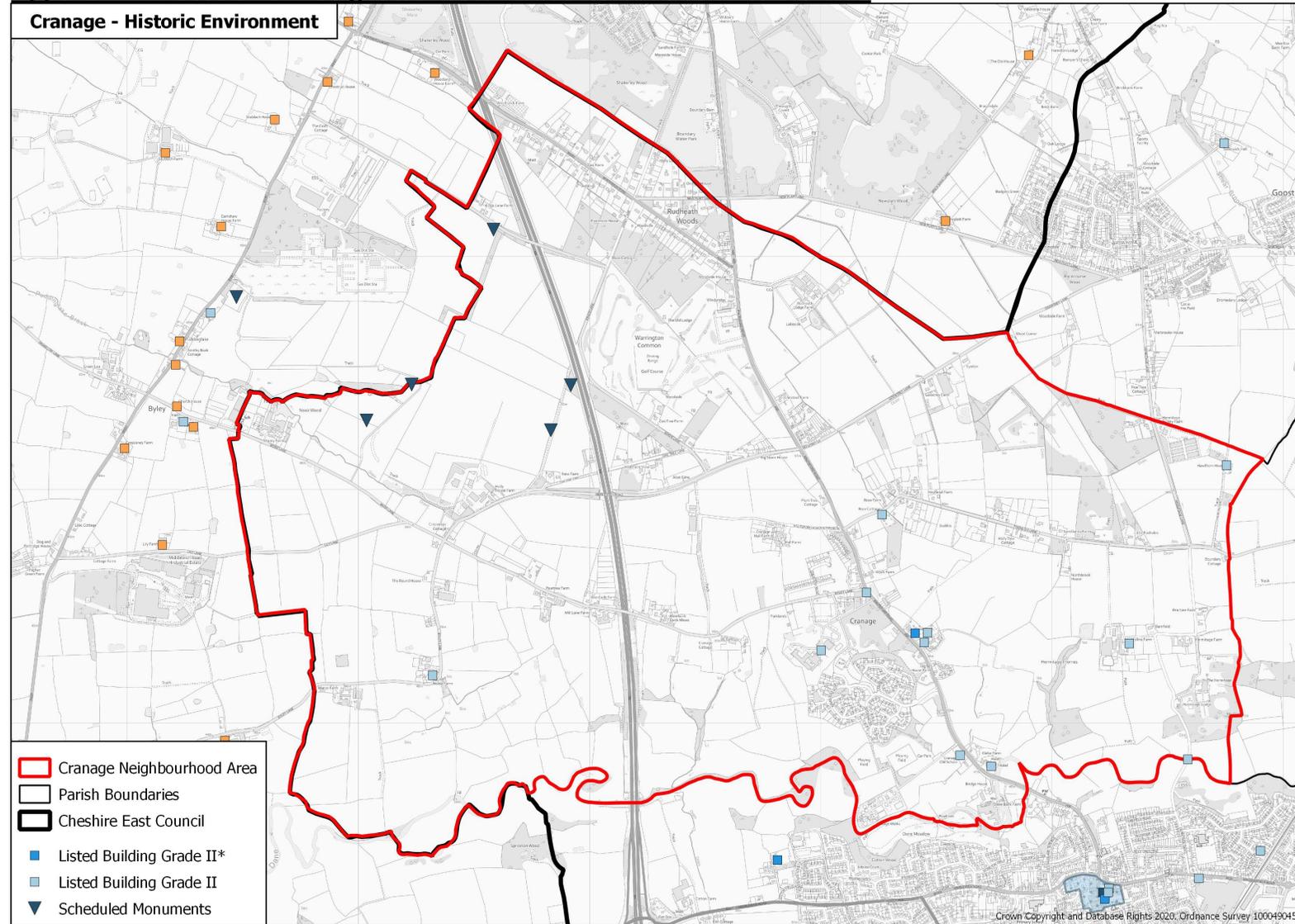
Appendix B: Location of European Designated Sites in Relation to the NDP



Appendix C: Location of Local Environmental Designations in Relation to the NDP



Appendix D: Location of Designated Historic Assets in Relation to the NDP



Appendix E: Location of Flood Risk Zones in Relation to the NDP

