



Bourne Parish Neighbourhood Plan

**Bourne Parish Neighbourhood Plan (BPNP) to 2036:
Pre-Submission Consultation Draft September 2025**

**Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) &
Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)
Screening Report**

September 2025

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Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) & Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening Report

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA); Sustainability Appraisal (SA) & Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)

- 1.1 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) ¹ is a systematic process used during the preparation of plans and policies and it aims to provide a high level of protection for the environment; it contributes to the integration of environmental considerations in plan preparation with a view to promoting sustainable development.
- 1.2 Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is a process that similarly investigates plans and policies, including consideration of socio-economic factors in the same way as environmental factors and to the same level of detail. SA incorporating SEA is a mandatory requirement for Local Plans in accordance with planning legislation² and paragraph 33 of the National Planning Policy Framework (revised December 2024 & updated February 2025)³. Government advises⁴ that an integrated approach is taken so that the SA process incorporates the requirements for SEA – and to the same level of detail.
- 1.3 There is no statutory requirement⁵ for Neighbourhood Plans to be subject to SA. However, a qualifying body must demonstrate how its plan will contribute to achieving sustainable development. In some limited circumstances, where a Neighbourhood Plan is likely to have significant environmental effects, it may require a SEA since the Localism Act 2011 requires neighbourhood plans to comply with EU legislation. This is determined through a SEA screening process by the responsible authority with regard to the SEA Directive and UK SEA Regulations – for this Neighbourhood Plan, the South Kesteven District Council (SKDC).
- 1.4 Plan-makers are also required to consider whether a Habitats Regulations⁶ Assessment (HRA) is required. The aim of the HRA process is to assess the potential effects arising from a plan against the nature conservation objectives of any site designated for its nature conservation importance. The HRA process has its own legislative drivers and requirements and, while the different processes can inform each other, it is important that the HRA remains distinguishable from the wider SA/SEA process.

¹ EU Directive 2001/42/EC

² Section 19(5) of the 2004 Act and Regulation 22(a) of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012

³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--> National Planning Policy Framework (2012, revised 2018, updated 2019, revised 2021, updated 2023, revised 2024, updated 2025)

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/strategic-environmental-assessment-and-sustainability-appraisal>

⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/strategic-environmental-assessment-and-sustainability-appraisal>

⁶ The Conservation of Habitats & Species Regulations 2010
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2010/490/contents/made>

- 1.5 It may be noted that under planning reform proposed through the Levelling Up & Regeneration Act 2023 (LURA)⁷ there were included proposed changes to environmental assessment requirements. A new system of environmental assessment – Environmental Outcomes Reports (EORs) – was proposed to replace the current processes of SEA and its associated project level environmental impact assessment (EIA). Between 17 March and 9 June 2023, these proposals⁸ were consulted upon.
- 1.6 The new Government published its Planning & Infrastructure Bill in March 2025⁹ and this aims to speed up and streamline the delivery of new homes and critical infrastructure. At the time of writing, it is at the report stage prior to 3rd reading in the House of Lords. The Bill does not include any mention of changes to environmental assessment requirements. The Bourne Parish Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared and will be consulted upon during the extant system and according to established procedures for SEA and HRA screening.
- 1.7 The Bourne Town Council has commissioned independent SA, SEA, HRA specialists Enfusion Ltd to undertake the SEA and HRA screening on behalf of the Council.

The adopted South Kesteven Local Plan (SKLP) to 2036 and Local Plan Review (SKLPR) to 2043

- 1.8 The Local Plan¹⁰ (adopted 2020) sets out planning policies for South Kesteven to guide future development in the Local Authority area during the period up to 2036. In accordance with legislative and policy requirements¹¹, the Council carried out a SA incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of its Local Plan.
- 1.9 South Kesteven District Council (SKDC) is undertaking a Local Plan Review to cover the period of 20 years up to 2043¹² to ensure that policies and proposals are up to date. An initial Draft Local Plan was subject to public consultation between February and April 2024 in accordance with Regulation 18 planning requirements. This draft plan comprised planning policies and potential locations for housing and employment development. The updating of the NPPF published in December 2024 included revision to the standard method for calculating housing need resulting in identified increased housing need for the South Kesteven District. Therefore, SKDC undertook further work focusing

⁷ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2023/55>

⁸ <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/environmental-outcomes-reports-a-new-approach-to-environmental-assessment/environmental-outcomes-report-a-new-approach-to-environmental-assessment#background-to-environmental-assessment>

⁹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-planning-and-infrastructure-bill/guide-to-the-planning-and-infrastructure-bill#part-2-planning>; <https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3946>

¹⁰ <https://www.southkesteven.gov.uk/planning-building-control/planning-policy-local-plans/south-kesteven-local-plan>

¹¹ Town & Country Planning Regulations (2011, 2012); National Planning Policy Framework (2012, revised 2024, updated 2025)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2>

¹²

on any changes to the site allocation policies and proposals arising from increased housing need, and published for Regulation 18 consultation July-August 2025.

- 1.10 SKDC aim to publish a pre-submission draft Local Plan for Regulation 19 consultation during January to February 2026. This will be submitted for independent examination in due course, with adaptation of the new Local Plan anticipated late 2027.
- 1.11 The preparation of the Local Plan Review has been supported by various evidence studies, including SA/SEA (February 2024 & Addendum July 2025) and HRA (February 2024 & Addendum July 2025) with reports¹³ accompanying the draft Local Plan on public consultation. Comments made on the SA/SEA and HRA have been taken into account at each stage of the two processes and the findings of the HRA have been incorporated into the SA/SEA in accordance with requirements.
- 1.12 A Neighbourhood Plan attains the same legal status as the Local Plan once it has been agreed at a referendum and is adopted or "made" (brought into legal force) by the local planning authority. At this point it becomes part of the statutory development plan. Applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise¹⁴.

This SEA & HRA Screening Report

- 1.13 This document provides a screening determination of the need to carry out an SEA and an HRA of the Bourne Parish Neighbourhood Plan to 2036 (BPNP Pre-Submission consultation draft September 2025). South Kesteven District Council, as the "Responsible Authority"¹⁵ under the SEA Regulations, and the "Competent Authority"¹⁶ under the HRA Regulations, is responsible for this screening process that will determine if the Neighbourhood Plan is likely to have any significant environmental effects and therefore, whether an SEA and an HRA is required. Independent specialists are undertaking the screening for Bourne Parish Council and on behalf of SKDC. It is the responsibility of the local planning authority (LPA), the SKDC, to ensure that all the regulations appropriate to the nature and scope of a NP submitted have been met.
- 1.14 This Screening Report is being sent to the environmental consultation bodies (Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England) for the statutory five weeks consultation period during autumn 2025. This screening report will accompany the pre-submission draft BPNP on its statutory minimum six weeks Regulation 14 consultation.

¹³ <https://www.southkesteven.gov.uk/local-plan-review-evidence-base>

¹⁴ PCPA 2004 section 38(6)

¹⁵ The organisation that adopts ("makes") the neighbourhood plan

¹⁶ The organisation that ensures that the plan will not have any likely significant effects on the integrity of the designated nature conservation sites

2.0 LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS & GUIDANCE; METHOD

Legislative Requirements

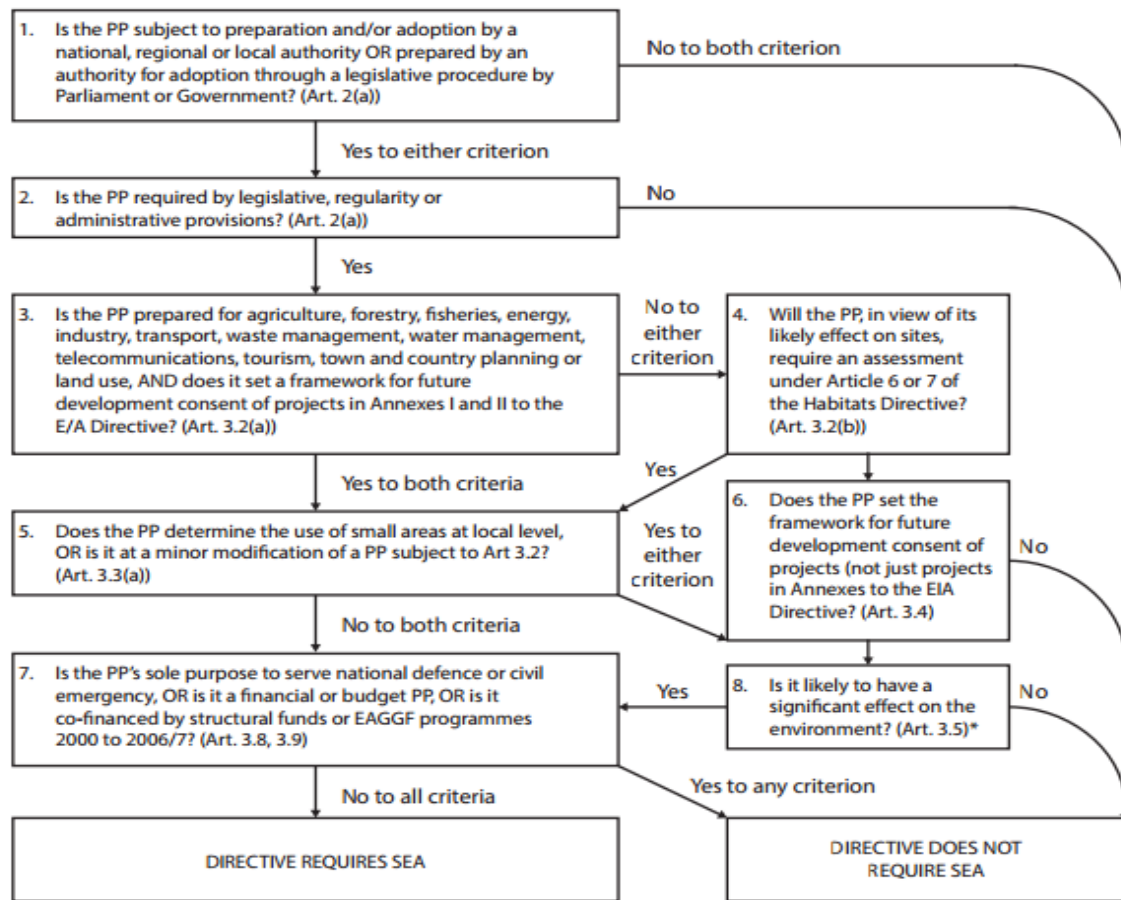
- 2.1 The Localism Act 2011 requires neighbourhood plans to comply with EU legislation. Regulation 5 of the SEA Regulations requires an environmental assessment of plans which:
- 1. are prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism, town and country planning or land use (Regulation 5, para. (2)(a), and which set the framework for future development consent of projects listed in Annex I or II to Council Directive 85/337/EEC (EIA Directive) on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment (Regulation 5, para. (2)(b)*
 - 2. in view of the likely effect on sites, have been determined to require an assessment pursuant to Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) (Regulation 5, para. (3)*
 - 3. set the framework for future development consent of projects¹⁷ (Regulation 5, para. (4)(b)*
 - 4. are determined to be likely to have significant environmental effects as determined under regulation 9(1) (Regulation 5, para. (4)(c)*
- 2.2 An environmental assessment need not be carried out for:
- a) plans which determine the use of a small area¹⁸ at local level (Regulation 5, para. (6)(a); or*
 - b) plans which are a minor modification¹⁹ to a plan or programme (Regulation 5, para. (6)(b) unless it has been determined under regulation 9(1) that the plan is likely to have significant environmental effects.*
- 2.3 UK Government guidance provides a flow diagram with questions/criteria for the SEA Directive and its application to the plan-making process as follows:

¹⁷ European Commission guidance states that plans and programmes which *set the framework for future development consent of projects* would normally contain 'criteria or conditions which guide the way a consenting authority decides an application for development consent'. *Development consent* is defined in the EIA Directive as "the decision of the competent authority or authorities which entitled the developer to proceed with the project" (Article 1(2) of the EIA Directive).

¹⁸ European Commission guidance suggests that *plans which determine the use of small areas at local level* might include "a building plan which, for a particular, limited area, outlines details of how buildings must be constructed, determining, for example, their height, width or design"

¹⁹ 'Minor modifications' should be considered in the context of the plan or programme which is being modified and of the likelihood of their having significant environmental effects. A modification may be of such small order that it is unlikely to have significant environmental effects.

Figure 2.1: Flow Diagram²⁰ for Determining if a Plan is likely to have Significant Environmental Effects



Note: The figure is intended as a guide to the criteria for application of the Directive to plans & programmes (PPs); it does not have legal status. Where a Neighbourhood Plan is likely to have a significant effect on the environment, a strategic environmental assessment (SEA) must be carried out and an Environmental Report (ER) prepared.

- 2.4 There is no legal requirement for a Neighbourhood Plan (NP)²¹ to have a Sustainability Appraisal as set out in section 19 of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Government advises that in some limited circumstances, where a Neighbourhood Plan is likely to have significant environmental effects, it may require a Strategic Environmental Assessment. In order to decide whether a draft NP might have significant environmental effects, it must be screened at an early stage according to the requirements set out in regulation 9 of the SEA Regulations. This includes a requirement to consult with the SEA consultation bodies (in England - Environment Agency, Historic England, Natural England); each body can advise on particular topics relevant to its specific area of expertise and responsibility.

²⁰ Based on ODPN 2005 - 'A Practical Guide to the SEA Directive' 2005

²¹ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/strategic-environmental-assessment-and-sustainability-appraisal#neighbourhood-plan-require-sustainability-appraisal>

Guidance on SA/SEA & HRA/AA

- 2.5 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) have advised that a Neighbourhood Plan:
- would need SEA “...in limited circumstances...”
 - should be screened early
 - screening should consult with the consultation bodies
 - if ‘screened out’, should have a ‘statement of reasons’ prepared
- 2.6 Whether a Neighbourhood Plan proposal requires a SEA, and (if so) the level of detail needed, will depend on what is proposed. An SEA may be required, for example, where:
- a neighbourhood plan allocates sites for development
 - the neighbourhood area contains sensitive natural or heritage assets that may be affected by the proposals in the plan
 - the neighbourhood plan is likely to have significant environmental effects that have not already been considered and dealt with through a sustainability appraisal of the Local Plan.
- 2.7 Government planning guidance further advises that before deciding whether significant environmental effects are likely, the local planning authority should take into account the criteria specified in Schedule 1²² to the SEA Regulations (2004) and consult the statutory environmental consultation bodies. Schedule 1 sets out the criteria for determining likely significant effects on the environment taking into account the characteristics of plans and the characteristics of the effects and the area likely to be affected.
- 2.8 The qualifying body (ie Bourne Parish Council for the BPNP to 2036) is required to provide the following – to demonstrate that the basic condition²³ in the planning legislation has been met:
- “a statement of reasons for a determination... that the proposal is unlikely to have significant environmental effects; or
 - An environmental report”
- 2.9 Under the Town & Country Planning Act (1990 as amended), the District Council has a statutory duty to assist communities in the preparation of NDPs. There is no requirement to give financial assistance. A local planning authority must give such advice or assistance to qualifying bodies that they consider appropriate for the purpose of preparing NDPs.

²² <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2004/1633/schedule/1/made>

²³ A Neighbourhood Plan should not breach, and must be compatible with, European Union obligations in order for it to be legally compliant.

- 2.10 Planning practice guidance²⁴ also provides advice on HRA screening and the subsequent appropriate assessment (AA) stage of the process for neighbourhood planning. An appropriate assessment for a more strategic plan, such as the Local Plan, can consider the impacts on sites and confirm the suitability or likely success of mitigation measures for associated non-strategic policies and projects. An individual assessment of non-strategic policies and projects may not be necessary in some limited cases where the strategic appropriate assessment is sufficiently robust. This needs to contain conclusions capable of removing all reasonable scientific doubt on the impacts of non-strategic policies, such as in neighbourhood plans.

Method

- 2.11 In order to be able to decide whether a SEA will be required, the Council needs to know about the policies and proposals in the Neighbourhood Plan, and in particular, as follows:
- how they might affect the environment, community, or economy
 - whether they propose a higher level of development than is already identified in SKLP planning policies
 - whether any of the proposals are likely to affect a “sensitive area”, such as a Site of special Scientific Interest (SSSI), protected heritage, or designated European Site for nature conservation (Special Area of Conservation SAC, Special Protection Area SPA)
 - whether implementation of policies in the plan might lead to new development in the future
 - Whether the cumulative impact of the policies and proposals when assessed together may give rise to a likely significant effect, for example, several relatively small housing proposals may have cumulative significant effects on a nearby important wildlife habitat
- 2.12 Available information, for example, from Defra Magic maps, Environment Agency flood risk maps, the Council's evidence base for the SKDC Local Plan, and the evidence base for the BPNP, together with professional judgment, was used to identify the sensitivity of the Bourne Parish NP area environment and whether significant effects are likely that have not been previously assessed through SA/SEA, such that an SEA would be required, and whether an HRA/Appropriate Assessment is necessary.

²⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/appropriate-assessment>

3.0 THE BOURNE PARISH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2036 (BPNP)

Context

- 3.1 The Bourne Town Council (BTC)²⁵ is the qualifying body designated for the purpose of preparing the BPNP and who have approved the draft plan for submission to SKDC to ensure that all appropriate regulations have been met. The Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (NPSG, composed of Town Councillors and members of the local community), on behalf of the BTC has progressed the draft BPNP. The historic market town and civic parish of Bourne is located in Lincolnshire about 16 miles north of Peterborough and with Lincoln and Sleaford to the north. Most of the Parish population live in the town, with small rural settlements at Cawthorpe, Dyke and Twenty, and the eastern part of the area extends out into the Fens, an expansive, flat, open and low-lying wetland of remoteness. The Bourne Parish was formally designated²⁶ as a Neighbourhood Area by the South Kesteven District Council²⁷ on 23 June 2015 and the boundary is shown in the figure 3.1 on the following page.
- 3.2 The BPNP must be in general conformity with the strategic policies set out in the South Kesteven Local Plan SKLP, 2036²⁸ (adopted 2020). The adopted SKLP recognises the historically important market town of Bourne that is the third largest settlement in South Kesteven, located on the A15 Lincoln to Peterborough route.
- 3.3 The development strategy for Bourne seeks to enable choice in the local market and accommodate both the local community's and the Neighbourhood Plan Group's desire to plan for the growth of their town. This strategy also recognises recent levels of development that the town has seen, including the development of Elsea Park and other sites. One site (BRN1-H1), which will deliver approximately 107 new homes was allocated in Bourne and has now been developed. It is expected that any additional sites will be allocated by the Neighbourhood Plan body who will work in partnership with the Council to identify suitable, sustainable locations for a minimum of 100 additional new homes over the plan period.
- 3.4 The BPNP must also be in general conformity with the Lincolnshire Minerals & Waste Local Plan up to 2031 (Core Strategy & Development Management Policies²⁹ adopted 2016). Policy W3 Spatial Strategy for New Waste Facilities allows for proposals for new, including extensions to existing, waste facilities to

²⁵ <https://bourne.parish.lincolnshire.gov.uk/>

²⁶ Localism Act 2011

²⁷ <https://www.southkesteven.gov.uk/planning-building-control/planning-policy-local-plans/bourne>

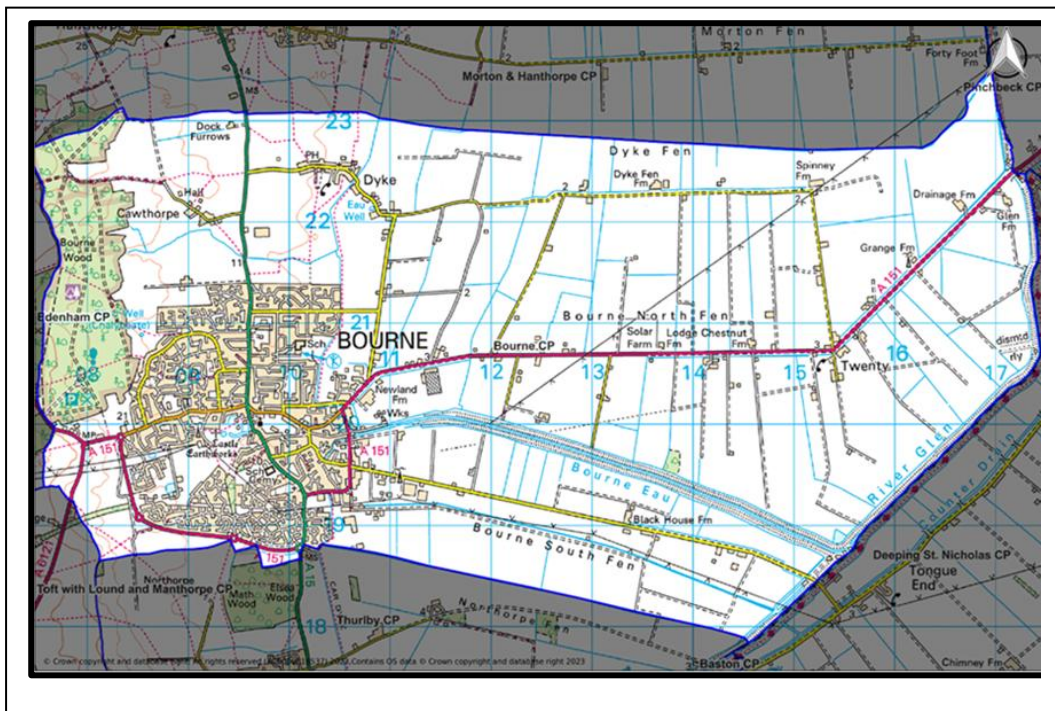
²⁸ <https://www.southkesteven.gov.uk/planning-building-control/planning-policy-local-plans/south-kesteven-local-plan>

²⁹ <https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/directory-record/61697/minerals-and-waste-local-plan-core-strategy-and-development-management-policies>

be permitted subject to the criteria of Policy W4 in a range of settlements, and this includes Bourne.

- 3.5 This SEA & HRA screening has been carried out on the pre-submission draft BPNP dated September 2025. This Report sets out the screening assessments and decisions to demonstrate that due processes have been followed in line with regulatory requirements.

Figure 3.1: Boundary for the Area Designation of the Bourne Parish Neighbourhood Area



The Bourne Parish Neighbourhood Plan 2043 (Pre-Submission Consultation Draft September 2025)

- 3.7 The Vision of the Bourne Parish Neighbourhood Plan is:

“By 2036 Bourne will be a more attractive, sustainable, vibrant and prosperous market town and parish with a safe, healthy environment that is more resilient to climate change and where provision has been made to better cater for the infrastructure needs of our community, from the very young to the very old; where the positive character of our heritage, our landscape and our natural environment has been improved; where there is a thriving economy; where housing meets the needs of the local community; where shopping and services within the town centre are more varied; where the visitor experience has been enhanced; and where there are greater opportunities for sustainable travel.”

3.8 The BPNP Vision is accompanied by objectives that seek to address specific aspects of the Vision, as follows:

- *To protect our most important green assets whilst improving and increasing the provision of open space and green infrastructure links*
- *To conserve and enhance biodiversity*
- *To support the retention and further provision of community facilities and services in Bourne to meet the needs of the population*
- *To conserve and, where possible, enhance Bourne's distinctive historic character as a market town*
- *To conserve and, where possible, enhance key landscape and townscape features and important views*
- *To support a diverse range of employment opportunities in Bourne*
- *To support uses and proposals that enhance the economic vitality and viability of Bourne town centre*
- *To support the visitor economy while protecting the unique culture, environment and heritage of Bourne*
- *To plan for a minimum of 100 new homes in sustainable locations which are well connected to local services and facilities*
- *To provide for a mix of house types, sizes and tenures which reflect the housing needs of Bourne*
- *To encourage walking, cycling and the use of public transport as alternatives to the car*
- *To promote development that contributes positively to its neighbourhood while embracing high quality design and energy efficiency*

Proposed policies and community aspirations are aligned against relevant BPNP Objectives.

3.9 The BPNP 2036 comprises fifteen sections with the initial three sections providing an introduction and context. Responsibility, process, evidence and community engagement and consultation is introduced in Section 1. The Vision & Objectives are set out in Section 2 and an introduction to the planning Policies and Proposals is presented in Section 3.

3.10 Sections 4-15 detail planning policies to be applied within the parish of Bourne – set out by themes: Green Infrastructure (Policies BP1-6); Character Areas (Policy BP7); Housing Design & Materials (Policy BP8); Historic Environment (policies BP9-10); Local Heritage Assets (Policy BP11); Bourne Town Centre (Policies BP12-14); Visitor Economy (Policy BP15); Community Facilities & Services (Policies BP16-18); Sustainable Transport (Policies BP19-22); Town Settlement Boundary (Policy BP23); Meeting Housing Needs (Policies BP24-25); and Delivering Economic Prosperity (Policies BP26-28). The proposed policies are presented with explanatory text and are aligned with aims, justification and supporting evidence. The draft BPNP is supported by Appendices A-H providing further information.

4.0 SEA SCREENING ASSESSMENT

4.1 South Kesteven District Council, as the responsible authority, considers that the Bourne Parish Neighbourhood Plan (BPNP) to 2036 is within the scope of the SEA Regulations since it is a plan that:

- is subject to preparation or adoption by an authority at national, regional or local level (Regulation 2)
- is prepared for town and country planning or land use and it is a plan that sets the framework for future development consent of projects generally (Regulation 5, para. 4)
- will apply to a wider area other than a small area at local level and is not a minor modification to an existing plan or programme (Regulation 5, para. 6).

A determination under Regulation 9 is therefore required as to whether the BPNP 2043 is likely to have significant effects on the environment.

4.2 The screening requirements set out in Regulation 9 and Schedule 1 of the SEA Regulations include two sets of characteristics for determining the likely significance of effects on the environment:

- the characteristics of the plan itself and
- the characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected by the plan

Therefore, this screening assessment is structured in the following table according to the criteria specified in Schedule 1 of the Regulations:

Table 4.1: Screening Assessment of the draft BPNP to 2036 (Pre-Submission Draft September 2025)

Criteria (Schedule 1 SEA Regulations)	Are significant environmental effects likely? Yes/ No	
	Justification and evidence	
1.The characteristics of plans, having regard, in particular, to:		
(a) the degree to which the plan sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating	Yes	The NP does propose allocation of sites for development projects & thus, the plan does set a framework for new development projects. The BPNP proposes an allocation for housing development – Policy BP24 Land South of Mill Drove and West of Meadow Drove. The adopted SKLP to 2036 includes 2 allocations for employment uses. BPNP Policies BP26 & BP27 set out criteria to be applied in

Criteria (Schedule 1 SEA Regulations)	Are significant environmental effects likely? Yes/ No Justification and evidence
conditions or by allocating resources	respect of planning applications for the development of the allocated land. The BPNP seeks to influence new development through requirements for housing mix and affordability (Policy BP25); settlement boundary (Policy BP23); working from home (Policy BP28); conserving & enhancing the natural environment (Policies BP1-BP7); protecting the historic environment (Policies BP9-BP11); guiding building & environmental design (Policies BP8, BP12-BP14); facilities & services (Policies BP15- BP18); and promoting sustainable transport (Policies BP19-BP21). Chapter 14 of the BPNP explains the approach to meeting housing needs and with reference to appropriate evidence, including consideration of site options and as reported in the Housing Sites Assessment Paper³⁰ and wide community/stakeholder engagement. The chapter explains how housing proposals that meet identified need & are in accordance with other relevant policies in the NP & the adopted SKLP to 2036 will be accepted. The BPNP also prudently makes provision for some of the additional housing requirement that will be needed during the period up to 2043 and as evidenced through the emerging new Local Plan SKLPR (Regulation 19 consultation pre-submission draft Plan anticipated early 2026) – and, therefore, at a well developed stage of plan-making. Evidence & consultation indicated that the BPNP should allocate a single site that would offer opportunity for greater community benefits. Policy BP24 requires a masterplan and design code for the whole site to be detailed collaboratively. Further criteria in the policy provide specific mitigation measures to avoid/minimise impacts on environmental factors. Policy BP25 requires a mix of dwelling sizes and tenures, together with requirements for provision of affordable housing. The preparation of the adopted South Kesteven Local Plan to 2036 was informed by an SA/SEA (June 2018)³¹ (and HRA/AA) that was carried out in accordance with statutory requirements, planning guidance, and good practice. The SA/SEA investigated potential locations for development in the Bourne area – identifying constraints & opportunities – as detailed in the SA Technical Annex. At that time, limited housing allocations were required in Bourne for the Plan period and the site Land South of Mill Drove & West of Meadow Drove was not proposed for allocation.

³⁰ <https://www.bourneparishneighbourhoodplan.org.uk/documents/>

³¹ <https://www.southkesteven.gov.uk/planning-building-control/planning-policy-local-plans/south-kesteven-local-plan>

Criteria (Schedule 1 SEA Regulations)	Are significant environmental effects likely? Yes/ No Justification and evidence
	The SKLP to 2036 states that the arrangement for housing for Bourne “is based on the understanding that the Neighbourhood Plan will make sufficient, suitable and sustainable allocations to meet Bourne’s housing requirement. Should the Neighbourhood Plan not do this within the first five years of the Local Plan being adopted, the Local Plan will make the required allocations through its first review.” The SKLP to 2036 allocates BRN1-H1 Manning Road (107 dwellings). The ongoing SKLP Review to 2043 (Regulation 18 July 2025) addresses the changed housing needs requirement and investigated further site options to meet with the increased housing need. Some proposed allocations from the Draft new Local Plan have been expanded in size, some indicative site densities have increased, and there are some additional proposed allocations. All site options and proposals were subject to SA/SEA and published for consultation (July 2025)³². The proposed site allocations for Bourne to meet with increased housing needs comprise: SKPR-53 Land at Mill Drove (units increased from 285 to 441); SKPR83 Land North of Mill Drove (units increased from 172 to 326); and new site SKPR7 Land to South West of Raymond May Way (indicative units 270). The proposed site allocation in the BPNP Policy BP24 Land South of Mill Drove & West of Meadow Drove equates to the proposed allocation SKPR-53 in the SKLP Review to 2043 – and this has been subject to SA/SEA and formal consultation with the public and statutory environmental bodies. A key objective of the BPNP is to support the provision of employment opportunities & the area is the third largest employment centre in the SKDC area. Sites for employment uses are allocated in the adopted SKLP to 2036 and were subject to SA/SEA during the preparation of the Plan. Employment sites were not considered (except as mixed-use) during the focused Regulation 18 consultation July-August 2025 for the SKLP Review to 2043. Policy BP26 Land South of Spalding Road & BP27 Land North of Bourne Eau & East of Car Dyke in the draft BPNP set out criteria to be applied in respect of planning applications for their development.

³² <https://www.southkesteven.gov.uk/localplanreview>

Criteria (Schedule 1 SEA Regulations)	Are significant environmental effects likely? Yes/ No Justification and evidence	
		BPNP Policies (BP19-BP20) support development that would maintain or enhance public transport, enhance the role of Bourne bus station, and prioritise walking, cycling & public transport. BPNP Policies BP1-BP4 protect Local Green Spaces, Important Open Spaces & GI corridors; BP5-BP6 protects & enhances landscape & biodiversity; BP7 protects Character Areas BPNP Policies BP9 & BP11 protect the Bourne Conservation Area & Local Heritage Assets. BPNP Policy BP8 sets out the matters that will be used to guide the acceptability of planning applications with regard to locally appropriate design as set out in the Design & Materials Guidance Appendix. The BPNP does seek to influence the framework for development projects and other activities; and there could be the potential for environmental effects. The BPNP area includes nationally protected historic environmental assets (Listed Buildings), Scheduled Monuments, & locally protected (Bourne Conservation Area). Overall, the extent of such influence from the BPNP is limited as it is very localised; however, there are environmental sensitivities. The proposed site allocations for housing and employment have been previously subject to SA/SEA as part of the SKLP plan-making process for the adopted SKLP to 2036 and the SKLP Review to 2043.
(b) the degree to which the plan influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy	No	The BPNP is prepared by the local community to influence development at the parish level. It does not strongly influence strategic plans higher up in the spatial planning hierarchy, although the District Council does need to consider the proposals in the NP during preparation of the Local Plan.
(c) the relevance of the plan for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development	No	The BPNP is a spatial/land-use plan that seeks to promote the objectives of sustainable development. It is not specifically relevant as a plan for integrating environmental considerations. Any development proposed must be in accordance with the environmental protection policies in the adopted SKLP and the NPPF.
(d) environmental problems relevant to the plan	No	There are no specific environmental problems relevant to this plan that have not been identified and assessed through the higher-level Local Plan and its accompanying SA/SEA.

Criteria (Schedule 1 SEA Regulations)	Are significant environmental effects likely? Yes/ No Justification and evidence	
(e) 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).	No	The BPNP is not relevant as a plan for implementing community legislation.
2.Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to:		
(a) the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects	No	This has been tested through SA/SEA at the Local Plan level & with strong mitigation measures through LP policies, the SA/SEA concluded that there will be no significant residual negative environmental effects. The BPNP proposes allocation of sites for development projects and these have been previously subject to SA/SEA.
(b) the cumulative nature of the effects	No	As above in 2(a)
(c) the transboundary nature of the effects	No	No significant transboundary effects with other EU countries are likely from the proposals.
(d) the risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents)	No	No significant negative environmental effects are considered likely to risk human health or the environment.
(e) the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected);	No	The BPNP proposes allocation of sites for development projects that have been assessed and are considered to be sustainable in line with SA/SEA objectives for the plan area and its scope/sphere of influence. The geographical size of the plan area is comparatively small, with a population of 17,981 (ONS 2021), mostly living in the town. Therefore, no likely significant adverse effects.
(f) the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to— (i) special natural characteristics or cultural heritage; (ii) exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values; or (iii) intensive land-use;	No	As above. No likely significant negative effects on locally important characteristics – the BPNP proposes allocation of one site for development projects but this has been subject to SA/SEA previously and found to be sustainable with no likely significant negative effects. The BPNP has identified locally important natural characteristics & cultural heritage that are important to residents. Locally important green spaces that are of local value formal designation as Local Green Spaces (LGSs) listed in BPNP Policy BP1, and Important Open Space is addressed through BPNP Policy BP2. With regard to exceedances of environmental quality standards, the BPNP area is not within an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA).³³

³³ <https://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/aqma/maps/>

Criteria (Schedule 1 SEA Regulations)	Are significant environmental effects likely? Yes/ No Justification and evidence	
		The watercourses through and around the BPNP area, especially to the east, are within Flood Zones 2&3 ³⁴ .
(g) the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.	No	There are no National Parks or nationally designated Landscapes in the vicinity of South Kesteven. Locally important landscape is protected by SKLP policies such as EN1 Landscape Character and BPNP Policy BP5 Landscape & Biodiversity Enhancement. In the Bourne area, land to the north, west and south-west is a mixture of Grade 3 and land classified as 'other', whilst land to the east and south-east land is Grade 2 (BMV land). Best quality agricultural land is protected through location of sites for development and other SKLP policies, such as RE1 Renewable Energy Generation, and Policies E7 & E9. There are two national Scheduled Monuments: Bourne Castle, located in the centre of Bourne, and Car Dyke, located to the north-east of Bourne, to the south of Dyke. There are approximately 63 listed buildings in Bourne, as well as clusters in Dyke and Cawthorpe to the north. The centre of the town is designated a Conservation Area. Historic assets and their settings are protected by SKLP Policy EN6 Historic Environment and BPNP Policies BP9-BP11. There are no Special Protection Areas (SPAs) or Ramsar sites within or nearby to the Bourne Parish Neighbourhood Plan boundary³⁵. The nearest internationally protected Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)³⁶ are the Grimsthorpe SAC some 4.5 km to the west of the town & the Baston Fen SAC some 3km to the south. The SA (& HRA) of the adopted SKLP to 2036 reported that the development locations in Bourne are not within the associated SSSI Impact Risk Zones for the types of development & therefore, unlikely to lead to significant effects on these protected sites. The southern part of the town (The Austerby) is located within the Math & Elsea Wood SSSI Impact Risk Zone for housing developments. The HRA (2018) of the adopted SKLP to 2036 concluded that <i>"the policies within the South Kesteven Local Plan are not likely to have any significant effects on any Natura 2000 site. There is, therefore, no requirement to proceed to the next stage of an Appropriate Assessment."</i>

³⁴ <https://flood-map-for-planning.service.gov.uk/map>

³⁵ <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.html>

³⁶ <https://sac.incc.gov.uk/site/UK0012845>

Criteria (Schedule 1 SEA Regulations)	Are significant environmental effects likely? Yes/ No Justification and evidence
	The HRA (July 2025) for the SKLP Review investigated three Habitats Sites relevant to the Bourne Parish NP – Grimsthorpe SAC (with regard to air quality), Baston Fen SAC (with regard to water quantity, level & flow) and Barnack Hills & Holes SAC (with regard to air quality). The HRA has concluded that the SKLP can be screened out of causing any likely significant effects with regard to hydrological changes or air quality. SKLP Policy EN2 Biodiversity & Geodiversity protects Habitats sites & ensures that there is embedded policy mitigation in place. Bourne is situated on the western limit of the Fenland floodplain with much of the eastern extent of the area in Flood Zones 2 or 3. The water environment and flood risk management is covered through SKLP Policy EN5. The SK Local Plan to 2036 was adopted in 2020; it was subject to iterative SA/SEA and HRA that independent examination found to be sound. Therefore, the approach & policies in the BPNP refer to Policies in the Local Plan that have been previously subject to SA/SEA (and HRA), found sound, and adopted. The emerging new SK Local Plan to 2043 with increased housing needs has been subject to SA/SEA and HRA – with Regulation 19 pre-submission draft plan anticipated for early 2026. It is considered that the SKLP SA/SEAs (& HRA/AAs) remain valid & that there is no new material or relevant information that should be considered.

5.0 SEA SCREENING DECISION

- 5.1 Regulation 9 of the SEA Regulations requires that the responsible authority shall determine whether or not a plan is likely to have significant environmental effects. The responsible authority shall:
- (a) take into account the criteria specified in Schedule 1 to these Regulations, and
 - (b) consult the consultation bodies
- 5.2 Where the responsible authority determines that the plan is unlikely to have significant environmental effects (and, accordingly, does not require an environmental assessment), it shall prepare a statement of its reasons for the determination.
- 5.3 It is considered that the draft Bourne Parish Neighbourhood Plan (BPNP to 2036, September 2025) could have significant environmental effects because it allocates a site for new development. However, this site has been previously subject to SA/SEA (and HRA) that has found the proposals to be sustainable and without likely significant negative effects on the environment. Therefore, the draft BPNP does not require a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). This decision is made for the following key reasons:
- The likely significant effects on the environment in the NP area were identified at an early stage of plan development during initial investigations for strategic options for the Local Plan – all subject to SA incorporating SEA. Mitigation measures for negative effects have been embedded in the Local Plan to 2036(adopted 2020). Further mitigation measures are provided through other SK Local Plan Policies such as EN2 and EN6 - ensuring that there will be no residual significant negative effects. The BPNP does propose allocation of one site for housing development but this has been previously subject to SA/SEA (and HRA) through the Local Plan process.
 - There will be no significant negative effects on the nationally designated and locally important environmental and cultural heritage assets and settings of the town and rural area.
 - Likely significant effects have been previously assessed through SA incorporating SEA and therefore, further SEA of the BPNP is not required.
 - There will not be any adverse effects on the integrity of Habitats sites designated for nature conservation due to the limited size and extent of any likely development in Bourne and the distance from and/or absence of identified environmental pathways to any designated sites.

6.0 HABITATS REGULATIONS ASSESSMENT (HRA) SCREENING

- 6.1 There are no Special Protection Areas (SPAs) or Ramsar sites within or nearby to the Bourne Parish Neighbourhood Plan boundary³⁷. The nearest internationally protected Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)³⁸ are the Grimsthorpe SAC some 4.5 km to the west of the town and the Baston Fen SAC some 3km to the south. The Barnack Hills and Holes SAC to the south of Bourne and some 1.5 km outside the SKDC boundary are also considered.
- 6.2 The Grimsthorpe SAC is a 0.35 hectare site situated amongst an area of ancient parkland. SAC interest is provided by several disused stone quarries which were mined by pickaxe which created a unique substrate supporting rich limestone flora and important orchid sites, and is the most northerly outpost for early gentian *Gentianella anglica*. The 2014 Site Improvement Plan lists environmental vulnerability air pollution from risk of atmospheric nitrogen deposition.
- 6.3 The Baston Fen SAC comprises long strips of permanent pasture which are subject to regular winter flooding, interspersed with a series of old flooded borrow-pits with associated swamp and fen plant communities. Amongst the variety of fish which have been recorded from the site is the spine loach *Cobitis taenia*, significant populations of which occur in the Counter Drain and, to a lesser extent, in the River Glen. The 2014 Site Improvement Plan lists environmental vulnerabilities from siltation and from changes in species distributions.
- 6.4 The HRA of the adopted SKLP to 2036 reported that the development locations in Bourne are not within the associated SSSI Impact Risk Zones for the types of development and therefore, unlikely to lead to significant effects on these protected sites. The southern part of the town (The Austerby) is located within the Math & Elsea Wood SSSI Impact Risk Zone for housing developments. The HRA (2018) of the adopted SKLP to 2036 concluded that *"the policies within the South Kesteven Local Plan are not likely to have any significant effects on any Natura 2000 site. There is, therefore, no requirement to proceed to the next stage of an Appropriate Assessment."*
- 6.5 The HRA (July 2025) for the SKLP Review investigated Habitats Sites relevant to the Bourne Parish NP – Grimsthorpe SAC (with regard to air quality), Baston Fen SAC (with regard to water quantity, level & flow) and Barnack Hills & Holes SAC (with regard to air quality).
- 6.6 The Barnack Hills and Holes SAC is an area of Jurassic Limestone grassland which has developed on the site of a disused mineral working/quarry. The grassland is of a type, characteristic to eastern England and is now scarce in

³⁷ <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.html>

³⁸ <https://sac.incc.gov.uk/site/UK0012845>

Britain as a result of reclamation for agriculture. South Kesteven District lies approximately 1.7km north of the SAC, which is situated south-west of the small village of Barnack near Stamford. Therefore, it falls within the core recreational catchment recommended by Natural England for the SAC of 8km (as identified in the Peterborough Local Plan and its HRA work) and it is reasonable to assume that South Kesteven residents, particularly those in the southern part of the district, use the SAC for recreational purposes.

- 6.7 The HRA of the SKLPR reported that the semi-natural dry grassland and scrubland facies, qualifying feature of the SAC, are sensitive to recreational pressure through a variety of pathways, such as direct trampling damage to individual plants, soil compaction (resulting in disturbance to a wide range of soil and hydrological processes) and nutrient enrichment from dog faeces.
- 6.8 The HRA has concluded that the SKLP Review can be screened out of causing any likely significant effects with regard to hydrological changes or air quality. SKLP Policy EN2 Biodiversity & Geodiversity protects Habitats sites & ensures that there is embedded policy mitigation in place.
- 6.9 In consideration of the small geographical area of the BPNP, its distance from Habitats sites, together with the conclusions of the HRA of the SKLP to 2036 and the HRA of the emerging SKLP to 2043, this HRA screening considers that the Bourne Parish NP to 2036 is not likely to have significant effects on European designated sites, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects. The implications of effects from planned development on the integrity of Habitats sites has been previously tested through HRA of the Local Plan 2036 (adopted 2020) and the HRA of the new Local Plan to 2043 (Regulation 19 pre-submission draft anticipated early 2026). The HRA of the Local Plan remains valid and there is no new material and relevant information that should be considered.

7.0 STATUTORY SCREENING CONSULTATION & OVERALL CONCLUSION

- 7.1 This Screening Report is being sent to the statutory environmental bodies (Environment Agency, Historic England, Natural England) for the formal five weeks consultation during autumn 2025 to demonstrate that due processes have been undertaken to screen the draft Bourne Parish Neighbourhood Plan to 2036 (pre-submission draft September 2025) with regard to HRA and SEA. Any comments received will be taken into account in compiling the final SEA and HRA screening conclusions. This screening report will accompany the draft pre-submission BPNP for its statutory minimum six weeks Regulation 14 consultation.