

# Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) for the Holme Valley Neighbourhood Plan

Environmental Report

Holme Valley Parish Council

June 2019

## Quality information

### Prepared by

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Sam Stone  
Industrial Placement

### Checked by

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Alastair Peattie  
Associate Director

### Approved by

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Alastair Peattie  
Associate Director

Cheryl Beattie  
Environmental Planner

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## Revision History

Revision	Revision date	Details	Name	Position
V1	11 June 2019	Draft for internal review	Cheryl Beattie	Environmental Planner
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Prepared for:

Holme Valley Parish Council

Prepared by:

AECOM Limited  
3rd Floor, Portwall Place  
Portwall Lane  
Bristol BS1 6NA  
United Kingdom

T: +44 117 901 7000  
aecom.com

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# 1. Introduction

## Background

- 1.1 AECOM is commissioned to lead on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in support of the emerging Holme Valley Neighbourhood Plan (HVNP).
- 1.2 The HVNP is being prepared by Holme Valley Parish Council in the context of the Kirklees Local Plan (KLP), adopted in February 2019. Once the HVNP has been 'made' it will have material weight when deciding on planning applications, alongside the KLP.
- 1.3 SEA is a mechanism for considering and communicating the likely effects of an emerging plan, and alternatives, with a view to avoiding and mitigating negative effects and maximising the positives. SEA of the HVNP is a legal requirement.<sup>1</sup>

## SEA explained

- 1.4 It is a requirement that SEA is undertaken in-line with the procedures prescribed by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, which transposed into national law EU Directive 2001/42/EC on SEA.
- 1.5 In-line with the Regulations, a report (known as the Environmental Report) must be published for consultation alongside the draft plan that 'identifies, describes and evaluates' the likely significant effects of implementing 'the plan, and reasonable alternatives'.<sup>2</sup> The report must then be taken into account, alongside consultation responses, when finalising the plan.
- 1.6 More specifically, the Report must answer the following three questions:
  - 1) What has plan-making / SEA involved **up to this point**?
    - Including in relation to 'reasonable alternatives'.
  - 2) What are the SEA findings **at this stage**?
    - i.e. in relation to the draft plan.
  - 3) What happens **next**?

## This Environmental Report

- 1.7 This report is the Environmental Report for the HVNP. It is published alongside the draft – 'pre-submission' – version of the plan, under Regulation 14 of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations (2012, as amended).
- 1.8 This report essentially answers questions 1, 2 and 3 in turn, in order to provide the required information.<sup>3</sup> However, before answering Q1, two initial questions are answered in order to further set the scene; what is the plan seeking to achieve? And what is the scope of the SEA?

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<sup>1</sup> Regulation 15 of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations (2012, as amended) requires that each Neighbourhood Plan is submitted to the Local Authority alongside either: A) an environmental report; or, B) a statement of reasons why SEA is not required, prepared following a 'screening' process completed in accordance with Regulation 9(1) of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations ('the SEA Regulations'). The HVNP was subject to screening in 2018, including through consultation, at which time it was determined that SEA *is* required.

<sup>2</sup> Regulation 12(2) of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.

<sup>3</sup> See **Appendix I** for further explanation of the regulatory basis for answering certain questions within the Environmental Report, and a 'checklist' explaining more precisely the regulatory basis for presenting certain information.

## 2. What is the plan seeking to achieve?

### Introduction

- 2.1 With a view to introducing the aims and objectives of the HVNP, this section considers the strategic planning policy context provided by the current KLP. It then presents the HVNP vision and objectives. **Figure 2.1** (at the end of this chapter) shows the area covered by the HVNP.

### Relationship with the Kirklees Local Plan

- 2.2 The Draft HVNP is being prepared in the context of the adopted Kirklees Local Plan (2019). The KLP sets out the spatial development plan for Kirklees in the period up to 2031.
- 2.3 Neighbourhood plans will form part of the development plan for the District, alongside, but not as a replacement for the Local Plan. The Local Plan seeks to give communities a solid framework within which appropriate community-led planning policy documents, including neighbourhood plans, can be brought forward. Neighbourhood plans are required to be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan and can develop policies and proposals to address local place-based issues. In this way it is intended for the Local Plan to provide a clear overall strategic direction for development in Kirklees, whilst enabling finer detail to be determined through the neighbourhood planning process where appropriate.
- 2.4 Whilst the KLP does not identify an overall housing target for delivery within Holme Valley over the Plan period, it does identify 25 housing allocation sites, 1 mixed-use site and 3 employment allocation sites delivering a combined total of 1,211 new dwellings, and just over a hectare of new employment space within the HVNP area.

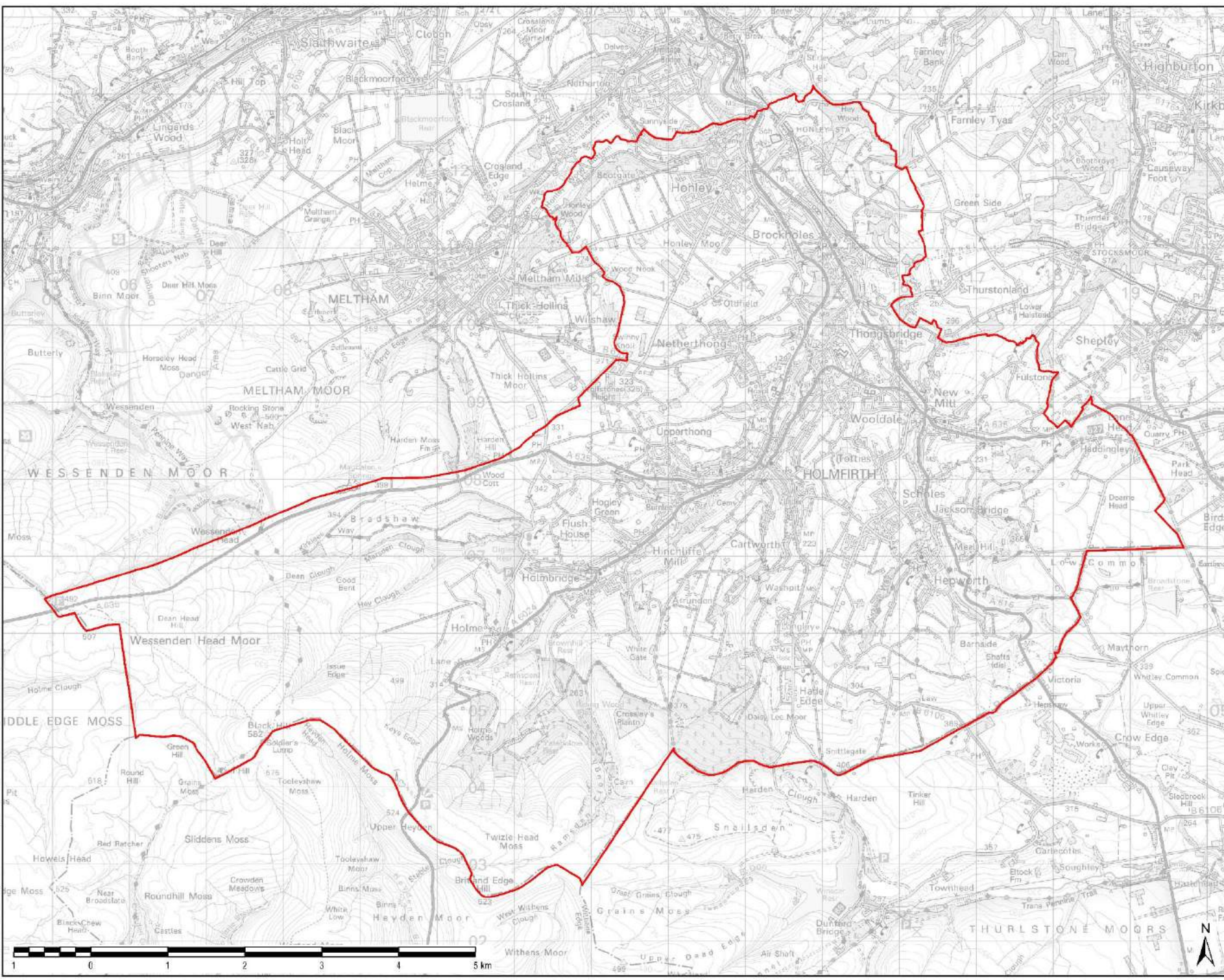
### Vision, aims and objectives of the Holme Valley Neighbourhood Plan

- 2.5 The vision for the Draft HVNP, which was developed during earlier stages of plan development, is as follows:

*“The Holme Valley of the future will continue to be a beautiful rural landscape offering safe environments for wildlife and celebrating its culture, heritage and splendour for the benefit of local people and visitors. It will be home to a vibrant and welcoming community whose people live and/or work within its thriving settlements. It will offer the services and facilities for modern life, whilst sustaining a strong sense of identity and belonging for everyone.”*

- 2.6 To achieve this vision, the following eight community objectives have been identified:
- To preserve and promote the distinctive characteristics of the Holme Valley;
  - To protect important open spaces, views and landscape of the Holme Valley;
  - To promote the type of housing that meets the needs of the local population, and ensure that all new development meets appropriate design and buildings standards;
  - To promote growth of the economy, employment and tourism in the Holme Valley;
  - To promote education and life-long learning for all through investment in improved local community facilities;
  - To promote the health and well-being of residents;
  - To improve accessibility, infrastructure and movement around the Valley by promoting more sustainable transport choices; and
  - To promote sustainability, reduce impact on climate change and move towards a zero-carbon local economy.

File Name: 2004 - Information System\20271007\_NeighbourhoodPlan\_C03\_2019\_202202\_HolmeValley Parish Council\Figure 1-1\_Topic: NeighbourhoodPlan\_Areaweb



**LEGEND**

Holme Valley Neighbourhood Plan Area

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**Prepared by**  
**DRAFT**

---

**Client**  
**HOLME VALLEY PARISH COUNCIL**

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CN	JW	CB	28/03/2019

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**Figure 2.1** Rev 01

## 3. What is the scope of the SEA?

### Introduction

- 3.1 The aim here is to introduce the reader to the scope of the SEA, i.e. the sustainability issues/objectives that should be a focus of (and provide a methodological framework for) SEA. The purpose of scoping was to outline the 'scope' of the SEA through setting out:
- A context review of the key environmental and sustainability objectives of national, regional and local plans and strategies relevant to the Neighbourhood Plan;
  - Baseline data against which the Neighbourhood Plan can be assessed;
  - The key sustainability issues for the Neighbourhood Plan; and
  - An 'SEA Framework' of objectives against which the Neighbourhood Plan can be assessed.
- 3.2 Further information on the scope of the SEA is presented in **Appendix II**.

### Consultation

- 3.3 The SEA Regulations require that “*when deciding on the scope and level of detail of the information that must be included in the report, the responsible authority shall consult the consultation bodies*”. In England, the consultation bodies are the Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England.<sup>4</sup> As such, the Scoping Report was released to these authorities for consultation between the period 12<sup>th</sup> April and 17<sup>th</sup> May 2019.
- 3.4 Responses were received from Natural England, the Environment Agency and Kirklees Council, predominantly relating to additional policy context documents, which have been reflected in the Scoping Report update found in Appendix II. The suggested amendments did not result in any changes to the proposed SEA Framework (see below).

### SEA Framework

- 3.5 The issues identified through the Scoping process were translated into an 'SEA Framework'. This SEA Framework provides a methodological framework for the appraisal of likely significant effects on the baseline. The SEA framework for the HVNP is presented in **Table 3.1** below.

**Table 3.1: SEA Framework for the HVNP (as broadly agreed in 2019)**

SEA theme	Proposed objective(s)
Biodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protect and enhance all biodiversity and geological features and support overall ecological connectivity.</li> </ul>
Climate change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce the level of contribution to climate change made by activities within the Neighbourhood Plan Area.</li> <li>• Support the resilience of the Neighbourhood Plan Area to the potential effects of climate change.</li> </ul>
Historic environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protect and enhance the rich historic environment within and surrounding the Neighbourhood Plan Area, including the many Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas, further designated and non-designated heritage assets and their settings, and archaeological assets.</li> </ul>
Landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protect and enhance the character and quality of landscapes, including the Peak District National Park, villages and urban environments within and surrounding the NPA.</li> </ul>

<sup>4</sup> In line with Article 6(3) of the SEA Directive, these consultation bodies were selected “*by reason of their specific environmental responsibilities, [they] are likely to be concerned by the environmental effects of implementing plans and programmes*”.



<b>SEA theme</b>	<b>Proposed objective(s)</b>
Population and community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Providing everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality, affordable housing and ensuring an appropriate mix of dwelling sizes, types and tenures.</li><li>• Support continued low levels of deprivation and promote inclusive and self-contained communities.</li></ul>
Health and wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Improve the health and wellbeing of residents within the Neighbourhood Plan Area.</li></ul>
Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Promote sustainable transport use and active travel opportunities and reduce the need to travel.</li></ul>

## 4. What has plan-making/ SEA involved to this point?

### Introduction

- 4.1 In accordance with the SEA Regulations the Environmental Report must include:
- An outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with; and
  - The likely significant effects on the environment associated with alternatives/ an outline of the reasons for selecting the preferred approach in light of alternatives appraised.
- 4.2 The 'narrative' of plan-making/ SEA up to this point is told within this part of the Environmental Report.

### Overview of plan-making/ SEA work to date

- 4.3 Plan-making for the Draft HVNP has been underway since 2016. Initial work has incorporated informal and formal consultation exercises carried out by the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and has sought to inform local people, and to ensure that local businesses, organisations and residents had opportunity to contribute to the making of the plan from the outset. A summary of the informal consultation process to date is provided in the Draft HVNP and full details of consultation undertaken to date will be provided in the Consultation Statement that accompanies the Draft HVNP for submission.
- 4.4 To complement the existing Kirklees evidence base, the Steering Group have also commissioned further work in the form of the Holme Valley Heritage and Character Assessment (AECOM, 2016) through Locality<sup>5</sup> support.
- 4.5 This section of the Environmental Report seeks to discuss the evolution of the Draft HVNP in association with the SEA process.

## Developing reasonable alternatives

### Top-down considerations

- 4.6 The Kirklees Local Plan was adopted in February 2019 and sets out the overall development needs of the District up to 2031. The KLP allocates 29 sites within the HVNP area to help deliver against the identified needs for the District; delivering a combined total of 1,211 new dwellings, and just over a hectare of new employment space. As part of the adopted Local Development Plan, the Draft HVNP would have little scope to affect delivery of development at these sites, which have been considered in full and found sound through the Local Plan process and its accompanying Sustainability Appraisal.

### Bottom-up considerations

- 4.7 No further growth is being proposed through the Draft HVNP, which does not seek to deliver over and above those sites outlined by the higher-level planning framework. The HVNP area is characterised as largely rural in nature, and the addition of over 1,200 new homes is considered locally as a significant level of new growth. Any additional growth is likely to be met with local opposition, particularly when considering the environmental constraints of the Plan area.

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<sup>5</sup> <https://locality.org.uk/>

## Establishing reasonable alternatives for the HVNP

- 4.8 A key element of the SEA process is the appraisal of ‘reasonable alternatives’ for the Draft HVNP. The SEA Regulations<sup>6</sup> are not prescriptive as to what constitutes a reasonable alternative, stating only that the Environmental Report should present an appraisal of the ‘plan and reasonable alternatives taking into account the objectives and geographical scope of the plan’. As in many cases, the HVNP Steering Group are limited in terms of potential alternatives that can be considered for the Draft HVNP, which must be in general conformity with and support the strategic development needs set out in the adopted KLP.
- 4.9 Significant effects against SEA objectives are most likely to arise through the consideration of alternatives for the level and location of growth to be delivered in the HVNP area, which is often one of the key issues for neighbourhood plans to address. In this context, the overall level, distribution and location of housing growth would be a logical approach for assessing an alternative approach to that set out in the Draft HVNP; however, as allocated housing sites have been examined and adopted through the Local Plan process, this is not considered necessary. The Local Plan development strategy meets the Objectively Assessed Housing Needs in full and there are no further realistic additional or alternative options (taking into account the objectives and geographical scope of the plan) established through the SEA.

## Current approach in the HVNP and the development of the Neighbourhood Plan policies

- 4.10 To support the implementation of the vision for the Draft HVNP discussed in Section 2, the current version of the Draft HVNP puts forward a number of policies to guide development in the area.
- 4.11 The policies, which were developed following extensive community consultation and evidence gathering, are presented in **Table 4.1** below.

**Table 4.1: Holme Valley Neighbourhood Plan policies**

Draft Policy 1	Protecting and enhancing the landscape character of the Holme Valley
Draft Policy 2	Protecting and enhancing the built character and conservation areas of the Holme Valley and promoting high quality design
Draft Policy 3	Conserving and enhancing local non-designated heritage assets
Draft Policy 4	Promoting high quality shop fronts, and advertisements
Draft Policy 5	Promoting high quality public realm
Draft Policy 6	Building homes for the future
Draft Policy 7	Supporting business generation
Draft Policy 8	Facilitating development in Holmfirth, Honley and other local centres
Draft Policy 9	Protecting and enhancing local community facilities
Draft Policy 10	Protecting local green space
Draft Policy 11	Improving transport, accessibility and local infrastructure
Draft Policy 12	Promoting sustainability
Draft Policy 13	Focusing developer contributions on local priorities

<sup>6</sup> Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004

## 5. What are the SEA findings at this stage?

### Introduction

- 5.1 The aim of this chapter is to present appraisal findings and recommendations in relation to the current Regulation 14 version of the HVNP, and the draft policies contained within. This chapter presents:
- An appraisal of the current version of the HVNP under the seven SEA theme headings; and
  - The overall conclusions at this current stage and recommendations for the next stage of plan-making.

### Approach to the assessment

- 5.2 The appraisal is structured under the seven SEA themes taken forward for the purposes of the SEA and that are linked to the SEA objectives, see **Table 3.1**.
- 5.3 For each theme 'significant effects' of the current version of the plan on the baseline are predicted and evaluated. Account is taken of the criteria presented within Schedule 2 of the Regulations. So, for example, account is taken of the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of effects as far as possible. These effect 'characteristics' are described within the assessment as appropriate.
- 5.4 Every effort is made to identify/ evaluate effects accurately; however, this is inherently challenging given the high-level nature of the plan. The ability to predict effects accurately is also limited by understanding of the baseline and the nature of future planning applications. Because of the uncertainties involved, there is a need to exercise caution when identifying and evaluating significant effects and ensure all assumptions are explained. In many instances it is not possible to predict significant effects, but it is possible to comment on merits (or otherwise) in more general terms.

### Biodiversity

- 5.5 The south-western extent of the Plan area encompasses part of two European designated sites; the South Pennine Moors SAC, and the Peak District Moors (South Pennine Moors Phase I) SPA. The European designated area also contains designated SSSIs, including Dark Peak SSSI and Rake Dike SSSI within the Plan area. The sites support a complete range of flora typical of the South Pennines, as well as higher plants, several important species of bird, and a variety of insects. Qualifying features at the European sites include; European dry heaths, blanket bogs, old sessile oak woods with *Ilex* and *Blechnum* in the British Isles, Northern Atlantic wet heaths with *Erica tetralix*, wet heathland with cross-leaved heath, and transition mires and quaking bogs. The Honley Cutting Station nationally designated SSSI is also located in the north of the Plan area. The SSSIs in the Plan area are all of a 'favourable' condition, with the exception of Dark Peak SSSI which was found to be largely in an 'unfavourable but recovering' condition, with smaller areas of the site in an 'unfavourable – no change' condition.
- 5.6 The interest features of these designated sites are unlikely to be significantly affected by the implementation of the Draft HVNP, given that no site allocations are proposed. Whilst the Plan area is subject to growth, this is as a result of Local Plan allocations, which were assessed separately alongside the development of the Local Plan in its accompanying Sustainability Appraisal and Habitat Regulations Assessment. As no further growth is being proposed through the Draft HVNP, no significant negative effects either alone or cumulatively are anticipated.

- 5.7 The KLP provides policy protection for designated and non-designated biodiversity, including through Policy LP30 (Biodiversity and Geodiversity) protecting designated sites, ancient woodland and habitats of 'principal importance', and advocating avoidance before compensation or mitigation. The Draft HVNP does not repeat policy in this respect, but instead highlights key biodiversity considerations at the neighbourhood scale. Draft Policy 1 identifies that development should "*protect wildlife resources, green corridors and key biodiversity assets*" including "*areas of woodland on valley slopes*" in line with the Kirklees Green Corridors, Tree and Woodland and Biodiversity Strategies. Draft Policy 2 identifies that planting schemes should "*be seen as an integral part of the overall master plan, used to define spaces, frame views, and provide screening and shelter. Native species should be used to enrich the natural habitat and increase biodiversity. Corridors for wildlife movement should be provided on sites next to or in green fields*".
- 5.8 Local areas of green space are also known to support biodiversity in the Holme Valley, with diverse habitats including; good quality semi-improved grassland; lowland dry acid grassland, meadows and heathland; upland heathland, flushes, fens and swamps; blanket bog; deciduous and ancient woodland; woodpasture; and parkland. The Draft HVNP proposes four new Local Green Space designations, and in this respect, indirectly positively contributes to the overall identification and protection of biodiversity assets and green infrastructure networks by retaining these areas. Further to this, the recognition of local landscape character assets such as trees and hedgerows in Draft Policy 1, maximise protection for and enhancement of assets that contribute to overall ecological connectivity.
- 5.9 As a result, the Draft HVNP is anticipated to lead to **minor positive effects** overall and in the long-term with regards to biodiversity. The draft policies complement the existing planning policy framework in delivering benefits for biodiversity. Recommendations in relation to the Draft HVNP could include a commitment to 'biodiversity net gain' though it is recognised that this concept is given strategic weight already under the provisions of the NPPF (2019) and the Government's 25-year Environment Plan (2018).

## Climate change

- 5.10 The Draft HVNP does not propose any development sites that would contribute to the overall built footprint of the Plan area; however, as a location for growth as directed through the KLP, the Draft HVNP recognises that there are considerations for major and small-scale development in the locality with regards to climate change mitigation and adaptation.
- 5.11 At the District level it is recognised that the domestic sector is the biggest contributor to greenhouse gas emissions, whilst at the neighbourhood scale the rural geography can contribute to car dependency and the contributions of the transport sector should not be overlooked. Draft Policies 2 and 12 promote emissions reductions in the domestic sector through increased energy efficiency, insulation and renewable energy use, complimenting the existing provisions of the KLP, particularly by identifying locally evidenced opportunities for renewable energy schemes such as wind turbine development on identified 'moorland' areas. The policies include support for "*the creation of community gardens and further allotments space in the valley for local food growing*" alongside "*local shops and businesses providing locally produced food*" to "*reduce consumer vehicle miles and carbon emissions*". Economic and housing development is required to "*recognise the overall aim to reduce carbon emissions through sustainable design and promoting access by walking, cycling and public transport*". Draft Policy 6 also encourages enhancement, expansion and linking of existing cycle routes in support of the Kirklees Cycling Campaign (a local sustainable transport initiative).
- 5.12 Measures to address climate change adaptation through the Draft HVNP include protection of green infrastructure and design-based flood mitigation. Draft Policy 12 states that the "*flood risk sequential test*" and, where mitigation and design fall short, an "*exception test*" will be applied to all proposed developments in areas at risk of flooding in line with the provisions of the NPPF and KLP. The policy further requires sustainable drainage to "*increase recharge of groundwater, reduce run off and reduce levels of water treatment*" with a need to "*address any limitations of the existing system in the area*".
- 5.13 "Green", as well as "living" and "blue" roofs are also encouraged in Policy 12 where possible, as well as the planting of trees on streets and hillsides. These measures have the potentially

multifaceted effect of protecting against flood risk, lowering energy bills through temperature regulation, and contributing to emission reduction targets.

- 5.14 Overall, the implementation of the Draft HVNP is considered likely to lead to **minor long-term positive effects** in relation to climate change mitigation and adaptation. The draft policies complement the existing planning policy framework in delivering measures that support emissions reductions and proactive strategies to adapt in response to climate change.

## Historic environment

- 5.15 The historic environment of the Plan area encompasses 450 Listed Buildings, 13 Conservation Areas, 3 Scheduled Monuments and non-designated assets including 26 buildings identified by the Holme Valley Heritage and Character Assessment<sup>7</sup> as of local interest. The sheer volume of identified assets within the Plan area depicts the strong historical values associated with the settlement areas and beyond. Given that the Draft HVNP is not allocating any development sites, the potential for significant negative effects in respect of the historic environment is considered minimal.
- 5.16 Designated and non-designated heritage assets, and their settings, are provided protection in new development through the policy provisions of the NPPF and KLP, including KLP Policies LP5, LP13, LP15 and LP35. The Draft HVNP has sought to complement the existing evidence base in terms of the historic environment, with the Holme Valley Heritage and Character Assessment supporting policy and design directions. Additional policy protections afforded through the Draft HVNP focus on; high-quality design (Draft Policies 2, 3, 4, 5 and 11); protection and enhancement of the built character and Conservation Areas (Draft Policy 2); conserving and enhancing local non-designated heritage assets (Draft Policy 3); design codes for shopfronts – often located in town and village centres or high streets, where concentrations of Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas are typically found (Draft Policy 4).
- 5.17 Alongside enhanced policy protections, the Draft HVNP includes aims (identified in Draft Policy 13) to focus development contributions on local priorities which include “*environmental or heritage projects seeking to improve the built and natural environment*”.
- 5.18 In accordance with the NPPF (2019) heritage assets should be recognised as an “*irreplaceable resource*” that should be conserved in a “*manner appropriate to their significance*”, taking account of “*the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits*” of conservation, whilst also recognising the positive contribution new development can make to local character and distinctiveness. To this effect, tourism based on the historic environment and the part-containment of the plan area within the Peak District national park is identified by the Draft HVNP (Draft Policy 7) as a key area for development, that could contribute significantly to the local and regional economy. Supporting the visitor economy will contribute positively towards protecting and enhancing the areas historic core; providing economic support for the heritage assets and the wider plan area.
- 5.19 The policy directions are also supported by ‘Parish Council Actions’ which include direct benefits, such as the action to “*encourage Kirklees to produce and implement Conservation Area Appraisals and Conservation Area Management Plans which illustrate the vernacular design for specific areas that should be reflected in new development*”. Further actions include to; develop a list of non-designated heritage assets; support community purchases and development where a heritage asset becomes structurally unsafe for use; encourage community ownership of locally important buildings, and; support place-making initiatives seeking to build both community and economic value from the Plan area’s unique heritage and environment.
- 5.20 Overall, it is deemed that the Draft HVNP, in conjunction with the higher-level policy suite, provides sufficient policy mitigation to ensure that future development will not detract from the valued historic environment of the Plan area. Parish Council actions stemming from the Draft HVNP are likely to realise benefits for the historic environment in the long-term, and as a result, overall **minor positive effects** are anticipated. Whilst overall positive effects are anticipated, recommendations to enhance potential positive effects could include additional policy wording

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<sup>7</sup> AECOM (2016) Holme Valley Heritage and Character Assessment

which seeks to enhance value and legibility in relation to the historic environment. This could include statements concerning the value of heritage to a sense of identity, place and wellbeing for both residents and visitors with consequent economic and retail advantages and with implications for local authorities, public utilities and private owners. Legibility improvements could include signage, waymarking, trails and heritage focal points.

## Landscape

- 5.21 The landscape around the plan area is diverse, with the River Holme running through the bottom of the valley, and land being covered variably by woodland, fields and semi-natural habitats. Lying partially within the Peak District National Park, where the Peak District National Authority are responsible for land-use management, the landscape is nationally valued. There are also distinct international tourism landscape values connected with the landscape setting depicted by the long running TV show 'Last of the Summer Wine'. The Yorkshire Southern Pennine Fringe NCA<sup>8</sup> and the Dark Peak NCA<sup>9</sup> cover the Plan area.
- 5.22 The value of the landscape and the diversity of Landscape Character Areas in the District are acknowledged in the Draft HVNP and evidenced through the Holme Valley Heritage and Character Assessment (2016), the Kirklees District Landscape Character Assessment (2015), and the Peak District Landscape Character Assessment (2008). The extensive evidence base identifies the intrinsic value of the urban heritage within a rural setting; setting out character management principles, and key features of high sensitivity to change.
- 5.23 Landscape character is protected at the District level, particularly through Policy LP32, which stipulates that development proposals "*should be designed to take into account and seek to enhance the landscape character of the area*", in terms of views, habitat boundaries and the settings of buildings.
- 5.24 The Draft HVNP seeks to add localised detail to support the strategic policy framework; specifically identifying and describing, using the evidence provided by the Holme Valley Heritage and Character Assessment, key landscape character assets and attributes, and key aspects for consideration in new development in the Plan area. Draft Policy 1 identifies 8 defined Landscape Character Areas where new development must demonstrate consideration of "*land use and cover, greenspace and public realm, views, settlement pattern and built form of the Local Character Area*" and how designs have "*responded positively to protect and enhance the distinctive characteristics of each area*". The policy identifies expectations that views from built up areas to the upland areas of moorland and moorland fringe, as well as significant local landmarks will be protected through "*attention to layout, form and height*" in new development, whilst also supporting new opportunities "*to help 'frame' a particular view to enhance the surrounding townscape*".
- 5.25 Green Belt comprises a significant proportion of the Plan area; with a fundamental aim of its policy being to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open (NPPF, 2019). The Draft HVNP does not propose further growth over and above the directions of the KLP and asserts through Draft Policy 6 a preference for brownfield development, and development within existing settlement areas. The Draft HVNP thus supports Green Belt preservation, which will contribute towards maintaining the definition of settlements and preserving the open countryside, indirectly protecting some the defining characteristics and landscape features of the Plan area.
- 5.26 The Draft HVNP also acknowledges the landscape/ townscape value of existing and future green and open spaces within the urban parts of the plan area, and states that future developments should seek to "*enhance and extend*" these through the design of appropriate landscaping, open spaces and sympathetic buildings. The allocation of four new Local Green Spaces – identified in Draft Policy 10 – and protection from "*new development which impacts adversely on the openness of these sites*" will support landscape character in the long-term in this respect.

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<sup>8</sup> Natural England (2013) NE490: NCA Profile: 37 Yorkshire Southern Pennine Fringe [online] available at: <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5459581769613312?category=587130>

<sup>9</sup> Natural England (2015) NE378: NCA Profile: 51 Dark Peak [online] available at: <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/3684793?category=587130>

5.27 Overall, it is considered that the Draft HVNP, alongside the higher-level policy suite, provides a robust framework for the protection and enhancement of the local landscape. It is recognised that sensitive development requirements will maintain and potentially enhance the existing townscape character, and further protect landscape character by avoiding development where it may adversely impact upon the characteristic features of the plan area, Green Belt, and the wider landscape setting within and adjacent to the National Park. The policy framework seeks to strike a balance; providing strong design guidance to minimise risk without stifling new and creative design responses. In this respect, **minor long-term positive effects** are anticipated overall with regards to this SEA theme.

## Population and community

5.28 Land to meet the Objectively Assessed Housing Need for the Housing Market Area in full has been identified through the adopted KLP. The housing and economic growth allocations identified in the KLP will provide development to meet the needs of the Plan area and deliver positive effects for local communities. In this respect the Draft HVNP does not propose any further development locations. With no further development allocations, the Draft HVNP provides indirect support for the retention of designated Green Belt land, supporting settlement identities overall by preventing them from merging.

5.29 The KLP seeks to provide a balanced housing mix and greater quantities of affordable housing (Policy LP11 Housing Mix and Affordable Housing) and requires all housing proposals to “*be of high-quality design and contribute to creating mixed and balanced communities in line with the latest evidence of housing need.*”

5.30 This is supported at the local level with the Draft HVLP acknowledging that the Plan area exhibits a higher concentration of larger owner-occupier homes than Kirklees overall, and that new developments have historically exacerbated this trend. As a location for growth directed by the KLP, the Draft HVNP and in particular Draft Policy 6, seeks to ensure new development delivers an increased number of affordable and low-cost dwellings, with imbalances in house sizes, tenures, cost and access (for both public and private transport) being directly addressed.

5.31 The Draft HVLP acknowledges a need to supply more housing, particularly smaller more affordable homes, to allow people to buy their first homes and to down-size. However, there is also a recognition that such developments could have a negative impact on incumbent community members, through things such as view interruption and increased traffic congestion. Draft Policy 6 consequently asserts a focus on ensuring any future development beyond sites allocated in the KLP prioritises redevelopment of brownfield sites, with conversion of existing buildings for low cost housing where at all possible. Developments must also have effective access for all types of transport, with an emphasis on public transport, pedestrian and cyclist access to minimise the negative effects associated with this type of development.

5.32 The Draft HVLP also promotes high-quality design throughout the Plan and policy framework; seeking to; protect local character (Draft Policies 1 and 2); positively enhance public spaces and the public realm (Draft Policies 2 and 5); improve natural spaces and green infrastructure networks (Draft Policies 2 and 10); and improve the user/ visitor experience (Policies 5 and 7). High-quality design considerations will support communities in the long term with legible, accessible and enjoyable environments to live or work in.

5.33 Accessible development is also key to supporting residents in forming inclusive communities and maintaining low levels of deprivation. In this respect the Draft HVNP supports the higher-level planning framework which seeks to deliver accessible development, by protecting existing services and facilities (Draft Policy 9), supporting school expansions and seeking improvements to health-care provisions (Draft Policy 9), identifying and protecting Local Green Spaces (Draft Policy 10), promoting highways and access improvements (Draft Policy 11), and focusing development contributions on accessibility improvements (Draft Policy 13).

5.34 The Draft HVLP acknowledges the risks faced by the plan area in terms of becoming a “dormitory belt”, due to a decline in local employment opportunities. This in turn can have a negative impact on the community in terms of local businesses and service feasibility, and increased traffic volumes at peak times due to the high proportion of commuters relying on private vehicles in the plan area. Holmfirth’s pedigree as a tourist destination is cited as a



cornerstone of potential continued economic stimulus for the plan area. Furthermore, aspirations of cultivating a local “digital economy” to increase economic activity in the area are presented, with the goal of attracting younger, economically active residents to the area. The Draft HVNP therefore seeks opportunities to support local economies, to the benefit of residents in the long-term.

- 5.35 The Draft HVNP seeks to address imbalances in the housing market, supporting high-quality design and good accessibility in new development. The Draft HVNP also seeks to maximise opportunities for place-based local economies, including by bolstering tourism relating to the rural landscape and towns and villages of the area. The Plan overall is anticipated to lead to **minor long-term positive effects** with regards to this SEA theme, by supporting inclusive communities and development that meets local needs.

## Health and wellbeing

- 5.36 Healthy lifestyles are notably well covered in the KLP, with Policy LP47 promoting healthy, active and safe lifestyles through ensuring access to open spaces and sports facilities, improvements in air quality, and the requirement for Health Impact Assessments to be carried out on all proposals that can be deemed likely to have a significant effect on the health and well-being of local communities. This aims to help mitigate the increasing number of health issues to be expected in the plan area due to rising populations.
- 5.37 The health and wellbeing of residents will be supported by the Draft HVNP policies that seek to protect and encourage a high-quality public realm, local distinctiveness and landscape/townscape character. In this context, Draft Policies 5, 9 & 12 seek to improve spaces, infrastructure and facilities designed to facilitate better health in Holme Valley parish.
- 5.38 Further to this, Draft Policy 1 in the HVNP seeks to enhance the local landscape character, identifying 8 distinct Landscape Character Areas (evidenced by the Holme Valley Heritage and Character Assessment) and the challenges for development within these areas. Developments are required to account for a variety of geographic and urban sensitivities in order to protect and preserve the distinctive characteristics of each area. This will support communities with high quality environments and continued good access to valued countryside, National Park land and open space; as the rural setting of the settlements within the HVNP area is recognised as a valued asset that contributes to the health, wellbeing and enjoyment of plan area residents.
- 5.39 The Draft HVNP (through Draft Policy 10) identifies and designates four new Local Green Spaces, which will contribute to the retention and enhancement of recreational areas supporting local communities and health and wellbeing (and offering alternative recreation sites to the most sensitive sites in the Plan area). Health benefits might also be expected through the Draft HVNP’s promoted improvements to pedestrian and cycle access and infrastructure, particularly as a result of direct investment from development contributions (Draft Policy 13). Draft Policy 6 states the ambition of enhancing, expanding and linking existing walking and cycling routes through any future developments, which could facilitate greater adoption of these sustainable modes of travel, bringing health benefits in the long-term.
- 5.40 Overall, it is predicted that the Draft HVNP will lead to **minor long-term positive effects** regarding the Health & Wellbeing SEA theme, mostly through and emphasis on protecting valued community assets, identifying new spaces to be protected as designated Local Green Spaces, and supporting improvements to services and facilities for health and recreation.

## Transportation

- 5.41 Transport and infrastructure improvements are predominantly strategic in nature, costly, and often outside the scope and remit of a neighbourhood plan, particularly in this case as the Draft HVNP does not propose any sites for development. Added to this is the local constraint of a valued historic environment in which new infrastructure needs to be designed with high sensitivity – with Draft Policy 11 directly identifying local challenges for a “*balanced approach*” and “*minimal interventions*”. As the draft HVNP does not allocate sites for development, it is not considered likely to significantly affect the SEA objective for transportation.

- 5.42 Draft Policy 11 is supportive of the principles laid out by the Kirklees Highway Design SPD<sup>10</sup> including; prioritisation of pedestrians and cyclists; ensuring inclusivity for people of all ages and abilities; and addressing long term durability, safety and sustainability. Added to this, Draft Policy 13 identifies that local priorities for development contributions include; improvement of public rights of way; highways improvements for the benefit of residents; and improvements to car parking provision.
- 5.43 The policy directions are supported by 'Parish Council Actions' which include direct benefits such as the action to investigate the feasibility of renaming Brockholes railway station as "*Brockholes and Holmfirth*" station, with an accompanying shuttle bus service for Holmfirth residents. The measures outlined above demonstrate a commitment to localised improvements that can positively promote active travel and more sustainable transport modes.
- 5.44 Whilst the plan area is situated across a valley and the settlements are dispersed; meaning that cycling and walking as modes of transport are inherently unfeasible for certain journeys and for some people; around 5% of people walk to work in the plan area (which is higher than other Kirklees rural areas). The Draft HVNP seeks to maintain and improve the existing and new pedestrian access networks in response to localised opportunities and this trend in active travel. This includes the use of development contributions as outlined above but also through Draft Policy 11 which seeks the incorporation of wider walkways and highways, and parking facilities into new developments, which could open up space to pedestrians and cyclists alike, improving safety and accessibility. It is also recognised that cycling remains popular in the area, with National Cycle Route 68 intersecting Holmfirth, and the Kirklees Cycling Campaign seeks to promote the interests, routes and access for plan area cyclists at a higher level. In supporting higher-level as well as localised initiative, the Draft HVNP is likely to positively contribute to improving the sustainability of the plan area transport networks, with the potential for minor long-term positive effects with regards to this SEA objective.
- 5.45 The Draft HVNP acknowledges the issues caused to cyclists and pedestrians, in terms of access and safety, by traffic and congestion in the plan area. This results from a heavy reliance on personal vehicles for residents of the plan area and is particularly prevalent in Holmfirth centre. The Draft HVNP seeks to address this proactively by acknowledging this reliance and suggesting mitigation measures, such as improved traffic networks and more infrastructure to support a transition to electric vehicles, which can make a significant contribution to sustainability goals where other sustainable transport modes are not a possibility. Whilst these are not specific policy directions, the supporting text and Parish Council actions are considered to make a positive contribution to sustainable transport goals.
- 5.46 Overall, the Draft HVNP promotes the inclusion of sustainable transport considerations in any new development, as well as ensuring new developments are connected to each other and the existing transport networks. Outside of the Local Plan development strategy for Holme Valley, brownfield sites are advocated for any further development, increasing possibilities to ensure developments are well connected to existing and new pedestrian and cycle routes where possible. This is alongside efforts to deliver benefits locally in terms of active travel and sustainable transport opportunities. As such, **long-term minor positive effects** are considered likely overall.
- 5.47 The policy framework is considered an overall positive contribution to this SEA objective, and recommendations are limited, but stronger policy to act on the introduction of electric vehicle infrastructure could enhance these positive effects.

## Conclusions and recommendations

- 5.48 The Draft HVNP performs well overall against all the SEA themes, and multiple potential benefits to the local community are identified.
- 5.49 The Draft HVNP aims to balance the requirements of local communities, biodiversity, access, and conservation whilst addressing the challenging prospects of future climate change. Whilst no further development sites are proposed through the Draft HVNP, it does seek to ensure that

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<sup>10</sup> Kirklees Highway Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) <https://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/planning-policy/highway-design-guide-spd.aspx>

growth directed to the area by the KLP delivers a wide range of housing, targeted at addressing housing imbalances in terms of type, size and tenure.

- 5.50 Opportunities to improve accessibility and support pedestrian and cycle networks through future development are well considered, and ambitious actions are identified, including improvements to rail provisions in the Plan area.
- 5.51 The Draft HVNP aims to support future development in a way that integrates existing heritage, landscape and architecture, reinforcing the unique characteristics of the area. Further to this, the Draft HVNP supports opportunities for improving townscape and the tourism appeal of the plan area's highly valued environment, seeking to secure long-term local economies that can support thriving centres and high-quality service and facility provisions.
- 5.52 Four new Local Green Spaces are identified for protection, and will deliver benefits by retaining valued local spaces that contribute to health and wellbeing, recreational assets and townscape character.
- 5.53 Overall, recommendations are limited, which is unsurprising given the overall positive performance of the Draft HVNP with regards to the SEA themes, possible suggestions to strengthen the plan or maximise positive effects could however include:
- Dedicated policy commitments to the 'biodiversity net gain' principle.
  - Additional policy wording which seeks to enhance value and legibility in relation to the historic environment. This could include statements concerning the value of heritage to a sense of identity, place and wellbeing for both residents and visitors with consequent economic and retail advantages and with implications for local authorities, public utilities and private owners. Legibility improvements could include signage, waymarking, trails and heritage focal points.
  - In light of limited capacity to act on large scale transport infrastructure, policy wording in the Draft HVNP in support for installation of EV charging stations through future developments could bring significant benefits to the transportation, climate change and health and wellbeing themes. Whilst this would do little to curb traffic congestion, greater sustainability through reduced emissions, and health benefits from improved air quality in settlements could be realised through making EVs a more realistic option for plan area residents.

## 6. What are the next steps?

6.1 This part of the report explains next steps that will be taken as part of plan-making and SEA.

### Plan finalisation

6.2 This Environmental Report accompanies the Pre-Submission version of the Holme Valley Neighbourhood Plan for Regulation 14 consultation.

6.3 Following consultation, any representations made will be considered by Holme Valley Parish Council, and the Neighbourhood Plan and accompanying Environmental Report will be updated as necessary. The updated Environmental Report will then accompany the Neighbourhood Plan for submission to the Local Planning Authority, Kirklees Council, for subsequent Independent Examination.

6.4 At Independent Examination, the Neighbourhood Plan will be considered in terms of whether it meets the Basic Conditions for Neighbourhood Plans and is in general conformity with the adopted Kirklees Local Planning Framework.

6.5 If the subsequent Independent Examination is favourable, the Holme Valley Neighbourhood Plan will be subject to a referendum, organised by Kirklees Council. If more than 50% of those who vote agree with the Neighbourhood Plan, then it will be 'made'. Once made, the Neighbourhood Plan will become part of the Development Plan for Kirklees, covering the defined Neighbourhood Plan area.

### Monitoring

6.6 The SEA regulations require 'measures envisaged concerning monitoring' to be outlined in this report. This refers to the monitoring of likely significant effects of the Neighbourhood Plan to identify any unforeseen effects early and take remedial action as appropriate.

6.7 It is anticipated that monitoring of effects of the Neighbourhood Plan will be undertaken by Kirklees Council as part of the process of preparing its Annual Monitoring Report (AMR).

6.8 The SEA has not identified any potential for significant negative effects that would require closer review or monitoring.

# Appendix I: Regulatory requirements

As discussed in Chapter 1 above, Schedule 2 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans Regulations 2004 (the Regulations) explains the information that must be contained in the Environmental Report; however, interpretation of Schedule 2 is not straightforward. Table A links the structure of this report to an interpretation of Schedule 2 requirements, whilst Table B explains this interpretation.

**Table A: Questions answered by this Environmental Report, in-line with an interpretation of regulatory requirements**

		Questions answered	As per regulations... the Environmental Report must include...
<b>Introduction</b>		What's the plan seeking to achieve?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan and relationship with other relevant plans and programmes</li> </ul>
		What's the sustainability 'context'?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Relevant environmental protection objectives, established at international or national level</li> <li>Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan including those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance</li> </ul>
	What's the SEA scope?	What's the sustainability 'baseline'?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan</li> <li>The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected</li> <li>Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan including those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance</li> </ul>
		What are the key issues and objectives that should be a focus?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Key environmental problems / issues and objectives that should be a focus of (i.e. provide a 'framework' for) assessment</li> </ul>
<b>Part 1</b>	What has plan-making / SEA involved up to this point?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Outline reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with (and thus an explanation of the 'reasonableness' of the approach)</li> <li>The likely significant effects associated with alternatives</li> <li>Outline reasons for selecting the preferred approach in-light of alternatives assessment / a description of how environmental objectives and considerations are reflected in the draft plan</li> </ul>
<b>Part 2</b>	What are the SEA findings at this current stage?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The likely significant effects associated with the draft plan</li> <li>The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and offset any significant adverse effects of implementing the draft plan</li> </ul>
<b>Part 3</b>	What happens next?		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A description of the monitoring measures envisaged</li> </ul>

**Table B: Questions answered by this Environmental Report, in-line with regulatory requirements**

<u>Schedule 2</u>	<u>Interpretation of Schedule 2</u>	
<i>The report must include...</i>	<i>The report must include...</i>	
(a) an outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan and relationship with other relevant plans and programmes;	An outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan and relationship with other relevant plans and programmes	i.e. answer - <i>What's the plan seeking to achieve?</i>
(b) the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan	Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance	i.e. answer - <i>What's the 'context'?</i>
(c) the environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected;	The relevant environmental protection objectives, established at international or national level	
(d) any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan or programme including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance, such as areas designated pursuant to Directives 79/409/EEC and 92/43/EEC;	The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan'	i.e. answer - <i>What's the 'baseline'?</i>
(e) the environmental protection objectives, established at international, Community or Member State level, which are relevant to the plan and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation;	The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected	
(f) the likely significant effects on the environment including on issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors;	Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance	
(g) the measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the plan;	Key environmental problems / issues and objectives that should be a focus of appraisal	i.e. answer - <i>What are the key issues &amp; objectives?</i>
(h) an outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with and a description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties (such as technical deficiencies or lack of know-how) encountered in compiling the required information	An outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with (i.e. an explanation of the 'reasonableness of the approach')	i.e. answer - <i>What has Plan-making / SA involved up to this point?</i> [Part 1 of the Report]
(i) a description of the measures envisaged concerning monitoring.	The likely significant effects associated with alternatives, including on issues such as... ... and an outline of the reasons for selecting the preferred approach in light of the alternatives considered / a description of how environmental objectives and considerations are reflected in the draft plan.	
	The likely significant effects associated with the draft plan	i.e. answer - <i>What are the assessment findings at this current stage?</i> [Part 2 of the Report]
	The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects of implementing the draft plan	
	A description of the measures envisaged concerning monitoring	i.e. answer - <i>What happens next?</i> [Part 3 of the Report]

# Appendix II: The SEA scope

## Introduction

Whilst Chapter 3 presents a summary of the SEA scope, in the form of the SEA framework, this appendix presents more detailed information. Specifically, this appendix presents a discussion of key issues and objectives under each of the SEA topic headings.

The SEA scope is primarily reflected in a list of topics and objectives ('the SEA framework'), which was established subsequent to a review of the sustainability 'context'/ 'baseline', analysis of key issues, and consultation.

## Biodiversity

### Summary of policy context

Key context documents include:

- EU Biodiversity Strategy;<sup>11</sup>
- National Planning Policy Framework<sup>12</sup> (NPPF);
- Natural Environment White Paper (NEWP);<sup>13</sup>
- Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services;<sup>14</sup>
- UK Government, 'A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment';<sup>15</sup>
- Kirklees Local Plan (February 2019);
- Kirklees Local Plan Sustainability Appraisal (SA);
- Peak District National Park Local Development Framework Core Strategy (2011).

### Summary of current baseline

European designated sites:

- The South Pennine Moors Special Area of Conservation (SAC); and
- The Peak District Moors (South Pennine Moors Phase 1) Special Protection Area (SPA).

Nationally designated sites:

- Dark Peak SSSI;
- Rake Dike SSSI.
- Honley Cutting Station SSSI

Priority habitats include:

- Good quality semi-improved grassland;

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<sup>11</sup> European Commission (2011) Our life insurance, our natural capital: an EU biodiversity strategy to 2020 [online] available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52011DC0244&from=EN> [accessed 07/12/18]

<sup>12</sup> MHCLG (2018) National Planning Policy Framework [online] available at: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/728643/Revised\\_NPPF\\_2018.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/728643/Revised_NPPF_2018.pdf) [accessed 07/12/18]

<sup>13</sup> HM Gov (2011) The Natural Choice: securing the value of nature [online] available at: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/228842/8082.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/228842/8082.pdf) [accessed 07/12/18]

<sup>14</sup> DEFRA (2011) Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services [online] available at: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/69446/pb13583-biodiversity-strategy-2020-111111.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/69446/pb13583-biodiversity-strategy-2020-111111.pdf) [accessed 07/12/18]

<sup>15</sup> HM GOV (2018) A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment [online] available at: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/693158/25-year-environment-plan.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/693158/25-year-environment-plan.pdf)

- Lowland Dry Acid Grassland;
- Lowland Meadows;
- Lowland Heathland;
- Upland Heathland;
- Blanket Bog;
- Upland Flushes, Fens and Swamps;
- Deciduous Woodland;
- Ancient Woodland; and
- Woodpasture and Parkland.

## Key Issues

The following key issues emerge from the context and baseline review:

- The South Pennine Moors SAC and Peak District Moors (South Pennine Moors Phase 1) SPA are internationally designated sites for biodiversity that fall partly within the NPA. This designated area also contains the component SSSIs; Dark Peak and Rake Dike.
- A further site in the north of the NPA is also a nationally designated SSSI; Honley Station Cutting.
- There are a wide variety of BAP Priority Habitats within the NPA that support overall ecological connectivity.

Considering this discussion, and supplementary discussion within the Scoping Report (2019), the following objective was established:

**Protect and enhance all biodiversity and geological features and support overall ecological connectivity.**

## Climate change

### Summary of policy context

Key context documents include:

- UK Climate Change Act<sup>16</sup> (2008);
- UK Climate Change Risk Assessment (2017);
- UK Government , 'A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment';<sup>17</sup>
- National Planning Policy Framework (2019);
- Flood and Water Management Act;<sup>18</sup>
- Kirklees Local Plan (February 2019);
- Kirklees Local Plan Sustainability Appraisal (SA);
- Peak District National Park Local Development Framework Core Strategy (2011).

### Summary of current baseline

*Potential effects of climate change*

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<sup>16</sup> GOV.UK (2008) Climate Change Act 2008 [online] available at:  
[http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2008/27/contents?sm\\_au=ivVt4Hr6tbjgnqNj](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2008/27/contents?sm_au=ivVt4Hr6tbjgnqNj)

<sup>17</sup> HM GOV (2018) A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment [online] available at:  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/693158/25-year-environment-plan.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/693158/25-year-environment-plan.pdf)

<sup>18</sup> Flood and Water Management Act (2010) [online] available at: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/29/contents>



The Met Office UK Climate Projections for 2018 (UKCP18)<sup>19</sup> provide the most up to date climate observations and projections out to 2100. The effects of climate change for Yorkshire and The Humber by 2040-2059 (at a 50% percentile)<sup>20</sup> are likely to be as follows:

- Approximately 1-2°C increase in mean winter and summer temperatures.
- An approximate 10% reduction in mean summer precipitation and 10% increase in mean winter precipitation.

Resulting from these changes, a range of risks may exist for the NPA and wider region. These include:

- Effects on water resources from climate change;
- Adverse effect on water quality from low stream levels and turbulent stream flow after heavy rain;
- Reduction in availability of groundwater for extraction;
- Increased risk of flooding, including increased vulnerability to 1:100 year floods;
- A need to increase the capacity of wastewater treatment plants and sewers;
- A need to upgrade flood defences;
- Soil erosion due to flash flooding;
- Loss of species that are at the edge of their southerly distribution;
- Spread of species at the northern edge of their distribution;
- Increased demand for air-conditioning;
- Increased drought and flood related problems such as soil shrinkages and subsidence;
- Risk of road surfaces melting more frequently due to increased temperature; and
- Flooding of roads.

#### *Flood risk*

Most of the Parish area is located within the lowest risk area, Flood Zone 1, where there is a >0.1% chance (1 in 1000) of fluvial flooding in any given year. There are areas of higher risk of fluvial and surface water flooding and these areas are generally concentrated around water body corridors.

## Key Issues

The following key issues emerge from the context and baseline review:

- Kirklees has had lower per capita emissions than that of Yorkshire and The Humber, and England as a whole, and the domestic sector is identified as the biggest contributor to these emissions.
- Flood risk across the Plan area is relatively low and the HVNP does not intend to allocate sites for development. Therefore, the development of the HVNP is unlikely to affect flood risk in the future.

Considering this discussion, and supplementary discussion within the Scoping Report (2019), the following objectives were established:

**Reduce the level of contribution to climate change made by activities within the Neighbourhood Plan Area.**

**Support the resilience of the Neighbourhood Plan Area to the potential effects of climate change.**

<sup>19</sup> Data released 26<sup>th</sup> November 2018 [online] available at: <https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/research/collaboration/ukcp> [accessed 10/12/18]

<sup>20</sup> Met Office (2018) Land Projection Maps: Probabilistic Projections [online] available at: <https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/research/collaboration/ukcp/land-projection-maps> [accessed 10/12/18]

# Historic environment

## Summary of policy context

Key context documents include:

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF);
- The Government's Statement on the Historic Environment for England;<sup>21</sup>
- The Government's 'A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment';<sup>22</sup>
- Kirklees Local Plan (February 2019);
- Kirklees Local Plan Sustainability Appraisal (SA);
- Peak District National Park Local Development Framework Core Strategy (2011).

## Summary of current baseline

There are 450 listed buildings in the plan area, the vast majority of which are contained within 13 designated Conservation Areas, which are:

- Butterley;
- Fulstone;
- Hepworth;
- Hinchcliffe Mill;
- Holme;
- Holmfirth;
- Honley;
- Netherthong;
- Oldfield;
- Totties;
- Underbank;
- Upperthong;
- Wooldale.

There are 3 scheduled monuments in the plan area:

- Cairnfield in Hagg Wood, Honley, 375m south east of Upper Hagg;
- The Old Bull Ring, 500m north of Meal Hill;
- Cairnfield in Honley Old Wood, 280m north west of The Woodlands.

## Key Issues

The following key issues emerge from the context and baseline review:

- The HVNP area contains a rich variety of designated and non-designated heritage assets, including many conservation areas which are identified as sensitive receptors to development.

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<sup>21</sup> HM Government (2010) The Government's Statement on the Historic Environment for England [online] available at: <[http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+http://www.culture.gov.uk/reference\\_library/publications/6763.aspx](http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/+http://www.culture.gov.uk/reference_library/publications/6763.aspx)> last accessed 05/12/18

<sup>22</sup> HM GOV (2018) A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment [online] available at: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/693158/25-year-environment-plan.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/693158/25-year-environment-plan.pdf) [accessed 05/12/18]

- Whilst the HVNP does not allocate sites for development, any design code policies will have the potential to influence future development (particularly small-scale and in-fill development) and heritage settings.

Considering this discussion, and supplementary discussion within the Scoping Report (2019), the following objective was established:

**Protect and enhance the rich historic environment within and surrounding the Neighbourhood Plan Area, including the many Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas, further designated and non-designated heritage assets and their settings, and archaeological assets.**

## Landscape

### Summary of policy context

Key context documents include:

- National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF);
- The Government's 'A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment';<sup>23</sup>
- Kirklees Local Plan;
- Kirklees Local Plan Sustainability Appraisal (SA);
- Peak District National Park Local Development Framework Core Strategy (2011).

### Summary of current baseline

The plan area lies partially within the Peak District National Park and is split between the Yorkshire Southern Pennine Fringe NCA<sup>24</sup> and the Dark Peak NCA<sup>25</sup>. Both NCAs are recognised for their distinctive character and are in need of restoration and/or preservation, from a heritage and future value perspective.

### Key Issues

The following key issues emerge from the context and baseline review:

- The landscape in the south of the NPA is designated as part of the Peak District National Park.
- The Dark Peak NCA contains internationally important habitats and species as well as significant soil and water resources, the importance of which should continue to be recognised in future development.
- The Yorkshire Southern Pennine Fringe NCA has a distinct landscape character that should continue to be protected in future development.

Considering this discussion, and supplementary discussion within the Scoping Report (2019), the following objective was established:

**Protect and enhance the character and quality of landscapes, including the Peak District National Park, villages and urban environments within and surrounding the Neighbourhood Plan Area.**

<sup>23</sup> HM GOV (2018) A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment [online] available at: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/693158/25-year-environment-plan.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/693158/25-year-environment-plan.pdf) [accessed 05/12/18]

<sup>24</sup> Natural England (2013) NE490: NCA Profile: 37 Yorkshire Southern Pennine Fringe [online] available at: <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5459581769613312?category=587130>

<sup>25</sup> Natural England (2015) NE378: NCA Profile: 51 Dark Peak [online] available at: <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/3684793?category=587130>

# Population and community

## Summary of policy context

Key context documents include:

- National Planning Policy Framework<sup>26</sup> (NPPF);
- 'Ready for Ageing?' Select Committee on Public Service and Demographic Change;<sup>27</sup>
- A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment;<sup>28</sup>
- Kirklees Local Plan (February 2019);
- Kirklees Local Plan Sustainability Appraisal (SA);
- Peak District National Park Local Development Framework Core Strategy (2011).

## Summary of current baseline

The population in Holme Valley increased by 8.4% between 2001 and 2011. The rate of population increase in the plan area was marginally less than the rate of increase for Kirklees (8.7%), but greater than that seen in Yorkshire and The Humber (6.4%) and England (7.9%). The percentage of residents within the 60+ category (25.08%) is higher than seen at the Borough (21.30%), regional (22.71%) and national scales (22.30%). Conversely, there is a lower proportion of residents aged 0-24 in the plan area (27.64%) compared to Borough (32.41%), regional (31.48%) and national levels (30.80%).

97% of usual residents in the plan area identified themselves as white in 2011, with 1.2% identifying as mixed/multiple ethnic groups, 0.8% as Asian/Asian British, 0.3% as Black/African/Caribbean/Black British and 0.1% as other ethnic groups.<sup>29</sup>

45.85% of households in Holme Valley are deprived in some form<sup>30</sup>. This is lower than the proportion seen in Kirklees (59.1%), Yorkshire and The Humber (59.13%) and England (57.5%). This indicates that residents of Holme Valley are relatively less deprived than larger scale geographies, as well as other communities within Kirklees.

In 2011, there were 12,039 dwellings in the Holme Valley Parish; however, 541 of these were household spaces with no usual resident. Most Dwellings within the Neighbourhood Plan Area were detached (33%), semi-detached (26.2%) or terraced (33.7%) houses or bungalows. The remaining 7.1% of dwellings within the Parish were flats, maisonettes or apartments, with no caravans/ other mobile or temporary homes recorded in the 2011 census. There is a high rate of home ownership in the Neighbourhood Plan Area. 79.61% of Home Valley residents own their own homes (either outright or with a mortgage); a higher proportion of home ownership than at district (67.06%), regional (64.1%) and national (63.3%) levels. Additionally, a small proportion of residents live in social rented accommodation (7.18%), with a higher proportion in private rented accommodation (11.71%).

The following three occupation categories account for the greatest proportion of residents in Holme Valley:

- Professional occupations;
- Associate professional & technical occupations; and
- Managers, directors and senior officials.

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<sup>26</sup> MHCLG (2018) National Planning Policy Framework [online] available at: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/728643/Revised\\_NPPF\\_2018.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/728643/Revised_NPPF_2018.pdf) [accessed 07/12/18]

<sup>27</sup> Select Committee on Public Service and Demographic Change (2013) Ready for Ageing? [online] available at: <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201213/ldselect/ldpublic/140/140.pdf> [accessed 05/12/18]

<sup>28</sup> HM GOV (2018) A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment [online] available at: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/693158/25-year-environment-plan.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/693158/25-year-environment-plan.pdf) [accessed 05/12/18]

<sup>29</sup> ONS (2011): Census 2011: Ethnic Group 2011 (Table KS201EW)

<sup>30</sup> ONS, Census (2011) statistical analysis assessing four dimensions of deprivation; employment, education, health and disability, and housing.

## Key Issues

The following key issues emerge from the context and baseline review:

- Evidence indicates a growing and ageing population within the NPA.
- There are relatively low levels of deprivation in the NPA in comparison with Borough, regional and national levels.
- House prices are relatively high in comparison with the Borough.

Considering this discussion, and supplementary discussion within the Scoping Report (2019), the following objectives were established:

**Providing everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality, affordable housing and ensuring an appropriate mix of dwelling sizes, types and tenures.**

**Support continued low levels of deprivation and promote inclusive and self-contained communities.**

## Health and wellbeing

### Summary of policy context

Key context documents include:

- National Planning Policy Framework<sup>31</sup> (NPPF);
- A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment<sup>32</sup>;
- Fair Society, Healthy Lives<sup>33</sup> ('The Marmot Review');
- Health and Social Care Act 2012<sup>34</sup>;
- Kirklees Joint Strategic Assessment (KJSA)<sup>35</sup>;
- Kirklees Local Plan (February 2019);
- Kirklees Local Plan Sustainability Appraisal (SA);
- Peak District National Park Local Development Framework Core Strategy (2011).

### Summary of current baseline

There are 12 health indicators in Kirklees that perform significantly worse than the national average, and 6 that perform better. 84.63% of residents in the plan area consider themselves to be in "good" or "very good" health. 85.24% of plan area residents report that their day to day activities are "not limited" by disability.

## Key Issues

The following key issues emerge from the context and baseline review:

<sup>31</sup> MHCLG (2018) National Planning Policy Framework [online] available at: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/728643/Revised\\_NPPF\\_2018.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/728643/Revised_NPPF_2018.pdf) [accessed 29/11/18]

<sup>32</sup> HM GOV (2018) A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment [online] available at: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/693158/25-year-environment-plan.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/693158/25-year-environment-plan.pdf) [accessed 29/11/18]

<sup>33</sup> The Marmot Review (2011) The Marmot Review: Implications for Spatial Planning [online] available at: <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20170106161952/http://www.apho.org.uk/resource/item.aspx?RID=106106> [accessed 29/11/18]

<sup>34</sup> Health and Social Care Act 2012: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2012/7/contents/enacted>

<sup>35</sup> Kirklees Joint Strategic Assessment (KJSA): <https://www.kirklees.gov.uk/beta/delivering-services/joint-strategic-needs-assessment.aspx>

- The majority of residents within the Neighbourhood Plan Area consider themselves to have 'very good health' or 'good health,' at a higher percentage than Borough, regional and national levels.
- A greater proportion of Holme Valley residents report that their activities are not limited by disability compared to Borough, regional and national levels.

Considering this discussion, and supplementary discussion within the Scoping Report (2019), the following objective was established:

**Improve the health and wellbeing of residents within the Neighbourhood Plan Area.**

## Transportation

### Summary of policy context

Key context documents include:

- National Planning Policy Framework<sup>36</sup> (NPPF);
- 2025 Kirklees Transport Vision;
- Kirklees Local Plan (February 2019);
- Kirklees Local Plan Sustainability Appraisal (SA);
- Peak District National Park Local Development Framework Core Strategy (2011).

### Summary of current baseline

There are two train stations within the plan area, at Brockholes and Honley; both of which are located toward the north-east of the plan area and provide hourly services to Sheffield and Huddersfield. The plan area is also served by local buses and most connections are concentrated within Honley and Holmfirth. National Cycle Network Route 68 runs longitudinally through the centre of the plan area, with Route 627 bordering the east of the plan area.

The A629 runs along the east of the plan area, with the M62 and A640 to the north, providing good access to Manchester, Sheffield, Leeds and other parts of the country.

Based on the 2011 census data, 85.63% of households in the Neighbourhood Plan Area own at least one car or van, which is higher than the percentage for Kirklees (73.56%), Yorkshire and The Humber (72.44%) and England (74%). Holme Valley has a higher percentage of households with access to two or more vehicles than at Borough, regional and national levels, indicating a strong reliance on private vehicles within the plan area.

The most popular method of travelling to work in the Neighbourhood Plan Area is by car or van (48.6%), which is higher than the proportions for the Borough (40.91%), Yorkshire and The Humber (38.45%) and England (37.00%). The percentage of people who work from home (5.05%) is also higher than the Borough (2.79%), regional (2.85%) and national (3%) rates. Finally, a lower proportion of people walk, cycle, or use a bus, minibus or coach to travel to work in the place area (8.89%) compared to Borough (11.73%), regional (14.32%) and national levels (14%).

### Key Issues

The following key issues emerge from the context and baseline review:

- There are high levels of reliance on the private vehicle, with a highway presence in the NPA and relatively good road access.
- There is a National Cycle route along the eastern border and through the centre of the plan area.

<sup>36</sup> MHCLG (2018) National Planning Policy Framework [online] available at: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/728643/Revised\\_NPPF\\_2018.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/728643/Revised_NPPF_2018.pdf) [accessed 29/11/18]

- There are two train stations in the north-east of the NPA, however these are beyond reasonable walking distance for most residents in the area.

Considering this discussion, and supplementary discussion within the Scoping Report (2019), the following objective was established:

**Promote sustainable transport use and active travel opportunities and reduce the need to travel**

