

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

SEA Addendum Report

October 2021

Quality information

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1. Introduction

SEA explained

- 1.1 AECOM is commissioned to lead on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in support of the emerging Holme Valley Neighbourhood Plan (HVNP).
- 1.2 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.¹

Background

- 1.3 The HVNP is being prepared by Holme Valley Parish Council in the context of the Kirklees Local Plan (KLP), adopted in February 2019. The HVNP is at a relatively progressed stage of development, having been through examination and now in the process of being modified and finalised for referendum. Once 'made', the HVNP will have material weight when deciding on planning applications, alongside the KLP.
- 1.4 SEA has been undertaken alongside the development of the HVNP. SEA scoping was undertaken in 2019, with a Scoping Report consulted with the statutory consultees² from 12th April to 17th May 2019.
- 1.5 An SEA Environmental Report was subsequently produced which assessed the draft plan and alternatives. The Environmental Report (October 2019) was presented to the public alongside the draft HVNP on the Regulation 14 consultation.
- 1.6 Following Regulation 14 consultation, consultation responses and draft HVNP updates were considered in the finalised submission version SEA Environmental Report (September 2020).

This SEA Addendum Report

- 1.7 This SEA Addendum Report is produced to consider the 'referendum' version of the HVNP. The 'referendum' version has updated the submission HVNP to take account of the suggested modifications arising through examination of the plan.
- 1.8 Following consideration of modifications, this SEA Addendum Report further seeks to conclude on the SEA process. This report sets out how the SEA process has informed and influenced the development of the HVNP, how consultation responses have been considered, and the suggested monitoring measures.

¹ Regulation 15 of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulation (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, which, following consultation, determined that SEA is required.

² Natural England, Historic England and the Environment Agency.

2. The modified HVNP

- 2.1 At Independent Examination, the examiner suggested several modifications to the HVNP, to ensure that the plan meets the basic conditions. Kirklees Council have reviewed and agreed with the modifications, providing a [summary table of changes \(embedded link\)](#).
- 2.2 The table of modifications to the HVNP, as suggested by Kirklees Council, has been screened to identify the potential for any significant changes to the overall findings of the SEA.
- 2.3 This chapter presents the summary findings of this screening work, with the detailed screening table presented in **Appendix A**.

Summary findings for the SEA of the referendum HVNP

- 2.4 The proposed modifications were subject to SEA screening as detailed in Appendix A. The screening work has found that the modifications are not considered to significantly affect the previous findings of the SEA Environmental Report. As a result, the findings presented in the Environmental Report (September 2020) are considered to remain valid. Overall, minor positive effects are anticipated across all SEA themes scoped in for the purposes of SEA, with a potential for significant positive effects noted in relation to biodiversity, given the policy premise for biodiversity net gain in development.

3. How the SEA process has informed and influenced the development of the HVNP

3.1 This chapter details how the SEA process has informed and influenced the development of the HVNP.

Introduction

3.2 The SEA process has informed and influenced the HVNP throughout its development. Reflecting this, four main SEA documents have been prepared alongside the development of the HVNP. **Table 3.1** details these documents.

Table 3.1: Key documents in plan-making/ SEA process

Year	Plan-making	SEA
2019	Evidence gathering	SEA Scoping Report
2019	Regulation 14 consultation draft HVNP	SEA Environmental Report
2020	Regulation 16 consultation submission version HVNP	SEA Environmental Report
2021	Referendum HVNP	SEA Addendum Report

3.3 As demonstrated in the table above, the SEA process has been carried out iteratively and informed the development of the HVNP at each key stage. The SEA primarily influenced the Plan through the development and appraisal of the Plan, as detailed in the Environmental Report (October 2019) and the submission Environmental Report (September 2020).

3.4 Updated summary findings are provided within this report (Chapter 2) which take account of the latest changes made to the Plan through examination.

4. Consultation responses and how they have been considered

- 4.1 This chapter describes how the opinions expressed by the public and consultation bodies during consultation on the plan and SEA were considered. As detailed in **Chapter 3** and **Table 3.1**, at each stage of the HVNP's development, an SEA Environmental Report was published alongside the Plan for consultation.
- 4.2 Consultation was carried out with:
- The three statutory bodies for SEA (the Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England).
 - Other key stakeholders; and
 - The general public.

SEA Scoping consultation

- 4.3 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.³
- 4.4 As such, the SEA Scoping Report for the HVNP was released to these authorities for consultation between the period 12th April and 17th May 2019.
- 4.5 Responses were received from Natural England, the Environment Agency and Kirklees Council, predominantly relating to additional policy context documents. Updates were made accordingly and presented in the Regulation 14 consultation and submission SEA Environmental Reports.

Regulation 14 consultation

- 4.6 The responses received following Regulation 14 consultation on the draft HVNP have been presented within the Plan's accompanying [Consultation Statement \(embedded link\)](#). Any representations referring directly to the published SEA Environmental Report were taken into consideration and informed subsequent stages of the SEA process.

Regulation 16 consultation

- 4.7 The updated HVNP, Environmental Report and accompanying Consultation Statement were submitted to Kirklees Council in 2020 and subject to further consultation, prior to examination. Responses received through Regulation 16 consultation were considered through the examination of the Plan.

³ 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”.

5. Monitoring

- 5.1 The SEA Regulations require that: *“The responsible authority shall monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of each plan or programme with the purpose of identifying unforeseen adverse effects at an early stage and being able to undertake appropriate remedial action.”*
- 5.2 The Regulations also state that the SEA should set out *“...the measures that are to be taken to monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the plan or programme.”*
- 5.3 The purpose of monitoring is to measure the significant sustainability effects of a plan, as well as to measure success against the plan’s objectives. This will enable appropriate interventions to be undertaken if monitoring highlights negative trends relating to the relevant elements. It is therefore beneficial if the monitoring strategy builds on monitoring systems which are already in place.
- 5.4 To this end, 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). The SEA has not identified any potential for significant negative effects that would require closer review or monitoring.

6. Conclusions on the SEA process

6.1 This SEA Addendum Report demonstrates that a robust and iterative SEA process has been progressed alongside plan-making, with appraisal findings feeding in to decision-making at each stage, and with two reports having been published for full public consultation alongside plan documents. Any representations received were taken into account and informed subsequent stages of the SEA process.

6.2 In summary, the following reports were published as part of the SEA process:

- SEA Scoping Report (April 2019): published for consultation with statutory bodies.
- SEA Environmental Report (October 2019): published in Regulation 14 consultation.
- SEA Environmental Report (September 2020): published in Regulation 16 consultation
- SEA Addendum Report (October 2021): this report.

6.3 Most importantly, in terms of compliance with the SEA and Neighbourhood Planning Regulations, the SEA Environmental Report was published alongside the both the Regulation 14 and Regulation 16 HVNP, presenting the required information. The report served to inform representations on the plan, and then served to inform plan finalisation.

6.4 This SEA Addendum Report is the final step in the SEA process.

Appendix A Screening of HVNP modifications

This appendix provides the detailed screening of the modifications made to the HVNP, as discussed in Chapter 2 of the main report. **Table AA.1** below summarises the modifications made (provided in greater detail in the Kirklees Council [summary table of changes](#)) and whether such modifications are likely to affect the overall findings of the SEA Environmental Report (September 2020).

Table AA.1: SEA screening of modifications to the HVNP

Relevant HVNP section	SEA screening	Likely to affect overall findings?
Introduction and Background	The modifications reflect structural and wording amendments which seek to ensure consistent referencing where the policies do not apply to the Peak District National Park, and to move all Parish Council actions to an appendix to improve clarity. The changes do not affect the overall findings of the previous SEA.	No
Executive Summary	Minor wording and formatting updates. The changes do not affect the overall findings of the previous SEA.	No
Planning Context for Holme Valley NDP	References to Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding removed as CIL is no longer being progressed by Kirklees Council. Whilst this has implications for local funding streams, it aligns with the strategic policy context and is unlikely to significantly affect the overall findings of the previous SEA.	No
Holme Valley NDP Vision and Objectives	Minor wording updates that do not affect the overall findings of the previous SEA.	No
Protecting Local Character	Wording and structural/ formatting updates that do not affect the overall findings of the previous SEA.	No
Policy 1: Protecting and Enhancing the Landscape Character of Holme Valley	Policy has been modified to reflect that it does not apply to land within the National Park. Further wording amendments are made to ensure consistency and alignment with the strategic planning policy framework provided by the KLP. The amendments do not deviate from the aims of the policy to protect and enhance local landscape character. The updates are not considered likely to significantly affect the overall findings of the previous SEA.	No
Policy 2: Protecting and Enhancing the Built Character of the Holme Valley and Promoting High Quality Design	The Policy has been modified to remove overlaps with Policy 1, remove any ambiguity and ensure conformity with the strategic policy context provided by the KLP. The updates are not considered likely to significantly affect the overall findings of the previous SEA.	No
Policy 3: Heritage Assets	The modifications to the HVNP have re-written Policy 3 (Conserving and Enhancing Local Heritage Assets) to provide clearer intent and simplified directions for development. The policy now provides	No

Relevant HVNP section	SEA screening	Likely to affect overall findings?
	<p>clear intent in respect of both buildings which are positive contributors to the conservation areas and how proposals will be assessed. Direction is provided for owners and developers to take account of the significance of local heritage assets when designing proposals which affect these assets. Notably Kirklees Council identify that with the modifications in place the policy (supported by Appendix II) “<i>will help protect local heritage assets in the neighbourhood area maintaining a sense of place and contributing to the achievement of sustainability</i>”. The re-written policy does not deviate from the overall findings of the previous SEA, particularly the likely minor positive effects predicted in relation to the historic environment as a result of these policy directions.</p>	
Policy 4: Design Codes for High Quality Shopfronts and Advertisements	<p>The modifications to this policy seek to primarily improve clarity and remove any duplicated/ repetitive text. The amendments also reflect improved clarity as to where the policy applies in Kirklees and the Peak District National Park Authority areas. The amendments are not considered likely to affect the overall findings of the previous SEA.</p>	No
Policy 5: Promoting High Quality Public Realm and Improvements to Gateways and Highways	<p>Minor wording and structural/ formatting updates are made to this policy to improve clarity and remove any ambiguity. In particular, reference is made to the Kirklees Highways Design Guide which provides significant advice on the matter of design in the public realm. The policy is considered to be strengthened in this respect. The amendments are not considered likely to affect the overall findings of the previous SEA.</p>	No
Policy 6: Building Homes for the Future	<p>Several wording and structural/ formatting amendments are made to this policy however, these do not deviate from the overall policy intent. The amendments clarify the relationship of the HVNP with the KLP and consistency between the policy frameworks, provide accurate detail in relation to the scope of community right to build schemes and improve the overall clarity of policy directions. The amendments are not considered likely to affect the overall findings of the previous SEA.</p>	No
Policy 7: Supporting Economic Activity	<p>The modifications to this policy reflect consistency/ alignment with national planning policy (particularly with national Green Belt policy) and clarified policy directions/ intent (including less repetitive text). The amendments are not considered likely to affect the overall findings of the previous SEA.</p>	No
Policy 8: Facilitating Development in Holmfirth Town Centre and Honley District Centre and Brockholes and New Mill Local Centres	<p>The modifications to the policy reflect the introduction of the new use class E. Wording and structural/ formatting updates are also made to improve clarity and ensure consistency with the KLP. New information is added to provide a description of the centres and their role, and in doing so provide justification for how Policy 8 seeks to control development in these centres. The amendments are not considered likely to affect the overall findings of the previous SEA.</p>	No

Relevant HVNP section	SEA screening	Likely to affect overall findings?
Policy 9: Protecting and Enhancing Local Community Facilities	The modifications to Policy 9 seek to ensure consistency with the KLP and improve clarity in terms of policy intent and policy directions. The amendments are not considered likely to affect the overall findings of the previous SEA.	No
Policy 10: Protecting Local Green Spaces	A minor update is made to this policy to more clearly identify the policy intent to protect the identified Local Green Spaces. The amendment is considered to strengthen the policy in this respect and does not affect the overall findings of the previous SEA.	No
Policy 11: Improving Transport, Accessibility and Local Infrastructure	The modifications to this policy provide links to Kirklees Councils highways guidance, improve consistency with the higher-level strategic policy framework and improve clarity. The amendments are not considered likely to affect the overall findings of the previous SEA.	No
Policy 12: Promoting Sustainability	The modifications to this policy aim to improve clarity and ensure consistency with the both the KLP and national planning policy. The amendments are not considered likely to affect the overall findings of the previous SEA.	No
Policy 13: Protecting Wildlife and Securing Biodiversity Net Gain	Minor wording updates are made to this policy to ensure clarity. The amendments are not considered likely to affect the overall findings of the previous SEA.	No
Policy 14: Focusing Developer Contributions on Local Priorities	This policy is deleted following Kirklees Council's intention to no longer pursue Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). Whilst this has implications for local funding streams, it aligns with the strategic policy context and is unlikely to significantly affect the overall findings of the previous SEA.	No
Appendices	The modifications reflect the clarity improvements discussed above and do not affect the overall findings of the previous SEA.	No

Summary findings

Considering the above, the previous findings of the SEA Environmental Report (September 2020) are considered to largely remain the same. Overall, minor positive effects are anticipated across all SEA themes scoped in for the purposes of SEA, with a potential for significant positive effects noted in relation to biodiversity, given the policy premise for biodiversity net gain in development.

