

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

SEA Adoption Statement

December 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 currently being 'made' following a successful referendum outcome. 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).
- 1.7 Finally, an SEA Addendum Report was produced in October 2021 to consider the 'referendum' version of the HVNP. The 'referendum' version updated the submission HVNP to take account of the suggested modifications arising through examination of the plan.

This SEA Adoption Statement

- 1.8 This SEA Adoption Statement 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. How the SEA process has informed and influenced the development of the HVNP

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

Introduction

2.2 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 2.1: 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 |

2.3 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).

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

3. Consultation responses and how they have been considered

- 3.1 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.
- 3.2 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

- 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.³
- 3.4 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.
- 3.5 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

- 3.6 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

- 3.7 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”.

4. Monitoring

- 4.1 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.”*
- 4.2 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.”*
- 4.3 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.
- 4.4 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.

5. Conclusions on the SEA process

- 5.1 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.
- 5.2 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): published alongside the HVNP at referendum.
 - SEA Adoption Statement (December 2021); this report.
- 5.3 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.
- 5.4 This SEA Adoption Statement is the final step in the SEA process.

