

The Grovehill Future Neighbourhood Plan Appendices 6.1 - 6.6

March 2017



2016-2031

GROVEHILL FUTURE

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6.1 Site Allocation: LA1- Marchmont Farm

The key development principle policy requirements that specifically affect LA1 Marchmont Farm in relation to the Core Strategy are set out in **Table 1** and Site Allocations (DPD) - LA1 Marchmont Farm **Table 2**.

Table 1 - Core Strategy principles

Location reference	LA1
Site location	Marchmont Farm
Proposals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Around 300 new homes • Extend Margaret Lloyd Park
Principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A mix of two storey and three storey housing including around 40% affordable homes. • A contribution must be made towards education and community facilities. • The layout, design, density and landscaping must create a soft edge with the adjoining Green Belt boundary. • New strategic landscaping to mitigate impact on new development on the Gade Valley and help ensure its separation from Piccotts End. • Impact on the local road network mitigated through the promotion of sustainable travel options, including pedestrian links to the local centre.
Delivery	The proposal will be delivered as an allocation in the Site Allocations DPD where detailed planning requirements will be established

6.1 Site Allocation: LA1- Marchmont Farm



Table 2 - Site Allocations DPD principles for LA1 - Marchmont Farm* (amended February 2017), as set out below.

**At the time of writing the Site Allocations policy was awaiting the Inspectors examination report and approval from DBC to be adopted as part of the Council's planning framework and may be subject to change. Please see their website for the latest information.*

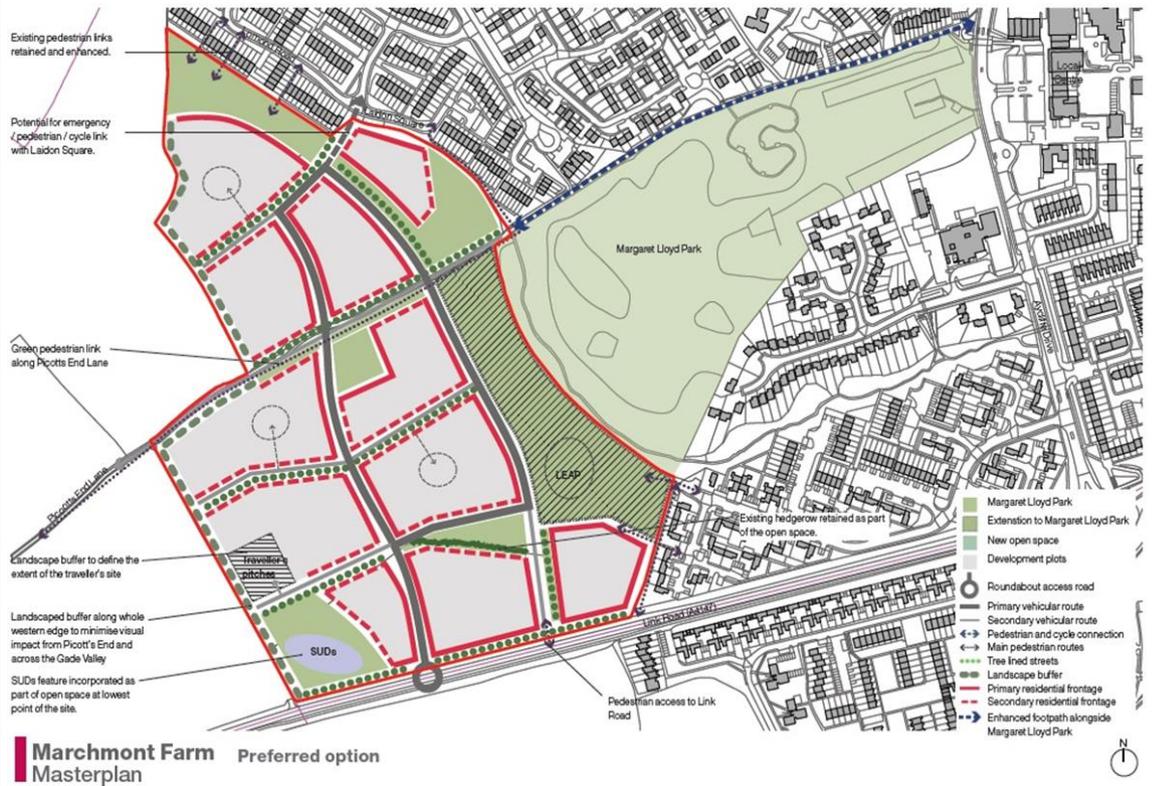
Location reference	LA1
Site location	Marchmont Farm
Proposals	<p>Local Allocation 1 at Marchmont Farm as identified on the Policies Map will be released from the Green Belt and deliver the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 300-350 homes** • a traveller site of 5 pitches • an extension to Margaret Lloyd Park • The provision of a locally equipped area of play (LEAP) and • Inclusion of a sustainable drainage (SUDS) basin. <p><i>** The net capacity figures specified provide an estimate of expected capacity and should not be treated as maxima. Final dwelling capacities will be tested through the planning application process, where detailed schemes will be expected to demonstrate compliance with specified planning requirements and other relevant policies and guidance.</i></p>
Vision	<p>The new part of Grovehill will be an attractive place in its own right. Its character and appearance will complement and enhance Grovehill. The development will be integrated with the rest of Grovehill through the use of the local centre and other shared services, facilities and open space. Pedestrian and cycle routes will permeate the neighbourhood.</p> <p>The new area will be an inclusive community, designed to be safe and secure. There will be a mix of homes, accommodating both smaller households and family homes. Development will be spacious and will allow views of the countryside in the Gade valley. Open space will permeate the neighbourhood, providing links between Margaret Lloyd Park, Howe Grove and the wider countryside.</p>
Key development Principles	<p>The following principles will be used to guide the site master plan and assess the subsequent planning application:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver a mix of housing including 40% affordable homes. • Provide for family homes and larger, more spacious properties within a range of provision. • Incorporate 5 pitches for gypsies and travellers at the site with good access to the primary road network. • Limit buildings to two storeys, except where a higher element would create interest and focal points in the street scene and is appropriate in terms of topography and visual impact.

6.1 Site Allocation: LA1- Marchmont Farm



- Enlarge Margaret Lloyd Park; Arrange the open space to ensure a pleasant, coherent and wildlife-friendly network linking to Hunting Gate Wood and Howe Grove.
- Soften views of housing from the countryside by use of planting, by retaining appropriate hedges and by siting open space carefully.
- Provide a soft edge to the countryside and ensure visual and physical separation from Piccotts End.
- Incorporate a sustainable drainage system throughout the site including the use of green space as a basin.
- Plan good pedestrian and cycle access to Henry Wells Square and to key services, such as bus stops and community facilities.
- Take the main vehicular access from East-West Link Road (A4147).

Indicative Spatial layout



Delivery and Phasing

- LA1 is available for immediate development, in accordance with Policies CS3: Managing Selected Development Sites, SA1: Identified Proposals and Sites, SA8: Local Allocations and the Schedule of Housing Proposals and Sites.
- The site will be developed in phases in accordance with the master plan. 'The phasing of the site will seek to deliver the Gypsy and Traveller pitches within an early phase, subject to technical and viability considerations, to ensure a 5 year supply of Gypsy and Traveller provision. The Council will require that when a planning application or planning applications are brought forward for the allocation they demonstrate compliance with this Master Plan and a comprehensive approach to the development of the allocation, including the nature and timing of delivery of community infrastructure and other planning obligations'.

6.1 Site Allocation: LA1- Marchmont Farm



	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No abnormal costs have been identified that would undermine the ability of this site to provide appropriate contributions towards infrastructure through CIL and Section 106, as appropriate, in accordance with Core Strategy Policy CS35: Infrastructure and Developer Contributions.• Key planning obligations are set out in the site master plan and will include 40% affordable housing and contributions towards improving local services and facilities at Grovehill local centre and local social and transport infrastructure.• Key off-site transport works are set out in the Schedule of Transport Proposals and Sites (proposal T/10). The new junction onto the Link Road provides the primary vehicular access and should be in place when development commences.• Early liaison required with Thames Water to develop a Drainage Strategy to identify any infrastructure upgrades that are required as a result of the development, in order to ensure that sufficient sewerage and sewage treatment capacity is available to support the timely delivery of this site.'• Early liaison required with the local planning authority to ensure appropriate sustainable drainage is designed into the development scheme at the early design stage.
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Grovehill Future Draft Neighbourhood Plan

Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Report

and

Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening Report

Post Screening Consultation Update

November 2015



Grovehill Future Draft Neighbourhood Plan

Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Report

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Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening Report

Post Screening Consultation Update

November 2015

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1 Introduction

1.1 Grovehill Future Neighbourhood Plan

On 11th February 2014 Dacorum Borough Council Cabinet designated the Grovehill Future organisation as the Neighbourhood Forum for the Grovehill Neighbourhood Area.

A Neighbourhood Plan (Grovehill Future NP) is now being prepared under the provisions of the Localism Act of 2011 to set planning policies for the development and use of land within Grovehill and create a vision for regenerating Henry Wells Square and the surrounding area. Once adopted the Neighbourhood Plan will form part of the statutory development plan for the area.

1.2 Strategic Environmental Assessment

The objective of Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)¹ is to provide a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans/programmes. A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is required for certain types of plans and programmes to determine whether the plan or programme could have significant effects on the environment. The Grovehill Future NP falls within the categories of plan that might require SEA, but only if it is first determined that the plan would result in significant effects.

Government planning guidance for neighbourhood plans states that:

“In some limited circumstances, where a neighbourhood plan is likely to have significant environmental effects, it may require a strategic environmental assessment. Draft neighbourhood plan proposals should be assessed to determine whether the plan is likely to have significant environmental effects. This process is commonly referred to as a “screening” assessment and the requirements are set out in regulation 9 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.

If likely significant environmental effects are identified, an environmental report must be prepared in accordance with paragraphs (2) and (3) of regulation 12 of those Regulations”².

Section 3 of this report documents the findings of the Screening Assessment that has been undertaken.

¹ European Union Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (2001/42/EC) as implemented in the UK by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (SI 2004 No. 1633)

² The Conservation of Habitat and Species Regulations 2010 transpose European Union Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (EC Habitats Directive) into national law.

³ The term European Sites is a collective term that covers Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) designated under the Habitats Directive, Special Protection Areas (SPAs) designated under the Birds Directive, and RAMSAR Sites.

1.3 Habitats Regulations Assessment

In addition to the need to consider whether SEA is required, under separate regulations² it is also necessary to determine whether the Neighbourhood Plan could lead to Likely Significant Effects upon a European Site³ of importance for nature conservation, when considered either alone or in combination with other plans and projects. The closest European Site to Grovehill is the Chiltern Beechwoods Special Area of Conservation (SAC).

A screening exercise as part of a Habitats Regulations Assessment is required to determine whether there is the potential for a Likely Significant Effect. If it were the case that the Neighbourhood Plan could lead to Likely Significant Effects the plan would not be able to proceed to examination without amendments being made to ensure that such Effects could not occur. This would require additional Habitats Regulations Assessment work.

As with SEA, a screening process has been undertaken for the Grovehill Future NP and this report documents the findings of that process (see Section 4).

1.4 Consultation

When determining whether or not an SEA needs to be undertaken it is necessary for responsible authorities (Dacorum BC in this case) to consult with the three statutory consultation bodies (Environment Agency, Historic England, and Natural England)⁴.

The consultation bodies were sent the original version of the Screening Report (September 2015) and were asked to comment on the screening findings included in that report.

The responses from the three consultation bodies are summarised in Appendix 1.

⁴ Regulation 9 (2b) of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (SI 2004 No. 1633)

2 Grovehill Future Neighbourhood Plan

The neighbourhood plan covers the area shown in Figure 1.

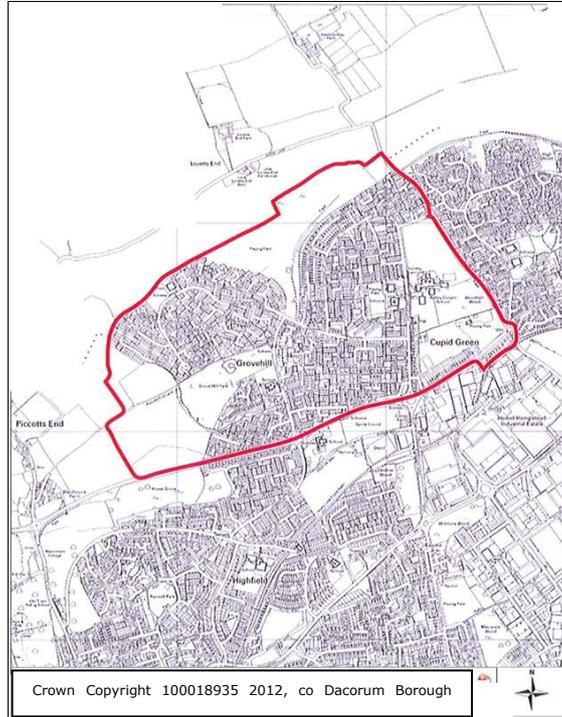


Figure 1: Grovehill Future Neighbourhood Plan Area

The aims of the Grovehill Future NP are as follows:

- Redefine the local hub for Grovehill at Henry Wells Square.
- Set out a clear vision for the ward that most people in the community support.
- Influence the types of development that meets the needs of the community.
- Improve and establish the impacts of connectivity for pedestrian and cyclists and encourage sustainable transport.
- Encourage and improve the natural and built environment of the ward.
- Support and maintain community facilities and services within the ward.

The Draft Neighbourhood Plan includes policies covering the following topics:

Housing:

- **Access and Connectivity:**

- Provide safe, street level access for pedestrians & cyclists.
- Provision of good public transport connections from new developments to the town centre/railway station.
- Well designed, designated cycle routes to link all parts of Grovehill.
- Where practicable, consider the removal of underused and unpopular underpasses and install street level crossings.

- Clear signposting.
- Consideration should be given to the sensitive provision of storage facilities for refuse collection bins.
- **Environment:**
 - New developments should be softened by the use of appropriate landscaping planting. Such planting should not undermine the structure or integrity of any new buildings.
 - All existing trees affected by any development proposal should be surveyed and assessed in accordance with BS 5837. If a development results in the loss of any woodland trees, they should be replaced with saplings of an appropriate species and planted elsewhere within existing woodland areas.
 - Environmentally sensitive lighting should be used to provide safe & secure off-road routes.
- **Social and Community Facilities:**
 - Consideration should be given to the inclusion of play facilities specifically for children and young people in all age-groups.
 - The provision of a combination of living and small-scale employment space will be encouraged (i.e. live-work units).
 - There should be adequate and high-quality public spaces (including the provision of benches and covered areas) provided along important pedestrian routes within the housing development.
- **Design:**
 - New homes should be constructed to an appropriate height to reflect the local character, maintain a low skyline, to preserve areas with existing open characteristics within Grovehill and include suitable wildlife corridors (retaining existing hedgerows and trees).
 - Houses should be of a good quality design, use materials to complement the existing vernacular and comply with modern energy efficient standards (C rating of the Energy performance rating: EU directive 2002/91; Housing Act 2004; Energy performance of buildings regulations (SI 2007/991)).
 - New homes should provide an adequate minimum area per room in accordance with the relevant space standards.
- **Parking:**
 - The provision of off-road parking will be preferable to the creation of new garage blocks.
 - Where garages are provided, these will be of appropriate size commensurate to modern vehicle.
- **Housing Mix:**
 - Any new development shall seek to provide a mix of new homes to help meet local needs. In particular, support will be given to the provision of the following housing types:
 - Smaller starter homes.
 - Larger family homes.
 - Accommodation for the elderly.
 - Properties for available to ownership and rent (including affordable and socially supported housing).

Garage blocks:

- Where there is an identified need, any rebuilding or refurbishment of existing garage blocks should provide units of a size commensurate with modern vehicles.
- Any refurbishment of existing garage blocks shall be designed to prevent crime and facilitate natural surveillance, provide appropriate lighting and make provision for CCTV to create a safe and attractive environment.
- Any refurbishment shall include planting and landscaping to reduce any visual impact and improve the local environment.
- Any redevelopment of garage blocks will complement and integrate with the existing community and be constructed to achieve good quality design and use of appropriate materials.
- Any proposal to refurbish, redevelopment or construct new garage blocks within Grovehill should accord with the design principles set out within the Dacorum Borough Council's Core Strategy Policies CS11, CS12 and CS13.

Public and Green Space Amenities:

- High quality and well-designed public spaces.
- Include environmentally sensitive lighting, where necessary, to provide safe and secure off-road routes.
- Provide adequate and high quality public space furniture within and along important routes.
- Provide high quality seating and covered areas.
- Provide recreational facilities for children and young people.
- Include planting and landscaping to reduce visual impact of the development and improve the natural environment.
- Support the installation of artwork and temporary exhibitions in public areas.
- Create better public access between green spaces.
- Promote a greater range of uses in urban green spaces.

Henry Wells Square Redevelopment Principles:

- An increase in the number of units (retail/business) within Henry Wells Square should be encouraged;
- The redevelopment should incorporate the provision for new homes above the retail/business units;
- The redevelopment of Henry Wells Square must seek to improve the experience for the consumer and encourage a diverse variety of retail outlets and businesses. In order to achieve this, the following should be taken into consideration when developing the design of the site:
 - Landscaping in and around the Square to encourage the use of external spaces for meeting/relaxing; to complement existing surroundings and to be aesthetically pleasing.
 - Adequate and aesthetic lighting.
 - Covered, well paved areas.
 - Easy, safe and suitable access to shopping areas and other facilities within the site for pedestrians and vehicles.
 - Informative sign posting, clear street names, unit numbers and names.
- The redevelopment must ensure all existing places of worship are retained, enhanced or provided elsewhere within the site;
- The redevelopment of Henry Wells Square should provide safe and convenient access off Aycliffe Drive and include sufficient car parking to meet the needs of the local centre.

Grovehill Connectivity and Public Realm:

- Where required and possible, amend and upgrade existing pathways to make the routes easier to navigate.
- Form a connected network of well designed, shared cycle routes throughout Grovehill with links to any new developments and to the wider regional cycle network, e.g. the Nickey Line.
- Where practicable, consider the removal of underused and unpopular underpasses and install street level crossings.
- Implement signage throughout the pedestrian and cycle network to direct people to Henry Wells Square, local schools, other community facilities as well as towards adjacent rights of way in the surrounding countryside. Any new signage should typically be natural wood signs and include maps where appropriate. It may be appropriate to provide pavement markings in accordance with the Highway Authority's standards to improve legibility of the existing and any new pedestrian and cycle networks.
- Pedestrian and cycle networks should be made safe and secure utilising environmentally sensitive lighting.
- Any non-essential street furniture should be removed in order to de-clutter the street scene.
- Where required, provide traffic calming measures, taking account of users of all modes of transport in accordance with the relevant Highway Authority's standards.

3 Screening for SEA

3.1 Introduction

A Sustainability Appraisal incorporating the requirements of the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive has been undertaken for the adopted Dacorum Core Strategy and also the Dacorum Site Allocations document, that is to be finalised before being submitted to the Secretary of State for an independent examination to be undertaken by a planning inspector.

Some of the policies and allocations included in these Borough wide planning documents, are directly relevant to the Grovehill Neighbourhood Plan area (e.g. Local Allocation 1: Marchmont Farm; and the potential allocation H/h111 Henry Wells Square⁵), however as they have already been subjected to SEA there is no need to repeat the process for these plan elements.

Therefore the screening process for the Grovehill Future NP just needs to focus on the specific policies and proposals within the Neighbourhood Plan and not on the wider principles of whether the area should be subject of new development / redevelopment or not.

3.2 SEA Screening

Annex II⁶ of the SEA Directive contains criteria for determining whether plans are likely to have significant environmental effects. These criteria are included in Table 1 along with an assessment of the likelihood of significant effects arising from the implementation of the Grovehill Future NP.

⁵ This site has not been allocated in either the Core Strategy or the Site Allocations document but has been subject to high level assessment as part of the SA/SEA for the Site Allocation options that were included in Dacorum's Supplementary Schedule of Site Appraisals (September 2014)

⁶ Included as Schedule 1 in the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004

Table 1: SEA Screening for the Grovehill Future Neighbourhood Plan

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects on the environment (Annex II SEA Directive)	Likelihood of significant effects	Assessment Commentary
1. The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular, to—		
(a) the degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources;	No	The NP sets the framework for redevelopment activities at a local level but the effects are not considered significant in terms of SEA.
(b) the degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy;	No	The NP sits below other plans in the hierarchy that have been subject to SEA.
(c) the relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development;	No	The NP promotes sustainable development but the effects are not considered significant in terms of SEA.
(d) environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme; and	No	The NP does not contain policies that would give rise to environmental problems.
(e) the relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (for example, plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection).	No	The NP does not contain policies relevant to the implementation of EC legislation.
2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to—		
(a) the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects;	No	The NP does not contain policies that would give rise to significant effects for which probability, duration, frequency and reversibility would need to be considered. Any effects will be localised and small-scale.
(b) the cumulative nature of the effects;	No	The NP will have some positive cumulative effects with the Core Strategy but these will not be significant.
(c) the transboundary nature of the effects;	No	This criterion relates to effects on other EU Member States.

(d) the risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents);	No	The NP will not result in any risks to human health.
(e) the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected);	No	The NP covers a small local area and the effects are likely to be restricted to that area.
(f) the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to—		
(i) special natural characteristics or cultural heritage;	No	<p>The NP area includes the Woodhall Wood wildlife site that is an area of ancient woodland.</p> <p>The NP area contains Hunting Gate Wood - extension of Margaret Lloyd Park.</p> <p>The NP area includes one designated heritage asset, the Grade II Listed St Agnell's Farmhouse, Cupid Green Ln.</p> <p>The NP area includes an area of local archaeological importance "<i>Evidence of high status Roman occupation including burials</i>" to the south of Woodhall Wood.</p> <p>The area is also in proximity to the Piccotts End Conservation Area and associated Listed Buildings.</p> <p>The NP area is partly within the Metropolitan Green Belt.</p> <p>The objectives and policies within the NP will not have significant effects on these special characteristics.</p>
(ii) exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values; or	No	The NP plan will not result in any environmental standards or limit values being exceeded.
(iii) intensive land-use; and	No	The NP relates to improvement of the current land use and not new intensive land use.
(g) the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.	No	The NP area is >1km from the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The NP will not have any adverse effects on the setting of the AONB.

3.3 SEA Screening Outcome

The screening assessment documented in Table 1 did not identify any criteria where significant effects are likely to result from the implementation of the draft Grovehill Future NP.

As a result of this finding it is considered that it will not be necessary to undertake an SEA of the Grovehill Future NP.

In their responses to the Screening Consultation (see Section 1.4) the statutory environmental bodies (Environment Agency, Historic England, and Natural England) were all in agreement with this conclusion.

4 Habitats Regulations Assessment

4.1 Introduction

In addition to SEA it is also necessary to determine whether the Neighbourhood Plan could lead to Likely Significant Effects upon a European Site, when considered either alone or in combination with other plans and projects. This is in order to meet the obligations of the Habitats⁷ and Wild Birds Directives⁸. These Directives aim to protect and improve Europe's most important habitats and species, such as the Chiltern Beechwoods Special Area of Conservation situated in the north of Dacorum Borough.

A Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) was undertaken for the adopted Dacorum Core Strategy and this was revisited for the Dacorum Site Allocations document.

The HRA for these higher level plans concluded that there would be no significant effects on Chiltern Beechwoods SAC, this being the only European Site likely to be affected by development in Dacorum. Natural England concurred with this conclusion.

4.2 HRA Screening

Chiltern Beechwoods SAC is situated approximately 6km to the north-west of the neighbourhood plan area.

The Grovehill Future NP does not introduce a new development that would result in any effects that would be of a scale that would alter the findings of the previous HRA of the Core Strategy and Site Allocations document. Therefore the conclusions of the Core Strategy HRA Report that there would be no significant effects on Chiltern Beechwoods SAC remain unchanged and there will be no need for any further Habitats Regulations Assessment in relation to the Grovehill Future NP.

In their response to the Screening Consultation (see Section 1.4) Natural England were in agreement with this conclusion.

5 Conclusion and Next Steps

The screening processes documented in Sections 3 and 4 have concluded that, neither SEA nor further Habitats Regulations Assessment will be required to be undertaken during the development of the Grovehill Future NP.

These findings have been confirmed by the three statutory consultation bodies (Environment Agency, Historic England, and Natural England) in their responses to the consultation on the Screening Report (September 2015).

Regulation⁹ requires that where the responsible authority determines that the plan, programme or modification is unlikely to have significant environmental effects (and, accordingly, does not require an environmental assessment), it shall prepare a statement of its reasons for the determination. It will therefore be necessary for Dacorum BC to prepare such a statement and inform the relevant bodies.

If significant changes are made to the policies in the Draft Grovehill Future NP following the consultation on the Plan it may be necessary to revisit the screening, however this is considered to be unlikely given the scope of the Plan.

It should be noted that SEA and HRA have been undertaken during the development of both the Dacorum Core Strategy and the Dacorum Site Allocations document and these assessment processes have picked up any general sustainability issues that would be associated with the implementation of the Grovehill Future NP, as well as any specific effects associated with any future development at Core Strategy Local Allocation LA1: Marchmont Farm; and the potential allocation H/h111 Henry Wells Square.

⁷ Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora.

⁸ Directive 2009/147/EC on the conservation of wild birds.

⁹ Regulation 9 (2b) of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (SI 2004 No. 1633).

Appendix 1: Consultation Responses

Consultation body comment and action required/taken
Environment Agency
Having taken a look at the information submitted we don't have any specific comments to make. Therefore we see no reason to request a SEA or an Appropriate Assessment.
<u>Action required/taken</u>
None required
Historic England
<p>The Screening Report indicates that the Council considers that the neighbourhood plan will not significantly affect any 'special natural characteristics or cultural heritage in the plan area.</p> <p>It is acknowledged that whilst there are site allocations directly relating to the neighbourhood plan area (such as Marchmont Farm and potentially Henry Wells Square) these have been / will be the subject of an SEA through the wider Site Allocations process and it is therefore not your intention to repeat the process for the neighbourhood plan, which seems reasonable. It is however considered that the outcome of the SEA process with regard to these two sites should be clearly reflected within the Screening Report and within the neighbourhood plan for clarity. We would also like to highlight our previous representations on the Site Allocations, most recently dated 22 September 2015, particularly with regard to comments over the site allocation at Marchmont Farm.</p> <p>In the terms of the screening assessment itself, we welcome the acknowledgement of the site of archaeological importance to the south of Woodhall Wood. It is considered the Screening Report should contain more information on the Historic Environment and highlight historic designations such as the one designated heritage asset in the area, the Grade II Listed farmhouse, and make note of non-designated Heritage Assets, seeking appropriate protection. The proximity to the Piccotts End Conservation Area and associated Listed Buildings should also be acknowledged.</p> <p>Notwithstanding the above, on the basis of the information supplied, as potential development sites within the neighbourhood plan boundary have been covered by SEA within the Site Allocations process, and in the context of the criteria set out in Schedule 1 of the Environmental Assessment Regulations (Annex II of the 'SEA' Directive), Historic England concurs with the Council that the preparation of an SEA is not required for the neighbourhood plan.</p> <p>We should like to stress that the above opinions are based on the information provided by you within your letter dated 23rd September 2015, the Screening Report and previous consultation on the Site Allocations (our most recent response dated 22 September 2015). To avoid any doubt, this does not reflect our obligation to provide further advice at later stages of the SEA process and, potentially, object to specific proposals which may subsequently arise as a result of the neighbourhood plan where we consider that, despite the absence of an SEA, these would have an adverse effect upon the Historic Environment.</p>
<u>Action required/taken</u>
The information on heritage assets provided in Table 1 has been updated.

Natural England
<p><u>SEA</u></p> <p>Natural England was consulted on the Pre-Submission Site Allocations document for Dacorum, to which we responded on 3rd November 2014. In this response, we provided comments on the Local Allocations policies and masterplans, including Policy LA1: Marchmont Farm, Hemel Hempstead. Our comments were as follows:</p> <p><i>‘We are pleased to note that an ecological survey of the site has already been undertaken and further surveys will be undertaken at the planning application stage and prior to any development taking place. Natural England is satisfied that proposals are unlikely to have any adverse effect on statutorily designated sites. We welcome that all trees and hedgerows within the site are to be retained and existing ecological corridors through and around the site to Howe Grove, Margaret Lloyd Park and the wider countryside are to be maintained. The Sustainability Appraisal identifies positive effects on greenhouse gas emissions and air quality, as the site has good access to local facilities which could decrease the need to travel, reducing the level of growth in emissions. We support improvement to pedestrian and cycle access and incorporation of open space and green linkages.’</i></p> <p>As the Grovehill Future Neighbourhood Plan is not introducing new development that would alter these findings, Natural England is in agreement that no SEA will be required for this plan.</p>
<p><u>Action required/taken</u> None required</p>
<p><u>HRA</u></p> <p>Natural England was consulted on the Dacorum Core Strategy and Site Allocations documents. The Habitats Regulations Assessment of the Core Strategy found no significant effects on the Chiltern Beechwoods Special Area of Consultation (SAC) from individual developments as a result of either air pollution or recreational disturbance. The assessment was updated to ensure there are no cumulative significant impacts on the SAC due to development proposed around Hemel Hempstead and the wider region. Natural England agreed with the conclusions of the HRA and the avoidance and mitigation measures proposed.</p> <p>The Grovehill Future Draft Neighbourhood Plan document does not put forward any sites that are of a scale and/or location that will alter the findings of the previous HRA (of the Core Strategy) or the Site Allocations document, therefore Natural England concurs that there is no requirement to carry out an HRA for this Neighbourhood Plan. However for clarity we advise that the Screening Report is amended to demonstrate that potential in-combination effects, with other projects and plans, have been considered. This is required to enable the Report to conclude that the Plan alone, and in-combination with other plans and projects, is unlikely to have a significant effect.</p> <p>For awareness, Neighbourhood Plans cannot exist where there is likely to be a significant effect on a European designated site. For this reason, Neighbourhood Plans cannot get as far as the Appropriate Assessment (AA) stage of a Habitats Regulations Assessment. Paragraph 1.3 and Part 4 of the Grovehill Future Draft Neighbourhood Plan are therefore incorrect when they refer to a requirement to determine whether an AA should be carried out. The requirement under the Habitats and Birds Directives as transposed into English law by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010, is that a Lilely Significant Effect test is carried out to ascertain whether there is a likely to be a significant effect on the integrity of a European designated site, alone or in combination with other plans or projects. Subject to implementation of the amendment suggested above, Natural England is satisfied that this ‘test’ has been applied through the HRA Screening Report.</p>
<p><u>Action required/taken</u></p> <p>The Screening Report and the relevant section of the Draft Neighbourhood Plan have been updated to reflect the advice provided by Natural England relating to the HRA process.</p>

6.3 How the Grovehill Neighbourhood Plan could benefit from Dacorum Borough Council's vision

DBC Vision	DBC objectives	Grovehill Future objectives
<p>Clean, Safe and enjoyable environment</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The parks and recreational spaces will continue to be high quality spaces achieving a green flag for environmental standards • Work with partners to focus on the twin aims of cutting crime and keeping people safe 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To improve the public spaces and amenities within Grovehill, help facilitate new and improved recreational activities for the community especially the youth • Work with the police and partners to identify areas for improvement and create a safe environment
<p>Building strong and Vibrant communities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver 'Get Set, Go Dacorum and Love Your Neighbourhood programmes as part of a broader package of community support • Commission another £1.8 million of voluntary and community services over the next three years with an option of a further two years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To create a community hub to integrate all of Grovehill, welcome visitors and share skills • Improved neighbourhood providing valuable services to the local community through volunteering or grant funding
<p>Ensuring economic growth and prosperity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a new strategy for regeneration and growth based around attracting private sector investment and expertise • Implement a plan to support the development of a digital high street 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To regenerate Henry Wells Square and surrounding area to increase economic growth and create a community hub • To identify users currently excluded from digital access and increase access to activities available online

6.3 How the Grovehill Neighbourhood Plan could benefit from Dacorum Borough Council’s vision

DBC Vision	DBC objectives	Grovehill Future objectives
<p>Providing good quality affordable homes, in particular for those most in need</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build 300 affordable new homes by 2020 and support a further 500 through developer agreements and Housing Associations • Support residents to access good quality and affordable homes in the private rented sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure housing is adequate, affordable and will help integrate and enhance the local community within Grovehill • To ensure young families have access to a variety of housing options for those in need
<p>Delivering an efficient modern council</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move into smaller energy efficient premises at the Forum, sharing costs with Herts County Council and reducing our operating expenditure • Make the majority of our services available online 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To continue the working relationship with DBC and other external bodies for grant funding and encourage economic growth and development • To work with local organisations to help deliver digital improvements to all ages

6.4 How the Grovehill Neighbourhood Plan was prepared - Diary of events



Date	Event Type
December 2011	Planning Aid Workshop - What is neighbourhood planning?
January 2012	Launch day feedback session - group activity to discuss the results of the launch day.
February 2012	Community Engagement Stakeholder Workshop - identifying our stakeholders.
March 2012	<p>Three Design workshops hosted by Design Council CABE.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What makes great places to live? - Grovehill walkabout: evaluating the place in detail, noting salient features. - Drawing up scenarios for Henry Wells Square Neighbourhood Centre.
May 2012	'Design in Neighbourhood Planning' learning event - the Forum attended a conference on neighbourhood design at DC CABE, London.
June 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PR meeting - to discuss recruitment of new members. - Visit to Astley Cooper School Yr.7 - to discuss the art competition and the groups. - Terms of Reference adopted - the election of the group's executives, terms of reference agreed and the Forum members elected.
July 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leaflet drop - all Grovehill homes leafleted with information about the Grovehill Future Neighbourhood Plan and invited them to join meetings. - Press release about the plans for the plan in local paper.
September 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Forum representatives attended the Neighbourhood Action Group AGM to give a talk/recruit residents and user groups. - Planning Aid workshop communication health checker - group activity to help with ongoing community engagement.

6.4 How the Grovehill Neighbourhood Plan was prepared - Diary of events



Date	Event Type
September - December 2012	Designation of the Neighbourhood Plan Area letter submitted to Dacorum Borough Council to request a six week public consultation. Consultation took place from 1 October - 12 November 2012 with formal designation approved as a 'Neighbourhood Area' under section 61G of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
October 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planning Aid how to 'create a vision' workshop - group activity. - Harlow Newhall trip - design trip to Harlow to view other areas of housing design. - Henry Wells Square workshop held to consider the viability of refurbishment vs redevelopment.
November 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Visit to Two Beeches residential home - group community engagement event. - Planning Aid visioning workshop - group activity to progress vision and themes for the NP.
December 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community Centre Christmas Fair - community engagement event, issuing leaflets, chatting to residents and Forum recruitment.
January 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Leaflet Drop - information leaflets delivered across Grovehill to update and engage local interest and recruit new members. - Neighbourhood Plan preparation workshop - group activity. - Planning Aid next steps workshop - group activity. - Key issues workshop - group activity to consider issues and visions.
January - March 2013	Vision Art Competition - 'Your vision for the future of Grovehill' - invitation to all children living or going to school in Grovehill to depict their vision of Grovehill Future. The prize giving day attended by the Mayor, local MP, County Councillor, Dacorum Borough Councillors and local residents. Support received from Head teacher, Astley Cooper for the plan. Captured more views of residents about the vision statement.

6.4 How the Grovehill Neighbourhood Plan was prepared - Diary of events



Date	Event Type
February 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Visions and Themes workshop February 2013 - Vision Statement prepared and then adopted by group. - Planning Aid engagement strategy workshop - group activity to progress further community engagement.
March 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - DC CABE Neighbourhood Planning Panel Review - The group were visited by key designers (the 3'BEE's) who reviewed the groups level of development and offered advice and support. - Henry Wells Sq. workshop (x2) - Conceptual options for viability for redevelopment and draft report generated. Discussed the proposed Marchmont Farm development principles. - Community Engagement workshop - group activity about future community engagement needs.
May 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Henry Wells Sq. workshop - viability follow up workshop. - Marchmont Farm community workshop – engagement and consultation workshop held, exploring access and movement options to integrate links from Grovehill to Marchmont Farm.
June 2013	<p>GHFF website was created - website set up and run by the group to keep all informed of the groups' activities. www.grovehillfuture.org.</p>
July 2013	<p>LA1 Site Allocation - Visit/talk from developer/stakeholders for Marchmont Farm.</p>
November 2013 - February 2014	<p>The Neighbourhood Forum - the next step in creating the Neighbourhood Plan was to create a Neighbourhood Forum.</p> <p>The group submitted an application to Dacorum Borough Council in October 2013, consultation held Nov 13 - Jan 14 and in Feb 14 the group were formally granted Neighbourhood Forum status under section 61F of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.</p>

6.4 How the Grovehill Neighbourhood Plan was prepared - Diary of events



Date	Event Type
February 2014	'Issues and Options' Workshop - group activity to consider key issues and options.
March 2014	Youth Survey - survey undertaken via all schools and community centre users/after school clubs - results used to inform the Issues and Options consultations.
January 2014	Facebook and Twitter accounts setup - created to assist in engaging more residents in consultation events.
March 2014	Planning Aid Workshop - Policy Planning.
October 2014	LA1-Site allocations Marchmont Farm exhibition workshop - the Forum attended DBC's site allocations workshop to understand emerging policy details.
September - October 2014	Issues and Option consultation - the Forum consulted with local residents, businesses and community groups on this document which outlined a series of ideas and objectives, the responses were used to inform the Plan.
November 2014	DBC's LA1 Site allocation Marchmont Farm consultation - the Forum issued their response to consultation.
February 2015	Community Fair - Community engagement, information and recruitment event.
July 2015	Sustainability appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) screening process commenced.
September 2015	SA/SEA Screening issued to statutory consultees for approval to support the GHFNP. Consultation responses actioned as appropriate.

6.4 How the Grovehill Neighbourhood Plan was prepared - Diary of events



Date	Event Type
January 2016 - July 2016	'Draft (pre-submission) Grovehill Future Neighbourhood Plan' prepared and approved by the Forum.
September - November 2016	'Draft (pre-submission) Grovehill Future Neighbourhood Plan' 6-week consultation 28 th Sept - 4 Nov issued to residents, businesses and community users groups in Grovehill for their final comments on the draft plan.
Next steps (subject to change, as dependent upon DBC and external examiner timescales)	
December 2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review of the consultation responses and actioned, as appropriate.
February/March 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Grovehill Future Neighbourhood Plan submitted to Dacorum Borough Council to confirm eligibility to go to external examination.
May/June 2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - External Examination undertaken - followed by approval to proceeding to Referendum.
July - September 2017	Referendum held - residents to support the Grovehill Future Neighbourhood Plan at referendum.
September - December 2017	The 'Grovehill Future Neighbourhood Plan' 'made' and now a statutory planning document for Dacorum Borough Council.

6.5 Key Issues - Issues and Options analysis



Below highlights some of the concerns raised through ongoing community engagement in the form of consultations and Neighbourhood Plan issues and options. These responses helped to inform the most important section of the Grovehill Future Neighbourhood Plan, the ‘policies’, which are locally relevant to Grovehill and have been designed to steer any proposed development and potential improvements to ensure they are for the benefit of all.

<p>Henry Wells Square - Issues</p>	<p>Grovehill Future proposed option</p>
<p>Henry Wells Square is poorly designed with a great deal of unused space and parking areas to the rear of the shops.</p>	<p>Good building layout, design and mixed uses will create natural surveillance. People will feel safe and secure visiting the centre during the day and the evening.</p>
<p>Garage Blocks - Issues</p>	<p>Grovehill Future proposed option</p>
<p>Garage blocks are isolated, lack natural surveillance and are poor in appearance. The garages are too small for modern cars and many garage blocks and parking courts are underused.</p>	<p>Redevelopment of garage blocks, will improve the appearance and vitality of the neighbourhood.</p>
<p>Enhancing Public Spaces - Issues</p>	<p>Grovehill Future proposed option</p>
<p>Some areas of Grovehill are not within easy reach of areas where young children can play.</p>	<p>New or improved amenity spaces will give young children areas to play close to their homes. There will be safe spaces and play areas for all ages, both indoor and outdoor facilities for children and the youth as well as the elderly.</p>
<p>Housing - Issues</p>	<p>Grovehill Future proposed option</p>
<p>In many areas it is unclear which are the front and the back of houses, making it difficult for visitors to navigate.</p> <p>Residents often park and access their homes from the rear, reducing activity and social interaction in pedestrian areas.</p>	<p>New development will integrate with the existing neighbourhood through strengthened footpaths, cycle ways and shared facilities, creating a sense of one community.</p>
<p>Improving Access and Connectivity - Issues</p>	<p>Grovehill Future proposed option</p>
<p>The many garage blocks and back alleyways make it difficult to choose which route to use and add to safety and security concerns.</p>	<p>Better connectivity and signage so local residents and visitors alike will be easily able to navigate their way through Grovehill and Henry Wells Square, providing safe and accessible routes, balancing the needs of pedestrians, cyclists and drivers.</p>

6.6 Grovehill Future Neighbourhood Plan Policies - Example of evolved policies



The table below shows the process used to create the final policies within the Neighbourhood Plan. They have evolved from the Forum's original 'Vision', to key 'Issues and Option' and the 'Aims, Objectives and Opportunities, through community engagement events from 2011-2016*.

Vision Theme 	Community engagement issues* 	Consideration of issue 	Final GHFNP Policy	Aim 
Henry Wells Square	Henry Wells Square is poorly designed with a great deal of unused space and parking areas to the rear of the shops	Good building layout, design and mixed uses will create natural surveillance. People will feel safe and secure visiting the centre during the day and the evening.	Area 1: Henry Wells Square	Economic
Garage blocks - these overlap with all of the themes	Garage blocks are isolated, lack natural surveillance and are poor in appearance. The garages are too small for modern cars and many garage blocks and parking courts are underused.	Redevelopment of garage blocks, will improve the appearance and vitality of the neighbourhood.	Area 2: Garage blocks	Economic
Quality and Protection of Green Space	Some areas of Grovehill are not within easy reach of areas where young children can play.	New or improved amenity spaces will give young children areas to play close to their homes. There will be safe spaces and play areas for all ages, both indoor and outdoor facilities for children and the youth as well as the elderly.	Theme 1: Enhancing public spaces	Environmental
Housing and New Development	Residents often park and access their homes from the rear, reducing activity and social interaction in pedestrian areas	New development will integrate with the existing neighbourhood through strengthened footpaths, cycle ways and shared facilities, creating a sense of one community	Theme 2: Housing	Social

6.6 Grovehill Future Neighbourhood Plan Policies - Example of evolved policies



Vision Theme 	Community engagement issues* 	Consideration of issue 	Final GHFNP Policy	Aim 
Connectivity and Public Realm Improvements	Grovehill was designed as a car dominated layout	More pedestrian refuges will be created to aid the crossing of main roads.	Theme 3: Improving access and connectivity	Environmental
Services for the Community	There are not enough facilities for children and young people within the neighbourhood. The large youth club building appears to no longer be in use.	There will be indoor facilities for children and the youth of the community as well as the elderly.	All GHFNP policies	Social