

**SCREENING STATEMENT UNDER REGULATION 9 OF THE STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT REGULATIONS 2004 ON THE DETERMINATION OF THE NEED FOR STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (SEA) FOR THE NEWPORT NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN (NNDP)**

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This document is the Strategic Environmental assessment Screening Statement for the Newport Neighbourhood Development Plan (NNDP). This SEA Screening Statement concludes that the NNDP is unlikely to have Significant Environmental Effects and the NNDP is therefore screened-out of the SEA process and no further assessments under the SEA Regulations are deemed to be necessary.

## **1. Introduction**

1.1 The government has decided that sustainability appraisals are only required for Development plan Documents and do not apply to Neighbourhood Plans. However Neighbourhood Plans must not breach and must be compatible with EU and Human Rights obligations. Neighbourhood Plans therefore need to be considered against the Habitat and Strategic Environmental Assessment Directives and associated Regulations. Whilst not every Neighbourhood Plan will need a Strategic Environmental Assessment it is necessary for the qualifying body, that is Newport Town Council, to prepare a Screening Statement to determine whether the scope and matters addressed in the Neighbourhood Plan are likely to have significant environmental effects that would require a Strategic Environmental Assessment to be undertaken.

1.2 Strategic Environmental Assessments (SEA) are required by **EU Directive 2001/42/EC**, to assess the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment. This Directive was implemented in the UK in July 2004 with the adoption of the **Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (the Regulations)**. The requirement for SEA is assessed under **Regulation 9 (1)**. The SEA focuses on impacts on the natural environment with some limited consideration of human needs and material assets. The SEA itself should, among other things, consider options, quantify impacts and offer advice on alternatives or mitigating measures where impacts are likely.

1.3 **Regulation 8** explicitly prevents the adoption or submission of a Plan for which an Environmental Assessment is required before the SEA is completed. This Regulation also prohibits the adoption or submission of a Plan before the responsible authority has determined whether the Plan is likely to have significant effects on the environment.

1.4 Different parts of the Telford & Wrekin Local Plan will have varying degrees of environmental impact and it is not possible to categorically rule out the need for SEA without first carrying out a screening process to establish whether or not the Newport Neighbourhood Development Plan is likely to have **Significant Environmental Effects (Article 3(1))**. Under **Article 3(4)** of the Directive and **Regulation 5** of the Regulations the responsible authority must determine which

Plans, other than those for which an SEA is automatically required, are likely to have significant environmental effects. The responsible authority as defined by **Regulation 2** is the authority on whose behalf the Plan is prepared, that is Newport Town Council.

1.5 Both the Directive (**in annex11**) and the Regulations (**in Schedule 1**) set out specific criteria for determining the likely significance of the environmental effects of a Plan. The process for determining whether or not is required is called **Screening**. These criteria include specific considerations regarding the characteristics of the Plan, the effects of the Plan and the area likely to be affected by the Plan.

1.6 A determination cannot be made until the three statutory consultation bodies have been consulted, that is the **Environment Agency, Natural England** and **Historic England**.

1.7 Within 28 days of making its determination the Town Council must publish a Statement, such as this one, setting out its decision. If it determines that a SEA is not required the statement must include the reasons for this.

## **2. Neighbourhood Development Plans**

2.1 Neighbourhood planning is a community right introduced by the **Localism Act 2011**. Take up of this right is voluntary and at the discretion of neighborhoods and communities.

2.2 In March 2012 the government published the final version of the **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)**, replacing existing planning guidance. The NPPF sets out the provisions for Neighbourhood Plans in paragraphs 183, 184 and 185 of the Framework.

2.3 The Neighbourhood Planning Regulations (SI 637) came into force on 6<sup>th</sup>. April 2012 and have since been amended through the Neighbourhood Planning (Referendums) (Amendment) Regulations 2016 which became effective on 1<sup>st</sup>. October 2016 (SI 934). This sets out the procedures for designating a Neighbourhood Plan Area and getting the Plan adopted through the planning system.

## **3. Newport Neighbourhood Development Plan**

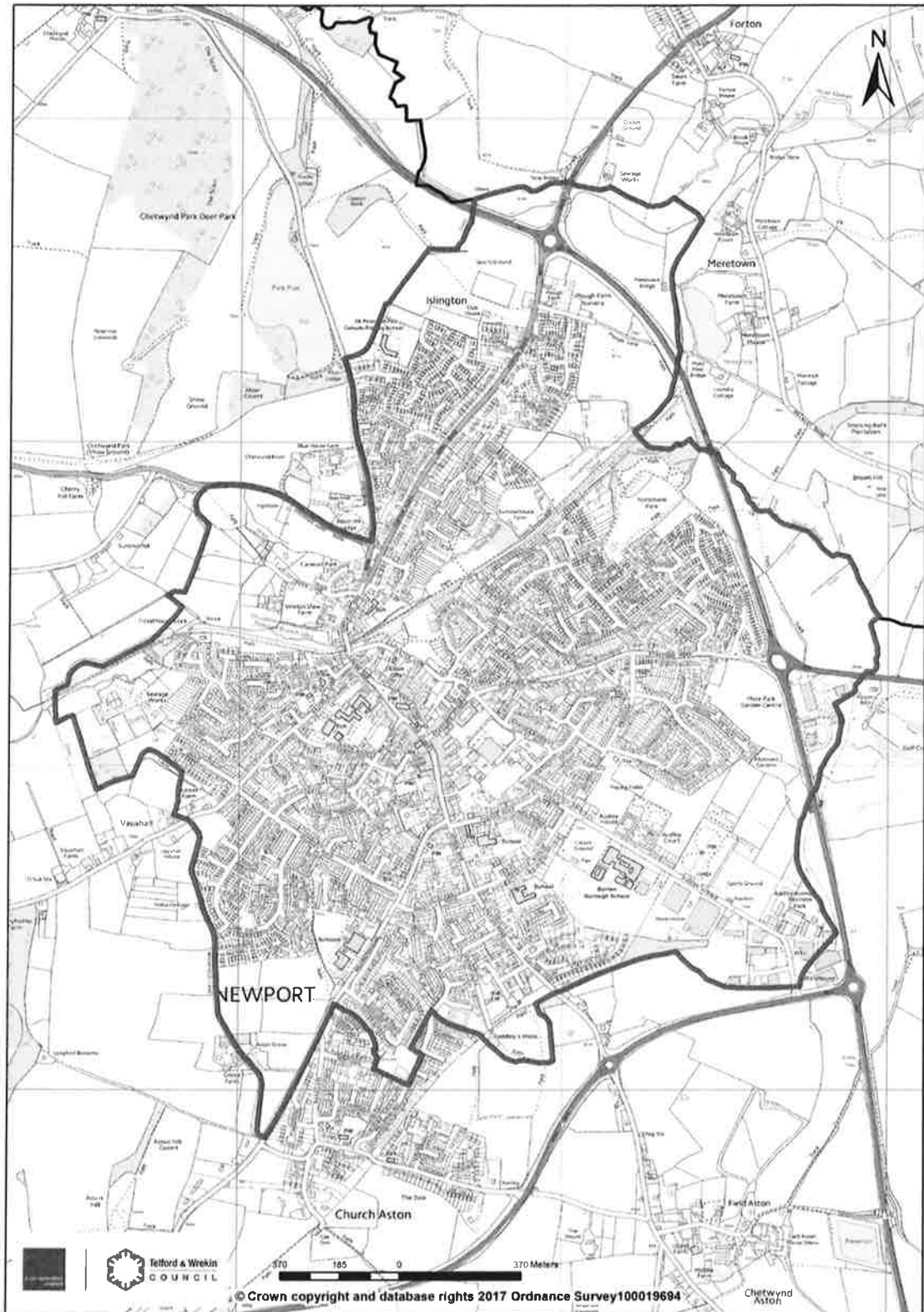
3.1 The NDP must conform to National Planning Policy and Strategic Local Development Plan Development Plan Policies. This means that it must conform to the NPPF and the Telford & Wrekin Core Strategy (2007), the saved policies of the Telford & Wrekin Local Plan (2000), the saved policies of the Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin Joint Structure Plan (2002), the saved policies of the Shropshire, Telford & Wrekin Minerals Local plan (2000), the LDF Central Telford Area Action Plan (2011) and the policies in the emerging Local Plan 2011-2031 currently undergoing Examination in Public. The Strategic Policies for housing in Newport in the Telford & Wrekin Local Plan are SP2 Newport and H13 an allocation for new

housing. Consequently there is no specific requirement to allocate sites in the NNDP.

3.2 Newport Town Council decided to produce a Neighbourhood Development Plan and submitted its application to Telford & Wrekin Council for designation of its Neighbourhood Area in January 2013. After a formal six week consultation period Telford & Wrekin Council resolved to support the Neighbourhood Area application and the Neighbourhood Area was designated. A notice confirming the designation was published on 30<sup>th</sup>. May 2013. The following map shows the designated Neighbourhood Plan Area.

3.3 The Newport Neighbourhood Plan is based around a number of important local issues that were raised during consultation and identified from survey evidence. These issues reflect what local people are seeking from their Plan and they have been used to develop policy objectives, policy options and the policy areas that make up the Neighbourhood Development Plan.

# Newport Neighbourhood Development Plan Boundary



### 3.4 Local Policy Areas

- Housing
- Economy and Jobs
- Green and Open Spaces
- Water Lane
- Tourism and Leisure
- Transport and Accessibility
- Newport as a Retail and Service Centre
- Local Landscape and Wildlife
- Community Wellbeing
- Sustainability and Climate Change

3.5 These policy areas have been used to prepare the detailed policies that comprise the Neighbourhood Plan that will be considered through Regulation 14 Consultation. The policies in the Plan may be further refined as a result of the responses received during the consultation period. The amended and final version of the Neighbourhood Plan will be presented for Independent Examination.

<b>Newport Neighbourhood Development Plan Objectives</b>
<p><b>Policy Area: Housing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To support new housing that will provide affordable dwellings that will be delivered on-site throughout the development period.</li><li>• To support new housing that will include a mix of dwellings and tenures to meet local needs including dwellings suited to older residents as well as younger households.</li><li>• To avoid an overconcentration of houses in multiple occupation (HMO) in any one part of Newport that could adversely affect the character of the locality.</li></ul>
<p><b>Policy Area: Economy and Jobs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To support the retention of existing employment sites and protect them from changes to alternative uses in order to protect existing jobs and businesses.</li><li>• To secure new job opportunities to provide employment for the growing population and minimize the need to travel to work outside Newport.</li></ul>
<p><b>Policy Area: Green and Open Space</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To protect and where possible improve existing Green Spaces.</li><li>• To support the provision of new Green Spaces within new development and improve linkage between them.</li><li>• To support the provision of new and accessible green space to achieve the standards set out in "Fields in Trust Guidance for Outdoor Sport and Play (England)" as recommended by the government.</li></ul>
<p><b>Policy Area: Water Lane</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• To encourage new development in this area.</li></ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To support development that will add to the characters and quality of Newport and its Conservation Area.</li> <li>• To support the creation of an area of mixed uses based on residential and small-scale employment.</li> <li>• To support development that will relate to Victoria Park and the adjacent canal to be mutually beneficial to both.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Policy Area: Tourism and Leisure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To encourage the development of facilities tha support sustainable tourism and leisure.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Policy Area: Transport and Accessibility</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To support new developments that has sufficient car parking to meet current and future needs.</li> <li>• To support enhancement of existing public rights of way and the provision of routes and connections to improve accessibility for residents.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Policy Area: Newport as a Retail and Service Centre</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To support retail uses and make sure that non-retail uses do not impact negatively on the shopping environment or local amenity within the centre.</li> <li>• To protect and enhance the Conservation Area as part of measures to conserve the Town's heritage and support the centre as a destination for residents and visitors.</li> <li>• To support the provision of adequate off-street car parking to serve the centre of Newport.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Policy Area: Local Landscape and Wildlife</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To help maintain Newport as a freestanding Market Town.</li> <li>• To protect the open countryside around Newport and preserve the separation between Newport and Edgmond to the North West and Lilleshall to the South.</li> <li>• To protect important hedgerows, trees and woodland to make sure that the natural qualities of the rural landscape are maintained.</li> <li>• To protect and enhance the biodiversity and range of species in the countryside around Newport.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Policy Area: Community Wellbeing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To seek to protect existing community facilities and services that are considered to be important in providing ongoing community wellbeing and to support new facilities for the benefit of residents and visitors.</li> <li>• To support new facilities for families and young people.</li> <li>• To protect existing community buildings.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Policy Area: Sustainability and Climate Change</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To support energy efficiency and high environmental standards in new buildings in order to address climate change locally and to conserve natural resources.</li> </ul>

#### 4. Monitoring Delivery

4.1 The Neighbourhood Plan sets out a process for monitoring and review of the policies that will be undertaken by the Town council in liaison with Telford & Wrekin Council.

#### 5. Assessment of Requirement for Strategic Environmental Assessment

5.1 The government has published planning guidance in the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG). The guidance advises that to decide whether a Neighbourhood Plan might have significant environmental effects it must be assessed or screened in accordance with the requirements set out in **Regulation 9 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004**. These include a requirement to consult the environmental assessment consultation bodies.

Where it is determined that the plan is unlikely to have Significant Environmental Effects (and, accordingly, does not require an Environmental Assessment), a statement of reasons for the determination should be prepared.

5.2 In principle, Neighbourhood Plans should not be subject to the SEA Directive or require Sustainability Appraisal because they do not normally introduce new policies or proposals or modify planning documents that have already been subject to sustainability appraisal. However, they might occasionally be found likely to give rise to significant effects that have not been previously assessed.

5.3 When screening a plan **Article 3(6) of the SEA Directive** requires that the relevant bodies concerned with environmental matters, as defined by individual Member states, shall be consulted as part of the Screening process. In the case of the UK, the statutory environmental consultees are: **Natural England**, the **Environment Agency** and **Historic England**.

5.4 It is considered that the screening methodology should address the issues identified in the table below.

Screening Stage	Purpose
Assessing the Newport Neighbourhood Plan against Annex II criteria	To establish whether or not the NDP is likely to have a significant effect on the Annex II criteria. This will take account of the role of the NDP in relation to the existing policy context
Conclusion on whether the Screening exercise identifies a need for SEA	To set out conclusions from the Screening exercise
Recommendations for how the Newport Neighbourhood Plan should proceed in relation to SEA requirements	To set out the broad approach needed to carry out an SEA on the NDP or, where the screening report suggests no SEA is required, to determine the parameters within which the NDP will need to operate to avoid triggering a need for an SEA.

## 6. Assessing the Newport Neighbourhood Development Plan against Annex II Criteria

6.1 Annex II of the SEA Directive sets out the criteria for determining if there are likely to be significant effects resulting from the implementation of a plan.

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)	Likely to have significant environmental effects	Summary of significant effects
<p><b>1a) 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.</b></p>	<p>No</p>	<p>The Newport Neighbourhood Development Plan (NNDP) proposes a framework of development policies comprising Housing, Economy and Jobs, Green and Open Spaces, Water Lane, Tourism and Leisure, Transport and Accessibility, Newport as a Retail and Service Centre, Local Landscape and Wildlife, Community Wellbeing and Sustainability and Climate Change. It seeks to designate Local Green Spaces, deliver affordable housing and protect the surrounding countryside to prevent coalescence with neighbouring villages.</p> <p>Supporting suitable sites for housing development and the creation of jobs to meet local needs will contribute towards the Telford &amp; Wrekin Strategic Policies for Newport in the emerging Local Plan and the saved Development Plan Policies.</p> <p>Policy SP2, H13 and EC4 in the Telford &amp; Wrekin Local Plan relate to Newport. The Policies identify development that will support its role as a Market town providing new homes and additional employment. The Newport Neighbourhood Development Plan will be in conformity with the policies set out in the emerging Local Plan that has already undergone a Sustainability Appraisal.</p>



<p><b>1(b) the degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans or programmes including those in a hierarchy.</b></p>	<p>No</p>	<p>The Newport Neighbourhood Plan responds to other plans and programmes such as the LDF Core Strategy, other saved Development Plan policies, the emerging Local Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework, as it is a lower tier planning policy document. The NNDP is likely to have a positive impact on these Plans through its policies to deliver sustainable development and protect and enhance the local environment; it will help deliver the objectives and Policies of the emerging Local Plan.</p> <p>The environmental characteristics of Newport and how these compare relative to the West Midlands and other parts of the country has been given limited attention in the NNDP. This is because this activity is not directly helpful to the Plan delivery process. The focus is therefore on the issues already identified within Telford &amp; Wrekin.</p>
<p><b>1(c) the relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development.</b></p>	<p>No</p>	<p>The Newport Neighbourhood Development Plan has regard to the objective of achieving sustainable development in the local area. The NNDP contains policies that seek to protect and retain local valuable green and open spaces, public rights of way, provide new homes to meet local need and help to promote and support existing services and facilities. The plan looks to support and promote public transport opportunities, and the re-use of existing buildings for business use. The policies in the NNDP support the provision of a balanced range of good quality housing (size, type and affordability, tenure) as supported by local residents. The Policies in the NNDP have been prepared to have a positive impact on local environmental assets and places valued by local people in the Neighbourhood area. They will primarily focus on the protection and enhancement of green and open spaces the quality of the built environment and the conservation of the historic centre and its buildings.</p>

<p><b>1(d) environmental problems relevant to the plan</b></p>	<p>No</p>	<p>There are no major allocations identified for housing or employment. The NNDP identifies limited public transport and town centre parking as environmental issues and seeks to minimise the impacts by supporting alternative transport opportunities and off-street parking through development policies. Policies H2, H3, TA1 and RS1 support the provision of adequate off-street parking and improvements to pedestrian and cycle way routes through new development.</p> <p>Any further environmental problems could be triggered through the development of new housing sites however the impact on traffic flow/highway safety, drainage, ecology and the environment is unclear at this stage. If an application for housing were made to the Local Planning Authority it would have to go through a rigorous assessment process where conditions/mitigation could be put in place to reduce environmental problems should the development be considered acceptable.</p> <p>There are no Air Quality Management Areas within the Newport Neighbourhood Development Plan area.</p>
<p><b>1(e) the relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of community legislation on the environment (e.g. plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection)</b></p>	<p>No</p>	<p>The NNDP policies do not propose any changes that are likely to have a severe impact on the environment i.e. tree preservation orders or existing public rights of way. The Telford &amp; Wrekin Local Plan Policies on the Natural Environment are positive enabling policies (NE1 to NE7) and the Newport Neighbourhood Development Plan has adopted a similar approach that is likely to have a positive effect.</p>
<p><b>2(a) the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects</b></p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Due to the limited scale of new development proposed, it is unlikely that the NNDP would result in any irreversible damaging environmental impacts. Any new development should be sustainable and be in accordance with existing planning policy</p>
<p><b>2(b) the cumulative nature of the effects</b></p>	<p>No</p>	<p>It is not possible to fully assess the cumulative effects of future development until planning applications have been submitted and assessed for the site allocated in the Local plan However it is anticipated that the likely issues would be the impact on school places, transportation and highway safety. These matters are the responsibility of Telford &amp; Wrekin Council. It</p>

		may be possible to address some or all of these cumulative issues through mitigation measures, financial contributions, and in detail as part of the planning application process. Further to this it is thought the policies within the NNDP will generate positive effects.
<b>2(c) the trans boundary nature of the effects</b>	No	The housing and small-scale employment policies of the Newport Neighbourhood Development Plan are unlikely to generate any significant cross-boundary effects. By designating and protecting Local Green Spaces the NNDP may help to reduce pressure on open spaces elsewhere. Support for more sustainable transport modes and linkages, including cycling, walking should help to minimise any trans boundary effects. Effects will be mainly local but there may be some effects on surrounding areas. It is not clear at this stage what these effects will be.
<b>2(d) the risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents)</b>	No	It is unlikely that there will be any obvious risks to human health arising from the policies within the Newport Neighbourhood Development Plan. Health and Safety standards on developments arising within the plan area will be controlled/ governed by relevant statutory regulations, guidelines and codes. Any risks arising from the policies and proposals in the NNDP will be managed in accordance with the relevant statutory frameworks, however no details have been submitted or are shown within the Plan.
<b>2(e) the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)</b>	No	The Strine Brook runs through Newport. However any impact on development or adjacent property will be controlled and managed by the relevant statutory bodies and planning consent. The area is characterised by its Conservation Area and Listed Buildings and areas of green space. The policies contained in the ENP seek to protect and enhance open space, retain historical character, protect amenities and services, whilst supporting a mix of new homes to meet local needs. The Neighbourhood Plan will impact on the local population, it has been prepared to address local issues raised by local people during consultation.
<b>2(f) the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:</b>  <b>(i) special natural</b>		The NNDP is unlikely to adversely affect the value and vulnerability of the area in relation to its natural or cultural heritage. It will provide support to enhance the setting of heritage assets and of local green spaces. Where possible, policies will encourage new opportunities for recreation, access and

<p><b>characteristics or cultural heritage</b></p> <p><b>(ii) exceeded environmental quality standards</b></p> <p><b>(iii) intensive land-use</b></p>		<p>leisure. The Newport Neighbourhood Development Plan Policies will seek to protect, preserve, enhance known sites and areas of ecological or environmental importance, as well as designating Local Green Spaces. This together with policies that seek to protect the surrounding countryside, landscape wildlife will support the protection and preservation of the characteristic natural features of Newport Neighbourhood Area. The NNDP seeks to protect and conserve the cultural and historic heritage of Newport. These Policies are in accordance with Policies in the emerging Telford &amp; Wrekin Local Plan dealing with the Natural Environment, the Built Environment and Heritage, and Environmental Resources.</p>
<p><b>2 (g) the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, community or international protection status.</b></p>	<p>No</p>	<p>It is considered that the NNDP is unlikely to adversely impact on existing landscapes. Whilst there are areas of grade 2, 3 and 4 agricultural land within the Newport Neighbourhood Area the Plan does not propose any new development on the best and most versatile land.</p> <p>Some of the eastern parts of the Newport Neighbourhood Area are within 10km of Aqualate Mere Midland Meres &amp; Mosses Ramsar Phase 2. The Newport Neighbourhood Development Plan does not propose any new development that would affect the site.</p> <p>A statement on Habitats Regulations assessment will be prepared identifying whether the Plan is likely to have a Significant Effect on a European Site, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.</p> <p>The plan proposes to protect green and open spaces, the local landscape and wildlife through policies CS1, GS2, GS3 and LW1 that are likely to have beneficial impacts.</p>

## 7. Conclusion

7.1 The conclusion of this SEA Screening Statement is that the Newport Neighbourhood Development Plan is unlikely to have significant environmental effects and is therefore screened-out of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) process and that no further assessment under the **SEA Regulations** is recommended. The statutory consultees; **Natural England**, the **Environment Agency** and **Historic England**, will be given an opportunity to comment on this Screening Statement and Telford & Wrekin Council will have regard to their comments prior to making the Newport Neighbourhood Plan.