

Menston Neighbourhood Plan

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening Report

&

Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) Screening Report

Determination Statement

Prepared by Design Yorkshire on behalf of Menston Parish Council

January 2026



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Abbreviations

CBMDC	-	City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council
HRA	-	Habitat Regulations Assessment
LPA	-	Local Planning Authority
MNP	-	Menston Neighbourhood Plan
MPC	-	Menston Parish Council
NPPF	-	National Planning Policy Framework
NPPG	-	National Planning Policy Guidance
SAC	-	Special Area of Conservation
SEA	-	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SPA	-	Special Protection Area
SSSI	-	Site of Special Scientific Interest

0. Determination Statement

0.1 This statement provides the determination (under Regulation 9 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (SEA Regulations)) that the draft Menston Neighbourhood Plan (MNP) is unlikely to result in significant environmental effects and therefore does not require a Strategic Environmental Assessment.

0.2 This statement also includes the reasons for this determination (in line with Regulation 11 of the SEA Regulations).

0.3 This statement also determines that the making of the draft MNP is unlikely to result in any significant effects on any European sites and therefore the MNP does not require a Habitat Regulation Assessment.

0.4 The statement also intends to demonstrate that the HNP is compatible with The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019) (the 2017 regulations as amended).

0.5 This determination has been made on 8th April 2026. Within 28 days of this determination, Menston Parish Council will publish this determination statement in accordance with its regulatory requirements (as per Regulation 11 of the SEA Regulations). Statutory consultees will be sent a copy of this statement and copies of the statement will be available for inspection on Bradford Council's website www.Bradford.gov.uk and on the Parish Council's website www.menston-pc.gov.uk

0.6 A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) screening opinion was prepared on behalf of Menston Parish Council for the draft Menston Neighbourhood Plan. This opinion, included later in this report was made available to the statutory environmental bodies (Natural England, Historic England and Environment Agency) for comment in January 2026. Consultation responses were received from two of the three bodies. Their conclusions are summarised below and detailed responses are included in section 9.

0.7 Historic England agreed that it is unlikely an significant environmental effects will arise from the MNP.

0.8 Natural England had no specific comments to make on the MNP.

0.9 The Environment Agency did not respond.

0.10 The SEA/HRA screening concludes that the Menston Neighborhood Plan is not predicted to have any likely significant effects on any European site, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects. Based on the screening opinion prepared by Menston Parish Council in January 2026 and having considered the consultation responses from the statutory environmental bodies, Menston Parish Council determines that the Menston Neighbourhood Plan is unlikely to result in significant environmental effects and therefore does not require a strategic environmental assessment.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 This report sets out the screening assessment for the Menston Neighbourhood Plan (MNP). The purpose of screening is to establish if the MNP will require a full Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and/or a Habitat Regulation Assessment (HRA). Sections 6 and 8 shows the conclusions of the screening assessment.

1.2 An SEA is a process for evaluating the environmental effects of a plan before it is made. The SEA screening determines whether the plan is likely to have significant environmental effects. If likely significant environmental effects are identified, an environmental report must be produced.

1.3 A Habitats Regulations Assessment identifies whether a plan is likely to have a significant effect on a European site, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects. A HRA is required when it is deemed that likely negative significant effects may occur on protected European Sites (Natura 2000 sites) as a result of the implementation of a plan/project. The HRA screening will determine whether significant effects on a European site are likely.

1.4 This report explains the legislative background to SEA and HRA screening, provides details of the draft MNP before undertaking a SEA and HRA screening exercise and providing conclusions.

1.5 Design Yorkshire have prepared this screening report on behalf of the Menston Parish Council (MPC) who is the qualifying body for the MNP. Bradford City Council has a responsibility to advise the MPC if there is a need for formal SEA/HRA of the draft plan. One of the basic conditions that will be tested by the independent examiner is whether the making of the neighbourhood plan is compatible with European Union obligations (this includes the SEA Directive).

1.6 SEA/HRA screening was applied to the draft NDP that was produced and issued for the Regulation 14 consultation. This version of the plan has previously been informally consulted on with CBMDC and suggested changes have been incorporated. The draft plan has also undergone several informal local consultations as the plan was being produced.

2.0 Legislative Background

Strategic Environmental Assessment

2.1 The basis for Strategic Environmental Assessments and Sustainability Appraisal legislation is European Directive 2001/42/EC and was transposed into English law by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, or SEA Regulations. Detailed Guidance of these regulations can be found in the Government publication 'A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive' (ODPM 2005).

2.2 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 required Local Authorities to produce Sustainability Appraisals (SA) for all local development documents to meet the requirement of the EU Directive on SEA. It is considered best practice to incorporate requirements of the SEA Directive into an SA as discussed within the NPPF at paragraph 165. However, the 2008 Planning Act amended the requirement to undertake a Sustainability Appraisal for only development plan documents (DPD's), but did not remove the requirement to produce a Strategic Environmental Assessment. As a Neighbourhood Plan is not a development plan document it therefore does not legally require a Sustainability Appraisal. Where appropriate, however, an SEA still needs to be undertaken in line with the SEA regulations.

2.3 In February 2015 amendments to the Neighbourhood Plan Regulations came into force. Regulation 2(4) of these amendments adds additions to the list of documents that a qualifying body must submit to a local planning authority with a Neighbourhood Plan. The additional document which must be submitted is either an environmental report prepared in accordance with the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, or a statement of reasons why an environment assessment is not required. The amendment to the Regulations is to ensure that the public can make informed representations and that independent examiners have sufficient information before them to determine whether a neighbourhood plan is likely to have significant environmental effects.

2.4 The legislation advises that 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. The regulations state that before an authority makes a determination on a plan it should:

- a) Take into account the criteria for determining the likely significance of effects on the environment specified in schedule 1 of the Regulations.
- b) Consult the environmental consultation bodies.

2.5 The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) provides further guidance on SEA screening. It advises that whether a neighbourhood plan proposal requires a Strategic Environmental Assessment, and (if so) the level of detail needed, will depend on what is proposed. A SEA may be required, for example, where:

- A neighbourhood plan allocates sites for development.
- The neighbourhood area contains sensitive natural or heritage assets that may be affected by proposals in the plan.
- The neighbourhood plan is likely to have significant environmental effects that have not already been considered and dealt with through a sustainability appraisal of the Local Plan.

2.6 Where it is determined that the plan is unlikely to have significant environmental effects, and accordingly, does not require an environmental assessment, the authority is required to prepare a statement for its reasons for the determination. If likely significant environmental effects are identified then an environmental report must be prepared in accordance with paragraphs (2) and (3) of regulation 12 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.

Habitats Regulations Assessment

2.7 Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) has its origins in European law under the EU Habitats Directive. This has been translated into UK law via The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019) (the 2017 regulations as amended).

2.8 Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive and Regulations 105 and 106 of the 2017 regulations (as amended) require that an appropriate assessment is carried out with regard to the Conservation Objectives of the European Sites and with reference to other plans and projects to identify if any significant effect is likely for any European Site.

2.9 The NPPG advises that it is required to determine whether significant effects on a European site can be ruled on the basis of objective information. If the conclusion of the screening is that the plan is likely to have a significant effect on a European site then an appropriate assessment of the implications of the plan for the site, in view of the site's conservation objectives, must be undertaken. If a plan is one which has been determined to require an appropriate assessment under the Habitats directive then it will normally also require a SEA.

3.0 Menston Neighbourhood Plan

3.1 Whether a Neighbourhood Plan requires an SEA or HRA depends on what is being proposed in the plan. The draft MNP includes locally specific policies and guidance for the plan area but importantly does not allocate any sites for development nor does it promote more development than what is being proposed by CBMDC.

3.2 This section of the report sets out the context of the Menston and details the characteristics of the Plan Area.

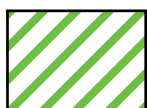
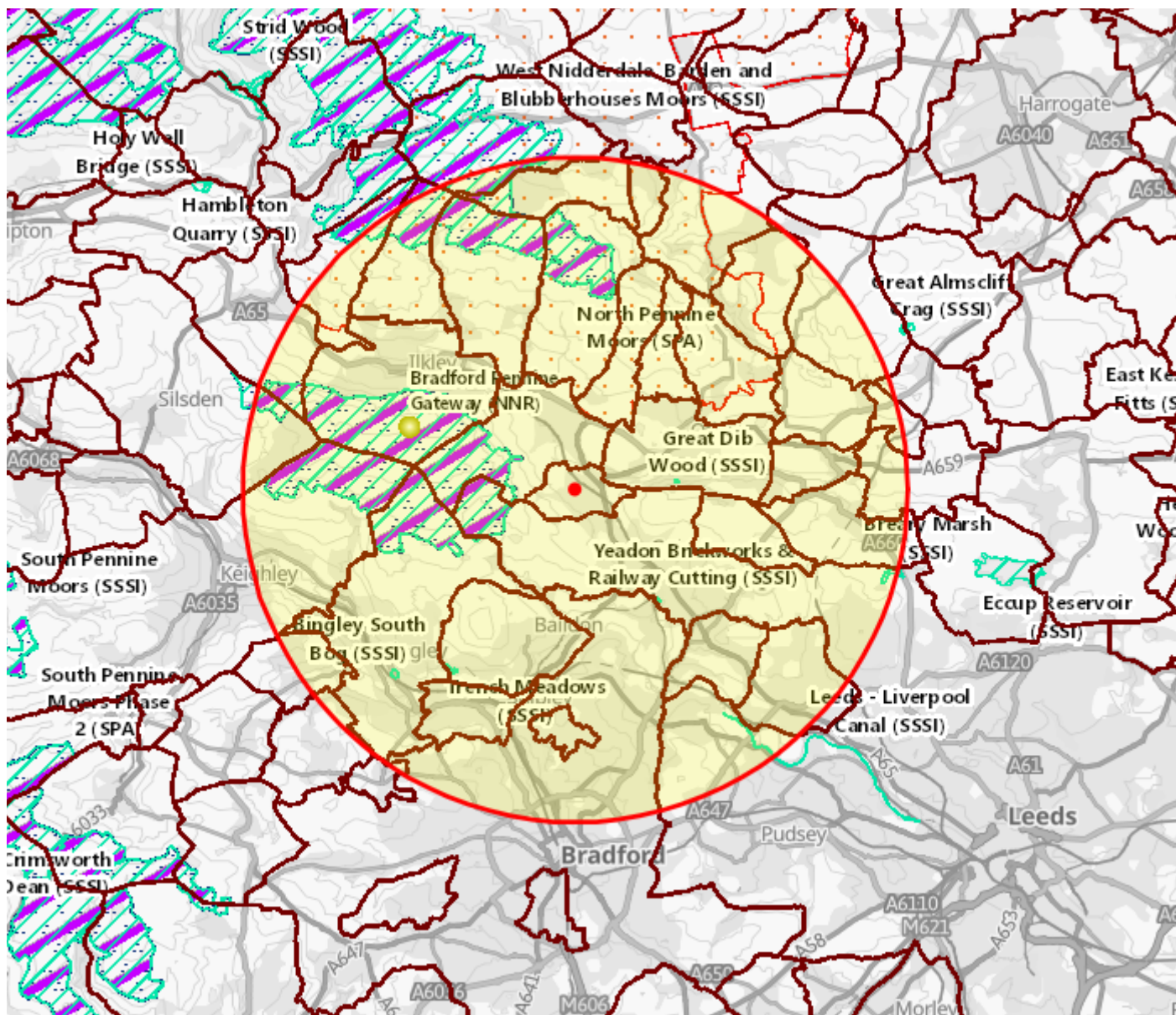
3.3 Menston is a small semi-rural community situated 10km north of Bradford city centre. The population of Menston is around 4,000 people. There is one conservation area within the village and 15 listed buildings throughout the whole village. There are no Local Wildlife Sites within the village. The Burley Disused Railway Local Wildlife Site lies immediately adjacent to the Menston boundary. There are no Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) or National Nature Reserves (NNR) which would be of national importance within Menston, neither are there any internationally important Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) or Special Protection Areas (SPA) which would be of European level of importance. The South Pennine Moors SSSI/SPA/SAC lies only 240m to the west.

3.4 There are no designated sites within the MNP area but within a 10km buffer there are:

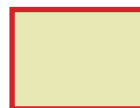
- South Pennine Moors SSSI/SPA/SAC
- North Pennine Moors SSSI/SPA/SAC
- Bingley South Bog SSSI
- Breary Marsh SSSI
- West Nidderdale, Barden and Blubberhouses Moors SSSI
- Leeds - Liverpool Canal SSSI
- Trench Meadows SSSI
- Great Dib Wood SSSI
- Yeadon Brickworks and Railway Cutting SSSI

Menston Neighbourhood Plan

3.5 The MNP boundary with 10km buffer, layers showing SSSI, SPA, SAC



Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)



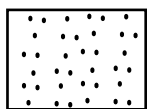
10km buffer



Special Area of Conservation (SAC)



Menston



Special Protection Area (SPA)

Menston Neighbourhood Plan

3.6 Vision

Menston will continue to be a village that nurtures community spirit, preserves its unique rural character, and promotes sustainable development, ensuring a high quality of life for current and future generations.

Menston will maintain its strong sense of identity by valuing its heritage and beautiful natural surroundings while embracing innovative solutions that meet the changing needs of its residents. The village will offer excellent amenities and services, accessible to all, fostering social cohesion and promoting well-being.

The Neighbourhood Plan will guide Menston's future by balancing growth with careful management of resources, enhancing its green spaces, supporting local businesses, and improving infrastructure in ways that promote community, connectivity, and environmental responsibility. Menston will be a resilient community where residents take pride in their village, creating a vibrant and inclusive place to live, work, and visit.

3.7 Aims & Objectives

- Protect and enhance the natural environment and important green spaces
- Conserve the historic character and setting of Menston
- Improve transport, movement and accessibility
- Secure high-quality design in new development
- Ensure that new housing meets the needs of the local community
- Protect and enhance community facilities, services and local infrastructure
- Support a sustainable and thriving local economy
- Promote sustainability and climate resilience

3.8 Policies

Housing

MNP1 High Quality Design

MNP2 Renewable Energy and Sustainability

MNP3 Housing Mix

MNP4 Biodiversity in New Housing Developments

MNP5 Flood Resilience

Environment

MNP6 Local Green Spaces

MNP7 Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity

MNP8 Tree Planting

MNP9 Sport, Leisure, Open Space, and Allotments

MNP10 Key Views

Movement

MNP11 Public Transport Connections

MNP12 Residential Parking

MNP13 Pedestrian and Cycle Connections

Community Facilities

MNP14 Community Facilities

MNP15 Local Centre Retail and Services

MNP16 Community Energy Schemes

Heritage

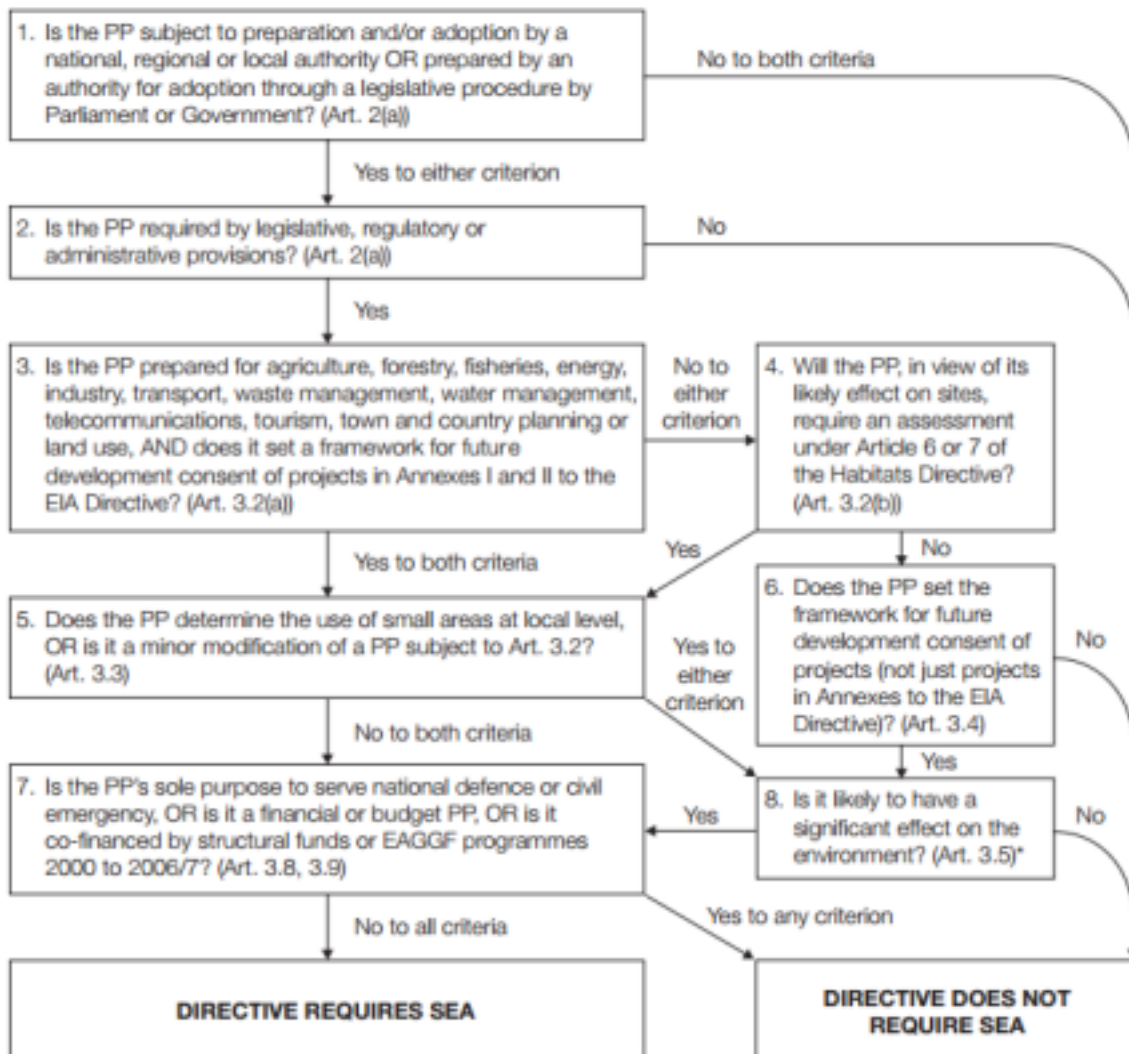
MNP17 Design and Development in the Conservation Area

MNP18 Non-Designated Heritage Assets

4.0 Strategic Environmental Assessment

The flowchart below illustrates the process for screening a planning document to ascertain whether a full SEA is required:

This diagram is intended as a guide to the criteria for application of the Directive to plans and programmes (PPs). It has no legal status.



*The Directive requires Member States to determine whether plans or programmes in this category are likely to have significant environmental effects. These determinations may be made on a case by case basis and/or by specifying types of plan or programme.

4.0 Strategic Environmental Assessment

Table 1:

Application of the SEA Directive to the Menston Neighbourhood Plan

STAGE	YES/NO	REASON
1. Is the Plan subject to preparation and/or adoption by a national, regional or local authority or prepared by an authority through a legislative procedure by Parliament or Government? (Article 2(a))	Yes	Neighbourhood Plans are prepared by a qualifying body (Parish Council) under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended). This Neighbourhood Plan is prepared by Menston Parish Council (as the “relevant body”) and will be ‘made’ by City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council as the Local Authority, if successful at referendum. The preparation of Neighbourhood Plans is subject to The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) and The Neighbourhood Planning (Referendums) Regulations 2012 (as amended).
2. Is the Plan required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions? (Article 2(a))	No	Communities have the right to produce a Neighbourhood Plan. However, communities are not required by legislative, regulatory or administrative purposes to produce a Neighbourhood Plan. However, if ‘made’, the Menston Neighbourhood Plan would form part of the statutory development plan; it is therefore considered necessary to answer the following questions to determine further if SEA is required.
3. Is the Plan prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, telecommunications, tourism, town and country planning or land use, and does it set a framework for future development consent of projects in Annexes I and II to the EIA Directive? (Article 3.2(a))	Yes	A Neighbourhood Plan can include these policy areas and could provide, at a Neighbourhood Area level, the framework for development that would fall within Annex II of the EIA Directive. Developments that fall within Annex I are ‘excluded’ development for Neighbourhood Plans, as set out in Section 61(k) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended). It is not anticipated that the Menston Neighbourhood Plan would be the tool to manage development of the scale and nature envisaged by Annex I and Annex II of the EIA Directive.
4. Will the Plan, in view of its likely effects on sites, require an assessment of future development under Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive? (Article 3.2(b))	No	The screening section for the HRA is included later in this report.

4.0 Strategic Environmental Assessment

Table 1:

Application of the SEA Directive to the Menston Neighbourhood Plan

STAGE	YES/NO	REASON
5. Does the Plan determine the use of small areas at local level or is it a minor modification of a plan or proposal subject to Article 3.2? (Article 3.3)	Yes	Once made the MNP will be part of the land use framework for the area and will help determine the use of small areas at the local level.
6. Does the Plan set the framework for future development consent of projects (not just projects in annexes to the EIA Directive)? (Article 3.4)	Yes	The MNP will form part of the statutory Development Plan and will be used in the determination of planning applications in the Neighbourhood Area. Therefore, it sets the framework for future developments at a local level within the context of the Bradford Core Strategy and the NPPF. The plan gives support to certain types of development and projects within the plan area but these conform to the strategic aims of the Core Strategy.
7. Is the Plan's sole purpose to serve the national defence or civil emergency, or is it a financial or budget plan or proposal, or is it co-financed by structural funds or EAGGF programmes 2000 to 2006/7? (Article 3.8, 3.9)	No	The Menston Neighbourhood Plan does not deal with these issues.
8. Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment? (Article 3.5)	No	<p>The Neighbourhood Plan does not propose any development but instead provides guidance on how local people would like to see the area developed. The plan contains both policies and design guidance which seek to protect and enhance natural and historic assets. The plan promotes the safeguarding of wildlife and biodiversity. It supports green and renewable energy technologies and promotes sustainable transport methods. The plan supports local economic development within the defined local centre.</p> <p>It is therefore considered unlikely the plan will have a significant effect on the environment.</p>

4.0 Strategic Environmental Assessment

The criteria for determining the likely significance of effects referred to in Article 3(5) of Directive 2001/42/EC are set out below in Figure 2.

FIGURE 2 - CRITERIA FOR DETERMINING LIKELY SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS

1. The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular, to

- 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,
- the degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy,
- the relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development,
- environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme,
- 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).

2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to

- the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects,
- the cumulative nature of the effects,
- the trans-boundary nature of the effects,
- the risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents),
- the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected),
- the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:
 - special natural characteristics or cultural heritage,
 - exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values,
 - intensive land-use,
 - the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, community or international protection status.

Table 2:
Draft SEA Screening Opinion

Criteria (Schedule 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.	<p>Alongside the Local Plan (currently the Bradford Replacement Unitary Development Plan 2005 – Saved Policies (June 2020 Schedule, alongside the Core Strategy and Waste Management DPD, both adopted in 2017, the MNP will provide a statutory development plan for the area. This means planning applications will be determined against its policies and design guidance. The policies can be categorised into the following themes:</p> <p>Protection & enhancement policies: Natural and historic environment, green infrastructure, local green spaces, footpaths and cycle ways, community facilities and services</p> <p>Design & development policies: Ensuring high quality design, parking and street design guidance, housing type and mix, SuDS, green and renewable technologies</p>
(b) the degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy.	The Menston Neighbourhood Plan dovetails the Bradford Core Strategy and the NPPF and is in-line with the strategic context of both documents. It adds fine-grain, locally specific policies which complement and add value to higher-level plans. It does not influence other Plans and programmes as this Plan is at the bottom of the planning hierarchy.
(c) The relevance of the plan for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development;	The Plan promotes sustainable development, defined as “meeting the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” It has an emphasis on protecting the natural environment, wildlife, biodiversity, promoting better flood and water management and protecting heritage and historic assets. These are included in both policy and design guidance. Before the plan is made it will go through the basic conditions test, this includes a requirement to contribute towards sustainable development.

Table 2:
Draft SEA Screening Opinion

Criteria (Schedule 1)	
The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular, to:	

<p>(d) Environmental problems relevant to the plan;</p>	<p>There are no nationally or internationally designated sites within the Plan Area.</p> <p>There are however 9 sites of international nature conservation importance within a 10km buffer:</p> <p>1. Bingley South Bog SSSI 4.0(ha)</p> <p>This small mire occupies a peat-filled hollow in undulating ground between the Leeds Liverpool Canal and the River Aire, at Bingley, north of Bradford.</p> <p>Despite drainage and hydrosereal succession, the surviving wetland provides a transition from fen to damp neutral grassland, maintained in a species-rich condition, probably by grazing.</p> <p>Open water occurs in a depression caused by the weight of an aqueduct embankment.</p> <p>This central swamp is dominated by water horsetail <i>Equisetum fluviatile</i>, with common spikerush <i>Eleocharis palustris</i>, broad-leaved pondweed <i>Potamogeton natans</i>, thread-leaved crowfoot <i>Ranunculus trichophyllus</i> and mare's-tail <i>Hippuris vulgaris</i>. The last two species are relatively rare in West Yorkshire.</p> <p>Even rarer in the region, the marsh cinquefoil <i>Potentilla palustris</i> is widespread in the surrounding damp transitional fen, extending both into the open water and into the grasslands.</p> <p>The mosaic of neutral grassland and transitional fen supports large quantities of a number of sedges. These include brown sedge <i>Carex disticha</i> – regionally uncommon – hammer sedge <i>C. hirta</i>, yellow sedge <i>C. demissa</i>, oval sedge <i>C. ovalis</i>, carnation sedge <i>C. panicea</i>, glaucous sedge <i>C. flacca</i> and common sedge <i>C. nigra</i>, together with a broad diversity of other marshland plants.</p>
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**Table 2:
Draft SEA Screening Opinion**

Criteria (Schedule 1)	
The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular, to:	

<p>(d) Environmental problems relevant to the plan;</p>	<p>2. Trench Meadows SSSI 4.69(ha)</p> <p>Trench Meadows are situated in the River Aire valley between the towns of Shipley and Bingley, on the fringe of the Southern Pennines. Occupying a gently-sloping, south facing position, the meadows lies on boulder clay deposits overlying Millstone Grit. The meadows are of special interest for their neutral grassland, which occurs with smaller areas of acid grassland and rush pasture, the latter associated with a number of flushes which run downslope through the fields.</p> <p>The neutral grassland is rich in plant species, with the grasses red fescue <i>Festuca rubra</i>, sweet vernal-grass <i>Anthoxanthum odoratum</i>, crested dog's-tail <i>Cynosurus cristatus</i>, and the herbs black knapweed <i>Centaurea nigra</i> and bird's-foot-trefoil <i>Lotus corniculatus</i> all typical for the habitat, and being found frequently. However, it is the occurrence of heath grass <i>Danthonia decumbens</i>, together with the herbs devil's-bit scabious <i>Succisa pratensis</i>, tormentil <i>Potentilla erecta</i> and betony <i>Stachys officinalis</i>, through the sward, which characterise this particular community. These are among a number of plant species within the neutral grassland which indicate slightly acidic soils, and reflect the underlying parent material. Unimproved speciesrich lowland grassland of this type is now a nationally rare habitat. Acid grassland can be found within the meadows where the soils are thinner and the parent material exerts a greater influence on the vegetation. The presence of wavy hair-grass <i>Deschampsia flexuosa</i>, mat grass <i>Nardus stricta</i> and heath bedstraw <i>Galium saxatile</i> in the sward, together with an increased abundance of common bent <i>Agrostis capillaris</i> and sheep's fescue <i>Festuca ovina</i> distinguish the acid grassland from the more widespread neutral grassland. Three large flushes also occur within the meadows. These have a distinctive suite of plant species associated with them, including sharp-flowered rush <i>Juncus acutiflorus</i>, marsh bedstraw <i>Galium palustre</i>, lesser spearwort <i>Ranunculus flammula</i>, meadowsweet <i>Filipendula ulmaria</i>, and marsh marigold <i>Caltha palustris</i>. Together with the stands of acid grassland, these flushes add both habitat and species diversity to the site.</p>
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**Table 2:
Draft SEA Screening Opinion**

Criteria (Schedule 1)	
The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular, to:	

<p>(d) Environmental problems relevant to the plan;</p>	<p>3. Yeadon Brickworks And Railway Cutting 3.3(ha)</p> <p>This quarry and adjacent railway cutting display an excellent section through the rocks of late Namurian age, and the importance of this site is recognised by its being the type locality for the Yeadonian Stage. The site, with its exposures of the <i>Gastrioceras cumbriense</i> Marine Bank and, more importantly, the <i>G. cancellatum</i> Marine Band, marking the base of the Yeadonian, is thus a section of considerable stratigraphic significance in a national and international context. In layman's terms, the interest of this site may be expressed more simply, and such a statement is provided below. This should not be taken as definitive and further information as to details of the interest can be obtained from the Nature Conservancy Council.</p> <p>The rock exposures within this site provide a most important cross-section through shales and sandstones of the Namurian Series, originally formed about 350 million years ago during the Carboniferous Period of geological history. The shales include important layers rich in the fossil remains of marine animals known as goniatites, which enable geologists to accurately date the rocks and to compare these shales with other rocks of similar age elsewhere in Britain and overseas. The significance of these exposures is widely recognised by geologists and this site has been proposed as the standard for one of the major subdivisions of the Carboniferous Period, named the Yeadonian Stage.</p>
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**Table 2:
Draft SEA Screening Opinion**

Criteria (Schedule 1)	
The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular, to:	

(d) Environmental problems relevant to the plan;	<p>4. Breary Marsh SSSI 9.5(ha)</p> <p>This site lies 1 km south east of the village of Bramhope just north of Leeds, on the headwaters of Adel Beck which flows ultimately to the river Aire. The geology is mainly drift overlying Carboniferous millstone grit at an altitude of around 130 m AOD. Breary Marsh is a representative example of a wet valley alderwood and associated flood plain fen communities and is the most diverse example known in the county. These habitats would once have been frequent along stream and river valleys in the county but now are localised and fragmented. A fen community has developed on alluvial flats beside the stream in the northern sector of the site in which meadow-sweet, wild angelical and figwort are typical tall herbs with occasional stands of branched bur-reed and yellow iris. This is being colonised by a scrub of willow <i>Salix cinerea</i> and <i>Salix caprea</i>. The fen grades southwards into a neglected coppice predominantly of alder. This 'carr' contains marshy pools with common reed, reed canary grass, water mint, marsh marigold and bog bean <i>Menyanthes trifoliata</i>. There are numerous tussocks of the greater tussock sedge and ferns, including male fern <i>Dryopteris filix-mas</i>, broad buckler-fern <i>Dryopteris dilatata</i> and narrow buckler-fern <i>Dryopteris carthusiana</i> are abundant. Wood sorrel, dog's mercury and woody nightshade occur on patches of drier ground. There is sharp contrast between this wet woodland and more freely drained ground to the south where densely grown birch coppice together with oak and rowan has a ground vegetation dominated by creeping soft-grass and bluebell. An extensive list of insects has been recorded including several uncommon in the county, for example the beetle <i>Quedius fulvicollis</i> which is characteristic of ancient fen habitats.</p>
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**Table 2:
Draft SEA Screening Opinion**

Criteria (Schedule 1)	
The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular, to:	

(d) Environmental problems relevant to the plan;	<p>5. Leeds - Liverpool Canal 19.5(ha)</p> <p>This section of the Leeds-Liverpool canal extends from close to Leeds city centre 'upstream' to a point just north of the village of Calverley. It rises from 50m to 60m above the sea level and closely follows the river Aire. Whereas the underlying rocks of the Aire valley at this point are the Coal Measures the water quality and biological character of the canal are largely determined by the nature of the water supply and materials used in its construction. Low levels of pollution and turbidity combined with alkaline water supply and a base rich puddle clay substrate provide a unique aquatic habitat in this part of West Yorkshire. The Leeds-Liverpool canal is the best example of a slow flowing fresh-water habitat in the county. There is a rich aquatic flora including eight species of pondweed (<i>Potamogeton</i> spp) one of which, <i>Potamogeton trichoides</i>, is nationally scarce and known to be declining. Ridged hornwort (<i>Ceratophyllum demersum</i>) a species more typical of still rather than moving water occurs and there is an abundance of arrowhead (<i>Sagittaria sagittifolia</i>). Both species have a very restricted distribution in the county. The canal supports a characteristic range of emergent vegetation but two notable species occur here; the flowering rush (<i>Butomus umbellatus</i>) and sweet flag (<i>Acorus calamus</i>), both of which are uncommon in West Yorkshire and are here close to the northern limits of their range in Great Britain. The aquatic moss <i>Fontinalis antipyretica</i> is widely distributed and in places abundant, and the brown alga <i>Bangia atropurpurea</i> occurs here close to its northernmost limits in this country. A representative aquatic fauna occurs with good populations of fish, including pike, roach and gudgeon and both common frog and common toad breed here. There is an abundance of invertebrates with molluscs being very well represented and including both gastropods such as <i>Lymnaea peregra</i> and bivalves such as <i>Sphaerium rivicola</i>. The number and individual size of freshwater sponges (<i>Spongilla</i> spp) and horse leech (<i>Haemopsis</i> spp) are a particularly interesting feature.</p>
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**Table 2:
Draft SEA Screening Opinion**

Criteria (Schedule 1)	
The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular, to:	

(d) Environmental problems relevant to the plan;	<p>6. Great Dib Wood SSSI 1.1(ha)</p> <p>A natural cliff section displaying two Namurian sandstones separated by an extremely fossiliferous series of mudstones and limestones, constituting the Otley Shell Bed. This bed of presumed Kinderscoutian age contains a very broad selection of fossils, with virtually all marine groups represented. It is of particular interest as the Otley Shell Bed is one of the stratigraphically youngest horizons to yield trilobites at surface exposures in Britain. In layman's terms, the interest of this site may be expressed more simply, and such a statement is provided below. This should not be taken as definitive and further information as to details of the interest can be obtained from the Nature Conservancy Council. This site provides exposures of rocks of the Namurian Series, formed during the Carboniferous Period of geological history about 320 million years ago. Two sandstone layers are exposed, separated by a layer of mudstone and limestone known as the Otley Shell Bed which is rich in the fossilised remains of the animals that inhabited the Carboniferous sea. This fossil-rich bed is of great geological interest principally because of the variety of fossils it contains, but also because it is one of the youngest rock-layers known to contain the remains of a now-extinct group of animals known as trilobites.</p>
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**Table 2:
Draft SEA Screening Opinion**

Criteria (Schedule 1)	
The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular, to:	

(d) Environmental problems relevant to the plan;	<p>7. West Ninnerdale, Barden and Blubberhouses Moors SSSI 13,418.94 (ha)</p> <p>Moorlands of the North Pennines are of international importance for their blanket bog and heather moorland vegetation communities and for their breeding bird populations, particularly merlin and golden plover. This site forms part of a series of moorland Sites of Special Scientific Interest in the North Pennines. The upland watershed between Wharfedale and Nidderdale and the moorland plateau to the west of Wharfedale supports vegetation characteristic of the more natural moorlands of the North Pennines. These upland blocks include moorlands in western Nidderdale and from Barden Moor to Blubberhouses Moor. The site has a nationally important assemblage of moorland breeding birds including merlin, golden plover, snipe, curlew, redshank, teal and short-eared owl. The vegetation displays a transition between blanket bog and dry heathland and supports diverse and extensive upland plant communities. Dry heath dominates the low plateau and slopes, grading into wet heath, flushes and blanket bog on the deep peat overlying the higher summits. Acid grasslands occur around the edges of the site as a result of localised over-grazing, while several gills on the moorland edge support relict woodland. Dry heath covers most of the site and this is dominated by heather <i>Calluna vulgaris</i> and wavy hair-grass <i>Deschampsia flexuosa</i>. On steeper slopes, particularly in gills, bilberry <i>Vaccinium myrtillus</i> becomes more dominant. Cowberry <i>Vaccinium vitis-idaea</i> is a frequent component of the dry heaths above 400 metres and on the slopes of stream gullies. Areas of blanket mire occur on the higher moorland where deep peat has accumulated. In these areas, hare-tail cotton-grass <i>Eriophorum vaginatum</i> is dominant, with cross-leaved heath <i>Erica tetralix</i>, crowberry <i>Empetrum nigrum</i>, common cotton-grass <i>E. angustifolium</i> and heather. Cloudberry <i>Rubus chamaemorus</i> is locally abundant on Henstone Band Side and Thorpe Fell. In locally wetter blanket mire or areas of wet heath or valley mire, the richest bog vegetation persists and supports cranberry <i>Vaccinium oxycoccos</i>, bog asphodel <i>Narthecium ossifragum</i>, cross-leaved heath <i>Erica tetralix</i>, bog mosses <i>Sphagnum</i> spp., round-leaved sundew <i>Drosera rotundifolia</i> and bog rosemary <i>Andromeda polifolia</i>. Throughout the area species-poor flushes dominated by soft rush <i>Juncus effusus</i> and bog moss <i>Sphagnum recurvum</i> occur. Locally, species-rich flushes are found which contain scarcer species such as bog pimpernel <i>Anagallis tenella</i> and bog pondweed <i>Potamogeton polygonifolius</i>. The nationally scarce species, pale forget-me-not <i>Myosotis stolonifera</i>, occurs in several locations. Other habitats of note on the site include those associated with past lead-mining activities. Although generally species-poor, the old spoil heaps support the nationally</p>
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**Table 2:
Draft SEA Screening Opinion**

Criteria (Schedule 1)	
The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular, to:	

(d) Environmental problems relevant to the plan;	<p>scarce, heavy metal tolerant spring sandwort <i>Minuartia verna</i>. A population of chickweed wintergreen <i>Trientalis europaea</i> occurs on Barden Moor. Where grazing pressures have been severe, the vegetation is dominated by acid grassland, often in association with bracken <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i>. These grasslands consist mainly of mat grass <i>Nardus stricta</i> and heath bedstraw <i>Galium saxatile</i>, with patches of heath rush <i>Juncus squarrosus</i> and sheep's fescue <i>Festuca ovina</i>. Around the moorland edge and in some of the lower gills, grassland dominated by sheep's fescue, common bent <i>Agrostis capillaris</i> and heath bedstraw become abundant. Woodland and scrub are very restricted habitats within the site. Guisecliff Wood is the largest area of woodland, dominated by silver birch <i>Betula pendula</i>, with occasional rowan <i>Sorbus aucuparia</i>, holly <i>Ilex aquilinum</i>, sessile oak <i>Quercus petraea</i> and pedunculate oak <i>Q. robur</i>. The ground layer is dominated by bracken, heather and bilberry with frequent bluebell <i>Hyacinthoides non-scripta</i> and wood sorrel <i>Oxalis acetosella</i>. Other small oak and birch woodlands remain in the lower reaches of Harden Gill and along Ashfold Side Beck. Upper Fell supports scattered trees or rowan, sessile oak, silver birch, bird cherry <i>Prunus padus</i> and hazel <i>Corylus avellana</i> over an understorey of bracken and bilberry. Bird records and sample surveys indicate a nationally important breeding bird assemblage, including a nationally significant merlin population. Areas of tall heather are favoured by breeding merlin and short-eared owl, while the moorland burning regime provides the varied structure required by species like red grouse, golden plover and curlew. Snipe and redshank breed around the grassy and rushy edges of the moor, whinchat utilise the bracken and ring ouzels frequent gill sides and rocky outcrops. Peregrine, hen harrier and buzzard forage over the moorland. A variety of other breeding species are recorded including teal, wheatear, twite, common sandpiper and lapwing.</p> <p>Other Information: The site is located partly within the Yorkshire Dales National Park and partly within the Nidderdale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The international importance of the bird assemblage is supported by the presence of the following breeding species on Annex 1 of the EU Birds Directive: merlin, peregrine, golden plover and short-eared owl. The site supports the following species which are listed as Red Data Birds in Britain, ED. L. A. Batten, 1990: teal, merlin, peregrine, red grouse, golden plover, curlew, redshank and twite. Short-eared owl, snipe, ring ouzel, whinchat, wheatear and lapwing are being considered as candidate Red Data Birds because their populations are declining or their status is uncertain. The site overlaps part of the Stump Caves SSSI and is adjacent to part of the Cracoe Reef Knolls SSSI. These two geological sites are notified separately under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981, as amended.</p>
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**Table 2:
Draft SEA Screening Opinion**

Criteria (Schedule 1)	
The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular, to:	

(d) Environmental problems relevant to the plan;	<p>8. South Pennine Moors SPA/SAC/SSSI 65,024 (ha)</p> <p>South Pennine Moors SAC and SPA (incorporating South Pennine Moors SSSI – NB part of area within SSSI Impact Risk Zone). The South Pennine Moors SPA/SAC covers an area of moorland of 65,024 hectares in northern England.</p> <p>SPA citation – an upland of international importance providing habitat for an important assemblage of breeding moorland and moorland fringe birds.</p> <p>SAC citation - hosts the following habitats listed in Annex I: • Blanket bogs* • European dry heaths • Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i>. (Wet heathland with cross-leaved heath) • Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles. (Western acidic oak woodland) • Transition mires and quaking bogs.</p> <p>Fauna: South Pennine Moors SPA supports nationally important breeding populations of 2 Annex 1 bird species – merlin & golden plover. Supports, in summer, diverse assemblage of breeding migratory birds of moorland and moorland fringe habitats, including golden plover, lapwing, dunlin, snipe, curlew, redshank, common sandpiper, short-eared owl, whinchat, wheatear, ring ouzel and twite. Supports southernmost assemblage in Britain of breeding merlin, red grouse, golden plover, dunlin, short-eared owl and twite.</p> <p>Flora: SPA/SAC flora characteristic of upland heathland (dry and wet), blanket bog (including uncommon cloudberry), old sessile oak woods and transition mires and quaking bogs.</p>
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**Table 2:
Draft SEA Screening Opinion**

Criteria (Schedule 1)	
The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular, to:	

(d) Environmental problems relevant to the plan;	<p>9. North Pennine Moors SPA/SAC/SSSI 10,3014 (ha)</p> <p>4030 European dry heaths The North Pennine Moors (along with the North York Moors) hold much of the upland heathland of northern England. At higher altitudes and to the wetter west and north of the site complex, the heaths grade into extensive areas of 7130 blanket bogs. The most abundant heath communities are H9 <i>Calluna vulgaris</i> – <i>Deschampsia flexuosa</i> heath and H12 <i>Calluna vulgaris</i> – <i>Vaccinium myrtillus</i> heath. There are also examples of H18 <i>Vaccinium myrtillus</i> – <i>Deschampsia flexuosa</i>, H10 <i>Calluna vulgaris</i> – <i>Erica cinerea</i> and H21 <i>Calluna vulgaris</i> – <i>Vaccinium myrtillus</i> – <i>Sphagnum capillifolium</i> heaths.</p> <p>5130 <i>Juniperus communis</i> formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands The North Pennine Moors includes one major stand of juniper scrub in Swaledale as well as a number of small and isolated localities. The Swaledale site grades into heathland and bracken <i>Pteridium aquilinum</i> but the core area of juniper is of W19 <i>Juniperus communis</i> – <i>Oxalis acetosella</i> woodland with scattered rowan <i>Sorbus aucuparia</i> and birch <i>Betula</i> spp.</p> <p>7130 Blanket bogs (* if active bog) * Priority feature The North Pennine Moors hold the major area of blanket bog in England. A significant proportion remains active with accumulating peat, although these areas are often bounded by sizeable zones of currently non-active bog, albeit on deep peat. The main NVC type is M19 <i>Calluna vulgaris</i> – <i>Eriophorum vaginatum</i> blanket mire, but there is also representation of M18 <i>Erica tetralix</i> – <i>Sphagnum papillosum</i> blanket mire and some western localities support M17 <i>Scirpus cespitosus</i> – <i>Eriophorum vaginatum</i> blanket mire. Forms of M20 <i>Eriophorum vaginatum</i> blanket mire predominate on many areas of non-active bog.</p> <p>7220 Petrifying springs with tufa formation (Cratoneurion) * Priority feature The petrifying springs habitat is very localised in occurrence within the North Pennine Moors, but where it does occur it is species-rich with abundant bryophytes, sedges and herbs including bird’s-eye primrose <i>Primula farinosa</i> and marsh valerian <i>Valeriana dioica</i>.</p>
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**Table 2:
Draft SEA Screening Opinion**

Criteria (Schedule 1)	
The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular, to:	

<p>(d) Environmental problems relevant to the plan;</p>	<p>8220 Siliceous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation Acidic rock outcrops and scree are well-scattered across the North Pennine Moors and support vegetation typical of Siliceous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation in England, including a range of lichens and bryophytes, such as <i>Racomitrium lanuginosum</i>, and species like stiff sedge <i>Carex bigelowii</i> and fir clubmoss <i>Huperzia selago</i>.</p> <p>91A0 Old sessile oak woods with <i>Ilex</i> and <i>Blechnum</i> in the British Isles Birk Gill Wood is an example of old sessile oak woods well to the east of the habitat's main distribution in the UK. However, this sheltered river valley shows the characteristic rich bryophyte and lichen communities of the type under a canopy of oak, birch <i>Betula</i> sp. and rowan <i>Sorbus aucuparia</i>. The slopes are boulder-strewn, with mixtures of heather <i>Calluna vulgaris</i>, bilberry <i>Vaccinium myrtillus</i> and moss carpets in the ground flora.</p>
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Table 2:
Draft SEA Screening Opinion

Criteria (Schedule 1)	
The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular, to:	

<p>(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)</p>	<p>There are no conflicts between the MNP and statutory plans linked to waste, water etc.</p>
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**Table 2:
Draft SEA Screening Opinion**

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	The plan does not allocate any sites for development. It does contain several policies and design guidance which seek to protect and enhance the natural and historic environment, including heritage assets, wildlife and biodiversity. It is unlikely the MNP will lead to any environmental effects that have not already been raised and addressed by the Core Strategy.
(b) The cumulative nature of the effects	The cumulative effects of proposals within the NP are unlikely to be significant on the local environment. The effects of the NP need to be considered alongside the Bradford Core Strategy. The NP is required to be in general conformity with the emerging Bradford Core Strategy. It is not considered that the NP introduces additional effects over and above those already considered in the SA/SEA for the Local Plan. Notably the NP does not propose more development than what is contained in the Local Plan for the area. It is therefore unlikely the culmination of the plans will have an effect.
(c) The transboundary nature of the effects	The proposals within the NP are unlikely to have a significant impact beyond the Neighbourhood Area boundary.
(d) The risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents)	None identified
(e) The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected),	The NP is concerned with development within the Menston Neighbourhood Area. The potential for environmental impacts, if any, are likely to be local, limited and minimal.
(f) The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • special natural characteristics or cultural heritage, • exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values, • intensive land-use 	The NP is unlikely to adversely affect the value and vulnerability of the area in relation to its special natural characteristics or cultural heritage. The policies within the plan seek to provide greater protection to the character of the area. The NP does not allocate any sites for development.
(g) The effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status	It is not considered that the draft policies in the NP will adversely affect areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, community or international protection status. There are currently no applicable sites within the plan area. The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to provide green infrastructure and, where possible, connect with the existing Green Infrastructure provision and/or Local Wildlife Sites and linkages, and promote appropriate tree planting.

5.0 Assessment of MNP Policies (SEA)

5.1 Housing Policies

MNP1 High Quality Design - requires new development to be well-designed and respond to the character of the area, linking with the Menston Design Code and Bradford's Homes and Neighbourhoods Design Guide.

MNP2 Renewable Energy and Sustainability - encourages new homes to include the provision of renewable energy technologies.

MNP3 Housing Mix - encourages a mix of house types and sizes in new developments to meet local needs.

MNP4 Biodiversity in New Developments - encourages new housing developments to incorporate features that actively encourages wildlife and biodiversity.

MNP5 Flood Resilience - encourages new housing development to incorporate flood resilience measures where appropriate.

5.2 Environment Policies

MNP6 Local Green Spaces - designates 6 sites as Local Green Spaces.

MNP7 Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity - requires new development to include provision of green infrastructure and link with the wider network of green infrastructure.

MNP8 Tree Planting - discourages removal of mature trees where appropriate and encourages planting of new trees.

MNP9 Sport, Leisure, Open Space, and Allotments - encourages retention of existing facilities and supports expansion of existing or creation of new facilities.

MNP10 Key Views - encourages new development to takes steps to mitigate negative visual impact on identified key views.

5.3 Movement Policies

MNP11 Public Transport Connection - encourages new development to be located within 400m of a bus stop or 800m of the train station

MNP12 Residential Parking - guidance for new development to provide cycle and car parking provision

MNP13 Pedestrian and cycle connections - encouraging new developments to connect to the wider network of footpaths

5.0 Assessment of MNP Policies

5.4 Community Facilities Policies

MNP14 Community Facilities - Policy identifying community facilities to be protected

MNP15 Local Centre Retail and Services - Policy supporting provision of new retail and services in the Local Centre

MNP16 Community Energy Schemes - Policy supporting community energy schemes depending on siting and impact

5.5 Heritage Policies

MNP17 Design and Development in the Conservation Area - Policy outlining design considerations for new development in the conservation area

MNP18 Non-designated Heritage Assets - Identification and designation of 14 local heritage assets

6.0 SEA Screening Conclusion

6.1 Based on the comments in Table 2 - Draft SEA Screening Opinion it is considered that the Plan is **NOT** likely to have significant environmental effects and, therefore, Strategic Environmental Assessment is **NOT** required.

6.2 The Plan determines the use of small areas at a local level and once “made” will be part of the land use framework for the area. No likely significant effects upon the environment have been identified.

6.3 The Plan will not promote a higher level of development than that set within the Local Plan, include any site allocations, or amend the existing development limit as shown on the Local Plan Policies Map. The policies of the Neighbourhood Development Plan on the whole do not have the potential to add significantly to local strategic policies.

6.4 The Plan itself contains policies to promote sustainable development and protection of important environmental assets, and to provide additional environmental protection. It is not likely to have significant effects in relation to environmental problems relevant to the Plan.

6.5 The Plan seeks to ensure that new development preserves and enhances the environment. It is highly unlikely there will be any irreversible damaging environmental impacts as a result of the policies in the Plan.

6.6 The cumulative effect of the Plan alongside the Bradford Local Plan will likely lead to sustainable development in the area. It is not considered that the policies cumulatively will result in negative effects, but will result in moderate positive effects.

6.7 There is no development proposed in the Neighbourhood Plan and, therefore, the potential for environmental effects is also likely to be none or very small. The Plan is unlikely to result in significant environmental effects on the value and vulnerability of the natural or historic environment. The proposed policies have the potential to result in direct positive environmental effects, although these are not considered to be significant.

7.0 HRA Screening

7.1 The HRA involves an assessment of any plan or project to establish if it has potential implications for European wildlife sites. The HRA will consider if the proposals in the MNP have the potential to harm the habitats or species for which European wildlife sites are designated. European wildlife sites are:

- Special Protection Areas (SPA) designated under the Birds Directive (79/409/EEC)
- Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) designated under the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC)

7.2 This section of the report:

- Identifies the European sites within 10km of the plan area
- Summarises the reasons for designation and conservation objectives for each of the sites which have an impact risk zone stretching into the plan area
- Screens the NDP for its potential to impact upon European sites
- Assesses the potential for in-combination effects from other projects and plans in the area

7.3 European Sites within 10km of the NDP area

There are two European sites within a 10km radius of the Menston Neighbourhood Plan area. These are:

- South Pennine Moors SPA/SAC/SSSI
- North Pennine Moors SPA/SAC/SSSI

The South Pennine Moors SPA/SAC covers an area of moorland of 65,024 hectares in northern England stretching at its southern point from just north of Matlock in Derbyshire all the way north to Ilkley in West Yorkshire.

The North Pennine Moors SPA includes parts of the Pennine moorland massif between the Tyne Gap (Hexham) and the Ribble-Aire corridor (Skipton). It encompasses extensive tracts of semi-natural moorland habitats including upland heath and blanket bog. The southern end of the North Pennine Moors SPA is within 10 km of the South Pennine Moors SPA, which supports a similar assemblage of upland breeding species.

7.5 Reasons for designation & conservation objectives of European sites within 10km radius of MNP

7.6 The South Pennine Moors Phase 2 Special Protection Area (SPA)

The site qualifies under Article 4.1 of the EC Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds by supporting nationally important breeding population of two species listed in Annex I:

- Merlin (*Falco columarius*)
- Golden Plover (*Pluvialis apricaria*)

The site qualifies under Article 4.2 by supporting a diverse assemblage of breeding migratory birds of moorland and moorland fringe habitats including golden plover, lapwing, dunlin, snipe, curlew, redshank, common sandpiper, short eared owl, whinchat, wheatear, ring ouzel and twite.

The Conservation Objectives for the South Pennine Moors Phase 2 Special Protection Area (SPA) are published by Natural England. They are:

Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the aims of the Wild Birds Directive, by maintaining or restoring:-

- The extent and distribution of the habitats of the qualifying features
- The structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying features
- The supporting processes on which the habitats of the qualifying features rely
- The population of each of the qualifying features, and,
- The distribution of the qualifying features within the site.

7.7 The South Pennine Moors Special Area of Conservation (SAC)

The site is designated under article 4(4) of the Directive (92/43/EEC) as it hosts the following habitats listed in Annex I:

- Blanket bogs
- European dry heaths
- Northern Atlantic wet heaths with *Erica tetralix*.
- Old sessile oak woods with *Ilex* and *Blechnum* in the British Isles.
- Transition mires and quaking bogs.

The Conservation Objectives for the South Pennine Moors SAC are published by Natural England. They are:

Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring:-

- The extent and distribution of the qualifying natural habitats
- The structure and function (including typical species) of the qualifying natural habitats, and,
- The supporting processes on which the qualifying natural habitats rely

7.8 The North Pennine Moors Phase 2 Special Protection Area (SPA)

The site qualifies under Article 4.1 of the EC Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds by supporting nationally important breeding population of two species listed in Annex I:

- Merlin (*Falco columarius*)
- Hen Harrier (*Circus cyaneus*)
- Peregrine (*Falco peregrinus*)
- Golden Plover (*Pluvialis apricaria*)

The site qualifies under Article 4.2 by supporting a diverse assemblage of breeding migratory birds of moorland and moorland fringe habitats including golden plover, lapwing, dunlin, snipe, curlew, redshank, common sandpiper, short eared owl, whinchat, wheatear, ring ouzel and twite.

The Conservation Objectives for the North Pennine Moors Phase 2 Special Protection Area (SPA) are published by Natural England. They are:

Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the aims of the Wild Birds Directive, by maintaining or restoring;

- The extent and distribution of the habitats of the qualifying features
- The structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying features
- The supporting processes on which the habitats of the qualifying features rely
- The population of each of the qualifying features, and,
- The distribution of the qualifying features within the site.

7.9 The North Pennine Moors Special Area of Conservation (SAC)

The site is designated under article 4(4) of the Directive (92/43/EEC) as it hosts the following habitats listed in Annex I:

- Northern Atlantic wet heaths with *Erica tetralix*; Wet heathland with cross-leaved heath
- European dry heaths
- *Juniperus communis* formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands; Juniper on heaths or calcareous grasslands
- Calaminarian grasslands of the *Violetalia calaminariae*; Grasslands on soils rich in heavy metals
- Siliceous alpine and boreal grasslands; Montane acid grasslands
- Semi-natural dry grasslands and scrubland facies: on calcareous substrates (*Festuco-Brometalia*); Dry grasslands and scrublands on chalk or limestone
- Blanket bogs*
- Petrifying springs with tufa formation (*Cratoneurion*); Hard-water springs depositing lime*
- Alkaline fens; Calcium-rich springwater-fed fens
- Siliceous scree of the montane to snow levels (*Androsacetalia alpinae* and *Galeopsietalia ladani*); Acidic scree
- Calcareous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation; Plants in crevices in base-rich rocks
- Siliceous rocky slopes with chasmophytic vegetation; Plants in crevices on acid rocks
- Old sessile oak woods with *Ilex* and *Blechnum* in the British Isles; Western acidic oak woodland
- *Saxifraga hirculus*; Marsh saxifrage

The Conservation Objectives for the North Pennine Moors SAC are published by Natural England. They are:

Ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring;

- The extent and distribution of qualifying natural habitats and habitats of qualifying species
- The structure and function (including typical species) of qualifying natural habitats
- The structure and function of the habitats of qualifying species
- The supporting processes on which qualifying natural habitats and the habitats of qualifying species rely
- The populations of qualifying species, and,
- The distribution of qualifying species within the site.

7.10 What possible impacts on the European Sites should be considered as part of the HRA screening on the NP?

The appropriate assessment (2015) undertaken for the Bradford District Core Strategy provides useful context to the HRA screening for the MNP. This led to the identification of a range of likely significant effects on the South and North Pennine Moorlands that could result from the Core Strategy for Bradford District.

Impact pathways considered for likely significant effects on the European sites as part of the HRA work for the Core Strategy were:

- Loss of supporting habitats (directly or indirectly);
- Increased water demand;
- Impacts on water quality;
- Increased emissions to air;
- Collision mortality risk and displacement due to wind turbine developments;
- Recreational impacts, including walkers, dogs, trampling and erosion; and
- A range of urbanisation impacts, including fly-tipping, invasive species, wildfire and increased predation

7.11 The findings of the Core Strategy appropriate assessment were that:

- Adverse effects resulting from wind turbine development, increased water demand or impacts on water quality are not considered likely for any of the European sites.
- Loss of supporting habitats and urbanisation impacts are assessed as likely to affect the South Pennine Moors SAC/SPA, however, they are considered to be adequately avoided and mitigated by the policy response in Core Strategy Policy SC8.
- Recreational impacts are assessed as potentially affecting any of the four sites, however, they are considered to be adequately avoided and mitigated by the Core Strategy policy response.

- The distribution and magnitude of impacts differs between the four designated areas. Evidence is presented to indicate that, if left unmitigated, impacts are likely to be greater in relation to the South Pennine Moors due to their relative proximity to locations for future development and high levels of accessibility, a key influence on the numbers of people visiting the sites and associated impacts

7.12 The possible impacts identified as part of the HRA work on the Core Strategy have been taken into account to identify the following impact pathways to be considered for likely significant effects on the European sites as a result of the NP.

- Loss of supporting habitats and urbanisation impacts on the South and North Pennine Moors SAC/SPA
- Recreational impacts arising from an increase in the number of people visiting the sites

8.0 Assessment of MNP Policies (HRA)

8.1 Assessment of the likely effects of the MNP

The following categories should be referred to in the assessment of likely significant effects in the proceeding Table 3.

Category	Sub Category	Description
1. No negative effect	A	Policy will not lead to development in that it relates to design or other qualitative criteria, or it is not a land-use planning policy.
	B	Policy intended to conserve or enhance the natural, built or historic environment, where enhancement measures will not be likely to have any negative effect on a European Site.
	C	Policy is similar to existing Local Plan policy which has been assessed as having no negative effects by a HRA.
2. No significant effect	N/A	No significant effect either alone or in combination with other plans or projects because effects are trivial or minimal.
3. Likely significant effect alone	N/A	Policy could indirectly affect a European Site because it provides for, or steers, a quantity or type of development that may be very close to it or ecologically, hydrologically, or physically connected to it, or it may increase disturbance as a result of increased recreational pressure.
4. Likely significant effect in combination	N/A	The policy alone would not be likely to have significant effects but when its effects are combined with the effects of other policies or proposals the cumulative effects would be likely to be significant.

8.2 Some of the policies in the draft MNP are aimed at shaping how development comes forward and do not themselves guide where development comes forward or lead to additional development coming forward. Such policies need not be considered for their impact on European site and can be ruled out at an early stage of screening.

8.3 The table below lists every proposed policy in the draft MNP, provides a summary of what it seeks to achieve and identifies whether or not it is a policy that can be ruled out of the HRA screening assessment. The screening report will then focus on those policies of the MNP which have not been ruled out.

Table 3. Assessment of likely significant effects on European Sites through implementation of the Menston Neighbourhood Plan				
Draft Policy	Policy summary	Comment	Significant effect likely?	Category/ Sub Category of likely effects
MNP1 High Quality Design	Seeks to ensure that new housing development is designed so that it responds to and reinforces the character of Menston and addresses key local issues.	Will not lead to development in that it seeks to maximise the design of development. Requires development to take account of and comply with the guidance set out in the Menston Design Code and Bradford's Homes and Neighbourhoods Design Guide which covers a range of issues and sets design parameters for new development. Safeguards important character and green infrastructure within the Neighbourhood Area.	No negative effect.	1A
MNP2 Renewable Energy and Sustainability	Seeks to ensure that new homes in Menston are energy efficient, affordable to heat, and meet targets to limit climate change by including the provision of renewable energy technologies.	Will not lead to additional development beyond the scale proposed by the Local Plan. Strongly supports new housing that meets a high level of sustainable design and construction and is optimised for energy efficiency, targeting zero carbon emissions, with reference to the Menston Design Code.	No negative effect.	1A

Table 3. Assessment of likely significant effects on European Sites through implementation of the Menston Neighbourhood Plan				
Draft Policy	Policy summary	Comment	Significant effect likely?	Category/ Sub Category of likely effects
MNP3 Housing Mix	Policy requiring mix of house types and sizes in new developments	Will not lead to development beyond the scale of the Local Plan. Requires new housing to include a mix of types and sizes to meet the needs of the local community.	No negative effect.	1C
MNP4 Biodiversity in new housing developments	Policy requiring steps to ensure biodiversity measures are incorporated into new housing	Will not lead to development beyond the scale of the Local Plan. Requires new housing to include bat/bird boxes and insect bricks	No negative effect.	1B
MNP5 Flood resilience	Policy requiring new development where appropriate to mitigate risks of flooding	Will not lead to development beyond the scale of the Local Plan. Requires new housing to include SuDS where appropriate	No negative effect.	1C
MNP6 Local Green Spaces	Policy designating 6 Local Green Spaces	Will not lead to additional development beyond the scale proposed by the Local Plan. Proposes a number of sites for protection. Enhancement of the sites should improve access, amenity, leisure and recreational opportunities, wildlife, and biodiversity opportunities.	No negative effect.	1B
MNP7 Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity	Seeks to conserve and enhance green infrastructure in Menston and to ensure that, where possible, new development makes a positive contribution to the local network in Menston.	Encourages new green infrastructure. Expects new development to include provision of green infrastructure, and where possible, connect with the existing Green Infrastructure provision and/or Local Wildlife Sites and linkages, including wildlife corridors.	No negative effect.	1B

Table 3.
Assessment of likely significant effects on European Sites through implementation of the Menston Neighbourhood Plan

Draft Policy	Policy summary	Comment	Significant effect likely?	Category/ Sub Category of likely effects
MNP8 Tree Planting	Discourages removal of mature trees, encourages planting of new trees	Will not lead to development. Seeks to maximise the retention of mature trees in new development and encourages tree planting that respects and enhances biodiversity, character and distinctiveness of the area.	No negative effect.	1B
MNP9 Sport, Leisure, Open Space, and Allotments	Retention of existing provision of sport, leisure, open space, encourages creation of allotments	Will not lead to significant development. Supports the retention, expansion and enhancement of existing facilities, and the development of new facilities or services to meet local needs. Where any new facilities are proposed they will be assessed by CBMDC for any potential impact as per the Core Strategy.	No significant effect.	2
MNP10 Key Views	Identification of key views and encouraging new development to mitigate any potential negative impact on said key views	Will not lead to development. Seeks to mitigate negative impact arising from any development that might impact identified views	No negative effect.	1A
MNP11 Public Transport Connection	Requires new housing development to be located close to public transport connections	Will not lead to development. Seeks to ensure new homes are within reasonable walking distance from bus stops and train station	No negative effect.	1C
MNP12 Residential Parking	Sets design criteria for new homes in relation to cycle and car parking	Will not lead to development. Seeks to ensure adequate provision of cycle and car parking is included in new homes	No negative effect.	1A

Table 3.
Assessment of likely significant effects on European Sites through implementation of the Menston Neighbourhood Plan

Draft Policy	Policy summary	Comment	Significant effect likely?	Category/ Sub Category of likely effects
MNP13 Pedestrian and cycle connections	Seeks to ensure new housing connects to the existing pedestrian and cycle network	Will not lead to significant development. New development should connect with existing footpaths and cycle paths where available and, where required, improve the network.	No negative effect.	1A
MNP14 Community facilities	Seeks to retain existing identified community services and supports their enhancement or creation of new community facilities where appropriate	Will not lead to significant development. Supports the expansion or enhancement of existing facilities, or development of new facilities or services, to meet local needs.	No significant effect.	2
MNP15 Local Centre Retail and Services	Support for new retail and service uses within the local centre	Will not lead to significant development. Supports new retail or service provision in the designated local centre	No significant effect.	2
MNP16 Community energy schemes	Support for community renewable energy schemes	Will not lead to significant development. Policy supports community renewable energy schemes providing: The siting and scale is appropriate to its setting and position in the landscape; It does not create unacceptable impact on a feature of natural or biodiversity importance; It does not have unacceptable impact on amenities of residents.	No significant effect.	2
MNP17 Design and development in the conservation area	Design guidance for new development in the conservation area	Will not lead to significant development. Encourages quality design and development. Looks to preserve and enhance the character and appearance of Menston Conservation Area.	No negative effect.	1B
MNP18 Non-designated heritage assets	Identification and designation of heritage assets	Will not lead to development. Encourages heritage assets to be conserved and sensitively enhanced	No negative effect.	1B

8.4 The adopted Bradford Core Strategy and the HRA of the Core Strategy

As part of the assessment of the MNP, it is important to consider the Core Strategy and the findings of the HRA work into the Core Strategy. Adopted Core strategy policy HO1 provides dwelling targets for the District. Policy HO2 states that the dwellings target set out in Policy HO1 will be met through:

- Housing completions since April 2004
- Existing commitments with planning permission
- Unimplemented but deliverable and developable sites allocated for residential development in the RUDP
- Safeguarded land identified in the RUDP
- Additional new deliverable and developable sites allocated for housing development within the emerging Local Plan DPDs (Allocations DPD, Bradford City Centre AAP, Shipley & Canal Road AAP and Neighbourhood Plans)

8.5 The appropriate assessment took into account the broad spatial strategy of the Core Strategy when identifying impacts. Specifically, it took into account (see page 37 of the AA of the Core Strategy):

At least 42,100 dwellings and 135ha of employment land between 2013 and 2030;

*The Regional City of Bradford (with Shipley and Lower Baildon) being the prime focus for a wide range of developments, with the principal towns of Ilkley, Keighley and Bingley being the main local focus for housing, shopping, leisure, education, health and cultural activities and facilities. The Local Growth Centres of Burley in Wharfedale, **Menston**, Queensbury, Silsden, Steeton with Eastburn and Thornton are identified as making a significant contribution to meeting the district's needs for housing, employment and supporting community facilities, with a range of local service centres providing for smaller scale developments;*

Growth areas including Bradford City Centre and the Shipley & Canal Road Corridor, an urban extension (at Holme Wood), local green belt deletions and a focus on previously developed land;

A wide variety of infrastructure, ancillary and supporting development to achieve regeneration and build sustainable communities; and

A zoned approach to managing and mitigating the effects of development around the South Pennine Moors Phase 2 SPA and South Pennine Moors SAC.

8.6 The appropriate assessment assumes the spatial distribution of development as shown below.

SECTION 5.3 Planning for People - Housing

Policy HO3: Distribution of Housing Development

A. In accordance with the vision and spatial principles set out in this Plan, the forthcoming Allocations, Bradford City Centre and Shipley & Canal Road DPD's will allocate sufficient land to meet the residual housing requirement of at least 42,100 for the District between April 2013 and April 2030. This requirement will be apportioned as follows:

- 3,500 (8.3% of the District total) within the Bradford City Centre Area AAP;
- 3,100 (7.4% of the District total) within the Shipley & Canal Road Corridor AAP;
- 35,500 (84.3% of the District total) within the Allocations DPD.

B. The Apportionments between the different settlements of the District will be as follows:

The Regional City of Bradford (27,750) Divided as follows:

■ Bradford City Centre	3,500	■ Bradford NE	4,400
■ Canal Road	3,100	■ Bradford SW	5,500
■ Shipley	750	■ Bradford NW	4,500
■ Bradford SE	6,000		

The Principal Towns (6,900) Divided as follows:

■ Ilkley	1,000	■ Bingley	1,400
■ Keighley	4,500		

Local Growth Centres (4,900) Divided as follows:

■ Burley in Wharfedale	700	■ Menston	600
■ Queensbury	1,000	■ Steeton With Eastburn	700
■ Silsden	1,200	■ Thornton	700

Local Service Centres (2,550) Divided as follows:

■ Addingham	200	■ East Morton	100
■ Baildon	350	■ Harden	100
■ Haworth	400	■ Cottingley	200
■ Cullingworth	350	■ Oakworth	200
■ Denholme	350	■ Oxenhope	100
■ Wilsden	200		

8.7 A further key Core Strategy policy which is of direct relevance to the NP is Policy SC8:

Strategic Core Policy (SC8): Protecting the South Pennine Moors SPA and the South Pennine Moors SAC and their zone of influence.

In this Policy:

- **Zone A is land up to 400m from the South Pennine Moors Special Protection Area (“SPA”) and South Pennine Moors Special Area of Conservation (“SAC”) boundary;**
- **Zone B is land up to 2.5km from the SPA and SAC boundary; and**
- **Zone C is land up to 7km from the SPA and SAC boundary.**

Subject to the derogation tests of Article 6(4) of the Habitats Directive, in all Zones development will not be permitted where it would be likely to lead, directly or indirectly, to an adverse effect (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects), which cannot be effectively mitigated, upon the integrity of the SPA or the SAC.

In conducting the above assessment the following approach will apply:

- **In Zone A no development involving a net increase in dwellings would be permitted unless, as an exception, the development and/or its use would not have an adverse effect upon the integrity of the SPA or SAC.**
- **In Zone B it will be considered, based on such evidence as may be reasonably required, whether land proposed for development affects foraging habitat for qualifying species of the SPA.**
- **In Zone C, in respect of residential developments that result in a net increase of one or more dwellings, it will be considered how recreational pressure on the SPA or SAC, that such development might cause, will be effectively mitigated. The mitigation may be:**
 - (i) such that the developer elects to offer, either on-site and / or deliverable outside the boundary of the development site, such as the provision of accessible natural greenspace and/or other appropriate measures; or**
 - (ii) in the form of a financial contribution from the developer to:**
 - 1. The provision of additional natural greenspace and appropriate facilities to deflect pressure from moorland habitats and the long-term maintenance and management of that greenspace.**
 - 2. The implementation of access management measures, which may include further provision of wardens, in order to reduce the impact of visitors.**
 - 3. A programme of habitat management and manipulation and subsequent monitoring and review of measures.**

8.8 To mitigate impacts on the SPA and SAC due to the increase in population, an SPD will set out a mechanism for the calculation of the financial contributions, by reference to development types, the level of predicted recreational impact on the SPA or SAC, and the measures upon which such contributions will be spent.

8.9 Policy EN2: Biodiversity and Geodiversity of the Core Strategy would also be applicable to all development proposals coming forward in the plan area. This includes the requirement:

The North and South Pennine Moors SPAs and SACs

A. Any development that would be likely to have a significant effect on a European Site either alone or in combination with other plans or projects will be subject to assessment under the Habitat Regulations at project application stage. If it cannot be ascertained that there will be no adverse effects on site integrity then the project will have to be refused unless the derogation tests of Article 6(4) Habitats Directive can be met.

8.10 Assessment of the likely effects of the Neighbourhood Plan

8.11 Does the MNP propose new development or allocate sites for development?

No. The neighbourhood plan is required to be in general conformity with the policies set out within the adopted Bradford Local Plan which set the broad parameters for future development within Bradford. The Adopted Core Strategy (2017) has been subject to HRAs. The plan gives support for certain development which is in line with the Bradford Local Plan.

8.12 c) Are there any other projects or plans that together with the MNP could impact on the integrity of a European site, the 'in combination' impact?

There is one relevant plan level appropriate assessment that has been carried out. This is the Habitats Regulations Assessment for the Bradford District Core Strategy published in November 2015. This concluded that, taking into account the range of avoidance and mitigation measures incorporated into the strategic plan, the Core Strategy will not result in adverse effects on the ecological integrity of the North Pennine Moors SAC and SPA, South Pennine Moors SAC and South Pennine Moors Phase 2 SPA.

Of key relevance here is that the neighbourhood plan is being brought forward within the wider strategic context provided by the adopted Core Strategy which has already been subjected to appropriate assessment. The neighbourhood plan provides additional detail with regards the shaping development coming forward within the plan area but it does not trigger development in addition to that already envisaged.

In combination effects from other projects and plans in the area can therefore be ruled out.

9.0 HRA screening conclusion

9.1 It is considered that the policies in the MNP are **NOT** likely to have a significant effect on European Sites, whether alone or in combination with other projects and programmes. The Plan does not specifically allocate land for development and does not promote more land for development than the Local Plan. Furthermore, the policies within the plan are required to be in general conformity with those of the Local Plan (inc Biodiversity policies) which has been subject to HRA assessment.

9.2 Screening opinions have been received from statutory consultees and are included below. No response was received by the Environment Agency. Natural England had no specific comments to make. Historic England agreed with the screening report that 'it is unlikely that any significant environmental effects will arise as a result of the MNP'.

9.3 Copies of the responses are included on the next pages.



Ms Catriona Hanson (Clerk)

Menston Parish Council
17 Oakridge Court
Bingley
BD16 4TA

cc: [REDACTED]

Our ref: PL00801186

Your ref:

Telephone 01904 601879

07502 737925

6th March 2026

Environmental Assessment Regulations 2004: Regulation 9

Menston Neighbourhood Plan: SEA Screening Report Response - January 2026

Dear Menston Parish Council,

Thank you for consulting Historic England on the above Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA) Screening Opinion. Historic England is a public organisation that protects and brings new life to the heritage that matters to us all, so it lives on and is loved for longer. We are pleased to offer our comments.

Based on the analysis set out in the Screening Report, and within the areas of interest to Historic England, we agree that the emerging plan is unlikely to result in significant environmental effects and, therefore, it does not need SEA. In coming to this view we have taken the following factors into consideration:

- The plan area contains a number of heritage assets including a conservation area, several listed buildings, and the potential for non-designated assets.
- Heritage assets are fragile and irreplaceable and can be damaged by change through development both directly and indirectly by development in their setting.

Historic England, 37 Tanner Row, York YO1 6WP
Telephone: 01904 601948 | historicengland.org.uk

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- The plan is not expected to allocate sites for development.

As such, from the perspective of our area of interest, the need for SEA of the draft plan can be screened out as it is unlikely to result in significant environmental effects (positive or negative). However, the view of the other two statutory consultees should be taken into account before you conclude on whether SEA is needed. According to Regulation 11 of the above Regulations, I look forward to receiving a copy of your determination in this case.

Yours sincerely

John Lambe

John Lambe

Historic Places Adviser

E-mail: [REDACTED]

Date: 10 March 2026
Our ref: 540173
Your ref: Menston Neighbourhood Plan



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T 0300 060 3900

Mr Jamie Wilde
Design Yorkshire

BY EMAIL ONLY

Dear Mr Wilde

Menston Neighbourhood Plan - SEA/HRA Scoping Report Consultation

Thank you for your consultation on the above dated 02 February 2026.

Natural England is a non-departmental public body. Our statutory purpose is to ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced, and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development.

Natural England is a statutory consultee in neighbourhood planning and must be consulted on draft neighbourhood development plans by the Parish/Town Councils or Neighbourhood Forums where they consider our interests would be affected by the proposals made.

Natural England does not have any specific comments on this draft neighbourhood plan.

However, we refer you to the attached annex which covers the issues and opportunities that should be considered when preparing a Neighbourhood Plan and to the following information.

Natural England does not hold information on the location of significant populations of protected species, so is unable to advise whether this plan is likely to affect protected species to such an extent as to require a Strategic Environmental Assessment. Further information on protected species and development is included in [Natural England's Standing Advice on protected species](#).

Furthermore, Natural England does not routinely maintain locally specific data on all environmental assets. The plan may have environmental impacts on priority species and/or habitats, local wildlife sites, soils and best and most versatile agricultural land, or on local landscape character that may be sufficient to warrant a Strategic Environmental Assessment. Information on ancient woodland, ancient and veteran trees is set out in Natural England/Forestry Commission [standing advice](#).

We therefore recommend that advice is sought from your ecological, landscape and soils advisers, local record centre, recording society or wildlife body on the local soils, best and most versatile agricultural land, landscape, geodiversity and biodiversity receptors that may be affected by the plan before determining whether a Strategic Environmental Assessment is necessary.

Natural England reserves the right to provide further advice on the environmental assessment of the plan. This includes any third party appeal against any screening decision you may make. If a Strategic Environmental Assessment is required, Natural England must be consulted at the scoping and environmental report stages.

For any further consultations on your plan, please contact: consultations@naturalengland.org.uk.

Yours sincerely
Sally Wintle
Consultations Team