

## Ickleford Neighbourhood Plan

Habitats Regulation Assessment – Initial Screening	
Name of Neighbourhood Plan	Ickleford Neighbourhood Plan – Regulation 16 version
Name of Qualifying Body	Ickleford Parish Council
Date of screening	28 March 2023
Screened by	Clare Skeels

### Initial screening question 1

	Y / N	Commentary
Does the Neighbourhood Plan propose any development allocations which are additional or alternate to the sites proposed in the emerging North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031?	No	The neighbourhood plan does not allocate any sites for development. There are policies which address: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the rural character of the parish;</li> <li>• the design of new development;</li> <li>• the protection of community facilities; and</li> <li>• provisions for non-motorised transport and car parking.</li> </ul>

*If the answer to the above question is “No”, the Neighbourhood Plan is not considered to have the potential to cause a likely significant adverse effect on a European Site and no further action is required.*

*If the answer to the above question is “Yes”, please proceed to Initial screening question 2.*

### Initial screening question 2

	Y / N or N/A	Commentary
Does the designated neighbourhood area (or any part of it) lie <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) wholly or partially within; or</li> <li>(ii) in close proximity to* the Thames River Basin District?</li> </ul>	N	No – Ickleford is not situated in, or in close proximity to the Thames River Basin District.  See maps available at: <a href="https://environment.data.gov.uk/catchment-planning/">https://environment.data.gov.uk/catchment-planning/</a>

*If the answer to the above question is “No”, the Neighbourhood Plan is not considered to have the potential to cause a likely significant adverse effect on a European Site and no further action is required.*

*If the answer to the above question is “Yes”, please contact the District Council who will advise on how to proceed.*

*\*Sites close to watershed boundaries may be subject to commercial or operational agreements where water is pumped to, or otherwise treated within the adjoining River Basin District. Please contact the District Council for further advice if you consider the answer to (ii) may be “Yes”.*

## Explanatory Note

The Habitats Regulations say that relevant plans should identify whether they are likely to have a significant effect on certain types of nature conservation sites. These are known as European Sites. This requirement applies to both Local Plans and Neighbourhood Plans.

The District Council will address any requirements in relation to the Habitats Regulations that arise from its Local Plans. Qualifying Bodies in the District will only need to address the requirements of the Habitats Regulations insofar as they relate to any new or different proposals in their Neighbourhood Plans. From work carried out to date for the Local Plan, we already know that:

- There are no European Sites within North Hertfordshire District. Plans within the District cannot result in the direct physical loss or damage of habitat;
- There are no European Sites within 500m of North Hertfordshire District. This is the buffer within which disturbance from noise, vibration or light might be an issue;
- There are no European Sites within 5km of North Hertfordshire District. This is the buffer within which additional visitors to the site(s) might need to be managed;
- There are three European Sites within 15km of the District. This is the initial zone within which species might reasonably be assumed to travel in search of food (forage) from:
  - Eversdon and Wimpole Woods Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
  - Wormley – Hoddesdonpark Woods SAC
  - Lee Valley Special Protection Area (SPA)
- Further analysis shows that the specific species for which the Eversdon and Wimpole Woods SAC and Lee Valley SPA are designated are unlikely to forage more than 8km from these sites. No part of the District falls within this buffer;
- Further analysis shows that Wormley – Hoddesdonpark Woods SAC is designated for the presence of specific tree species, rather than animals. This means that it is not necessary to look at (potential) foraging pathways from this site;
- **It is therefore not necessary for neighbourhood plans within the District to consider any of the above matters further under the Habitats Regulations;**
- Assessment may be required outside of the buffer zones above where development may impact upon a European Site for other reasons. One European Site is identified on this basis.
- Wastewater from those parts of the District within the Thames Water catchment is treated at a site next to the Lee Valley SPA. If this site does not have the capacity to appropriately treat wastewater arising from new development, it could have an effect on the SPA. This is a matter that requires further investigation under the Habitats Regulations;
- Relevant sites within local plans that fall within, or otherwise in close proximity to, the Thames Water catchment will be identified and assessed through the local plan process. Local plans will contain any necessary measures to avoid significant effects from these sites;
- **Any neighbourhood plans that do not propose additional or alternate development sites to those in local plans will not need to consider this matter further under the Habitats Regulations.**
- **Any neighbourhood plans proposing additional or alternate development sites but which are wholly outside or not otherwise in close proximity to the Thames Water catchment will not need to consider this matter further under the Habitats Regulations.**