

Hart District Council
Crondall Neighbourhood Plan
STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT REPORT:
ADOPTION STATEMENT



The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004
(Reg 16 – information as to adoption of plan or programme)

Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA) involves a series of procedural steps which are designed to meet the requirements of the SEA Regulations. The final step in the process involves preparing a 'statement' at the time a neighbourhood plan is 'made'.

The SEA Adoption Statement includes information on:

- How environmental considerations have been integrated into the Neighbourhood Plan
- How the SEA has been taken into account
- How the results of public consultation have been taken into account
- The reasons for choosing the made Neighbourhood Plan, in light of the other reasonable alternatives, and
- How any significant environmental effects of implementing the Neighbourhood Plan will be monitored.

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Crondall Neighbourhood Plan relates to the area that was designated by the Council as a Neighbourhood Area on 1 September 2016. This area is coterminous with the Crondall Parish boundary and is entirely within the Local Planning Authority area.
- 1.2 Crondall Parish Council undertook pre-submission consultation on the draft Plan in accordance with Regulation 14 between November and December 2018.
- 1.3 Following the submission of the Crondall Neighbourhood Plan to the Council on 17 June 2019, the Council publicised the draft Plan for a six-week period and representations were invited in accordance with Regulation 16. The publicity period ended on 29 July 2019.
- 1.4 The Council appointed an Examiner to review the plan and their report was received on 8 November 2019. The report concludes that subject to making the modifications recommended, the Plan meets the basic conditions set out in the legislation and should proceed to a Neighbourhood Planning referendum.

- 1.5 Having considered each of the recommendations made in the Examiner's report and the reasons for them, the Council decided to make the modifications to the Crondall Neighbourhood Plan.
- 1.6 A local referendum was held on 6 May 2021, where more than 50% of those voting, voted in favour of the Neighbourhood Plan. Hart District Council consequently made the Crondall Neighbourhood Plan at its meeting on 20 May 2021. Crondall Neighbourhood Plan, is therefore part of the development plan for Hart District.

2.0 HOW ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS HAVE BEEN INTEGRATED INTO THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

- 2.1 In parallel with the development of the Crondall Neighbourhood Plan, the SEA process was also undertaken. Crondall Parish Council commissioned consultants (AECOM) to undertake the SEA of the Crondall Neighbourhood Plan.
- 2.2 SEA is used to assess Neighbourhood Plans against a set of environmental objectives developed in consultation with interested parties. The purpose of the appraisal is to avoid adverse environmental effects and identify opportunities to improve the environmental quality of the neighbourhood planning area through the neighbourhood planning process.
- 2.3 The SEA has informed the plan making process, more specifically, the Crondall Neighbourhood Plan states the following (Section 2.6) :

The SEA assesses the emerging policies of this Neighbourhood Plan. (Its conclusions have informed the final choice and wording of land use policies to ensure the Neighbourhood Plan can avoid or minimise its impacts on the local environment.). In particular it assesses a series of reasonable alternatives to the approach to be taken in the Plan. As part of this process it identifies the basis on which proposed housing sites have been included in the Plan and which sites have been considered and not pursued further.

3.0 HOW THE SEA HAS BEEN TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT

- 3.1 In April 2018, a screening assessment was undertaken by consultants BASE, who determined that the Crondall Neighbourhood Plan required an SEA on the basis that it could give rise to significant environmental effects.
- 3.2 The statutory bodies, Historic England, Natural England and the Environment Agency were all consulted on the screening assessment. None disagreed with its conclusions or raised any concerns in respect of the requirement for the Neighbourhood Plan to meet European obligations.

Regulation 14 Consultation

- 3.3 Following extensive community consultation and evidence gathering and to support the implementation of the vision of the Neighbourhood Plan, the Regulation 14 pre-submission version of the Crondall Neighbourhood Plan put forward nine policies to guide development within the Neighbourhood Plan area. An assessment of these policies was undertaken in 2018 through the SEA process, with the assessment findings presented in the SEA Environmental Report (AECOM, November 2018).
- 3.4 Both the pre-submission version of the Neighbourhood Plan and the accompanying SEA Environmental Report were subject to public consultation (Regulation 14) that was undertaken between 3th November and 16th December 2018.
- 3.5 Following Regulation 14 consultation, the Neighbourhood Plan policies were updated to reflect responses received.

Submission version of the Crondall Neighbourhood Plan

- 3.6 An SEA of the revised version of the Crondall Neighbourhood Plan was then undertaken and published in May 2019, and included :
- An outline of the contents and main objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan and its relationship with other relevant policies, plans and programmes;
 - Relevant aspects of the current and future state of the environment and key sustainability issues;
 - The SEA Framework of objectives against which the Neighbourhood Plan has been assessed;
 - The appraisal of alternative approaches for the Neighbourhood Plan;
 - The likely significant environmental effects of the Neighbourhood Plan;
 - The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects as a result of the Neighbourhood Plan; and
 - The next steps for the Neighbourhood Plan and accompanying SEA process
- 3.7 The report concluded that :

Para 5.47- 5.50 - The assessment has concluded that the current version of the Crondall Neighbourhood Plan is likely to lead to significant long term positive effects in relation to the 'population and community' and 'health and wellbeing' SEA themes. These benefits largely relate to the protection of key service and facility provisions, the delivery of new housing to meet local needs; improved availability and affordability of new housing; the protection of the surrounding countryside; the protection of settlement identities; local heritage protection; and the protection of green spaces. This is also expected to lead to minor positive effects in terms of the 'biodiversity' SEA theme, improving connectivity and supporting net gain in new development; however, there remains some

uncertainty relating to potential effects on internationally and nationally designated sites.

While a number of policies seek to protect the landscape and historic environment, the allocation of sites within areas of 'low' overall landscape capacity for development has the potential to lead to uncertain minor long-term negative effects on this SEA theme. It is noted that there is some uncertainty relating to the delivery of new housing development, which may impact upon the significance of effects.

Minor long term negative effects are anticipated for the 'land, soil and water resources' SEA theme given the loss of poorer quality agricultural land.

Residual neutral effects are anticipated in relation to the 'climatic factors' SEA theme given it is considered that flood risk at The Bungalow (CRON 21) will be sufficiently mitigated; and for the 'transportation' SEA theme due to the anticipated continued high car reliance of residents, and the inability to address existing issues relating to public transport provision in the village.

Independent Examination and Referendum

- 3.8 Following submission to Hart District Council, the Crondall Neighbourhood Plan and accompanying SEA Report underwent Regulation 16 public consultation from 17 June to 29 July 2019.
- 3.9 Independent Examination was subsequently undertaken, with the Examiner's Report received on 8 November 2019. Subject to a number of modifications being made, the Independent Examiner recommended that the Crondall Neighbourhood Plan would meet the basic conditions and did not breach and was otherwise compatible with EU obligations and with Convention Rights.
- 3.10 The updated Fleet Neighbourhood Plan was subject to a referendum on 6th May 2021, organised by Hart District Council. To the question "Do you want Hart District Council to use the Neighbourhood Plan for Crondall Neighbourhood Planning Area to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?" , 83% of votes cast said yes.
- 3.11 Reflecting the favourable outcome of the referendum, the Crondall Neighbourhood Plan was subsequently 'made' by Hart District Council on 20 May 2021.

4.0 HOW THE RESULTS OF PUBLIC CONSULTATION HAVE BEEN TAKEN INTO ACCOUNT

- 4.1 Each version of the SEA has been subject to public consultation and comments from both the statutory consultation bodies and others were taken into account.
- 4.2 Representations received at the Regulation 14 stage can be viewed at https://www.crandall-pc.gov.uk/file/2019/06/Crandall-NPWG-Reg14-Consultation-Results_v0.4_05052019.pdf

- 4.3 Representations received at the Regulation 16 stage can be viewed at <https://www.hart.gov.uk/crondall>

5.0 THE REASONS FOR CHOOSING THE MADE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

- 5.1 The SEA concludes that the Crondall Neighbourhood Plan is likely to lead to significant long term positive effects.
- 5.2 The SEA assessed sites put forward for development in the Neighbourhood Plan and the conclusions are set out above at 3.6. The SEA provided the scrutiny required to determine which proposed housing sites have been included in the Plan and which sites have been considered and not pursued further. In addition, the plan seeks to facilitate appropriate development in the Neighbourhood Plan area through robust development management policies.
- 5.3 The development management policies in the Fleet Neighbourhood Plan have also been incorporated into the SA as set out in the SA Report (inc. SEA). The SA explains how the policies help to mitigate the environmental effects associated with the Fleet Neighbourhood Plan.

6.0 HOW ANY SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL/SUSTAINABILITY EFFECTS OF IMPLEMENTING THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN WILL BE MONITORED

- 6.1 The Crondall Neighbourhood Plan will be subject to on-going monitoring as part of Hart District Council's Authority Monitoring Reports (AMR). This will demonstrate the on-going suitability of the Crondall Neighbourhood Plan's policies and enable any unforeseen effects arising from their implementation to be identified. Monitoring will also provide information as to whether the predicted effects of the SEA were accurate.