

# Rooley Moor Neighbourhood Development Plan

## **Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening Report**

September 2018

## Contents:

1. Introduction	3
2. Legislative Background	8
3. SEA Screening	10
4. HRA Screening	16
5. Conclusions	19

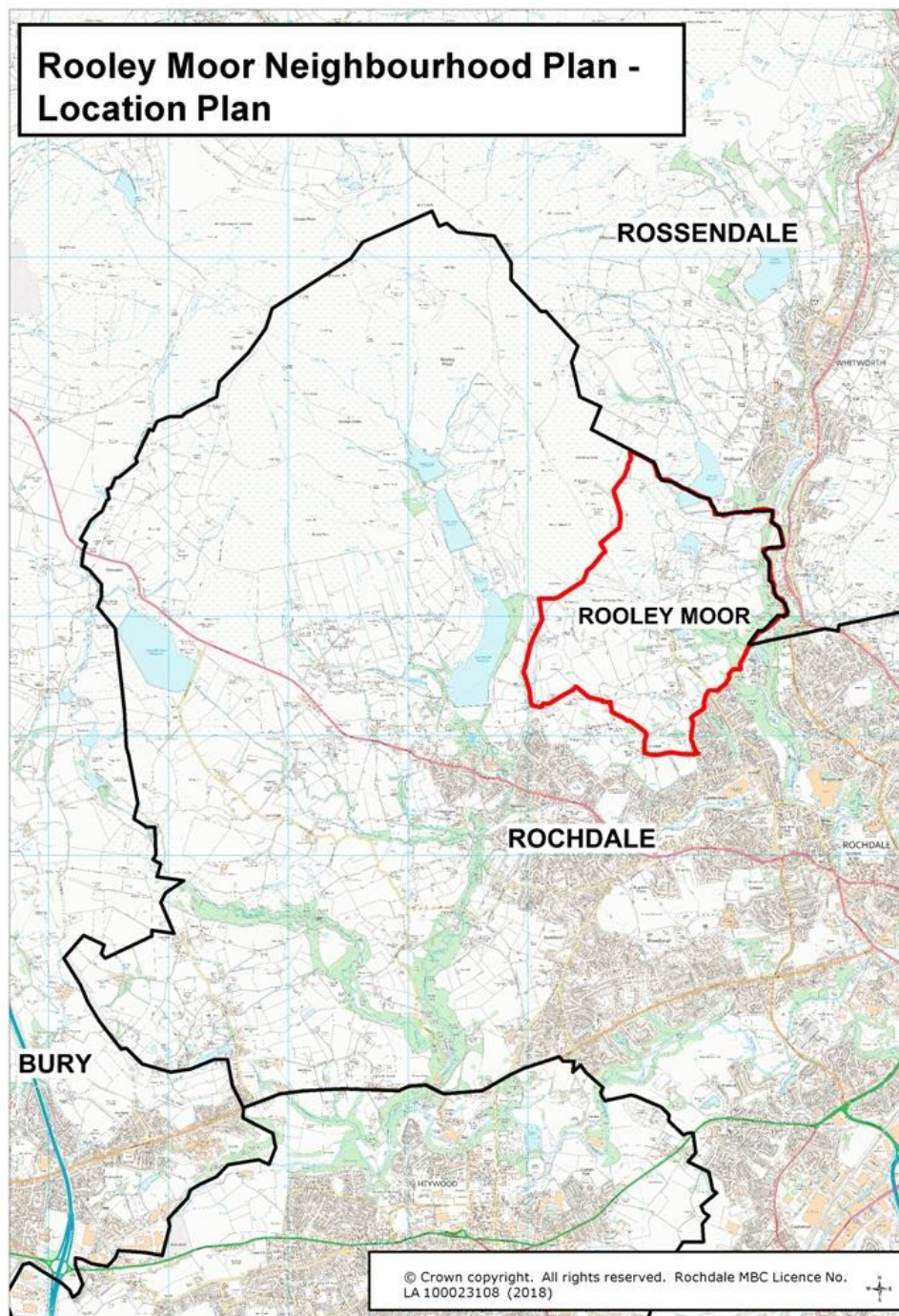
## **1: Introduction**

- 1.1 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is a mechanism for assessing the likely significant effects of a draft Plan with a view to integrating environmental considerations into its development and adoption, ensuring negative environmental effects are minimised / mitigated and positive impacts maximised. This document is a screening opinion to determine whether or not a full Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is required for the Rooley Moor Neighbourhood Plan (hereafter referred to as 'The Plan'). Additionally, this document sets out a screening opinion as to whether full Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) will be required; HRA is an assessment of the impacts of the Plan upon habitats and flora / fauna protected by the European Habitats Directive.
- 1.2 This screening has been carried out by Rochdale Borough Council, which is the 'responsible body' for the purposes of these regulations, using the Pre-submission Draft for Consultation of the Plan.

### **The Plan**

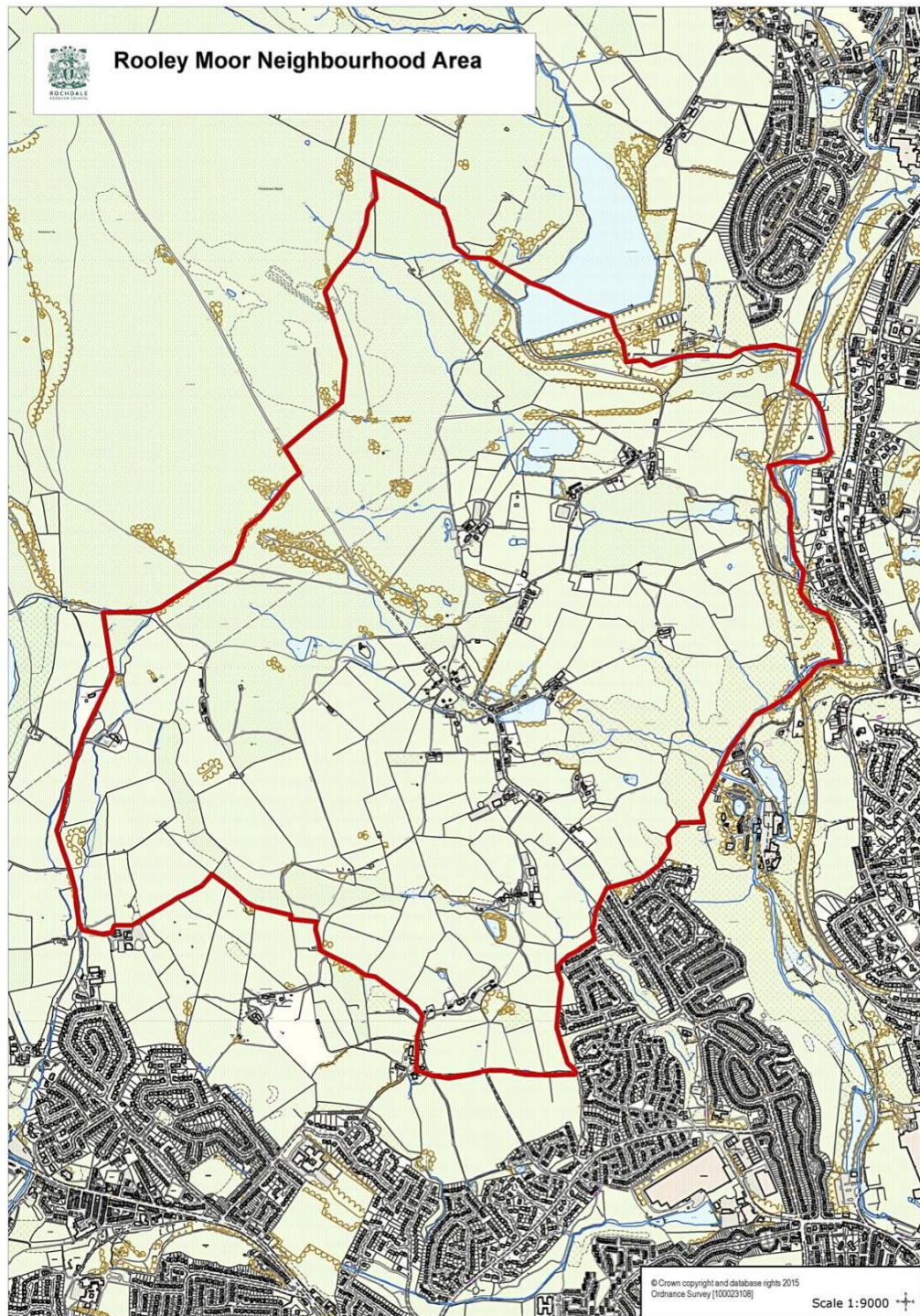
- 1.3 The Plan is being produced by the Rooley Moor Neighbourhood Forum under the Localism Act 2011 and the associated Regulations, to provide a community led framework to guide, promote and control the future use and development of land in the area including changes of use and the management of land and buildings. It also has policies relating to the conservation of the built and natural heritage. The Plan is a statutory document which will, when adopted, form part of the Borough's Local Development Plan, and thus its policies will be used in making decisions on planning applications in the neighbourhood area, addressing the community's local planning priorities for the area, promoting positive change and investment and promoting conservation and improvements in the area. It does not seek to allocate sites or propose a greater degree of development to that already set out in the Core Strategy / draft Allocations Plan, which it will be in general conformity with. The area is shown in figures 1 and 2 below.

Figure 1: Rooley Moor Neighbourhood area in the wider context





**Figure 2: Rooley Moor Neighbourhood boundary area**



1.4 The objectives of the Plan are as follows:

- *To promote a sustainable and harmonious residential, farming and recreational community;*
- *To promote public appreciation of the area and its history, culture and heritage, its landscape and natural assets;*

- *To retain the openness of the area and its special rural character and identity.*
- *To ensure new development is of a high standard and respects and reinforces local character.*
- *To protect and enhance local landscape quality and diversity (e.g. moorland, farmland, woodland and trees, valleys, water features, etc.)*
- *To protect and enhance sites and features of local biodiversity and geodiversity importance.*
- *To protect and enhance the built heritage (including conservation areas, listed buildings, archaeological features and buildings and structures of local interest) and to promote the retention and effective use of rural buildings of character.*
- *To promote recreational opportunities appropriate to the area for the benefit of all (including those with mobility and sensory impairment) by improving accessibility and routes, parking facilities, interpretation and signage, and other visitor facilities.*
- *To support farming, appropriate farm diversification, other appropriate rural business activities especially where they help to maintain the rural economy, improve the appearance and character of the area and contribute to other objectives.*
- *To promote sustainable development, environmental protection and tackle the impacts of climate change.*

#### 1.5 The Plan contains 18 policies relating to:

- Design
- Conservation and Re-use of rural buildings
- Character Areas and important views
- Protection of heritage assets
- Farm diversification
- Areas of recreational focus
- Key recreational routes
- Equestrian development
- Visitor facilities
- Overnight visitor accommodation
- Landscape protection and enhancement
- Trees, woodlands and hedgerows
- Sites of wildlife importance
- Energy efficiency and renewable / low carbon energy
- Wind turbines
- Light pollution
- Traffic impact

#### **The Area**

- The area covered by the Plan (see figures 1 and 2 below) is largely rural in character and has a population of approximately 200.
- The farmland in the area is generally poor quality and agriculture is generally restricted to grazing and equestrian activities. The area is made up of open moor, mire, bog pools, grassland, pasture and woods.
- Architectural character makes a significant contribution to the identity of the area; there are two conservation areas and four listed buildings.

- From a biodiversity point of view, the area provides habitat for a significant colony of common lizards, hares and bats (GM Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) species), roe deer, and otters and water voles (Rochdale BAP species). There are fifteen 'red' species of birds (species most critical and in decline) and twenty 'amber' species. The area also includes the Healey Dell Site of Biological Importance (SBI) and Local Nature Reserve, which contains a large area of remnant clough oak Ancient Woodland, acid grassland, heath habitat and former mill lodges.
- The River Spodden, which is a designated 'main river', forms the eastern boundary of the Neighbourhood Plan area. Indicative surface water flood risk mapping published by the Environment Agency suggests that the risk of flooding is generally very low. Areas of medium and high surface water flood risk do occur within the Neighbourhood Area but these are concentrated along existing surface water flow paths and topographic lows such as gullies or former quarry areas.
- Leisure and recreation in the area includes fishing ponds used by anglers, walking and cycling routes through Healey Dell and other bridleways and footpaths including an integral part of the Mary Towneley Loop, a nationally significant trail.

1.6 Chapter 2 of this document sets out the legislative background that led to the requirement for this screening opinion. Chapter 3 sets out the screening assessment of the likely significant environmental effects of the Plan to determine whether full SEA is needed. Chapter 4 provides an assessment on the likely effects of the Plan on European protected habitats to determine the need for full HRA. Chapter 5 summarises the findings and conclusions for both screening processes.

## **2: Legislative Background**

### *Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)*

- 2.1 The basis for Strategic Environmental Assessments and Sustainability Appraisal legislation is European Directive 2001/42/EC which was transposed into English law by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, or SEA Regulations. The Directive states that its objective is to “provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes with a view to promoting sustainable development.”
- 2.2 Plans and programmes subject to the Directive are those:
- Subject to preparation and/or adoption by an authority at national, regional or local level or which are prepared by an authority for adoption, through a legislative procedure by Parliament or Government, and
  - Required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions.
- 2.3 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires local authorities to produce Sustainability Appraisals (SAs) for all local development documents, partly for the purpose of meeting the requirements of the EU Directive on SEA as outlined in National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) paragraph 165. The 2008 Planning Act amended this requirement so that SA was only required for Development Plan Documents (DPDs) but did not remove the requirement for an SEA. As a Neighbourhood Plan is not a DPD an SA is not legally required; however, if a Neighbourhood Plan is likely to have significant environmental effects, it will require SEA, and therefore draft Neighbourhood Plan proposals should be assessed to determine whether this will be the case. This is commonly referred to as ‘screening’ and constitutes the purpose of chapter 3 of this report.
- 2.4 The requirements for screening are set out in regulation 9 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004. These include a requirement to consult the environmental assessment consultation bodies (which will be the Environment Agency, Natural England and Historic England). Where it is determined that the plan is unlikely to have significant environmental effects (and, accordingly, does not require a full SEA) a statement of reasons for the determination should be prepared. A copy of this statement must be submitted with the neighbourhood plan proposal and made available to the independent examiner.
- 2.5 When a Neighbourhood Plan is likely to have a significant environmental effect an SEA must be carried out and an environmental report prepared in accordance with paragraphs 2 and 3 of regulation 12 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.

### *Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)*

- 2.6 Article 6 (3) of the EU Habitats Directive and regulation 61 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended) requires an ‘appropriate assessment’ to be carried out with regard to the Conservation Objectives of European Sites (Natura 2000 sites) if there are likely to be any significant effects on any of those sites. These sites are a network of protected areas across Europe designed to protect the most seriously threatened habitats and species.

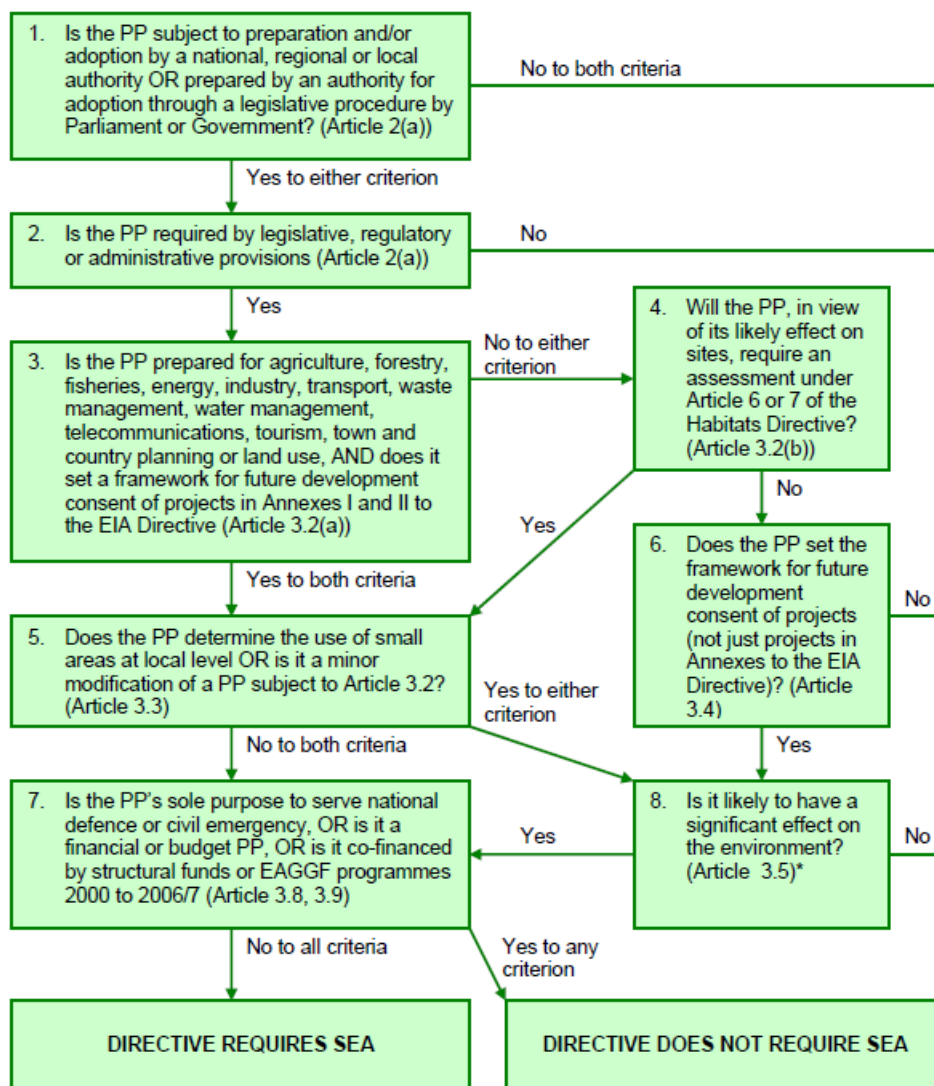


- 2.7 A Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) screening identifies whether a plan is likely to have a significant effect on a Natura 2000 site, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects, and thus whether a full assessment is required. This must determine whether significant effects on a European site can be ruled out on the basis of objective information.
- 2.8 The SEA Directive requires that if a plan or programme requires 'appropriate assessment' under the Habitats Directive, then that plan or programme will also require an SEA. It is therefore advisable to check whether an assessment under the Habitats Directive is required at the SEA screening stage, and that is the purpose of chapter 4 of this report.

### 3: SEA Screening

- 3.1 The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) has produced practical guidance in respect of the SEA Directive, which includes a guide to assist in determining if a plan or programme will require SEA. This is shown in Figure 1 below.

**Figure 1: Application of the SEA Directive to plans and programmes**



- 3.2 As a first step the process shown in figure 1 has been undertaken in respect of the Rooley Moor Neighbourhood Plan, and this is shown in table 1 below.

**Table 1: Establishing if there is a need for SEA – Step 1**

Stage	Yes/No	Comments
2 Is the PP subject to preparation and/or adoption by a national, regional or local authority OR prepared by an authority for adoption through a legislative procedure by Parliament or	Yes	The Plan would be subject to adoption by a local authority as part of the Local Plan

Government? (Art. 2(a))		
3 Is the PP required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions? (Art. 2 (a))	Yes	Whilst not required in itself, the Neighbourhood Plan would ultimately form part of the Local Plan, which is required
4 Is the PP prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water 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? (Art 3.2(a))	Yes to both criteria	The Plan is prepared for town and country planning / land use, and, together with the rest of the Local Plan sets a framework for development consents in the area which might include projects outlined in Annexes I and II of the EIA Directive. For example, there are policies in the Plan relating to wind farms and visitor facilities, both development types contained in Annex II of the EIA Directive.
5. Does the PP determine the use of small areas at local level, OR is it a minor modification of a PP subject to Art 3.2? (Art. 3.3)	Yes	European Commission guidance suggests that plans or programmes which determine the use of small areas at local level might include those which outline details of how buildings should be designed in a limited area, which the Plan does. It could also be considered to be a 'minor modification' of the Local Plan.
8. Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment?		See below

3.3 Thus, following on from the table above, specifically question 8, it is necessary to determine whether the Plan would be likely to have a significant effect on the environment. To do this it is pertinent to look at the criteria for assessing its effects, which are set out in Annex II of the Directive and shown in Table 2 below:

**Table 2: Criteria for assessing the effects of a Plan (European Directive 2001/42/EC)**

<p><i>1. The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular, to</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>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,</i></li> <li>- <i>the degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy,</i></li> <li>- <i>the relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development,</i></li> <li>- <i>environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme,</i></li> <li>- <i>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).</i></li> </ul> <p><i>2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects,</i></li> <li>- <i>the cumulative nature of the effects,</i></li> <li>- <i>the transboundary nature of the effects,</i></li> <li>- <i>the risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents),</i></li> <li>- <i>the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected),</i></li> <li>- <i>the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <i>special natural characteristics or cultural heritage,</i></li> <li>- <i>exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values,</i></li> <li>- <i>intensive land-use,</i></li> <li>- <i>the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
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3.4 Table 3 below applies these criteria to the Plan in question:

**Table 3: Establishing if there is a need for SEA – Step 2**

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)	Comments
The characteristics of the Plan, having regard 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 Plan sets out criteria for design of new development, recreational activities, equestrian developments, visitor facilities, wind turbines and other criteria, all of which support the policies of the Core Strategy but interpret them for the local area. In this respect, it is fair to say that the Plan is an element of the framework for the local area impacting on such matters as location and design. However the Plan does not allocate sites or propose development in excess of that identified in the Allocations Plan, and it is in general conformity with the policies in the Core Strategy. Thus, it is considered that the SA which has been carried out for the Core Strategy is sufficient in this regard.
The degree to which the plan or	The Plan will help to deliver the objectives of the Core Strategy policies and is

programme influences other plans or programmes including those in a hierarchy	influenced by it, but it does not influence the Core Strategy. It will potentially influence proposals for new development, but not plans or programmes subject to adoption by local authorities or required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions (which constitute the definition of 'plans and programmes' for the purposes of SEA as set out in Government guidance).
The relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development	The Plan in itself is influential in terms of environmental considerations in a very localised area, and is therefore relevant for the integration of environmental considerations. However, this is minor in comparison with the influence of the policies of the Core Strategy, which is far greater because it is holistic and comprehensive, and in any case the Plan will be in conformity with the Core Strategy. Thus in terms of relevance in this respect the Plan is not significant.
Environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme	There are no significant environmental 'problems' in the area in question. For example, it is largely rural, not industrial and is not prone to flooding.
The relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (e.g. plans or programmes linked to waste management or water protection).	In terms of European Community legislation and its implementation, there is nothing in the Plan which is particularly relevant in this regard.
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	As the Plan will be a material consideration in planning decisions, there is a high probability of effects, which could be lasting but not likely to be particularly frequent. However, these effects would not be significant and would (given the nature of the Plan which is to improve the environment) be positive.
The cumulative nature of the effects	The aim of the Plan is to protect and improve the overall environment of the area through a variety of impacts, and thus it could be said the Plan is designed specifically to encourage cumulative effects
The transboundary nature of the effects	There would be no transboundary effects arising from the implementation of this Plan
The risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents)	The Plan would not be allocating sites or levels of development, and would be principally seeking to influence, in a positive way, the visual and aesthetic impacts of development and some principles of low-impact recreational developments. It would not be influencing any regulatory regimes or local or national planning policies
The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)	The effects of the policies set out in the Plan would be almost entirely restricted to the local geographical area covered by the Plan, effecting a population of about 200.
The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:	
Special natural characteristics or cultural heritage	The special characteristics of the area include Conservation Areas and a Local Nature Reserve but no nationally or internationally designated ecological sites. None of these characteristics are considered to be particularly vulnerable, and the Plan would seek to preserve these characteristics and not significantly change them.
Exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values	There are no known exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values in the area.
Intensive land-use	The area is mainly poor quality pasture land and is not intensively used.
The effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status	There are no areas within or adjacent to the Plan area which have such protection status apart from two Conservation Areas. These are not considered to be in a vulnerable condition and the Plan would seek to preserve their character and not significantly change them.



3.5 A further assessment looking at specific environmental ‘issues’ is shown in Table 3 below (these are taken from Government guidance in respect of SEA (*‘A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive, ODPM’*)):

**Table 3: Establishing if there is a need for SEA – Step 3**

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Conclusions</b>
Biodiversity, fauna and flora	Area provides habitat for GM and Rochdale BAP species. Includes an SBI and Local Nature Reserve. No European sites or SSSIs. The Plan includes a policy which promotes local sites and habitat features in new developments	As the nature of the Plan is not to allocate sites and to support the policies of the Core Strategy, and considering the lack of European or nationally designated sites, the impact would not appear to be significant
Population and human health	The area has a population of approximately 200. The Plan does not propose to increase this by allocation.	No allocations are proposed or policies which would promote facilities where there could be issues in relation to health.
Water and soil	The River Spodden forms the eastern boundary of the Plan area. Flood risk is generally very low. Soil quality is low from an agricultural point of view.	The Plan proposes no allocations, or any policies which promote extraction or major earthworks or potentially polluting developments.
Air	There are no specific issues in respect of air quality.	The Plan does not promote activities which could potentially have significant air pollution impacts.
Climate factors	There are no climate issues which are particular to this area. The Plan promotes energy efficiency and renewable / low carbon energy.	The Plan does not allocate sites. It does not promote any activity which could have significant climate impacts.
Cultural heritage and landscape	There are two Conservation Areas and four listed buildings. The Plan puts particular emphasis on protecting heritage assets.	The Plan is unlikely to lead to significant changes to the landscape or cultural heritage of the area, and any impact there is will be likely to be positive.

### **Conclusion**

3.6 The Rooley Moor Neighbourhood Plan does not propose more development than is set out in the Core Strategy and Allocations Plan, which have both been subject to full SEA, nor does it allocate sites for development. It promotes the preservation and enhancement of the existing environmental assets in the area through the planning system, these assets being mainly of local significance, and the impacts of the Plan will be almost entirely restricted to the Plan area. There are no nationally or internationally designated ecological sites in the Plan area or significant environmental problems in the area in question, and there are only two nationally designated Conservation Areas upon which the Plan will seek to preserve and not significantly change. The

Plan does not promote potentially polluting developments or developments which might have potential health impacts. Having carefully considered the Plan against the criteria from Annex II of the Directive and a range of specific issues, it is concluded that Strategic Environmental Assessment will not be required.

## **4: Habitats Regulations Assessment - Screening**

- 4.1 An assessment referred to as an Appropriate Assessment must be undertaken if the Plan is likely to have a significant effect on any European protected (Natura 2000) wildlife sites i.e. if policies and proposals in the plan might impact significantly on one or more European sites. The assessment must determine whether the plan would adversely affect, or be likely to affect, the integrity of a site in terms of its nature conservation objectives. This process is known as Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA).
- 4.2 The initial stage of this process is the screening stage, which determines if there are likely to be significant effects as a result of the implementation of the plan, and therefore whether a full assessment is required. The screening process should provide a description of the plan and an identification of any Natura 2000 sites which may be affected by it and the significance of the effects.
- 4.3 The plan is described in earlier chapters of this report. There are no Natura 2000 sites within the Plan area. As a 'rule of thumb' all sites within 15 km of the Plan area have been identified, and these are shown in Table 4 below:

**Table 4: Natura 2000 sites which may be affected**

<b>Name of European Site</b>	<b>Reason for Designation</b>	<b>Conservation Objectives</b>	<b>Identified Possible Impacts</b>
Rochdale Canal Special Area of Conservation (SAC) – Approximately 4 km away	A significant population of floating water plantain ( <i>Luronium natans</i> )	Maintain, in favourable condition the habitats for the floating water plantain	Dredging, draining of canal, pollution of canal, shading, increased boat traffic, use of herbicide, introduction of invasive species
South Pennine Moors Special Area of Conservation (SAC) / Special Protection Area (SPA) – approximately 6.8 km away	European Dry heath, Blanket Bog, Old Sessile Oak woods, breeding birds	Maintain, in favourable condition, the habitats of golden plover, merlin and short-eared owl, and blanket bog, dry heaths, wet heaths, transition mires and old oak woods	Cultivation, grazing, mowing or cutting, application of manure, fertilisers or lime, application of pesticides, burning, drainage, extraction of minerals, construction of roads, ditches etc, erection of structures, use of vehicles, pollution, recreational activities, agricultural intensification leading to loss of bird feeding areas outside the designated site

- 4.4 Table 5 below shows assessment of the policies contained within the Plan against these two European sites, taking into account the conservation objectives and identified potential impacts for those sites outlined above.

**Table 5: Effects on European sites**

Policy	Effect on Rochdale Canal SAC	Effect on South Pennine Moors SAC / SPA
Policy HO1 – Residential Development	None. Too distant and in any event does not go beyond Green Belt policy set out in existing documents	None. Too distant and in any event does not go beyond Green Belt policy set out in existing documents
Policy D1 – Design	None. Impacts only within the Plan area.	None. Impacts only within the Plan area.
Policy D2 – Conversion and Re-use of rural buildings	None. Impacts only within the Plan area.	None. Impacts only within the Plan area.
Policy D3 – Character areas and important views	None. Impacts only within the Plan area or areas adjacent to it.	None. Impacts only within the Plan area or areas adjacent to it.
Policy HE1 – Protection of heritage assets	None. Impacts only within the Plan area.	None. Impacts only within the Plan area.
Policy RE1 – Farm diversification	None. Impacts only within the Plan area.	None. Impacts only within the Plan area. Does not promote intensification.
Policy R1 – Areas of recreational focus	None. Impacts only within the Plan area.	None. Impacts only within the Plan area.
Policy R2 – Key recreational routes	None. Impacts only within the Plan area or areas adjacent to it.	None. Impacts only within the Plan area or areas adjacent to it.
Policy R3 – Equestrian development	None. Impacts only within the Plan area.	None. Impacts only within the Plan area. Does not promote intensification.
Policy V1 – Visitor facilities	None. Impacts only within the Plan area or areas adjacent to it.	None. Impacts only within the Plan area or areas adjacent to it.
Policy V2 – Overnight visitor accommodation	None. Impacts only within the Plan area or areas adjacent to it.	None. Impacts only within the Plan area or areas adjacent to it.
Policy LB1 – Landscape protection and enhancement	None. Impacts only within the Plan area or areas adjacent to it.	None. Impacts only within the Plan area or areas adjacent to it.
Policy LB2 – Trees, woodlands and hedgerows	None. Impacts only within the Plan area.	None. Impacts only within the Plan area.
Policy LB3 – Sites of wildlife importance	None. Impacts only within the Plan area.	None. Impacts only within the Plan area.
Policy E1 – Energy efficiency and renewable / low carbon energy	Policy relates only to impacts within the Plan area.	Policy relates only to impacts within the Plan area.
Policy E2 – Wind turbines	Policy relates only to impacts within the Plan area.	Policy relates only to impacts within the Plan area.
Policy E3 – Light pollution	None. Impacts only within the Plan area.	None. Impacts only within the Plan area.
Policy T1 – Traffic impact	None. Impacts only within the Plan area or areas adjacent to it.	None. Impacts only within the Plan area or areas adjacent to it.

4.5 Tables 6 and 7 below summarise the relationship between the Plan and the specific features and environmental conditions of the protected sites, as could be affected by the Plan in isolation or in combination with other plans, taking particular account of the conservation objectives.

**Table 6: Rochdale Canal SAC – Potential impacts of Plan**

Possible Impacts	Plan in isolation	Plan in combination with other plans
Dredging	No impact	No impact
Draining of canal	No impact	No impact
Pollution	No impact	No impact

Shading	No impact	No impact
Increased boat traffic	No impact	No impact
Use of herbicides	No impact	No impact
Introduction of invasive species	No impact	No impact

**Table 7: South Pennine Moors SAC / SPA – Potential impacts of Plan**

Possible impacts	Plan in isolation	Plan in combination with other plans
Cultivation	No impact	No impact
Grazing	No impact	No impact
Mowing or cutting	No impact	No impact
Application of manure, fertilisers or lime	No impact	No impact
Application of pesticides	No impact	No impact
Burning	No impact	No impact
Drainage	No impact	No impact
Extraction of minerals	No impact	No impact
Construction of roads, ditches etc	No impact	No impact
Erection of structures	No impact	No impact
Use of vehicles	No impact	No impact
Pollution	No impact	No impact
Recreational activities	No impact	No impact
Agricultural intensification leading to loss of bird feeding areas outside the designated site	No impact	No impact

- 4.6 Tables 5, 6 and 7 show that the policies of the Plan will not lead to any significant impact on European protected sites, and therefore it is not necessary to proceed to the further stages of the Appropriate Assessment.



## **5: Summary**

- 5.1 The Rooley Moor Neighbourhood Plan has been subject to screening assessments both for SEA and HRA as outlined in this report.
- 5.2 A key point which has been taken into consideration is that the Plan will not allocate development or propose any greater level of development for the area than the Core Strategy / Allocations Plan, both of which have been subject to full SEA and HRA. This essentially means that the impacts of the Plan and its policies will be restricted to:
- (i) The detail of developments which in principle would already be acceptable through the provisions of the other plans.
  - (ii) Promotion of activities already accepted in principle in the area.

In both instances above, the policies aim to protect and enhance the existing character of the area, with any resultant impacts highly local to the area or, in a few cases, also impacting on immediately adjacent areas.

- 5.3 Taking the above into account, it can be concluded that the impacts of the Plan will:
- (i) Be small scale and local;
  - (ii) Be neutral or positive in environmental terms;
  - (iii) Not affect any European protected ecological sites because of their nature and the distance from the sites;
  - (iv) Not affect any other 'sensitive sites' such as SSSIs, National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural beauty or World Heritage sites / scheduled monuments.
- 5.4 It is concluded that further SEA or HRA assessment will not be required.