

**Belgravia
Neighbourhood Plan
2022-2040**

**Strategic Environment Assessment
Screening Report
and
Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening Report
April 2023**

Prepared by Westminster City Council for Belgravia Neighbourhood
Forum

Consultation carried out with Natural England, Historic England and
The Environment Agency



City of Westminster

Contents

1. Introduction.....	3
1.1. Legislative background	3
1.2. HRA requirements for neighbourhood plans.....	3
1.3. SEA requirements for neighbourhood plans	3
2. Summary of the neighbourhood plan	4
3. HRA Screening.....	7
3.1. European sites which may be affected by the Neighbourhood Plan	7
3.2. Screening outcome	7
4. SEA Screening	8
4.1. Establishing the need for SEA	8
4.2. Determining the likely significant effects	9
4.3. Screening outcome	12
4.4. Consultation with statutory bodies	12
5.1. Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening	12
5.2. Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening	12

1. Introduction

1.1. Legislative background

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, including under the Habitats Directive and the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive.

The Habitats Directive is transposed into English law under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010, and seeks to avoid negative impacts on European protected sites.

The SEA Directive has been transposed into English law by the Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (hereafter referred to as the SEA Regulations), and seeks to make sure that the environmental implications of a plan or programme are taken into account.

1.2. HRA requirements for neighbourhood plans

The purpose of a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) is to identify whether a plan is likely to have a significant effect on a European site, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects. The first step of the appropriate assessment process is a screening assessment, which' purpose is to screen out if any significant effect is likely for any European site, based on objective information. Where there is a risk of a significant effect on a European site, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, then there will be a requirement to progress to an Appropriate Assessment.

1.3. SEA requirements for neighbourhood plans

Draft neighbourhood plan proposals are required to be assessed to determine whether the plan is likely to have significant environmental effects, which is commonly referred to as a "screening" exercise. If likely significant environmental effects are identified, a strategic environmental assessment will be required in accordance with the SEA regulations.

The National Planning Practice Guidance provides examples of when a strategic environmental assessment may be required:

- 'a neighbourhood plan allocates sites for development
- the neighbourhood area contains sensitive natural or heritage assets that may be affected by the 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.'

If the requirement for a Habitat Regulations Assessment is identified, then a plan will normally also require a strategic environmental assessment.

2. Summary of the neighbourhood plan

Name of the neighbourhood plan	Belgravia Neighbourhood Plan
Geographic coverage of the plan	<p>The Belgravia Neighbourhood Area is located to the south-west of the Westminster local government area. To the north-east, the Neighbourhood Area is bounded by Hyde Park and Buckingham Palace Gardens which lie within the Royal Parks Conservation Area. To the west, the Area borders the local government boundary with Kensington & Chelsea.</p> <p>The area is predominantly residential in many parts, but it has commercial activity within the Motcomb Street, Elizabeth Street and Pimlico Road Local Centres, as well as towards the south of the Neighbourhood Area which is in proximity to Victoria Coach and Railway stations, the latter which borders the Neighbourhood Area. The area also forms part of the Central Activity Zone (CAZ), which includes Belgrave Square and some of the fringes of the Neighbourhood Area, and includes a mix of commercial and residential uses.</p> <p>Within the area, there are many statutorily protected London Squares including Eaton, Belgrave and Chester Squares. The area also has a high number of listed buildings with entire terraces forming listed groups in many instances, and almost all of the Neighbourhood Area falling within the Belgravia Conservation Area.</p>
Vision of the plan	<p>The vision of the plan is as follows:</p> <p><i>'To conserve and enhance Belgravia's unique character for future generations while allowing sustainable growth which promotes its historic architecture and heritage and to ensure it remains an attractive, vibrant and agreeable 'village' in the heart of London for those who live, work or visit there'</i></p>
Key issues/objectives	<p>The plan policies seek to address the issues outlined within 4 key objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) To conserve and enhance the historical, cultural and architectural heritage of Belgravia. 2) To maintain and enhance the village feel of Belgravia. 3) To improve the environment of Belgravia and mitigate the impacts of construction work. 4) To influence the design and character of any major development projects within the Belgravia Neighbourhood Area.
Summary of policies	<p>The pre- submission version of the plan that has been subject to this SEA screening includes 14 draft policies which are summarised below:</p> <p><u><i>BEL 1 'Design Principles'</i></u></p> <p>The policy requires new development or redevelopment of existing buildings to demonstrate high quality design and architecture that is sympathetic to, and respects, the architectural and historical character of the Belgravia Area. It is linked to 'Belgravia Design Codes' which provide further design guidance on how development should be designed to be in keeping with the heritage and character of Belgravia, with further guidance on scale, density, massing, fenestration, detailed design and materiality.</p> <p><u><i>BEL 2 'Retrofitting historic buildings for energy efficiency'</i></u></p>

The policy encourages the retrofitting of buildings to increase energy efficiency, provided it is demonstrated proposals would not result in unacceptable harm to the character or significance of listed buildings and conservation areas.

BEL 3 'Belgravia's Character Areas'

The policy identifies three specific areas as having unique characters and which are predominantly residential in nature and of a smaller scale in terms of the massing of existing buildings. It seeks to ensure that non-residential uses do not result in harm to residential amenity and that new development does not harm the character of these areas nor their settings.

BEL 4 'Building Refurbishments and Enlargements'

The policy requires developments to demonstrate how construction impacts would be minimised, mitigated and managed in order to protect the amenity of surrounding occupiers.

BEL 5 'Local Views of Significance'

The policy designates local views of significance and requires development proposals to retain and enhance these views.

BEL 6 'Local Buildings and Structures of Merit'

The policy designates buildings which are considered of architectural or historical interest as Local Buildings of Merit, requiring development proposals to conserve these heritage assets.

BEL 7 'Shopfronts'

The policy seeks to ensure that new or refurbished shopfronts and signage is in keeping with the character of Belgravia by according with guidance within an appended 'Belgravia Design Code', which has regard to materiality and architectural detail.

BEL 8 'New Monuments and Public Art'

The policy requires proposals for new monuments or public art to demonstrate that they are appropriate to the proposed setting and can demonstrate reflection of the local area of Belgravia and its history.

BEL 9 'Late Night Uses in the Neighbourhood Area'

The policy seeks to direct new late night and commercial uses to the designated Local Centres and requires proposals to demonstrate that they will not result in harm to amenity.

BEL 10 'Small-scale Workspaces'

The policy seeks to support new workspaces for small businesses with the CAZ and Local Centres, whilst requiring proposals to demonstrate that they would not result in harm to residential amenity and the local highway network.

BEL 11 'Space for Play and Group Social Activities'

The policy requires major development proposals to provide new public open space and play spaces.

BEL 12 'Trees and Greening'

The policy seeks to encourage tree maintenance, opportunities for green infrastructure and for developments to demonstrate biodiversity net-gain.

BEL 13 'Streetscapes'

The policy seeks to encourage the improvement of the public realm and paved spaces, reduction in street clutter and supports the provision of new cycle parking and hire spaces and electric vehicle charging points, provided these are designed to preserve and enhance the character of Belgravia and its streetscapes.

BEL 14 'Major Development Sites'

The policy requires new buildings within major developments to be designed in accordance with the 'Belgravia Design Code' and require the height, bulk and massing of proposals to respect the scale and character of the local built environment. It also seeks to encourage permeability of major sites and the provision of landscaping and publicly accessible open and green spaces.

3. HRA Screening

3.1. European sites which may be affected by the Neighbourhood Plan

For this assessment four Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and two Special Protection Areas have been identified which will be assessed in accordance with the requirements of the Habitats Directive. These are:

- Wimbledon Common SAC
- Richmond Park SAC
- Epping Forest SAC
- Essex Estuaries SAC
- Thames Estuary and Marshes Special Protection Area and Ramsar
- Lee Valley Special Protection Area and Ramsar

The site characteristics and conservation objectives of these sites can be found in Annex 1.

The closest protected European Sites to the Belgravia Neighbourhood Area are the Lee Valley and the Epping Forest SAC which are approximately 10.5km and 15km from the Area respectively. These sites are considered too far from the plan area to be given further consideration.

The only European Sites within 10km are the Wimbledon Common and Richmond Park SACs.

Westminster City Council has conducted a screening exercise for the whole of Westminster as part of the revision of its City Plan which concludes¹:

'No likely significant impacts on Wimbledon Common SAC and Lee Valley Special Protection Area and Ramsar have been identified, as Westminster is outside of the core recreational catchment of these sites. No likely significant impacts on Richmond Park SAC have been identified as development in Westminster is unlikely to impact on habitats on the site.'

Overall, no likely significant impacts on any European sites have been identified, either alone or in combination. Therefore, no amendments to the City Plan are required and it will not be necessary to progress to the Appropriate Assessment stage.'

The Belgravia Neighbourhood Plan does not contain any proposals that impose a potential impact pathway to any European sites. The area is outside of the recreational catchment of the sites identified above and it is unlikely that any policies, plans or projects in the plan will result in an impact on traffic movement to or from any of these sites. The conclusions of the screening for the City Plan 2019-2040 therefore also apply to the proposals in the Belgravia Neighbourhood Plan.

In terms of further 'in combination' effects, consideration needs to be given to the potential future arrival of Crossrail at Victoria Station and associated development within the Victoria Opportunity Area. These projects will improve the accessibility of the area from across London and the wider South East. The Belgravia Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate any sites for development. Due to the scale and nature of the proposals in the Belgravia Neighbourhood Plan, which focuses on policies protecting amenity, minimising construction impacts and encouraging sustainable design that responds to Belgravia's character and heritage, it is unlikely that any proposals in the plan will result in any significant effects to European sites in combination with these projects.

3.2. Screening outcome

It is concluded that no full HRA needs to be undertaken as there are no likely effects on European sites.

The views of Natural England will be sought in March 2023.

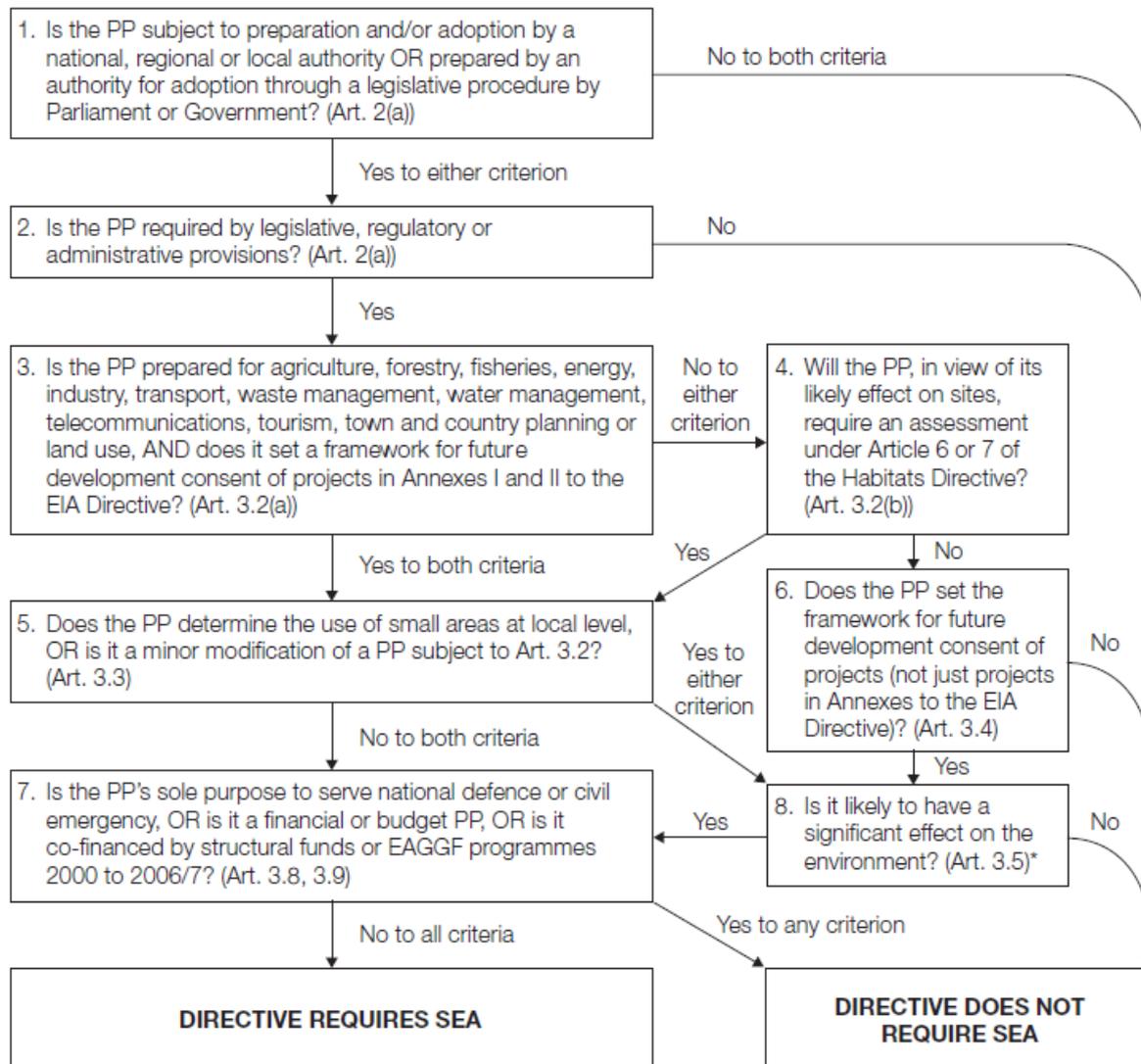
¹ [HRA Screening Report, Westminster City Council \(June 2019\)](#)

4. SEA Screening

4.1. Establishing the need for SEA

Practical guidance on the application of the SEA Directive published in 2005 by the predecessor of the Ministry of Housing, Communities, & Local Government sets out a flow chart to establish the need for SEA. This flow chart is duplicated below, after which the need for SEA for the Belgravia Neighbourhood Plan is established.

Figure 1 SEA flowchart



*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.

Table 1 Establishing the need for SEA

Assessment criteria	Assessment	
Is the Plan 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 government? (Art 2(a))	The Plan is being prepared by the Belgravia Neighbourhood Forum under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Localism Act 2011 and will be "made" by Westminster City Council under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.	Yes
Is the Plan required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions? (Art 2(a))	There is no requirement to produce a neighbourhood plan, however, they are subject to formal procedures and regulations laid down by Government.	Yes
Is the Plan 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))	The Belgravia Neighbourhood Plan is prepared for town and country planning purposes. It does not explicitly set a framework for future development consent of projects in Annexes I or II of the EIA Directive.	No
Will the Plan in view of its likely effect on sites, require an assessment under Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats directive?	The Belgravia Neighbourhood Plan could potentially have an impact on European protected sites protected by the Habitats Directive.	Yes
Does the Plan determine the use of small areas at local level OR is it a minor modification of a Plan subject to Art3.2? (Art 3.3)	The Belgravia Neighbourhood Plan seeks to direct and shape future uses, building upon the City Plan and will provide a framework for future development consent of projects in the area.	Yes
Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment? (Art 3.5)	See the results of table 2 'Determining the likely significant effects'	No

4.2. Determining the likely significant effects

The likely significant environmental; effects of a neighbourhood plan depend on the contents of the plan. The criteria for assessing any likely significant effects on the environment are specified in Schedule 1 of the SEA Regulations.

The table below sets out these criteria, along with a consideration of the likely impact of the neighbourhood plan against each of the criteria.

Table 2 Determining the likely significant effects

SEA Regulations Criteria	Comments	Likely Significant Effects?
1. The characteristics of the neighbourhood plan, having regard, in particular, to:		
1a) The degree to which the neighbourhood plan sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources	Once 'made', the Belgravia Neighbourhood Plan will set out a framework with which to manage development and change in the area including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conserving and enhancing heritage assets including listed buildings, conservation areas and unlisted buildings and structures of merit. 	No

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encouraging the retrofitting historic buildings for energy efficiency. - Protecting amenity with regard to minimisation and mitigation of construction impacts from development. - Protecting and enhancing Local Views. - Managing and minimising impacts from late-night and commercial uses. - Enhancing the public realm and streetscapes. - Encouraging small business workspaces. - Supporting sustainable design and biodiversity net gain. - Encouraging provision of green open space and play spaces. <p>However, the Belgravia Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate any new development sites in the plan. All the projects outlined above are of a local scale and link in with wider initiatives.</p>	
1b) The degree to which the neighbourhood plan influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy	The Belgravia Neighbourhood Plan will form part of the development plan for the City of Westminster, and will together with the City Plan and London Plan be used to determine planning applications. The Belgravia Neighbourhood Plan is required to be in general conformity with the City Plan and so it will not influence any other plans.	No
1c) The relevance of the neighbourhood plan for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development	Achieving sustainable development is at the heart of the National Planning Policy Framework, and is one of the basic conditions that Neighbourhood Plans must meet. The likelihood of significant effects on the environment is therefore minimised. The Belgravia Neighbourhood Plan seeks to improve the local environment and policies encourage sustainable development, particularly relating to supporting energy efficiency within buildings and supporting cycle provision and sustainable modes of transport, as well as policies to preserve and enhance heritage assets and allow for biodiversity net gain.	No
1d) Environmental problems relevant to the neighbourhood plan	<p>To the south of the Neighbourhood Area there is a small area within Flood Zone 3. Approximately two-thirds of the Area, primarily the southern and central areas, are identified as being areas of open space deficiency. Parts of the Knightsbridge and Victoria London Atmospheric Emissions Inventory (LAEI) 2016 Focus Areas are within the Neighbourhood Area.</p> <p>The plan's ambitions to create new green and open spaces, high standards of sustainable design, and ambition to enhance sustainable travel seek to address these environmental problems.</p>	No
1e) The relevance of the neighbourhood plan for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (for example, plans and programmes linked to waste	<p>The Belgravia Neighbourhood Plan has to be in general conformity with the Westminster City Plan 2019-2040, which is already in conformity with such legislation.</p> <p>The Belgravia Neighbourhood Plan does not contain any proposals of relevance for the</p>	No

management or water protection).	implementation of Community legislation on the environment.	
2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to:		
2a) The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects	Policies that seek to encourage the provision of new open and play space, biodiversity net gain and high-quality sustainable design to increase energy efficiency are likely to be beneficial in the long-term and are permanent outcomes.	No
2b) The cumulative nature of the effects	The Belgravia Neighbourhood Plan will, together with the City Plan and London Plan, form part of the development plan. Any cumulative effects of these policies have been examined and tested and the proposals in the Belgravia Neighbourhood Plan are therefore unlikely to have a significant effect on the local environment.	No
2c) The transboundary nature of the effects	The effects of the Belgravia Neighbourhood Plan will be limited to the Belgravia Neighbourhood Area.	No
2d) The risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents)	The Belgravia Neighbourhood Plan is likely to have a positive or neutral effect on human health by supporting the provision of additional open and play space, encouraging biodiversity net gain and tree planting, and supporting more sustainable urban design whilst improving energy efficiency of buildings.	No
2e) The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)	There are approximately 11,000 people living within the Knightsbridge & Belgravia Ward, which encompasses the Belgravia Neighbourhood Area and parts of the adjacent Knightsbridge region, according to data provided through the 2021 Census. The Belgravia Neighbourhood Plan is not considered to affect areas beyond the neighbourhood planning area.	No
2f) The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to (i) special natural characteristics or cultural heritage; (ii) exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values; or (iii) intensive land-use	There are no sites of special scientific interest in the Belgravia Neighbourhood Area. Most of the Belgravia Neighbourhood Area is within the Belgravia Conservation Area, whilst it also exhibits a high number of statutorily listed buildings and registered London Squares. Policies within the Belgravia Neighbourhood Plan seek to protect the character and significance of these heritage assets, as well as protecting the setting of these through protecting Local Views which frame the setting of many of these assets. The Plan also designates additional buildings considered to be of local special architectural, cultural or historical significance. The Plan recognises development pressures and seeks to set a framework for protecting heritage characteristics, having a positive impact.	No
2g) The effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status	The Belgravia Neighbourhood Area has a St. Pauls Protected Vista through the centre of the area whilst the south of the area is within the Pimlico Archaeological Priority Area. The Area is also covered in large by the Belgravia Conservation Area. Proposals in the plan are not expected to significantly impact upon these areas and	No

	designations as it does not propose or allocate large scale developments that are incongruous with these designations.	
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4.3. Screening outcome

Having reviewed the Belgravia Neighbourhood Plan against the requirements in the SEA Directive, it is concluded that the Plan is unlikely to have significant environmental effects and accordingly should not be subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment.

4.4. Consultation with statutory bodies

The screening determination is subject to consultation with the statutory consultation bodies. The consultation bodies are specified in the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 and are as follows:

- Historic England;
- Environment Agency; and
- Natural England.

All of these statutory bodies were consulted on the councils screening assessment in March 2023, and in their response, none have raised any concerns that would suggest that the Belgravia Neighbourhood Plan would have significant impacts that would require a full Strategic Environmental Assessment or Habitats Regulations Assessment to be carried out. A copy of the response from each of these bodies can be found in Annex 2 below.

5. Conclusion

5.1. Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening

The HRA screening assessment concludes that there no likely significant effects in respect of European sites. Further stages of Appropriate Assessment are therefore not required.

5.2. Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening

The SEA screening assessment concludes that the Belgravia Neighbourhood Plan as drafted is unlikely to have significant environmental effects. The Belgravia Neighbourhood Plan therefore does not need to be subject to a Strategic Environmental Assessment.

Annex 1 Site characteristics and conservation objectives

This information has been derived from the Joint Nature Conservation Committee and has been provided by Westminster City Council.

Wimbledon Common

Location of Wimbledon Common Special Areas of Conservation	
Country	England
Unitary Authority	Merton; Wandsworth
Grid Ref*	TQ227719
Latitude	51 25 56 N
Longitude	00 14 04 W
SAC EU code	UK0030301
Status	Designated Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
Area (ha)	348.31
* This is the approximate central point of the SAC. In the case of large, linear or composite sites, this may not represent the location where a feature occurs within the SAC.	
General site character	
Inland water bodies (standing water, running water) (1%)	
Bogs. Marshes. Water fringed vegetation. Fens (0.5%)	
Heath. Scrub. Maquis and garrigue <i>Phygrana</i> (5%)	
Dry grassland. Steppes (45%)	
Improved grassland (3.5%)	
Broad-leaved deciduous woodland (45%)	
Annex I habitats that are a primary reason for selection of this site	
Not applicable	
Annex I habitats present as a qualifying feature, but not a primary reason for selection of this site	
4010 Northern Atlantic wet heaths with <i>Erica tetralix</i>	
4030 European dry heaths	
Annex II species that are a primary reason for selection of this site	
1083 Stag beetle <i>Lucanus cervus</i>	
Wimbledon Common has a large number of old trees and much fallen decaying timber. It is at the heart of the south London centre of distribution for stag beetle <i>Lucanus cervus</i> , and a relatively large number of records were received from this site during a recent nationwide survey for the species (Percy <i>et al.</i> 2000). The site supports a number of other scarce invertebrate species associated with decaying timber.	
Annex II species present as a qualifying feature, but not a primary reason for site selection	
Not applicable.	

Richmond Park

Location of Richmond Park Special Areas of Conservation	
Country	England
Unitary Authority	Richmond upon Thames

Grid Ref*	TQ199728
Latitude	51 26 27 N
Longitude	00 16 28 W
SAC EU code	UK0030246
Status	Designated Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
Area (ha)	846.68
* This is the approximate central point of the SAC. In the case of large, linear or composite sites, this may not represent the location where a feature occurs within the SAC.	
General site character	
Inland water bodies (standing water, running water) (1.5%)	
Bogs. Marshes. Water fringed vegetation. Fens (0.5%)	
Heath. Scrub. Maquis and garrigue. Phygrana (25%)	
Dry grassland. Steppes (18%)	
Humid grassland. Mesophile grassland (5%)	
Improved grassland (20%)	
Broad-leaved deciduous woodland (25%)	
Mixed woodland (5%)	
Annex I habitats that are a primary reason for selection of this site	
Not applicable	
Annex I habitats present as a qualifying feature, but not a primary reason for selection of this site	
Not applicable.	
Annex II species that are a primary reason for selection of this site	
1083 Stag beetle <i>Lucanus cervus</i>	
Richmond Park has a large number of ancient trees with decaying timber. It is at the heart of the south London centre of distribution for stag beetle <i>Lucanus cervus</i> , and is a site of national importance for the conservation of the fauna of invertebrates associated with the decaying timber of ancient trees.	
Annex II species present as a qualifying feature, but not a primary reason for site selection	
Not applicable.	

Epping Forest

Location of Epping Forest Special Areas of Conservation	
Country	England
Unitary Authority	Essex
Grid Ref*	TQ399959
Latitude	51 38 39 N
Longitude	00 01 21 E
SAC EU code	UK0012720
Status	Designated Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
Area (ha)	1604.95

* This is the approximate central point of the SAC. In the case of large, linear or composite sites, this may not represent the location where a feature occurs within the SAC.

General site character

Inland water bodies (standing water, running water) (6%)
 Bogs. Marshes. Water fringed vegetation. Fens (0.2%)
 Heath. Scrub. Maquis and garrigue. Phygrana (3.8%)
 Dry grassland. Steppes (20%)
 Broad-leaved deciduous woodland (70%)

Annex I habitats that are a primary reason for selection of this site

9120 Atlantic acidophilous beech forests with Ilex and sometimes also Taxus in the shrublayer (Quercion robori-petraeae or Ilici-Fagenion)

Epping Forest represents Atlantic acidophilous beech forests in the north-eastern part of the habitat's UK range. Although the epiphytes at this site have declined, largely as a result of air pollution, it remains important for a range of rare species, including the moss *Zygodon forsteri*. The long history of pollarding, and resultant large number of veteran trees, ensures that the site is also rich in fungi and dead-wood invertebrates.

Annex I habitats present as a qualifying feature, but not a primary reason for selection of this site

4010 Northern Atlantic wet heaths with Erica tetralix

4030 European dry heaths

Annex II species that are a primary reason for selection of this site

1083 Stag beetle *Lucanus cervus*

Epping Forest is a large woodland area in which records of **stag beetle *Lucanus cervus*** are widespread and frequent; the site straddles the Essex and east London population centres. Epping Forest is a very important site for fauna associated with decaying timber, and supports many Red Data Book and Nationally Scarce invertebrate species.

Annex II species present as a qualifying feature, but not a primary reason for site selection

Not applicable.

Essex Estuaries

Location of Essex Estuaries Special Areas of Conservation	
Country	England
Unitary Authority	Essex
Grid Ref*	TM103048
Latitude	51 42 06 N 51.70166667
Longitude	01 02 37 E 1.043611111
SAC EU code	UK0013690
Status	Designated Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
Area (ha)	46140.82

* This is the approximate central point of the SAC. In the case of large, linear or composite sites, this may not represent the location where a feature occurs within the SAC.

General site character

Marine areas. Sea inlets (30%)

Tidal rivers. Estuaries. Mud flats. Sand flats. Lagoons (including saltwork basins) (56.5%)

Salt marshes. Salt pastures. Salt steppes (11%)

Shingle. Sea cliffs. Islets (0.5%)

Improved grassland (2%)

Annex I habitats that are a primary reason for selection of this site

1130 Estuaries

This is a large estuarine site in south-east England, and is a typical, undeveloped, coastal plain estuarine system with associated open coast mudflats and sandbanks. The site comprises the major estuaries of the Colne, Blackwater, Crouch and Roach rivers and is important as an extensive area of contiguous estuarine habitat. Essex Estuaries contains a very wide range of characteristic marine and estuarine sediment communities and some diverse and unusual marine communities in the lower reaches, including rich sponge communities on mixed, tide-swept substrates. Sublittoral areas have a very rich invertebrate fauna, including the reef-building worm *Sabellaria spinulosa*, the brittlestar *Ophiothrix fragilis*, crustaceans and ascidians. The site also has large areas of saltmarsh and other important coastal habitats.

1140 Mudflats and sandflats not covered by seawater at low tide

Essex Estuaries represents the range of variation of this habitat type found in south-east England and includes the extensive intertidal **mudflats and sandflats** of the Colne, Blackwater, Roach and Crouch estuaries, Dengie Flats and Maplin Sands. The area includes a wide range of sediment flat communities, from estuarine muds, sands and muddy sands to fully saline, sandy mudflats with extensive growths of eelgrass *Zostera* spp. on the open coast. The open coast areas of Maplin Sands and Dengie Flats have very extensive mudflats and an unusually undisturbed nature. Maplin Sands is particularly important for its large, nationally-important beds of dwarf eelgrass *Zostera noltei* and associated animal communities.

1310 Salicornia and other annuals colonising mud and sand

Glasswort *Salicornia* spp. saltmarsh in the Essex estuaries on the east coast of England forms an integral part of the transition from the extensive and varied intertidal mud and sandflats through to upper saltmeadows. Although the saltmarshes in this area are generally eroding, secondary pioneer communities appear as a precursor to erosion on the seaward edge of degraded mid-marsh communities. The area of pioneer marsh includes gradation into extensive cord-grass *Spartina* spp. swards.

1320 Spartina swards (*Spartinion maritimae*)

The most extensive remaining stand of the native small cord-grass *Spartina maritima* in the UK and possibly in Europe is found in the Essex Estuaries. The stand is located at Foulness Point and covers approximately 0.17 ha. Other smaller stands

are found elsewhere in the estuary complex, notably in the Colne estuary, where it forms a major component of the upper marsh areas.
1330 Atlantic salt meadows (Glauco-Puccinellietalia maritimae)
Although the saltmarshes in this area are generally eroding, extensive salt meadows remain and Essex Estuaries represents Atlantic salt meadows in south-east England, with floristic features typical of this part of the UK. Golden samphire <i>Inula crithmoides</i> is a characteristic species of these marshes, occurring both on the lower marsh and on the drift-line. It represents a community of south-east England also found to the south in mainland Europe.
1420 Mediterranean and thermo-Atlantic halophilous scrubs (Sarcocornetea fruticosi)
In this complex of estuarine marshes on the east coast of England the occurrence of Mediterranean and thermo-Atlantic halophilous scrubs is currently artificially restricted by sea-walls. It now occurs principally as a strandline community or at the foot of sea-walls. Recent managed retreat schemes offer the prospect of future expansion of the habitat type. The local variant of this vegetation, which features sea-lavenders <i>Limonium</i> spp. and sea-heath <i>Frankenia laevis</i> , occurs at one location, Colne Point.
Annex I habitats present as a qualifying feature, but not a primary reason for selection of this site
1110 Sandbanks which are slightly covered by sea water all the time
Annex II species that are a primary reason for selection of this site
Not applicable.
Annex II species present as a qualifying feature, but not a primary reason for site selection
Not applicable.

Thames Estuary and Marshes

Location Thames Estuary and Marshes Special Protection Area and Ramsar	
Country	England
Unitary Authority	Essex (10%) Kent (90%)
Latitude	51 29 08 N
Longitude	00 35 47 E
Special Protection Area EU code	UK9012021
Ramsar EU code	UK11069
Status	Special Protection Area Wetland of international importance (Ramsar)
Area (ha)	4838.94
General site character	
Tidal rivers. Estuaries. Mud flats. Sand flats. Lagoons (including saltwork basins) (57.3%)	
Salt marshes. Salt pastures. Salt steppes (1.5%)	
Shingle. Sea cliffs. Islets (0.9%)	
Inland water bodies (standing water, running water) (5.6%)	
Bogs. Marshes. Water fringed vegetation. Fens (3.7%)	

Dry grassland. Steppes (1.9%) Humid grassland. Mesophile grassland (29.1%)
Article 4.1 qualification under the Birds Directive (79/409/EEC)
Over winter the area regularly supports <i>Circus cyaneus</i> 1% of the population in Great Britain, Five year peak mean for 1993/94 to 1997/98, <i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i> (Western Europe/Western Mediterranean -breeding) 28.3% of the population in Great Britain Five year peak mean for 1993/93 to 1997/98
Article 4.2 qualification under the Birds Directive (79/409/EEC)
Over winter the area regularly supports <i>Calidris alpina alpina</i> , (Northern Siberia/Europe/Western Africa) 2.1% of the population Five year peak mean for 1993/94 to 1997/98 <i>Calidris canutus</i> , (North-eastern Canada/Greenland/Iceland/Northwestern Europe) 1.4% of the population Five year peak mean for 1993/94 to 1997/98 <i>Limosa limosa islandica</i> (Iceland - breeding) 2.4% of the population Five year peak mean for 1993/94 to 1997/98 <i>Pluvialis squatarola</i> , (Eastern Atlantic - wintering) 1.7% of the population Five year peak mean for 1993/94 to 1997/98 <i>Tringa totanus</i> (Eastern Atlantic - wintering) 2.2% of the population Five year peak mean for 1993/94 to 1997/98 On passage the area regularly supports waterfowl including <i>Charadrius hiaticula</i> , (Europe/Northern Africa - wintering) 2.6% of the population Five year peak mean for 1993/94 to 1997/98, <i>Circus cyaneus</i> , <i>Recurvirostra avosetta</i> ,
Conservation Objectives
With regard to the Special Protection Area and the individual species and/or assemblage of species for which the site has been classified (the 'Qualifying Features' listed below), and subject to natural change; 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; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.

Lee Valley

Location Lee Valley Special Protection Area	
Country	England

Unitary Authority	Hertfordshire (51%), Greater London (44%), Essex (5%)
Latitude	51 34 51 N
Longitude	00 02 58 W
Special Protection Area EU code	UK9012111
UK Ramsar Code	UK11034
Status	Special Protection Area Wetland of international importance (Ramsar)
Area (ha)	447.87
General site character	
Inland water bodies (standing water, running water) (97%)	
Bogs. Marshes. Water fringed vegetation. Fens (4%)	
Humid grassland. Mesophile grassland (8%)	
Improved grassland (10%)	
Broad-leaved deciduous woodland (10%)	
Other land (including towns, villages, roads, waste places, mines, industrial sites) (1%)	
Article 4.1 qualification under the Birds Directive (79/409/EEC)	
This site qualifies under Article 4.1 of the Directive (79/409/EEC) by supporting populations of European importance of the following species listed on Annex I of the Directive:	
Over winter;	
Bittern <i>Botaurus stellaris</i> , 6 individuals representing at least 6.0% of the wintering population in Great Britain (5 year peak mean, 1992/3-1995/6)	
Article 4.2 qualification under the Birds Directive (79/409/EEC)	
This site also qualifies under Article 4.2 of the Directive (79/409/EEC) by supporting populations of European importance of the following migratory species:	
Over winter;	
Gadwall <i>Anas strepera</i> , 515 individuals representing at least 1.7% of the wintering Northwestern Europe population (5 year peak mean 1991/2 - 1995/6)	
Shoveler <i>Anas clypeata</i> , 748 individuals representing at least 1.9% of the wintering Northwestern/Central Europe population (5 year peak mean 1991/2 - 1995/6)	
Conservation Objectives	
With regard to the Special Protection Area and the individual species and/or assemblage of species for which the site has been classified (the 'Qualifying Features' listed below), and subject to natural change;	
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;	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.

Annex 2 Consultation responses

<p>Environment Agency received 30th March 2023:</p>	<p>Thank you for consulting us on the Strategic Environment Assessment Screening Report and Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening Report March 2023 for the Belgravia Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>In accordance with our statutory duty, we have reviewed the SEA Screening Statements in consideration of environmental constraints and potential significant environmental effects that are likely to result from the Neighbourhood Plan. To confirm, we do not anticipate that the Neighbourhood Plan will have any significant negative effects on the environment. Please note, we are unable to formally advise on whether the Neighbourhood Plan falls under the requirements of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive.</p> <p>Flood Risk</p> <p>The Neighbourhood Plan includes areas which are located in Flood Zone 3 and Thames Tidal Breach Flood Extent. In accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) paragraphs 161-168, we remind you that the Sequential Test/Exception Test should be undertaken if the plan is proposing development or promoting growth to ensure development is directed to the areas of lowest flood risk taking climate change into account. The application of the Sequential Test should be informed by the Local Planning Authority's (Westminster) Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA).</p> <p>It is important that your Plan also considers whether the flood risk issues associated with any proposed development can be safely managed to ensure development can come forward. Without this understanding your Plan is unlikely to complaint with the NPPF.</p> <p>As highlighted in the Westminster SFRA, proposed developments within areas at risk of tidal breach flooding will need to use flood resilient construction measures. We require all sleeping accommodation to be above the tidal breach level for any new development.</p> <p>The Lead Local Flood Authority will be able to advise if there are areas at risk from surface water flood risk (including groundwater and sewerage flood risk) in your neighbourhood plan area. The Surface Water Management Plan will contain recommendations and actions about how areas at risk of surface water flooding can be managed. This may be useful when developing policies or guidance.</p> <p>Aquifers</p> <p>Your plan includes areas which are located on aquifer. These should be considered within your plan if growth or development is proposed here. The</p>
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	<p>relevance of the designation and the potential implication upon development proposals should be considered with reference to our Groundwater Protection guidance: https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/groundwater-protection</p> <p>Wastewater infrastructure</p> <p>If your plan proposes development or promotes growth we recommend early consultation with Thames Water to determine whether there is (or will be prior to occupation) sufficient infrastructure capacity existing for the connection, conveyance, treatment and disposal of quantity and quality of water associated with any proposed development within environmental limits of the receiving watercourse. This may impact on the housing figures and the phasing of development. Please note that if there is not sufficient capacity in the infrastructure then we must be consulted again with alternative methods of disposal.</p>
<p>Historic England received 6th April 2023</p>	<p>Thank you for consulting Historic England about the above screening report.</p> <p>On the basis that the Belgravia neighbourhood plan is not likely to result in significant effects upon the historic environment, Historic England concurs with your assessment that a Strategic Environmental Assessment is not required for this document.</p> <p>The views of the other statutory consultation bodies should be taken into account before the overall decision on the need for an SEA is made.</p>
<p>Natural England received 24th March 2023</p>	<p>Thank you for your consultation on the above dated and received by Natural England on 08 March 2023.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Screening Request: Strategic Environmental Assessment</p> <p>It is our advice, on the basis of the material supplied with the consultation, that, in so far as our strategic environmental interests (including but not limited to statutory designated sites, landscapes and protected species, geology and soils) are concerned, that there are unlikely to be significant environmental effects from the proposed plan.</p> <p>Neighbourhood Plan Guidance on the assessment of Neighbourhood Plans, in light of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (as amended), is contained within the National Planning Practice Guidance. The guidance highlights three triggers that may require the production of an SEA, for instance where:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a neighbourhood plan allocates sites for development

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

We have checked our records and based on the information provided, we can confirm that in our view the proposals contained within the plan will not have significant effects on sensitive sites that Natural England has a statutory duty to protect.

We are not aware of significant populations of protected species which are likely to be affected by the policies / proposals within the plan. It remains the case, however, that the responsible authority should provide information supporting this screening decision, sufficient to assess whether protected species are likely to be affected.

Notwithstanding this advice, Natural England does not routinely maintain locally specific data on all potential environmental assets. As a result the responsible authority should raise environmental issues that we have not identified on local or national biodiversity action plan species and/or habitats, local wildlife sites or local landscape character, with its own ecological and/or landscape advisers, local record centre, recording society or wildlife body on the local landscape and biodiversity receptors that may be affected by this plan, before determining whether an SA/SEA is necessary.

Please note that Natural England reserves the right to provide further comments on the environmental assessment of the plan beyond this SEA/SA screening stage, should the responsible authority seek our views on the scoping or environmental report stages. This includes any third party appeal against any screening decision you may make.

Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening

Natural England agrees with the report's conclusions that the draft Belgravia Neighbourhood Plan would not be likely to result in a significant effect on any European Site, either alone or in combination and therefore no further assessment work would be required.