Bradwell with Pattiswick Neighbourhood Plan 2024-2041

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) & Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening Report including Appropriate Assessment

January 2026

Essex County Council

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1. Introduction

1.1 The Purpose of this Report

This screening report is an assessment of whether or not the contents of the Bradwell with Pattiswick Neighbourhood Plan Review and Update 2025 requires a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in accordance with the European Directive 2001/42/ EC and associated Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations. A SEA is required if the Neighbourhood Plan is deemed to have a likely significant effect on the environment.

This report will also screen to determine whether the Neighbourhood Plan requires a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) in accordance with Regulation 61 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). An HRA screening report is required when it is deemed that likely adverse significant effects may occur on protected Habitats (European) sites as a result of the implementation of a plan or project.

1.2 The Bradwell with Pattiswick Neighbourhood Plan

The Neighbourhood Plan will set out planning policies for the Bradwell with Pattiswick Neighbourhood Plan area. Once made, a Neighbourhood Plan carries the same legal weight as Local Development Plans adopted by the Local Planning Authority (LPA), in this case Braintree District Council.

The Neighbourhood Plan includes a Vision, which expresses the communities' aspirations for the Plan area. This Vision is included within the Plan as follows:

> 'Our vision for Bradwell with Pattiswick Parish is to continue to thrive, meeting the changing needs of the community whilst preserving the distinctive character, landscape and setting of this Parish which has evolved over twelve centuries of history.'

A number of economic, social and environmental objectives have been devised for the Neighbourhood Plan. These are:

- Environment
    - To maintain the natural environment and rural tranquillity of the Parish
    - To enhance the biodiversity of the Parish
    - To conserve the valued rural landscape of the Parish
- Community facilities and public open space
    - To support a cohesive, supportive, safe, secure, inclusive and sustainable community

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- To retain and encourage the use of facilities for outdoor recreation
- To provide leisure facilities to meet the needs of all residents
- To protect locally important areas of open space and community facilities

- Heritage
  - To conserve and promote the heritage of the Parish
- Drainage
  - To seek improvements to watercourses which will minimise flood risk and damage to property
- Housing
  - To support very small scale housing proposals which meet local needs
  - To encourage the provision of owner-occupied housing which meet local needs
  - To ensure that housing is designed to high standards (e.g. Passivhaus)
  - To support housing which respects and enhances the Parish's heritage and character
  - To support proposals which strengthen and support the hamlets
- Local economy
  - To support and encourage small scale employment uses appropriate to a rural area To encourage new business opportunities for local people
- Transport
  - To improve road safety by creating a safe road network, which is fit for purpose
  - To maintain an excellent network of public footpaths and public rights of way (including byways and bridleways)
  - To improve off-road parking facilities in The Street and Forge Crescent
  - To improve the provision of community and public transport within the Parish
- Design
  - To ensure high standards of design within new development
  - To support design which respects and enhances the Parish's heritage and character

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1.3 The Braintree District Council Local Plan

The Braintree District Local Plan was adopted in 2022, with a plan period that extends to 2033. A Local Plan Review is underway, and an Issues and Options Regulation 18 stage consultation was undertaken outlining the key challenges for future development in the District in early-to-mid-2025. Consultation on a Preferred Options Regulation 18 Local Plan Review is scheduled for February 2026. The content of the adopted Local Plan relevant to Finchingfield and Wethersfield is outlined in the corresponding sub-sections.

1.3.1 Bradwell (and Pattiswick) in the Local Plan and Spatial Strategy

The Local Plan identifies Bradwell as a “Third Tier” settlement. Third Tier settlements are villages outside of first or second tier settlements which have a development boundary. Third Tier settlements are the smallest villages in the District and lack most of the facilities required to meet day to day needs. They often have very poor public transport links and travel by private vehicle is usually required. The Local Plan states that when considering the tests of sustainable development, these will not normally be met by development within a Third Tier village. Pattiswick is not included within the Local Plan settlement hierarchy.

1.3.2 Development Boundaries

The Local Plan includes Policy LPP1 - Development Boundaries, which sets out that within development boundaries, development will be permitted where it satisfies amenity, design, environmental and highway criteria and where it can take place without material adverse detriment to the existing character and historic interest of the settlement. Development outside development boundaries will be confined to uses appropriate to the countryside whilst also protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils to protect the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside.

The village of Bradwell has a defined development boundary drawn around the built up area.

1.3.3 Housing Allocations

There are no housing allocations contained within the settlement boundaries of Bradwell.

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2. Legislative Background

2.1 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27th June 2001 on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment states that,

> 'Environmental assessment is an important tool for integrating environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of certain plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment.
>
> (10) All plans and programmes which are prepared for a number of sectors and which set a framework for future development consent of projects listed in Annexes I and II to Council Directive 85/337/EEC of 27 June 1985 on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment(7), and all plans and programmes which have been determined to require assessment pursuant to Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild flora and fauna(8), are likely to have significant effects on the environment, and should as a rule be made subject to systematic environmental assessment. When they determine the use of small areas at local level or are minor modifications to the above plans or programmes, they should be assessed only where Member States determine that they are likely to have significant effects on the environment.
>
> (11) Other plans and programmes which set the framework for future development consent of projects may not have significant effects on the environment in all cases and should be assessed only where Member States determine that they are likely to have such effects.'

The Bradwell with Pattiswick Neighbourhood Plan may influence frameworks for future development or become used ancillary to those plans and programmes that do set such a framework, and as such it has been determined that the principle of the Neighbourhood Plan should be screened for the necessary application of the SEA Directive.

The Report from the Commission to The Council, The European Parliament, The European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions states, on the application and effectiveness of the Directive on Strategic Environmental Assessment (Directive 2001/42/EC), that 'the following Plan & Programme (P&P), and modifications to them, are covered when prepared and/or adopted by an authority and required pursuant to legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions:

- P&P prepared for certain sectors, and which set the framework for future development consent in respect of projects under the Environmental Impact Assessment-EIA-Directive.
- P&P requiring an assessment under the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC).

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- P&P setting the framework for development consent in respect of projects (not limited to those listed in the EIA Directive; see above) and determined by "screening" as being likely to have significant environmental effects.'

This report represents this screening process in regard to the content and influence of the Bradwell with Pattiswick Neighbourhood Plan.

2.2 Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)

Under the provisions of the Habitats Regulations (The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, as amended), a competent authority must carry out an assessment of whether a plan or project will significantly affect the integrity of any European site (also referred to as Habitats sites in the National Planning Policy Framework), in terms of impacting the site's conservation objectives.

The first stage of HRA is the screening assessment of the impacts of a land use proposal against the conservation objectives of Habitats sites. Specifically, it is to ascertain whether or not a proposal (either alone or in combination with other proposals) would potentially damage the internationally designated features of that site. European sites are also known as Natura 2000 sites.

This HRA Screening Report has been undertaken in order to accompany the Bradwell with Pattiswick Neighbourhood Plan Review and Update 2025 in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.

The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, state that submitted Plans need to be accompanied by a statement explaining how the proposed Plan meets the 'basic conditions' set out in Schedule 4B of the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act. These basic conditions include a requirement to demonstrate how the Plan is compatible with certain obligations, which includes the need to undertake an HRA.

In line with the Court judgement (CJEU People Over Wind v Coillte Teoranta C-323/17), mitigation measures cannot be taken into account when carrying out a screening assessment to decide whether a plan or project is likely to result in significant effects on a Habitats site.

On 23 June 2016, the United Kingdom (UK) held a referendum and voted to leave the European Union (EU). On 26 June 2018. The European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018 received Royal Assent and the UK left the EU. The European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018 made sure that UK laws continue to operate following the UK's exit. Relevant EU Directives have been transposed into UK law and those are unchanged until amended by Parliament. The requirements for HRA under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) remain in place with minor changes being affected by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Amendment (EU Exit) Regulations 2019. Parliament is however at liberty to introduce future changes to the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) since, after 31 December 2020, the UK is no longer be bound by the EU Habitats and Wild Birds Directives.

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At the present time the position, under section 6(3) EU (Withdrawal) Act 2018 (as amended), is that the courts in the UK, with the sole exception of the Supreme Court, will continue to be bound by HRA judgements handed down by the CJEU and by domestic courts prior to 31 December 2020 when interpreting the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). This is the case as long as the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) remain unmodified by Parliament.

There is currently a legal requirement for HRA screening of Plans prior to being adopted so any additional plans or projects which might reasonably interact with the Bradwell with Pattiswick Neighbourhood Plan Review and Update 2025 will be considered before post consultation.

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3. SEA Screening

3.1 When is SEA Required?

Planning Practice Guidance – Strategic environmental assessment requirements for Neighbourhood Plans (Paragraph: 026 Reference ID: 11-026-20140306) states that,

> 'In some limited circumstances, where a Neighbourhood Plan is likely to have significant environmental effects, it may require a strategic environmental assessment. Draft Neighbourhood Plan proposals should be assessed to determine whether the plan is likely to have significant environmental effects. This process is commonly referred to as a "screening" assessment and the requirements are set out in regulation 9 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.
>
> If likely significant environmental effects are identified, an environmental report must be prepared in accordance with paragraphs (2) and (3) of regulation 12 of those Regulations.
>
> 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 Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive).
>
> To decide whether a draft Neighbourhood Plan might have significant environmental effects, it must be assessed (screened) at an early stage of the plan's preparation according to the requirements 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. Each consultation body will be able to advise on particular topics relevant to its specific area of expertise and responsibility, and the specific information that it holds.
>
> Where it is determined that the plan is unlikely to have significant environmental effects (and, accordingly, does not require an environmental assessment), a statement of reasons for the determination should be prepared. A copy of the statement must be submitted with the Neighbourhood Plan proposal and made available to the independent examiner.'

Articles 2 and 3 of the SEA Directive set out the circumstances in which a SEA is required. Table 1 sets out the assessment of whether the principle of the Bradwell with Pattiswick Neighbourhood Plan will require a full SEA.

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Table 1:Exploring whether the Principle of the Plan would warrant SEA

Question 1: Is the Plan subject to preparation and/or adoption by a national, regional or local authority OR prepared by an authority for adoption through legislative procedure by Parliament or Government?
The NP has been prepared for adoption through legislative procedure.
Question 2: Is the Plan required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provision? (Typical characteristics of "administrative provisions" are that they are publicly available, prepared in a formal way, probably involving consultation with interested parties. The administrative provision must have sufficient formality such that it counts as a "provision" and it must also use language that plainly requires rather than just encourages a Plan to be prepared.)
The NP would be considered as falling within the category of an 'administrative provision'.
Question 3: 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?
The NP has been prepared for town and country planning and sets a framework for future development consent.
Question 4: Will the Plan, in view of its likely effect on sites, require an assessment under Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive?
The NP's likely effect on sites and requirement for an assessment under Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive is explored in Section 4 of this Report.
Question 5: Does the Plan determine the use of small areas at local level, OR is it a minor modification of a Plan likely to require assessment under the Habitats Directive?
The policies of the NP can be considered to determine the use of small areas at local level commensurate with their status in determining local planning applications.
Question 6: Does the Plan set the framework for future development consent of projects (not just projects in the Annexes of the EIA Directive)?
The NP has been prepared for town and country planning and sets a framework for future development consent.

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Question 7: Is the Plans sole purpose to serve national defence or civil emergency, or is it a financial or budget Plan, or is it co -financed by structural funds or European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF) programmes 2000 to 2006/7?

The NP does not serve a purpose related to national defence or civil emergency, a financial or budget Plan. The Neighbourhood Plan is not co-financed by structural funds or EAGGF programmes 2000 to 2006/7.

Question 8: Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment?

Likely significant effects are explored in more detail in Section 3.3 of this Screening Report. The 'conclusions' section of the Report outlines whether the NP requires SEA or not due in regard to its effects on the environment.

The following section looks at the criteria for assessing the effects of the Neighbourhood Plan and the identified effects of the Neighbourhood Plan in line with the criteria. Crucially, it will determine whether there are any likely significant effects on the environment.

3.2 Criteria for Assessing the Effects of the Neighbourhood Plan

Criteria for determining the likely significant effects on the environment, referred to in Article 3(5) of Directive 2001/42/EC are set out below.

Annex II of SEA Directive 2001/42/EC – Significant Effects

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

- the degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources,
- the degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy,
- the relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development,
- environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme,

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Annex II of SEA Directive 2001/42/EC – Significant Effects

- the relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (e.g. plans and programmes linked to waste-management or water protection).

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

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

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3.3 Likely Significant Effects resulting from the Neighbourhood Plan

The following assessment will consider the likelihood of the Bradwell with Pattiswick Neighbourhood Plan (at the time of writing) to have significant effects on the environment. The table below will explore the likelihood of effects on the following required themes, as included within Annex I of the SEA Directive (2001/42/EC):

- Biodiversity;
- Population;
- Human health;
- Fauna;
- Flora;
- Soil;
- Water;
- Air;
- Climatic factors;
- Material assets;
- Cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage;
- Landscape; and
- The interrelationship between the above factors.

Table 2: Assessment of Likely Significant Effects on the Environment

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)	Likelihood and summary of significant effects
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 relevant policies which will be used to determine proposals for development within the Neighbourhood Plan area once adopted. A Neighbourhood Plan must demonstrate conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan and once brought into force, the policies it contains take precedence over existing non-strategic policies only in the Local Plan for that Neighbourhood Plan area. The principle of growth is established for Bradwell as a Third Tier settlement and is

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Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)	Likelihood and summary of significant effects
	identified as appropriate within the development boundary. The adopted Braintree Local Plan does not include housing allocations within the Neighbourhood Plan area. The Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate any additional land for development purposes. Irrespective of the Neighbourhood Plan policies' compliance with those of the Local Plan, which will be considered between the Parish Council and the Local Planning Authority in finalising the Neighbourhood Plan and through the independent examination of the Neighbourhood Plan, it is considered that the degree to which the Neighbourhood Plan sets a framework for development is low. This is primarily due to the Neighbourhood Plan not allocating land for development purposes.
The degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans or programmes including those in a hierarchy.	The Neighbourhood Plan, when/if 'made', will have weight in all planning decisions within the plan area. The Neighbourhood Plan provides policies for the Plan area, relevant to a local level only. The Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate land for development purposes. In consideration of the above, the degree to which the Neighbourhood Plan influences other plans or programmes is considered relatively low in the context of the Neighbourhood Plan area. This is primarily related to the Plan's position of not allocating land for development purposes.
The relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development.	Neighbourhood Plans are required to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The Neighbourhood Plan policies seek to ensure environmental considerations are taken into account. The Neighbourhood Plan includes policies related (directly / indirectly) to ensuring environmental considerations will be integrated into any forthcoming development within the Plan area. Irrespective of the adequacy of any such policies, adopted

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Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)	Likelihood and summary of significant effects
	Local Plan policies apply within the Neighbourhood Plan area, which have been subject to thorough assessment within the Local Plan Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulations Assessment. This ensures that environmental considerations, in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development, will be considered for all development proposals within the Neighbourhood Plan area.
Environmental problems relevant to the plan area	The Neighbourhood Plan reflects a small area and the Plan's policy content seeks to address environmental issues. The policy content of the adopted Local Plan will additionally apply to any proposals within the Neighbourhood Plan area. Local Plan policies have been subject to Sustainability Appraisal (SA) within the context of the Local Plan. The Neighbourhood Plan and this Screening Report identify the following potential (direct / indirect) environmental problems or sources of potential problems relevant to the Neighbourhood Plan area: • There are seven Habitats sites (SPA/SAC/Ramsar sites) which lie within 22 km of the Plan area: the SPAs of Abberton Reservoir, Blackwater Estuary (Mid Essex Coast Phase 4), and Colne Estuary (Mid Essex Coast Phase 2); the SAC of Essex Estuaries; and the Ramsar sites of Abberton Reservoir, Blackwater Estuary (Mid Essex Coast Phase 4), and Colne Estuary (Mid Essex Coast Phase 2). • The Plan area lies within the recreational Zone of Influence (ZoI) of the Essex Coast Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS) which covers seven additional habitat sites. • The Belchers and Broadfield Woods Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) lies to the north of the Plan area, and the majority of the Plan area is within the Impact Risk Zone of this SSSI. As a result, consultation with Natural England is

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Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)	Likelihood and summary of significant effects
	required for certain planning applications. • A number of Great Crested Newts Strategic Opportunity Areas are located throughout the Plan area, as well as two areas in the north that for class licence returns for the survey of great crested newts. • A number of areas on the Priority Habitat Inventory exist throughout the Plan area, including: Floodplain Grazing Marsh; Deciduous Woodland; Open Mosaic Habitat; and Woodpasture and Parkland BAP Priority Habitat. • Areas of Ancient and Semi-Natural Woodland and Ancient Replaced Woodland exist within the Plan area. • There are 25 Grade II listed buildings in the Parish. The Parish Church of the Holy Trinity in Bradwell village is Grade I listed and St Mary's Church (now a private residence) in Pattiswick is Grade II* listed. • The River Blackwater runs through the Parish and to the south of the village. There are areas of land within Flood Zones 2 and 3 associated with the river. There are also areas at low to medium risk of Surface Water Flooding. • The entirety of the Plan area is within a Source Protection Zone (SPZ) (Zone III - Total Catchment). SPZs are defined around large and public potable groundwater abstraction sites. The purpose of SPZs is to provide additional protection to safeguard drinking water quality through constraining the proximity of an activity that may impact upon a drinking water abstraction. • The entirety of the Plan area is within a Drinking Water Protected Area (Surface Water), which is currently 'at risk', and a Drinking Water Safeguard Zone. • The non-developed areas of the Plan area, and

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Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)	Likelihood and summary of significant effects
	those also not in non-agricultural use, are predominantly Grade 2 ('very good') and Grade 3 ('good to moderate') soils. Grade 2 soil represents the best and most versatile soil within the wider District context. • The Plan area is located within the South Suffolk and North Essex Clayland National Character Area (NCA). • The NCA is characterised as predominantly arable with a wooded appearance. There is some pasture on the valley floors. Field patterns are irregular despite rationalisation, with much ancient countryside surviving. Winding, narrow and sometimes sunken lanes are bounded by deep ditches, wide verges and strong hedgerows. A strong network of public rights of way provides access to the area's archetypal lowland English countryside. • The Braintree District Landscape Character Assessment identifies two distinct Landscape Character Areas (LCAs) within the Plan area: the Blackwater River Valley LCA; and the Silver End Farmland Plateau LCA. • The Plan area contains many features synonymous with the National Character Area, and the local Landscape Character Areas.
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).	The content of the Neighbourhood Plan is not in conflict with those relevant planning documents within the wider district and county area related to waste management or water protection.

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Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)	Likelihood and summary of significant effects
The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects on the following factors:	The following impacts have been identified within this Screening Assessment:
• Biodiversity	The Plan includes Policy 1: Protecting and Enhancing The Natural Environment And Green Infrastructure. The policy outlines that development proposals should protect, and where possible, enhance the natural environment and that all proposals should seek to deliver net biodiversity gain, in addition to protecting existing habitats and species. The Plan area lies within the recreational Zone of Influence (ZoI) of the Essex Coast Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS) and any forthcoming residential development has the potential for a Likely Significant Effect on the Habitats sites at the Essex coast through in-combination recreational pressure. Although the Plan does not allocate any land for development purposes Policy 7: Housing supports proposed residential development (subject to criteria) and this requires an amendment to embed mitigation into the Neighbourhood Plan. The HRA Appropriate Assessment element of this Report, due to the content of the Plan, outlines that with mitigation embedded there will be no adverse effect on the integrity of the Habitats site within scope, either alone or in-combination with other plans and projects. In consideration of all of the above, should the Plan embed the recommendations of the Appropriate Assessment within this Report, effects on biodiversity that would require the full application of the SEA Directive (a SEA Environmental Report) can be screened out.
• Population	It is considered that there would be no significant effects on population resulting from the Neighbourhood Plan. This is

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Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)	Likelihood and summary of significant effects
	due to the small scale of the plan area.
• Health	The Neighbourhood Plan includes Policy 3: Protecting Community Facilities and Public Open Space, and Policy 4: Local Green Space, both of which indirectly support the principle of improving health and wellbeing in the plan area. There are therefore no significant effects resulting from the Neighbourhood Plan regarding human health that would warrant a strategic assessment through SEA.
• Fauna	There are no direct impacts resulting from the Neighbourhood Plan on fauna that are considered significant at the Plan level. The Plan seeks the protection and enhancement of biodiversity at key sites and does not propose any development that could lead to the direct deterioration of habitats. Possible effects on fauna (outside those associated with Habitats sites) cannot be considered strategically significant to the extent that Strategic Environmental Assessment would be warranted. Such issues are more appropriate to be considered on a case-by-case 'project level' basis at the development management stage and in accordance with relevant development management policies contained within the LPA's adopted Local Plan. Effects on fauna from the content of the Neighbourhood Plan can therefore be screened out.
• Flora	Various areas of Priority habitat exist within the plan area. The Plan seeks their protection and enhancement and it should be acknowledged that relevant to such matters, Local Plan policies also apply within the Neighborhood Plan area. As a result, no effects are expected to result from the Neighbourhood Plan regarding flora.

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Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)	Likelihood and summary of significant effects
• Soil	The non-developed areas of the Neighbourhood Plan area consist of predominantly Grade 2 and Grade 3 soils. Although no thematic policies are included within the Plan that address soil quality, it should be acknowledged that Local Plan policies apply on the matter and that the Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate land for development purposes. There are no identified negative implications surrounding soil quality as a result of the Neighbourhood Plan.
• Water	Land within Source Protection Zone III makes up the entirety of the Plan area. Source Protection Zones (SPZs) respond to sources such as wells, boreholes and springs used for public drinking water supply. These zones show the risk of contamination from any activities that might cause pollution in the area. The Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate any land for development purposes and as such no uses are considered to give rise to ground water pollutants (e.g. give rise to hazardous substances such as pesticides, oils, petrol and diesel, solvents, arsenic, mercury or chromium VI; or non-hazardous substances such as ammonia or nitrates). The HRA element of this Screening Report confirms that there are no potential pathways for development within the Plan area to impact on the Habitats sites within scope of the HRA.
• Air	The Plan area contains no areas designated or otherwise identified as having poor air quality. Additionally, the Local Plan does not allocate land for development purposes or include any other commitments that would lead to a deterioration in air quality. There will be significant effects on air quality as a result.
• Climatic factors	The Neighbourhood Plan area contains a stretch of the River Blackwater and areas of Flood Zone 2 and 3 are prevalent

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Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)	Likelihood and summary of significant effects
	along this watercourse. Some of the area is also subject to surface water flood risk. Policy 6: Drainage and Flood Management sets out that development proposals should where appropriate avoid and reduce the risk of flooding (including fluvial and surface) on site and elsewhere in the catchment, and manage water and waste water discharge. Further, Policy 10: Design sets out that all development proposals should incorporate sustainable design features which promote energy efficiency, biodiversity gains, innovative low carbon technology, water efficiency, energy conservation and efficiency, flood resilience, sustainable waste, and mineral management. No development allocations are proposed within the Plan, and irrespective of the adequacy of Policies 6 and 10, adopted Local Plan policies on flood risk and climatic factors will also apply to any off-plan proposals that may come forward within the Plan area. It is therefore considered that SEA would not be required regarding matters of flood risk.
• Material assets	The Plan area contains land within a Minerals Consultation Area (MCA) for sand and gravel as identified within the County Council's adopted Minerals Local Plan. Nevertheless, the Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate any land for development proposals or contain any commitments that are considered contrary to preserving the integrity of these deposits. The Plan area does not contain any existing or allocated sites for waste management facilities within the County Council's adopted Waste Local Plan. Regarding other material assets, the content of the Neighbourhood Plan is not considered to have any significant effects due to the extent / size of the Plan area. Such issues are more appropriate to be considered on a case-by-case basis at the development management stage

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Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)	Likelihood and summary of significant effects
	and in accordance with relevant development management policies contained within the LPA's adopted Local Plan.
• Cultural heritage	The Plan area contains numerous Listed Buildings. The Plan does not allocate land for development purposes that could have any effects on these listings or their settings. The Plan includes Policy 5: Protecting and Enhancing the Historic Environment, which sets out that development proposals should protect and where appropriate enhance non-designated heritage assets, and that any proposal which could impact on a non-designated heritage asset should demonstrate how the significance of the asset has been acknowledged and addressed. Irrespective of the adequacy of the Plan's policy relating to the historic environment, policy regarding the protection and enhancement of the historic environment also exists at the LPA level which additionally applies in the Plan area. The effects on heritage are, as a result, considered a development management issue in the context of the Plan and its content. There are not considered to be any elements of the Plan that would give rise to significant effects on the historic environment at the strategic level that would require the full application of the SEA Directive.
• Landscape	The Parish area wholly lies within National Character Area 86 South Suffolk and North Essex Clayland. The Plan does not allocate any land for development purposes and includes Policy 2: Protection of Special and Sensitive Landscapes, which seeks protection and enhancement of overall character and access to the countryside within the two locally identified Landscape Character Areas within the Plan area. In light of the Plan not allocating land for development purposes and in consideration also of the requirements of development proposals in accordance with the adopted Braintree Local Plan, there are no significant strategic landscape effects identified within this Report that would

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Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)	Likelihood and summary of significant effects
	warrant the requirement for the application of the SEA Directive and the formulation of a SEA Environmental Report.
The cumulative nature of the effects.	The Plan does not allocate any land for development purposes and therefore any negative cumulative effects can be ruled out.
The trans boundary nature of the effects.	The adopted Braintree Local Plan can be seen to support the protection and improvement of conditions relevant to those sustainability factors listed within the SEA Directive. The Neighbourhood Plan is broadly aligned with the principles of those wider thematic environmental policies. The HRA Screening element of this Report, which explores in-combination effects with other relevant plans and projects, also identifies no in-combination effects regarding Habitats (European) sites.
The risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents).	It is considered that there is no risk to human health or the environment as a result of the Neighbourhood Plan. This is in consideration of the above screening requirements related to sustainability themes. The Neighbourhood Plan is unlikely to give rise to any accidents that can be considered to have a significant risk to human health or the environment.
The magnitude spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected).	The Neighbourhood Plan relates to the local level only. The magnitude and spatial extent of the Plan's content is therefore not considered significant in a wider District context. No effects are highlighted within this SEA screening at either the local or wider geographic area.
The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due	As highlighted above in the screening of the Neighbourhood Plan per sustainability theme, the Neighbourhood Plan has not been assessed as having negative effects associated

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Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Annex II SEA Directive)	Likelihood and summary of significant effects
to: • special natural characteristics or cultural heritage • exceeded environmental quality standards • intensive land use	with environmental themes.
The effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, community or international protection status.	As highlighted above in the screening of the Plan per sustainability theme, the Neighbourhood Plan has not been assessed as having any significant effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, community or international protection status.

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4. HRA Screening

4.1 Habitats Regulations Assessment of Development Plans

This section forms a plan level Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) as required by Regulation 63 of The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended).

This section of this Report aims to:

- Identify the Habitats sites within 22km of Bradwell with Pattiswick Neighbourhood Plan Review and Update 2025 area.
- Summarise the reasons for designation and Conservation Objectives for each site to be considered in this assessment.
- Screen the Bradwell with Pattiswick Neighbourhood Plan Review and Update 2025 for its potential to impact upon a Habitats site.
- Assess the potential for in combination effects from other projects and plans in the area.
- Identify if there are any outstanding issues that need further investigation.

4.2 Court Judgements and their consideration in this Report

4.2.1 CJEU People Over Wind v Coillte Teoranta C-323/17

In line with the Court judgement (CJEU People Over Wind v Coillte Teoranta C-323/17), mitigation measures cannot be taken into account when carrying out a screening assessment to decide whether a plan or project is likely to result in significant effects on a Habitats site.

This HRA Screening Report does not therefore consider mitigation measures within the assessment of Likely Significant Effects resulting from the Bradwell with Pattiswick Neighbourhood Plan Review and Update 2025.

4.2.2 CJEU Holohan C- 461/17

This Court judgement now imposes more detailed requirements on the competent authority at Appropriate Assessment stage:

> 1. […] an 'Appropriate Assessment' must, on the one hand, catalogue the entirety of habitat types and species for which a site is protected, and, on the other, identify and examine both the implications of the proposed project for the species present on that site, and for which that site has not been listed, and the implications for habitat types and species to be found outside the boundaries of that site, provided that those implications are liable to affect the conservation objectives of the site.

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2. […] the competent authority is permitted to grant to a plan or project consent which leaves the developer free to determine subsequently certain parameters relating to the construction phase, such as the location of the construction compound and haul routes, only if that authority is certain that the development consent granted establishes conditions that are strict enough to guarantee that those parameters will not adversely affect the integrity of the site.

3. […] where the competent authority rejects the findings in a scientific expert opinion recommending that additional information be obtained, the 'Appropriate Assessment' must include an explicit and detailed statement of reasons capable of dispelling all reasonable scientific doubt concerning the effects of the work envisaged on the site concerned.

Within this Stage 1 HRA Screening report, the assessment determines the requirement whether or not a Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment is needed for the Bradwell with Pattiswick Neighbourhood Plan Review and Update 2025.

4.3 Habitats (European) sites

Habitats sites is the term used in the NPPF (2024) to describe any site which would be included within the definition at Regulation 8 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) for the purpose of those regulations. These now form part of the UK national network of sites for nature protection. The aim of the network is to assure the long-term survival of UK's most valuable and threatened species and habitats.

All Special Protection Areas (SPAs) are designated for birds and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) are designated for other species, and for Habitats. Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar sites) are also part of the National Network of sites. This is because all SPAs and SACs are comprised of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and all Ramsar sites in England are SSSIs. Together, SPAs, SACs and Ramsar Sites make up the Habitats sites in England. The following offers a description and explanation of SPAs, SACs and Ramsar sites.

4.3.1 Explanation of SPAs, SACs and Ramsar sites

Special Protection Areas (SPAs)

SPAs are areas which have been identified as being of international importance for the breeding, feeding, wintering or the migration of rare and vulnerable species of birds. Example: Abberton Reservoir SPA is one of the most important reservoirs in the country for overwintering waterfowl. Legislation: The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended).

Special Areas of Conservation (SACs)

SACs are areas designated to protect habitat types that are in danger of disappearance, have a small natural range, or are highly characteristic of the region; and to protect species that are endangered, vulnerable, rare, or endemic. Example: Essex Estuaries SAC: The Mid-

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Essex Coast comprises an extensive complex of estuaries and intertidal sand and silt flats, including several islands, shingle and shell beaches and extensive areas of saltmarsh. Legislation: The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended).

Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar sites)

Ramsar sites are designated to protect the biological and physical features of wetlands, especially for waterfowl habitats. For example, Colne Estuary Ramsar site is important due to the extent and diversity of saltmarsh present. This site, and the four other sites in the Mid-Essex Coast complex, includes a total of 3,237 ha, that represent 70% of the saltmarsh habitat in Essex and 7% of the total saltmarsh in Britain. Legislation: Ramsar Convention (1971) – Wetlands of International Importance. Ramsar sites often overlap with SACs and SPAs and UK planning policy requires that they should be accorded the same importance when developments are proposed.

4.3.2 Habitats sites to be considered

There are seven Habitats sites (SPA/SAC/Ramsar sites) which lie within 22 km of Bradwell with Pattiswick plan area.

Table 3: Habitats sites within 22km to be considered in this assessment.

SPA
• Abberton Reservoir • Blackwater Estuary (Mid Essex Coast Phase 4) • Colne Estuary (Mid Essex Coast Phase 2)
SAC
• Essex Estuaries
Ramsar site
• Abberton Reservoir • Blackwater Estuary (Mid Essex Coast Phase 4) • Colne Estuary (Mid Essex Coast Phase 2)

Consideration was given to potential impact pathways, Impact Risk Zones (IRZ) for the underpinning SSSIs for the Habitats sites listed in Table 3 and confirmed on MAGIC website www.magic.gov.uk.

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The Bradwell with Pattiswick Neighbourhood Plan Review and Update 2025 area lies outside the 10km Impact Risk Zone for Abberton Reservoir SPA and Ramsar site as identified by Natural England. However, the Plan area lies within the recreational Zones of Influence (ZOI) of the Essex Coast Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS) which covers Hamford Water SPA, SAC & Ramsar site, Stour & Orwell SPA and Ramsar site, Colne Estuary SPA and Ramsar site, Blackwater Estuary SPA and Ramsar, Dengie SPA and Ramsar site and Essex Estuaries SAC. Therefore, the additional 7 Habitats sites are within scope of this Plan level HRA screening when considered in combination with other plans and projects.

The coastal Habitats sites (Blackwater Estuary SPA and Ramsar site, Colne Estuary SPA and Ramsar and Essex Estuaries SAC) are vulnerable to recreational pressure. In simple terms, this means that harm to the integrity of such sites could arise because people are using such sites for daily recreational purposes (such as dog walking). Consequently, residential development is predicted to increase the quantity of recreational use of the Habitats sites within the scope of the Essex Coast RAMS, that development is predicted to result in harm without mitigation measures in place. Only residential development has the potential to increase recreational pressure. The potential increase in pressure will depend on the location of the development and quantity of new homes (and hence people) it will deliver.

After consideration of potential impact pathways, on a precautionary principle, it is concluded that should be assessed for any likely significant effects resulting from the Bradwell with Pattiswick Neighbourhood Plan Review and Update 2025. The following Habitats sites are therefore included within scope for this HRA screening report:

Colne Estuary SPA and Ramsar site, Blackwater Estuary SPA and Ramsar site, Dengie SPA and Ramsar site, Hamford Water SPA, SAC & Ramsar site and Stour & Orwell Estuaries SPA and Ramsar site and Essex Estuaries SAC.

Any mitigation considered necessary would need to be secured at application stage in line with policies in the adopted Braintree Local Plan as well any project level HRA Appropriate Assessment as the competent authority for planning decisions.

4.4 Method and Approach

The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 state that submitted Plans need to be accompanied by a statement explaining how the proposed Plan meets the ‘basic conditions’ set out in Schedule 4B of the 1990 Town and Country Planning Act. These basic conditions include a requirement to demonstrate how the Plan is compatible with UK obligations, which includes the need to undertake a HRA screening report; this is necessary to ensure the making of the Neighbourhood Plan is not likely to have a significant effect on a Habitats site or a Habitats offshore marine site, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects. This document relates only to Stage 1 of the HRA process.

4.4.1 Stage 1: HRA Screening

The screening stage identifies if any significant effects are likely because any policies or

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projects will have an impact on a Habitats site. Table 4 identifies the different categories assigned to each policy in the plan: Category A identifies those policies or projects that are considered to have No Negative Effect. Category B identifies those policies or projects that will have No Likely Significant Effect. Category C identifies those policies or projects that might have Likely Significant Effect upon a Habitats site either alone or in combination with other plans or projects. Section 4.5 considers each policy or projects and the results of the screening exercise recorded.

Each of the policies in the Bradwell with Pattiswick Neighbourhood Plan Review and Update 2025 has been screened to identify whether they would have any effect on a Habitats site and allocated to a category as shown in Table 4.

Table 4: HRA Screening categorisation

Category A: No negative effect
Policies or projects that will not be likely to have any negative effect on a Habitats site.
Category B: No Likely Significant Effect
Policies or projects that could have an effect but would not be likely to have a *significant* negative effect on a Habitats site alone or in combination. This conclusion could only be reached if the effects, even in combination and taking the precautionary principle into account, are considered trivial.
Category C: Likely Significant Effect
Policies or projects which are predicted to have a likely significant effect on a Habitats site either alone or in combination with other plans and projects and require revision or further assessment (Appropriate Assessment).

4.4.2 Potential impacts of Bradwell with Pattiswick Neighbourhood Plan Review and Update 2025 on Habitats sites

There are a wide range of potential impacts on Habitats sites that could arise from development plans. These can be summarised as -

- Land take by development;
- Impact on protected species found within, but which travel outside, the protected sites may be relevant where development could result in effects on qualifying interest species within the Habitats site, for example through the loss of feeding grounds for an identified species.
- Increased disturbance, for example from recreational use resulting from new

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housing development and / or improved access due to transport infrastructure projects;

- Changes in water availability, or water quality as a result of development and increased demands for waste water treatment, and changes in groundwater regimes due to increased impermeable areas;
- Changes in atmospheric pollution levels due to increased traffic, waste management facilities etc. Pollution discharges from developments such as industrial developments, quarries and waste management facilities.

Each policy will be assessed against the criteria in the table below.

Table 5: Assessment of potential impacts on Habitats sites

Nature of potential impact	How the Bradwell with Pattiswick Neighbourhood Plan Review and Update 2025 (alone or in combination with other plans and projects) could affect a Habitats site	Why these effects are not considered significant
Land take by development	The Bradwell with Pattiswick Neighbourhood Plan Review and Update 2025 area is outside the boundaries of the Habitats sites within scope of this HRA.	No likely significant effects are expected, as no development will be allocated on designated land. It is therefore, considered that impacts from land take by development can be screened out when considered from the Plan alone. As there will be no land take by development, this impact pathway is screened out.
Impact on protected species outside the protected sites	The Bradwell with Pattiswick Neighbourhood Plan Review and Update 2025 area may contain land providing functional use by designated features of the Habitats site.	There is a potential risk of impacts on protected species outside of the Habitats site e.g. birds which are designated features of a SPA. However, given that the distance is over 14km, it is not considered that this impact pathway will not result in likely significant effects upon any Habitats site from the Neighbourhood Plan Review and Update 2025. Therefore, impacts on protected species

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Nature of potential impact	How the Bradwell with Pattiswick Neighbourhood Plan Review and Update 2025 (alone or in combination with other plans and projects) could affect a Habitats site	Why these effects are not considered significant
		outside the Habitats site from the Neighbourhood Plan alone on the Habitats sites from this impact pathway is screened out.
Recreational pressure and disturbance	The Bradwell with Pattiswick Neighbourhood Plan Review and Update 2025 area lies within the 22km Zone of Influence for the Blackwater Estuary SPA and Ramsar as evidenced within the adopted Essex Coast RAMS.	There is no policy which requires all residential development proposals must meet the requirements of Braintree Local Plan Policy LPP64 (Protected Sites) and SP2 (Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS). Any proposals that have adverse effects on the integrity of existing habitats either alone or in-combination) will not be supported. Residential developments must contribute to the Essex Coast Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy 2018-2038 (RAMS) where they fall within the Zones of Influence of international designations as defined in the RAMS, in accordance with SP2. It is therefore considered that this impact pathway should be screened in for further assessment as, without mitigation, Likely Significant Effects from the Neighbourhood Plan resulting from recreational impacts on Habitats sites cannot be ruled out.

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Nature of potential impact	How the Bradwell with Pattiswick Neighbourhood Plan Review and Update 2025 (alone or in combination with other plans and projects) could affect a Habitats site	Why these effects are not considered significant
Water quantity and quality	There is no potential pathway for development within the Bradwell with Pattiswick Neighbourhood Plan Review and Update 2025 area to impact on the Habitats sites within scope of this HRA.	Although the Bradwell with Pattiswick Neighbourhood Plan Review and Update 2025 does support residential development, at just over 14km distance, no likely significant effects are expected given the distance and no impact pathway, so changes in water quantity or quality have been screened out.
Changes in air pollution levels	It is considered that there is no pathway for development to result in air pollution impacts.	Although the Bradwell with Pattiswick Neighbourhood Plan Review and Update 2025 does support residential development, at just over 14km distance, no likely significant effects are expected given the distance, so changes in air pollution have been screened out.

4.5 Results from HRA Screening of Neighbourhood Plan Policies

Each of the policies in the Bradwell with Pattiswick Neighbourhood Plan Review and Update 2025 was screened in turn to identify whether they would have any impact on a Habitats site and the result of this exercise is recorded in the table below.

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Table 6: Assessment of potential impacts from the Plan policies

Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats sites?	Recommendations
Policy 1: Protecting and Enhancing The Natural Environment And Green Infrastructure	Development proposals should protect, and where possible, enhance the natural environment. All proposals should seek to deliver net biodiversity gain, in addition to protecting existing habitats and species. Any proposals which negatively affect, or have the potential to negatively affect, the natural environment should demonstrate that any negative impacts on biodiversity, including flora and fauna, and local wildlife (including wildlife habitats), will be adequately mitigated. Proposals will be encouraged that seek to enhance the green infrastructure and biodiversity of the parish by: - Using land for the purpose of delivering off-site biodiversity net gain; - Protecting and enhancing designated green spaces and/or creating new green/open spaces where appropriate; - Improving the connectivity between wildlife areas and green spaces through green corridors and/or improvements to the Public Rights of Way and cycle, bridleway and footpath	No, Category A	No specific recommendations

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Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats sites?	Recommendations
	networks; - Enhancing the visual characteristics and biodiversity of green spaces in close proximity to the development; - Ensuring that landscape schemes, layouts, access and public open space provision and other amenity requirements contribute to the connectivity, maintenance and improvement of the green infrastructure network; - Incorporating the principles of Sustainable Urban Drainage (SUDs) where appropriate, which will enhance biodiversity and ecosystems; and / or - Incorporating the multi-functional use of local green spaces where appropriate as part of the Green Infrastructure network. Development proposals should protect and where possible enhance the following natural environment features within the Parish, identified within Figure 6 and Annex 3: - Links Wood (Bra146); - Park House Meadow		

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Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats sites?	Recommendations
	(Bra157); - Blackwater Plantation West (Bra158); - Blackwater Plantation (Bra186); - The Mill Pond; - Common land south of Holy Trinity Church; - Common land east of Bradwell village; - Bushy Warren (ref W5); - Captain's Wood (ref W3); - Orange Wood (ref W2); - Century Piece (ref W1); - Artigore (ref W6); - Cock Pheasant Spinney (ref W7); - Bankfield (ref W4); - The Street, Bradwell, Priority Habitat; and - Rectory Meadow, Priority Habitat. Development proposals which are likely to have a negative impact upon these features should demonstrate that where the benefits of development clearly		

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Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats sites?	Recommendations
	outweigh any negative impacts to the nature conservation value of the feature, or to its contribution to wider biodiversity objectives.		
Policy 2: Protection of Special and Sensitive Landscapes	Development proposals within the Blackwater River Valley or the Silver End Farmland Plateau Landscape Character Areas identified within Figure 6 should demonstrate that the proposal will: - protect and enhance the special features and the overall character of the Landscape Character Area; - protect and where possible improve access to open countryside within the Landscape Character Area for recreation.	No, Category A	No specific recommendations
Policy 3: Protecting Community Facilities and Public Open Space	Developer contributions will be sought towards a range of specific projects which address local needs, including enhancements and upgrades to the playing fields in Bradwell village to ensure that the needs of local sports teams can be accommodated in the future. Development proposals which would result in the net loss of existing community facilities or public open space should demonstrate benefits which outweigh the harm created by the	No, Category A	No specific recommendations

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Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats sites?	Recommendations
	loss.		
Policy 4: Local Green Space	Bradwell Village Playing Fields, Allotments, and Village Orchard identified in Figure 7 is designated as a Local Green Space where inappropriate development should not be approved except in very special circumstances.	No, Category A	No specific recommendations
Policy 5: Protecting and Enhancing the Historic Environment	Development proposals should protect and where appropriate enhance non-designated heritage assets, including those identified in Figure 8. Any proposal which could impact on a non-designated heritage asset should demonstrate how the significance of the asset has been acknowledged and addressed.	No, Category A	No specific recommendations
Policy 6: Drainage and Flood Management	Development proposals should where appropriate avoid and reduce the risk of flooding (including fluvial and surface) on site and elsewhere in the catchment, and manage water and waste water discharge.	No, Category A	No specific recommendations
Policy 7: Housing	Proposals for residential development will be supported where the proposed development: - Is located within defined settlement boundaries; - Includes housing types and tenures which meet the	Yes, Category C	The birds associated with the Essex coast Habitats sites, in particular the Blackwater Estuary, are sensitive to disturbance from

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Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats sites?	Recommendations
	current and future housing needs of the Parish taking into account the existing housing stock. Proposals should ensure an appropriate housing mix; - Contributes positively to the existing rural character and appearance of the area; - Reflects and responds positively to the scale, design, density and layout of existing development in the surrounding area, and will not result in significant harm to neighbouring residential amenity; - Will not result in significant harm to heritage assets (both designated and non-designated) in the surrounding area; - Will not result in any detrimental impact on local highway safety, and where possible improves highway safety within the Parish; and - Protects and enhances important features of the natural environment and biodiversity of the site and its surrounds; Development proposals for small scale residential development and extensions and conversions for		recreation, in particular off-lead dog walking, and the unique attraction of the Estuary presents a strong draw for undertaking such activities. Mitigation of such effects usually requires more than one type of approach; this is typically a combination of 'on-site' informal open space provision and promotion (i.e. in and around the development site) and 'off-site' visitor access management measures (i.e. at the Habitats site). However, measures primarily to mitigate the effects on a Habitats site cannot be considered at HRA screening stage. Further assessment is therefore triggered for predicted recreational disturbance impacts from the Plan in combination

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Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats sites?	Recommendations
	residential use outside the Bradwell village settlement boundary shall be supported as an exception to planning policies where they; - Can demonstrate a significant contribution towards maintaining the future viability and sustainability of the adjacent settlement; - Meet local housing needs, including affordable housing; - Are adjacent to an existing settlement or hamlet1; and - Continue the predominantly linear existing built form of Bradwell Village along the A120 Coggeshall Road and The Street, and avoid any extensions of the Village into the countryside from Church Road, Rectory Meadow, or Hollies Road.		with other plans and projects. Recommend amended policy text is added at paragraph 4.39 of the Plan for specific compliance with Braintree Local Plan Policy LPP64 (Protected Sites) to be re-screened at Stage 2 HRA Appropriate Assessment. It is also recommended that the Policy include a new bullet point, stating: - Will avoid adverse effect on the integrity of existing Habitats sites (either alone or in-combination). Effects on the integrity of existing Habitats sites (either alone or in-combination) will not be supported.
Policy 8:	Employment generating development proposals will be	No,	No specific

[1] Existing settlements and hamlets in the Parish are Perry Green, Clapdog Green, Glazenwood, the hamlets around Pattiswick Church and The Compasses, the collection of buildings at Goslings Farm, the developments in Bridge Hall Road, Hollies Road and Riverside. Please refer to the Village Design Statement.

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Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats sites?	Recommendations
Economy	supported which: - enable new small-scale businesses to locate within the Parish, particularly related to self-employed skilled trades and home-working businesses; - protect and support existing businesses within the Parish; - provide benefits to the local economy and community which outweigh any harmful impacts of the proposals; - are located in areas which are accessible to the surrounding transport network without having a significantly detrimental impact on levels of traffic or congestion in the Parish; - will not result in a significant increase in HGV traffic on non-strategic routes within the Parish; - will not detrimentally impact upon residential amenity, health, and quality of life of existing residents; - contribute positively to the existing rural character and appearance of the area as described in the Village	Category A	recommendations

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Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats sites?	Recommendations
	Design Statement; - would not result in significant harm to heritage assets (designated or non-designated) in the surrounding area; - protect and enhance important features of the natural environment and biodiversity of the site and its surrounds; and - use materials which preserve and enhance the character of the area. All new residential and commercial developments should be designed to be served by a fast and reliable broadband connection to the premises. Connection should include the installation of appropriate cabling within the homes or business units as well as a fully enabled connection of the developed areas to the full main telecommunications network to provide the fastest available broadband access.		
Policy 9: Transport	Proposals for new development should: - provide parking in accordance with the adopted Essex County Council Parking Standards;	No, Category A	No specific recommendations

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Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats sites?	Recommendations
	- protect public rights of way, including footpaths, cycle routes and bridleways; and - Not create a significant potential risk or be detrimental to the safety of the highway network.		
Policy 10: Design	All new development proposals should: - Be of a high quality design which contributes positively to the character and appearance of the surrounding area and they should include a high-quality design which will contribute positively to the character and appearance of the surrounding area in accordance with the Bradwell with Pattiswick Parish Village Design Statement; - Demonstrate how the proposal will contribute positively to the existing rural character and appearance of the area as described in the Bradwell with Pattiswick Village Design Statement; - Ensure that the design reflects and responds positively to the scale, design, density, layout and	No, Category A	No specific recommendations

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Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats sites?	Recommendations
	historic character of existing development in the surrounding area, and will not result in significant harm to neighbouring residential amenity; - Ensure that the design, layout, scale, and appearance will not result in significant harm to heritage assets in the surrounding area, in accordance with BPNP Policy 5; - Be of a scale and size which reflects the rural character and appearance of villages and hamlets in the area; - Ensure that there is an appropriate use of materials which preserves and enhances the character of the area; - Be at a height which is in keeping with the character of the Parish and existing development surrounding the proposal site; - Incorporate sustainable design features which promote energy efficiency, biodiversity gains, innovative low carbon technology, water efficiency, energy conservation and efficiency,		

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Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats sites?	Recommendations
	flood resilience, sustainable waste and mineral management; - Include an appropriate provision of off-street parking Development proposals should where appropriate respond sensitively to the existing natural environment by: - Ensuring that the proposed layout protects and enhances important features of the natural environment and biodiversity of the site and its surrounds; - Retaining and protecting existing trees and hedges in and around the Parish wherever possible; - Incorporating the planting of trees, hedging and vegetation which is predominantly native and consistent with flora in the surrounding area. The planting of broadleaf species is encouraged to retain the leafy character of the Parish; - Retaining and maintaining grass verges, ideally incorporating native wildflowers which support		

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Policy Number	Policy Wording	Will Policy have Likely Significant Effects on the Habitats sites?	Recommendations
	local fauna; and - Including features within the design of the building which help declining species.		
Policy 11: Developer Contributions	Where appropriate development will be required to contribute towards the provision of relevant infrastructure in the Parish and provide a proportionate contribution to the relevant projects identified in Table 2. Planning applications should where appropriate clearly demonstrate the impact of the proposed development on local infrastructure in the area, and demonstrate how developer contributions towards local infrastructure will satisfactorily mitigate the identified impacts.	No, Category A	No specific recommendations

4.5.1 Recommendations and HRA Screening Conclusion

This a single policy in the Neighbourhood Plan Review and Update 2025 which is predicted to result in a Likely Significant Effect when considered in combination with other plans and projects. This is Policy 7 Housing.

As Policy 7 supports residential development, without any policy text to avoid impacts and refer to the need for mitigation in-combination with other plans and projects, there is a need for avoidance measures to be secured from recreational disturbance. This policy therefore needs to be assessed at Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment.

Five Habitats sites were scoped in for HRA screening, i.e. Blackwater Estuary (Mid Essex Coast Phase 4) SPA and Ramsar site, Colne Estuary (Mid Essex Coast Phase 2) SPA and Ramsar site and Essex Estuaries SAC.

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There is a single potential impact pathway for recreational disturbance which is predicted to result in Likely Significant Effect from the Plan Review and Update 2025 in combination with other plans and projects. As this pathway triggers further assessment, consideration of predicted effects in combination with other plans or projects will be included within Chapter 5.

This HRA screening recommends that Policy 7 Housing of this Neighbourhood Plan Review and Update 2025 should be assessed further as it has been assigned to Category C due to predicted recreational impacts from the Plan in combination with other plans and projects.

Further Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment is therefore required under the UK Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended). The Bradwell with Pattiswick Neighbourhood Plan Review and Update 2025 may only be made after having ascertained that it will not result in adverse effect on integrity of the Habitats sites within scope of this assessment. This 2nd stage is an iterative process as measures can be incorporated in order to be able to ascertain that there is no adverse effect on the integrity, before re-screening and making a final assessment.

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5. Appropriate Assessment and Considering the Integrity Test

5.1 Introduction to Appropriate Assessment

The Bradwell with Pattiswick Neighbourhood Plan Review and Update 2025 is, without mitigation, predicted to result in Likely Significant Effect from the Plan in combination with other plans and projects. This is for a single impact pathway: recreational disturbance.

The second stage of HRA is to undertake an 'Appropriate Assessment' of the implications of the Plan (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) and establish whether there may be an Adverse Effect on Integrity (AEOI) of any Habitats sites in view of their Conservation Objectives. The process undertaken for the Appropriate Assessment is set out in this Chapter.

The Appropriate Assessment should be undertaken by the competent authority and should assess all aspects of the Neighbourhood Plan Review and Update 2025 which can by themselves, or in combination with other plans and projects, affect the sites' Conservation Objectives. The assessment must consider the implications for each qualifying feature of each potentially affected Habitats site. Key vulnerabilities and the Site Improvement Plans (SIPs) were used to obtain this information.

Site Improvement Plans have been developed for each Habitats site in England as part of the 'Improvement Programme for England's Natura 2000 sites (IPENS)'. The Site Improvement Plans provide a high level overview of the issues (both current and predicted) affecting the condition of the designation features of the site(s) and outlines the priority measures required to improve the condition of the features.

In order to identify potential in combination effects, other plans and projects which may affect the Habitats sites need to be identified.

This should involve an 'Appropriate Assessment' of the implications of the Bradwell with Pattiswick Neighbourhood Plan Review and Update 2025, in relation to predicted recreational disturbance in combination with other plans or projects, in order to establish whether there may be an Adverse Effect on the Integrity of any Habitats sites in view of their Conservation Objectives.

This stage is to undertake objective scientific assessment of the implications of the Neighbourhood Plan Review and Update 2025 on the Qualifying Features of the listed Habitats sites using the best scientific knowledge in the field. It should apply the best available techniques and methods to assess the extent of the effects of the Neighbourhood Plan on the integrity of the Habitats sites. The description of the site's integrity and the impact assessment should be based on the best possible indicators specific to the qualifying features of Habitat sites within scope of this assessment, which can also be useful in monitoring the impact of the Neighbourhood Plan's implementation.

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The Appropriate Assessment should assess all aspects of the Plan Review and Update 2025 which can by themselves, or in combination with other plans and projects, affect the Conservation Objectives of one or more Habitats site. The assessment must consider the implications for each qualifying feature of each potentially affected Habitats site. The focus of the appropriate assessment is therefore on the species and / or the habitats for which the Habitats site is designated.

The best scientific knowledge should be used when carrying out the Appropriate Assessment in order to enable the competent authority to conclude with certainty that there will be no Adverse Effect on the Integrity of any Habitats site.

It is important that the Appropriate Assessment provides a better understanding of potential effects and can therefore assist in the identification of mitigation measures where possible to avoid, reduce or cancel significant effects on Habitats sites which could be applied when undertaking the 'integrity test'. All mitigation measures built into the Plan Review and Update 2025 can be taken into account. The Appropriate Assessment is an iterative process, re-assessing changes and new or different mitigation measures before making its final conclusion. It must be clear which mitigation measures are being relied upon in order to meet the integrity test.

The integrity test must apply the precautionary principle. However, plan assessments are less precise than project assessments, and so it is important for the assessment process to eliminate the prospect of adverse effects integrity insofar as it is possible, given the level of specificity of this Neighbourhood Plan Review and Update 2025.

Natural England should be formally consulted on this HRA report.

5.2 Approach and Methodology of the Appropriate Assessment

The potential Likely Significant Effects considered at Screening Stage are now carried forward for consideration at Appropriate Assessment. The policies and their potential to have adverse effects on any Habitats site through a variety of impact pathways are now considered in more detail, for example habitat loss or deterioration, disturbance, direct and indirect effects; extent of the effects (habitat area, species numbers or areas of occurrence); importance and magnitude (e.g. considering the affected area or population in relation to the total area and population size).

Key sources of the Habitats sites information were found at:

- JNCC: **http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/**
- Site Designation features and Conservation Objectives- Designated Sites View: **https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/**
- Site Improvement Plans, e.g.: **http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6270737467834368**
- MAGIC (the Multi Agency Geographic Information website): **www.magic.gov.uk**

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- "Managing Natura 2000 sites- The provisions of Article 6 of the 'Habitats' Directive 92/43/EEC" **http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/management/docs/art6/Provisions_Art_._nov_2018_endocx.pdf**

Additional information is also provided for each site on the Natural England Designated Sites website and this information has been interrogated.

5.2.1 Use of Mitigation Measures

All mitigation measures built into the Bradwell with Pattiswick Neighbourhood Plan Review and Update 2025 can now be taken into account at Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment.

At this stage, other policies of the Plan can be considered in order to mitigate some of the predicted Likely Significant Effects which have been identified. This stage is an iterative process as avoidance and reduction measures can be incorporated in order to be able to avoid the potential impacts identified in the Appropriate Assessment or reduce them to a level where they will no longer adversely affect the site's integrity.

Where residual effects are identified, monitoring will be required as part of the Bradwell with Pattiswick Neighbourhood Plan Review and Update 2025.

5.2.2 Applying the Integrity Test

Following the Appropriate Assessment and the consideration of all mitigation measures, the competent authority needs to make a judgement on whether any of the policies will have an Adverse Effect on Integrity on any Habitats site either alone or in combination with other plans and projects. This test incorporates the precautionary principle.

5.2.3 Embedding Mitigation

Braintree District Council, as the competent authority, should consider the manner in which the Bradwell with Pattiswick Neighbourhood Plan Review and Update 2025 is to be implemented and any mitigation measures which could be relied upon when deciding whether it would have an Adverse Effect on Integrity, including when and how they can be embedded into the Neighbourhood Plan Review and Update 2025.

5.2.4 Re-applying the Integrity Test

After considering mitigation, the integrity test should be re-applied to check if the proposed mitigation is now sufficient to avoid adverse effects on integrity of the Habitats sites within scope for the impact pathways identified. Where there may still be adverse effects on the ecological integrity of Habitats sites, in view of the Sites' conservation objectives, additional mitigation measures should be considered.

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5.3 Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment for Bradwell with Pattiswick Neighbourhood Plan Review and Update 2025

5.3.1 Consideration of the Plan Alone

There is no impact pathway to consider from the Bradwell with Pattiswick Neighbourhood Plan Review and Update 2025 alone.

5.3.2 Consideration of the Plan in combination with other Plans & Projects

There is a single impact pathway to consider from the Plan in combination with other plans and projects; recreational disturbance.

Although the Plan does not allocate sites for development, it does support development in Policy 7: Housing. Paragraph 4.39 refers to compliance with Braintree Local Plan policies but this is not sufficient to provide certainty that appropriate mitigation measures will be delivered.

The birds associated with the Essex coast Habitats sites, in particular the Blackwater Estuary, are sensitive to disturbance from recreation, in particular off-lead dog walking, and the unique attraction of the Estuary presents a strong draw for undertaking such activities. Mitigation of such effects usually requires more than one type of approach; this is typically a combination of ‘on-site’ informal open space provision and promotion (i.e. in and around the development site) and ‘off-site’ visitor access management measures (i.e. at the Habitats site). However, measures primarily to mitigate the effects on a Habitats site cannot be considered at HRA screening stage. Further assessment is therefore triggered for predicted recreational disturbance impacts from the Plan in combination with other plans and projects.

Considering the potential impacts from the Bradwell with Pattiswick Neighbourhood Plan Review and Update 2025, in combination with other plans and project, this impact pathway is considered below with mitigation recommended.

5.3.2.1 Recreational disturbance from residential development:

At HRA screening stage, the following Habitats sites were listed as having the potential for Likely Significant Effects as a result of recreational disturbance from residential development, when the Plan is considered in combination with other plans and projects:

Colne Estuary SPA and Ramsar site, Blackwater Estuary SPA and Ramsar site, Dengie SPA and Ramsar site, Hamford Water SPA, SAC & Ramsar site and Stour & Orwell Estuaries SPA and Ramsar site and Essex Estuaries SAC.

At screening stage, the following Policy was screened in as having the potential for creating Likely Significant Effects as a result of recreational disturbance:

- Policy 7: Housing

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Although the Plan does not allocate land, this HRA considers it necessary, given that the Plan area lies within the Impact Risk Zone of the Colne Estuary SPA and Ramsar site, Blackwater Estuary SPA and Ramsar site, Dengie SPA and Ramsar site, Hamford Water SPA, SAC & Ramsar site and Stour & Orwell Estuaries SPA and Ramsar site and Essex Estuaries SAC, that the policy text should include reference to Braintree Local Plan Policy LPP 64 (Protected Sites). It should also specify the need for any new residential development to avoid adverse effects from the development alone and consider whether mitigation measures can avoid adverse effects on integrity.

The competent authority, in this case Braintree DC, therefore needs to apply the Integrity test to the Plan in combination with other plans and projects and it can now consider mitigation measures for recreational disturbance to assess if the Bradwell with Pattiswick Neighbourhood Plan Review and Update 2025 can avoid AEOI on the Habitats sites screened in at Stage 1 HRA. These are the Colne Estuary SPA and Ramsar site, Blackwater Estuary SPA and Ramsar site, Dengie SPA and Ramsar site, Hamford Water SPA, SAC & Ramsar site and Stour & Orwell Estuaries SPA and Ramsar site and Essex Estuaries SAC.

Wetland birds are vulnerable to disturbance, albeit some birds can become habituated to some kinds of disturbance, usually where the source of disturbance occurs in a predictable way. However, it will vary according to the species concerned.

5.3.3 Mitigation measures

The plan area lies within the 22km Zone of Influence for recreational disturbance impacts on Habitats sites in combination with other plans and projects. Policy 7 needs to embed the requirements of the Braintree Local Plan Policy LPP 64 (Protected Sites) into the Regulation 14 Neighbourhood Plan to avoid any adverse effect on integrity of Essex coastal Habitats sites listed above, in combination with other plans and projects. . This is supported by the adopted Essex Coast Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS). Monitoring of recreational disturbance of impacts is not currently required but may be requested in the future.

As a precautionary approach is required in order to conclude that the Regulation 14 Bradwell with Pattiswick Neighbourhood Plan Review and Update 2025 will not lead to AEOI in combination with other plans and projects, mitigation measures are necessary and these need to be embedded in the Regulation 14 Bradwell with Pattiswick Neighbourhood Plan to avoid impacts from the single impact pathway of recreational disturbance at the Colne Estuary SPA and Ramsar site, Blackwater Estuary SPA and Ramsar site, Dengie SPA and Ramsar site, Hamford Water SPA, SAC & Ramsar site and Stour & Orwell Estuaries SPA and Ramsar site and Essex Estuaries SAC.

The recommendations are for amended policy text to be added at paragraph 4.39 for compliance with Braintree Local Plan Policy LPP64 (Protected Sites) to be re-screened at stage 2 HRA Appropriate Assessment.

A new bullet point added to Policy 7 part a) is therefore also considered appropriate:

- viii. Will avoid adverse effect on the integrity of existing Habitats sites (either alone

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or in-combination).

As the Neighbourhood Plan Policy 7 supports proposals for residential development, these are considered to require mitigation to avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of the Habitats sites within scope through increased recreational pressure, when considered in combination with other plans and projects.

As shown in the below table, there are five relevant Plans for which HRAs have been carried out by Local Planning Authorities and, with mitigation embedded, these Plans have been found to avoid any adverse effect on the integrity of Habitats sites when being assessed in-combination with other plans and projects.

There is only one Project considered to be relevant to this Plan which is the King Charles III England Coast Path (Tilbury to Southend-on-Sea section, Southend-on-Sea to Wallasea Island section, Burnham-on-Crouch and Maldon to Salcott section).

Table 7: Other plans or projects considered for in-combination effects

Statutory Body	Title of HRA or Project	Findings of HRA or Project	Potential for in combination effects
Braintree District Council	HRA Report for North Essex Authorities Shared Strategic Section 1 Local Plan – Update Following Proposed Main Modifications (LUC, 2020)	Local Plan – Section 2, and can be successfully implemented, there are no adverse effects on Habitats sites.	It is considered that, with mitigation measures secured, in combination adverse effects on integrity of the Habitats sites within scope are not predicted.
Tendring District Council	HRA Report for North Essex Authorities' Shared Strategic Section 1 Plans (LUC, May 2019)	In conclusion, providing that key recommendations and mitigation requirements are adopted and implemented the Shared Strategic Part 1 for Local Plans will not result in adverse effects on the integrity of European sites either alone or in-combination	It is considered that, with mitigation measures secured, in combination adverse effects on integrity of the Habitats sites within scope are not predicted.

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Statutory Body	Title of HRA or Project	Findings of HRA or Project	Potential for in combination effects
Tendring District Council	HRA of Tendring District Draft Local Plan Part 2 (LUC, May 2017)	In conclusion, providing that key recommendations and mitigation requirements are fully developed and included within the Tendring District Draft Local Plan Part 2, and can be successfully implemented, there will be no adverse effects on the European sites either alone or in combination	It is considered that, with mitigation measures secured, in combination adverse effects on integrity of the Habitats sites within scope are not predicted.
Colchester Borough (now City) Council	Habitats Regulations Assessment Colchester Borough Publication Draft Local Plan – Section 2 (LUC, 2021)	In conclusion, providing that key recommendations and mitigation requirements are fully developed and included within Chapter 5 of the Habitats Regulations Assessment Colchester Borough Publication Draft	It is considered that, with mitigation measures secured, in combination adverse effects on integrity of the Habitats sites within scope are not predicted.
Uttlesford District Council	Uttlesford Local Plan Habitats Regulations Assessment (AECOM, June 2024)	In conclusion, providing that key recommendations and mitigation requirements are fully developed and included within the Uttlesford Local Plan, and can be successfully implemented, there are no adverse effects on Habitats sites.	It is considered that, with mitigation measures secured, in combination adverse effects on integrity of the Habitats sites within scope are not predicted.
Maldon District Council	Maldon District Pre-Submission Local Development Plan	In conclusion, providing that key recommendations and	It is considered that, with mitigation

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Statutory Body	Title of HRA or Project	Findings of HRA or Project	Potential for in combination effects
	2014-2029 (Maldon District Council, 2014)	mitigation requirements are fully developed and included within the Maldon District Local Development Plan, and can be successfully implemented, there are no adverse effects on Habitats sites.	measures secured, in combination adverse effects on integrity of the Habitats sites within scope are not predicted.
Natural England	King Charles III England Coast Path Proposals – Four sections are now open and each has an Assessment of Sensitive Features Appraisal (Habitats Regulations Assessment of effects on Habitats sites (Natural England 2017)	No possible adverse effects from the access proposal (taking into account any proposed mitigation measures) have been identified for Blackwater Estuary SPA and Ramsar site and Essex Estuaries SAC.	Public access is already established and no significant increase in recreational use is expected as a result of the Neighbourhood Plan.

The Bradwell with Pattiswick Neighbourhood Plan Review and Update 2025 does not allocate any land for development but does support residential development under Policy 7. This triggers the need for mitigation measures to avoid adverse effects on integrity of the Blackwater Estuary SPA and Ramsar site, Colne Estuary SPA and Ramsar site and Essex Estuaries SAC. With mitigation embedded into the Bradwell with Pattiswick Neighbourhood Plan Review and Update 2025, the predicted in-combination impacts from recreational disturbance and consideration of any plans or projects, will avoid adverse effect on the integrity of the Habitats sites. Delivery of mitigation for residential development will be secured by the LPA requiring a proportionate financial contribution to the Essex Coast RAMS at application stage.

In addition, no adverse effects on the integrity of the Blackwater Estuary SPA and Ramsar site, Colne Estuary SPA and Ramsar site and Essex Estuaries SAC are expected from the proposals included in the King Charles III England Coast Path (see above for sections which are now open), as the footpath is already in public usage and new signposts will add to public awareness of the impacts from increased recreational pressures.

In this case the potential for adverse effects from the plan or project has been wholly avoided by the incorporated mitigation measures outlined above. It is therefore considered that there

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are no residual and credible effects likely to arise from this plan which have the potential to act in-combination with those from other proposed plans or projects. It has therefore been excluded, on the basis of objective information, that the Plan can have an adverse effect on site integrity in-combination with the proposed plans or projects listed in Table 7.

In light of this review, there are no identified insignificant and combinable effects that are likely to arise from other plans or projects. In light of the above conclusions, no further in-combination assessment is required.

5.4 Recommendations

The Habitats sites that have been scoped into this HRA report are: The Colne Estuary SPA and Ramsar site, Blackwater Estuary SPA and Ramsar site, Dengie SPA and Ramsar site, Hamford Water SPA, SAC & Ramsar site and Stour & Orwell Estuaries SPA and Ramsar site and Essex Estuaries SAC.

No potential impact pathways between the above Habitats sites and the Bradwell with Pattiswick Neighbourhood Plan Review and Update 2025 have been identified, considered and assessed for predicted recreational disturbance from the Plan alone.

All residential development within the Plan area is predicted to result in additional recreational impacts from the Plan in combination with other plans and projects, from increased visitor pressure on the Blackwater Estuary SPA and Ramsar site. In 2016, Natural England proposed a strategic approach to LPAs and recommended identifying the scale of the disturbance and implementing measures to mitigate impacts through the preparation of a joint Suffolk Coast Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS). Annex 1 of the Natural England advice to Braintree District Council incudes advice on green infrastructure requirements for large residential developments to avoid impacts from the Plan alone. Any large residential development coming forward, will therefore need to meet this advice.

This HRA Appropriate Assessment has recommended amendments to the Bradwell with Pattiswick Neighbourhood Plan Review and Update 2025. These include the following changes:

Policy 7 requires that:

> ‘all development will not have an adverse impact on the integrity of the Essex coast Habitats sites from the development either alone or in combination with other plans and projects.’

The recommendations from the Appropriate Assessment are precautionary, to ensure that the Bradwell with Pattiswick Neighbourhood Plan Review and Update 2025 identifies clear mitigation needs and protects the Habitats sites from any project level impacts.

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6. Conclusions

6.1 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared for town and country planning purposes and sets a framework for future development consent. The policies of the Neighbourhood Plan can be considered to determine the use of small areas at local level commensurate with their status in determining local planning applications.

Planning Practice Guidance on SEA of Neighbourhood Plans indicates that a strategic environmental assessment may be required, for example, where a Neighbourhood Plan allocates sites for development; the neighbourhood area contains sensitive natural or heritage assets that may be affected by the proposals in the plan; or 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.

The Plan does not allocate any land for development purposes and seeks to strengthen the protection and enhancement of assets at the local level and in a local context. The HRA element of this Report however includes that Likely Significant Effects on the integrity of Habitats sites cannot be ruled out due to the Plan's support for housing development where appropriate. The HRA therefore applies an Appropriate Assessment (stage 2 of the HRA process) which makes recommendations to Policy 7 of the Plan, regarding housing, to ensure that any such effects can be ruled out at the plan-level.

Should these mitigation measures be embedded into Policy 7, and in regard to all other environment considerations explored within this Report, the Bradwell with Pattiswick Neighbourhood Plan can be **screened out** for its requirement of Strategic Environmental Assessment in line with the requirements of Directive 2001/42/EC.

6.2 Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)

This Habitat Regulations Assessment, including Appropriate Assessment, considers the impacts arising from the Bradwell with Pattiswick Neighbourhood Plan Review and Update 2025.

The HRA Screening stage identified that, without mitigation, further consideration was required at the Appropriate Assessment stage to determine whether the Bradwell with Pattiswick Neighbourhood Plan Review and Update 2025 either alone or in-combination with other plans and projects, would adversely affect the integrity of Habitats sites as a result of the recreational disturbance potential impact pathway, i.e. this HRA recommended that Policy 7 Housing should be re-assessed further as it was assigned to Category C due to predicted recreational impacts from the Plan alone.

In applying the HRA Test 2 (the integrity test at the Appropriate Assessment stage), based on the proximity to Habitats sites, and in order to be in accordance with the Essex Coast Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS), mitigation needs to be

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embedded in the Plan in relation to recreational disturbance to avoid impacts from the Neighbourhood Plan in combination with other plans and projects. Therefore, this HRA has recommended that the policy and supporting text is altered for Policy 7 Housing.

Embedded mitigation measures for projects (planning applications) will need to be considered in project level HRA/AA reports assessed by Braintree District Council and secured by way of a legal agreement attached to any planning consent. Therefore, there will be no need for further assessment for this Neighbourhood Plan.

Subject to the above recommendations being incorporated, and Natural England's review, this HRA Screening Report including Appropriate Assessment concludes that the Bradwell with Pattiswick Neighbourhood Plan Review and Update 2025 is not predicted, with the mitigation secured, to result in any Adverse Effect on the Integrity of the Habitats sites in scope, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects.

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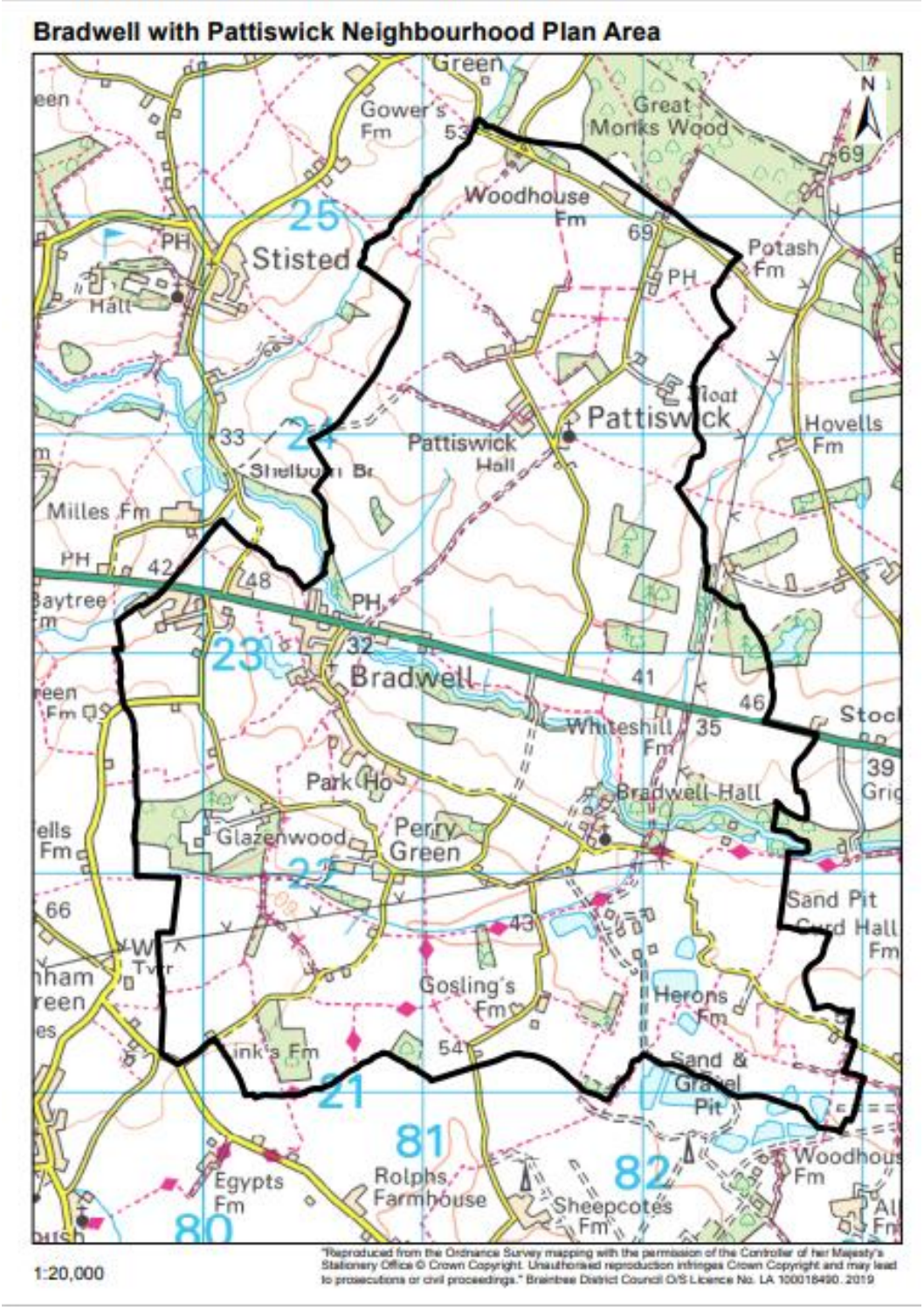
7. References

- Braintree District Council Local Plan 2013-2033 (2022)
- Bradwell with Pattiswick Neighbourhood Plan - Adopted July 2019
- Bradwell with Pattiswick Neighbourhood Plan Review and Update 2025
- Land Use Consultants (August 2019) HRA report for Braintree District
- Local Plan Section 2
- Land Use Consultants (May 2017) HRA Report for North Essex Authorities Shared Strategic Part 1 for Local Plans Pre-submission (Regulation 19)
- Natural England Conservation objectives for European Sites: East of England Website: **http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/category/6581547796791296#content**
- Natural England (2017) England Coast Path Proposals –Assessment of Sensitive Features Appraisal Maldon to Salcott (Blackwater Estuary) **maldon-salcott-sensitive-features-report.PDF**
- Place Services (2018) Essex Coast Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS) Available at: **Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) – Braintree District Council**
- Place Services (2020) Essex Coast Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS) **Supplementary Planning Document** (SPD).

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Appendix 1

The Bradwell with Pattiswick Neighbourhood Plan area

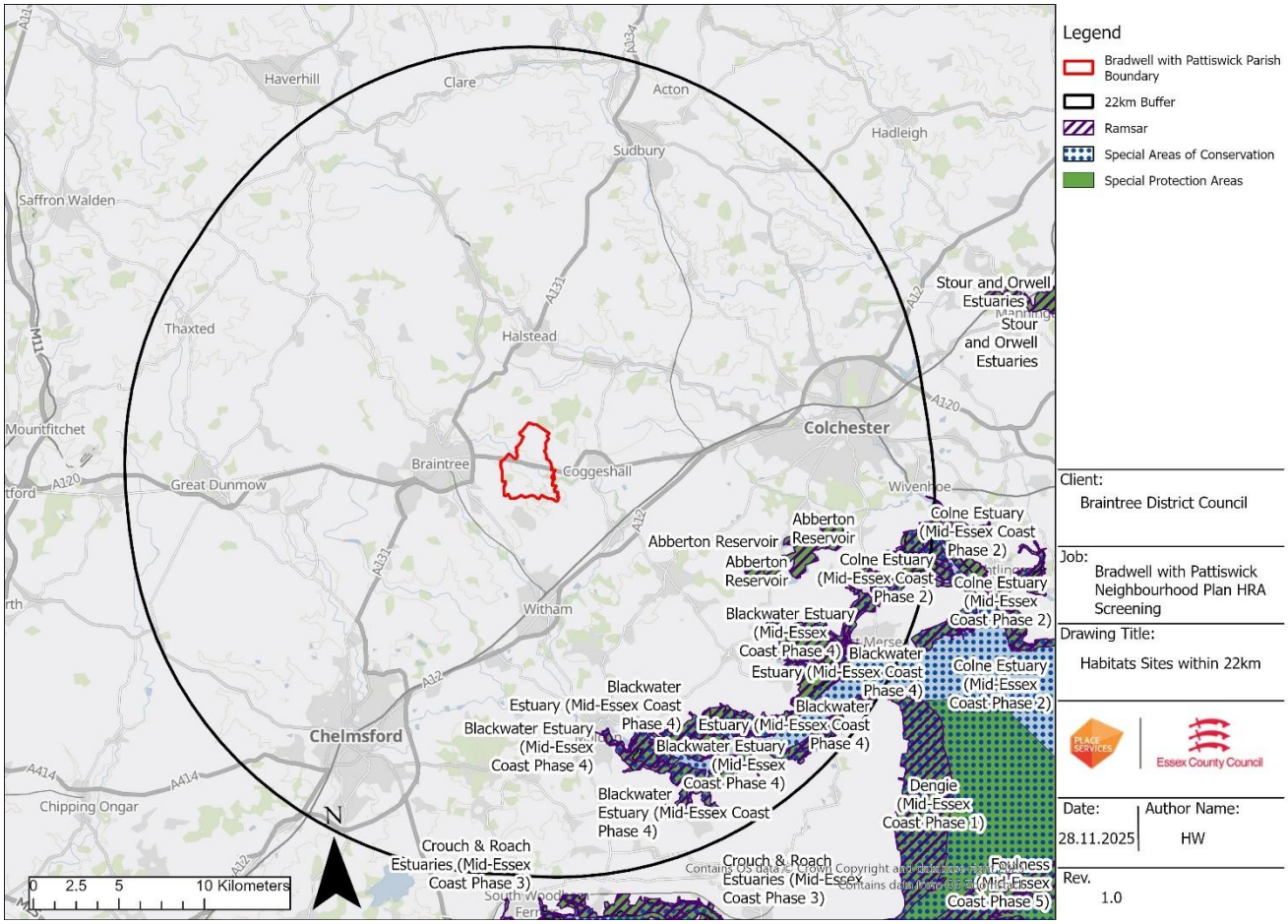


Source: Bradwell with Pattiswick Neighbourhood Plan Review and Update 2025

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Appendix 2

Bradwell with Pattiswick Neighbourhood Plan area & Locations of Habitats sites within 22 km



Source: Place Services (2025)

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