



**West
Northamptonshire
Council**

Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area (SPA) Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

Addendum to the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA SPD: Mitigation Strategy



October 2021

www.westnorthants.gov.uk

Please note that no change is being made to the already adopted SPA SPD, this addendum will be added onto the end of the document as a new section 6.

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Consultees

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Developer Funding, Development Management, Assets, Ecology, Finance, Legal, Joint Planning Unit	Natural England, Wildlife Trust

Distribution List

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Links to other documents

Document	Link
Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA Supplementary Planning Document	https://www.northampton.gov.uk/info/200205/planning-for-the-future/2105/upper-nene-valley-gravel-pits-spa-spd
West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy	https://westnorthantsjpu.inconsult.uk/website/view?objectId=2737424
Submitted Northampton Local Plan Part 2	https://www.northampton.gov.uk/info/200205/planning-for-the-future/2553/northampton-local-plan-part-2-submission
Northamptonshire Biodiversity Supplementary Planning Document	https://www.northampton.gov.uk/info/200205/planning-for-the-future/2328/biodiversity-supplementary-planning-document-for-northamptonshire
South Northamptonshire Local Plan Part 2	https://www.southnorthants.gov.uk/info/65/local-plan-part-2-and-evidence/40/local-plan-part-2

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This addendum (to the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area SPD) applies to the council area of West Northamptonshire. This authority has the potential for residential sites to be located within the 3km buffer zone of Unit 1 of the SPA, which is detailed further below.

Purpose

1. The West Northamptonshire Mitigation Strategy has been prepared to enable mitigation of Unit 1 of the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area (SPA) and Ramsar site. The Mitigation Strategy uses the same methodology as, and is based on, the adopted North Northamptonshire Mitigation Strategy which seeks to mitigate development on Units 2 – 8 of the SPA.
2. It is the intention to adopt the West Northamptonshire Mitigation Strategy for Unit 1 of the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA to complement the existing North Northamptonshire Mitigation Strategy for Units 2 – 8 of the SPA.
3. In partnership with North Northamptonshire, West Northamptonshire Council is currently progressing an Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA Mitigation Strategy that will consider the SPA in its entirety. New visitor and bird disturbance studies are being undertaken and, when results are available and relevant to Unit 1, the West Northamptonshire Mitigation Strategy will be updated ahead of the adoption of a SPA wide Mitigation Strategy.
4. Once all up to date studies and surveys have taken place across the SPA, a new Northamptonshire Mitigation Strategy will be adopted and will supersede both the North and West Northamptonshire Mitigation Strategies.
5. Local Planning Authorities have a duty as competent authorities under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) (known as the Habitats Regulations) to ensure that planning application decisions comply with the Habitats Regulations.
6. Special Protection Areas are protected in UK law by the Habitats Regulations and development proposals must not give rise to adverse effects on the integrity of the SPA, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects, and if they are likely to, measures must be secured to avoid or mitigate this impact, otherwise the competent authority is obliged to refuse permission in the absence of satisfying exacting derogation tests.
7. The Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA was designated in April 2011 under the regulations due to its number and type of bird species present. West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy 2011 – 2029 (Local Plan Part 1) Policy BN4 sets out that new development will need to demonstrate through the development management process that there will be no significant adverse effects upon the integrity of the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA and Ramsar Site. If Habitats Regulations are not met and impacts not mitigated, then development must not be permitted. A map of the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA can be found at Appendix 1. The Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA is split into 9 Units with Unit 1 (Clifford Hills Gravel Pits) situated

within the boundary of West Northamptonshire. Units 2 – 9 are situated in North Northamptonshire. A map of all units can be viewed via Defra’s Magic Maps¹.

8. As of the 1 April 2021 Daventry District, Northampton Borough and South Northamptonshire Councils constitute the larger unitary authority of West Northamptonshire Council. Daventry District Council adopted their LPP2 in February 2020² and South Northamptonshire’s LPP2 was adopted in July 2020³. The Northampton LPP2 has been submitted to and is going through the process of examination by the Secretary of State.
9. The Northampton LPP2 has been informed by a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) which states (at paragraph 5.79) that *In line with the findings of the visitor access study above and the 3km consultation zone defined by the SPD for all applications involving a net gain in residential units, it is judged that all residential development within 3km of Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA and Ramsar site would be likely to contribute to an in-combination recreational disturbance effect on the European site.* The South Northamptonshire LPP2 was also informed by a HRA which concluded that *significant effects of the Local Plan Part 2 on the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA and Ramsar site are likely.* 6.1.4 – therefore, whilst there are no specific housing allocations within the 3km buffer of the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA and Ramsar site, housing development could be granted here as an exception under policies referred to in Chapter 4 “Delivering Housing” of the Plan. Policy NE1 of the adopted South Northamptonshire LPP2 states that *the Local Planning Authority or successor authority will prepare a Mitigation Strategy document concerning the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area with a view to its subsequent adoption as an Addendum to the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area Supplementary Planning Document within 12 months of the adoption of the Part 2 Plan.* Appendix 2 shows the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA and the 3km recreation pressure catchment, with the proposed allocated sites contained within the Northampton LPP2.
10. The ‘in-combination’ effect of proposals involving a net increase of one or more dwellings within a 3km radius of the SPA are concluded likely to have an adverse effect on the SPA’s integrity unless avoidance and mitigation measures are in place. This is through an increase in visitors that will in turn increase the level of disturbance to the wintering waterbirds, particularly through dog walking.
11. For residential developments which result in a net increase in the number of dwellings within 3km of Unit 1 of the SPA it is proposed to avoid and mitigate

1

<https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/SiteUnitList.aspx?SiteCode=s2000494&SiteName=&countyCode=&responsiblePerson=&unitId=&SeaArea=&IFCAArea=>

² <https://www.daventrydc.gov.uk/living/planning-policy/part-2-local-plan/>

³ <https://www.southnorthants.gov.uk/info/65/local-plan-part-2-and-evidence/40/local-plan-part-2>

likely adverse effects on the SPA by making a financial contribution towards Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM) and/or other suitable mitigation. This will avoid or mitigate any adverse effect of people visiting the SPA through specific measures and monitoring.

12. This SPD sets out the SAMM mitigation costs for residential developments that fall within the 3km catchment. The mitigation funded by the contribution will ensure that there is no adverse effect on the integrity of the SPA. Alternatively applicants can undertake their own project level Appropriate Assessment and fulfil the mitigation that is required through that assessment. Developments of 10 dwellings or more may be required to pay the SAMM and / or provide other suitable mitigation. Further mitigation will be in exceptional circumstances and where Natural England advise.
13. All applications that involve a net gain in residential development of 1 or more dwellings will be required to pay a mitigation contribution⁴. Due to its size the proposed allocation (LAA1098) The Green, Great Houghton will provide its own Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) and is therefore not considered to fall in the remit of this mitigation strategy, however if suitable space is not provided within that development, then a SAMM contribution will be required. Other large scale developments, that have the scope to deliver bespoke mitigation, will require a project level HRA and the mitigation identified in that assessment will need to be delivered. Proposed schemes of 10+ dwellings are required to liaise with Natural England at the outset to discuss SPA mitigation.

Background

14. Local Planning Authorities have a duty as competent authorities under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) (known as the Habitats Regulations) to ensure that planning application decisions comply with the Habitats Regulations.
15. An assessment of need was undertaken to understand the impacts of recreational pressure across the SPA. Details of recreational use in Unit 1 of the SPA can be found in Appendix 6. This primarily used data collected by Footprint Ecology in their *Visitor Access Study of the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA* (2014)⁵. This demonstrates that the number of dog walkers visiting the area is high and that further development will increase pressure at Unit 1.
16. The required mitigation includes access management such as interpretation panels and some fencing as well as directing walkers to less sensitive areas,

⁴ The fee applies to Full, Outline, Section 73, Reserved Matters, Permitted Development and Certificate of Lawfulness applications

⁵ Footprint Ecology: Visitor Access Study of the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA - <https://www.footprint-ecology.co.uk/work/reports-and-publications>

alongside wardening and monitoring to minimise or address the adverse effects of people visiting the SPA.

17. Tables 1 and 2 in Appendix 6⁶ list the measures identified which are sufficient to address any additional adverse effect of developments likely to occur within the 3km catchment. They have been recommended as suitable measures through the Footprint Ecology Visitor Access Study and have been assessed by a steering group consisting of Natural England, the Environment Agency, local landowners and Parish Council members.

Question 1:

Do you agree with the identified mitigation measures within the draft SPD? If not, please provide details of other mitigation measures that you consider would be appropriate to include.

Question 2:

Do you know of any existing, publicly accessible open spaces that could be considered as alternative recreational areas to the SPA?

18. Strategic Access Management and Monitoring contributions have been calculated by distributing the costs of measures evenly across the anticipated residential development within 3km of the SPA within the Proposed Submission Northampton LPP2 plan period. However, it should be noted that windfall sites that fall within 3km of Unit 1 of the SPA (including in both Northampton and South Northamptonshire areas) will be required to pay the SMM contribution and / or provide their own mitigation measures depending on the size of the development. The cost of the SMM contributions have been assumed in the Viability Study that was produced to help inform the Northampton LPP2 and they are considered to be viable.

⁶ Appendix 6 is the West Northamptonshire Mitigation Strategy Needs Assessment and is a separate document

Question 3:

Is the impact of development on the SPA the same across the 3km buffer, and if not, should there be any difference in the level of mitigation required? If you are suggesting there is a difference in impact closer / further away from the SPA, please provide evidence in the form of surveys and / or studies to demonstrate the buffer should be altered.

Regulations

19. The SAMM contributions are a specific SPA mitigation measure. They are sought for the management of access to the SPA and can be secured through Section 111 or 106 obligations. This approach is consistent with the views of other local authorities across the country in dealing with mitigation requirements for other SPAs and has been accepted by inspectors at appeal.
20. Payment of the SAMM contribution is required to mitigate against effects on a European site. By following the process set out in this SPD, mitigation is quickly and efficiently secured as an alternative to applicants having to undertake a project level HRA for any residential development applications.
21. Appendix 3 demonstrates compliance with the three legal tests of Regulation 122 of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010, Community Infrastructure Levy (Amendment) (England) (No. 2) Regulations 2019 and Paragraph 56 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2019.
22. Where developments result in the need for specific new infrastructure in addition to the SAMM contribution to mitigate impacts on the SPA, contributions will be negotiated on a case by case basis in dialogue with Natural England and the Local Authority, and will need to meet the relevant regulations. This would include items such as SANGs.
23. The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 provides the legal framework of how an authority can consider whether any adverse effects on the integrity of a European site could be overcome by planning obligations under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (planning obligations).

Implications and Contribution to Access Management

24. The SAMM contributions figure detailed below was arrived at through the needs assessment work that costed out the required works; interpretation panels and some fencing alongside the use of a warden to guide and educate dog walkers in the sensitive locations of Unit 1 of the SPA. Monitoring is an important part of access management to ensure that the schedule of works are completed in a timely manner, identify any significant changes in access which could require alterations to management works, and investigate how disturbance affects the birds to inform future management. These works are required over the lifetime of the Northampton and South Northamptonshire LPP2s to 2029.

Developer Contributions

25. Any new residential development within 3km of Unit 1 of the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA will have a recreational impact and therefore must be mitigated. The calculated SAMM contributions are for each new dwelling to contribute a set figure of **£428.58**. This will be index linked to the Consumer Prices Index (CPI) rounded to the nearest whole pound, with a base date of 2021. This will be reviewed annually on 6 April.
26. Making this contribution will remove the need for developments to mitigate against recreational pressure, undertake project level Appropriate Assessment and speed up the process of approval from Natural England. This would in turn, speed up the determination of these applications.
27. An example of specific wording to secure this contribution through a planning obligation (Section 106) can be found in Appendix 4. If following this mechanism of payment then a legal fee will also be required. Alternatively a payment through Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 can be made with no further legal cost. For template, see Appendix 5. Templates and guidance notes will be made available on the Council's website.
28. If appropriate, phasing of payments for larger schemes can be written into legal agreements with the agreement of Natural England, but some upfront payments would normally be required.
29. Some housing schemes, when accounting for their scale or relationship to the SPA may need to provide bespoke mitigation measures in addition to making the financial contribution in order to ensure effective avoidance / mitigation of impacts on the SPA. Where a development will create 10 or more net additional dwellings it is advised that early dialogue with Natural England take place. Natural England will then advise the Local Planning Authority if mitigation may be dealt with through a fixed SAMM contribution of **£428.58** per dwelling (index linked with a base date of 2021) and / or bespoke mitigation. Further mitigation will be in exceptional circumstances and where

Natural England advise. If a bespoke process is required then a project level Appropriate Assessment will be required.

Question 4:

Do you consider the SAMM contribution to be adequate? If not, please state why.

Permitted Development Rights

30. In recent years, changes have been made to the General Permitted Development Order (GPDO) which allow, in certain circumstances, new dwellings to be developed without the need to apply for planning permission, having defined them under the GPDO as 'permitted development'. However, in such circumstances the proposed development must still comply with the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) (Habitat Regulations).
31. The Habitat Regulations require that any development granted planning permission by a GPDO, which is likely to have a significant effect on a European site (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects), must not be begun until the developer has received written notification of approval of the local planning authority that the proposals will not have an adverse impact on the integrity of a European site. Within the plan area this will require the provision of appropriate mitigation measures to address adverse impacts of the development on the European sites.
32. Accordingly, compliance with the Habitat Regulations can be secured as part of the 'prior notification' process in a similar way to residential development that requires planning permission accompanied with developer contributions.

Question 5:

Do you have any comments on any other aspect of the SPD not covered by questions 1-3?

Examples of different levels of SAMM contribution

Development of 1 unit within the 3km buffer – $1 \times £428.58 =$ contribution of £428.58.

Development of 11 units within the 3km buffer – $11 \times £428.58 =$ contribution of £4,714.41

Development of 50 units within the 3km buffer - $50 \times £428.58 =$ contribution of £21,429.12

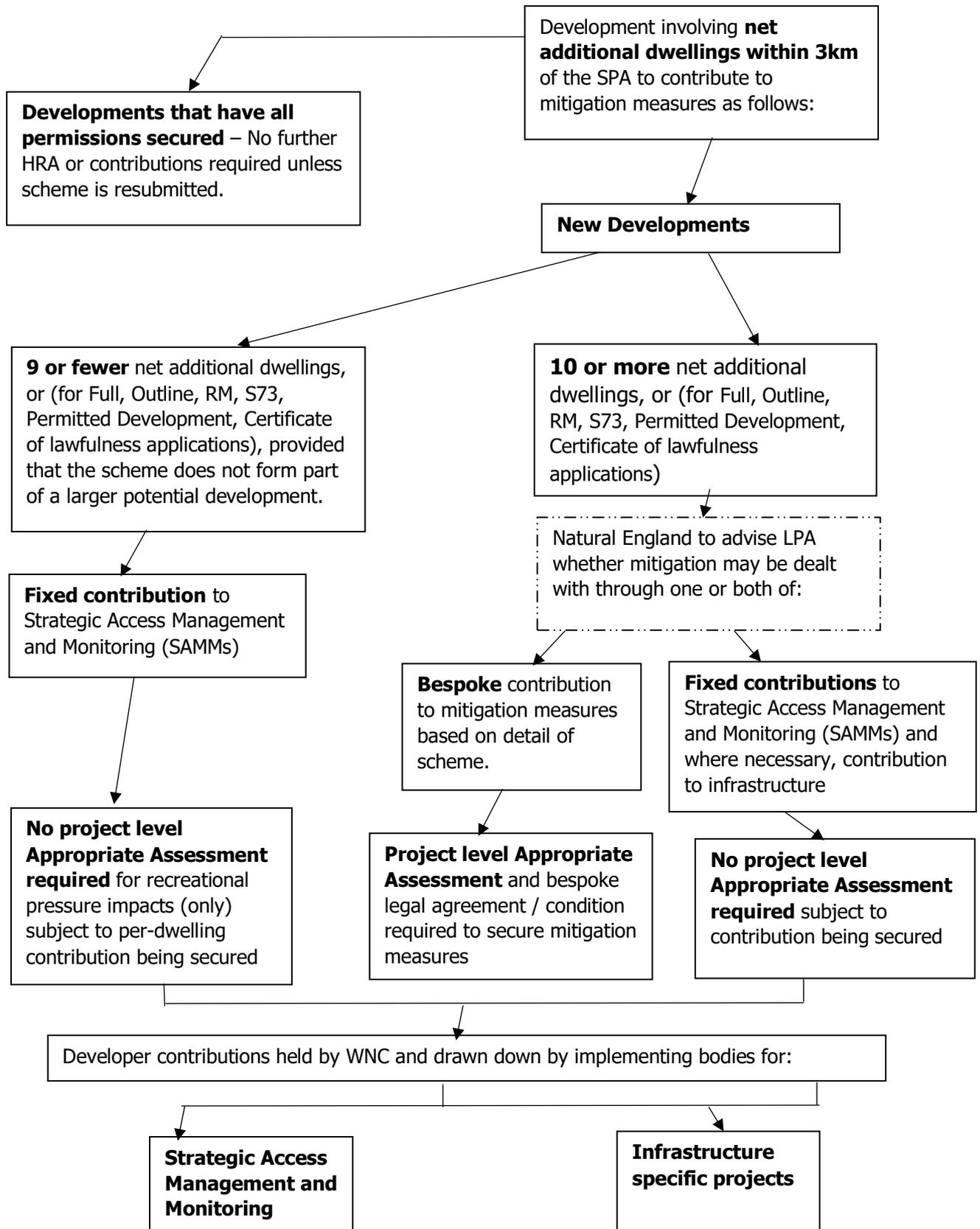
Development of 400 units within the 3km buffer – $400 \times £428.58 =$ contribution of £171,432.99

Examples of bespoke mitigation

Other large scale developments, that have the scope to deliver bespoke mitigation, will require a project level HRA and the mitigation identified in that assessment will need to be delivered. Proposed schemes of 10+ dwellings are required to liaise with Natural England at the outset to discuss SPA mitigation. Bespoke mitigation may include provision of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG).

Process

The following flow chart sets out how the process will work.



Payment mechanisms

33. If using a Section 106 planning obligation, on commencement of development the contributions to SAMP will be required as per the legal agreement. It is important that the contribution towards SAMP is made on commencement to ensure the mitigation is in place ahead of any significant effect on the SPA.
34. If using the Section 111 mechanism a form should be completed with payment at the application stage. A template for the form can be found at Appendix 5.
35. To comply with Habitats Regulations, mitigation must be in place before occupation of the development. The planning obligation associated with the development will contain the following occupation restriction. This is non negotiable.

Not to occupy the development or any part thereof until the Council has issued written confirmation that the payment for the Strategic Access Management and Monitoring contribution has been received.

36. As referred to in paragraph 28 above phasing options can be considered for larger schemes on a case by case basis. Occupation restrictions could relate to specific phases of the development.

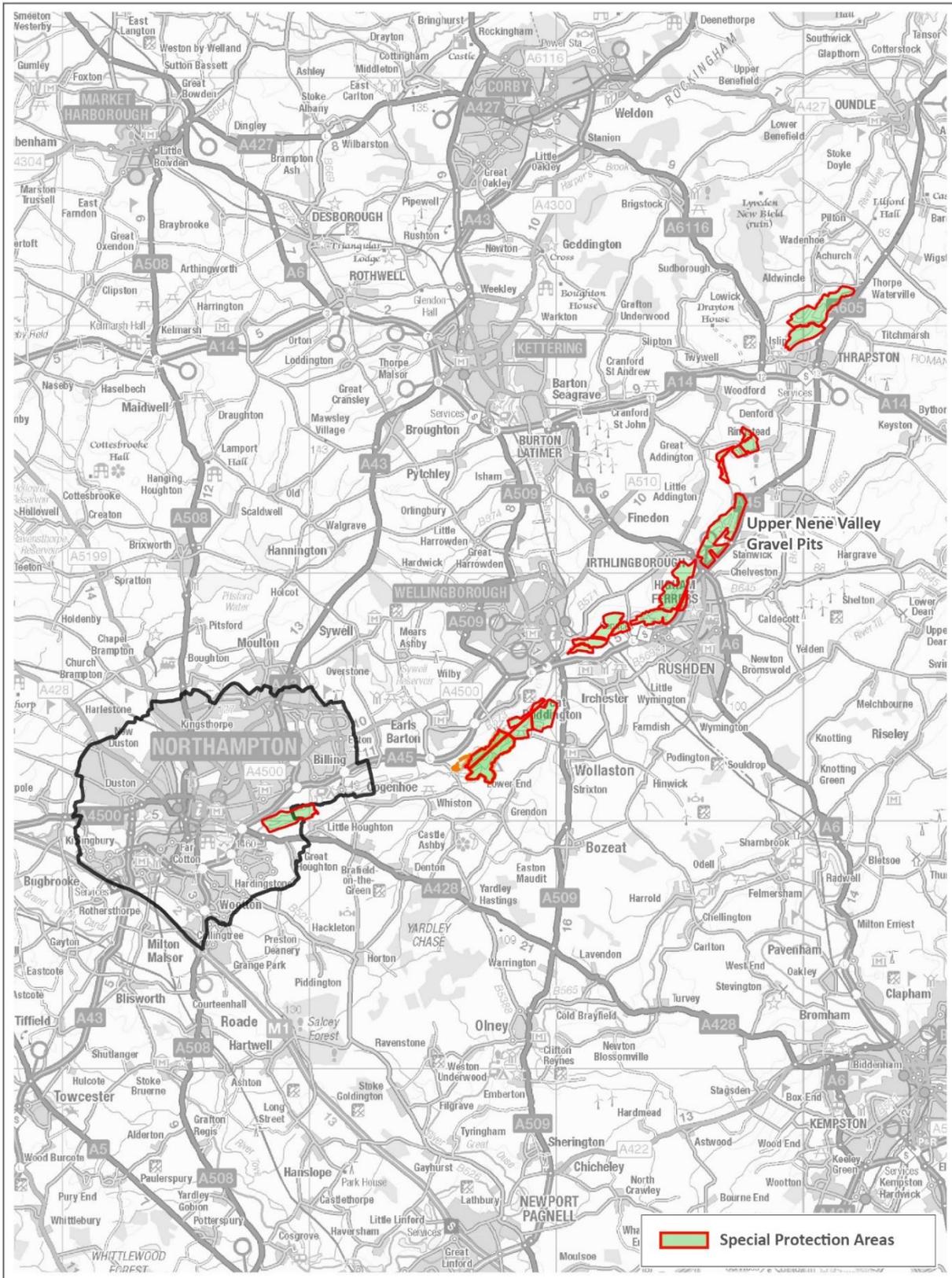
Governance

37. The Local Authority will hold the developer contributions and this will be paid to third party providers to undertake the physical work required or to undertake the wardening.

Conclusion

38. The above contributions are necessary to enable the proposed development to satisfy policy, guidance and the Habitats Regulations. Failure to mitigate the impacts on the SPA will result in an approval of the application being unlawful and contrary to Policy BN4 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy, Policy 30 of the Proposed Northampton LPP2 and Policy NE1 of the South Northamptonshire LPP2.
39. This approach to SPA mitigation has been fully endorsed by Natural England.

Appendix 1 – Map of Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area



Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area

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Appendix 3

Compliance with the three legal tests of Regulation 122 of the Community Infrastructure Levy Regulations 2010, Community Infrastructure Levy (Amendment) (England) (No. 2) Regulations 2019 and Paragraph 56 of the National Planning Policy Framework 2019.

Planning obligations should only be sought where they meet all of the following tests:

1. Necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms.

Local Planning Authorities have the duty as competent authorities under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (Habitat Regulations) to ensure that planning application decisions comply with the Habitats Regulations.

As identified within the Habitats Regulations Assessment produced to inform the production of the Council's Proposed Submission Local Plan Part 2 (LPP2), and detailed within policy 30 of the proposed LPP2, all new residential development within 3km of the SPA is likely to have an adverse effect on the SPA. The 'in-combination' impact of proposals involving a net increase of one or more dwellings within a 3km radius of the SPA are concluded to have an adverse effect on its integrity unless avoidance and mitigation measures are in place. This is through an increase in visitors that will in turn increase the level of disturbance to the wintering waterbirds.

2. Directly related to the development.

Evidence demonstrates that visitors come mainly from within a 3km zone around the SPA and visit different areas within the SPA. Therefore new development that falls within the 3km buffer can be seen to be directly increasing visitors to the SPA. The 'in-combination' impact of proposals involving a net increase of one or more dwellings within a 3km radius of the SPA are concluded to have an adverse effect on its integrity unless avoidance and mitigation measures are in place.

This SPD considers what is required to mitigate against increased visitors to the SPA and takes into account the in-combination effects, as required by the Habitat Regulations.

Mitigation measures have been identified to avoid the adverse impacts on the SPA and they amount to £216,462.50 over the lifetime of the LPP2. This cost is divided between proposed allocations within the LPP2 to reach a cost per dwelling to mitigate the 'in combination' effects of development on the SPA.

3. Fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM) costs have then been apportioned by distributing the costs evenly across the anticipated development within 3km of the SPA within the plan period. This has been calculated as a cost of

£428.58 for each new dwelling. This contribution is therefore a proportionate cost dependent on the scale of development proposed and it is therefore fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

Appendix 4 – Planning Obligation Wording

Wording for Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM) contributions to be included in any legal agreement.

To pay to the Council (West Northamptonshire Council) on or before commencement of development the following sums Indexed Linked:

1.1 The Strategic Access Management and Monitoring contribution in the sum of [] pounds and [] pence (£) for use by the Council for providing strategic access management and monitoring arrangements in relation to the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area to mitigate any adverse significant effect arising from the development. This is in accordance with Policy BN4 of the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy, Policy 30 of the Northampton Local Plan Part 2 , Policy NE1 of the South Northamptonshire LPP2 Policy and the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Special Protection Area Supplementary Planning Document.

Appendix 5 – Section 111 Template

The following template would need to be submitted at the planning application stage.

Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972
Habitats Mitigation Contribution ⁷

DRAFT

To the Planning Manager,
West Northamptonshire Council, The Guildhall, St Giles' Square, NN1 1DE

Application Reference Number:

Address of Planning Application:

The Council is the local planning authority for the area within which I proposed to develop land for residential purposes.

I have applied to the Council for planning permission for

[Insert description of the development] ("the Development")

at

[Insert address of the Land]

I have read the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA SPD: Mitigation Strategy and I am contributing a sum of £..... towards the cost of measures to mitigate the impact of the proposed residential development at the above address on the Nene Valley Special Protection Area (SPA)⁸ – known as the 'Strategic Access Management and Monitoring contribution'. The payment has been made to the Council for defined purposes to be held by the Council and used solely for those purposes upon the development being commenced.

I hereby acknowledge and agree that:

- a) The Strategic Access Management and Monitoring contribution has been paid to West Northamptonshire Council as a contribution towards mitigation of the effect of the proposed development on the Nene Valley SPA as set out in West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (2014) Policy BN4, policy 30 of the Northampton LPP2 and Policy NE1 of the South Northamptonshire LPP2;
- b) No refund of this habitats mitigation contribution will be made unless the application does not receive approval or is later withdrawn.

⁷ A signed copy of this form and a direct payment by cheque must accompany the relevant application as a contribution towards mitigation of the effect of proposed development on the Nene Valley SPA.

⁸ This amount must be the sum of **£428.58** for each dwelling to be developed.

- c) *In respect of any refund (including where an application is withdrawn) I further acknowledge that:*
- *A request for a refund will be made to the Local Planning Authority in writing;*
 - *The total amount refunded will be the sum of the original habitats mitigation contribution payment less an administration fee of £50;*
 - *No interest will accrue to be refunded; and,*
 - *No refund will be made until the period for appeal has passed or an appeal has been dismissed or six months has elapsed since the date of withdrawal.*

Signature of applicant/agent:

Date:

Full name of applicant/agent:

West Northamptonshire Council

Signed:

West Northamptonshire Council Planning Manager

This receipt signifies the agreement on behalf of West Northamptonshire Council to the terms in which the habitats mitigation contribution is made by the applicant as set out in this form and in accordance with Section 111 Local Government Act 1972.

Appendix 6 – West Northamptonshire Mitigation Strategy Needs Assessment

Mitigation Options for Unit 1

Issues	Mitigation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disturbance to birds within Unit 1 of the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits (Clifford Hill Gravel Pits) Special Protection Area (SPA) • Off-lead dogs within the SPA basin 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interpretation panels • Fencing • Provision of Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) for residents of The Green, Great Houghton • Wardening • Promote Brackmills Country Park as local off-lead area.

SPA Mitigation needs

1. The following Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM) mitigation measures have been determined between West Northamptonshire Council, Natural England and other local partners. Requirements include interpretation panels , fencing, wardening and monitoring, which is required throughout Unit 1 of the SPA to mitigate and evaluate visitor pressure and patterns over time.

Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG)

2. It is expected that the greatest impact on the SPA will result from development at The Green, Great Houghton (proposed allocation LAA1098). A SANG will be secured here to provide an area for residents to use and, in particular, provide dog walkers with a substantial “off-lead” area and a sufficient circular route.

Interpretation panels and Access Management

3. Interpretation panels will provide residents and visitors with information about the sensitivity of the SPA and of nearby alternative walking / dog walking routes. These will be placed at all entrance points to Unit 1. Information will include the requirement to keep dogs on leads, links to the Countryside Code and details of nearby off-lead dog walking areas.
4. Fencing will be placed at appropriate and agreed locations around the SPA to aid visitor management.

Greenspace improvements

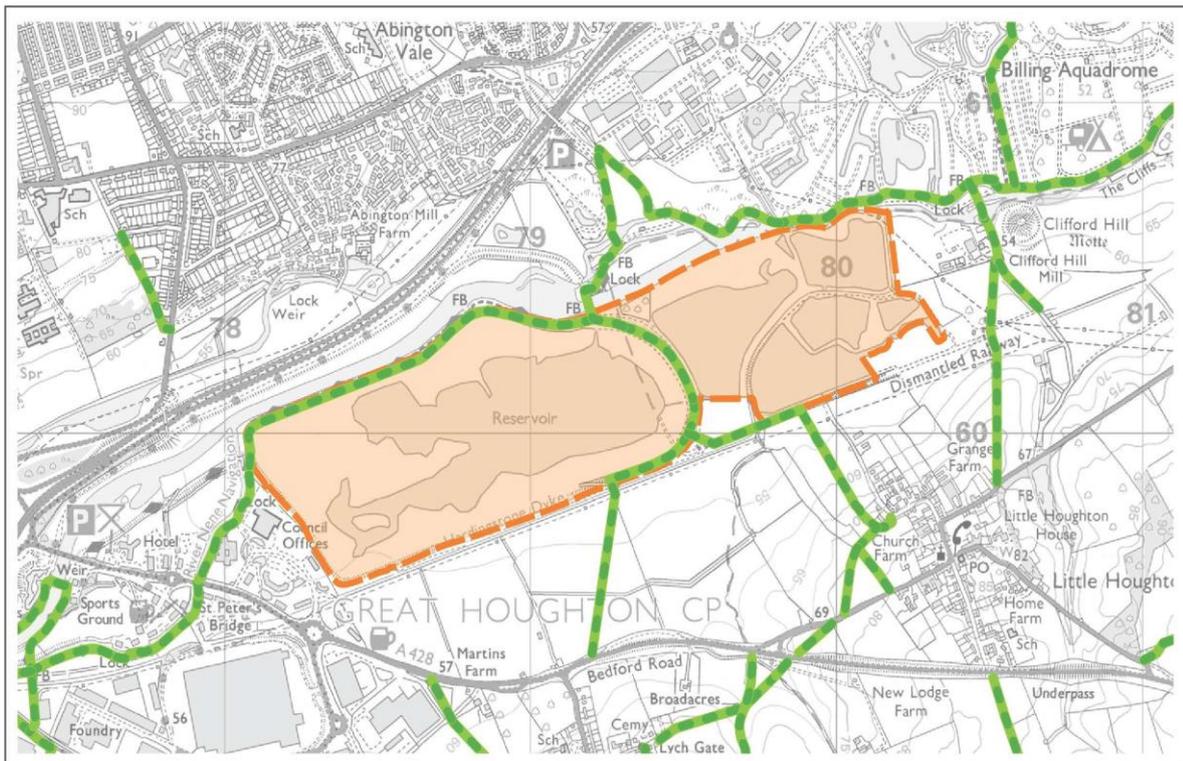
5. Improvements to nearby greenspace including Brackmills Country Park and surrounding areas must include signage to longer walks, dog bins, footpath improvements and maintenance as well as overall ecological enhancement.

Wardening

6. A part-time warden is required to help mitigate visitor impacts on Unit 1 of the SPA. Their role will be to help educate visitors on the importance of the SPA and the reasons why visitors and dogs must stay on-lead and to access paths. It is expected that wardens will also participate in year-round engagement activities alongside partners who are working to protect the SPA.

Monitoring

7. A monitoring scheme to track the implementation of mitigation measures. Patterns of visitor access to and around Unit 1 of the SPA must be monitored for any significant changes that could require adjustments to access management.
8. Additionally, the reaction of the SPA's birds to disturbance needs to be monitored to better inform future mitigation measures.
9. A part time funding officer will be required to administer monies collected and to distribute funds to implement measures to the relevant internal and external bodies.
10. See maps on continuing page showing the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA and Public Rights of Way.



West Northamptonshire Council

Unit 1 of the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA and Public Rights of Way

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Indicative Costs

11. The following costs are based on figures included within the Mitigation Strategy Needs Assessment undertaken for North Northamptonshire's Mitigation Strategy. They take account of indexation using the most up to date figures from Office of National Statistics Consumer Price Index⁹ and will be updated annually on 6 April. The provision of a warden is funded in perpetuity and capital costs reflect ongoing maintenance. In future, where monitoring and up to date surveys show additional visitors and dog walkers, additional mitigation measures such as increased wardening may be required. Residential windfall development within 3km of Unit 1 of the SPA will be expected to pay the contribution fee to mitigate their impact on the SPA and this will be spent on scaled up mitigation measures.

Table 1: Indicative costs to implement **full complement of measures** required to mitigate the impacts of visitor pressure in Unit 1 of the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA

Measure	Unit 1 cost
Fencing 50m @ £33.51/m ¹⁰ plus ongoing maintenance costs	£5,483.93
5 x Interpretation panels @ £1,117.10 each plus ongoing maintenance costs ¹¹	£18,279.76
1 x ft Warden (and associated costs) in perpetuity @ £45,600 / year ¹²	£2,072,727.27
1 x ft Monitoring / Funding officer @ £36,864.19 from 2022 - 2029 ¹³	£258,049.30
TOTAL for Unit 1	£2,354,540.27

Measures included in the Mitigation Strategy

12. The mitigation strategy must include an appropriate but representative proportion of the total measures required. Consequently, some on-site presence is required to oversee implementation of the access management measures on the ground, talk to visitors, and answer questions about and generate public support for the changes. It is estimated that this could be accomplished by one 0.25 FTE (full-time equivalent) warden.

13. Resources will also be required to coordinate the collection of mitigation funds, oversee works contracts as well as monitor and report on the progress

⁹ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/inflationandpriceindices/datasets/consumerpriceinflation>

¹⁰ Cost taken from Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Mitigation Strategy and index linked (CPI) to August 2021

¹¹ Greenbarnes Signage - <https://www.greenbarnes.co.uk/shop/signage/lecterns/a2-man-made-timber-interpretation-panel-ref-pipa2/> - materials and labour

¹² Cost of WNC warden

¹³ CIL and S106 Officer role from Planning Resource website <https://jobs.planningresource.co.uk/job/356533/senior-cil-and-s106-officer> (April 2021)

of the mitigation strategy. It is estimated that this would require one 0.25 FTE monitoring / funding officer. It may be that this administrative role could be resourced in whole or in part by or within the local planning authorities. This possibility has not been investigated however, so costs for the full amount are included in this analysis.

14. Therefore, the following measures have been selected for their combination of low cost and high effectiveness (recommended mitigation measures costs are shown in Table 4). These are:

- Fencing
- Interpretation panels
- One 0.25 FTE warden
- One 0.25 FTE monitoring / funding officer

Table 2: Indicative costs to implement **recommended mitigation measures** in the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA

Measure	Unit 1 cost
Fencing 50m @ £33.51/m ¹⁴ plus ongoing maintenance costs	£5,483.93
5 x Interpretation panels @ £1,117.10 each plus ongoing maintenance costs ¹⁵	£18,279.76
1 x ft Warden (and associated costs) in perpetuity @ £45,600 / year ¹⁶	£518,181.82
1 x ft Monitoring / Funding officer @ £36,864.19 from 2022 - 2029 ¹⁷	£115,500.00
TOTAL for Unit 1	£657,445.51

Apportioning Mitigation Costs

15. It is expected that the greatest impact on the SPA will result from development at The Green, Great Houghton (proposed allocation LAA1098). It is therefore proposed that a SANG is delivered in association with this development.

16. The inclusion of a SANG at The Green, Great Houghton reduces the cost of the entire package of mitigation measures as it removes the need to identify and pay for land to accommodate an additional off-lead dog walking area. However, if a SANG does not come forward on this site, then SAMM contributions will be required.

¹⁴ Cost taken from Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits Mitigation Strategy and index linked (CPI) to August 2021

¹⁵ Greenbarnes Signage - <https://www.greenbarnes.co.uk/shop/signage/lecterns/a2-man-made-timber-interpretation-panel-ref-pipa2/> - materials and labour

¹⁶ Cost of WNC warden

¹⁷ CIL and S106 Officer role from Planning Resource website <https://jobs.planningresource.co.uk/job/356533/senior-cil-and-s106-officer> (April 2021)

17. As such, the costs associated with the mitigation measures identified in Table 2 are spread equally among the remaining proposed allocations within the Northampton LPP2 that are located within 3km of the SPA (see Table 3 below).
18. To mitigate adverse impacts on the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA from proposed and windfall residential development within 3km of Unit 1 of the SPA, a contribution of **£428.58** is required per dwelling towards SAMM mitigation measures.

Table 3: Proposed residential allocations within the submitted Northampton LPP2 that fall within a 3km radius of the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA

Site number	Site name
0174	Ransome Road Gateway
0193	Former Lings Upper School, Birds Hill Walk
0204	The Farm, Hardingstone
0335	Great Russell Street / Chronicle & Echo North
0336	Site R/O Aldi, former Chronicle & Echo site
0685	Adj 12 Pennycross Place, Ecton Brook Road
0903	Hawkins Shoe Factory, Overstone Road
0932	Southbridge Road Site 1
0933	Southbridge Road Site 2
1010	Land at St. Peter's Way / Court Road / Freeschool Street
1014	University of Northampton, Avenue Campus
1022	Belgrave House
1049	Land off Arbour Court, Thorplands Garage Block
1058	Land off Oat Hill Drive, Ecton Brook
1098	The Green, Great Houghton
1107	Former Abington Mill Farm, land of Rushmere Road
1113	Greyfriars
1124	41 – 43 Dergate
1127	32 Connaught Street
1134	St Johns Railway Embankment
1138	Land south of Old Bedford Road
1139	Ransome Road

Appendix 7: GLOSSARY

Appropriate Assessment – An assessment, required under the Habitats Directive, if a plan or project is judged as likely to have a significant effect on a Natura 2000 site.

Commencement – commencement of development is in accordance with the legal requirements in section 56 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. This states that 'development is taken to be begun on the earliest date on which a material operation is carried out'. A material operation is defined in the Act and can include any works of construction, digging foundations, laying out or constructing a road and a material change in the use of the land.

Competent Authority – The decision maker under the Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (or as subsequently amended): often the local authority, but could be a planning inspector or other body responsible for assessing a plan or project.

Development Plan – A set of documents, which at the time of this SPD's adoption comprises certain saved policies from the Northampton Local Plan (1997), South Northamptonshire Local Plan Part 2 (2020), West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy and the Submitted Northampton Local Plan Part 2, Northamptonshire Biodiversity SPD, and the Upper Nene Valley Gravel Pits SPA SPD.

Development Plan Document – A Local Development Document which forms part of the statutory development plan, examples include the Core Strategy and Area Action Plans.

Local Plan – A Local Plan forms part of the development plan system set out in the Town and County Planning Act 1990. Local Plans set out a vision and a framework for the future development of an area, addressing housing, the economy, community facilities and infrastructure, the environment, adapting to climate change and securing good design. Local Plans (together with any adopted neighbourhood plans) are the starting-point for considering whether planning applications can be approved.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) – A document that sets out the government's planning policies for England. It guides planning decisions and sets the framework for the production of planning documents at the local level.

Natura 2000 Sites – An ecological network of sites (SPAs and SACs) established under the Habitats Directive to provide a strong protection for Europe's wildlife areas.

Special Protection Area (SPA) – A nature conservation site designated for its bird interest under the Birds Directive, but subject to the assessment procedure set out in the Habitats Directive.

Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM) - This comprises of various methods of access management including wardening and general monitoring of the SPA. It is not classed as infrastructure.

Suitable Alternative Natural Greenspace (SANG) – Open space, meeting guidelines on quantity and quality, for the purpose of providing recreational alternatives to the SPA.

Supplementary Planning Document (SPA) – A planning document produced at the local level to build upon and provide more detailed advice or guidance on local policies.