

MARTON MOSS NEIGHBOURHOOD FORUM

Marton Moss Strategic Environmental Assessment Draft Environmental Report

Summary

This is a summary of the report that was produced for the Neighbourhood Forum by planning consultants AECOM.

The need for a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) for the Neighbourhood Plan was triggered by the requirement to produce a Habitats Regulations Assessment, itself related to the proximity of Marton Moss to the internationally important wildlife habitats associated with the Ribble Estuary and nearby waters.

A SEA is prepared in accordance with a set methodology and has a broad scope covering a wide range of topics associated with the state of the local environment and the objectives of a Plan. The extent to which the topics are relevant in terms of Marton Moss was considered through a scoping exercise. Taking account of the intended policies in the Draft Neighbourhood Plan the following topics were adjudged to be relevant – biodiversity, climatic factors, historic environment, landscape, along with population and housing.

The SEA Draft Environmental Report then goes on to consider the sites intended to be allocated for housing development (those listed in Policy MM4 of the Draft Plan) and compares the effects of that with the alternative of higher growth using the additional sites suggested in the Call for Sites that are not proposed for inclusion in the Plan. The outcome of this assessment work is that the Plan as proposed for Regulation 14 consultation mainly has positive effects with the possible exception of the impact on the historic environment in some instances. In comparison the higher growth alternative would predominantly have significant negative effects.

To address the possibility of a minor negative effect on the historic environment of the proposed Draft Plan the Report recommends that:

- the archaeological potential [of relevant sites] must be explored and appropriate action taken to protect and record features of importance.
- Policy MM6 [market gardening businesses] includes a requirement for an ecological survey of the site(s) considered for re-development to avoid potential harm to established biodiversity on such sites.

The Draft Plan as published at the Regulation 14 stage has been amended to include these two safeguards.

Before the Plan is finalised there is an opportunity for local people and other interested parties to put forward other suggestions or to comment on the outcomes of the Draft Environmental Report within the six weeks set aside from when the report was published. The full report can be viewed on the Forum's website www.martonmossforum.org and comments made using the form available there. The Forum can also be contacted via enquiries@martonmossforum.org or on 07739 517630.

Do you agree the Environmental Report has appropriately assessed the likely environmental effects of the Draft Neighbourhood Plan?

Do you disagree?