

**Wiltshire Council**

**Strategic Environmental Assessment**

**Screening determination for the Draft Westbury Neighbourhood  
Plan**

**November 2021**

**Wiltshire Council**  
The logo for Wiltshire Council, featuring the text "Wiltshire Council" in a bold, green, sans-serif font. Below the text is a stylized green graphic consisting of two curved lines that sweep upwards from the left and meet at the right, resembling a horizon or a stylized 'W'.

<b>Contents</b>	<b>Page</b>
1. Introduction	3
2. Legislative requirements	3
3. The Draft Westbury Neighbourhood Plan	5
4. SEA Screening assessment	5
5. SEA Screening decision	10
6. Consultation on SEA screening decision	10
Appendix A - Comments from consultation bodies on SEA screening	

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This document provides a screening determination of the need to carry out a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of the Draft Westbury Neighbourhood Plan.
- 1.2 Wiltshire Council, as the 'Responsible Authority'<sup>1</sup> under the SEA Regulations<sup>2</sup>, is responsible for undertaking this screening process. It will determine if the draft Plan is likely to have significant environmental effects, and hence whether SEA is required.
- 1.3 This process has been carried out in accordance with the requirements of European Directive 2001/42/EC<sup>3</sup>, often known as the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive, which has been transposed into English law by the SEA Regulations.

## 2. Legislative requirements

- 2.1 The Localism Act 2011 requires neighbourhood plans to comply with EU legislation. The screening procedure outlined in this report meets the requirements of the SEA Directive and Regulations, as introduced in Section 1 of this document.

- 2.2 Regulation 5 of the SEA Regulations requires an environmental assessment of plans which:

1. *are prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism, town and country planning or land use (Regulation 5, para. (2)(a), and which set the framework for future development consent of projects listed in Annex I or II to Council Directive 85/337/EEC (EIA Directive) on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment (Reg. 5, para. (2)(b)*
2. *in view of the likely effect on sites, have been determined to require an assessment pursuant to Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) (Reg. 5, para. (3)*
3. *set the framework for future development consent of projects<sup>4</sup> (Reg. 5, para. (4)(b)*
4. *are determined to be likely to have significant environmental effects as determined under regulation 9(1) (Reg. 5, para. (4)(c)*

An environmental assessment need not be carried out for:

- a) *plans which determine the use of a small area<sup>5</sup> at local level (Regulation 5, para. (6)(a); or*
  - b) *plans which are a minor modification<sup>6</sup> to a plan or programme (Regulation 5, para. (6)(b)*
- unless it has been determined under regulation 9(1) that the plan is likely to have significant environmental effects.

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<sup>1</sup> The organisation which adopts the neighbourhood plan (this is described in Wiltshire Council's guide *Neighbourhood planning – a guide for Wiltshire's parish and town councils* (June 2012) as 'makes the plan').

<sup>2</sup> The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004

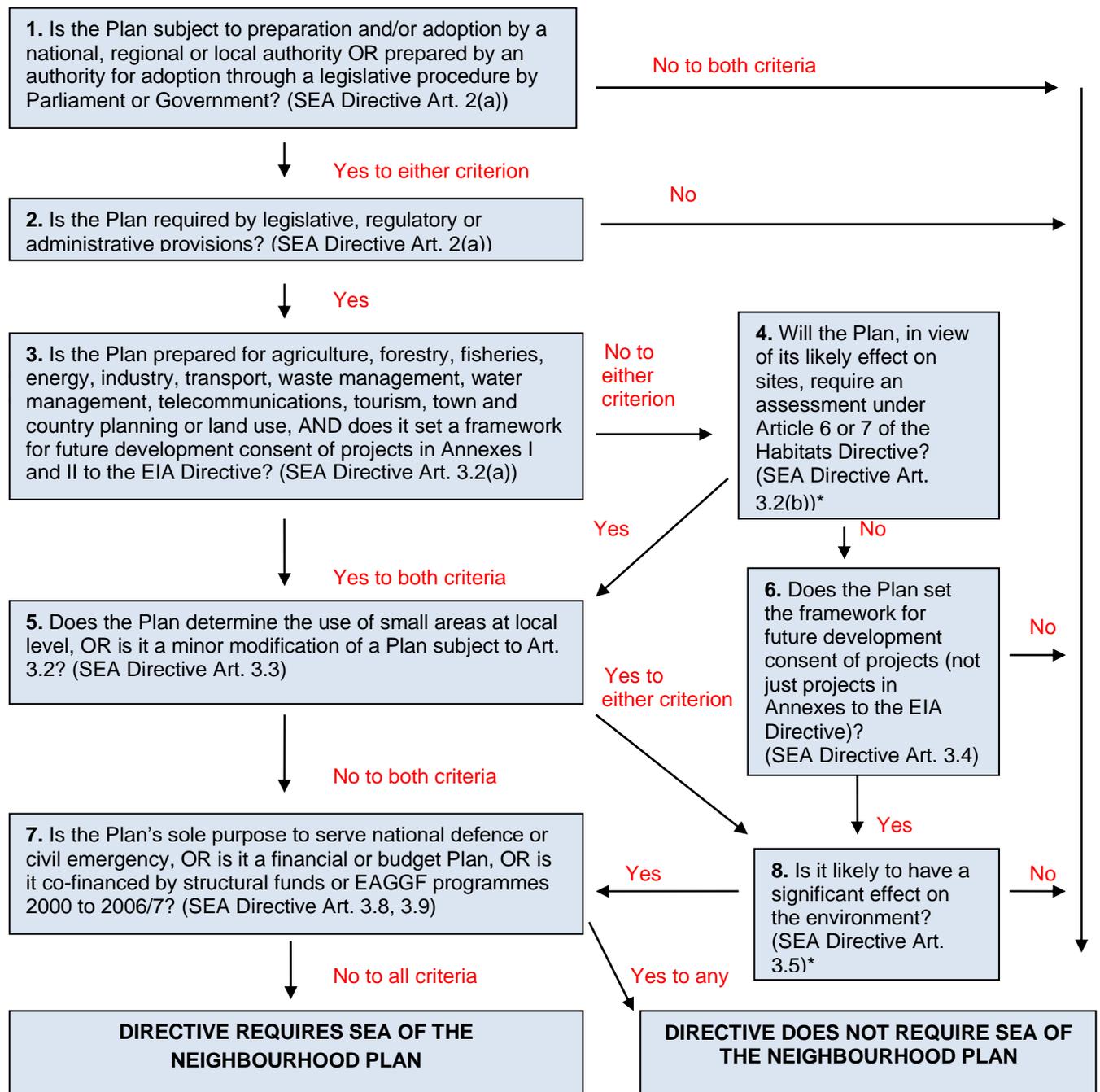
<sup>3</sup> European Directive 2001/42/EC "on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment"

<sup>4</sup> European Commission guidance states that plans and programmes which set the framework for future development consent of projects would normally contain 'criteria or conditions which guide the way a consenting authority decides an application for development consent'. Development consent is defined in the EIA Directive as "the decision of the competent authority or authorities which entitled the developer to proceed with the project" (Article 1(2) of the EIA Directive).

<sup>5</sup> European Commission guidance suggests that plans which determine the use of small areas at local level might include "a building plan which, for a particular, limited area, outlines details of how buildings must be constructed, determining, for example, their height, width or design"

<sup>6</sup> 'Minor modifications' should be considered in the context of the plan or programme which is being modified and of the likelihood of their having significant environmental effects. A modification may be of such small order that it is unlikely to have significant environmental effects.

2.3 The diagram<sup>7</sup> below shows the SEA Directive's requirements and its application to neighbourhood plans:



\* Plans falling in this category (No.8) will be screened by Wiltshire Council to determine if they are likely to have significant environmental effects. This determination will be made on a case-by-case basis for neighbourhood plans coming forward in Wiltshire.

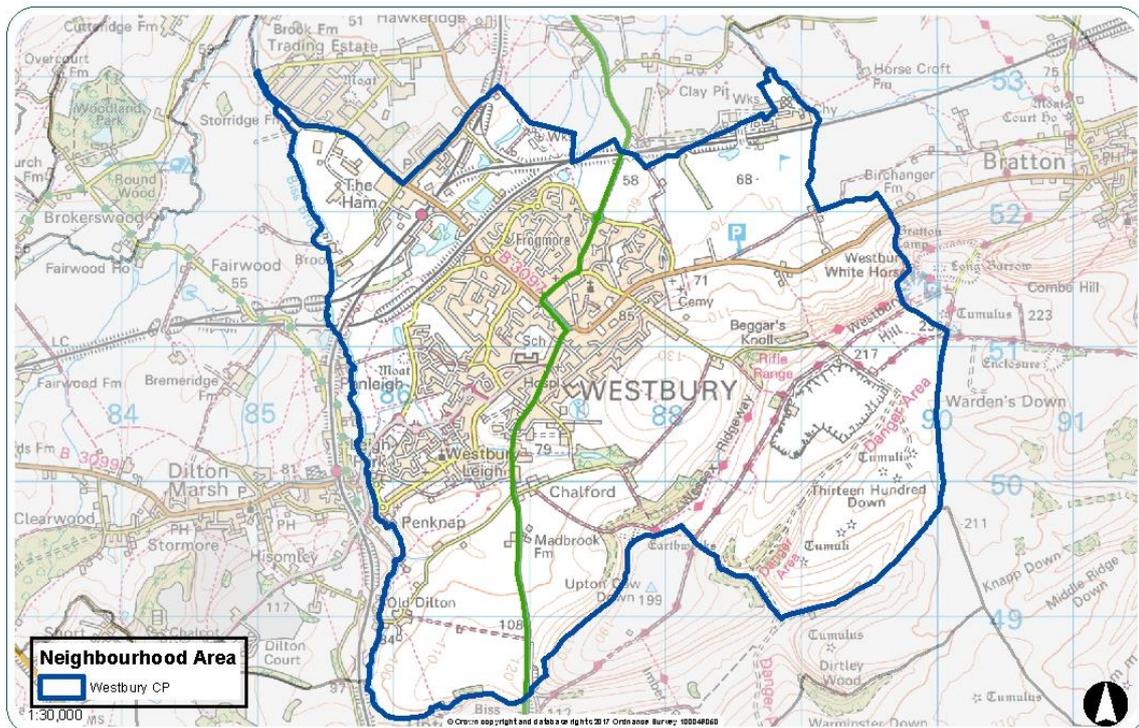
NB This diagram is intended as a guide to the criteria for application of the Directive to neighbourhood plans. It has no legal status.

<sup>7</sup> Taken from *A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive* ODPM, 2005)

### 3. The Draft Westbury Neighbourhood Plan

- 3.1 The parish of Westbury (Westbury Town Council) is preparing a neighbourhood plan under the provisions of the Localism Act 2011.
- 3.2 The designation of the Westbury Neighbourhood Area was made on 10<sup>th</sup> April 2017 (see map of area outlined in blue below). For the designation notice see <http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/planning-neighbourhood-latest-news>

Westbury Neighbourhood Area



- 3.3 This screening decision is based on, and accompanied by, a draft document dated July 2021 that contains the proposed vision, objectives and policies of a forthcoming draft plan, and three maps showing the three proposed housing site allocations.

### 4. SEA Screening assessment

- 4.1 Wiltshire Council, as the 'Responsible Authority', considers that the draft Westbury Neighbourhood Plan falls within the scope of the SEA Regulations on the basis that it is a plan that:
- a) is subject to preparation or adoption by an authority at national, regional or local level (Regulation 2);
  - b) is prepared for town and country planning or land use and it is a plan that sets the framework for future development consent of projects generally (Regulation 5, para. 4); and
  - c) will apply to a wider area other than a small area at local level and is not a minor modification to an existing plan or programme (Regulation 5, para. 6).
- 4.2 A determination under Regulation 9 is therefore required as to whether the draft Plan is likely to have significant effects on the environment.

4.3 The screening requirements set out in Regulation 9 and Schedule 1 of the SEA Regulations includes two sets of characteristics for determining the likely significance of effects on the environment. These relate to i) the characteristics of the draft Plan and ii) the characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected by the draft Plan. In making a determination, Wiltshire Council will take into account the criteria specified in Schedule I of the Regulations which are follows:

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

**(a)** 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;

**(b)** the degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy;

**(c)** the relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development;

**(d)** environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme; and

**(e)** the relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (for example, 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:**

**(a)** the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects;

**(b)** the cumulative nature of the effects;

**(c)** the transboundary nature of the effects;

**(d)** the risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents);

**(e)** the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected);

**(f)** the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to—

**(i)** special natural characteristics or cultural heritage;

**(ii)** exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values; or

**(iii)** intensive land-use; and

**(g)** the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.

The screening assessment of the draft Westbury Neighbourhood Plan is set out below:

Criteria (Schedule 1 SEA Regs.)	Significant environmental effects likely?	Justification and evidence
<b>1. The characteristics of plans, having regard, in particular, to:</b>		
(a) the degree to which the plan sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regards to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources	No	The neighbourhood plan covers the Westbury Town Council area only. Whilst the draft Plan does set a framework for projects at the parish level, it does not set a framework for a significant degree of projects or other activities.
(b) the degree to which the plan influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy	No	The neighbourhood plan is produced by the local community to influence development at the local parish level. The draft Plan will not have a significant influence on other plans and programmes or those in a hierarchy. All neighbourhood plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area, contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and have regard to national policies.
(c) the relevance of the plan for the integration of environmental considerations, in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development	No	The neighbourhood plan will be a land-use plan that promotes sustainable development, in general conformity with the Local Plan and national planning guidance. It is not a Plan specifically relating to the integration of environmental considerations.
(d) environmental problems relevant to the plan	No	There are no known specific environmental problems relevant to this Plan.
(e) the relevance of the plan for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (for example, plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection)	No	The neighbourhood plan is not relevant as a plan for implementing community legislation.
<b>2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to:</b>		
(a) the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects	Yes	The proposals considered most likely to have significant environmental effects are the proposed housing site allocations (WPS3, WPS9 and WPS10) and Policy TCE3: Town Centre, which supports the development of a new arts and performance venue (location unknown), regeneration of the former 'Lopes Arms' public house and activating the Angel Mill building. The former 'Lopes Arms' and Angel Mill buildings are both Grade II listed buildings and within the Westbury conservation area. The support for the regeneration of these two listed buildings in policy is considered likely to have

		<p>significant environmental effects.</p> <p>The proposed housing allocations WPS3 and WPS9, for a combined total of approx. 90 dwellings, are greenfield sites just outside the Westbury settlement boundary. They are adjacent to new and modern residential development and a Lidl supermarket. They are reasonably free of environmental constraints and some distance from the conservation area. They are not within or in close proximity to any environmental designations or flood risk zones. Significant environmental effects are not considered likely from these two sites on their own.</p> <p>Proposed housing allocation WPS10, for approx. 9 dwellings, is a Ford car dealership and repair centre. A relatively small brownfield site. There are a number of mature trees along the northern and eastern boundaries of the site and a number of listed buildings within 50 – 200m of the site which could be adversely affected by development of the site for housing. However, significant environmental effects are not considered likely from the redevelopment of this site on its own.</p> <p>All three proposed housing allocations will add to traffic congestion along the A350 through Westbury and add to the emissions which have led to the designation of an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in the town centre. Therefore, the cumulative effects of developing all three sites are considered likely to have significant environmental effects.</p> <p>On a separate matter, the Council's ecologist has confirmed that, having been screened under the Habitats Regulations, an appropriate assessment (AA) will be required. This decision means that an SEA will be required for the Plan as per Regulation 5 of the SEA Regulations.</p>
(b) the cumulative nature of the effects	No	No specific cumulative effects of the proposals are considered likely.
(c) the transboundary nature of the effects	No	No transboundary effects with other EU countries are considered likely to be significant.
(d) the risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents)	No	There are no significant environmental effects considered likely to risk human health or the environment.
(e) the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)	No	The neighbourhood plan area covers the Westbury Town Council area only. Significant environmental effects due to the geographic size of the area and population size are not considered likely.
(f) the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to— (i) special natural Characteristics or Cultural	Yes	<p>Refer to 2a above.</p> <p>It is not considered that the plan is likely to have significant environmental effects in relation to exceeded environmental quality standards, limit values or intensive land-use.</p>

<p>heritage;  (ii) exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values; or  (iii) intensive land-use;</p>		
<p>(g) the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Refer to 2a above.</p> <p>On a separate matter, the Council's ecologist has confirmed that, having been screened under the Habitats Regulations, an appropriate assessment (AA) will be required. This decision also means that an SEA will be required for the Plan as per Regulation 5 of the SEA Regulations.</p>

## 5. SEA Screening decision

5.1 Regulation 9 of the SEA Regulations requires that the responsible authority (Wiltshire Council) shall determine whether or not a plan is likely to have significant environmental effects. The responsible authority shall —

- (a) take into account the criteria specified in Schedule 1 to these Regulations; and
- (b) consult the consultation bodies (Historic England, Natural England, Environment Agency).

5.2 Where the responsible authority determines that the plan is unlikely to have significant environmental effects (and, accordingly, does not require an environmental assessment), it shall prepare a statement of its reasons for the determination.

5.3 Wiltshire Council considers that the draft Westbury Neighbourhood Plan **is likely to have significant environmental effects** and accordingly **a Strategic Environmental Assessment is required**. This decision is made for the following reasons:

Reason 1: it is considered that significant environmental effects are likely from development of the three proposed housing site allocations, which, cumulatively, are likely to increase further the traffic related emissions which contribute to poor air quality in the AQMA

Reason 2: Policy TCE3: Town Centre supports the regeneration of the former 'Lopes Arms' public house and the Angel Mill building. The former 'Lopes Arms' and Angel Mill buildings are both Grade II listed buildings and within the Westbury conservation area. The support for the regeneration of these two listed buildings in policy is considered likely to have significant environmental effects.

Reason 3: the Council's ecologist has confirmed that, having been screened under the Habitats Regulations, an appropriate assessment (AA) will be required. This decision also means that an SEA will be required for the Plan as per Regulation 5 of the SEA Regulations

5.4 This SEA screening decision is based on a draft document dated July 2021 that contains the proposed vision, objectives and policies of a forthcoming draft plan. It is possible that these proposals may change. If the draft Plan is subsequently amended significantly from these proposals i.e changes that substantially alter the draft plan and/or are likely to give rise to additional significant environmental effects, this SEA screening must be reviewed. In this instance, the Qualifying Body (Westbury Town Council) should request a revised SEA screening assessment from Wiltshire Council.

## 6. Consultation on SEA screening decision

6.1 This screening decision was sent to Natural England, Environment Agency and Historic England, requesting comments within a 5-week period, ending on 27<sup>th</sup> October 2021.

6.2 Comments were received from Historic England and Natural England who agreed with the decision that an SEA is required for this neighbourhood plan. Comments are presented in Appendix A.

## Appendix A – Comments from consultation bodies on SEA screening

### Historic England

From: [REDACTED]  
To: [REDACTED]  
Date: 26/10/2021 14:48

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your consultation on the SEA Screening associated with the emerging Westbury Neighbourhood Plan.

The Town Council has recently been in contact with us on its aspirations for its Plan and our attention has focused on 3 sites proposed for development. I attach that correspondence for information.

You will see that we identify where the evidence base would benefit from improvement to more confidently and appropriately demonstrate that relevant heritage assets will not be harmed by the proposed site allocations. Until such evidence has been provided there is a risk that the Plan might inadvertently generate significant environmental effects.

On that basis, and for the reasons the Council has identified, we concur with the view that a full SEA is required.

Kind regards

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] | Historic Places Adviser

Historic England | South West

1st Floor Fermentation North | Finzels Reach | Hawkins Lane | Bristol | BS1 6WQ

Direct Line: [REDACTED] | Mobile: [REDACTED]

<https://historicengland.org.uk/southwest>

## **Natural England**

Date: 18 October 2021  
Our ref: 371088  
[REDACTED]  
Senior Planning Officer  
Wiltshire Council

Hornbeam House  
Crewe Business Par  
Electra Way  
Crewe  
Cheshire  
CW1 6GJ  
T 0300 060 3900

Dear [REDACTED]

### **Draft Westbury Neighbourhood Plan proposals - SEA screening**

Thank you for your consultation on the above dated 22 September 2021.

Natural England is a non-departmental public body. Our statutory purpose is to ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced, and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development.

Natural England is a statutory consultee in neighbourhood planning and must be consulted on draft neighbourhood development plans by the Parish/Town Councils or Neighbourhood Forums where they consider our interests would be affected by the proposals made.

### **Strategic Environmental Assessment - Screening**

Where Neighbourhood Plans could have significant environmental effects, they may require a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) under the Environment Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (as amended). Further guidance on deciding whether the proposals are likely to have significant environmental effects and the requirements for consulting Natural England on SEA are set out in the [planning practice guidance](#).

Planning practice guidance also outlines that if an appropriate assessment is required for your neighbourhood plan this will also engage the need for a SEA. One of the basic conditions that will be tested by the independent examiner is whether the neighbourhood plan is compatible with European obligations, including those under the SEA Directive. Where a SEA is required it should be prepared in accordance with [regulation 12](#) of the SEA Regulations.

Where a neighbourhood plan requires an appropriate assessment under the Habitats Directive, Article 3.2 of the SEA Directive also requires a SEA to be undertaken.

In this case, an appropriate assessment is necessary due to the impacts of additional housing. Mitigation measures may be required to ensure no adverse effect on the site integrity of Salisbury Plain SPA and Bath and Bradford on Avon Bat SAC.

Natural England advises that without suitable mitigation, this plan would result in a significant environmental effect as outlined above. We cannot offer advice on how the relevant legislation should be applied or interpreted and recommend the LPA seeks its own legal advice as to whether a SEA is required in this case. If no significant effects are identified following the HRA process then it may be prudent to carry out a screening assessment under the SEA Directive to demonstrate where there is consensus on the likelihood of significant environmental effects and any actions proposed to mitigate effects.

### **General comments on Early Plan draft for SEA screening Draft Policy DDH3: Sustainable Design and Construction**

Natural England support this policy and advise the NDP steering group to consider Nature Based Solutions as a way of reducing emissions and maximising sustainable development.

Nature-based solutions (NbS) address societal problems in ways that benefit both people and nature. Natural habitats act as NbS for climate if they sequester carbon (contributing to Net Zero targets) or

provide adaptation to climate change effects (for example, reducing flooding, protecting coastline against sea-level rise or creating cool spaces in cities).

The British Ecological Society have [published](#) a report on NbS which may provide the steering group with a better insight into understanding the value. The report also outlines a detailed analysis of the tools, financial mechanisms and policies required for effective delivery in a UK context.

#### **Draft Policy WSP3 and WSP9**

Both allocation are within an impact risk zone for Picket and Clanger wood SSSI. It has been determined that increase in housing within close proximity to Picket and Clanger lead in increased recreational disturbance of bat species linked to the Bath and Bradford on Avon bat SAC. Planning applications at both location will be subject to HRA and will need to be determined favourably.

#### **Draft Policy TM1: Transport Safety and Air Quality**

Planting street trees are a great way to improve air quality within urban areas. This should be included as part of any mitigation requirements and could also form part of improving Draft Policy TCE3: Town Centre

#### **Draft Policy QL1: Natural Environment**

Natural England support this policy. The [Wiltshire Community Environmental Toolkit](#) has been developed in partnership with Natural England to allow communities to take the lead in defining and restoring biodiversity in their community. The toolkit has been designed for community groups, local landowners, Parish and Town Councils, schools and youth groups it provides a structure for how local communities can better understand what they already have in terms of natural habitats as well as how to plan for developing greater biodiversity and nature based solutions for carbon sequestration in the future. The Toolkit also signposts to many other organisations which can assist communities in delivering their aims and objectives. The Toolkit will form part of a suite of documents that Wiltshire Council is producing as part of the [Green Blue Infrastructure Strategy](#).

#### **Policy QL3 – Protection and Enhancement of Westbury’s Green Spaces**

Natural England support this policy and advise as a way to maximising opportunities include efforts to increase biodiversity at the named locations, please see above comments on the Wiltshire community Environmental toolkit

For further detail we refer you to the attached annex which covers the issues and opportunities that should be considered when preparing a Neighbourhood Plan.

For any further consultations on your plan, please contact: [consultations@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:consultations@naturalengland.org.uk).

Yours faithfully



Planning Lead Wiltshire and Swindon  
Wessex Team

#### **Annex 1 - Neighbourhood planning and the natural environment: information, issues and opportunities**

##### **Natural environment information sources**

The [Magic1](#) website will provide you with much of the nationally held natural environment data for your plan area. The most relevant layers for you to consider are: **Agricultural Land Classification, Ancient Woodland, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Local Nature Reserves, National Parks (England), National Trails, Priority Habitat Inventory, public rights of way (on the Ordnance Survey base map) and Sites of Special Scientific Interest (including their impact risk zones)**. Local environmental record centres may hold a range of additional information on the natural environment. A list of local record centres is available [here2](#).

**Priority habitats** are those habitats of particular importance for nature conservation, and the list of them can be found [here3](#). Most of these will be mapped either as **Sites of Special Scientific Interest**, on the Magic website or as **Local Wildlife Sites**. Your local planning authority should be

able to supply you with the locations of Local Wildlife Sites.

**National Character Areas** (NCAs) divide England into 159 distinct natural areas. Each character area is defined by a unique combination of landscape, biodiversity, geodiversity and cultural and economic activity. NCA profiles contain descriptions of the area and statements of environmental opportunity, which may be useful to inform proposals in your plan. NCA information can be found [here](#)<sup>4</sup>.

There may also be a local **landscape character assessment** covering your area. This is a tool to help understand the character and local distinctiveness of the landscape and identify the features that give it a sense of place. It can help to inform, plan and manage change in the area. Your local planning authority should be able to help you access these if you can't find them online.

If your neighbourhood planning area is within or adjacent to a **National Park** or **Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty** (AONB), the relevant National Park/AONB Management Plan for the area will set out useful information about the protected landscape. You can access the plans on from the relevant National Park Authority or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty website.

General mapped information on **soil types** and **Agricultural Land Classification** is available (under 'landscape') on the [Magic](#)<sup>5</sup> website and also from the [LandIS website](#)<sup>6</sup>, which contains more information about obtaining soil data.

### **Natural environment issues to consider**

The [National Planning Policy Framework](#)<sup>7</sup> sets out national planning policy on protecting and enhancing the natural environment. [Planning Practice Guidance](#)<sup>8</sup> sets out supporting guidance.

**Your local planning authority should be able to provide you with further advice on the potential impacts of your plan or order on the natural environment and the need for any environmental assessments.**

#### Landscape

Your plans or orders may present opportunities to protect and enhance locally valued landscapes. You may want to consider identifying distinctive local landscape features or characteristics such as ponds, woodland or dry stone walls and think about how any new development proposals can respect and enhance local landscape character and distinctiveness.

If you are proposing development within or close to a protected landscape (National Park or Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) or other sensitive location, we recommend that you carry out a landscape assessment of the proposal. Landscape assessments can help you to choose the most appropriate sites for development and help to avoid or minimise impacts of development on the landscape through careful siting, design and landscaping.

#### Wildlife habitats

Some proposals can have adverse impacts on designated wildlife sites or other priority habitats (listed [here](#)<sup>9</sup>), such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest or [Ancient woodland](#)<sup>10</sup>. If there are likely to be any adverse impacts you'll need to think about how such impacts can be avoided, mitigated or, as a last resort, compensated for.

#### Priority and protected species

You'll also want to consider whether any proposals might affect priority species (listed [here](#)<sup>11</sup>) or protected species. To help you do this, Natural England has produced advice [here](#)<sup>12</sup> to help understand the impact of particular developments on protected species.

#### Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land

Soil is a finite resource that fulfils many important functions and services for society. It is a growing medium for food, timber and other crops, a store for carbon and water, a reservoir of biodiversity and a buffer against pollution. If you are proposing development, you should seek to use areas of poorer quality agricultural land in preference to that of a higher quality in line with National Planning Policy Framework para 171. For more information, see our publication [Agricultural Land Classification](#):

[protecting the best and most versatile agricultural land](#)<sup>13</sup>.

## Improving your natural environment

Your plan or order can offer exciting opportunities to enhance your local environment. If you are setting out policies on new development or proposing sites for development, you may wish to consider identifying what environmental features you want to be retained or enhanced or new features you would like to see created as part of any new development. Examples might include:

- Providing a new footpath through the new development to link into existing rights of way.
- Restoring a neglected hedgerow.
- Creating a new pond as an attractive feature on the site.
- Planting trees characteristic to the local area to make a positive contribution to the local landscape.
- Using native plants in landscaping schemes for better nectar and seed sources for bees and birds.
- Incorporating swift boxes or bat boxes into the design of new buildings.
- Think about how lighting can be best managed to encourage wildlife.
- Adding a green roof to new buildings.

You may also want to consider enhancing your local area in other ways, for example by:

- Setting out in your plan how you would like to implement elements of a wider Green Infrastructure Strategy (if one exists) in your community.
- Assessing needs for accessible greenspace and setting out proposals to address any deficiencies or enhance provision.
- Identifying green areas of particular importance for special protection through Local Green Space designation (see [Planning Practice Guidance on this](#) 14).
- Managing existing (and new) public spaces to be more wildlife friendly (e.g. by sowing wild flower strips in less used parts of parks, changing hedge cutting timings and frequency).
- Planting additional street trees.
- Identifying any improvements to the existing public right of way network, e.g. cutting back hedges, improving the surface, clearing litter or installing kissing gates) or extending the network to create missing links.
- Restoring neglected environmental features (e.g. coppicing a prominent hedge that is in poor condition, or clearing away an eyesore).

1 <http://magic.defra.gov.uk/>

2 <http://www.nbn-nfbr.org.uk/nfbr.php>

3 <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140711133551/http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/conservation/biodiversity/protectandmanage/habsandspeciesimportance.aspx>

4 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-character-area-profiles-data-for-local-decision-making>

5 <http://magic.defra.gov.uk/>

6 <http://www.landis.org.uk/index.cfm>

7 [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/807247/NPPF\\_Feb\\_2019\\_revised.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/807247/NPPF_Feb_2019_revised.pdf)

8 <http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/blog/guidance/natural-environment/>

9 <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140711133551/http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/conservation/biodiversity/protectandmanage/habsandspeciesimportance.aspx>

10 <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/ancient-woodland-and-veteran-trees-protection-surveys-licences>

11 <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140711133551/http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/conservation/biodiversity/protectandmanage/habsandspeciesimportance.aspx>

12 <https://www.gov.uk/protected-species-and-sites-how-to-review-planning-proposals>

13 <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/35012>

14 <http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/blog/guidance/open-space-sports-and-recreation-facilities-public-rights-of-way-and-local-green-space/local-green-space-designation/>