

**Wiltshire Council**

**Strategic Environmental Assessment**

**Screening determination for the West Lavington Neighbourhood  
Plan**

**November 2017**

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This document provides a screening determination of the need to carry out a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of the West Lavington 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 of the West Lavington Neighbourhood Plan. It will determine if the 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

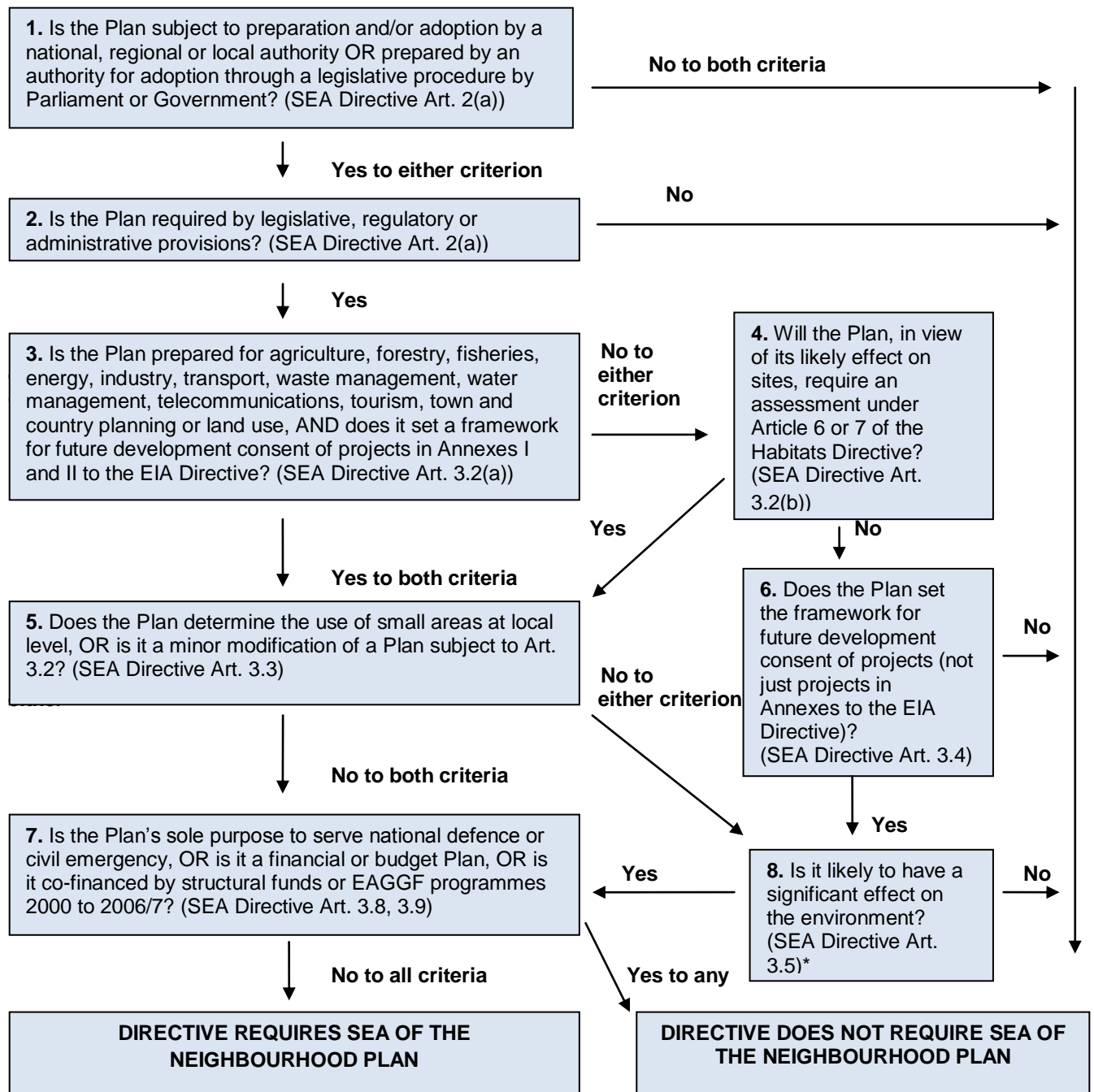
<sup>3</sup> European Directive 2001/42/EC "on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment"

<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> Adapted from *A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive* ODPM, 2005)

### 3. The West Lavington Neighbourhood Plan

- 3.1 The parish of West Lavington is preparing a neighbourhood plan under the provisions of the Localism Act 2011.
- 3.2 The designation of the West Lavington Neighbourhood Area was made on 17th July 2013. For the designation notice see <http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/planning-neighbourhood-latest-news>
- 3.3 The following documents accompany this screening opinion:
- West Lavington NDP SEA Screening Request
  - West Lavington NDP Site Selection Methodology
  - West Lavington NDP Housing Site Assessment Tables
- 3.4 Details of proposed policies for the neighbourhood plan are presented in Appendix 2 of the attached 'West Lavington NDP SEA Screening Request' document. That document, at Appendix 3, also sets out the potential impacts and mitigation measures for the proposed housing allocation site 7 – Land South of Lavington Lane, West Lavington – that Appendix is split into four sections: 'Accessibility', 'Infrastructure', 'Built Environment' and 'Natural Environment'.
- 3.5 The attached document 'West Lavington NDP Site Selection Methodology' gives further information on this proposed housing site allocation 7. Appendix 5 sets out a draft policy and development brief which is summarised below:

#### Proposed Development of Site 7, Lavington Lane/Sandfield

*Site 7, Lavington Lane/Sandfield, is allocated for residential development of between 40 and 60 housing units. Proposals must be in accord with the development principles summarised below:*

*The design of the site shall have particular regard to the criteria set out in Wiltshire Core Strategy Core Policy 57 "Ensuring high Quality Design and Place Shaping".*

*This allocation will be brought forward through a master planning process agreed between the community, the Parish Council, the local Planning Authority and the developer and should meet the requirements set out in the Development Brief at Annexe 1.*

*The Settlement Boundary to West Lavington and Littleton Panell will be realigned to include the site as part of the built up area.*

#### *Principles of Development*

*1. Vehicle Access. Provide a new access from Lavington Lane and also create a drop-off/collection parking area to service the Primary School.*

*2. Pedestrian Movement. Provide footways across the site to link with local pavement and footpath routes.*

*3. Housing and Design. Provide a mixed development of small/medium family houses and smaller accommodation for downsizing of (around 50 - number to be agreed) in an open, well designed layout.*

*4. Parking. Provide adequate off street parking both to serve the new housing and to supplement provision at the Primary School.*

*5. Landscaping. Provide landscaping belts on the northern and eastern perimeter of the site.*

*6. Drainage. Provide drainage systems that are pollution free and minimize surface water runoff to the surrounding area.*

3.6 Appendix 7 to that document sets out a series of maps showing the location of the proposed housing site allocation in relation to heritage and environmental assets, as follows:

- Map 1, page 67 - Site in relation to Heritage Assets
- Map 2, page 68 – Site in relation to Environmental Assets
- Map 3, page 69 – Site in relation to Salisbury Plain SAC/SPA/SSSI
- Map 4, page 70 – Site in relation to wider environmental designations
- Map 5, page 71 – Site in relation to areas of flood risk

#### **4. SEA Screening assessment**

4.1 Wiltshire Council, as the ‘Responsible Authority’, considers that the West Lavington 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 West Lavington Neighbourhood 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 West Lavington neighbourhood plan and ii) the characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected by the West Lavington Neighbourhood Plan. In making a determination, Wiltshire Council will take into account the criteria specified in Schedule I of the Regulations as 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 West Lavington 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 regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources	No	<p>The Neighbourhood Plan would form part of the Statutory Development Plan and therefore would set a framework for future development projects in West Lavington. However, the plan sits within a wider framework set out by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the Wiltshire Core Strategy and the saved policies of the Kennet Local Plan. In due course the emerging Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations Plan will also form part of the policy framework.</p> <p>The proposed policies of the Neighbourhood Plan are considered to be in general conformity with the NPPF, the Core Strategy and the saved policies of the Kennet Local Plan. In addition, the projects for which the Neighbourhood Plan contributes to setting a planning framework are very local in nature.</p>
(b) the degree to which the plan influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy	No	<p>The neighbourhood plan is produced by the local community to influence development at the local parish level. A neighbourhood plan must be in general conformity with Local Plans and national planning guidance. The Neighbourhood Plan has a low hierarchical position within a number of statutory development plans, therefore will respond to, rather than influence, other plans or programmes. Proposed policies set out in the Neighbourhood Plan are considered to be in conformity with the NPPF, the Core Strategy and the saved policies of the Kennet Local Plan.</p>
(c) the relevance of the plan for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development	No	<p>The neighbourhood plan is a land-use plan that promotes sustainable development, in general conformity with the Local Plan and national planning guidance. One of the Basic Conditions for any neighbourhood plan is that it contributes to the achievement of sustainable development. However, it is not a Plan specifically for the integration of environmental considerations. The Plan is not required to contain policies that relate to environmental considerations as these are already contained within strategic and national level policies.</p> <p>The Neighbourhood Plan will work to protect and enhance the natural environment and landscape of West Lavington and Littleton Panell, including statutory and non-statutory environmental designations. The proposed policies of the Neighbourhood Plan will provide protection for areas of environmental value, including Local Green Space. The policies of the Neighbourhood Plan are considered unlikely to affect the protection for areas of high environmental value, including the</p>



		<p>Salisbury Plain SSSI/SAC/SPA, which is partially within the Neighbourhood Plan area.</p> <p>A number of Neighbourhood Plan policies will contribute to the social sustainability of West Lavington. Therefore, the Neighbourhood Plan will provide socially sustainable development as defined in the NPPF.</p> <p>Therefore it is considered that the NDP will have a positive impact on local environmental assets and therefore will promote sustainable development.</p>
(d) environmental problems relevant to the plan	No	<p>There are no specific environmental problems relevant to this neighbourhood area.</p> <p>The Neighbourhood Plan will help to address wider environmental problems as highlighted in the NPPF at a local level, such as climate change, air pollution, traffic congestion, loss of biodiversity and flooding, with few negative effects envisaged.</p>
(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	<p>The neighbourhood plan is not relevant as a Plan for implementing community legislation. This legislation is taken into account by the Wiltshire Core Strategy and the saved policies of the Kennet Local Plan with which the Neighbourhood Plan must comply.</p>
<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	No	<p>Any environmental effects are not considered to be significant judging by the proposals in the Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p>The Neighbourhood Plan is considered likely to result in positive environmental effects through policies that seek to protect the built heritage character and green spaces. The plan is considered likely to result in positive social effects through policies which seek to address local highways issues indirectly through the provision of adequate off-street car parking and support the development of community recreational facilities. The plan is also considered likely to result in positive economic effects through policies which seek to support improvements to the Parish.</p> <p>The neighbourhood area contains European and National level biodiversity designations. The southern part of the neighbourhood area, on Salisbury Plain, is designated as SSSI, SAC and SPA. The proposed housing site allocation (Site 7) is considered unlikely to have significant environmental effects on these, either directly or indirectly, as the site is modest in size and located adjoining the existing built edge of the village of West Lavington. The number of new dwellings proposed is</p>

considered unlikely to lead to a significant increase in recreational pressure on the European designated sites. The attached document 'SEA Screening Request', at page 21, states that *'the proposed housing site is within 2km (at its closest point) of the Salisbury Plain SPA, the Salisbury Plain SAC and the Salisbury Plain SSSI. The development of the site for housing would be unlikely to lead to major adverse impacts on designated and non-designated biodiversity interests within the local area. However, because of the proximity to the Salisbury Plain Special Protection Area (SPA) housing development may trigger contributions to Salisbury Plain SPA HRA Mitigation Strategy (Stone Curlew Project).'*

There is an area of ancient woodland (Manor House Woods) to the north of the site, separated by Lavington Lane. This is designated as a County Wildlife Site. There will be no direct loss of ancient woodland from developing the site and indirect impacts can be mitigated through open space provision and landscaping in the north of the site which will also serve to buffer the areas of flood risk north of Lavington Lane. Appendix 5 in the attached 'Site Selection Methodology' document proposes 'strong' landscaping belts on the northern and eastern perimeter of the site. It states that *'this planting should help to reinforce the visual link between some existing planting on site and the trees adjacent to the Semington Brook and in the Manor Woods. On the northern edge the layout should provide for dwellings to be sited away from the ridge line adjacent to Lavington Lane and with their back gardens facing in this direction so that space is provided for the landscaped belt to be planted along the ridge on this road frontage with only garden fences behind. This will ensure that houses and roof tops should be barely visible from Lavington Lane thus maintaining as strong an impression as possible of visual separation between the two villages and maintaining the rural feel of the road.'*

The attached document 'SEA Screening Request', at page 21 also considers the effects of the site on the ancient woodland. It states *'The proposed site is separated from the woodland by a minor road and this will do much to prevent direct impacts as a result of development, however it is necessary to also consider the indirect impacts arising from lighting, including additional lighting of Lavington Lane. Careful consideration must be given to the extent and positioning of development within this site. The site frontage needs to incorporate an appropriate open area and retain as far as possible the existing topography and boundary treatment. In addition highway lighting of the site access from Lavington Lane can be of led design which offers the opportunity to prevent unintended light spillage.'* It is therefore considered that mitigation measures can be achieved to reduce adverse effects on the ancient woodland and that significant effects can be avoided.

There are no national or local landscape designations in the neighbourhood area.

There are no Scheduled Monuments within or in proximity to the site.

Appendix 7 Map 1 on page 67 of the attached document 'West Lavington NDP Site Selection Methodology' shows the proposed site in relation to the conservation area and listed buildings. Potential impacts and mitigation measures on heritage assets are set out in Appendix 3 of the attached document 'West Lavington NDP SEA Screening Request'. It states that *'the proposed housing site is elevated above Lavington Lane and any prominent or extensive development has the potential for adverse effect on the wider setting of the conservation area by changing the eastern gateway into the village. This means that careful consideration must be given to the extent and positioning of development within this site. The site frontage needs to incorporate an appropriate open area and retain as far as possible the existing topography and boundary treatment'. The*

		<p>West Lavington Conservation Area is located approx 200m to the west of the site and there is a large modern residential housing estate in between such that it is considered that the setting of the conservation area can be protected and the site is large enough to enable new dwellings to be located whereby adverse effects are reduced and significant areas of landscaping can be incorporated.</p> <p>Appendix 3 goes on to state that <i>‘the proposed housing allocation site is in relatively close proximity to listed buildings, namely Mill Farmhouse and Granary to the south-east and Clyffe Hall to the east. The setting of these is unlikely to be directly affected by development at the proposed site as a consequence of the intervening distance which is approximately 215m in all cases and the intervening landscape features, land uses and other built development. The proposed housing site is characterised as a modern green space which has been created on former post-medieval fields, as such there is little remaining legible historic character. As such the site has low sensitivity and could accommodate change.’</i></p> <p>The proposed housing allocation (Site 7) is entirely within Flood Zone 1. However, there is an area of Flood Zone 2 and 3 to the north and east of the site, associated with Semington Brook, but the site is considered to be large enough for an appropriate buffer zone to be incorporated in the north and east of the site, with development taking place further to the west adjacent to the existing built development, away from the Brook. The attached document ‘West Lavington NDP Site Selection Methodology’ pages 62-63 acknowledges that <i>‘the site presents challenges from a drainage viewpoint which will require considerable care to overcome. The Semington Brook runs close to the site, especially at the northeast corner by Cornbury Mill. This is a very high quality stream that rises out of the chalk on the edge of Salisbury Plain at the southern end of West Lavington and flows north past Manor Woods. It is essential that development of the site does not result in any water pollution to the stream either from foul drainage overflows or unmanaged surface water runoff. It is understood (to be confirmed) that the principle foul sewer in the area runs south to north from West Lavington into Littleton Panell and that this has been known to become overloaded, causing some pollution, in the Russell Mill Lane area adjacent to the Manor Woods. It will be essential to work closely with Wessex Water to ensure that the foul drainage provisions for the site can fully provide for the additional capacity required and prevents any possibility of further pollution problems.</i></p> <p><i>Surface water drainage arrangements for the site will also need to be carefully investigated. This is of particular concern because several parts of the village have been significantly affected by floods caused by surface water runoff in the recent past. It is felt that there is potential for the elevated nature of the site, when compared to Lavington Lane, to result in a considerable amount of storm water runoff after periods of heavy rain. This could result in flooding into Lavington Lane (which may block the road) and consequent unmanaged run off from there into Semington Brook. To counter this it will be essential to design a surface water drainage network that can adequately manage the potential flows and has spare capacity to deal with exceptional rainfall events. In addition it will be necessary to adopt ground surfacing techniques that minimise areas of hard standing or other impermeable surfaces. If the maximum permeability of the site can be maintained this will greatly assist in reducing any surface water flows.’</i> It is considered that although there are challenges with the site in terms of drainage and surface water, mitigation measures are entirely possible to implement on this site to reduce adverse effects and therefore that significant environmental effects are not likely.</p>
(b) the cumulative	No	No cumulative effects are considered likely to be significant.

nature of the effects		<p>A combination of this Neighbourhood Plan, which seeks to protect and enhance the character, environment and setting of West Lavington, and wider environmental policy of the Core Strategy, is likely to have cumulative positive environmental effects which will have cumulative positive benefits for the area of West Lavington and Littleton Panell.</p> <p>Notwithstanding this, as the Neighbourhood Plan deals with issues which are of a small scale and nature, it is considered that the impact of the neighbourhood plan will be limited.</p>
(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. Instead the Plan aims to enhance the environment required to meet the social needs of residents.
(e) the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected);	No	<p>The Neighbourhood Plan covers a rural parish. The Neighbourhood Plan relates to an area of approximately 2,395ha. This is a relatively small area with a population of approximately 1,502. Therefore the magnitude and spatial extent of the plan is considered to be small.</p> <p>Significant environmental effects due to the geographic size of the area and population size are not considered likely.</p>
(f) the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to— (i) special natural characteristics or cultural heritage; (ii) exceeded environment	No	<p>The neighbourhood area contains European and National level biodiversity designations. The southern part of the neighbourhood area, on Salisbury Plain, is designated as SSSI, SAC and SPA. The proposed housing site allocation (Site 7) is considered unlikely to have significant environmental effects on these, either directly or indirectly, as the site is modest in size and located adjoining the existing built edge of the village of West Lavington. The number of new dwellings proposed is considered unlikely to lead to a significant increase in recreational pressure on the European designated sites. The attached document 'SEA Screening Request', at page 21, states that <i>'the proposed housing site is within 2km (at its closest point) of the Salisbury Plain SPA, the Salisbury Plain SAC and the Salisbury Plain SSSI. The development of the site for housing would be unlikely to lead to major adverse impacts on designated and non-designated biodiversity interests within the local area. However, because of the proximity to the Salisbury Plain Special Protection Area (SPA) housing development may trigger contributions to Salisbury Plain SPA HRA Mitigation Strategy (Stone Curlew Project).'</i></p> <p>There is an area of ancient woodland (Manor House Woods) to the north of the site, separated by Lavington Lane. This is designated as a County Wildlife Site. There will be no direct loss of ancient woodland from developing the site and indirect impacts can be mitigated through open space provision and landscaping in the north of the site which will also serve to buffer</p>

<p>tal quality standards or limit values; or (iii) intensive land-use;</p>		<p>the areas of flood risk north of Lavington Lane. Appendix 5 in the attached 'Site Selection Methodology' document proposes 'strong' landscaping belts on the northern and eastern perimeter of the site. It states that <i>'this planting should help to reinforce the visual link between some existing planting on site and the trees adjacent to the Semington Brook and in the Manor Woods. On the northern edge the layout should provide for dwellings to be sited away from the ridge line adjacent to Lavington Lane and with their back gardens facing in this direction so that space is provided for the landscaped belt to be planted along the ridge on this road frontage with only garden fences behind. This will ensure that houses and roof tops should be barely visible from Lavington Lane thus maintaining as strong an impression as possible of visual separation between the two villages and maintaining the rural feel of the road.'</i></p> <p>The attached document 'SEA Screening Request', at page 21 also considers the effects of the site on the ancient woodland. It states <i>'The proposed site is separated from the woodland by a minor road and this will do much to prevent direct impacts as a result of development, however it is necessary to also consider the indirect impacts arising from lighting, including additional lighting of Lavington Lane. Careful consideration must be given to the extent and positioning of development within this site. The site frontage needs to incorporate an appropriate open area and retain as far as possible the existing topography and boundary treatment. In addition highway lighting of the site access from Lavington Lane can be of led design which offers the opportunity to prevent unintended light spillage.'</i> It is therefore considered that mitigation measures can be achieved to reduce adverse effects on the ancient woodland and that significant effects can be avoided.</p> <p>There are no national or local landscape designations in the neighbourhood area.</p> <p>There are no Scheduled Monuments within or in proximity to the site.</p> <p>Appendix 7 Map 1 on page 67 of the attached document 'West Lavington NDP Site Selection Methodology' shows the proposed site in relation to the conservation area and listed buildings. Potential impacts and mitigation measures on heritage assets are set out in Appendix 3 of the attached document 'West Lavington NDP SEA Screening Request'. It states that <i>'the proposed housing site is elevated above Lavington Lane and any prominent or extensive development has the potential for adverse effect on the wider setting of the conservation area by changing the eastern gateway into the village. This means that careful consideration must be given to the extent and positioning of development within this site. The site frontage needs to incorporate an appropriate open area and retain as far as possible the existing topography and boundary treatment'</i>. The West Lavington Conservation Area is located approx 200m to the west of the site and there is a large modern residential housing estate in between such that it is considered that the setting of the conservation area can be protected and the site is large enough to enable new dwellings to be located whereby adverse effects are reduced and significant areas of landscaping can be incorporated.</p> <p>Appendix 3 goes on to state that <i>'the proposed housing allocation site is in relatively close proximity to listed buildings, namely Mill Farmhouse and Granary to the south-east and Clyffe Hall to the east. The setting of these is unlikely to be directly affected by development at the proposed site as a consequence of the intervening distance which is approximately 215m in all cases and the intervening landscape features, land uses and other built development. The proposed housing site is characterised as a modern green space which has been created on former post-medieval fields, as such there is little</i></p>
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		<p><i>remaining legible historic character. As such the site has low sensitivity and could accommodate change.'</i></p> <p>The proposed housing allocation (Site 7) is entirely within Flood Zone 1. However, there is an area of Flood Zone 2 and 3 to the north and east of the site, associated with Semington Brook, but the site is considered to be large enough for an appropriate buffer zone to be incorporated in the north and east of the site, with development taking place further to the west adjacent to the existing built development, away from the Brook. The attached document 'West Lavington NDP Site Selection Methodology' pages 62-63 acknowledges that <i>'the site presents challenges from a drainage viewpoint which will require considerable care to overcome. The Semington Brook runs close to the site, especially at the northeast corner by Cornbury Mill. This is a very high quality stream that rises out of the chalk on the edge of Salisbury Plain at the southern end of West Lavington and flows north past Manor Woods. It is essential that development of the site does not result in any water pollution to the stream either from foul drainage overflows or unmanaged surface water runoff. It is understood (to be confirmed) that the principle foul sewer in the area runs south to north from West Lavington into Littleton Panell and that this has been known to become overloaded, causing some pollution, in the Russell Mill Lane area adjacent to the Manor Woods. It will be essential to work closely with Wessex Water to ensure that the foul drainage provisions for the site can fully provide for the additional capacity required and prevents any possibility of further pollution problems.</i></p> <p><i>Surface water drainage arrangements for the site will also need to be carefully investigated. This is of particular concern because several parts of the village have been significantly affected by floods caused by surface water runoff in the recent past. It is felt that there is potential for the elevated nature of the site, when compared to Lavington Lane, to result in a considerable amount of storm water runoff after periods of heavy rain. This could result in flooding into Lavington Lane (which may block the road) and consequent unmanaged run off from there into Semington Brook. To counter this it will be essential to design a surface water drainage network that can adequately manage the potential flows and has spare capacity to deal with exceptional rainfall events. In addition it will be necessary to adopt ground surfacing techniques that minimise areas of hard standing or other impermeable surfaces. If the maximum permeability of the site can be maintained this will greatly assist in reducing any surface water flows.'</i> It is considered that although there are challenges with the site in terms of drainage and surface water, mitigation measures are entirely possible to implement on this site to reduce adverse effects and therefore that significant environmental effects are not likely.</p> <p>Environmental quality standards or limit values are not likely to be exceeded and land-use is not likely to be intensified as a result of this neighbourhood plan.</p>
(g) the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.	No	<p>The neighbourhood area contains European and National level biodiversity designations. The southern part of the neighbourhood area, on Salisbury Plain, is designated as SSSI, SAC and SPA. The proposed housing site allocation (Site 7) is considered unlikely to have significant environmental effects on these, either directly or indirectly, as the site is modest in size and located adjoining the existing built edge of the village of West Lavington. The number of new dwellings proposed is considered unlikely to lead to a significant increase in recreational pressure on the European designated sites. The attached document 'SEA Screening Request', at page 21, states that <i>'the proposed housing site is within 2km (at its closest point) of the Salisbury Plain SPA, the Salisbury Plain SAC and the Salisbury Plan SSSI. The development of the site for housing</i></p>

*would be unlikely to lead to major adverse impacts on designated and non-designated biodiversity interests within the local area. However, because of the proximity to the Salisbury Plain Special Protection Area (SPA) housing development may trigger contributions to Salisbury Plain SPA HRA Mitigation Strategy (Stone Curlew Project).'*

There is an area of ancient woodland (Manor House Woods) to the north of the site, separated by Lavington Lane. This is designated as a County Wildlife Site. There will be no direct loss of ancient woodland from developing the site and indirect impacts can be mitigated through open space provision and landscaping in the north of the site which will also serve to buffer the areas of flood risk north of Lavington Lane. Appendix 5 in the attached '*Site Selection Methodology*' document proposes 'strong' landscaping belts on the northern and eastern perimeter of the site. It states that '*this planting should help to reinforce the visual link between some existing planting on site and the trees adjacent to the Semington Brook and in the Manor Woods. On the northern edge the layout should provide for dwellings to be sited away from the ridge line adjacent to Lavington Lane and with their back gardens facing in this direction so that space is provided for the landscaped belt to be planted along the ridge on this road frontage with only garden fences behind. This will ensure that houses and roof tops should be barely visible from Lavington Lane thus maintaining as strong an impression as possible of visual separation between the two villages and maintaining the rural feel of the road.*'

The attached document 'SEA Screening Request', at page 21 also considers the effects of the site on the ancient woodland. It states '*The proposed site is separated from the woodland by a minor road and this will do much to prevent direct impacts as a result of development, however it is necessary to also consider the indirect impacts arising from lighting, including additional lighting of Lavington Lane. Careful consideration must be given to the extent and positioning of development within this site. The site frontage needs to incorporate an appropriate open area and retain as far as possible the existing topography and boundary treatment. In addition highway lighting of the site access from Lavington Lane can be of led design which offers the opportunity to prevent unintended light spillage.*' It is therefore considered that mitigation measures can be achieved to reduce adverse effects on the ancient woodland and that significant effects can be avoided.

There are no national or local landscape designations in the neighbourhood area.

There are no Scheduled Monuments within or in proximity to the site.

Appendix 7 Map 1 on page 67 of the attached document 'West Lavington NDP Site Selection Methodology' shows the proposed site in relation to the conservation area and listed buildings. Potential impacts and mitigation measures on heritage assets are set out in Appendix 3 of the attached document 'West Lavington NDP SEA Screening Request'. It states that '*the proposed housing site is elevated above Lavington Lane and any prominent or extensive development has the potential for adverse effect on the wider setting of the conservation area by changing the eastern gateway into the village. This means that careful consideration must be given to the extent and positioning of development within this site. The site frontage needs to incorporate an appropriate open area and retain as far as possible the existing topography and boundary treatment*'. The West Lavington Conservation Area is located approx 200m to the west of the site and there is a large modern residential housing estate in between such that it is considered that the setting of the conservation area can be protected and the site is large enough to enable new dwellings to be located whereby adverse effects are reduced and significant areas of

landscaping can be incorporated.

Appendix 3 goes on to state that *'the proposed housing allocation site is in relatively close proximity to listed buildings, namely Mill Farmhouse and Granary to the south-east and Clyffe Hall to the east. The setting of these is unlikely to be directly affected by development at the proposed site as a consequence of the intervening distance which is approximately 215m in all cases and the intervening landscape features, land uses and other built development. The proposed housing site is characterised as a modern green space which has been created on former post-medieval fields, as such there is little remaining legible historic character. As such the site has low sensitivity and could accommodate change.'*

The proposed housing allocation (Site 7) is entirely within Flood Zone 1. However, there is an area of Flood Zone 2 and 3 to the north and east of the site, associated with Semington Brook, but the site is considered to be large enough for an appropriate buffer zone to be incorporated in the north and east of the site, with development taking place further to the west adjacent to the existing built development, away from the Brook. The attached document 'West Lavington NDP Site Selection Methodology' pages 62-63 acknowledges that *'the site presents challenges from a drainage viewpoint which will require considerable care to overcome. The Semington Brook runs close to the site, especially at the northeast corner by Cornbury Mill. This is a very high quality stream that rises out of the chalk on the edge of Salisbury Plain at the southern end of West Lavington and flows north past Manor Woods. It is essential that development of the site does not result in any water pollution to the stream either from foul drainage overflows or unmanaged surface water runoff. It is understood (to be confirmed) that the principle foul sewer in the area runs south to north from West Lavington into Littleton Panell and that this has been known to become overloaded, causing some pollution, in the Russell Mill Lane area adjacent to the Manor Woods. It will be essential to work closely with Wessex Water to ensure that the foul drainage provisions for the site can fully provide for the additional capacity required and prevents any possibility of further pollution problems.*

*Surface water drainage arrangements for the site will also need to be carefully investigated. This is of particular concern because several parts of the village have been significantly affected by floods caused by surface water runoff in the recent past. It is felt that there is potential for the elevated nature of the site, when compared to Lavington Lane, to result in a considerable amount of storm water runoff after periods of heavy rain. This could result in flooding into Lavington Lane (which may block the road) and consequent unmanaged run off from there into Semington Brook. To counter this it will be essential to design a surface water drainage network that can adequately manage the potential flows and has spare capacity to deal with exceptional rainfall events. In addition it will be necessary to adopt ground surfacing techniques that minimise areas of hard standing or other impermeable surfaces. If the maximum permeability of the site can be maintained this will greatly assist in reducing any surface water flows.'* It is considered that although there are challenges with the site in terms of drainage and surface water management, mitigation measures are entirely possible to implement on this site to reduce adverse effects and therefore that significant environmental effects are not likely.



## 5. SEA Screening decision

- 5.1 Regulation 9 of the SEA Regulations requires that the responsible authority 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.
- 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 proposed West Lavington Neighbourhood Plan is **unlikely to have significant environmental effects** and accordingly **does not require a Strategic Environmental Assessment**. This decision is made for the following key reasons:
- 1. The neighbourhood plan proposed policies and housing site allocation are considered to be in general conformity with the Wiltshire Core Strategy which has been subject to SEA and HRA assessments. The Core Strategy was adopted on 20<sup>th</sup> January 2015.
  - 2. The neighbourhood plan is proposing policies that seek to protect and enhance the setting of the parish and its natural and built environment. These will also be considered in combination with policies of the Local Plan (Wiltshire Core Strategy 2015) and national planning policy.
  - 3. There are no local or national landscape designations affecting the neighbourhood area.
  - 4. There is one housing site allocation being proposed adjacent to existing, modern residential development. Adverse effects on the natural and built environment are capable of being mitigated through site design and landscaping and therefore significant environmental effects are not considered likely.
- 5.4 This screening decision was sent to Natural England, the Environment Agency and Historic England, requesting comments within a 5-week period from 6<sup>th</sup> October 2017 to 10<sup>th</sup> November 2017. Their responses are included in Appendix A.

## **Appendix A – Consultation responses from statutory consultation bodies**

### **Natural England**

**From:** Routh, Charles (NE)

**To:** Way, David

**Subject:** RE: West Lavington Neighbourhood Plan - SEA screening determination. NE ref: 228166

**Date:** 06 November 2017 10:12:57

**Attachments:** image001.png image002.png

*David, in terms of the natural environment, we see no reason to disagree with the conclusion that a SEA is not required.*

*Regards,*

Charles Routh

Lead Advisor, Planning & Licencing, Somerset, Avon and Wiltshire Area Team, Natural England.

07990 773630

### **Environment Agency**

**From:** Challans, Ellie

**To:** Way, David

**Subject:** RE: West Lavington Neighbourhood Plan - SEA screening determination

**Date:** 09 November 2017 14:26:54

**Attachments:** image004.png image005.png

*Dear David*

*Thank you for consulting the Environment Agency on the above screening determination.*

*We have no objection to your decision that no SEA is required for the plan.*

*Kind regards, Ellie*

Ms Ellie Challans, Planning Advisor, Sustainable Places, Wessex Area,  
Blandford

T 02030 259311 (Internal 59311) E [ellie.challans@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:ellie.challans@environment-agency.gov.uk)

**Environment Agency**, Rivers House, Sunrise Business Park, Higher Shaftesbury Road,  
Blandford,  
Dorset, DT11 8ST

## **Historic England**

**From:** Stuart, David

**To:** Way, David

**Cc:** Burvill, Victoria

**Subject:** West Lavington Neighbourhood Plan - SEA screening determination

**Date:** 08 November 2017 14:54:53

**Attachments:** image001.png image002.png

*Dear David*

*Thank you for your consultation on the SEA Screening for the emerging West Lavington Neighbourhood Plan.*

*I can summarise our response as follows:*

- 1. The consultation is accompanied by an impressive array of information which in its detail and coverage of the relevant heritage considerations is helpful and impressive.*
- 2. The Screening outcome from our perspective essentially hangs on the proposed site allocation and the extent to which this has potential for impact on designated heritage assets.*
- 3. The site selection process and development of the draft brief is the product of methodology, some of which we have previously indicated may not be most suitable for determining potential for impact ie traffic light assessment; distance from asset etc, where such impact needs to be determined on the basis of an understanding of the significance of relevant individual heritage assets. Our last correspondence (see attached) details this and we have had no involvement with the Plan since that time.*
- 4. However, from the information provided it would seem that the individual and collective nature of the relationships between the site and those relevant assets does not appear to generate an in-principle problem in allocating the site for development. However, before ratifying this definitively we could recommend seeking the views of the County Archaeologist (if not already obtained) to ensure that the nature of any below ground archaeological potential does not preclude the site's development.*
- 5. The issue then is how an understanding of those relationships informs both the quantum of development which the site might accommodate and the manner of its displacement with mitigation as appropriate. The various reports highlight that because "the proposed housing site is elevated above Lavington Lane any prominent or extensive development has the potential for adverse effect on the wider setting of the conservation area by changing the eastern gateway to the village" (WLPC SEA Screening Request, p19, etc). The Draft Brief in the Report (Appendix 5, p59) provides detailed criteria for the design of any development, including new landscaping provisions.*
- 6. This generates two follow up questions. How has it been determined that the site can accommodate between 40 & 60 dwellings without causing harm to the setting of the conservation area and how does compliance with the design requirements of the Brief ensure that? How dependent is the acceptance of this approach on the new landscaping belts proposed and would these in themselves constitute alien, contrived or intrusive elements which compromise the setting of the conservation area and the relationship of the site with relevant heritage assets?*

7. The WLPC SEA Screening Report states that “a Heritage Impact Assessment would help identify the significance of the site, potential harm and would inform proposals at the planning application stage” (p19). It could be inferred from this that an appropriate level of understanding of the heritage significance of the site does not already exist, and prompts enquiry into the evidence which has been used to draft the detailed criteria in the Brief and demonstrate their contextual suitability. While an HIA might be expected as a matter of course it is useful to be clear that such an exercise would and should not identify heritage issues of fundamental concern which might compromise the ability of the policy to deliver against its objectives and proposed outcomes.

8. So, the issue upon which the outcome of the SEA Screening appears to depend is not the allocation of the site per se but its ability to deliver the detailed contents of the policy without causing the significant environmental effects in the form of impact on the setting of the conservation area which the Reports identify. We suspect that addressing these points is only a matter of filling in some of the gaps in the evidence narrative with information already known. We therefore look forward to receipt of that clarification so we can confirm a lack of objection to the view that an SEA is not required.

9. On a final and incidental point, the site is referred to as “West Lavington – Behind Lavington Lane/Sandfield/Newby Close” on p27 of the Site Selection Methodology report and as “Land South of Lavington Lane, West Lavington” elsewhere (eg p17 of the Screening Request report). It would be helpful to have consistency in the Site Name to avoid confusion.

*Kind regards*

*David*

David Stuart | Historic Places Adviser South West  
Direct Line: 0117 975 0680 | Mobile: 0797 924 0316  
Historic England | 29 Queen Square | Bristol |