

Blandford + Neighbourhood Plan (Version 2)

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Determination Statement

This determination statement has been produced to comply with Regulation 9 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.

The Regulations implement European Directive 2001/42/EC. This requires that the effect on the environment of certain plans and programmes should be assessed, including plans prepared for town and country planning or land use. An exception is made for plans that determine the use of a small area at a local level, if the responsible authority has determined that the plan is unlikely to have significant environmental effects. This determination statement sets out the reasons why North Dorset District Council (the responsible authority) considers that a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is required with respect to the Blandford + Neighbourhood Plan (Version 2).

A document, which included details regarding the policy scope of the Blandford + Neighbourhood Plan (Version 2), was submitted to North Dorset District Council (NDDC) in April 2018. NDDC sent the document, and a covering email which provided further information regarding the likely scale of development that would be proposed in the neighbourhood plan, to the Statutory Consultation Bodies (Historic England, Natural England and Environment Agency), on the 1 May 2018, as required by Regulation 9 (2) (b) of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.

The District Council received responses from all of the statutory consultation bodies by 22 June 2018 (see Appendix). Having considered these responses, and taken into account the criteria specified in Schedule 1 to the regulations, as required by Regulation 9 (2) (a), the District Council considers that a SEA of the Blandford + Neighbourhood Plan (Version 2) is required for a number of reasons including:

- The Plan intends to allocate land for at least 400 dwellings and 2 hectares of employment land. This is in addition to development proposed in the North Dorset Local Plan Part 1.
- A large part of the plan area is within, or in close proximity to, the Cranborne Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty or Dorset Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
- The plan area includes a large number of heritage assets.

NOTE: The statement is based on the information provided. If the contents of the plan are revised and/or there is a material change in the environmental characteristics in the locality (e.g. the designation of any additional nature conservation or other environmental sites), then the comments contained in this statement would need to be reconsidered in order to take account of the changes.

Habitats Regulations Assessment

Schedule 2, paragraph 1 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 sets out the prescribed basic condition that the making of a neighbourhood plan is not likely to have a significant effect on a European site (as defined in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2012) or a European offshore marine site (as defined in the Offshore Marine Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 2007) (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects).

The District Council has consulted Natural England as to the requirement for a habitats regulation assessment.

Natural England's response on this matter includes the following comment:

Given the scale of the additional housing I can confirm that it would be prudent to complete an HRA of the NP. Among other things this should consider any increase in traffic and potential associated impacts on air quality in combination with other proposals.

Given the large scale of the development proposed, and in light of the comments made by Natural England, the District Council considers that an HRA of the Blandford + Neighbourhood Plan (Version 2) is required.

APPENDIX

SEA Statutory Consultation Bodies Responses

1. Natural England – received 17/05/2018 and 22/06/18
2. Historic England – received 06/06/2018
3. Environment Agency – received 22/06/2018

From: Stobart, John (NE) [REDACTED]
Sent: 22 June 2018 10:48
To: Ed Gerry
Subject: RE: Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening Request - Blandford + Neighbourhood Plan (Version 2)

Ed

Apologies for the delay in getting back to you. Given the scale of the additional housing I can confirm that it would be prudent to complete an HRA of the NP. Among other things this should consider any increase in traffic and potential associated impacts on air quality in combination with other proposals.

I would be happy to comment on the scope of the HRA in due course.

Regards

John Stobart
Planning and Conservation Senior Advisor
Natural England
[REDACTED]

Please note that my working days are now Monday to Thursday

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From: Ed Gerry [REDACTED]
Sent: 18 May 2018 09:29
To: Stobart, John (NE) [REDACTED]
Subject: FW: Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening Request - Blandford + Neighbourhood Plan (Version 2)

Hello John,

Thank you for your email below.

In terms of the matter of the HRA it is currently anticipated that the neighbourhood plan would allocate sites for at least 400 dwellings and approximately 2 hectares of employment land (although this figure could increase to approximately 5 hectares of employment land). These allocations would be in addition to the areas of growth identified in the North Dorset Local Plan Part 1. Given this context please can you confirm that you do not think that an HRA of the plan is required.

I look forward to hearing from you. If you would like to discuss this issue in more detail please feel free to give me a call.

Kind regards,

Ed

Edward Gerry
Planning Policy Team Leader

Dorset Councils Partnership serving:

North Dorset District Council, West Dorset District Council and Weymouth & Portland Borough Council

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From: Stobart, John (NE) [REDACTED]
Sent: 17 May 2018 17:32
To: Ed Gerry
Subject: RE: Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening Request - Blandford + Neighbourhood Plan (Version 2)

Ed

Thank you for consulting Natural England on the screening opinion for the Blandford + Neighbourhood Plan.

I can confirm that based on the scale of the proposals and potential for impacts on the Cranborne Chase AONB, Dorset AONB, as well as possible loss of foraging habitat of the Greater horseshoe bat colony at the Bryanston SSSI Natural England advises that an SEA is completed in support of the proposed Neighbourhood Plan.

With regard to the need for a HRA if the Blandford Neighbourhood Plan is in line with the NDDC local plan then I do not consider there will be any additional issues that would need to be addressed by the NP that would not already have been fully covered by the HRA for the NDDC local plan. On this basis we would not require a separate HRA for the Neighbourhood Plan.

Should you require further information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Regards

John Stobart
Planning and Conservation Senior Advisor
Natural England
[REDACTED]

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From: Ed Gerry [REDACTED]
Sent: 01 May 2018 15:22
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening Request - Blandford + Neighbourhood Plan (Version 2)

Dear All,

North Dorset District Council (NDDC) is required to provide a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) screening opinion in respect of the proposed Blandford + Neighbourhood Plan (Version 2). Regulation 9 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 requires the Council to consult you (the consultation bodies) before issuing a determination statement.

As you will be aware a Blandford + Neighbourhood Plan has already been progressed and was subject to examination. NDDC understands that Blandford Forum Town Council (BFTC) (the Qualifying Body) will formally withdraw this original neighbourhood plan. Work has begun on progressing a new neighbourhood plan. Please see the document attached re the proposed scope of the new plan.

You will note from the content of this document that the new plan will seek to allocate sites for both residential and employment development. In terms of residential development it is currently anticipated that the neighbourhood plan will allocate sites for at least 400 dwellings. The final housing figure will be agreed as work on the plan progresses and it could be more than 400 dwellings. NDDC understands that BFTC will use the findings set out in the North Dorset Local Plan Review Issues and Options Consultation Document (<https://www.dorsetforyou.gov.uk/north-dorset-local-plan-review>), in respect of the areas of search at Blandford, as a basis for considering possible allocations in the neighbourhood plan.

Please could you confirm, on the basis of the information provided, whether you consider a SEA of the neighbourhood plan will be required. For information BFTC is proceeding on the basis that an SEA is required.

John, in addition to the SEA, please can you confirm whether you think a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) of the neighbourhood plan will be required. We discussed this matter in respect of the original neighbourhood plan, which allocated a site for large scale development, and you concluded that an HRA would not be required.

Regulation 9 does not specify a minimum consultation period for this particular duty, so I will take for reference the 5 week period that consultation bodies are given to respond to a Regulation 12 scoping consultation. Therefore, please can you provide me with your comments by the end of **Wednesday 6 June 2018** for your comments. If this deadline is going to prove difficult, please could you let me know at the earliest opportunity so I can advise BFTC.

If you have any questions on this matter, or wish to discuss the scope of the plan, then please let me know.

Kind regards,

Edward Gerry
Planning Policy Team Leader

Dorset Councils Partnership serving:
North Dorset District Council, West Dorset District Council and Weymouth & Portland Borough Council


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From: Stuart, David [REDACTED]
Sent: 06 June 2018 14:22
To: Ed Gerry [REDACTED]
Subject: Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening Request - Blandford + Neighbourhood Plan (Version 2)

Dear Ed

Many thanks for this consultation.

On the basis of the information provided and taking account of the nature of the previous version of the Plan I can confirm that we have no objection to your authority concluding that an SEA will be required.

Kind regards

David

David Stuart | Historic Places Adviser South West
[REDACTED]

Historic England | 29 Queen Square | Bristol | BS1 4ND
<https://historicengland.org.uk/southwest>



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North Dorset District Council
Nordon Salisbury Road
Blandford Forum
Dorset
DT11 7LL

Our ref: WX/2006/000033/OR-
07/PO4-L01
Your ref:
Date: 06 June 2018

Dear Mr Gerry

Proposed B NP2 policy scope

Thank you for consulting the environment Agency on the above mentioned document. We have reviewed the document and we can offer the following general advice in regards to the updated Neighbourhood Plan.

Policy Review

We note the policies proposed for the Neighbourhood Plan and these must look to ensure that all developments enhance the local environment to improve the area for people and wildlife.

Please note that any development must accord with National Flood Risk Policy, see more detailed comments below

SEA - Appraisal Framework

We note the the plan is promoting new development outside of the Local Plan areas and therefore would anticipate that it would require a SEA.

We would expect that the natural environment and climate change are part of the appraisal and that relevant objectives are selected for these areas.

Flood Risk

The local neighbourhood plan should consider whether there is any desire for growth in areas known to be at risk of fluvial, tidal, surface water, or groundwater flooding. If there is development proposed in any area of risk then the Sequential Test / Approach need to be considered, and only water compatible uses considered in the high flood risk areas. This is in accordance with [National Planning Policy Framework and its associated Practice Guidance](#).

You can find a copy of our Flood Maps (<https://flood-map-for-planning.service.gov.uk/>) and other environmental information on our website. This is particularly important for any growth in the Town Centre which may rely on future improvements to the existing flood defences. If this were the case and can pass the Sequential Test, then the development should be delivering financial contributions through the Local Planning Authority to improvements in the flood defence infrastructure that it will be relying on.

Please note that whilst a development site may not within a mapped Flood Zone it may still be at risk from other sources of flooding from other sources e.g. groundwater and overland run-off. Therefore, the plan should acknowledge and consider any known surface water problems and allow for this within any proposed development strategy. Please note that since the 15 April 2015 matters relating to surface water are now dealt with by the Lead

Local Flood Authority. This will be the Unitary or County Council, so please consult whichever is the appropriate body on this aspect.

Surface Water

Surface water run-off should be controlled as near to its source as possible with sustainable drainage systems (SuDS). This reduces flood risk through the use of soakaways, infiltration trenches, permeable pavements, grassed swales, ponds etc. SuDS can also increase groundwater recharge, improve water quality and provide amenity opportunities. A SuDS approach is encouraged by the Building Regulations.

We support the planting of trees within catchments, especially headwaters, to reduce surface water runoff. Therefore, opportunities for increasing the amount of tree planting, in appropriate locations, is considered beneficial.

There should also be consideration about the foul drainage network in the area to understand if there may be existing capacity constraints on the system.

Biodiversity / Green Space

The Neighbourhood plan should acknowledge the need for green spaces to be preserved and enhanced to improve the rich biodiversity of the area. Especially any area that includes wetlands or water bodies (e.g. rivers, streams, ditches) as these provide ecological interest and diversity. Opportunities to enhance any wetland feature should be identified and delivered through development, as this approach is promoted in the National Planning Policy Framework and is desired outcome of the Water Framework Directive.

We would recommend that Natural England are consulted if any proposed developments may impact on any conservation designations and / or [protected species](#).

Groundwater Protection / Contaminated Land

We are pleased to see that the Source Protection Zones are identified within Baseline data. The groundwater in this location requires protection through the development process. If employment uses are proposed then they must be appropriate to the sensitivities of the groundwater.

The rivers and groundwater should be protected and enhanced to ensure that the aims and objectives of the Water Framework Directive are met. Any site that may have been contaminated through its former use will need to be factored into the local plan and any redevelopment strategy.

Please contact me if you have any queries.

Yours sincerely

MICHAEL HOLM
Planning Advisor - Sustainable Places

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