

# **Ombersley and Doverdale Neighbourhood Plan**

Strategic Environmental  
Assessment (SEA) and Habitats  
Regulations Assessment (HRA)  
Screening Opinion



September 2020

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 BACKGROUND

This screening report is designed to determine whether or not the content of the draft Ombersley and Doverdale Neighbourhood Plan requires a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in accordance with the European Directive 2001/42/EC and associated Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.

Whether a Neighbourhood Plan requires a SEA, and if so the level of detail needed, will depend on what is proposed in the draft Neighbourhood Plan. The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) states that a SEA may be required, for example, where:

- the Neighbourhood Plan allocates sites for development;
- the Neighbourhood Plan Area contains sensitive natural or heritage assets that may be affected by the proposals in the plan;
- the Neighbourhood Plan may have significant environmental effects that have not already been considered and dealt with through the SEA of the Local Plan in the area.

The screening report also examines the potential impact of the draft Ombersley and Doverdale Neighbourhood Plan on internationally designated wildlife sites and determines if the plan requires a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA).

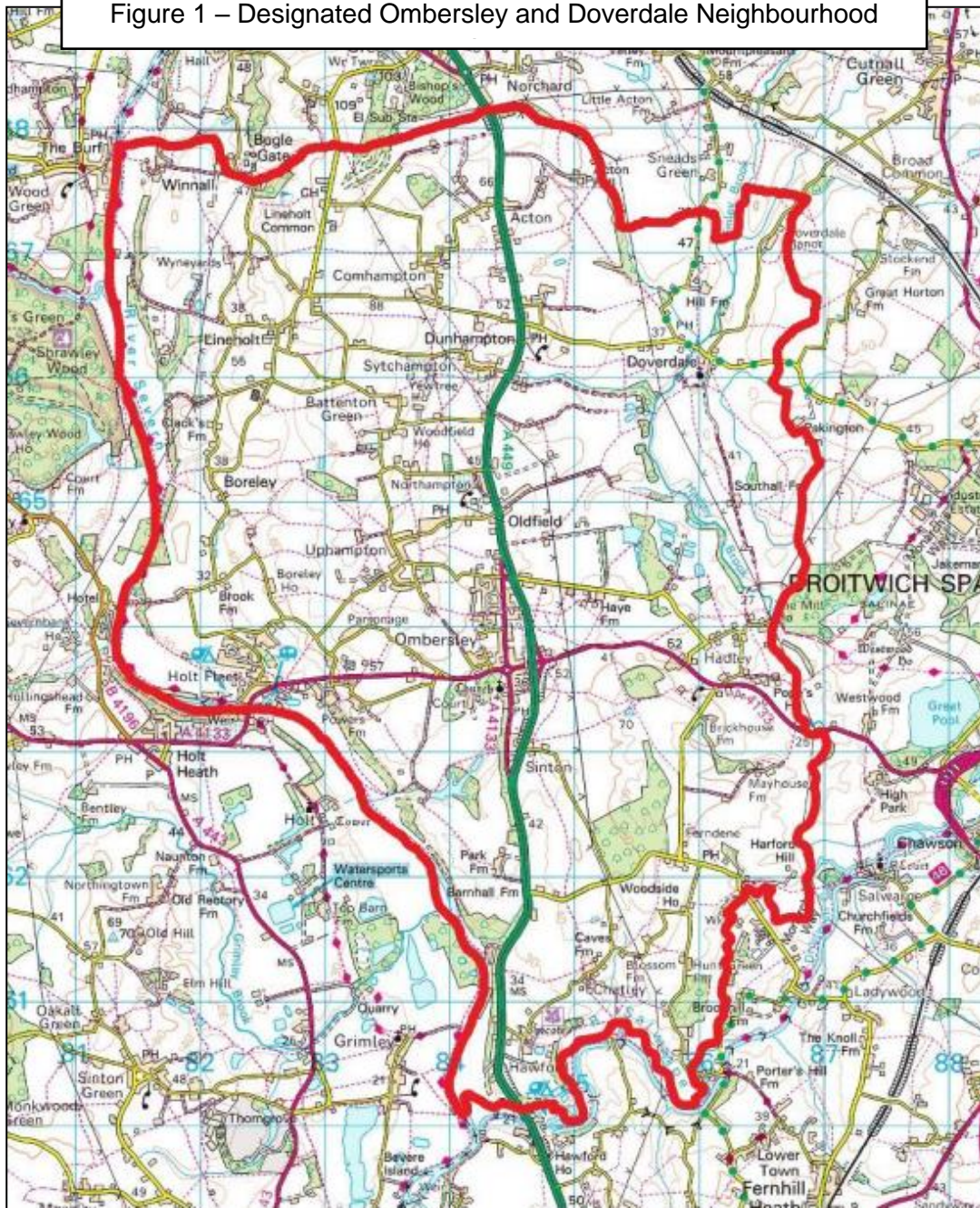
When deciding on whether the proposals are likely to have significant effects, the local authority is required to consult Historic England, Natural England and the Environment Agency. Where the local planning authority determines that the plan is unlikely to have significant environmental effects (and, accordingly, does not require an environmental assessment) it should prepare a statement of its reasons for the determination.

## 1.2 DRAFT OMBERSLEY AND DOVERDALE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN SUMMARY

The Ombersley and Doverdale Neighbourhood Plan is essentially a community-led framework for guiding future development and growth of the parishes to the year 2030. Fourteen draft policies have been proposed, focusing on topics including Sustainable Development; Housing, Facilities and Services; Natural Environment; Built Environment; and Economy.

### 1.3 OMBERSLEY AND DOVERDALE DESIGNATED NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA

Figure 1 – Designated Ombersley and Doverdale Neighbourhood



## 1.4 DRAFT OMBERSLEY AND DOVERDALE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN POLICY SUMMARIES

Fourteen policies are proposed in the draft Ombersley and Doverdale Neighbourhood Plan (ODNP); they are detailed below.

| DRAFT POLICY  | SUMMARY   |
|---|---|
| <i>SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT</i>                      |   |
| <p><b>TOAD1<br/>Sustainable<br/>Development</b></p> | <p>Policy TOAD1 supports development proposals which contribute to the sustainable development of the Ombersley and Doverdale Neighbourhood Area. In making this assessment of sustainability, the following objectives will be sought and balanced, as relevant to the proposal:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. to retain and enhance social and community infrastructure and promote and enable new provision, to meet a range of needs and support quality of life;</li> <li>2. to ensure that new housing addresses community needs;</li> <li>3. to conserve and enhance the distinctive natural and historic environment of the Neighbourhood Area, with development avoiding undue loss of amenity or impacts on landscape character and biodiversity;</li> <li>4. to support existing, new and diversified employment opportunities which are compatible and in scale with the rural nature of the Neighbourhood Area.</li> </ol> |
| <i>HOUSING, FACILITIES AND SERVICES</i>             |   |
| <p><b>TOAD2<br/>Housing Mix</b></p>                 | <p>Policy TOAD2 requires that, in order to be supported, all new housing development proposals of five or more units must demonstrate, subject to viability considerations, that they provide a mix of dwellings to meet community needs. There is a particular need in the Neighbourhood Area for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing with one- or two-bedrooms. On schemes of five or more units, at least 50% of market homes should be provided as one- or two-bedroom properties and approximately 40% as three-bedroom properties, unless up to date evidence on local need or viability suggests otherwise.</li> <li>• Housing designed to meet the needs of older people including bungalows.</li> <li>• Housing for those who wish to rent their homes.</li> </ul>   |

| DRAFT POLICY   | SUMMARY   |
|--|---|
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Starter homes and shared ownership homes.</li> </ul> <p>Where affordable homes are proposed, approximately 60% should be provided as affordable housing for rent unless up to date evidence on local need or viability suggests otherwise.</p>   |
| <p><b>TOAD3<br/>Land North of<br/>Woodhall Lane,<br/>Ombersley</b></p> | <p>Policy TOAD3 supports proposals for the development of land north of Woodhall Lane, Ombersley (allocated in the SWDP at SWDP59/26) providing they meet the following requirements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. a mix of dwellings is provided in accordance with policy TOAD2; and</li> <li>2. the scheme is designed to be in accordance with policy TOAD9 and the principles in the Ombersley and Doverdale Design Guidelines, positively addressing the character of the area including in terms of layout, density, the treatment of site frontages, and the use of materials and architectural detailing; and</li> <li>3. landscaping and improvements to benefit biodiversity are provided in accordance with policy TOAD6; and</li> <li>4. green space is provided which includes a pedestrian link between Woodhall Lane and Holly Lane, recreational facilities for specific age groups, and sustainable drainage.</li> </ol> |
| <p><b>TOAD4<br/>Community<br/>Facilities</b></p>                       | <p>Policy TOAD4 seeks to safeguard a number of existing community facilities, requiring that development proposals which would result in the loss of existing community facilities will only be supported when the criteria in policy SWDP 37B or its successor can be shown to be met.</p> <p>The community facilities covered by this policy are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ombersley Memorial Hall</li> <li>2. Sytchampton Village Hall</li> <li>3. St. Andrew’s Church, Ombersley</li> <li>4. St. Mary’s Church, Doverdale</li> <li>5. Ombersley Endowed First School</li> <li>6. Sytchampton Endowed Primary School</li> <li>7. Ombersley Family Dental Practice</li> <li>8. Ombersley Medical Centre</li> <li>9. Ombersley and Doverdale Tennis Club</li> </ol>   |

| DRAFT POLICY   | SUMMARY   |
|--|---|
|  | <p>10. Ombersley Cricket and Bowls Clubs</p> <p>11. Bowling Clubs at Hadley.</p>  |
| <p><b>TOAD5</b><br/><b>Local Retail and Service Facilities</b></p> | <p>Policy TOAD5 supports proposals for new or expanded convenience retail or other similar services to meet day-to-day needs will providing that they:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. are of a scale which is proportionate to local community needs; and</li> <li>2. make full use of opportunities to provide access by walking, cycling or public transport; and</li> <li>3. do not result in additional on-road parking and avoid undue impact on residential and visual amenity.</li> </ol> <p>Wherever possible, use should be made of sites which are within or physically well related to Ombersley, and of existing buildings and previously developed land in preference to new development on greenfield sites.</p>   |
| <i>NATURAL ENVIRONMENT</i>   |   |
| <p><b>TOAD6</b><br/><b>Landscape and Biodiversity</b></p>          | <p>Policy TOAD6 requires that development proposals should protect, conserve and enhance landscape character and contribute to securing net gains for biodiversity by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. demonstrating that the character of the landscape has positively influenced the siting, scale, layout, landscaping and boundary treatment of the proposal; and</li> <li>2. retaining, conserving and where possible enhancing existing site features of importance to landscape character and/or biodiversity, including woodland, trees, hedgerows, traditional orchards, watercourses and ponds; and</li> <li>3. incorporating new landscaping which serves to maintain and wherever possible enhance landscape character and biodiversity. New planting should favour native species, and arrangements should be made for the future maintenance of the landscaping scheme; and</li> <li>4. making full use of the available opportunities to improve biodiversity including by fostering resilient and coherent ecological networks which serve to link the site to its surroundings.</li> </ol> |
| <p><b>TOAD7</b><br/><b>Landscape Vistas</b></p>                    | <p>Policy TOAD7 requires that development proposals demonstrate that they are sited, designed and of a scale such that they do not substantially harm the landscape vistas identified in Table 1 / Plan 5.</p>  |

| DRAFT POLICY                                   | SUMMARY  |
|--|--|
| <p><b>TOAD8<br/>Local Green<br/>Spaces</b></p> | <p>Policy TOAD8 identifies seven Local Green Spaces, development on which will not be supported unless very special circumstances arise which outweigh the need for protection:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. LGS1 Millhampton Wood</li> <li>2. LGS2 Lloyds Allotments</li> <li>3. LGS3 Memorial Hall Field and playground</li> <li>4. LGS4 Wedding Field</li> <li>5. LGS5 Weighbridge site</li> <li>6. LGS6 Millennium Orchard</li> <li>7. LGS7 Cricket Pitch and bowling green.</li> </ol>   |
| <i>BUILT ENVIRONMENT</i>                       |  |
| <p><b>TOAD9<br/>Design</b></p>                 | <p>Policy TOAD9 requires that development proposals maintain and enhance the local distinctiveness of the Ombersley and Doverdale Neighbourhood Area and achieve a high quality of design by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. having regard to the Ombersley and Doverdale Design Guidelines. A Design and Access Statement or similar should be provided to show how the Guidelines have positively influenced the proposed design solution; and</li> <li>2. taking account of the character of the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, including with regard to density, styles and materials; and</li> <li>3. incorporating sustainability measures including energy and water conservation, the generation of renewable energy, and provision for the recycling of waste, cycle storage, communications and broadband technologies. All new housing should aim to achieve the highest standards of energy conservation, being ideally carbon neutral whilst as a minimum complying with Building Regulations; and</li> <li>4. making full use of available opportunities to provide safe, convenient and direct access to local facilities and services by walking, cycling and public transport; and</li> <li>5. being capable of being safely accessed from the local road network without undue local environmental impacts which cannot be mitigated, and not result in additional on-road parking; and</li> <li>6. not creating unacceptable impacts on amenity and tranquillity from</li> </ol> |



| DRAFT POLICY  | SUMMARY   |
|---|---|
|   | noise, volume and nature of traffic generated, dust or odour. External lighting should avoid undue adverse impacts on amenity, wildlife and dark skies.   |
| <p><b>TOAD10<br/>Development<br/>affecting<br/>Conservation<br/>Areas</b></p> | <p>Policy TOAD10 advises that development proposals should preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Ombersley, Uphampton and Northampton Conservation Areas, having regard to their significance and special interest. Proposals will be supported provided that they:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. serve to preserve or positively enhance the Conservation Area concerned by virtue of their use, character and design; and</li> <li>2. avoid any demolition of a building or structure if its loss would be harmful to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area concerned; and</li> <li>3. respect the prevailing density of buildings, their plan form and the siting of buildings on plots, recognising the variations that occur in these factors in each of the Conservation Areas; and</li> <li>4. reflect the height, scale, form, proportions and detailing of the existing and surrounding buildings; and</li> <li>5. use local materials and vernacular techniques wherever possible. Extensions should use materials that are sympathetic to the existing building; and</li> <li>6. retain the important views, open spaces, boundary features, trees and hedgerows as these may be identified in the relevant Conservation Area Appraisal; and</li> <li>7. specify local materials or native species for any new boundary treatments such as walls, railings, fencing or hedging; and</li> <li>8. preserve or enhance the setting of the Conservation Area.</li> </ol> <p>In applying this policy regard should be had to the relevant Conservation Area Appraisal and to the Ombersley and Doverdale Design Guidelines.</p> |
| <i>ECONOMY</i>  |   |
| <p><b>TOAD11<br/>Small-Scale<br/>Business<br/>Development</b></p>             | <p>Policy TOAD11 supports proposals to enable the creation or expansion of small business enterprises in the Ombersley and Doverdale Neighbourhood Area providing that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. they are of a scale, type and nature appropriate to their location and setting; and</li> </ol>  |

| DRAFT POLICY                                      | SUMMARY   |
|---|---|
|   | <p>2. the impacts on highway safety and capacity are or can be made acceptable, with adequate off-street parking provided for staff, delivery vehicles and visitors; and</p> <p>3. there are no undue impacts on residential amenity, or on the natural and built environments; and</p> <p>4. in the case of proposals in the countryside, full use is made of the available opportunities to improve access on foot, by cycling or by public transport.</p> <p>Wherever possible, use should be made of sites which are within or physically well related to the settlements of Ombersley, Oldfield, Sytchampton and Uphampton, and of existing buildings and previously-developed land in preference to new development on greenfield sites.</p>  |
| <p><b>TOAD12<br/>Tourism and<br/>Leisure</b></p>  | <p>Policy TOAD12 supports proposals which promote rural tourism, craft and leisure (excluding static and touring caravans, chalets and camping sites) in the Ombersley and Doverdale Neighbourhood Area providing that:</p> <p>1. the development is of an appropriate scale and compatible with the rural character of the Neighbourhood Area; and</p> <p>2. the proposal will serve to conserve and enhance the natural and built environments; and</p> <p>3. there is no undue impact on residential or visual amenity; and</p> <p>4. a safe and suitable access is proposed and the volume and nature of traffic expected to arise is appropriate to the location of the site.</p> <p>Proposals for new buildings in the countryside should provide ancillary facilities to an existing tourist business at that location, or re-use redundant rural buildings.</p> |
| <p><b>TOAD13<br/>Farm<br/>Diversification</b></p> | <p>Policy TOAD13 supports proposals to develop and diversify farm, horticultural and other land-based rural businesses in the Ombersley and Doverdale Neighbourhood Area to provide employment, tourism, leisure and recreational uses where:</p> <p>1. the current and future operation of the existing business will not be prejudiced; and</p> <p>2. the overall scale of activities is appropriate to the rural character of the Neighbourhood Area, having regard to hours of operation, traffic generation, and noise and light impacts; and</p> <p>3. existing buildings are re-used wherever possible, with any new</p>   |

| DRAFT POLICY  | SUMMARY   |
|---|---|
|   | buildings well related in scale, siting, materials and colour to existing development.  |
| <p><b>TOAD14<br/>Renewable and<br/>Low Carbon<br/>Energy Projects</b></p> | <p>Policy TOAD14 supports proposals for renewable energy projects and associated infrastructure in or likely to affect the Ombersley and Doverdale Neighbourhood Area where they can demonstrate that the following requirements can be met. In making this assessment, any other existing, permitted or proposed similar developments in the locality will be taken into account so that cumulative impacts are considered. Wherever possible, proposals should be situated on previously-developed or non-agricultural land which is not of high environmental value. The requirements are that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. any proposed use of agricultural land has been shown to be necessary, that poorer quality land has been used in preference to land of higher quality, and that the proposal allows for continued agricultural use where applicable and practicable, and encourages biodiversity improvements; and</li> <li>2. the impacts on landscape character, views and visual amenity are acceptable, or are capable of being satisfactorily mitigated by a landscaping scheme which is itself acceptable; and</li> <li>3. there will be no undue loss of amenity to the occupiers of residential properties, including by way of security fencing, noise, lighting or the design and siting of any installation; and</li> <li>4. the local highway network and the proposed means of vehicular access can cater safely for both the volume and type of vehicles anticipated, and the proposed access is environmentally acceptable; and</li> <li>5. where relevant, sustainable drainage proposals are included to acceptably manage surface water and avoid risk of pollution, soil erosion and damage to wildlife habitats; and</li> <li>6. there are no unacceptable impacts on the natural and historic environments, taking account of the impact on views important to the setting of heritage assets; and</li> <li>7. there are no unacceptable impacts on the utility and enjoyment of public rights of way.</li> </ol> <p>Where appropriate, planning conditions will be imposed to ensure that installations are removed when no longer in use and the land is restored to its previous use and condition.</p> |

## **1.5 STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (SEA) PROCESS**

The basis for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) legislation is European Directive 2001/42/EC which was transposed into English law by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, or SEA Regulations. Detailed guidance on these Regulations can be found in the Government publication “A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive” (OPDM 2005).

The SEA process aims to ensure that likely significant environmental effects arising from a Plan are identified, assessed, mitigated, communicated and monitored, and that opportunities for public involvement are provided. It enables environmental considerations to be accounted for in decision-making throughout the production of a Plan in an integrated manner.

Figure 2 sets out the screening procedure and how a plan should be assessed against the SEA Directive criteria. This outline procedure has then been applied to the draft Ombersley and Doverdale Neighbourhood Plan in Table 1.

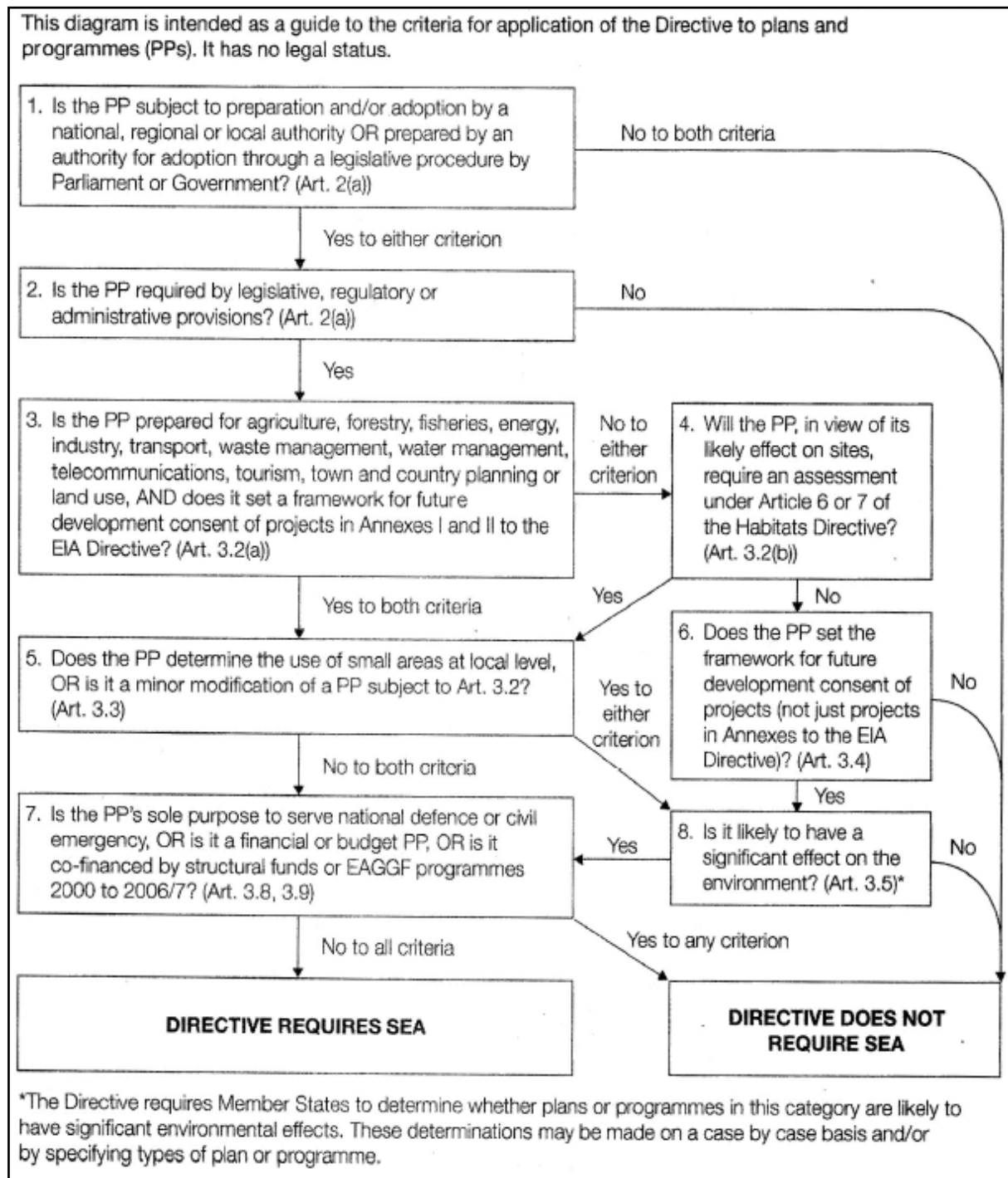


Figure 2 – Application of the SEA Directive to Plans and Programmes

**Table 1:** Assessment of the draft Ombersley and Doverdale Neighbourhood Plan using SEA Directive Criteria

| <b>Stage</b>   | <b>Y/N</b> | <b>Reason</b>  |
|--|------------|--|
| 1. Is the Ombersley and Doverdale Neighbourhood Plan subject to preparation and/or adoption by a national, regional or local authority OR prepared by an authority for adoption through a legislative procedure by Parliament or Government? (Art. 2(a))   | <b>Y</b>   | This is a Neighbourhood Plan that is being prepared by a qualifying body the Localism Act 2011. If the Plan is passed by means of an Examination and Referendum, it will be formally adopted by the Local Planning Authority. It will then form part of the local development framework and be afforded significant weight in planning decisions.  |
| 2. Is the Ombersley and Doverdale Neighbourhood Plan required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions? (Art. 2(a))   | <b>N</b>   | Neighbourhood Plans are not mandatory requirements, and the Ombersley and Doverdale Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared voluntarily by the local qualifying body in line with the provisions of the Localism Act. If the Plan is adopted however it will form part of the statutory development plan, and it is therefore considered necessary to answer the following questions to determine if a SEA is required. |
| 3. Is the Ombersley and Doverdale Neighbourhood Plan prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism, town and country planning or land use, AND does it set a framework for future development consent of projects in Annexes I and II to the EIA Directive? (Art 3.2(a)) | <b>Y</b>   | The Plan is prepared for town and country planning and sets out a framework for future development consent of projects, including the allocation of a specific area of land for development.   |
| 4. Will the Ombersley and Doverdale Neighbourhood Plan, in view of its likely effect on sites, require an assessment for future development under Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive? (Art. 3.2 (b))   | <b>N</b>   | See Screening Opinion for HRA in Section 3 of this report.   |
| 5. Does the Ombersley and Doverdale Neighbourhood Plan determine the use of small areas at   | <b>Y</b>   | The Ombersley and Doverdale Neighbourhood Plan is made up of a number of policies which, when adopted, will form   |

|  |          |  |
|--|----------|--|
| local level, OR is it a minor modification of a PP subject to Art. 3.2? (Art. 3.3)   |          | part of the Local Development Framework and so will have significant weight in planning decisions.   |
| 6. Does the Ombersley and Doverdale Neighbourhood Plan set the framework for future development consent of projects (not just projects in annexes to the EIA Directive)? (Art 3.4)   | <b>Y</b> | When adopted, the Ombersley and Doverdale Neighbourhood Plan will be a statutory planning document. It will form part of the Local Development Framework and so will have significant weight in planning decisions. The responsibility for issuing development consent will remain with the Local Authority. |
| 7. Is the Ombersley and Doverdale Neighbourhood Plan's sole purpose to serve the national defence or civil emergency, OR is it a financial or budget PP, OR is it co-financed by structural funds or EAGGF programmes 2000 to 2006/7? (Art 3.8, 3.9) | <b>N</b> | Not Applicable   |
| 8. Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment? (Art. 3.5)  | <b>N</b> | The policies contained within the Ombersley and Doverdale Neighbourhood Plan are unlikely to have a significant negative effect on the environment.  |

Based upon the initial screening carried out against the criteria in Table 1 above, the draft Ombersley and Doverdale Neighbourhood Plan is unlikely to have a significant effect on the environment. To explore this further, a case-by-case assessment has been conducted. The criteria used in the undertaking of such an assessment are drawn from Article 3.5 (Annex II) of the SEA directive, and the results are shown in Table 2.

## 1.6 HABITATS REGULATIONS ASSESSMENT (HRA) PROCESS

The Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) refers to the assessment required for any plan or project to assess the potential implications for European wildlife sites. The HRA therefore looks at whether the implementation of the plan or project would harm the habitats or species for which European wildlife sites are designated. The relevant European wildlife site designations are Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), which together form part of the Natura 2000 network.

In addition to SPAs and SACs, Ramsar sites are also designated areas which, as a matter of government policy, are to be treated in the same way as European wildlife sites (although

they are not covered by the Habitats Regulations). European wildlife sites and Ramsar sites are collectively known as internationally designated wildlife sites.

The legislation sets out a process to assess the potential implications of a plan on internationally designated wildlife sites. The first stage of this process is a screening exercise where the details of nearby internationally designated sites are assessed to see if there is the potential for the implementation of the plan to have an impact.



## 2. SEA SCREENING

### 2.1 SEA SCREENING ASSESSMENT

European Directive 2001/42/EC requires a full Strategic Environmental Assessment to be undertaken for certain types of plans and programmes that would have a significant environmental effect.

Table 2 below provides the screening determination of the need to carry out a full Strategic Environmental Assessment for the draft Ombersley and Doverdale Neighbourhood Plan. This has been made in accordance with the Regulations and will be subject to consultation with the strategic environmental bodies before Wychavon District Council makes its determination on the necessity for a full Strategic Environmental Assessment.

**Table 2** – The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004: Schedule 1 - Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects on the environment.

| Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (SEA Directive, Annex II)   | Likely to have significant environmental effects? | Summary of significant events   |
|---|---|---|
| 1(a) the degree to which the draft Ombersley and Doverdale Neighbourhood Plan sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources; | <b>YES</b>  | The Ombersley and Doverdale Neighbourhood Plan would, if adopted, form part of the statutory Development Plan and as such would contribute to the framework for future development consent of projects.   |
| 1(b) the degree to which the draft Ombersley and Doverdale Neighbourhood Plan influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy;   | <b>NO</b>   | Other than an additional housing allocation proposed in the draft Ombersley and Doverdale Neighbourhood Plan, the policies are considered to be in general conformity with the South Worcestershire Development Plan (SWDP) , and will be used alongside this document and any subsequently adopted review of the SWDP, in the determination of planning applications when formally 'made' (adopted). |
| 1(c) the relevance of the draft Ombersley and Doverdale   | <b>NO</b>   | The policies of the draft Ombersley and Doverdale Neighbourhood Plan  |

| Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (SEA Directive, Annex II)  | Likely to have significant environmental effects? | Summary of significant events   |
|--|---|---|
| Neighbourhood Plan for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development;   |   | are not considered to have a significant impact on the integration of environmental considerations.   |
| 1(d) environmental problems relevant to the draft Ombersley and Doverdale Neighbourhood Plan;  | <b>NO</b>   | The draft Ombersley and Doverdale Neighbourhood Plan is more likely to promote environmental sustainability than create any environmental problems.   |
| 1(e) the relevance of the draft Ombersley and Doverdale Neighbourhood Plan for the implementation of community legislation on the environment (for example, plans and programmes linked to waste management and water protection); | <b>NO</b>   | The policies of the draft Ombersley and Doverdale Neighbourhood Plan are not considered to be relevant to the implementation of EC legislation.   |
| 2(a) the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the draft Ombersley and Doverdale Neighbourhood Plan;   | <b>NO</b>   | It is considered unlikely that there will be any irreversible damaging environmental impacts associated with the draft Ombersley and Doverdale Neighbourhood Plan. The plan features policies which seek to protect and enhance the natural and built environment, and the plan is therefore likely to result in beneficial rather than damaging effects. |
| 2(b) the cumulative nature of the effects of the draft Ombersley and Doverdale Neighbourhood Plan;   | <b>NO</b>   | The policies of the draft Ombersley and Doverdale Neighbourhood Plan are unlikely to have any significant cumulative negative environmental impacts.  |
| 2(c) the transboundary nature of effects of the draft Ombersley and Doverdale Neighbourhood Plan;  | <b>NO</b>   | The draft Ombersley and Doverdale Neighbourhood Plan is unlikely to have any significant negative environmental impacts on adjoining  |

| Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (SEA Directive, Annex II)   | Likely to have significant environmental effects? | Summary of significant events   |
|---|---|---|
|   |   | Parishes.   |
| 2(d) the risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents) due to the draft Ombersley and Doverdale Neighbourhood Plan;  | <b>NO</b>   | It is considered that there will be no additional risk to human health or the environment as a result of the draft Ombersley and Doverdale Neighbourhood Plan.                          |
| 2(e) the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected);  | <b>NO</b>   | The policies of the Neighbourhood Plan apply to the entirety of Ombersley and Doverdale parishes and are unlikely to significantly affect areas beyond the Neighbourhood Area boundary. |
| 2(f) the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:<br><br>(i) special natural characteristics or cultural heritage;<br><br>(ii) exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values; or<br><br>(iii) intensive land-use; and | <b>NO</b>   | The draft Ombersley and Doverdale Neighbourhood Plan will not have any substantial impact on these factors.   |
| 2(g) the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, community or international protection status.   | <b>NO</b>   | The policies of the draft Ombersley and Doverdale Neighbourhood Plan are unlikely to have a negative impact on any environmental designations in the Neighbourhood Area.                |

## 2.2 SEA SCREENING OPINION

Table 2 assesses the likelihood of significant environmental effects arising from the draft Ombersley and Doverdale Neighbourhood Plan in its current form.

In general, the policies contained within the draft Ombersley and Doverdale Neighbourhood Plan are in-line with the strategy and policies of the adopted SWDP, which has been subject to a Sustainability Appraisal incorporating a Strategic Environmental Assessment.

The policies of the draft Ombersley and Doverdale Neighbourhood Plan seek to avoid or minimise environmental effects through the provision of guidance on issues which are specific to the Neighbourhood Area. It is therefore likely that the draft Ombersley and Doverdale Neighbourhood Plan will have, both directly and indirectly, a positive environmental impact rather than negative, by setting out guidance addressing how developers can minimise impacts on a number of environmental receptors. In addition, the draft Ombersley and Doverdale Neighbourhood Plan does not deviate from the land allocations which are contained with the adopted SWDP.

Pending the responses of the consultation and the formal views of the statutory environmental bodies, the draft Ombersley and Doverdale Neighbourhood Plan is unlikely to require a full Strategic Environmental Assessment.

## 3. HRA SCREENING

### 3.1 HRA SCREENING ASSESSMENT

There are no internationally designated wildlife sites within the Ombersley and Doverdale Neighbourhood Area. For the purposes of this screening assessment, sites that fall within a 20km radius are also considered. There is one site identified within this range – Lyppard Grange SAC which is approximately 10km south-east of the Ombersley and Doverdale Neighbourhood Area.

Lyppard Grange Ponds SAC is located on the eastern outskirts of Worcester, situated amongst a recent housing development on former pastoral farmland. The site comprises two ponds in an area of grassland and scrub (public open space). The site provides habitat for Great Crested Newts *Triturus Cristatus*, which are dependant on both the existing terrestrial habitat (to provide foraging areas and refuge) and on the aquatic habitat (for breeding).

The potential impact of development on this and other sites was examined by a full HRA as part of the production of the South Worcestershire Development Plan (SWDP). The HRA screening of the SWDP concluded that there was uncertainty with regard to the potential for significant effects on two sites as a result of increased disturbance, in particular due to increased recreational activity. Concerns were raised specifically relating to the Lyppard Grange SAC and the potential impact of proposed development on water levels and quality.

As a result of the concerns raised, a full Appropriate Assessment (AA) was conducted (this can be viewed on the SWDP website – [www.swdevelopmentplan.org](http://www.swdevelopmentplan.org)). The AA concluded that the policies of the SWDP (including land allocations) were not likely to have adverse effects on the integrity of Lyppard Grange SAC or Bredon Hill SAC. In addressing concerns relating to possible increased disturbance at the SACs, it was concluded that the location of the sites in relation to proposed developments and also the availability of more suitable areas of open space for recreation in close proximity would keep potential impacts to a minimum. It was also considered that the policies of the SWDP would sufficiently mitigate the potential impact of proposed developments on the water environment, leading to minimal effect on the SAC sites.

The policies in the draft Ombersley and Doverdale Neighbourhood Plan are considered to be in general conformity with the SWDP, and the draft Neighbourhood Plan does not propose an additional land allocation over and above that in the SWDP. With this and the SWDP AA in mind, it is considered that the draft Ombersley and Doverdale Neighbourhood Plan will have no negative impact on internationally designated wildlife sites.

### 3.2 HRA SCREENING OPINION

As a result of the above assessment, it is considered that the policies of the draft Ombersley and Doverdale Neighbourhood Plan are in general conformity with those contained in the SWDP, and the draft Ombersley and Doverdale Neighbourhood Plan does not deviate from the land allocations contained within the SWDP. It is therefore concluded that the draft Ombersley and Doverdale Neighbourhood Plan is unlikely to have a negative impact on any

internationally designated wildlife sites and as such, the recommendation is made that a full AA is not required.

## 4. CONCLUSIONS

The preceding assessment exercises have examined whether the draft Ombersley and Doverdale Neighbourhood Plan is likely to require a full Strategic Environmental Assessment or a Habitats Regulation Assessment Appropriate Assessment.

The SEA screening exercise featured in Section 2 concludes that the draft Ombersley and Doverdale Neighbourhood Plan is unlikely to require a full Strategic Environmental Assessment to be undertaken. This is because the Neighbourhood Plan is in general conformity with the policies contained within the adopted SWDP and does not deviate from the land allocations in the adopted SWDP.

The HRA screening exercise featured in Section 3 concludes that the draft Ombersley and Doverdale Neighbourhood Plan does not require a full Habitats Regulation Assessment Appropriate Assessment to be undertaken. There are no internationally designated wildlife sites within the Ombersley and Doverdale Neighbourhood Area, with only Lyppard Grange SAC falling within a 20km radius. The impact on this and other sites as a result of the land allocations contained within the SWDP has been assessed in the SWDP HRA AA, and the draft Ombersley and Doverdale Neighbourhood Plan does not deviate from these land allocations. It is therefore recommended that a full AA is not required.

Both of the above-mentioned recommendations were subject to consultation with the statutory environmental bodies (i.e. the Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England). The five week consultation period ran from Tuesday 11 August until 5pm on Tuesday 15 September 2020.

It was agreed by all three statutory environmental bodies that neither a full SEA nor a HRA AA were necessary. On that basis, neither a full SEA nor a HRA AA are required in the production of the Ombersley and Doverdale Neighbourhood Plan.

# **APPENDIX 1 - STATUTORY CONSULTEE RESPONSES**



Planning Policy  
Malvern Hills and Wychavon District  
Councils  
Civic Centre  
Queen Elizabeth Drive  
Worcestershire  
WR10 1PT

**Our ref:** SV/2010/104075/SE-  
06/DS1-L01  
**Your ref:**  
**Date:** 10 September 2020

**F.A.O: Mr. Reiss Sadler**

Dear Sir

**OMBERSLEY AND DOVERDALE DRAFT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN - STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENT ASSESSMENT (SEA) AND HABITATS REGULATIONS ASSESSMENT (HRA) SCREENING OPINION CONSULTATION.**

Thank you for referring the above consultations, which we received on 10 August 2020. We would offer the following comments to assist your consideration at this time.

**Strategic Environmental Assessment:** The European Union directive 200142/EC requires a SEA to be undertaken for certain types of plans and programmes that would have 'significant' environmental effect(s). Furthermore paragraph: 046 in the Flood Risk and Coastal Change section of the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) (Reference ID: 11-046-20150209) states "*a strategic environmental assessment may be required, for example, where:*

- *a neighbourhood plan allocates sites for development*
- *the neighbourhood area contains sensitive natural or heritage assets that may be affected by the proposals in the plan*
- *the neighbourhood plan is likely to have significant environmental effects that have not already been considered and dealt with through a sustainability appraisal of the Local Plan".*

Whilst, in consideration of the matters within our remit, the Neighbourhood Plan is considered unlikely to have significant environmental impacts.

**Habitats Regulation Assessment:** *Article 6(3) of the European Habitats Directive (1992) requires that any plan (or project), which is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of a European site (also known as a "Natura 2000" site), but would be likely to have a significant effect on such a site, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall be subject to an 'appropriate assessment' of its implications for the European site in view of the site's conservation objectives.*

Environment Agency  
Newtown Industrial Estate (Riversmeet House) Northway Lane, Tewkesbury, Gloucestershire, GL20 8JG.  
Customer services line: 03708 506 506  
[www.gov.uk/environment-agency](http://www.gov.uk/environment-agency)

Cont/d..

To assist your Council's determination of the HRA Screening opinion, we advise that based on the Screening Report submitted, and in consideration of the matters within our remit, the Neighbourhood Plan is considered unlikely to have significant effects on the European designated sites.

**Going Forwards:** We sent your Council a copy of our Neighbourhood Plan pro-forma guidance for distribution to Parish Councils. The purpose of the guidance is to assist the preparation of Neighbourhood Development Plans, including an appropriate evidence base. This includes consideration of some of the relevant environmental issues that should be considered, including flood risk (from rivers and sea), water quality, water resources and includes latest Climate Change recommendations for flood risk. Since we produced this guidance we have updated our climate change allowances for planners, a revised copy of which was forwarded with a recent response to a similar consultation.

For each proposed site allocation, we recommend completing the pro-forma to check the environmental constraints. This will help collect evidence, identify challenges, inform policy and assist delivery of sustainable solutions.

Regards to any additional housing allocations proposed within the draft Plan we would only make substantive further comments if the Plan was seeking to allocate sites for development in Flood Zones 3 and/or 2 (the latter being used as the 1% climate change extent). Furthermore, we do not offer detailed bespoke advice on policy but advise you ensure conformity with your Local Plan and refer to our guidance. This might assist with your consideration of a local environmental enhancements or improvement policies that may be necessary.

I trust that the above is of use to you at this time.

Yours faithfully

**Mrs Anita Bolton**  
**Planning Advisor**

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature area of the letter.



Historic England

Mr Reiss Sadler  
Wychavon District Council  
Civic Centre  
Queen Elizabeth House  
Persnore  
Worcestershire  
WR10 1PT

[REDACTED]  
Our ref: PL00710442

8 September 2020

Dear Mr Sadler

**OMBERSLEY AND DOVERDALE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN- SEA AND HRA SCREENING**

Thank you for your consultation and the invitation to comment on the SEA and HRA Screening Document for the above Neighbourhood Plan.

For the purposes of consultations on SEA Screening Opinions, Historic England confines its advice to the question, "Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment?" in respect of our area of concern, cultural heritage.

Our comments are based on the information supplied with the screening request. On the basis of the information supplied and in the context of the criteria set out in Schedule 1 of the Environmental Assessment Regulations [Annex II of the 'SEA' Directive], Historic England concurs with your view that the preparation of a Strategic Environmental Assessment is not required.

Regarding HRA Historic England does not disagree with your conclusions but would defer to the opinions of the other statutory consultees.

The views of the other statutory consultation bodies should be taken into account before the overall decision on the need for a SEA is made. If a decision is made to undertake a SEA, please note that Historic England has published guidance on Sustainability Appraisal / Strategic Environmental Assessment and the Historic Environment that is relevant to both local and neighbourhood planning and available at: <https://www.historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/sustainability-appraisal-and-strategic-environmental-assessment-advice-note-8/>

I trust the above comments will be of help in taking forward the Neighbourhood Plan.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

Historic Places Advisor



THE AXIS 10 HOLLIDAY STREET BIRMINGHAM B1 1TF

[REDACTED]  
[HistoricEngland.org.uk](http://HistoricEngland.org.uk)





Historic England



CC:



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[HistoricEngland.org.uk](http://HistoricEngland.org.uk)



*Historic England is subject to both the Freedom of Information Act (2000) and Environmental Information Regulations (2004). Any Information held by the organisation can be requested for release under this legislation.*

Date: 28 August 2020  
Our ref: 325963  
Your ref: Ombersley & Doverdale NP



Reiss Sadler  
Planning Officer (Policy)  
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**BY EMAIL ONLY**

[reiss.sadler@wychavon.gov.uk](mailto:reiss.sadler@wychavon.gov.uk)

Dear Mr Sadler,

**Ombersley and Doverdale Draft Neighbourhood Plan - Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening Opinion**

Thank you for your consultation on the above dated 10<sup>th</sup> August 2020 which was received by Natural England on the same day.

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.

**Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening**

Natural England considers that, based on the material supplied with the consultation, in so far as our strategic environmental interests are concerned, significant environmental effects resulting from the neighbourhood plan are unlikely. We therefore agree with the conclusion of the SEA screening report that a Strategic Environmental Assessment would not be required.

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 [National Planning Practice Guidance](#).

**Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening**

Natural England welcomes the consideration given to the Habitats Regulations. We agree with the conclusion of the report of no likely significant effect upon the named European designated site:

- Lyppard Grange Special Area of Conservation (SAC) - located approximately 45km away.

We would be happy to comment further should the need arise but if in the meantime you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact us.

For any new consultations, or to provide further information on this consultation please send your correspondences to [consultations@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:consultations@naturalengland.org.uk).

Yours sincerely

Victoria Kirkham  
Consultations Team