



# **Screening Assessment of the Draft Colwich Neighbourhood Plan**

Strategic Environmental Assessment &  
Habitats Regulations Assessment

Stafford Borough Council

March 2015

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1. Colwich Parish Council is preparing a draft Neighbourhood Plan (NP) for its two key service villages; Great Haywood and Little Haywood and surrounding areas. The draft Neighbourhood Plan proposes new developments that reflect the needs of the community. In preparing a draft Plan, Colwich Parish Council carried out a community consultation identifying key priorities for the Neighbourhood Plan to address and as a result a number of planning policies have been created. .
- 1.2. Colwich Parish Council have requested Stafford Borough Council to perform a screening assessment on the current draft Colwich Neighbourhood Plan, to ascertain whether it is likely to trigger significant environmental effects and whether a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) needs to be carried out.
- 1.3. Following the results of this screening assessment, the Parish Council will make any necessary changes to the draft Plan and arrange a pre-submission consultation as required by Regulation 14 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012. The Parish Council will then prepare the final draft Neighbourhood Plan to submit to the Borough Council for independent Examination and subsequent Referendum.
- 1.4. In order for Neighbourhood Plans to proceed to referendum, they must meet the Basic Conditions set out in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 Act<sup>1</sup>, which was inserted by the Localism Act 2011. The Borough Council needs to be satisfied that the Basic Conditions have been met. The Neighbourhood Plan must:
  - have regard to national policy
  - have special regard to listed buildings (where relevant)
  - have special regard to conservation areas (where relevant)
  - contribute to sustainable development
  - be in general conformity with strategic policies in the Local Plan
  - not breach EU obligations
- 1.5. In satisfying the basic Conditions, Colwich Parish Council who is the responsible body for preparing the Neighbourhood Plan have appraised the current draft Neighbourhood Plan's proposals and policies to ensure they contribute towards achieving sustainable development. A Basic Conditions Statement will be required on submission to the Borough Council to

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<sup>1</sup> Paragraph 8 of Schedule 4B.

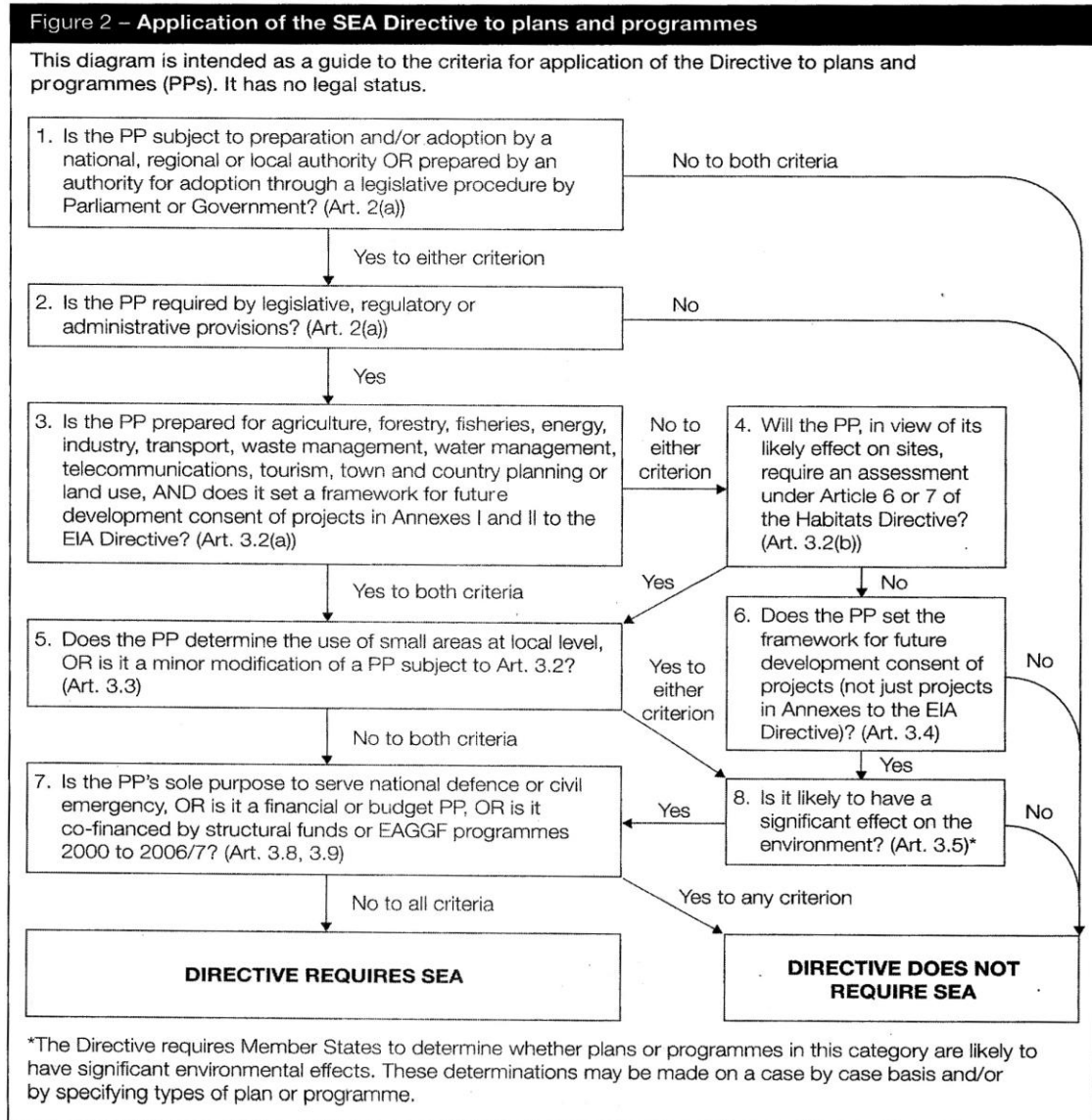
demonstrate how the draft Plan meets the basic conditions set out above alongside the final Plan.

## 2. Compatibility with EU obligations

- 2.1. To meet the basic conditions the draft Colwich Neighbourhood Plan must not breach EU obligations.
- 2.2. The Borough Council has prepared this screening assessment to determine whether the content of the draft Colwich Neighbourhood Plan requires a SEA in accordance with the European Directive 2001/42/EC and associated Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004; and / or a Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) in accordance with Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive and with Regulation 61 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended).
- 2.3. [The National Planning Practice Guidance](#) offers guidance on when a SEA may be required.
- 2.4. A recent reform in Neighbourhood Planning regulations took place with effect from February 2015 and requires Neighbourhood Plan areas to submit either a statement of reasons; environmental report; or an explanation of why the plan is not subject to the requirements of the SEA Directive, to accompany a Neighbourhood Plan when it is submitted to a local planning authority.
- 2.5. Providing there are no significant changes to the proposals and the policies of the current draft Neighbourhood Plan, this screening assessment undertaken by Stafford Borough Council fulfils the new statutory requirement to accompany the final submission of the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 2.6. In the context of neighbourhood planning, a Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) is required where a Neighbourhood Plan is deemed likely to result in negative significant effects occurring on protected European Sites (Natura 2000 sites), as a result of the Plan's implementation.

### 3. SEA Screening

3.1. The diagram below illustrates the process for screening a planning document to ascertain whether a full SEA is required.



3.2. The questions below in Table 1 are drawn from the diagram above which sets out how the SEA Directive should be applied when considering a draft plan.

**Table 1 SEA Screening Process**

Stage	Yes or No	Reason
<p><b>1. Is the Neighbourhood Plan (NP) 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></p>	<p>Yes (go to question 2).</p>	<p>The preparation and adoption of the Neighbourhood Plan (NP) is regulated under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Localism Act 2011. The draft NP is prepared by Colwich Parish Council (as the 'relevant body') and will be 'made' by Stafford Borough Council as the local planning authority.</p> <p>The preparation of NPs is subject to the following regulations: The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 and the Neighbourhood Planning (referendums) Regulations 2012.</p>
<p><b>2. Is the NP required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions? (Art. 2(a))</b></p>	<p>No (go to question 3).</p>	<p>Whilst the NP is not a requirement and is optional under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning Act as amended by the Localism Act 2011, it will, if 'made', form part of the Development Plan. It is therefore important and necessary to answer the following questions to determine whether the policies of the draft NP are likely to have significant environmental effects and if further environmental assessments will be required under the EU Directive.</p>
<p><b>3. Is the NP prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste 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></p>	<p>Yes (go to question 5).</p>	<p>The draft NP is being prepared for town and country planning and land use purposes.</p> <p>As such, the draft NP contains a framework for future development consent of development projects, which may fall under section 10 of the Annex II of the EIA Directive.</p>

<p><b>4. Will the NP, 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></p>		<p>See HRA screening below.</p>
<p><b>5. Does the NP determine the use of small areas at local level OR is it a minor modification of a plan or programme subject to Art. 3.2? (Art. 3.3)</b></p>	<p>Yes (go to question 8).</p>	<p>Yes. Although the plan has not reached the pre-submission stage and is considered relatively a draft at this stage, the Colwich Neighbourhood Plan seeks to provide a mix of developments allocating a number of sites for leisure and recreation, visitor accommodation, residential developments, retail and commercial development and seeks to designate a number of local green spaces most of which are within two defined settlement villages of the Colwich Neighbourhood Area. The plan also seeks to safeguard biodiversity, promote and enhance local heritage assets.</p> <p>The draft NP identifies sites for leisure and recreational developments, allotments, a solar farm, retail and office use and local green spaces. It also determines the use of new housing developments, which could accumulate to provide over 360 new dwellings over the plan period ending 2013. Over 100 dwellings are permitted, and approximately 141 proposed with the rest currently being considered by the LPA. A majority of the total number of housing provision is to be designated within the two settlement boundaries, 10 affordable units are designated outside the settlement boundary.</p>
<p><b>6. Does the NP set the framework for future development consent of projects (not just projects in annexes to the EIA Directive)? (Art. 3.4)</b></p>		<p>Not applicable.</p>
<p><b>7. Is the NP's sole purpose to serve the national defence or civil emergency, OR is it a financial or budget plan or programme, OR is it co-financed by structural funds or EAGGF</b></p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Not applicable.</p>

<b>programmes 2000 to 2006/7? (Art. 3.8, 3.9)</b>		
<b>8. Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment? (Art 3.5)</b>	No	The draft NP is unlikely to have any significant effect on the environment. Please see Appendix 1 and Appendix 2 which provide a detailed assessment to support this conclusion.



3.3. To decide whether the Plan might have significant environmental effects (stage 8), its potential scope should be assessed against the criteria set out in Schedule 1 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004. The criteria from Schedule 1 of the Regulations are set out below.

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

- 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,
- the degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy,
- the relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development,
- environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme,
- the relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (e.g. 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**

- the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects,
- the cumulative nature of the effects,
- the transboundary nature of the effects,
- the risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents),
- the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected),
- the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:
  - special natural characteristics or cultural heritage,
  - exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values,
  - intensive land-use,
  - the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.

3.4. Appendix 1 and 2 apply the above criteria to measure any likely significance effects on the environment arising from the draft Colwich NP.

### **3.5. SEA Screening Outcome**

3.6. As a result of the assessment above, it is considered unlikely that any significant environmental effects will occur from the implementation of the Colwich NP that were not considered and dealt with by the Sustainability Appraisal of the Plan for Stafford Borough (PFSB). As such the Colwich NP does not require a full SEA to be undertaken.

## 4. HRA Screening

4.1. The box below illustrates the stages of HRA related to assessing potential impacts from planning policy documents.

*Stage 1 Screening*

- Identify international sites in and around the plan/ strategy area
- Examine conservation objectives
- Identify potential effects on Natura 2000 sites
- Examine other plans and programmes that could contribute to 'in combination' effects
- If no effects are likely - report that there is no significant effect. If effects are judged likely or uncertainty exists - the precautionary principle applies, proceed to stage 2.

*Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment*

- Collate information on sites and evaluate impact in light of conservation objectives
- Consider how plan 'in combination' with other plans and programmes will interact when implemented (the Appropriate Assessment)
- Consider how the effect on integrity of sites could be avoided by changes to the plan and the consideration of alternatives
- Develop mitigation measures (including timescale and mechanisms)
- Report outcomes of AA and develop monitoring strategies. If effects remain, following the consideration of alternatives and development of mitigation measures, proceed to stage 3.

*Stage 3 Assessment where no Alternatives and impacts remain*

- Identify 'imperative reasons of overriding public interest' (IROPI)
- Identify/ develop potential compensatory measures

4.2. Stafford Borough Council has carried out Stage 1 Screening on the draft Colwich NP.

4.3. There are 6 European sites in Stafford Borough which may be affected by policies in the draft Colwich NP:

- Cope Mere RAMSAR
- Aqualate Mere RAMSAR
- Motte Meadows SAC
- Cannock Chase SAC
- Chartley Moss SAC
- Pasture fields Salt Marsh SAC

4.4. The PFSB was subject to a full Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) including appropriate assessment and identification of mitigation measures. Some of the possible effects identified in the HRA, which relate to the sites above include: water quality deterioration, eutrophication, air pollution, surface water run-off, nitrogen deposition, and increased visitor pressure.

- 4.5. In combination with the PFSB, the draft Colwich NP may affect Natura 2000 sites. Cannock Chase is designated as a Special Area of Conservation. Among the European Sites indicated above, Cannock Chase is situated within approximately 1000 metres of Colwich and Little Haywood and therefore falls within 15km radius of Cannock Chase.
- 4.6. The HRA identified impacts which could affect Cannock Chase Extension Canal SAC. These include an increase in recreational activity would be to the detriment of *Luronium natans*. Existing discharges of surface water run-off, principally from roads could cause some reduction in water quality.
- 4.7. In light of the HRA it is considered the draft Colwich NP does not propose anything which departs from the strategy set out in the PFSB. The PFSB contains a number of policies which aim to protect the SACs integrity and address water quality issues. These policies include Policy N5 Sites of European, National and Local Nature Conservation Importance, Policy N6 Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation (SAC), and Policy N7 Cannock Chase AONB.
- 4.8. The HRA carried out on the PFSB concluded that implementation of the Plan would not result in likely significant or in combination effects. As a result the Council does not consider that implementation of the draft Colwich NP would result in likely significant or in combination effects on Natura 2000 sites.

#### **4.9. HRA Stage 1 Screening Outcome**

- 4.10. As a result of the assessment above, it is considered unlikely that any significant environmental effects will occur from the implementation of the draft Colwich NP that were not considered and dealt with by the Habitats Regulation Assessment carried out on the PFSB. As such the draft Colwich NP does not require a further HRA work to be undertaken.

## **5. Consultation**

5.1. The National Planning Practice Guidance advises that the local planning authority should consult with the relevant statutory consultation bodies. These are Environment Agency, Natural England and English Heritage whose responsibilities cover the environmental considerations of the Regulations to ensure all key environmental issues have been considered.

5.2. This assessment has been circulated to the above agencies. After receiving a response from all the consultees, their response will be added to this assessment and can be found in Appendix 3.

**Appendix 1: The Characteristics of the Neighbourhood Plan, having regard to:**

	<b>Likely significant environmental effect?</b>	<b>Stafford Borough Council Assessment</b>
<b>a) The degree to which the 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>	No	The NP sets out a vision and a number of objectives to help deliver socio-economic and environmental growth and development within Colwich. The draft NP sets out a number of planning policies and proposals around transport, communities, environment and infrastructure. The NP also sets out 4 site specific policies to determine the location of new housing and mixed used developments within two defined settlement boundaries. Approximately 247 - 360 new houses are being allocated (with some sites awaiting decision). The housing provision may therefore be subject to change. It is not considered that the policies and proposals in the NP will have a significant environmental effect.
<b>b) The degree to which the Neighbourhood Plan influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy.</b>	Yes	The draft NP is required to conform to national policy (NPPF) and strategic policies stipulated in the PFSB. The draft NP, if made, will form part of the Development Plan for Stafford Borough and will be used to determine planning applications within the Parish.
<b>c) The relevance of the Neighbourhood Plan for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development.</b>	Yes	The NP seeks to provide a balance of market, specialist and affordable new housing within two defined settlement boundaries with a view to enable local people to reside in the village over the plan period and beyond. The plan seeks to encourage the use of buildings that could become redundant to accommodate retail and office use and also a new health care facility. The plan seeks the provision of a solar farm, leisure and recreation facilities for children and young people and requires new developments to provide pedestrian friendly links to existing and new green spaces.

		<p>It is considered the draft NP will have a positive effect on the environment as it seeks to provide a range of uses that will help deliver local aspirations, particularly with increasing recreational space for local people to use, and promoting local cultural and heritage assets.</p>
<p><b>d) Environmental problems relevant to the Neighbourhood Plan.</b></p>	No	<p>The draft NP area is located within the 15km radius of a European designated site; Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation and several other Natura 2000 sites. The PFSB Policy N6 seeks to protect the integrity of Cannock Chase SAC.</p> <p>Other environmental concerns found within the NP area include flood risks zones 2 and 3. This is concentrated around the north-west of Great Haywood and south of Little Haywood (areas surrounding the two settlement boundaries). Sites proposed for development do not fall within these flood risks areas.</p> <p>There are no Air Quality Management Areas in Stafford Borough which includes the Parish of Colwich.</p>
<p><b>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).</b></p>	N	<p>The NP is not proposing development specifically related to waste management or water management.</p>

**Appendix 2 Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard in particular to:**

	<b>Likely significant environmental effect?</b>	<b>Stafford Borough Council Assessment</b>
<b>a) The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects.</b>	No	<p>There will no doubt be changes to the land use within Colwich. This will largely be concentrated within the two settlement boundaries defined. The proposed developments set out in the plan are expected to carry positive socio-economic benefits for the local community within Colwich. Such proposals for development will be subject to meeting the requirements of policies set out in the PFSB in particular SP7, N2, N4, N5, N6 and N7.</p> <p>It is considered unlikely that any detrimental environmental impacts will occur from the proposals and the policies contained in the NP.</p>
<b>b) The cumulative nature of the effects of the Plan.</b>	No	<p>New housing developments could result to increased visitors to Cannock Chase. Such proposals will be required to ensure any impacts that affect the integrity of Cannock Chase to be mitigated as required in Policies N6 and N7 of the PFSB.</p> <p>The impacts of additional recreation arising from new housing developments in the zone of influence around Cannock Chase SAC are cumulative. Policy N6 and equivalent policies in the local plan for other authorities, part of the Cannock Chase SAC Partnership serve to avoid and mitigate these impacts.</p> <p>It is not expected any accumulative effects of the NP proposals and policies will lead to negative impacts, but result into positive impacts that will affect the Parish.</p>
<b>c) The trans-boundary nature of the effects of the Plan.</b>	No	<p>The impacts of additional recreation arising from new housing developments in the zone of influence around Cannock Chase SAC are</p>

		<p>trans-boundary. Policy N6 and equivalent policies in the local plan for other authorities, part of the Cannock Chase SAC Partnership serve to avoid and mitigate these impacts.</p> <p>There are not expected to be any significant trans-boundary effects as the vast majority of new development will be designated within the settlement boundaries, with some 10 new dwellings outside of these areas, within the Colwich Neighbourhood Plan Area.</p>
<b>d) The risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents).</b>	No	<p>There are no significant effects to human health. The NP sets out to increase green space and recreational provision for local people to use. This would encourage healthier lifestyles.</p>
<b>e) The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected) by the Plan.</b>	No	<p>The NP area comprises of approximately 2862 hectares. The NP allocates land to deliver approximately 360 new dwellings in Colwich, with small scale employment sites, a solar farm and new provision of leisure and recreational space. New housing developments are expected to increase the population of 4528 people living in Colwich (census 2011).</p> <p>The proposed housing developments are expected to change the land use of agricultural land within the Parish.</p> <p>The impacts of additional recreation arising from new housing developments in the zone of influence around Cannock Chase SAC are both cumulative and trans- boundary. Policy N6 and equivalent policies in the local plans of other Cannock Chase SAC Partnership authorities serve to avoid and mitigate these impacts.</p>
<b>f) The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected by the Plan due to:</b>	No	<p>The NP area includes Sites of Biological Importance (SBI) and is also surrounded by other Natura 2000 sites.</p>



<p><b>(i) Special natural characteristics or cultural heritage;</b>  <b>(ii) Exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values; or</b>  <b>(iii) Intensive land use and</b></p>		<p>It is not expected that the NP will have an adverse effect on these sites. The NP includes a policy to safeguard and improve biodiversity (CE7), detailed policies also exist in the PFSB to protect SBIs.</p> <p>The NP area includes four Conservation Areas. A policy within the NP seeks to conserve the existing heritage of the town in accordance with Colwich's Village Design Statement, protecting the local architectural style. In the PFSB Policy N8 ensures proposals are sympathetic to the landscape character and environment.</p> <p>Proposals and policies of the NP allocate sites for development that will meet the housing needs of the parish. It is not expected that this will result in the loss of locally important open space.</p>
<p><b>g) The effects of the Plan on areas or landscapes which have recognised national, community or international protection status.</b></p>	<p>No</p>	<p>Policy N4, N5 and N6 of the PFSB protect sites of European importance, the natural environment and green infrastructure, of which include the SAC Cannock Chase and various SBIs listed in Appendix H of the NP. Policy N7 in the PFSB seeks the conservation and enhancement of Cannock Chase as an Area of Outstanding Beauty (AONB).</p> <p>It is not expected that the NP policies and proposals will have an adverse effect on these areas.</p>

### **Appendix 3: Responses from Statutory Consultees.**

Date: 19 March 2015  
Our ref: 147390  
Your ref: N/a



Stafford Borough Council

For the attention of Raj Bains

**BY EMAIL ONLY**

Customer Services  
Hornbeam House  
Crewe Business Park  
Electra Way  
Crewe  
Cheshire  
CW1 6GJ

T 0300 060 3900

Dear Raj

**Planning consultation: Draft Colwich Neighbourhood Plan - SEA and HRA screening**

Thank you for your consultation on the above dated 09 March 2015 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**

We welcome the production of this SEA Screening report. Natural England notes and concurs with the screening outcome i.e. that no SEA is 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 at:

<http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/blog/guidance/strategic-environmental-assessment-and-sustainability-appraisal/does-a-neighbourhood-plan-require-a-sustainability-appraisal/>

**Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening – More information needed**

Natural England notes the screening process applied to this Neighbourhood plan. We agree with the Council's conclusion of no likely significant effect upon the named European designated sites:

- Cop Mere Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI - a component of the Midland Meres and Mosses Phase 1 Ramsar site)
- Aqualate Mere SSSI (a component of the Midland Meres and Mosses Phase 2 Ramsar Site)
- Motte Meadows Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
- Cannock Chase SAC
- Chartley Moss SSSI (a component of the Midland Meres and Mosses Phase 1 Ramsar site and a component of the West Midlands Mosses SAC)
- Pasturefields Salt Marsh SAC

However in order to set out a robust thought process showing how the Council has reached this conclusion we advise that you review and re-word some of the report content. We set out below the key examples that would benefit from review. If you would like to discuss these further then please get in touch:

### **Paragraphs 4.4 & 4.6**

4.4 – Natural England agrees with the stated impacts and/or vulnerabilities. This paragraph should specify (or reference via the HRA report for the local plan) information showing which Natura 2000 site each of the stated impacts refer to.

4.6 – This should state that it is referring to Cannock Extension Canal SAC.

Omission – the text doesn't explain how the remaining Natura 2000 sites have been screened out.

### **Appendix 1 & 2**

Appendix 1 (d) 'Environmental problems relevant to the Neighbourhood Plan'.

The explanatory text ought to refer to the plan for Stafford Borough (PFSB) and in particular Policy N6 Cannock Chase SAC.

Appendix 2 (a) 'probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects'.

The explanatory text ought to refer to Policy N6 and housing delivery.

Appendix 2 (b) 'cumulative nature of the effects of the Plan', Appendix 2 (c) 'trans-boundary nature of the effects of the Plan' and Appendix 2 (e) 'The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected) by the Plan'.

For clarity it should be noted that the impacts of additional recreation arising from new housing in the zone of influence around Cannock Chase SAC are both cumulative and trans-boundary. Policy N6 and equivalent policies in the local plans of other Cannock Chase SAC Partnership authorities serve to avoid and mitigate these impacts.

Appendix 2 (g) 'The effects of the Plan on areas or landscapes which have recognised national, community or international protection status'.

The explanatory text should include reference to the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and local plan policy N7.

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 queries relating to the specific advice in this letter only please contact me on 0300 060 1640. 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).

We really value your feedback to help us improve the service we offer. We have attached a feedback form to this letter and welcome any comments you might have about our service.

Yours sincerely

Antony Muller  
Lead Adviser – Sustainable Development and Wildlife Team – North Mercia Area

**From:** Dingley, John [mailto:john.dingley@environment-agency.gov.uk]  
**Sent:** 18 March 2015 10:38  
**To:** Raj Bains  
**Subject:** FW: Draft Colwich Neighbourhood Plan - Screening Assessment

Hi Raj,

As requested we have reviewed the screening assessment prepared in support of the Draft Colwich Neighbourhood Plan. We agree with the report's conclusions and do not consider further work on the SEA and HRA necessary for the plan to progress as it is unlikely to have any significant environmental impacts.

Our comments on the draft plan will follow in due course.

Regards,

John Dingley

Mr Alex Yendole  
Forward Planning  
Stafford Borough Council  
Civic Centre Riverside  
Stafford  
Staffordshire  
ST16 3AQ

**Our ref:** UT/2006/000313/AP-  
02/IS2-L01  
**Your ref:**  
**Date:** 08 April 2015

Dear Mr Yendole

## **COLWICH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

Thank you for referring the above consultation which we received on 09 March 2015. We apologise for the delay in responding, and hope that our comments are still able to be taken into consideration.

As floodplain from the River Trent affects a significant proportion of the plan area we welcome the locations of the allocations which all appear to be outside of the area of highest risk. We also support Policy C14 on flooding.

Your Water Cycle Study shows that Hixon Sewage Treatment Works is classified as Amber (some delay to development expected) with limited headroom available within the system to accommodate growth in this locality. In light of this, it must be ensured that any new connections to the public foul sewer has been discussed with Severn Trent water at an early stage to ensure there is capacity within the existing infrastructure to manage additional flow. We recommend this reflected within the plan as a locally specific issue, in order to bring the plan in line with adopted Policy N2 of the Plan for Stafford Borough, and to highlight this requirement at an early stage to prospective developers.

Policy CE1 (Design) could be improved through a specific reference to the inclusion of SuDS wherever feasible in development design. This would help to qualify and cross reference C14 (Flooding).

CE 7 (Biodiversity) should reference the Humber River Basin Management Plan and the objectives set for this stretch of the River Trent by the Water Framework Directive. This is of particular reference to the benefits gained from deculverting watercourses (7.5.31) and the broader objective CE7 d - Conserving and enhancing ponds and watercourses.

Environment Agency  
Sentinel House (9) Wellington Crescent, Fradley Park, Lichfield, WS13 8RR.  
Customer services line: 03708 506 506  
[www.gov.uk/environment-agency](http://www.gov.uk/environment-agency)

Cont/d..

Yours sincerely

Direct e-mail [jane.field@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:jane.field@environment-agency.gov.uk)

End





# ENGLISH HERITAGE

WEST MIDLANDS REGION

**Ms Raj Bains  
Neighbourhood Planning Officer  
Stafford Borough Council  
Council House  
Stafford  
Staffordshire**

Our ref: 1385  
Your ref:  
Telephone 0121 625 6887  
Fax

26 March 2015

Dear Ms Bains

## **COLWICH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN - STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT SCREENING OPINION & HRA SCREENING REPORT**

Thank you for your consultation received on the 9<sup>th</sup> of March and the request for a Screening Opinion.

For the purposes of consultations on SEA Screening Opinions, English Heritage 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, including that set out in the draft plan, and in the context of the criteria set out in Schedule I of the Environmental Assessment Regulations [Annex II of ‘SEA’ Directive], English Heritage concurs with the Council that the preparation of a Strategic Environmental Assessment is currently unlikely to be required.

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 English Heritage 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: <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/strategic-environ-assessment-sustainability-appraisal-historic-environment/>.

8<sup>TH</sup> FLOOR, THE AXIS, 10 HOLLIDAY STREET, BIRMINGHAM B1 1TG

Telephone 0121 625 6820 Facsimile 0121 625 6821

[www.english-heritage.org.uk](http://www.english-heritage.org.uk)

Please note that English Heritage operates an access to information policy.

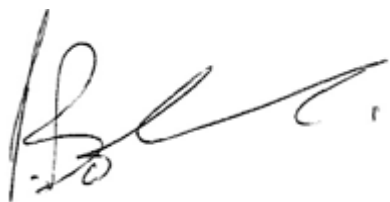
Correspondence or information which you send us may therefore become publicly available



As regards the HRA Screening Report English Heritage does not wish to comment in detail and would defer to Natural England and other statutory consultees, however, we have no adverse comments to make on the report.

I hope this is helpful.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Boland', written in a cursive style.

Pete Boland  
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