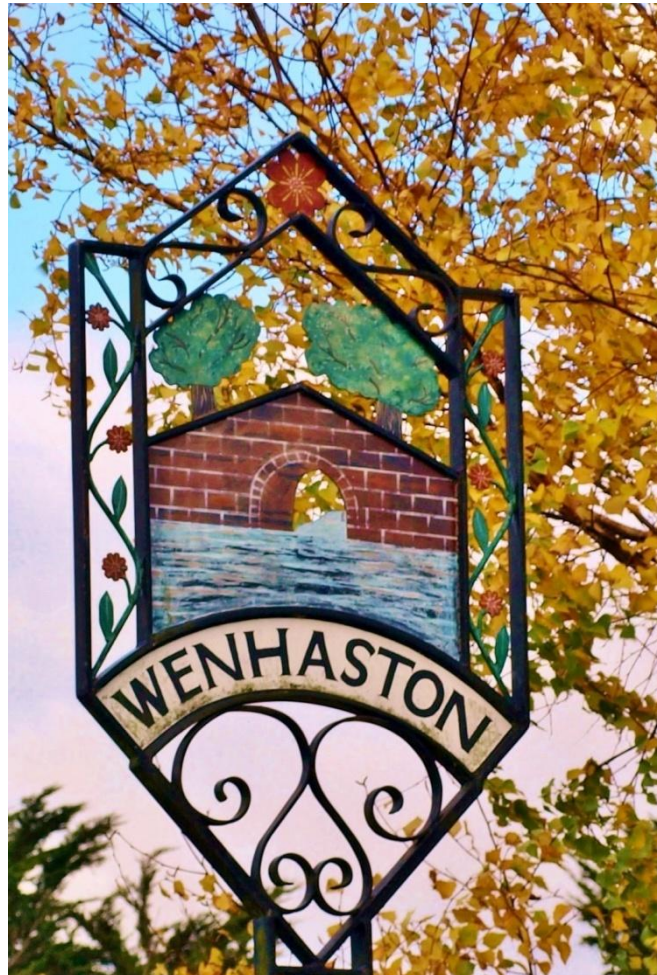


Wenhaston with Mells Hamlet Parish Council

Neighbourhood Development Plan



Strategic Environmental Assessment

Screening Report

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Abstract

Wenhaston with Mells Hamlet Parish council has decided to undertake the process of producing a Neighbourhood Development Plan, as defined in the Localism Act 2011. This plan is to create a vision for the development and use of land within Wenhaston with Mells from 2015 to 2030 related to the views of the residents of the area.

The initial stage of the Neighbourhood Development Plan process is to identify issues and concerns of parishioners but also community assets and aspirations. This information has been used to develop a 'vision' and 'objectives' that have been interpreted into a draft plan for the future of the Parish.

As a stage of the process leading to a 'made' plan the draft plan is subjected to consultation and assessment process. The first stage of this process consultation has been carried out between October 1st and November 12th 2016, and comments have been returned for assessment and implementation into the plan where, and if, appropriate.

A comment received suggested that a Strategic Environmental Assessment, (SEA), Screening may be required as a result of plan proposals if they consider land allocation. Whilst land allocation has not been made by the plan an assessment has been performed to identify the lack of need for such a screening for clarification. This report records this assessment.

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Document Revision History		
Version	Changes	Date
Draft		16 December 2016

1. Introduction

This screening report has been prepared to assist in the determination of Wenhaston with Mells Hamlet, (WwMH), Neighbourhood Plan. It is undertaken to inform the determination process as set out in Regulation 5 and 9 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations (2004) which requires that either Suffolk Coastal District Council, (SCDC), planning department or the Neighbourhood Plan Group determines whether or not a plan is likely to have significant effects. Part of this process includes consulting with statutory bodies and to consider whether the plan complies with the Habitats Directive (Directive 92/43/ECC) and Birds Directive (Directive 79/409/EEC). and also to meet the 'Basic Conditions' for Neighbourhood Development Plans set out in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

It is a requirement to consult with the three statutory environmental organisations:

- English Heritage
- Natural England
- The Environment Agency

for their opinions and comments, which are included in Appendix A.

The English Heritages comments to strengthen the plan policies have been incorporated

The Natural England comments do not foresee any adverse effect on the natural environment.

The Environment Agency provided only generic comment with no issues highlighted.

2. Vision and Objectives

The Vision and objective statements for the WwMH Neighbourhood Plan are as set out below.

Vision Statement

The Neighbourhood Plan will have at its core the ambition to enhance the lives of residents by protecting the rural identity of the Parish of Wenhaston with Mells Hamlet, its scenic beauty, the balance of built and natural landscape, tranquillity and safety. In Wenhaston it will support community infrastructure, provide sufficient housing stock to meet the requirements generated by local needs and promote sustainable development. This will ensure a continued vibrant, safe and supportive village community.

Objectives

1 Environment.

- 1a. To protect and enhance wildlife habitats.
- 1b. To protect and enhance the Wenhaston commons and footpath network.
- 1c. Encourage the reduction of the risk of flooding.

2 Development

- 2a. To protect the AONB from adverse development.
- 2b. To limit new housing to within the development boundary.
- 2c. To limit new housing to that appropriate in tenure, size, design and in a quantity appropriate to local need in line with National and District policy.

3 Amenities and facilities.

- 3a. To protect and enhance village amenities and public facilities and services including Broadband, the Playing Field and equipment, the Post Office and the Village Hall.
- 3b. Identify and promote measures to improve road safety and improve public transport.

4. Character, history and heritage

- 4a To protect and enhance buildings, spaces and views important to the character of the parish, both within and outside the physical limits for the benefit of residents and visitors and education of future generations.

3. Context

A neighbourhood plan proposal is more likely to require a SEA 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.

The Wenhaston with Mells Hamlet Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate sites, but there are some sensitive assets which need considering, The SCDC Local Plan (July 2013) has been through a sustainability appraisal under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004). The latest appraisal took place in May 2013

and the Neighbourhood Plan is unlikely to have significant environmental effects not included in the Local Plan.

4. Environmental Context

Within the physical limits of the parish there is an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, (AONB), (Appendix D, Map 1), toward the eastern edge which then extends eastwards to the coast and there are Special Landscape Areas, (SLA), (Appendix D, Map 2), at the northern and southern fringes. Additionally, there are five commons around the perimeter of Wenhaston Village which have considerable wildlife value. They contain a number of animal species that have National Biodiversity Action Plans (BAPs) and areas of lowland heath, which is a threatened habitat, also with a national BAP.

5. Consultation

Consultations have taken place throughout the process of developing the WwMH Neighbourhood Plan. They have included widespread public consultation, business consultation, interested party consultation and statutory bodies. Protection of the environment was key in all of these consultations and support by the various consultees was emphatic and overwhelming.

7. Screening for SEA (Appendix B)

The procedure for screening set out by the Strategic Environmental Screening, (SEA), regulations are as follows:

- Assess the likely effects of the plan
- Conclude whether the plan requires SEA
- If no, consult the consultation bodies
- Final determination

8. Assessment Arrangements (Appendix C)

This detail application of the SEA Directive to plans and illustrates the screening process based on the flowchart presented in 'A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directives'

9. Assessment Responses for the WwMH Neighbourhood Plan, (NP)

Stage from Flowchart Above	Response	Explanation
1. Is the plan subject to preparation and/or adoption by a national, regional or local authority OR prepared by an authority for adoption through a	YES	The preparation of and adoption of the NP is allowed under the Localism Act 2011. The NP is prepared by Wenhaston with Mells Hamlet Parish Council and will be made by SCDC. The preparation of NP is subject to

legislative procedure by Parliament or Government? (Art. 2(a))		The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 and the NPPF.
2. Is the plan required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions? (Art. 2(a))	YES	The NP is not compulsory but it will form part of the Development Plan for the Parish of Wenhaston with Mells Hamlet and will be read in conjunction with the SCDC Local Plan 2013 which is required by the NPPF.
3. Is the 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))	YES	The NP contains policies on agriculture, energy, industry, transport, water management, telecommunications, tourism and town and country planning and sets a framework for future development.
4. Will the plan, in view of its likely effect on sites, require an assessment under Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive? (Art. 3.2(b))	N/A	The plan is unlikely to have any adverse effect on the environment.
5. Does the plan determine the use of small areas at local level OR Is it a minor modification of a PP subject to Art. 3.2? (Art. 3.3)	YES	The NP considers planning and development at a local level.
6. Does the plan set the framework for future development consent of projects (not just projects in Annexes to the EIA Directive)? (Art 3.4)	YES	The purpose of a Neighbourhood Plan is to establish planning policy and consent requirements for development within the neighbourhood area.
7. Is the plan's sole purpose to serve 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)	NO	None of these factors apply to the Neighbourhood Plan
8. Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment (Art 3.5)	NO	The NP is unlikely to have a significant effect on environmental parameters. The closest Ramsar site to the neighbourhood area is located approximately 1.5km from the boundary. Although the parish contains an AONB to the east and Special Landscape Areas to the north and south, because of the low level of development proposed under

		<p>the NP, it is unlikely to have any significant impact on these landscape designations or the environment as a whole. Furthermore, no adverse impacts are expected as the NP supports the maintenance and continued designation of all wildlife sites, commons and green spaces within the parish. Additionally, social and cultural environmental parameters are also considered under the Plan and the implementation of the Plan aims to enhance the existing provision.</p>
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10. Conclusions

The scope of the WwMH Neighbourhood Plan does not include the allocation of sites for development and is planning development limited to small scale infill only. The Plan also encourages and supports the protection and enhancement of existing habitats and so it is concluded that the Plan will have no likely significant effects and therefore a SEA is not required. It is also concluded that the plan will have no likely significant effects on the Ramsar site and therefore an HRA is not required.

Appendix A

Ref: Consultation on Pre Submission Draft Neighbourhood Plan for Wenhaston and Mells Hamlet

Thank you for inviting Historic England to comment on the Pre Submission draft of your Neighbourhood Plan. Please accept our apologies for the delay in response. I have now had an opportunity to review the draft document and our advice is set out below. Historic England is primarily concerned with how your Plan will impact on the historic environment and our advice focuses on those aspects of your Plan.

Historic England is pleased to note that the Vision Statement of the Neighbourhood Plan recognises the balance of built and natural landscape. Furthermore this vision is expanded by Objective 4 which seeks to protect character, history and heritage. Section 12 of the Neighbourhood Plan covers conservation and heritage. Within this section there is a comprehensive development history of the Neighbourhood Plan area, along with some good baseline information providing details about non designated heritage assets. However a preliminary desktop study of the area covered by the proposed Neighbourhood Plan has shown the parish includes a number of designated heritage assets including a Scheduled Monument (the remains of St Margaret's Chapel, Mells) and 23 listed buildings. Of these listed buildings, the Church of St Peter is listed at Grade 1 and The Grange is listed at Grade II*. The remainder are all listed at Grade II. Approximately half of the listed buildings are in Wenhaston, while the remainder are dispersed across the rural part of the parish. The majority are vernacular buildings that date from the 16th or 17th centuries. A map which plotted both designated and non-designated heritage assets would make a good addition to the proposed Neighbourhood Plan.

Policies seeking the protection of the above designated heritage assets, in terms of both their fabric and setting should be incorporated into the proposed Neighbourhood Plan. This would ensure that the strategy for this area is in line with national planning policy and the local plan. This will ensure that the Plan safeguards those elements which contribute to the significance of these assets so that they can be enjoyed by future generations of the area. Policy WwM P18 could be strengthened by naming the important views, especially the view where the tower of St Peter's Church acts as a landmark.

Historic England welcomes the inclusion of Policy WwM S30 which suggests formal recognition of the non-designated heritage assets in the Parish. We would suggest that this policy is strengthened to protect such Local Heritage Assets from loss or significant harm.. You may also wish to caveat this section to allow for new entries if further interesting historic buildings, structures or remains are discovered.

We consider that planning team and historic buildings conservation officer at Suffolk Coastal District Council will be best placed to assist in looking at areas of special character and promoting Area 1 as a Conservation Area. On this basis we would support Policies WwM P21 (areas of special village character), WwM S29 (Area 1 to be promoted as a Conservation Area) and WwM P22 (Improvement Op Areas). We would be more than happy to meet on site to provide any advice on the issue of conservation area designation if if you feel this would be helpful.

Policy WwM S11 deals with Energy and Sustainability Strategies. Given the number of listed buildings in the parish, we would recommend that this policy is amended to

protect the fabric and settings of both designated and non-designated heritage assets from inappropriate proposals.

Historic England welcomes Policy WwM S19 to preserve the historic public telephone kiosk in The Street, which we also note forms one of the proposed non-designated heritage assets, and contributes strongly to the public realm. Likewise the recognition Policy WwM S20 provides to the Victorian School building, along with its inclusion in the list of proposed non designated heritage assets is also welcomed.

Whilst the development of state of the art equipment at the playing field proposed in Policy WwM S26 is to be welcomed, this policy would be strengthened to protect the setting of any future conservation area or listed building from poorly designed lighting or equipment for example.

Finally, we should like to stress that this opinion is based on the information provided by the proposed Wenhaston Neighbourhood Plan as part of its consultation. To avoid any doubt, this does not affect our obligation to provide further advice on later stages of the Neighbourhood Plan process and potentially, object to specific proposals, which may subsequently arise in the Neighbourhood Plan where we consider that these would have an adverse effect upon the historic environment.

If you have any questions with regards to the comments made then please do get back to me. In the meantime we look forward to continuing to work with you and your colleagues.

Date: 11 November 2016
Our ref: 197325
Your ref: Wenhaston with Mellis Draft Neighbourhood Plan



Mr Phil Corbett
Wenhaston with Mellis Parish

planwenhaston@gmail.com

BY EMAIL ONLY

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

Dear Sir/Madam

Pre-Submission Consultation on the Wenhaston with Mellis Draft Neighbourhood Plan

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

Natural England is a statutory consultee in neighbourhood planning and must be consulted (under Schedule 1 (1) of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations) on draft neighbourhood development plans by the parish/town council or neighbourhood forum where they are likely to affect a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) or 20 hectares or more of Best and Most Versatile agricultural land. We must also be consulted where proposals require Environmental Impact Assessment or screening for Habitats Regulations Assessments.

The parish is close to the Minsmere-Walberswick Heaths and Marshes suite of sites designated for Nature Conservation, and within the Suffolk Coast and Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The plan does have policies for housing allocations, however these are at a low level, and in our view are unlikely to have an impact on any adjacent sites through recreational disturbance effects. The issue of recreational disturbance to birds from cumulative housing development is addressed in the Local Plan, and these measures could be applied to individual applications if necessary. We particularly welcome policies 11.1-11.3 of the Plan which will help to protect and enhance the existing landscape and biodiversity around the village.

Natural England considers that this Plan and its policies, due to the scale, nature and location of development being proposed, are generally unlikely to have any adverse effect on the natural environment, including designated sites and landscapes. We do not therefore wish to make specific comment on the details of this consultation.

The lack of specific comment from Natural England should not be interpreted as a statement that the Plan will have no impacts on the natural environment. Other bodies and individuals may make comments that will help the Parish Council to fully take account of the environmental value of this area in their Plan making process. I hope these comments are helpful. For clarification of any points in this letter, please contact me on. Please send any further consultations to:

consultations@naturalengland.org.uk.

Yours sincerely
John Jackson, Norfolk and Suffolk Team

Page 1 of 1



Natural England is accredited to the Cabinet Office Service Excellence Standard

Natural England Comments



Mr Phil Corbett
Copperfield Back Road
Wenhaston
Halesworth
IP19 9DY

Our ref: AE/2016/121029/01-L01

Date: 10 November 2016

Dear Mr Corbett

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN WENHASTON WITH MELLS

Thank you for your consultation received on 10 October 2016 for the Wenhaston with Mells Hamlet Neighbourhood Plan. We are unable to provide bespoke comments on the neighbourhood plan; however we would like to draw your attention to the following general comments:

Our principal aims are to protect and improve the environment, and to promote sustainable development, we:

- Act to reduce climate change and its consequences
- Protect and improve water, land and air
- Work with people and communities to create better places
- Work with businesses and other organisations to use resources wisely

You may find the following two documents useful; they provide:

- an overview of our role in development and when you should contact us;
- initial advice on how to manage the environmental impact and opportunities of development;
- signposting to further information which will help you with development;
- links to the consents and permits you or developers may need from us.

Building a better environment: Our role in development and how we can help:
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/289894/LIT_2745_c8ed3d.pdf

Environment Agency Response 1

Environmental Quality in Spatial Planning <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/environmental-quality-in-spatial-planning-supplementary-files/>

Please also find attached to this e mail our document "Planning for the environment at the neighbourhood level."

Please note that the view expressed in this letter by the Environment Agency is a response to the proposed Neighbourhood Development Plan only and does not represent our final view in relation to any future planning or permit applications that may come forward. We reserve the right to change our position in relation to any such application.

Please contact me on the details below should you have any questions or would wish to contact any of our specialist advisors. Please continue to keep us advised on the progress of the plan.

We trust this advice is helpful.

Yours sincerely,



Miss Eleanor Stewart
Sustainable Places - Planning Advisor

Direct dial 020 8474 8097
Email planning.ipswich@environment-agency.gov.uk

Appendix B

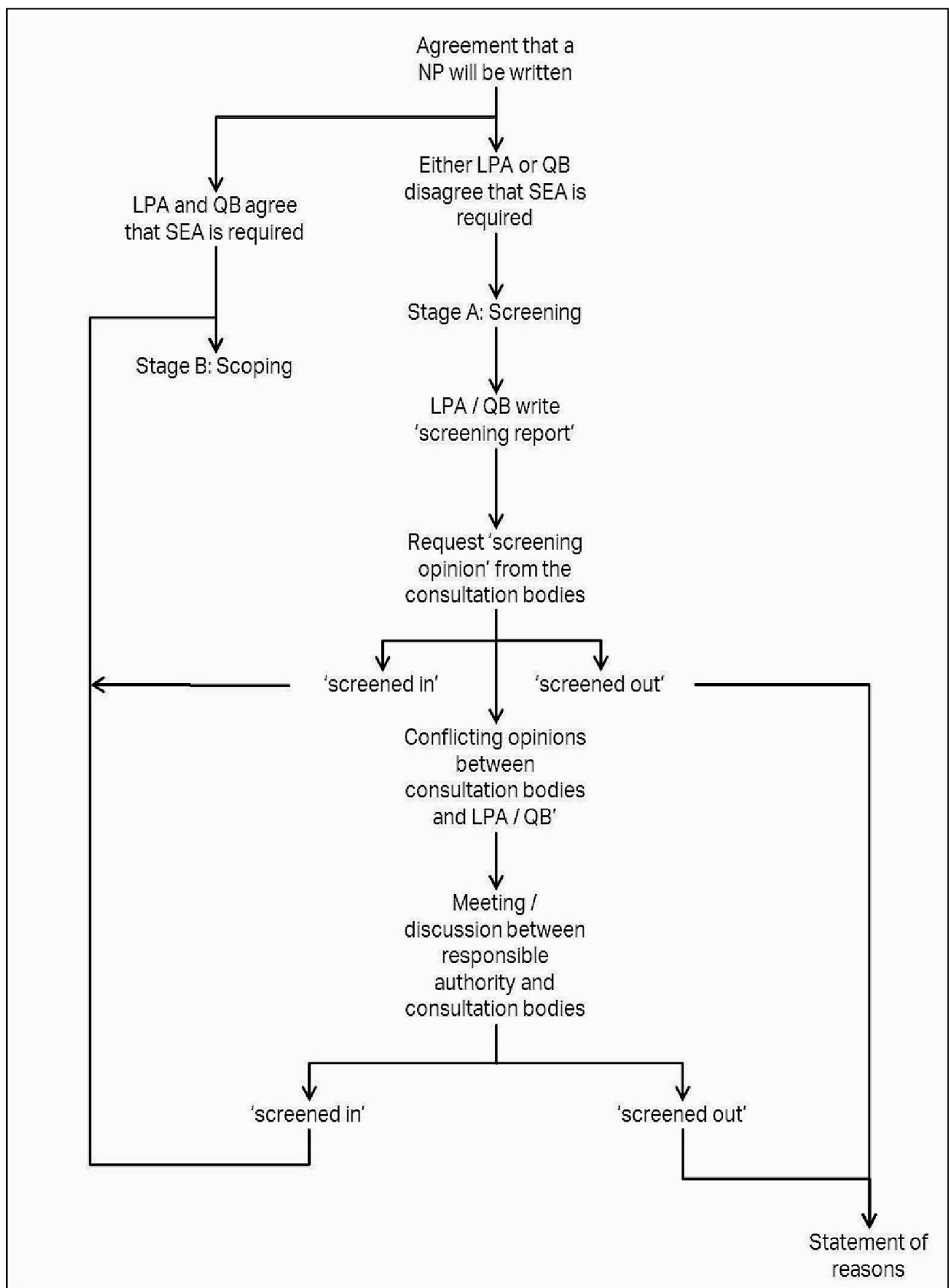
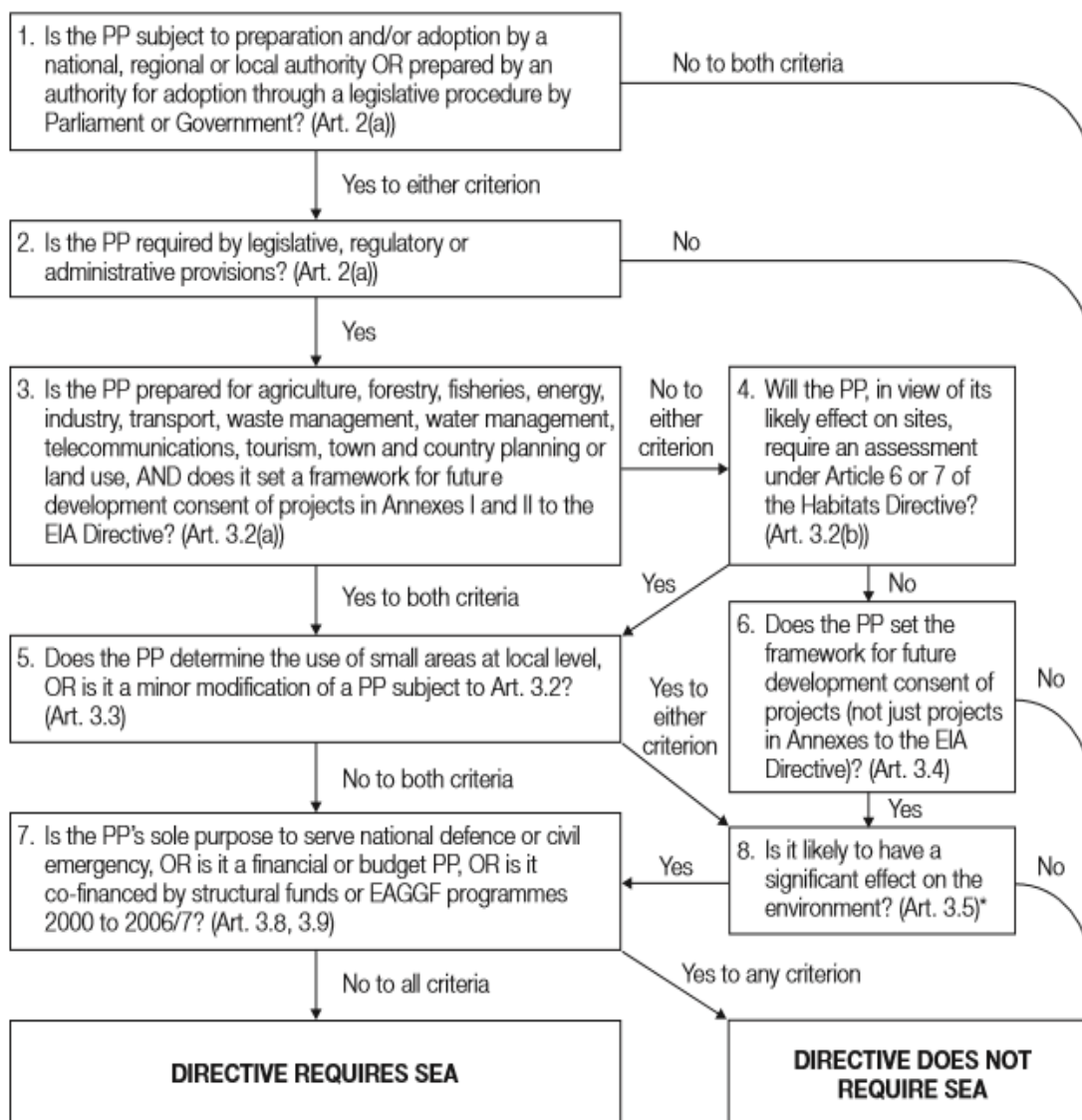


Fig 1 Screening Process from the SEA Toolkit

Appendix C

Figure 2 – Application of the SEA Directive to plans and programmes

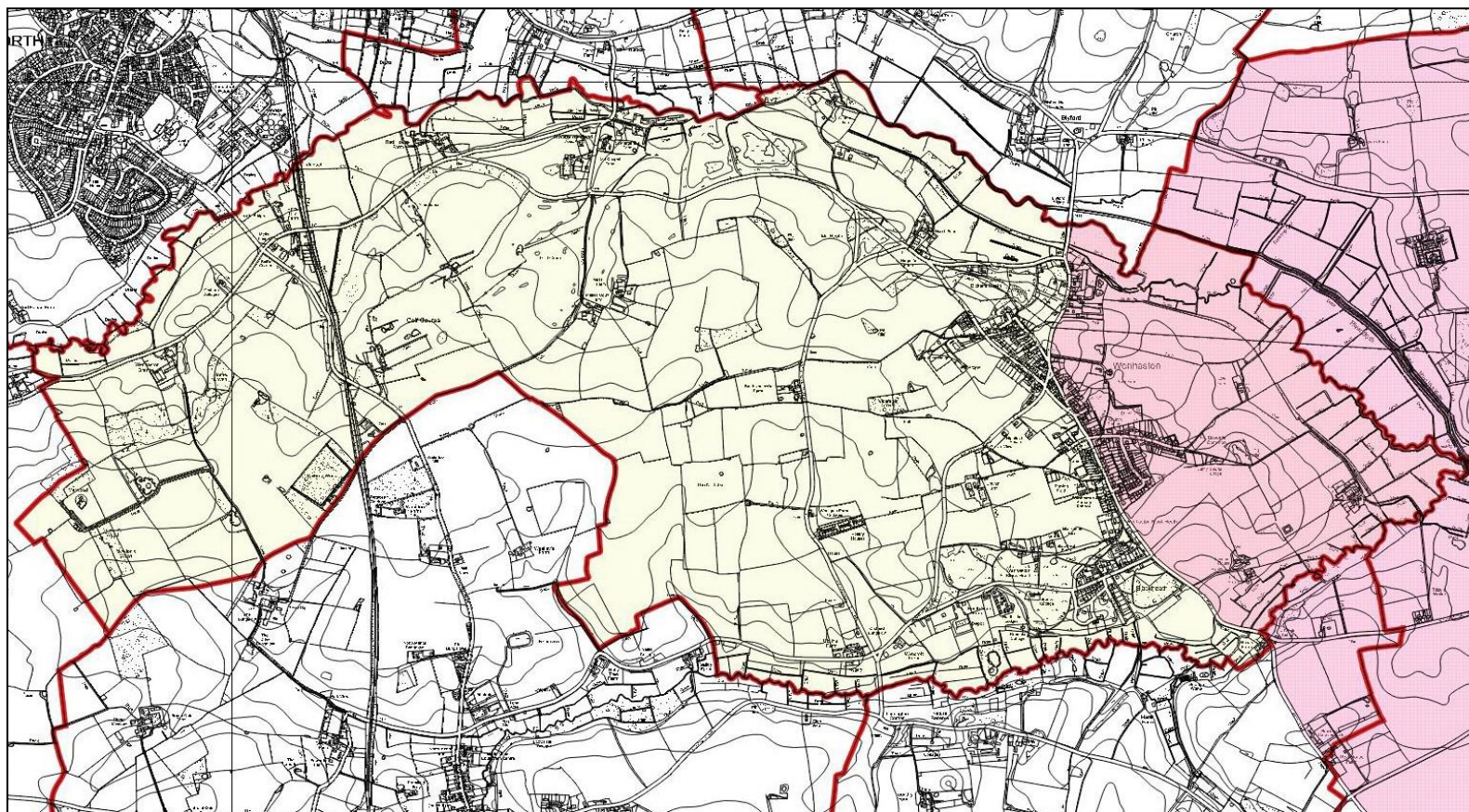
This diagram is intended as a guide to the criteria for application of the Directive to plans and programmes (PPs). It has no legal status.



*The Directive requires Member States to determine whether plans or programmes in this category are likely to have significant environmental effects. These determinations may be made on a case by case basis and/or by specifying types of plan or programme.

Fig 2 Detail Application of the SEA Directive Flowchart

Appendix D



A.O.N.B

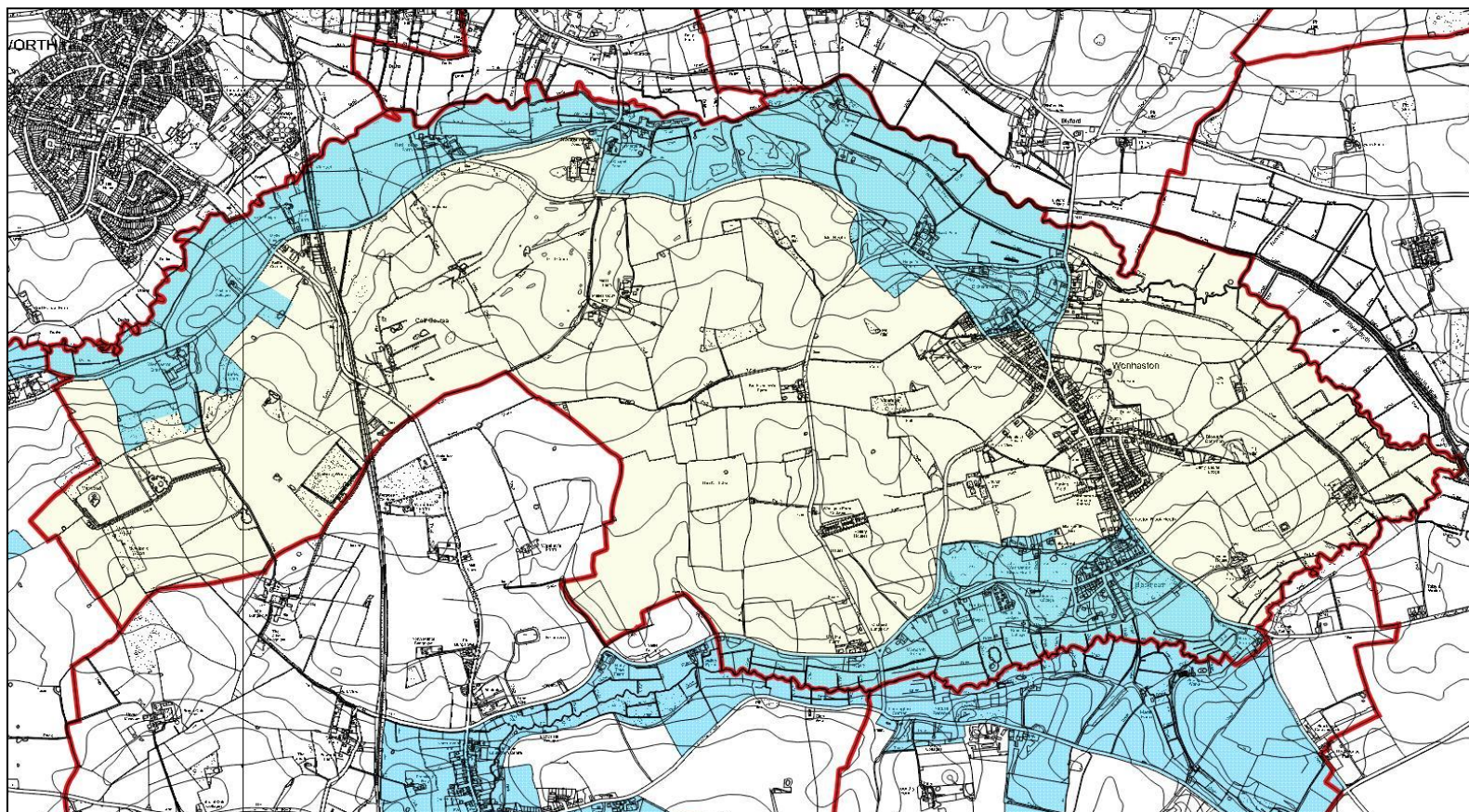




Parish Administrative Boundary

'Wenhasston with Mells Hamlet Parish Council host this map on behalf of SCDC for the purposes of the neighbourhood plan, no other uses permitted'

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Map 1 – Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (A.O.N.B)



 **S.L.A**  **Parish Administrative Boundary**
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Map 2 – Special Landscape Area (SLA)