



# **Castle Cary and Ansford Neighbourhood Plan**

## **Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulations Screening Report**

**December 2017**

Castle Cary and Ansford Neighbourhood Plan  
Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening  
Report

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 One of the basic conditions is that a Neighbourhood Plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations. These obligations include the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive and Habitats Directive. The Habitats Directive requires that plans do not have significant effects on European sites (Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas and Ramsar sites).
- 1.2 A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is required under European legislation for all plans which may have a significant effect on the environment. This particularly relates to plans which designate sites for development such as the District Council's Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plans produced by parish councils.
- 1.3 A Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) is a process which looks at the potential impact of proposals within a plan on European sites.
- 1.4 South Somerset District Council (SSDC) is required to determine whether or not the contents of the Castle Cary and Ansford Neighbourhood Plan require a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in accordance with the European Directive 2001/42/EC<sup>1</sup> and associated Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004. If it is concluded that an SEA is required, the Castle Cary and Ansford Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group are responsible for its production and it must form part of the material that is consulted on once the formal consultation stage is reached.
- 1.5 The aims of the emerging Castle Cary and Ansford Neighbourhood Plan are set out below. The draft neighbourhood plan does not propose to allocate land for housing and employment development. Appendix 1 includes the draft policies and policies map.
  - Support the level of new dwellings required by the Local Plan, particularly focused on the re-development or re-use of brownfield sites within the existing urban area
  - Ensure that new housing developments are of good quality, are energy efficient, have as low an environmental impact as possible and provide a good level of affordable housing to meet local needs with a mix of shared ownership/tenancy types.
  - Ensure that new housing provision, employment growth and provision of roads and additional community facilities progress in an integrated manner, so that the growing community is supported by the necessary infrastructure.
  - Support an environment in which enterprise can flourish and broaden the employment base of the Town. Encourage the early development of serviced sites within allocated employment land to allow the Town to attract new employers and create new jobs for local people of all ages.
  - Support increased tourism to the Town and wider area
  - Support, encourage and promote a range of shops and businesses in the town centre, protect the market, and maintain the free parking and public toilets. Better manage traffic movements through the Town Centre to improve safety and limit congestion, and as far as possible promote and support safe travel for all: public transport, cycle paths, foot paths and rights of way, parking provision, traffic calming schemes and safer roads linking to the Town Centre shops, schools and railway station.

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<sup>1</sup> 'SEA Directive'

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- Foster and promote opportunities for education, training, cultural stimulation and fun - for people of all ages.
- Maintain and enhance the green spaces within both parishes for the enjoyment of all, and protect the surrounding historic countryside, allowing wildlife to thrive.
- Preserve the area's heritage and pleasing ambience and keep it a pleasant place in which to live, work or visit.

1.6 The legislative background in the following chapter 2 outlines the regulations that determine the need for this screening exercise. Chapter 3 gives an overview of the screening process, whilst chapter 4 provides a screening assessment of the likely significant environmental effects of the emerging Castle Cary and Ansford Neighbourhood Plan and considers the need for a full SEA. The outcome of the screening assessment is set out in Chapter 5.

## 2. Legislative Background

- 2.1 The basis for Strategic Environmental Assessments and Sustainability Appraisal legislation is European Directive 2001/42/EC as transposed into English law by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, known as the SEA Regulations (from here on referred to as “the Regulations”). Detailed Guidance of these regulations can be found in the Government publication ‘A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive’ (ODPM 2005) and the National Planning Practice Guidance.
- 2.2 Schedule 2 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 makes provision in relation to the Habitats Directive. The Directive requires that any plan or project likely to have a significant effect on a European site must be subject to an Appropriate Assessment, part of the Habitats Regulations Assessment process. To achieve this, paragraph 1 of Schedule 2 prescribes a basic condition that the making of a neighbourhood plan is not likely to have a significant effect on a European site. Paragraphs 2 to 5 of Schedule 2 amend the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 so as to apply its provisions to neighbourhood development orders and neighbourhood plans.
- 2.3 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) requires Sustainability Appraisal, incorporating SEA, to be carried out for Local Plans. The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)<sup>2</sup> explains that there is no legal requirement for a neighbourhood plan to have a sustainability appraisal. However, a qualifying body must demonstrate how its plan or order will contribute to achieving sustainable development. A sustainability appraisal (SA) may be a useful approach for doing this and the guidance on sustainability appraisal of Local Plans should be referred to.
- 2.4 In some limited circumstances, where a neighbourhood plan could have significant environmental effects, it may fall within the scope of the Regulations and so require a strategic environmental assessment. One of the basic conditions that will be tested by the independent examiner is whether the making of the neighbourhood plan is compatible with European Union obligations (including under the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive).
- 2.5 Whether a neighbourhood plan requires a strategic environmental assessment, and (if so) the level of detail needed, will depend on what is proposed in the draft neighbourhood plan. A strategic environmental assessment may be required, for example, where<sup>3</sup>:
- 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 may have significant environmental effects that have not already been considered and dealt with through a sustainability appraisal of the Local Plan.

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<sup>2</sup> NPPG Paragraph: 026 Reference ID: 11-026-20140306

<sup>3</sup> NPPG Paragraph: 027 Reference ID: 11-027-20140306

- 2.6 To decide whether an emerging neighbourhood plan might have significant environmental effects, its potential scope should be screened at an early stage against the criteria set out in Schedule 1 the Regulations.<sup>4</sup>
- 2.7 This report focuses on screening the emerging Castle Cary and Ansford Neighbourhood Plan for SEA and HRA.

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<sup>4</sup> NPPG Paragraph: 029 Reference ID: 11-029-20140306

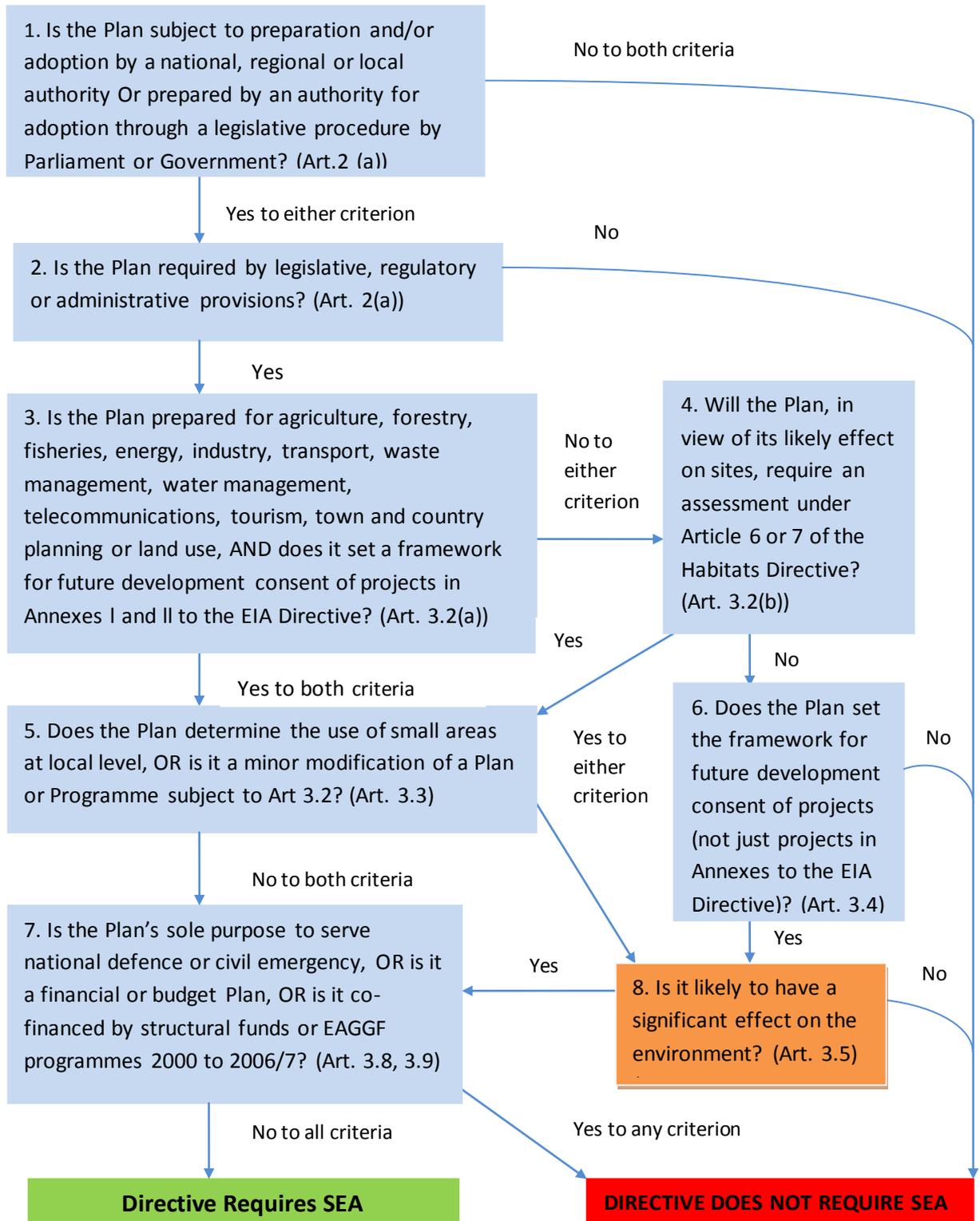
### **3. An Overview of the Screening Assessment**

- 3.1 Figure 1 below reflects 'A practical guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive' and illustrates the process for screening a neighbourhood plan to ascertain whether a full SEA is required (Article numbers relate to European Directive 2001/42/EC).
- 3.2 In order to carry out the screening process it is necessary to consider each of the criteria set out in Figure 1 - this is done in Table 1. Table 2 explicitly addresses criterion 8 (coloured orange) by considering if the Neighbourhood Plan is likely to have a significant effect on the environment. This is done by considering the Plan against the criteria for determining the likely significance of effects referred to in the Directive<sup>5</sup> - these criteria are listed in Figure 2.
- 3.3 Once the process set out in Figure 1 has been completed a screening outcome can be reached and the conclusion can be found in section 5.

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<sup>5</sup> Article 3.5 of European Directive 2001/42/EC

**Figure 1: Application of the SEA Directive to Neighbourhood Plans**



\*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.

- 3.4 The criteria for determining the likely significance of effects referred to in the Directive<sup>6</sup> are set out in Figure 2.

**Figure 2: Criteria for Determining Likely Significance of Effects**

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.

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<sup>6</sup> Article 3.5 of European Directive 2001/42/EC (these criteria are replicated in Schedule 1 of the Regulations)

#### 4. Carrying out the Assessment of Castle Cary and Ansford Neighbourhood Plan

- 4.1 Castle Cary and Ansford Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group have drafted a range of policies that support the aims of the Neighbourhood Plan as set out in paragraph 1.5 of this document. Policies have been drafted which support development for residential use to meet local needs particularly on brownfield land , promote businesses, manage transport impact, enhance new tourist facilities and accommodation support the provision of new and extended recreation facilities, support the town centre, protect community facilities and preserve green spaces and infrastructure.
- 4.2 The only European site within South Somerset is the Somerset Levels and Moors Special Protection Area/Ramsar. One other European site<sup>7</sup> is in close proximity to the district boundary. These sites have been addressed in the Habitats Regulations Assessment which has been carried out alongside the South Somerset Local Plan.
- 4.3 Table 1 assesses whether the Castle Cary and Ansford Neighbourhood Plan will require a full SEA. The criteria within Table 1 are drawn from Figure 1 above which sets out how the SEA Directive should be applied. Appendix 2 contains a map showing the environmental constraints within the Castle Cary and Ansford Neighbourhood Area (NA).

**Table 1: Assessment of the Need for SEA**

Assessment Criteria	Assessment	
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 legislative procedure by Parliament or Government? (Art. 2(a))	<b>Yes</b>	Neighbourhood Plans are prepared by parish/town councils (as the “qualifying body”) under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Localism Act 2011. Once the Plan has been prepared, and subject to examination and referendum, it will be “made” by South Somerset District Council as the Local Planning Authority.  <b>GO TO ASSESSMENT CRITERION 2</b>
2. Is the Plan required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions? (Art. 2(a))	<b>Yes</b>	Whilst producing a Neighbourhood Plan is not a requirement and is optional, it will if ‘made’, form part of the statutory Development Plan for the District and will be used when making decisions on planning applications. It is therefore important that the screening process considers whether it is likely to have significant environmental effects and hence whether SEA is required under the Directive.  <b>GO TO ASSESSMENT CRITERION 3</b>

<sup>7</sup> Bracket’s Coppice Special Area of Conservation, located south east of Crewkerne in Dorset.

<p>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))</p>	<p><b>Yes</b></p>	<p>Castle Cary and Ansford Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared for town and country planning and land use purposes and will set out a framework for future development in Castle Cary and Ansford parishes. It aims to support development for residential use to meet local needs and promote business use as well as supporting the provision of new and extended recreation facilities therefore this may fall under 10 (a &amp; b) of Annex II of the EIA Directive.</p> <p><b>GO TO ASSESSMENT CRITERION 5</b></p>
<p>4. Will the 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))</p>		<p><b>NOT APPLICABLE (refer to Figure 1)</b></p>
<p>5. Does the Plan 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)</p>	<p><b>Yes</b></p>	<p>The Castle Cary and Ansford Neighbourhood Plan draft policies aim to support housing development to meet the Local Plan requirement particularly on brownfield land. Support new small and medium scale economic development and tourism uses. Support the existing town centre facilities as well as supporting the provision of adequate infrastructure, social and recreational facilities, and protecting heritage assets.</p> <p>The draft NP designates seven Areas of Local Green Space. One of the proposed Areas of Local Green Space falls within the Ansford and Castle Cary Direction of Growth (Local Plan Policy LMT1) - a significant area of land within the Direction of Growth now has planning permission.</p> <p><b>GO TO ASSESSMENT CRITERION 8</b></p>
<p>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)</p>		<p><b>NOT APPLICABLE (refer to Figure 1)</b></p>
<p>7. Is the 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</p>		<p><b>NOT APPLICABLE (refer to Figure 1)</b></p>

funds or EAGGF programmes 2000 to 2006/7? (Art 3.8, 3.9)		
<b>As a result of the response to assessment criterion 5 it is necessary to consider the Neighbourhood Plan under assessment criterion 8. Table 2 below does this by using the criteria set out in Figure 2 of this document.</b>		

**Table 2: Determining the Likely Significant Effects of the emerging Castle Cary and Ansford Neighbourhood Plan on the Environment**

Significant effect criteria	Assessment	Likely Significant Environmental effect
<b>The characteristics of the plans, having regard to:</b>		
The degree to which the plan sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources.	<p>The Castle Cary and Ansford Neighbourhood Plan draft policies support development for residential use to meet local needs particularly on brownfield land , promote businesses, manage transport impact, enhance new tourist facilities and accommodation support the provision of new and extended recreation facilities, support the town centre, protect community facilities and preserve green spaces and infrastructure.</p> <p>The draft NP designates seven areas of land as Local Green Space. One of the proposed Local Green Spaces falls within the Ansford and Castle Cary Direction of Growth (Local Plan Policy LMT1) – large areas of land within the Direction of Growth now have outline planning permission.</p> <p>The Neighbourhood Plan sits within the wider framework of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the adopted South Somerset Local Plan 2006-2028; and will therefore help to set the framework for projects that are localised in nature. The proposed Local Green Space designations protect areas of land to the north east, within and adjoining the built up area of the settlement. This means that areas of countryside would be protected from development leading to a positive impact on the surrounding countryside, including areas of BMV agricultural land.</p>	No
The degree to which the plan influences other	The Neighbourhood Plan should have regard to the NPPF and be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the South Somerset	No

<p>plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy.</p>	<p>Local Plan 2006-2028. The plan seeks to accord with the Local Plan requirement of at least 374 dwellings over the plan period but expresses concern over the number of residential planning permissions granted which exceeds that target (monitoring as at 31/03/17 shows 68 completions (net) and 523 commitments).</p>	
<p>The relevance of the plan for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development.</p>	<p>A Neighbourhood Plan is required to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and covers a parish wide geographical area. Therefore the likely significant negative effects on the environment are minimised as the Neighbourhood Plan should integrate environmental considerations and promote sustainable development.</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>Environmental problems relevant to the plan.</p>	<p>The environmental impacts of the proposals within the Castle Cary and Ansford are likely to be minimal. Whilst part of the NA is located within Flood Zones 2 &amp; 3 (in the north west corner of the NA), any future proposals within the flood zone would be subject to a Sequential/Exception Test and site-specific flood risk assessment in accordance with the NPPF.</p> <p>The NA also has a number of heritage assets including four Conservation Areas, listed buildings and an archaeological site of national importance, all of which the Neighbourhood Plan intends to protect.</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>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).</p>	<p>The Neighbourhood Plan has to be in general conformity with the Local Plan. The Local Plan has had regard to European Community legislation on the environment and therefore the NP is not directly relevant to the implementation of other European legislation. Waste management issues are addressed in the Somerset Waste Core Strategy.</p>	<p>No</p>
<p><b>Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to:</b></p>		

The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects.	The draft Neighbourhood Plan seeks to allow for development in Castle Cary subject to a number of criteria therefore some element of environmental change will take place. The overall impacts will be broadly in accordance with the adopted Local Plan and unlikely to have a significant effect.	No
The cumulative nature of the effects.	The Neighbourhood Plan should not lead to significant cumulative impacts as long as the allowance for housing is in accordance with the settlement strategy of the Local Plan (SS1 and SS5). Policies drafted reflecting the aims to protect the historic environment and town centre should ensure that there are no significant cumulative effects on those elements.	No
The transboundary nature of the effects.	There are no transboundary effects resulting from the draft Castle Cary and Ansford Neighbourhood Plan.	No
The risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents).	There is limited risk to human health or the environment as result of the draft Castle Cary and Ansford Neighbourhood Plan.	No
The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected) by the Plan.	The NA covers the civil parishes of Castle Cary and Ansford which have a combined usual resident population of 3,361 people (2011 Census) and covers a geographical area amounting to around 1,262 ha.	No
The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected by the Plan due to: – Special natural characteristics or cultural heritage, – Exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values,	Castle Cary and Ansford NA has one site of national archaeological importance within its boundary; a motte with two baileys north of Park Pond Castle Cary (SM33722) (Local Plan Policy EQ3) <sup>8</sup> . The NA does have some Local Wildlife/Geology sites to the south and the south west of the Parish (Local Plan Policies EQ2, EQ4 and EQ5). A large proportion of the existing built up area is within Areas of High Archaeological Potential (Local Plan Policy EQ3). Conservation Areas cover a large proportion of the existing built settlement –	No

<sup>8</sup> Polices of South Somerset Local Plan 2006-2028, adopted March 2015

<p>- Intensive land-use,                  - The effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.</p>	<p>Castle Cary and Ansford. Parts of the NA are designated as Flood Zones 2 and 3 (medium – high flood risk), to the north west (Local Plan Policy EQ1). Much of the NA is classed as best and most versatile agricultural land.</p> <p>There are no landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status in the Castle Cary and Ansford NA.</p> <p>The Neighbourhood Plan intends to protect these valued areas. The policies within the NPPF and Local Plan (identified in brackets) should ensure that any significant negative effects are adequately mitigated.</p>	
<p><b>Criterion 8 Conclusion</b></p>	<p><b>The Castle Cary and Ansford Neighbourhood Plan is unlikely to have a significant effect on the environment.</b></p>	

## 5. Screening Outcome

- 5.1 As a result of the findings set out in Table 1 and Table 2, it is concluded that the draft objectives and policies of the Castle Cary and Ansford Neighbourhood Plan are unlikely to have significant environmental effects; consequently a full SEA is not required.
- 5.2 The aims of the Castle Cary and Ansford Neighbourhood Plan are particularly supported by South Somerset Local Plan 2006-2028, EP15: Protection and provision of local shops, community facilities and services, EQ1: Addressing Climate Change in South Somerset, EQ2: Design & General Development, EQ3: Historic Environment and EQ4: Biodiversity, all of which have been prepared in accordance with the SEA Directive by being subject to Sustainability Appraisal.
- 5.3 Given the lack of European Sites in the vicinity of the NA, the limited wider impacts likely from the plan itself, and the protection afforded by the NPPF and Local Plan policies, this screening also concludes that Castle Cary and Ansford Neighbourhood Plan **will not have significant effects upon the integrity of European sites**.
- 5.4 The three statutory consultation bodies, Historic England, Natural England and the Environment Agency were consulted on 30 October 2017 to determine if they agree with the screening outcomes of this report. Their Responses are summarised in Table 3 below and attached in full as Appendix 3:

**Table 3: Summary of Consultation Responses from Statutory Bodies**

Statutory Consultee	Summary of Comments
Natural England	<p>1. Natural England concurs with para 5.1 that the draft objectives and policies of the Castle Cary and Ansford Neighbourhood Plan are unlikely to have significant environmental effects; consequently a full SEA is not required.</p> <p>2. Natural England concurs with para 5.3 that the Neighbourhood Plan will not have significant effects upon the integrity of European sites.</p>
Environment Agency	We have reviewed the documents and can agree with the position that SEA and HRA are not required.
Historic England	<p>We note that Policy HOU1 proposes the allocation of 6 brownfield sites for development. Supporting text provides the broad rationale for wanting to identify additional housing need and provision but little information on how the sites in question have been selected.</p> <p>We could find no additional information on the Plan website and have insufficient local knowledge ourselves with which to establish whether there are any heritage issues which might affect such allocations in principle or influence how they should be developed.</p>

	<p>We acknowledge that as brownfield sites the principle of development is probably unlikely to be an issue and recognise that the broad, non-prescriptive and qualified nature of the policy's wording, complemented by national and Local Plan policy, should not mean that such allocations become hostage to fortune scenarios in subsequent development management exercises once the Plan is made and should important heritage considerations be identified.</p> <p>While we therefore do not necessarily dispute the opinion of the SEA Screening Report that there is not a likelihood of the Plan generating significant environmental effects it would be helpful if more information were available on the selection of the sites in question to substantiate their suitability and definition as "brownfield" allocations.</p> <p>On receipt of such information we would be happy to formally offer no objection to your proposed Screening conclusion.</p> <p>Additional information was forwarded by South Somerset District Council and confirmation was received that there is no objection to the conclusion that an SEA is not required.</p>
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- 5.5 In light of the District Council's findings and the responses from the statutory consultees it is concluded that there is **no requirement** for a full SEA or HRA to be undertaken. This conclusion is based upon the current draft policies of the Castle Cary and Ansford Neighbourhood Plan
- 5.6 This conclusion should be revisited at future stages, as SSSC must decide whether the neighbourhood plan proposal is compatible with EU obligations when it takes the decision on whether the neighbourhood plan should proceed to referendum; and when it takes the decision on whether or not to make the neighbourhood plan.

## **Appendix 1 – Draft Policies and Map**

### **Policy DP1**

The NP Councils will expect all new development to be designed to the highest standards and to recognise the unique character of Castle Cary and Ansford. The design principles set out below identify the criteria which will be used to assess all types of new development.

### **Policy HOU1: Housing development within the settlement area**

The local councils will encourage and support early development or redevelopment for housing purposes of the following brownfield sites within the settlement area, provided it is consistent with the design principles set out in this plan:

- Nursery site
- Hillcrest School
- Constitutional Club
- BMI site
- Priory Site
- Red House

### **Policy HOU2: Housing development in the “direction of growth”**

Proposals for housing development within the direction of growth or elsewhere outside the settlement boundary will be strongly resisted unless there is clear evidence that

- a. the additional housing will help meet a clearly identified local need for affordable housing (that need arising from within the neighbourhood plan area and its hinterland) that is not capable of being met elsewhere; and
- b. the proposal is consistent with the design principles set out in this plan

### **EMP1 – Delivery of further employment land**

The development of land for businesses falling within Use Classes B1 and B2 will generally be supported, provided that this can be accommodated without significant environmental harm or adverse impact on the local road network.

### **EMP2 – Expansion of existing employment premises**

The NP councils will normally give support to proposals for the expansion of existing employment premises which maintain or increase the level of employment opportunities.

### **TOU1 – New and enhanced tourist facilities and visitor accommodation**

The development of new or enhanced tourist facilities and visitor accommodation will be supported provided they are of a scale appropriate to the size and function of Castle Cary/Ansford as a local Market Town, do not harm the Town’s environmental, cultural or heritage assets and are accessible through sustainable modes of travel including rail, cycling and walking.

### **TC1 – Loss of retail or similar premises**

The NP councils will not support any proposals for change of use within the town centre which involve the loss of floorspace used for main town centre uses, as defined in Appendix B.

### **TC2 – Town Centre Parking**

Development which would either directly or indirectly reduce the public car parking provision in the Town Centre will not be supported.

### **TRA1 – Opportunities to improve the transport network**

Development proposals should provide or maintain a safe and convenient highway network that, where appropriate meets the following requirements:

- the provision of new or improved links to the existing highway network to promote a choice of reasonably direct and safe routes for pedestrians and cyclists into the town centre, main employment sites, and to the railway station, linking to the key route network
- the provision of opportunities for enhanced, attractive walking and cycling routes linking to the wider rights of way network into the countryside.

### **TRA2 – HGV Traffic at Local Highway Hotspots**

The NP councils will require that transport assessments associated with applications for employment and similar development should pay particular attention to the impact of HGV and other traffic at the local highway hotspots identified on the policies map: B3153 at Clanville; A371 at Cumnock Road, Ansford; A371 at the station railway bridge.

### **INF1 – Expanding Primary School provision**

The NP Councils will seek to ensure that future growth of the Castle Cary Community Primary School should be in close proximity to the town centre.

### **INF2 – Youth facilities provision**

Any s106 and CIL funds within the NP area should be allocated towards appropriate youth facilities in the area. In particular, the NP councils will press for new facilities to be provided on the Torbay Road development site on the land provisionally reserved for a primary school.

### **INF3 – Protection of important social and community facilities**

The NP councils have identified important social and community facilities, as shown on the schedule at Appendix A, and will seek to ensure that these are maintained and protected.

### **ENV1 protection of green corridors and natural environment**

The NP councils will seek to protect existing green corridors, footpath links, hedgerows and other natural features of the local environment, and to institute new or replacement features as opportunities arise.

### **ENV2 – Local Green Spaces**

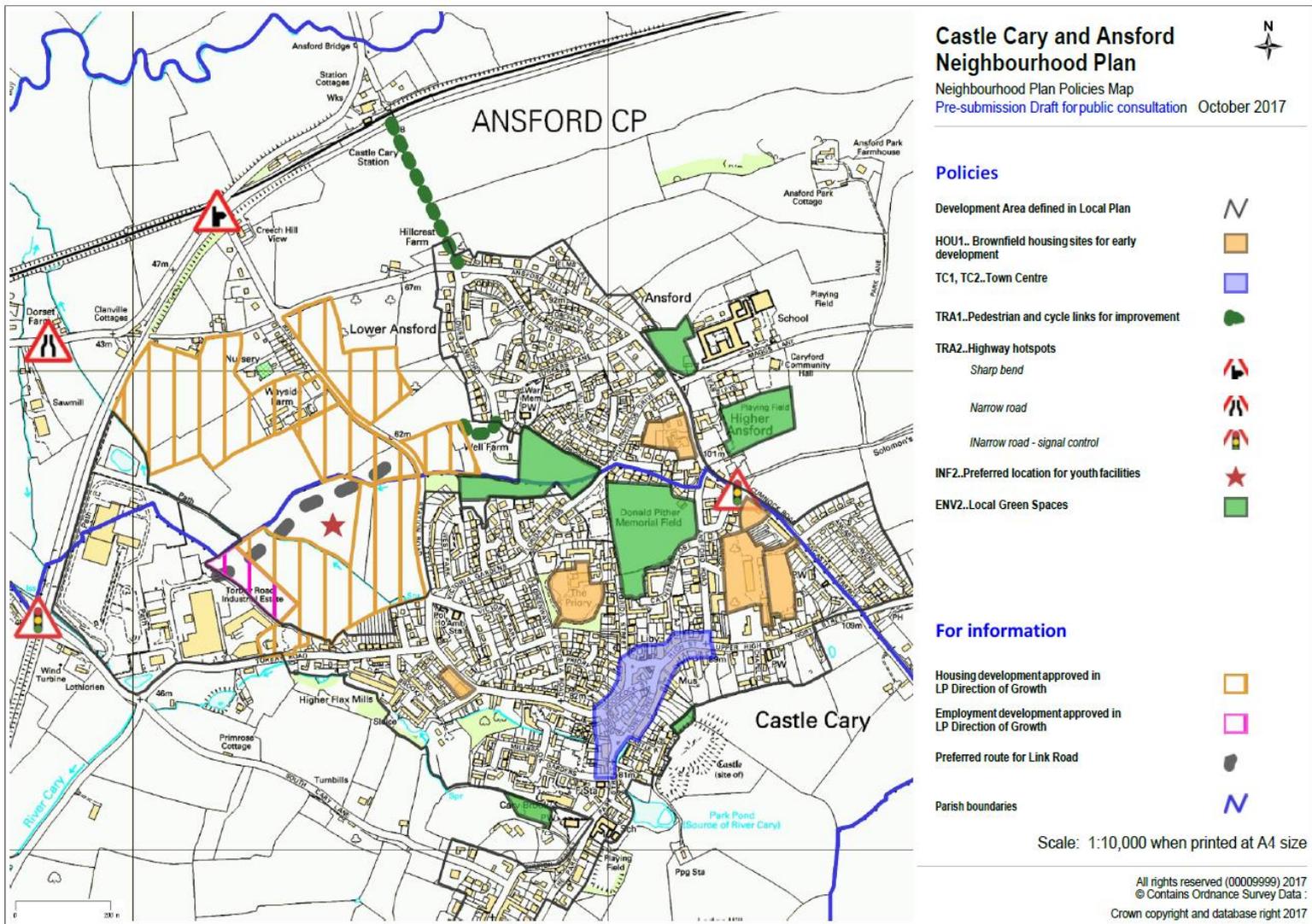
The following locations are designated as Local Green Spaces where development will only be permitted if it would maintain or enhance their use as a local green space:

- Donald Pither Memorial Playing Field and adjoining playground to the south
- Fairfield
- Moat Garden
- Millennium Wood

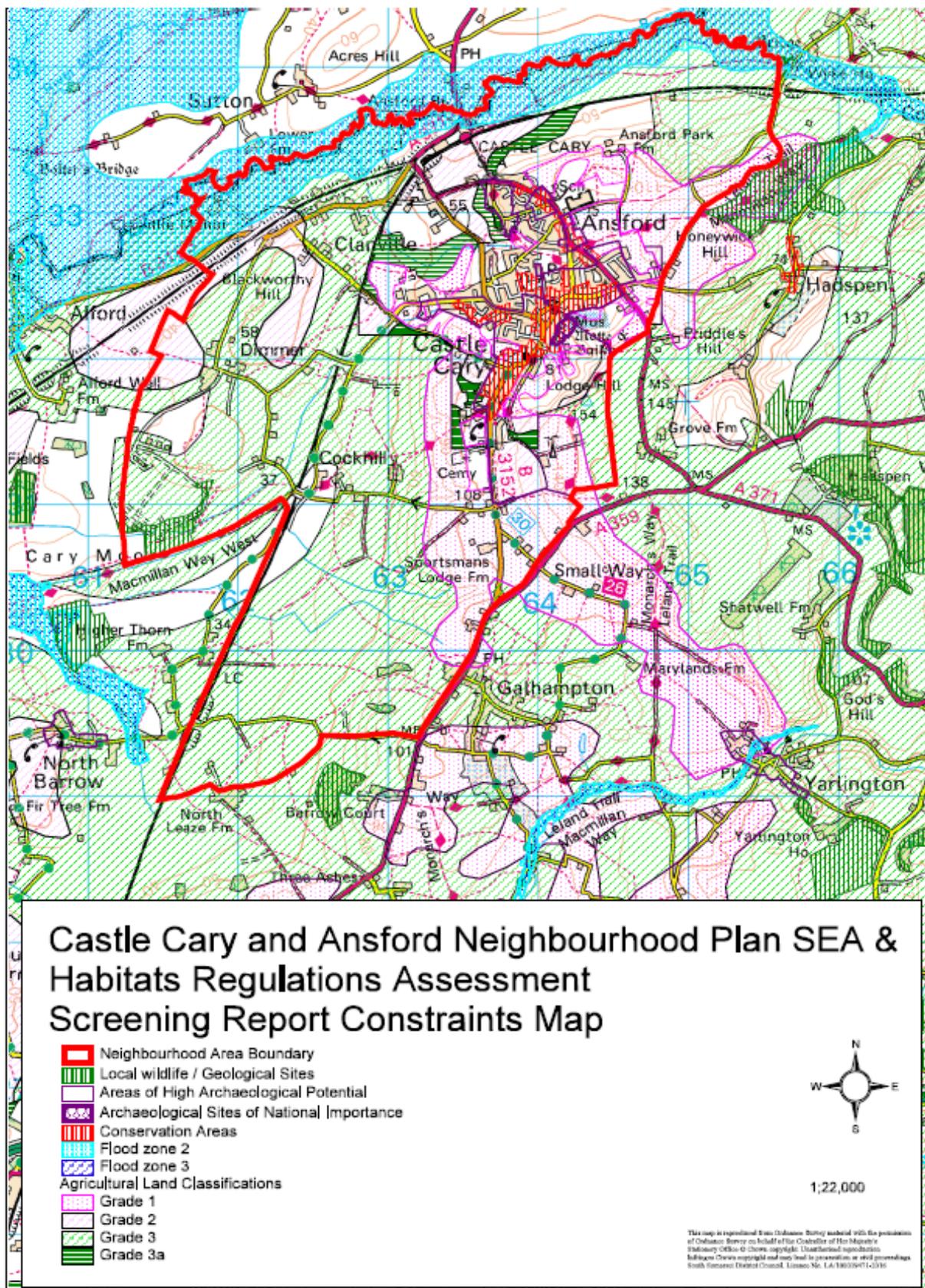
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- Eat Cary community garden
- Playing field, Ansford
- Jubilee Garden, Ansford

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Appendix 2 – Constraints Map



### Appendix 3: Responses from Statutory Consultees

**From:** Stuart, David

**Sent:** 06 December 2017 07:58

**To:** 'jo.wilkins@southsomerset.gov.uk'

**Subject:** Castle Cary and Ansford Neighbourhood Plan SEA Screening Consultation

Dear Jo

Thank you for your consultation on the SEA Screening for the Castle Cary Neighbourhood Plan. This is our first engagement with this Plan so it provides us with a useful opportunity to familiarise ourselves with the community's aspirations and identify any issues we think might benefit from attention.

Our main focus of attention with such Plans is where site allocations are proposed. In that respect we note that Policy HOU1 proposes the allocation of 6 brownfield sites for development. Supporting text provides the broad rationale for wanting to identify additional housing need and provision but little information on how the sites in question have been selected.

We could find no additional information on the Plan website and have insufficient local knowledge ourselves with which to establish whether there are any heritage issues which might affect such allocations in principle or influence how they should be developed.

We acknowledge that as brownfield sites the principle of development is probably unlikely to be an issue and recognise that the broad, non-prescriptive and qualified nature of the policy's wording, complemented by national and Local Plan policy, should not mean that such allocations become hostage to fortune scenarios in subsequent development management exercises once the Plan is made and should important heritage considerations be identified. But we do note that reference is made in the text to the BMI and Priory sites together being potentially capable of providing in the order of 80 dwellings (p12) which clearly suggests some level of expectation, the suitability or deliverability of which is no doubt based on evidence not currently available.

While we therefore do not necessarily dispute the opinion of the SEA Screening Report that there is not a likelihood of the Plan generating significant environmental effects it would be helpful if more information were available on the selection of the sites in question to substantiate their suitability and definition as "brownfield" allocations.

On receipt of such information we would be happy to formally offer no objection to your proposed Screening conclusion.

Kind regards

David

David Stuart | Historic Places Adviser South West

Direct Line: 0117 975 0680 | Mobile: 0797 924 0316

Historic England | 29 Queen Square | Bristol | BS1 4ND

<https://historicengland.org.uk/southwest>

**From:** Stuart, David [<mailto:David.Stuart@HistoricEngland.org.uk>]

**Sent:** 06 December 2017 08:54

**To:** Jo Wilkins

**Subject:** RE: Castle Cary and Ansford Neighbourhood Plan SEA Screening Consultation

And I should have added that there are no other issues associated with the Plan upon which we wish to comment.

David

David Stuart | Historic Places Adviser South West

Direct Line: 0117 975 0680 | Mobile: 0797 924 0316

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**From:** Jo Wilkins [<mailto:Jo.Wilkins@SouthSomerset.Gov.Uk>]

**Sent:** 06 December 2017 15:10

**To:** Stuart, David

**Subject:** RE: Castle Cary and Ansford Neighbourhood Plan SEA Screening Consultation

Dear David,

Thank you for your response.

The brownfield sites referred to in draft NP Policy HOU1 are located within the Development Area for Ansford and Castle Cary (adopted Local Plan Policies SS1, SS3 and SS5). This means that they are in an area where development is acceptable in principle subject to the other policies in the Local Plan. Policy HOU1 encourages the early development of these sites, but does not formally allocate them. The sites listed are either allocated in the Local Plan, have planning permission, have had a permission that has lapsed or have a pending planning application.

I have set out further information on each site below:

- The Hillcrest School site is a saved allocation in the adopted Local Plan (HG/ANSF/1).
- In April 2017, planning permission was granted for 17 dwellings on the Priory site (Historic England were consulted and commented on the application).
- Planning permission for residential development was previously granted on the BMI site for 89 dwellings, this has subsequently lapsed due to viability issues, but pre-application discussion for a scheme for around 80 dwellings has recently taken place with SSDC.
- Planning permission was granted in 2008 for 24 dwellings on the Nursery site (07/05328/REM).
- There is an extant outline planning permission and a pending application (17/03798/FUL) for two dwellings on the Constitutional Club site.
- There is an extant planning permission for 3 dwellings on the Red House site (15/14029/FUL).

I hope this has provides you with enough additional information to enable you to now confirm that you have no objection to the screening opinion.

Kind regards,

Jo

Jo Wilkins MA MRTPI

Acting Principal Spatial Planner

South Somerset District Council

Tel: 01935 462588

Email: [jo.wilkins@southsomerset.gov.uk](mailto:jo.wilkins@southsomerset.gov.uk)

Many thanks for this additional information Jo.

That is just the type of helpful evidence which is clear cut and unambiguous. Though we might politely disagree about whether the policy does constitute an allocation it becomes an irrelevant issue given the planning policy context and site histories. You could encourage the community to include your information in their evidence base.

On that basis I am more than happy to confirm that we have no objection to the conclusion that an SEA is not required. I can also confirm that unless the Plan changes significantly during its progress to being made we are unlikely to want to comment further and are happy to leave the handling of any residual heritage matters to the discretion of your authority utilising the heritage expertise available to it locally.

Kind regards

David

David Stuart | Historic Places Adviser South West

Direct Line: 0117 975 0680 | Mobile: 0797 924 0316

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Dear Jo,

1. Natural England concurs with para 5.1 that the draft objectives and policies of the Castle Cary and Ansford Neighbourhood Plan are unlikely to have significant environmental effects; consequently a full SEA is not required.
2. Natural England concurs with para 5.3 that the Neighbourhood Plan will not have significant effects upon the integrity of European sites.

Regards,

Charles Routh  
Lead Advisor, Planning & Licencing, Somerset, Avon and Wiltshire Area Team, Natural England. 07990 773630

Castle Cary and Ansford Neighbourhood Plan  
Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening Report

Ms Jo Wilkins  
South Somerset District Council  
The Council Offices  
Brympton Way  
Yeovil  
Somerset  
BA20 2HT

**Our ref:** WX/2006/000321/OR-08/IS1-  
L01  
**Your ref:**  
**Date:** 05 December 2017

Dear Ms Wilkins

**Castle Cary and Ansford Neighbourhood Plan – SEA Screening**

Thank you for consulting the Environment Agency on the above mentioned document.

We have reviewed the documents and can agree with the position that SEA and HRA are not required.

Please contact us if you have any queries.

Yours sincerely

**MR MICHAEL HOLM**  
**Planning Advisor - Sustainable Places**

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