

Draft Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan

Strategic Environmental
Assessment (SEA) and Habitats
Regulation Assessment (HRA)
Screening Opinions



September 2017

This document brings together the draft Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) Screening Opinions.

A SEA and HRA Screening Opinions document was published in February 2017 which concluded that a full SEA may be required as the draft Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan seeks to allocate sites for housing over and above that in the SWDP, and these sites were therefore not considered in the SWDP full SEA. It was also concluded that a HRA Appropriate Assessment would not be required. These conclusions were subject to consultation with the three statutory environmental consultees between Friday 3 March 2017 and Friday 7 April 2017.

Both the Environment Agency and Natural England concluded that a full SEA would not be required, and Natural England also confirmed that a HRA AA would not be required. However concerns were raised by Historic England who concluded a full SEA would be required.

After additional assessments and correspondence between Malvern Hills District Council and Historic England, a SEA Screening Opinion Update was published in June 2017 for consultation with Historic England. It concluded that the Neighbourhood Plan was in general conformity the SWDP with the exception of four small additional housing allocations, the impact of which on heritage assets would be afforded a significant level of protection or mitigation by Neighbourhood Plan policies BHN1, BHN2 and the Hanley Castle Parish Building Design Guide. On that basis, a full SEA was not considered necessary, a conclusion that Historic England agreed with.

On the basis of the above, it is considered that neither a full SEA nor a HRA AA is required for the draft Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan.

Appendix 1 – Hanley Castle Pre-Submission Neighbourhood Plan SEA and HRA Screening Opinions, February 2017

Appendix 2 – Hanley Castle Pre-Submission Neighbourhood Plan SEA and HRA Screening Opinions, February 2017 – Environmental Consultees Representations

Appendix 3 – Hanley Castle Pre-Submission Neighbourhood Plan SEA Screening Opinion Update, June 2017

Appendix 4 – Hanley Castle Pre-Submission Neighbourhood Plan SEA Screening Opinion Update, June 2017 – Historic England Representation

Appendix 1

Hanley Castle Pre-Submission Neighbourhood Plan SEA and HRA
Screening Opinions, February 2017

Draft Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan

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



February 2017

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

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

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

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

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

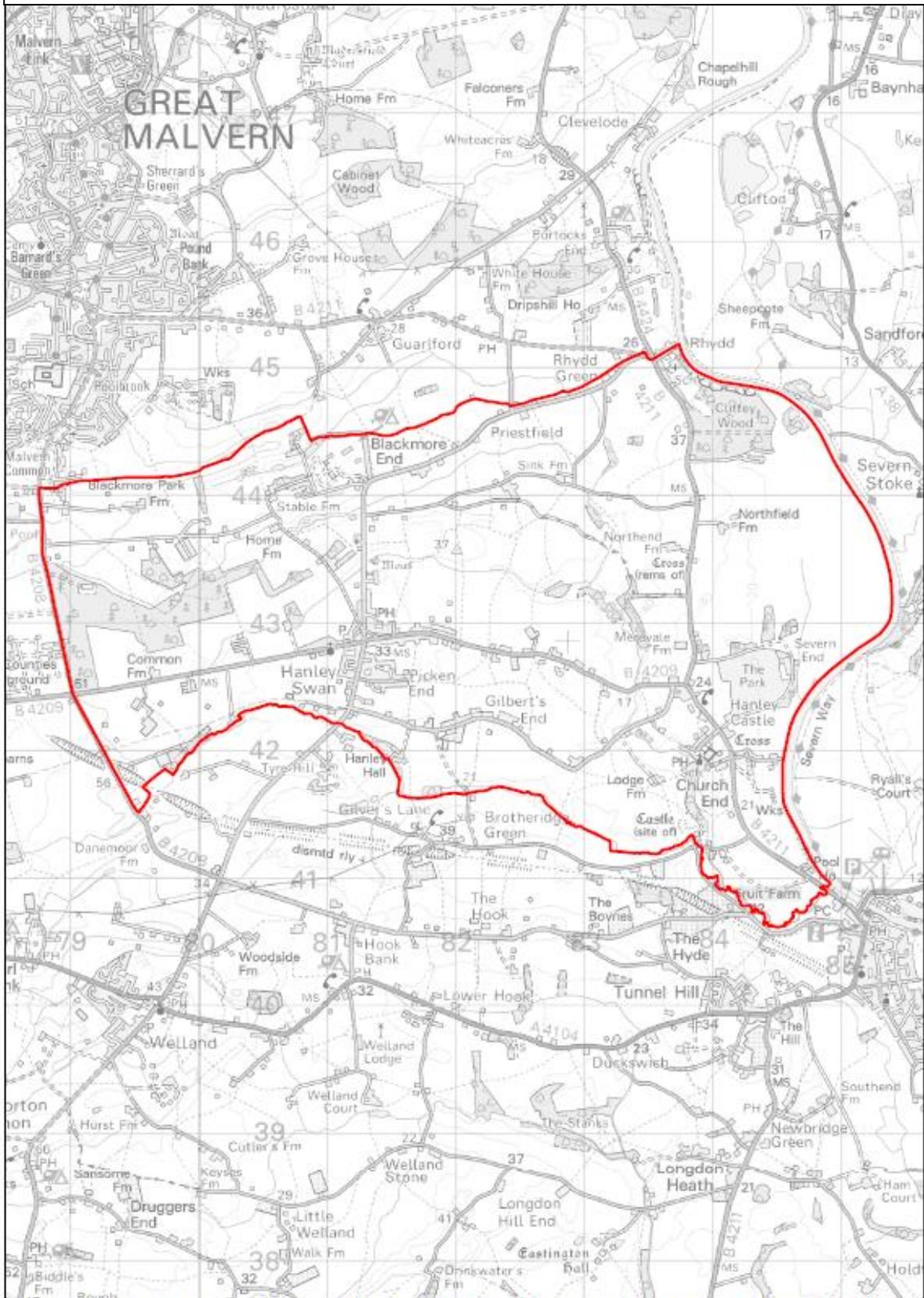
When deciding on whether the proposals are likely to have significant effects, the local authority is required to consult Historic England, Natural England and the Environment Agency. Where the local planning authority determines that the plan is unlikely to have significant environmental effects (and,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

1.2 DRAFT HANLEY CASTLE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN SUMMARY

The Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan is essentially a community-led framework for guiding future development and growth of the Parish of Hanley Castle to the year 2030. A total of 27 draft policies have been published focusing on topics including housing, community facilities, design, built, historic and natural environment, and traffic and transport.

1.3 HANLEY CASTLE DESIGNATED NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA

Figure 1 – Hanley Castle Designated Neighbourhood Area



1.4 DRAFT HANLEY CASTLE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN POLICY SUMMARIES

27 policies are proposed in the Draft Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan; they are summarised below.

DRAFT POLICY	SUMMARY
<p>MnGr 1 Housing Mix</p>	<p>Requires new housing to deliver a range of house types, sizes and tenures with an emphasis on the delivery of affordable housing, starter homes, two and three bedroom family homes and homes for the elderly and/or the disabled.</p>
<p>MnGr 2 Affordable Housing</p>	<p>Encourages developers to construct all affordable housing in accordance with Lifetime Homes Standards. Promotes shared-ownership at a minimum of 25% of part of the affordable housing tenancy mix. Supports rural exception affordable housing development on small sites beyond but reasonably adjacent to the development boundaries of the villages in the Parish.</p>
<p>MnGr 3 Allocation of Affordable Housing</p>	<p>Requires all affordable housing that is delivered in the Parish to be subject to a local connection in order to meet the needs of those in the Parish who are unable to access open market homes by being offered tenancy or shared-ownership first.</p>
<p>MnGr 4 Infill / Backland Housing in the Parish</p>	<p>Supports infill and backland housing development provided they are well designed and meet other relevant policies in the Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan and the South Worcestershire Development Plan (SWDP), and where such development fills a small gap in the existing frontage; does not involve the outward extension of a village; is not considered to be unneighbourly if backland; are no more than three bedrooms; or provides the plot for self-build development but limited to three bedrooms.</p>
<p>MnGr 5 Scale of New Development</p>	<p>States planning permission will only be granted for sites of a maximum of 10 dwellings, excluding the allocation in the SWDP, unless there is an agreed masterplan demonstrating the phasing of development over a number of years.</p>
<p>MnGr 6 Incremental Growth</p>	<p>Supports the development of up to 50 dwellings in the Parish, with no more than 30 dwellings to be granted planning permission over a rolling five year period.</p>
<p>MnGr 7 Siting of New Developments</p>	<p>Identifies four potential site allocations over-and-above SWDP allocations across the Parish to deliver up to 35 additional dwellings and an extension to Albion Lodge Care Home above and beyond the allocation within the SWDP (SWDP 59/6 for</p>

	an indicative 20 dwellings).
MnGr 8 Siting of Local Businesses	Promotes the development of new business premises within the identified existing business centres. Supports the further development of Blackmore Park in line with SWDP 54 and industrial or commercial development on the old incinerator site at Hayler's End.
MnGr 9 Heavy Goods Traffic	Requires proposals which would generate an increase in heavy goods traffic (B2 and B8 development for example) to demonstrate through a Transport Statement that the development will not have an unacceptable impact on the quality of life of residents through the generation of increased noise, vibration and pollution.
MnGr 10 Disused or Redundant Buildings	Supports the reuse of redundant or disused buildings where it would improve, restore or maintain a positive unlisted or local listed building, or any other structure of local significance provided it would lead to an enhancement of the local setting; the design respects the local character and significant of the structure; it is compatible with neighbouring uses; and the existing building is of permanent and substantial construction and capable of conversion without major works, extensions or ancillary buildings.
MnGr 11 Assets of Community Value	Supports proposals that will enhance the viability or community value of facilities listed as an Asset of Community Value, and seeks to protect such facilities from either loss or significant harm unless it can be demonstrated that the use no longer serves the community; there is adequate provision elsewhere in the Neighbourhood Area with capacity to meet the need; the proposed use will deliver a clear community benefit and is compatible with adjacent land uses; or the current facility is no longer financially viable.
MnGr 12 Developer Contributions Policy	Requires all development in the Parish to provide necessary infrastructure on-site, or contribute towards off-site infrastructure through section 106 or CIL. Identifies projects in the Parish for which such off-site monies could be attributed to.
RE 1 Sympathetic Design	Requires new development to achieve high quality and inclusive design whilst conserving local distinctiveness and the aesthetic qualities of traditional rural settlements and buildings found in the Parish.
RE 2 Settlement Identity	Seeks to maintain the separate identities of the two principal settlements in the Parish (Hanley Castle and Hanley Swan) by

	<p>restricting new housing development in the open countryside outside the development boundaries of the villages unless it is a dwelling for a rural worker; affordable housing on a rural exception site; or a replacement dwelling which does not exceed the original footprint by more than 30%. Extensions to existing dwellings outside the development boundaries are supported provided they do not dominate the original dwelling, and the conversion or re-use of existing buildings will be supported provided there is no need for substantial reconstruction.</p>
<p>RE 3 Replacing Natural Features Lost Through Development</p>	<p>Requires development proposals that are likely to have an adverse impact on significant trees, orchards, hedgerows and other natural features to provide appropriate and proportionate mitigation measures.</p>
<p>BHN 1 Protection of Buildings or Structures on the Local List of Heritage Assets (Local List)</p>	<p>Requires proposals that will affect a building or structure on the Local List to demonstrate how they protect or enhance the heritage asset. Seeks the renovation, alteration or change of use of buildings or structures identified on the Local List to be sensitively designed with consideration of the heritage asset's setting, historical and architectural interest. Resists demolition of buildings and structures on the Local List unless it can be demonstrated that the viability of continued use, conversion or restoration has been fully investigated.</p>
<p>BHN 2 The Environs of Heritage Assets</p>	<p>Seeks to ensure proposed developments, public realm additions and changes adjacent to nationally and locally listed buildings enhance or sustain the heritage asset. Promotes development which will contribute towards the long term management and wellbeing of heritage assets.</p>
<p>BHN 3 Protection of the Archaeological Environment</p>	<p>Lists known archaeological sites in the Parish and seeks to ensure development proposals take account, and ensure potentially significant deposits are identified and appropriately considered during development.</p>
<p>BHN 4 Preserving Ancient Trees, Woodland, Trees and Hedges</p>	<p>Seeks to resist development proposals which damage or result in the loss of ancient trees or trees and hedgerows of arboricultural or amenity value, with the establishment of new native hedgerows encouraged. Requires proposals to be designed to retain such features within landscaping schemes.</p>
<p>BHN 5 Protected Local Green Spaces</p>	<p>Identifies eight areas in the Parish as Local Green Spaces which are to be protected from development in order to preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, the village townscape and to offer long term recreational</p>

	opportunities.
BHN 6 Sites of Biological Interest	Supports the protection of Sites of Biological Interest throughout the Parish. Seeks to protect and enhance local habitats and wildlife biodiversity and corridors. Identifies a number of local wildlife and habitat sites which development proposals should seek to protect or enhance.
Des 1 General Building Design Principles	Sets design principles for which development proposals must address on issues such as scale, character, local distinctiveness and use of materials. Proposals that do not meet the design principles will be considered unsustainable and should therefore be resisted. Reference made to the Parish Design Guide (2016) which is a supplementary document to the Neighbourhood Plan.
Des 2 Renewable and Low Carbon Energy	Supports stand-alone renewable and low carbon energy schemes (excluding wind turbines) provided the potential impacts are or can be made acceptable; considerations include visual impact, impact on neighbouring uses, public safety and impact on a Conservation Area, Listed Building or their setting.
Des 3 Integrating New Developments with the Existing Communities	Seeks to integrate new housing and business developments with the existing communities with regard to design and its impacts on accessibility and connectivity with local services and facilities.
Trf 1 Highways and Traffic Principles	Details highways and traffic principles that should be addressed in all new development proposals, including road safety, traffic calming measures within new developments and car parking.
Trf 2 Safe Cycle Route between Hanley Castle and Hanley Swan	Details the Parish Council's priority for the development of a safe cycle route between the villages of Hanley Castle and Hanley Swan.
Trf 3 Footpaths / Bridleways / Cycle Paths	Supports new development proposals which seek to improve footpath and cycle connections within the proposal. Identifies further cycleway schemes which will be considered.

1.5 STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (SEA) PROCESS

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

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

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

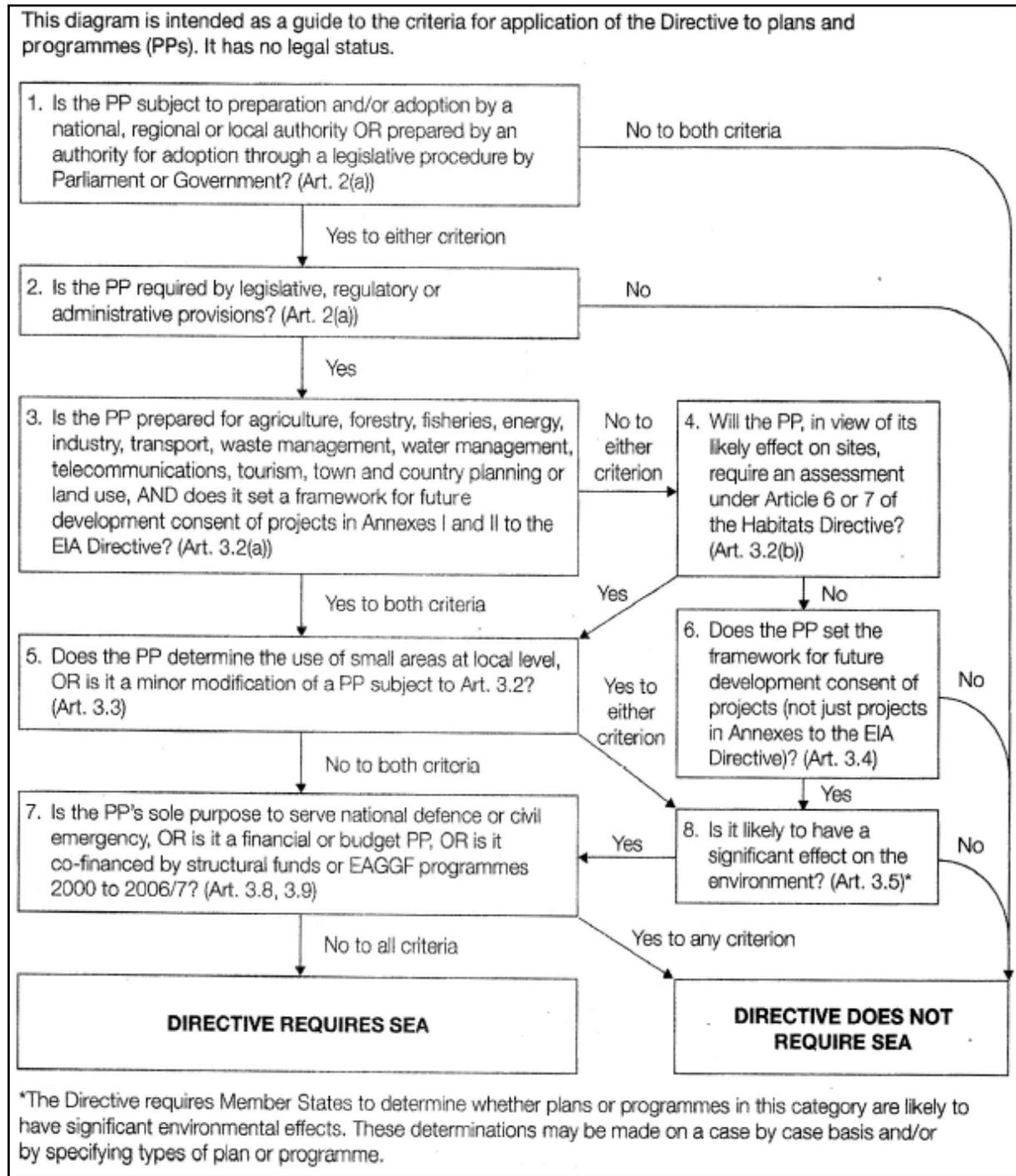


Figure 2 – Application of the SEA Directive to Plans and Programmes

Table 1: Assessment of Neighbourhood Plan using SEA Directive Criteria

Stage	Y/N	Reason
1. Is the Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan subject to preparation and/or adoption by a national, regional or local authority OR prepared by an authority for adoption through a legislative procedure by Parliament or Government? (Art. 2(a))	Y	This is a Neighbourhood Plan that is being prepared by a qualifying body (Hanley Castle Parish Council) under the Localism Act 2011. If the plan is passed by means of a referendum, it will be formally adopted by the local Planning Authority and will hence become a statutory planning document. It will form part of the local development framework and so will have significant weight in planning decisions.
2. Is the Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions? (Art. 2(a))	N	Neighbourhood Plans are not mandatory requirements, and the Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared voluntarily by the local qualifying body in line with the provisions of the Localism Act. If the plan is adopted however it will form part of the statutory development plan, and it is therefore considered necessary to answer the following questions to determine if an SEA is required.
3. Is the Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism, town and country planning or land use, AND does it set a framework for future development consent of projects in Annexes I and II to the EIA Directive? (Art 3.2(a))	Y	The plan is prepared for town and country planning, and sets out potential land use allocations (both in line with SWDP and additional sites).
4. Will the Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan, in view of its likely effect on sites, require an assessment for future development under Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive? (Art. 3.2 (b))	N	See Screening Opinion for HRA in Section 3 of this report.

5. Does the Hanley Castle Neighbourhood 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)	Y	The Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan proposes a site for housing development, which is in conformity with the allocations made by the SWDP. It also proposes a number of additional small sites for possible housing development which are not included in the SWDP.
6. Does the Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan set the framework for future development consent of projects (not just projects in annexes to the EIA Directive)? (Art 3.4)	Y	When adopted, the Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan will be a statutory planning document. It will form part of the Local Development Framework and so will have significant weight in planning decisions. The responsibility for issuing development consent will remain with the Local Authority.
7. Is the Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan's sole purpose to serve the national defence or civil emergency, OR is it a financial or budget PP, OR is it co-financed by structural funds or EAGGF programmes 2000 to 2006/7? (Art 3.8, 3.9)	N	Not Applicable
8. Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment? (Art. 3.5)	Y	The Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan could potentially have a significant effect on the environment in its current form, mainly owing to the potential for housing development as part of Policy MnGr7. To investigate the likelihood of potential impacts further a case-by-case assessment has been conducted, the full results of which can be found in Table 2.

Based upon the initial screening carried out against the criteria in Table 1 above, the emerging Draft Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan could potentially have a significant effect on the environment. To explore these potential effects further, a case-by-case assessment has been conducted. The criteria used in the undertaking of such an assessment are drawn from Article 3.5 (Annex II) of the SEA directive, and the results are shown in Table 2.

1.6 HABITATS REGULATIONS ASSESSMENT (HRA) PROCESS

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

In addition to SPAs and SACs, Ramsar sites are also designated areas which, as a matter of government policy, are to be treated in the same way as European wildlife sites (although they are not covered by the Habitats Regulations). European wildlife sites and Ramsar sites are collectively known as internationally designated wildlife sites.

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

2. SEA SCREENING

2.1 SEA SCREENING ASSESSMENT

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

Table 2 below provides the screening determination of the need to carry out a full Strategic Environmental Assessment for the Hanley Castle Parish pre-submission Neighbourhood Plan. This has been made in accordance with the Regulations and will be subject to consultation with the strategic environmental bodies before Malvern Hills District Council makes its determination on the necessity for a full Strategic Environmental Assessment.

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

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (SEA Directive, Annex II)	Likely to have significant environmental effects?	Summary of significant events
1(a) the degree to which the draft Hanley Castle Parish 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;	YES	The Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan would, if adopted, form part of the statutory Development Plan and as such does contribute to the framework for future development consent of projects.
1(b) the degree to which the draft Hanley Castle Parish Neighbourhood Plan influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy;	NO	Other than the additional housing allocations proposed in the draft Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan, the policies are considered to be in general conformity with the SWDP, and will be used alongside this document in the determination of planning applications when formally 'made' (adopted).
1(c) the relevance of the draft Hanley Castle Parish Neighbourhood Plan for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable	NO	The policies of the draft Hanley Castle Parish Neighbourhood Plan are not considered to have a significant impact on the integration of environmental considerations.

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (SEA Directive, Annex II)	Likely to have significant environmental effects?	Summary of significant events
development;		
1(d) environmental problems relevant to the draft Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan;	NO	The draft Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan is more likely to promote environmental sustainability than create any environmental problems.
1(e) the relevance of the draft Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan for the implementation of community legislation on the environment (for example, plans and programmes linked to waste management and water protection);	NO	The policies of the draft Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan are not considered to be relevant to the implementation of EC legislation.
2(a) the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the draft Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan;	NO	It is considered unlikely that there will be any irreversible damaging environmental impacts associated with the Draft Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan. The plan features a number of policies which seek to protect and enhance the natural, built and historic environment, and the plan is therefore likely to result in beneficial rather than damaging effects.
2(b) the cumulative nature of the effects of the Draft Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan;	NO	The policies of the Draft Hanley Castle Parish pre-submission Neighbourhood Plan are unlikely to have any significant cumulative negative environmental impacts.
2(c) the transboundary nature of effects of the Draft Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan;	NO	The Draft Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan is unlikely to have any significant negative environmental impacts on adjoining Parishes.
2(d) the risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents) due to the Draft Hanley	NO	It is considered that there will be no risk to human health or the environment as a result of the Draft

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (SEA Directive, Annex II)	Likely to have significant environmental effects?	Summary of significant events
Castle Neighbourhood Plan;		Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan.
2(e) the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected);	NO	The Draft Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan applies to an area of 1,793 hectares, which has a resident population of 1,340 (2011 census). The policies of the neighbourhood plan apply to the entirety of this area, and are unlikely to effect areas beyond the neighbourhood boundary.
2(f) the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) special natural characteristics or cultural heritage; (ii) exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values; or (iii) intensive land-use; and 	NO	The Draft Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan will not have any substantial impact on these factors.
2(g) the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, community or international protection status.	NO	The policies of the Draft Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan are unlikely to have a negative impact on any environmental designations in the Neighbourhood Area.

2.2 SEA SCREENING OPINION

Table 2 assesses the likelihood of significant environmental effects arising from the Draft Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan in its current form.

In general, the policies and allocations in the Draft Hanley Neighbourhood Plan are in-line with the strategy of the adopted SWDP, which has been subject to a Sustainability Appraisal incorporating a Strategic Environmental Assessment. The policies of the Draft Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan seek to avoid or minimise environmental effects through the provision of guidance on issues which are specific to the neighbourhood area. It is therefore likely that the Draft Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan will have, both directly and indirectly, a positive environmental impact rather than negative, by setting out guidance addressing how developers can minimise impacts on a number of environmental receptors. However, the emerging plan identifies four small potential housing allocations which were not featured in SWDP assessments, and hence the likelihood of it having a significant environmental impact if included in the adopted neighbourhood plan has not been examined.

Pending the responses of the consultation and the formal views of the statutory environmental bodies, the Draft Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan may require a full Strategic Environmental Assessment.

3. HRA SCREENING

3.1 HRA SCREENING ASSESSMENT

There are no internationally designated wildlife sites located within the Hanley Castle Parish Neighbourhood Area.

For the purposes of this screening assessment however, sites that fall within a 20km are considered. There are three sites identified within this range – Bredon Hill SAC approximately 10km east, Lyppard Grange SAC approximately 13km north-east and Dixon Wood SAC approximately 18km south-east of the Hanley Castle Parish Neighbourhood Area.

Bredon Hill SAC is an area of pasture woodland and ancient parkland situated approximately 4.5km south-west of Evesham. The site provides habitat for the Violet Click Beetle *Limoniscus Violaceus*, which develops in the decaying wood either of very large, old hollow beech trees (Windsor Forest) or ash trees (Worcestershire and Gloucestershire border sites). Currently the key site attributes which Natural England understands the species to require is related to the abundance and condition of the ancient trees on the designated site within which it develops.

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

Dixon Wood SAC is located approximately 6.7km to the south east of Tewkesbury and is an area of broadleaved woodland (formerly partially grazed) with a dominance of ash including exceptionally large ancient pollards. The site is designated for its population of Violet Click Beetle *Limoniscus violaceaus*, which is largely dependent on these pollards (for breeding). Principal risks to the site's integrity are lack of future replacement pollards (age-class skewed to older generation) and game management practices.

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

As a result of the concerns raised, a full Appropriate Assessment (AA) was conducted (which can be viewed on the SWDP website). The AA concluded that the policies and land allocations of the SWDP were not likely to have adverse effects on the integrity of Bredon Hills SAC, Lyppard Grange SAC or Dixon Wood SAC. In addressing concerns relating to possible increased disturbance at the SACs, it was concluded that the location of the sites in relation to proposed developments and also the availability of more suitable areas of open space for recreation in close proximity would keep potential impacts to a minimum. It was

also considered that the policies of the SWDP would sufficiently mitigate the potential impact of proposed developments on the water environment, leading to minimal effect on the SAC sites.

3.2 HRA SCREENING OPINION

It is considered that the policies of the Draft Hanley Castle Parish Neighbourhood Plan are in general conformity with those contained in the SWDP. Although the draft document does seek to allocate housing sites over-and-above those allocated in the SWDP, they are considered unlikely to have a negative impact on any internationally designated wildlife sites due to their scale and distance from such sites. With this in mind, alongside the SWDP AA, it is concluded that the Draft Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan is unlikely to have a negative impact on any internationally designated wildlife sites and as such, it is considered that a full Appropriate Assessment (AA) is not required.

4. CONCLUSION

4.1 SCREENING OPINIONS CONCLUSIONS

Following the assessment made in Table 2, it is considered that a full SEA may be required for the Draft Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan as there may be a potential negative environmental impact as a result of four small additional housing allocations proposed over-and-above allocations made in the SWDP.

There are no internationally designated wildlife sites within Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Area, with the three identified within a 20km radius having been assessed in the SWDP HRA AA. As the Draft Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan is considered to be in general conformity with the SWDP, with the additional housing allocations of a small-scale and some distance from any internationally designated sites, it is considered that a HRA AA is not required.

4.2 NEXT STEPS AND CONSULTATION

Both of the above conclusions are subject to consultation with the statutory environmental bodies (i.e. Natural England, Historic England and Environment Agency) before a formal decision is made on the requirement of a full SEA and HRA AA.

The five week consultation period runs from Friday 3 March to Friday 7 April 2017, with a determination made soon after.

Appendix 2

Hanley Castle Pre-Submission Neighbourhood Plan SEA and HRA
Screening Opinions, February 2017 – Environmental Consultees
Representations

Date: 13 March 2017
Our ref: 209600
Your ref: Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan - SEA/HRA Screening Opinions



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Dear Reiss

Planning consultation: Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan - SEA/HRA Screening Opinions

Thank you for your consultation on the above dated 28/02/2017

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 which assesses the requirement for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) for the Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan in accordance with the European Directive 2001/42/EC and associated Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.

Natural England notes and concurs with the conclusion that the Draft Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan will have a positive rather than negative environmental impact and that no SEA is required.

Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening

Natural England notes the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) screening process applied to this Neighbourhood plan. We agree with the conclusion that the Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan is unlikely to result in any significant effect on any European Site either alone or in combination and therefore no further assessment work under the Habitats Regulations is required.

Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land

We have not checked the agricultural land classification of the proposed allocations, but we advise you to ensure that any allocations on best and most versatile land are justified in line with para 112 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

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 Caolan Gaffney on 02080 266680. For any new consultations, or to provide further information on this consultation please send your correspondences to 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

Caolan Gaffney
Planning Adviser, Sustainable Development
East Midlands Area Team

Annex A – Additional advice

Natural England offers the following additional advice:

Landscape

Paragraph 109 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) highlights the need to protect and enhance valued landscapes through the planning system. This application may present opportunities to protect and enhance locally valued landscapes. You may want to consider whether any local landscape features or characteristics (such as ponds, woodland or dry stone walls) could be incorporated into the development in order to respect and enhance local landscape character and distinctiveness, in line with any local landscape character assessments. Where the impacts of development are likely to be significant, a Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment should be provided with the proposal to inform decision making. We refer you to the [Landscape Institute](#) Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment for further guidance.

Best and most versatile agricultural land and soils

Local planning authorities are responsible for ensuring that they have sufficient detailed agricultural land classification (ALC) information to apply the requirements of the NPPF. This is the case regardless of whether the proposed development is sufficiently large to consult Natural England. Further information is contained in Natural England's [Technical Information Note 049](#).

Agricultural Land Classification information is available on the [Magic](#) website on the [Data.Gov.uk](#) website. If you consider the proposal has significant implications for further loss of 'best and most versatile' agricultural land, we would be pleased to discuss the matter further.

Guidance on soil protection is available in the Defra [Construction Code of Practice for the Sustainable Use of Soils on Construction Sites](#), and we recommend its use in the design and construction of development, including any planning conditions. Should the development proceed, we advise that the developer uses an appropriately experienced soil specialist to advise on, and supervise soil handling, including identifying when soils are dry enough to be handled and how to make the best use of soils on site.

Protected Species

Natural England has produced [standing advice](#)¹ to help planning authorities understand the impact of particular developments on protected species. We advise you to refer to this advice. Natural England will only provide bespoke advice on protected species where they form part of a SSSI or in exceptional circumstances.

Priority habitats and species

Priority habitats and Species are of particular importance for nature conservation and included in the England Biodiversity List published under section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006. Most priority habitats will be mapped either as **Sites of Special Scientific Interest**, on the [Magic](#) website or as **Local Wildlife Sites**. List of priority habitats and species can be found [here](#)². Natural England does not routinely hold species data, such data should be collected when impacts on priority habitats or species is considered likely. Consideration should also be given to the potential environmental value of brownfield sites, often found in urban areas and former industrial land, further information including links to the open mosaic habitats inventory can be found [here](#).

Ancient woodland and veteran trees-link to standing advice

You should consider any impacts on ancient woodland and veteran trees in line with paragraph 118 of the NPPF. Natural England maintains the Ancient Woodland [Inventory](#) which can help identify ancient woodland. Natural England and the Forest Commission have produced [standing advice](#) for planning authorities in relation to ancient woodland and veteran trees. It should be taken into account by planning authorities when determining relevant planning applications. Natural England will only provide bespoke

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/protected-species-and-sites-how-to-review-planning-proposals>

² <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20140711133551/http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/conservation/biodiversity/protectandmanage/habsandspeciesimportance.aspx>

advice on ancient woodland/veteran trees where they form part of a SSSI or in exceptional circumstances.

Environmental enhancement

Development provides opportunities to contribute to and enhance biodiversity and the local environment, as outlined in paragraph 109 and 118 of the NPPF. We advise you to consider what existing environmental features on and around the site can be retained or enhanced or what new features could be incorporated into the development proposal. Examples might include:

- Providing a new footpath through the new development to link into existing rights of way.
- Restoring a neglected hedgerow.
- Creating a new pond as an attractive feature on the site.
- Planting trees characteristic to the local area to make a positive contribution to the local landscape.
- Using native plants in landscaping schemes for better nectar and seed sources for bees and birds.
- Incorporating swift boxes or bat boxes into the design of new buildings.
- Designing lighting to encourage wildlife.
- Adding a green roof to new buildings.

You could also consider how the proposed development can contribute to the wider environment and help implement elements of any Landscape, Green Infrastructure or Biodiversity Strategy in place in your area. For example:

- Links to existing greenspace and/or opportunities to enhance and improve access.
- Identifying opportunities for new greenspace and managing existing (and new) public spaces to be more wildlife friendly (e.g. by sowing wild flower strips).
- Planting additional street trees.
- Identifying any improvements to the existing public right of way network or using the opportunity of new development to extend the network to create missing links.
- Restoring neglected environmental features (e.g. coppicing a prominent hedge that is in poor condition or clearing away an eyesore).

Access and Recreation

Natural England encourages any proposal to incorporate measures to help improve people's access to the natural environment. Measures such as reinstating existing footpaths together with the creation of new footpaths and bridleways should be considered. Links to other green networks and, where appropriate, urban fringe areas should also be explored to help promote the creation of wider green infrastructure. Relevant aspects of local authority green infrastructure strategies should be delivered where appropriate.

Rights of Way, Access land, Coastal access and National Trails

Paragraph 75 of the NPPF highlights the importance of public rights of way and access. Development should consider potential impacts on access land, common land, rights of way and coastal access routes in the vicinity of the development. Consideration should also be given to the potential impacts on the any nearby National Trails. The National Trails website www.nationaltrail.co.uk provides information including contact details for the National Trail Officer. Appropriate mitigation measures should be incorporated for any adverse impacts.

Biodiversity duty

Your authority has a [duty](#) to have regard to conserving biodiversity as part of your decision making. Conserving biodiversity can also include restoration or enhancement to a population or habitat. Further information is available [here](#).



Historic England

WEST MIDLANDS OFFICE

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

Direct Dial: [REDACTED]

Our ref: PL00069567

28 March 2017

Dear Mr Sadler

HANLEY CASTLE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN SEA & HRA CONSULTATION

Thank you for the above consultation.

For the purposes of consultations on SEA, Historic England confines its advice to the question, "Is the Plan or proposal 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 by yourselves in your consultation to us.

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 1 of the Environmental Assessment Regulations [Annex II of 'SEA' Directive], Historic England concur with the conclusion that the preparation of a Strategic Environmental Assessment is required. Regarding HRA Historic England does not disagree with your conclusions but would defer to the opinions of the other statutory consultees.

The views of the other statutory consultation bodies should be taken into account before the overall decision on the need for a SEA is made. If a decision is made to undertake a SEA, please note that Historic England has published guidance on Sustainability Appraisal / Strategic Environmental Assessment and the Historic Environment that is relevant to both local and neighbourhood planning and available at:

<https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/strategic-environmental-assessment-sustainability-appraisal-historic-environment/>

I hope this advice is helpful.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

Peter Boland
Historic Places Advisor

[REDACTED]

cc:



THE AXIS 10 HOLLIDAY STREET BIRMINGHAM B1 1TG

Telephone 0121 625 6870
HistoricEngland.org.uk



Malvern Hills District Council
c/o Wychavon District Council
Civic Centre
Queen Elizabeth Drive
Persnore
WR10 1PT

Our ref: SV/2010/104077/OT-
08/IS1-L01

Date: 5 April 2017

F.A.O: Reiss Sadler

Dear Sir

Draft Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan – Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening Opinion Consultation

Thank you for referring the above consultation, which we received on 28 February 2017. We would offer the following comments to assist your consideration at this time.

Strategic Environmental Assessment:

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

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

To assist your Council’s determination of the SEA Screening opinion, we advise that based on the Screening Report (dated February 2017) submitted, and in consideration of the matters within our remit, the Neighbourhood Plan is considered unlikely to have significant environmental impacts.

Habitats Regulation Assessment:

Article 6(3) of the European Habitats Directive (1992) requires that any plan (or project), which is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of a European site (also known as a “Natura 2000” site), but would be likely to have a significant effect on such a site, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall be

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

Cont/d..

subject to an 'appropriate assessment' of its implications for the European site in view of the site's conservation objectives.

Based on records, we concur with the Screening Report; there are no internationally designated wildlife sites located within the Hanley Castle Parish Neighbourhood Plan Area and there are three Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) within 20km.

We note the comments made with respect to the Appropriate Assessment (AA) carried out as part of the South Worcestershire Development Plan (SWDP).

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

Going Forwards:

We sent your Council a copy of our Neighbourhood Plan pro-forma guidance for distribution to Parish Councils (as enclosed). The purpose of the guidance is to assist the preparation of Neighbourhood Development Plans, including an appropriate evidence base. This includes consideration of some of the relevant environmental issues that should be considered, including flood risk (from rivers and sea), water quality, water resources and includes latest Climate Change recommendations for flood risk. Since we produced this guidance we have updated our climate change allowances for planners. See [Flood risk assessments: climate change allowances](#) for more information. I have also enclosed a copy of area climate change guide to further assist.

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

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

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

Yours faithfully

Mrs Tessa Jones
Senior Planning Advisor

Direct dial [REDACTED]

Direct e-mail to [REDACTED]

Appendix 3

Hanley Castle Pre-Submission Neighbourhood Plan SEA Screening
Opinion Update, June 2017

Sadler, Reiss

From: Sadler, Reiss
Sent: 14 June 2017 16:26
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: 'David Clarke'
Subject: Hanley Castle Pre-Submission Neighbourhood Plan - SEA Screening Opinion Update
Attachments: Hanley Castle Pre-Submission Neighbourhood Plan SEA Screening Opinion Update June 2017.pdf

Dear Peter,

Please find attached the Hanley Castle Pre-Submission Neighbourhood Plan SEA Screening Opinion Update which is out for consultation from Friday 16 June until 5pm on Friday 21 July 2017.

This is following on from the SEA and HRA Screening Opinions consultation on the Hanley Castle Pre-Submission Neighbourhood Plan earlier on this year, for which Historic England concluded a full SEA would be required. Further to that and subsequent assessments and correspondence, this update seeks to address Historic England's initial concerns.

For ease of use, the sections of the SEA Screening Opinion which have been added/amended are highlighted.

I look forward to hearing from you, if you have any queries please contact David Clarke on [REDACTED]

Regards,

Reiss

Reiss Sadler BSc (Hons)
Planning Officer (Policy)
Wychavon District Council
Civic Centre
Queen Elizabeth Drive
Pershore
WR10 1PT
Tel: [REDACTED]



Draft Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan

Strategic Environmental
Assessment (SEA) Screening
Opinion Update



June 2017

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND

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

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

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

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

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

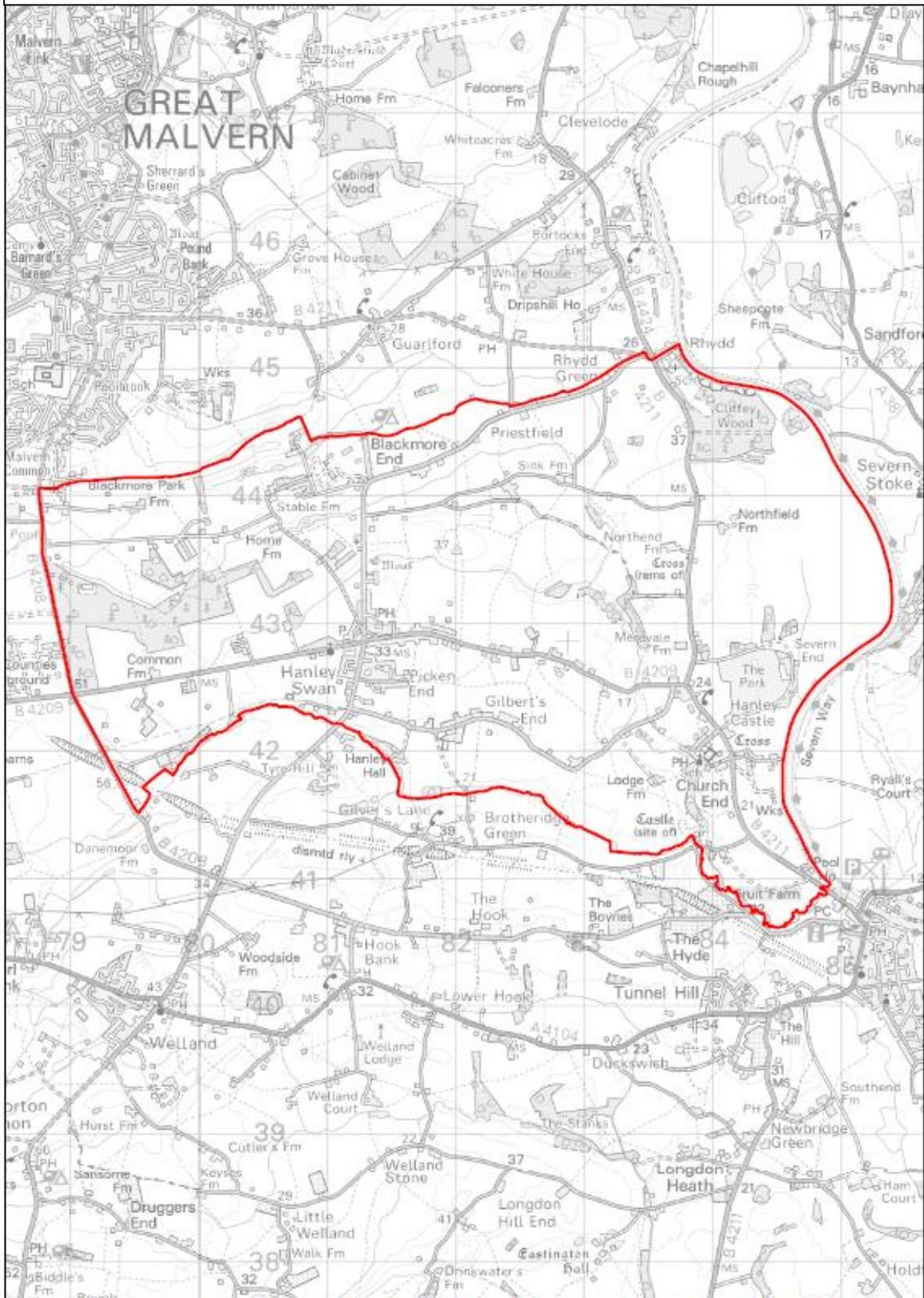
SEA and HRA Screening Opinions were published for consultation with the three statutory environmental consultees in February 2017. In summary, it was deemed a HRA Appropriate Assessment (AA) would not be required, with the Environment Agency and Natural England both concluding a full SEA would also not be necessary. There was concern from Historic England on the potential impact of the additional small-scale housing allocations on heritage assets, but further assessments, the proposed Parish Design Guide and neighbourhood policies to protect heritage assets have addressed initial concerns. This updated SEA Screening Opinion seeks to formally confirm the revised position.

1.2 DRAFT HANLEY CASTLE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN SUMMARY

The Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan is essentially a community-led framework for guiding future development and growth of the Parish of Hanley Castle to the year 2030. A total of 27 draft policies have been published focusing on topics including housing, community facilities, design, built, historic and natural environment, and traffic and transport.

1.3 HANLEY CASTLE DESIGNATED NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA

Figure 1 – Hanley Castle Designated Neighbourhood Area



1.4 DRAFT HANLEY CASTLE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN POLICY SUMMARIES

27 policies are proposed in the Draft Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan; they are summarised below.

DRAFT POLICY	SUMMARY
<p>MnGr 1 Housing Mix</p>	<p>Requires new housing to deliver a range of house types, sizes and tenures with an emphasis on the delivery of affordable housing, starter homes, two and three bedroom family homes and homes for the elderly and/or the disabled.</p>
<p>MnGr 2 Affordable Housing</p>	<p>Encourages developers to construct all affordable housing in accordance with Lifetime Homes Standards. Promotes shared-ownership at a minimum of 25% of part of the affordable housing tenancy mix. Supports rural exception affordable housing development on small sites beyond but reasonably adjacent to the development boundaries of the villages in the Parish.</p>
<p>MnGr 3 Allocation of Affordable Housing</p>	<p>Requires all affordable housing that is delivered in the Parish to be subject to a local connection in order to meet the needs of those in the Parish who are unable to access open market homes by being offered tenancy or shared-ownership first.</p>
<p>MnGr 4 Infill / Backland Housing in the Parish</p>	<p>Supports infill and backland housing development provided they are well designed and meet other relevant policies in the Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan and the South Worcestershire Development Plan (SWDP), and where such development fills a small gap in the existing frontage; does not involve the outward extension of a village; is not considered to be unneighbourly if backland; are no more than three bedrooms; or provides the plot for self-build development but limited to three bedrooms.</p>
<p>MnGr 5 Scale of New Development</p>	<p>States planning permission will only be granted for sites of a maximum of 10 dwellings, excluding the allocation in the SWDP, unless there is an agreed masterplan demonstrating the phasing of development over a number of years.</p>
<p>MnGr 6 Incremental Growth</p>	<p>Supports the development of up to 50 dwellings in the Parish, with no more than 30 dwellings to be granted planning permission over a rolling five year period.</p>
<p>MnGr 7 Siting of New Developments</p>	<p>Identifies four potential site allocations over-and-above SWDP allocations across the Parish to deliver up to 35 additional dwellings and an extension to Albion Lodge Care Home above and beyond the allocation within the SWDP (SWDP 59/6 for</p>

	an indicative 20 dwellings).
MnGr 8 Siting of Local Businesses	Promotes the development of new business premises within the identified existing business centres. Supports the further development of Blackmore Park in line with SWDP 54 and industrial or commercial development on the old incinerator site at Hayler's End.
MnGr 9 Heavy Goods Traffic	Requires proposals which would generate an increase in heavy goods traffic (B2 and B8 development for example) to demonstrate through a Transport Statement that the development will not have an unacceptable impact on the quality of life of residents through the generation of increased noise, vibration and pollution.
MnGr 10 Disused or Redundant Buildings	Supports the reuse of redundant or disused buildings where it would improve, restore or maintain a positive unlisted or local listed building, or any other structure of local significance provided it would lead to an enhancement of the local setting; the design respects the local character and significant of the structure; it is compatible with neighbouring uses; and the existing building is of permanent and substantial construction and capable of conversion without major works, extensions or ancillary buildings.
MnGr 11 Assets of Community Value	Supports proposals that will enhance the viability or community value of facilities listed as an Asset of Community Value, and seeks to protect such facilities from either loss or significant harm unless it can be demonstrated that the use no longer serves the community; there is adequate provision elsewhere in the Neighbourhood Area with capacity to meet the need; the proposed use will deliver a clear community benefit and is compatible with adjacent land uses; or the current facility is no longer financially viable.
MnGr 12 Developer Contributions Policy	Requires all development in the Parish to provide necessary infrastructure on-site, or contribute towards off-site infrastructure through section 106 or CIL. Identifies projects in the Parish for which such off-site monies could be attributed to.
RE 1 Sympathetic Design	Requires new development to achieve high quality and inclusive design whilst conserving local distinctiveness and the aesthetic qualities of traditional rural settlements and buildings found in the Parish.
RE 2 Settlement Identity	Seeks to maintain the separate identities of the two principal settlements in the Parish (Hanley Castle and Hanley Swan) by

	restricting new housing development in the open countryside outside the development boundaries of the villages unless it is a dwelling for a rural worker; affordable housing on a rural exception site; or a replacement dwelling which does not exceed the original footprint by more than 30%. Extensions to existing dwellings outside the development boundaries are supported provided they do not dominate the original dwelling, and the conversion or re-use of existing buildings will be supported provided there is no need for substantial reconstruction.
RE 3 Replacing Natural Features Lost Through Development	Requires development proposals that are likely to have an adverse impact on significant trees, orchards, hedgerows and other natural features to provide appropriate and proportionate mitigation measures.
BHN 1 Protection of Buildings or Structures on the Local List of Heritage Assets (Local List)	Requires proposals that will affect a building or structure on the Local List to demonstrate how they protect or enhance the heritage asset. Seeks the renovation, alteration or change of use of buildings or structures identified on the Local List to be sensitively designed with consideration of the heritage asset's setting, historical and architectural interest. Resists demolition of buildings and structures on the Local List unless it can be demonstrated that the viability of continued use, conversion or restoration has been fully investigated.
BHN 2 The Environs of Heritage Assets	Seeks to ensure proposed developments, public realm additions and changes adjacent to nationally and locally listed buildings enhance or sustain the heritage asset. Promotes development which will contribute towards the long term management and wellbeing of heritage assets.
BHN 3 Protection of the Archaeological Environment	Lists known archaeological sites in the Parish and seeks to ensure development proposals take account, and ensure potentially significant deposits are identified and appropriately considered during development.
BHN 4 Preserving Ancient Trees, Woodland, Trees and Hedges	Seeks to resist development proposals which damage or result in the loss of ancient trees or trees and hedgerows of arboricultural or amenity value, with the establishment of new native hedgerows encouraged. Requires proposals to be designed to retain such features within landscaping schemes.
BHN 5 Protected Local Green Spaces	Identifies eight areas in the Parish as Local Green Spaces which are to be protected from development in order to preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, the village townscape and to offer long term recreational

	opportunities.
BHN 6 Sites of Biological Interest	Supports the protection of Sites of Biological Interest throughout the Parish. Seeks to protect and enhance local habitats and wildlife biodiversity and corridors. Identifies a number of local wildlife and habitat sites which development proposals should seek to protect or enhance.
Des 1 General Building Design Principles	Sets design principles for which development proposals must address on issues such as scale, character, local distinctiveness and use of materials. Proposals that do not meet the design principles will be considered unsustainable and should therefore be resisted. Reference made to the Parish Design Guide (2016) which is a supplementary document to the Neighbourhood Plan.
Des 2 Renewable and Low Carbon Energy	Supports stand-alone renewable and low carbon energy schemes (excluding wind turbines) provided the potential impacts are or can be made acceptable; considerations include visual impact, impact on neighbouring uses, public safety and impact on a Conservation Area, Listed Building or their setting.
Des 3 Integrating New Developments with the Existing Communities	Seeks to integrate new housing and business developments with the existing communities with regard to design and its impacts on accessibility and connectivity with local services and facilities.
Trf 1 Highways and Traffic Principles	Details highways and traffic principles that should be addressed in all new development proposals, including road safety, traffic calming measures within new developments and car parking.
Trf 2 Safe Cycle Route between Hanley Castle and Hanley Swan	Details the Parish Council's priority for the development of a safe cycle route between the villages of Hanley Castle and Hanley Swan.
Trf 3 Footpaths / Bridleways / Cycle Paths	Supports new development proposals which seek to improve footpath and cycle connections within the proposal. Identifies further cycleway schemes which will be considered.

1.5 STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (SEA) PROCESS

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

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

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

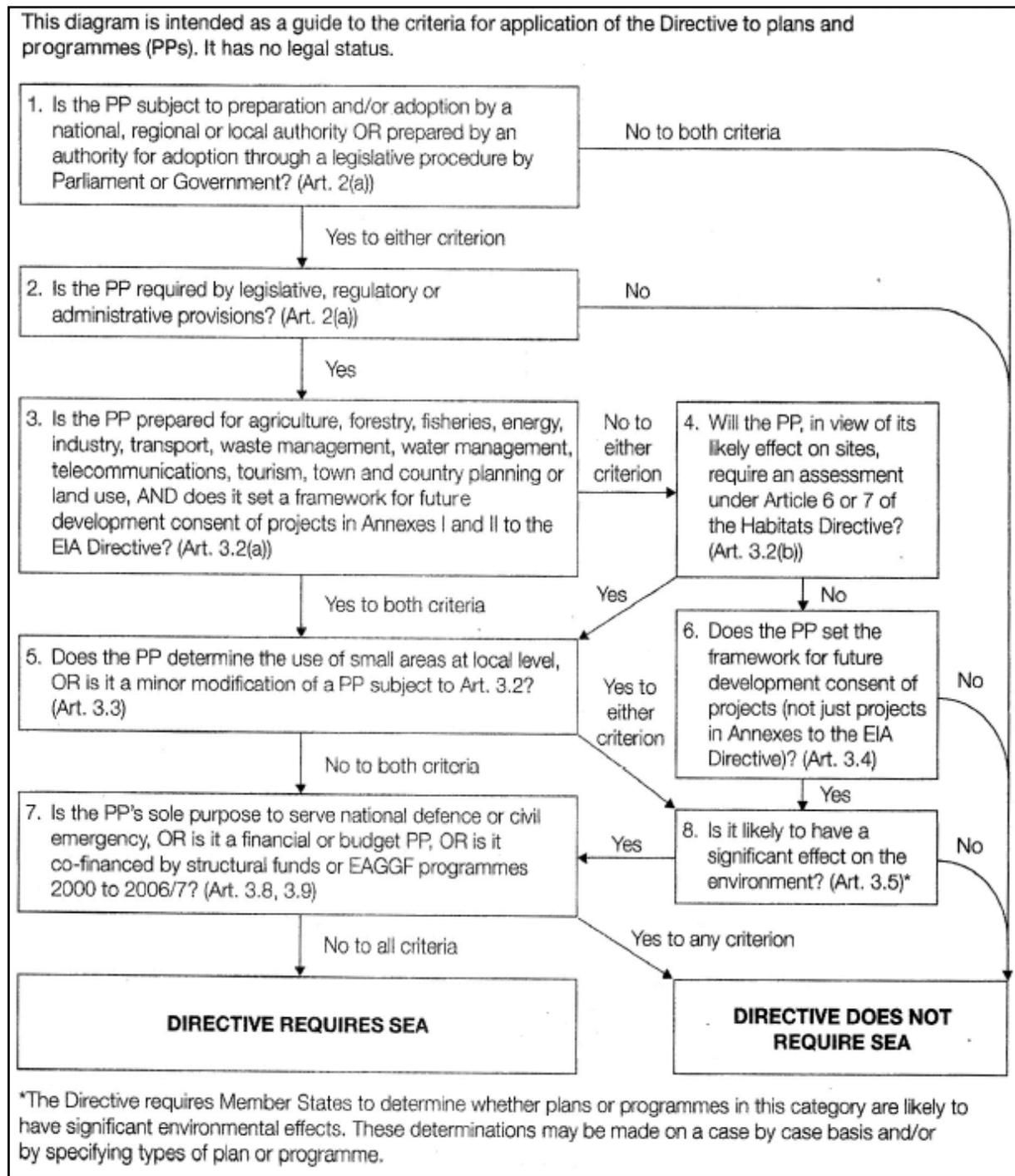


Figure 2 – Application of the SEA Directive to Plans and Programmes

Table 1: Assessment of Neighbourhood Plan using SEA Directive Criteria

Stage	Y/N	Reason
1. Is the Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan subject to preparation and/or adoption by a national, regional or local authority OR prepared by an authority for adoption through a legislative procedure by Parliament or Government? (Art. 2(a))	Y	This is a Neighbourhood Plan that is being prepared by a qualifying body (Hanley Castle Parish Council) under the Localism Act 2011. If the plan is passed by means of a referendum, it will be formally adopted by the local Planning Authority and will hence become a statutory planning document. It will form part of the local development framework and so will have significant weight in planning decisions.
2. Is the Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions? (Art. 2(a))	N	Neighbourhood Plans are not mandatory requirements, and the Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared voluntarily by the local qualifying body in line with the provisions of the Localism Act. If the plan is adopted however it will form part of the statutory development plan, and it is therefore considered necessary to answer the following questions to determine if an SEA is required.
3. Is the Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism, town and country planning or land use, AND does it set a framework for future development consent of projects in Annexes I and II to the EIA Directive? (Art 3.2(a))	Y	The plan is prepared for town and country planning, and sets out potential land use allocations (both in line with SWDP and additional sites).
4. Will the Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan, in view of its likely effect on sites, require an assessment for future development under Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive? (Art. 3.2 (b))	N	See Screening Opinion for HRA in Section 3 of this report.

5. Does the Hanley Castle Neighbourhood 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)	Y	The Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan proposes a site for housing development, which is in conformity with the allocations made by the SWDP. It also proposes a number of additional small sites for possible housing development which are not included in the SWDP.
6. Does the Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan set the framework for future development consent of projects (not just projects in annexes to the EIA Directive)? (Art 3.4)	Y	When adopted, the Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan will be a statutory planning document. It will form part of the Local Development Framework and so will have significant weight in planning decisions. The responsibility for issuing development consent will remain with the Local Authority.
7. Is the Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan's sole purpose to serve the national defence or civil emergency, OR is it a financial or budget PP, OR is it co-financed by structural funds or EAGGF programmes 2000 to 2006/7? (Art 3.8, 3.9)	N	Not Applicable
8. Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment? (Art. 3.5)	Y	The Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan could potentially have a significant effect on the environment in its current form, mainly owing to the potential for housing development as part of Policy MnGr7. To investigate the likelihood of potential impacts further a case-by-case assessment has been conducted, the full results of which can be found in Table 2.

Based upon the initial screening carried out against the criteria in Table 1 above, the emerging Draft Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan could potentially have a significant effect on the environment. To explore these potential effects further, a case-by-case assessment has been conducted. The criteria used in the undertaking of such an assessment are drawn from Article 3.5 (Annex II) of the SEA directive, and the results are shown in Table 2.

2. SEA SCREENING

2.1 SEA SCREENING ASSESSMENT

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

Table 2 below provides the screening determination of the need to carry out a full Strategic Environmental Assessment for the Hanley Castle Parish pre-submission Neighbourhood Plan. This has been made in accordance with the Regulations and will be subject to consultation with the strategic environmental bodies before Malvern Hills District Council makes its determination on the necessity for a full Strategic Environmental Assessment.

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

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (SEA Directive, Annex II)	Likely to have significant environmental effects?	Summary of significant events
1(a) the degree to which the draft Hanley Castle Parish 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;	YES	The Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan would, if adopted, form part of the statutory Development Plan and as such does contribute to the framework for future development consent of projects.
1(b) the degree to which the draft Hanley Castle Parish Neighbourhood Plan influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy;	NO	Other than the additional housing allocations proposed in the draft Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan, the policies are considered to be in general conformity with the SWDP, and will be used alongside this document in the determination of planning applications when formally 'made' (adopted).
1(c) the relevance of the draft Hanley Castle Parish Neighbourhood Plan for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable	NO	The policies of the draft Hanley Castle Parish Neighbourhood Plan are not considered to have a significant impact on the integration of environmental considerations.

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (SEA Directive, Annex II)	Likely to have significant environmental effects?	Summary of significant events
development;		
1(d) environmental problems relevant to the draft Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan;	NO	The draft Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan is more likely to promote environmental sustainability than create any environmental problems.
1(e) the relevance of the draft Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan for the implementation of community legislation on the environment (for example, plans and programmes linked to waste management and water protection);	NO	The policies of the draft Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan are not considered to be relevant to the implementation of EC legislation.
2(a) the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the draft Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan;	NO	It is considered unlikely that there will be any irreversible damaging environmental impacts associated with the Draft Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan. The plan features a number of policies which seek to protect and enhance the natural, built and historic environment, and the plan is therefore likely to result in beneficial rather than damaging effects.
2(b) the cumulative nature of the effects of the Draft Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan;	NO	The policies of the Draft Hanley Castle Parish pre-submission Neighbourhood Plan are unlikely to have any significant cumulative negative environmental impacts.
2(c) the transboundary nature of effects of the Draft Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan;	NO	The Draft Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan is unlikely to have any significant negative environmental impacts on adjoining Parishes.
2(d) the risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents) due to the Draft Hanley	NO	It is considered that there will be no risk to human health or the environment as a result of the Draft

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (SEA Directive, Annex II)	Likely to have significant environmental effects?	Summary of significant events
Castle Neighbourhood Plan;		Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan.
2(e) the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected);	NO	The Draft Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan applies to an area of 1,793 hectares, which has a resident population of 1,340 (2011 census). The policies of the Neighbourhood Plan apply to the entirety of this area, and are unlikely to effect areas beyond the neighbourhood boundary.
2(f) the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) special natural characteristics or cultural heritage; (ii) exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values; or (iii) intensive land-use; and 	NO	The Draft Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan will not have any substantial impact on these factors.
2(g) the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, community or international protection status.	NO	The policies of the Draft Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan are unlikely to have a negative impact on any environmental designations in the Neighbourhood Area.

2.2 SEA SCREENING OPINION

Table 2 assesses the likelihood of significant environmental effects arising from the Draft Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan in its current form.

In general, the policies and allocations in the Draft Hanley Neighbourhood Plan are in-line with the strategy of the adopted SWDP, which has been subject to a Sustainability Appraisal incorporating a Strategic Environmental Assessment. The policies of the Draft Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan seek to avoid or minimise environmental effects through the provision of guidance on issues which are specific to the neighbourhood area. It is therefore likely that the Draft Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan will have, both directly and indirectly, a positive environmental impact rather than negative, by setting out guidance addressing how developers can minimise impacts on a number of environmental receptors. The emerging Neighbourhood Plan identifies four small housing allocations which were not featured in SWDP assessments, and hence the likelihood of the sites having a significant environmental impact if included in the adopted Neighbourhood Plan has not been examined. However, any heritage assets would be afforded a level of protection or mitigation by policies BHN1, BHN2 and the Hanley Castle Parish Building Design Guide.

Pending the responses of the consultation and the formal views of the statutory environmental bodies, it is considered that the Draft Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan does not require a full Strategic Environmental Assessment.

3. CONCLUSION

3.1 SCREENING OPINIONS CONCLUSIONS

Following the assessment made in Table 2 and discussion in Paragraph 2.2, it is considered that a full SEA is not required for the Draft Hanley Castle Neighbourhood Plan. This conclusion is on the basis of the Neighbourhood Plan being in general conformity with the SWDP, with the exception of four small additional housing allocations. The impact of these additional sites on heritage assets would be afforded a level of protection or mitigation by policies BHN1, BHN2 and the Hanley Castle Parish Building Design Guide.

3.2 NEXT STEPS AND CONSULTATION

The above conclusion is based on consultation responses by Natural England and the Environment Agency to the initial Screening Opinion in Spring 2017 and subject to consultation with Historic England before a formal decision is made on the requirement of a full SEA.

The five week consultation period runs from Friday 16 June to Friday 21 July 2017, with a determination made soon after.

Appendix 4

Hanley Castle Pre-Submission Neighbourhood Plan SEA Screening
Opinion Update, June 2017 – Historic England Representation



Historic England

WEST MIDLANDS OFFICE

Mr Reiss Sadler
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Worcestershire
WR10 1PT

Direct Dial: [REDACTED]

Our ref: PL00069567

11 July 2017

Dear Mr Sadler

HANLEY CASTLE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN SEA RE-CONSULTATION

Thank you for the above re-consultation.

For the purposes of consultations on SEA, Historic England confines its advice to the question, "Is the Plan or proposal 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 by yourselves in your consultation to us.

On the basis of the information now supplied, including that set out in the draft plan that includes a supporting document (part 2) analysing site allocations and policies that mitigate against likely historic environment impacts along with a Parish Design Guide and in the context of the criteria set out in Schedule 1 of the Environmental Assessment Regulations [Annex II of 'SEA' Directive], Historic England concur with the revised conclusion that the preparation of a Strategic Environmental Assessment is **not** required.

I hope this advice is helpful.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

Peter Boland
Historic Places Advisor

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cc:



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