

# Responses from consultation with statutory partners concerning the Strategic Environment Assessment Screening Report

## Historic England:

Dear Ryan,

Thank you for your email of the 16th June 2023, inviting us to comment on the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Consultation for the Oakhampton Neighbourhood Development Plan.

Our role as a national statutory consultee for Neighbourhood Planning focuses mainly on ensuring there is no risk of undue harm to heritage assets. The most common way that risk of harm emerges in Neighbourhood Plans is when new, site-specific allocations for development are being made.

We note that the Oakhampton Neighbourhood Development Plan itself is modest in scope and does not make specific site allocations for development. Furthermore, we cannot detect any obvious cause for concern in the suite of emerging policies. Given the limited risk of harm to heritage, we concur with your opinion that a full SEA is not required on this occasion. We do not wish to make any other specific comments at this time.

I hope that our response has been helpful. We wish the neighbourhood planning group well with their on-going work. We look forward to being invited to comment further at the regulation 14 stage.

Kind Regards,

Alan

Alan Thompson | Historic Places Adviser

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## Natural England:

Date: 20 July 2023  
Our ref: 439228  
Your ref: Okehampton Town and Hamlets Neighbourhood Plan



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Dear Mr Putt

### **Okehampton Town and Hamlets Neighbourhood Plan - SEA Screening Opinion**

Thank you for your consultation on the above dated and received by Natural England on 16 June 202343

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.

#### **Screening Request: Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)**

**It is Natural England's advice, on the basis of the material supplied with the consultation, that significant effects on statutorily designated nature conservation sites or landscapes are unlikely.**

The proposed neighbourhood plan is unlikely to significantly affect any Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ), Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection area (SPA), Ramsar wetland or sites in the process of becoming SACs or SPAs ('candidate SACs', 'possible SACs', 'potential SPAs') or a Ramsar wetland. The plan area is unlikely to have a significant effect on a National Park, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty or Heritage Coast, and is unlikely to impact upon the purposes for which these areas are designated or defined.

Guidance on the assessment of Neighbourhood Plans, in line with the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 is contained within the [Planning Practice Guidance](#). This identifies three triggers that may require the production of an SEA:

- 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.

Natural England does not hold information on the location of significant populations of protected species, so is unable to advise whether this plan is likely to affect protected species to such an extent as to require an SEA. Further information is included in Natural England's [standing advice](#) on protected species.

Furthermore, Natural England does not routinely maintain locally specific data on all environmental assets. The plan may have environmental impacts on priority species and/or habitats, local wildlife sites, soils and best and most versatile agricultural land, or on local landscape character that may be

sufficient to warrant an SEA. Information on ancient woodland, ancient and veteran trees is set out in Natural England/Forestry Commission [standing advice](#).

We therefore recommend that advice is sought from your ecological, landscape and soils advisers, local record centre, recording society or wildlife body on the local soils, best and most versatile agricultural land, landscape, geodiversity and biodiversity receptors that may be affected by the plan before determining whether a SEA is necessary.

Natural England reserves the right to provide further advice on the environmental assessment of the plan. This includes any third party appeal against any screening decision you may make. If a SEA is required, Natural England must be consulted at the scoping and environmental report stages.

Please send any new consultations, or further information on this consultation to [consultations@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:consultations@naturalengland.org.uk).

Yours sincerely

Sally Wintle  
Consultations Team

## The Environment Agency:

Good afternoon,

Thank you for providing us with the opportunity to comment in respect of the Okehampton Town and Hamlets Neighbourhood Plan SEA/HRA screening opinion.

In general we consider that it is unlikely that neighbourhood plans will result in any significant environmental effects unless the plan allocates or encourages development over that set out in the Local Plan. Otherwise we consider that any potential for environmental effects from growth in the parish should already have been addressed through the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) which supported the adopted Local Plan.

Please note, this is a standard response. If you consider the plan will result in significant environmental effects please reconsult us.

Kind regards,

**Claire Crawley**

Sustainable Places – Planning Advisor

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