

Date: 16 February 2022
Our ref: 382549
Your ref: Kingsbridge, West Alvington and Churchstow Neighbourhood Plan:
Regulation 16 Consultation



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Dear Duncan Smith

Thank you for your consultation on the above dated 27 January 2022.

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. Our remit includes protected sites and landscapes, biodiversity, geodiversity, soils, protected species, landscape character, green infrastructure and access to and enjoyment of nature.

Kingsbridge, West Alvington and Churchstow Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) Regulation 16

We welcome the consideration given to our comments following the regulation 14 consultation, and note subsequent changes made to the Kingsbridge, West Alvington and Churchstow NDP. The NDP shows a clear commitment to protecting and enhancing the natural environment.

Kingsbridge Settlement Boundary: We take this opportunity to reiterate our previous comment relating to the settlement boundary for Kingsbridge. Whilst we acknowledge that the undeveloped land included in the northmost section takes in the Croft Lane Piggeries Site, and is presumably not therefore a site allocated for development, its inclusion within the settlement boundary determines that there is a presumption in favour of development on this land. The principles used to define these borders state that where agricultural land is located on the edge of a settlement, the *“Buildings that are used for residential purposes should form the furthest extent of the settlement boundary.”* On this basis, we recommend removing the agricultural land from the settlement boundary.

BE1 Brownfield First: Following our response to the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in November 2021, we note and welcome the changes made to the BE1 Brownfield First policy. Again, whilst we acknowledge that the policy itself presents a presumption in favour of development, with the policy wording amended to make specific reference to protecting the Salcombe to Kingsbridge SSSI we are satisfied that in so far as our strategic environmental interests are concerned, significant environmental effects resulting from the neighbourhood plan are unlikely. We therefore agree with the conclusion of the SEA screening report that a full Strategic Environmental Assessment is not required.

Finally, we advise that any references to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) are amended to accord with the most up to date version of the NPPF, revised in July 2021 .

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 Naomi-Beth Dixon at naomi.dixon@naturalengland.org.uk. For any new consultations, or to provide further information on this consultation please send your correspondence to consultations@naturalengland.org.uk.

Kind Regards,

Naomi-Beth Dixon

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