



Strategic Environmental Assessment for the Stoke Fleming Neighbourhood Plan

Environmental Report to accompany the Submission
version of the Neighbourhood Plan

Addendum

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Quality information

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1. Introduction

This document is an addendum to the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Environmental Report submitted with the Stoke Fleming Neighbourhood Plan in early 2018. The addendum has been prepared in response to the Independent Examiner's report on the Neighbourhood Plan, dated 17th October 2018.

The addendum presents a number of updates to the Environmental Report. This is with a view to addressing the Independent Examiner's comments that further heritage and landscape work should be presented to inform the Neighbourhood Plan allocation for housing on Rectory Lane and the allocation for a new car park between Old Road and Mill Lane. This work should also be reflected in the SEA Environmental Report.

To address these elements, this addendum to the SEA Environmental Report is structured as follows:

- **Chapter 2** presents updates to the assessment of the sites considered as reasonable alternatives through the SEA process, specifically Table 4.3 in Section 4.3.2 the Environmental Report.
- **Chapter 3** subsequently presents updates to the overall assessment findings presented in Section 5.5 of the Environmental Report, which considers impacts on landscape character and the historic environment.



2. Updates to assessment of alternative sites for taking forward through the SFNP (Table 4.3)

Minor revisions have been made to the assessments of the alternative housing sites included with **Section 4.3.2** of the Environmental Report. These revisions present additional information on the potential historic environment impacts associated with the Rectory Field.

In this context the following table updates and replaces **Table 4.3** in the Environmental Report. Deletions to the previous text are provided as a ~~strikethrough~~, and additions underlined in red.

Updated Table 4.3: Site B, Rectory Field

SEA theme	Commentary, Site B: Rectory Field
Biodiversity and geodiversity	<p>No designated biodiversity sites are present on or adjacent to the site. The site is not within an SSSI Impact Risk Zone, no County Wildlife Sites are present on or in close proximity to the site and the site is not within a Strategic Nature Area.</p> <p>The site is located adjacent to an area of Deciduous Woodland BAP priority habitat, which is located to the east of the site.</p>
Climatic factors	<p>Development of the site will lead to inevitable increases in greenhouse gas emissions from an increase in the built footprint of the village, although these are unlikely to be significant.</p> <p>In relation to adapting to the effects of climate change, the site is not located within identified flood risk zones for fluvial or surface water flooding.</p> <p>The site is located close to the centre of the village and village amenities and local bus routes. This will support the use of sustainable modes of transport.</p>
Landscape and historic environment	<p>The site is located within the South Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The site is currently well screened with no long or medium distance views in and out of the site. As such an allocation at this location is unlikely to lead to impacts on landscape character in the area.</p> <p>There are no sites of historic interest within the site, though the site is within approximately 30m of the Grade II listed Farwell House and East Farwell, located further to the north east. Whilst these structures are relatively well screened from the site, there is the potential for impacts on their setting from new housing development at this location.</p> <p><u>Development at this location would however be peripheral to the intended outlook of Farwell House, which is a residence designed to have an outlook from the principal rooms to view the church and have an attractive landscaped setting. The site has been separate from the garden of the listed building for several decades and benefits from considerable screening with existing planting. This will help limit potential effects.</u></p> <p>The Stoke Fleming Conservation Area lies approximately 40m to the south east of the site, covering Rectory Lane. Given existing screening and topography, there are unlikely to be impacts on the setting of the conservation area.</p>
Land, soil and water resources	<p>It is not possible to confirm if an allocation at this site will lead to a loss of Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land as recent land classification has not been carried out in this location. For this reason it is not possible to determine whether the pre-1988 classification of Grade 3 agricultural land comprises Grade 3a land (which is land classified as the Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land) or Grade 3b land (which is land not classified as such).</p> <p>The site is not located in a Groundwater Source Protection Zone.</p>
Population and community	<p>The site has the potential to deliver in the region of 9-12 dwellings, helping to meet local housing needs.</p> <p>The site is located close to the centre of the village and village amenities and local bus routes to Dartmouth and Kingsbridge. This will support accessibility to services and facilities.</p>

SEA theme	Commentary, Site B: Rectory Field	
Health and wellbeing	The site is located under 200m from the village playing fields and village hall and is adjacent to the existing public rights of way network, linking to the South West Coast Path. It is also accessible to the services and facilities in Dartmouth, including healthcare facilities, by bus. This will support health and wellbeing.	
Transportation	The site is located close to the centre of the village and village amenities and local bus routes. It is also located adjacent to the public rights of way network. This will support the use of sustainable modes of transport.	
Key		
Likely adverse effect (without mitigation measures)		Likely positive effect
Neutral/no effect		Uncertain effects

3. Updates to appraisal findings (Section 5.3)

Updates and additions have also been made to the findings presented in **Chapter 5** of the Environmental Report, specifically under Section 5.5, which discusses potential impacts on landscape character and the historic environment.

The updated sections are presented below. Deletions to the previous text are provided as a ~~strike through~~, and additions underlined in red.

5.5 Landscape and historic environment

[Text to replace paragraph 6 of Section 5.5]

In relation to the housing allocation taken forward through the SFNP at Rectory Field, the site is currently well screened with no long or medium distance views in and out of the site. As such an allocation at this location is unlikely to lead to impacts on landscape character in the area.

There are no sites of historic interest within the site, though the site is within approximately 30m of the Grade II listed Farwell House and East Farwell, located to the north east. Whilst these structures are relatively well screened from the site, there is the potential for impacts on their setting from new housing development at this location. Detailed historic character assessment at this location has however established that development would be peripheral to the intended outlook of Farwell House, which is a residence designed to have an outlook from the principal rooms to view the church and to have an attractive landscaped setting. The site has also been separate from the garden of the listed building for several decades and benefits from considerable screening with existing planting. The Stoke Fleming Conservation Area lies approximately 40m to the south east of the site, covering Rectory Lane. Given existing screening and topography, there are unlikely to be impacts on the setting of the conservation area. The policy for the site also ~~supports townscape quality by facilitating the provision of open space with new development areas~~ seeks to ensure that the scale, design and layout of the development is sensitive to its location within the setting of the listed building and the conservation area, and, in association with Policy RT2, ~~facilitates~~ enables enhancements to Bird Walk. This will help limit potential effects on the historic environment at this location.

The Neighbourhood Plan allocates through Policy RT3 a new car park on part of the field behind the parking bays and public toilets between Old Road and Mill Lane. In recognition of the potential sensitivity of the site in landscape character terms, a detailed landscape character assessment was undertaken for the location in July 2018¹. This highlighted that the following key landscape characteristics affect the site:

- Open plateau landform rolling down gently to the south east, with far reaching coastal views along the coast and out to sea.
- Mixed farmland and wind-blown vegetation creating a variety of colours and textures which change with the seasons, bounded by Devon hedges and characteristic stone walls.
- Hedgerows of high value for wildlife, containing many wildflowers.
- Iconic unspoilt and expansive panoramic views of the sea and the adjoining dramatic cliffs.
- Expansive seascapes under big skies influenced by the changing sea moods and skies
- A remote, windswept character of the high open plateau, sparsely settled with high levels of tranquillity and dark night skies.

The assessment's summary of the overall character of the site (which is based on scale, landform, pattern/complexity, settlement & human influences, skyline, visual relationships & views, intervisibility, perceptual/aesthetic criteria), is as follows:

¹ South Hams District Council (July 2018) Landscape Impact Assessment of Stoke Fleming Neighbourhood Plan Policy RT3: Car Park, between Old Road and Mill Lane

"An elevated and open site, forming part of a gently rolling pasture field sloping broadly to the south east. Whilst locally well screened by existing mature hedgerows, there are expansive, mid-distance to distant views along the coast in both directions which take in the site. A cluster of distinctive pines lies to the north east, alongside the church tower, both of which are visible over long distances.

Tree cover is otherwise limited to that bordering or close to the site, with boundary hedgerows, hedgerow trees to the northern boundary and that further to the south, and woodland to the south east."²

In response to these constraints and sensitivities, the landscape character assessment suggests a number of mitigation measures to minimise the potential effects of delivering a car park on the site. These have been adopted in full by the policy for the site (Policy RT3: Car Park, between Old Road and Mill Lane), which seeks to ensure that a range of provisions relating to limiting the impact of the car park on landscape character are implemented. These provisions include: boundary treatments using native banked hedgerow with trees to provide screening of long distance views of parked cars; the introduction of trees and planting within the parking areas with a naturalistic layout to provide screening of long distance views of parked cars; the use of sensitive surfacing material; utilising sensitive kerb treatments; reinforcing existing landscape features; and precluding the introduction of lighting on the site.

In this context, whilst the delivery of a car park on the site in this sensitive location has the potential to have impacts on landscape character, and affect views in the area, the significance of these impacts will be minimised through the implementation of these comprehensive design and mitigation measures. As such no significant effects on landscape character from this Neighbourhood Plan proposal are anticipated.

² Ibid.

