

Mrs J Griffith
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Our ref:

Your ref:

17 December 2014

Dear Mrs Griffith

East Wittering and Bracklesham Neighbourhood Plan

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Opinion Screening Determination under Regulation 9 and Schedule 1 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004

This letter addresses whether an environmental assessment of the East Wittering and Bracklesham Neighbourhood Plan is required and as such whether it meets one of the basic conditions that a neighbourhood plan must meet in order to proceed to referendum: that it does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations.

On the basis of the contents of the neighbourhood plan that was the subject of consultation with the relevant statutory agencies in accordance with Regulation 9(2) of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, the following determination can be made.

The screening determination is that **an environmental assessment of the East Wittering and Bracklesham Neighbourhood Plan is required** due there being adverse comments from English Heritage and for the reasons set out in the screening report which is attached to this letter.

As such it is the opinion of Chichester District Council that the East Wittering and Bracklesham Neighbourhood Plan requires an environmental assessment in order to be in accordance with the provisions of the European Directive 2001/42/EC as incorporated into UK law by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.

This decision has been based on the information provided. If the contents of the Plan are revised and/or there is a material change in the environmental characteristics in the locality (e.g. any additional nature conservation or other environmental designations), then the comments contained in this decision would need to be reconsidered in order to take account of the changes.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Andrew Frost'.

Andrew Frost
Head of Planning Services

Screening Report for the East Wittering and Bracklesham Neighbourhood Plan

Criteria and response of screening

Criteria (from Annex II of SEA Directive and Schedule I of Regulations)	Relevance in context of this screening report
The characteristics of plans and programmes	
(a) the degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources;	<p>The East Wittering and Bracklesham Neighbourhood Plan (NP) would, if adopted, form part of the Statutory Development Plan and as such will establish the development control framework for East Wittering and Bracklesham and the surrounding environs.</p> <p>The NP is prepared for town and country planning and land use planning purposes and will set out a framework for future development in East Wittering and Bracklesham. The nature of the NP is likely to include housing, open space, infrastructure and employment development, which may fall under 10(a & b) of Annex II of the EIA directive.</p>
(b) the degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy;	<p>The NP is the lowest tier in the planning hierarchy and must conform to plans in the upper tiers, rather than influence them. The East Wittering and Bracklesham NP must conform to the Chichester Local Plan, the National Planning Policy Framework and European Directives.</p>
(c) the relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development;	<p>There are opportunities for integrating environmental considerations within East Wittering and Bracklesham.</p>
(d) environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme; and	<p>Key issues taken from the Scoping Report of the Chichester Local Plan and derived from the East Wittering and Bracklesham NP include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The local visitor economy establishing green tourism to reflect the area's natural assets 2. A shortage of affordable homes; 3. Increase in traffic on access roads to and from Chichester on the Manhood Peninsula; and 4. Creating a sense of community and involving all residents.
(e) the relevance of the plan or programme	<p>The NP is a land-use plan and will set the</p>

<p>for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (for example, plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection).</p>	<p>framework for future development consents within the East Wittering and Bracklesham NP area.</p> <p>The NP will set policies, including environmental policies, which planning applications within the East Wittering and Bracklesham NP area must adhere to.</p>
<p>Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected</p>	
<p>(a) the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects;</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. No significant effects are anticipated on Population, Human Health, Flora, Fauna, Soil, Air, Climatic Factors, Material Assets and Landscape in East Wittering and Bracklesham Parish. 2. The Medmerry Managed Realignment Scheme lies to the east of Bracklesham. Medmerry is identified as a compensatory SAC and SPA habitat as part of the North Solent Shoreline Management Plan. It should therefore be considered in accordance with NPPF Paragraph 118.
<p>(b) the cumulative nature of the effects;</p>	<p>Housing proposals are in keeping with the aspiration of the Chichester Local Plan and the proposals of the NP. No cumulative effects are expected as a result.</p>
<p>(c) the transboundary nature of the effects;</p>	<p>The majority of effects within the Parish will be localised. Due to the locally important natural assets, effects on these features may occur beyond the area of the Parish.</p>
<p>(d) the risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents);</p>	<p>East Wittering and Bracklesham parish has areas within Flood Zones 2 and 3. Proposed sites for housing development should be outside of these areas.</p>
<p>(e) the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected);</p>	<p>East Wittering is the largest settlement in the Parish. Due to the lack of employment opportunities within East Wittering and Bracklesham Parish, residents generally out-commute for work. Indirect effects of the plan, such as out-commuting, may extend beyond the immediate area of the plan but are not anticipated to cause significant effects.</p>
<p>(f) the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to: (i) special natural characteristics or cultural heritage; (ii) exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values; or</p>	<p>(i) The Parish Council has indicated that the NP may contain policies that may affect sensitive natural or heritage assets located in or in proximity to the Plan area. Until housing sites are identified, it is possible that the</p>

<p>(iii) intensive land-use; and</p>	<p>proposed sites would have significant effects on the historic environment.</p> <p>(ii) Development in the parish is likely to be within the zones of influence for Chichester Harbour SPA and Pagham Harbour SPA. Policies 50 and 51 of the Chichester Local Plan are appropriate to deal with any issues associated with recreational disturbance. If appropriate, the NP should contribute to the management of the Bracklesham Bay SSSI.</p> <p>(iii) East Wittering and Bracklesham Parish has areas of moderate productivity agricultural land, with areas of grade 2 and 3 land situated within the Parish. The location of housing in East Wittering and Bracklesham Parish is concentrated within the village itself.</p>
<p>(g) the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.</p>	<p>There are locally and internationally designated wildlife sites in proximity to the NP area.</p> <p>The SSSI in the Parish is important for the biodiversity in the area. Any developments should be planned so as to not cause a significant effect on the integrity of the Site or the species which relies on it for survival. Policy RE7, RE8 and BE14 paragraph 49 in the Chichester Local Plan strive to protect statutory sites in the District.</p> <p>The East Wittering and Bracklesham NP is not anticipated to significantly affect the nearby Chichester Harbour AONB and is unlikely to adversely affect the character.</p> <p>The Medmerry Managed Realignment Scheme lies to the east of Bracklesham. Medmerry is identified as a compensatory SAC and SPA habitat as part of the North Solent Shoreline Management Plan. It should therefore be considered in accordance with NPPF Paragraph 118.</p>