

**Screening Statement on the  
determination of the need for a  
Strategic Environmental Assessment /  
Habitat Regulations Assessment  
for the emerging Ampport  
Neighbourhood Plan**

July 2025

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# **1 INTRODUCTION**

## **1.1 BACKGROUND**

This screening report is designed to determine whether or not the content of the draft Amport 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 SEA, 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 SEA may be required, for example, where:

- the 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 SEA of the Local Plan in the area.

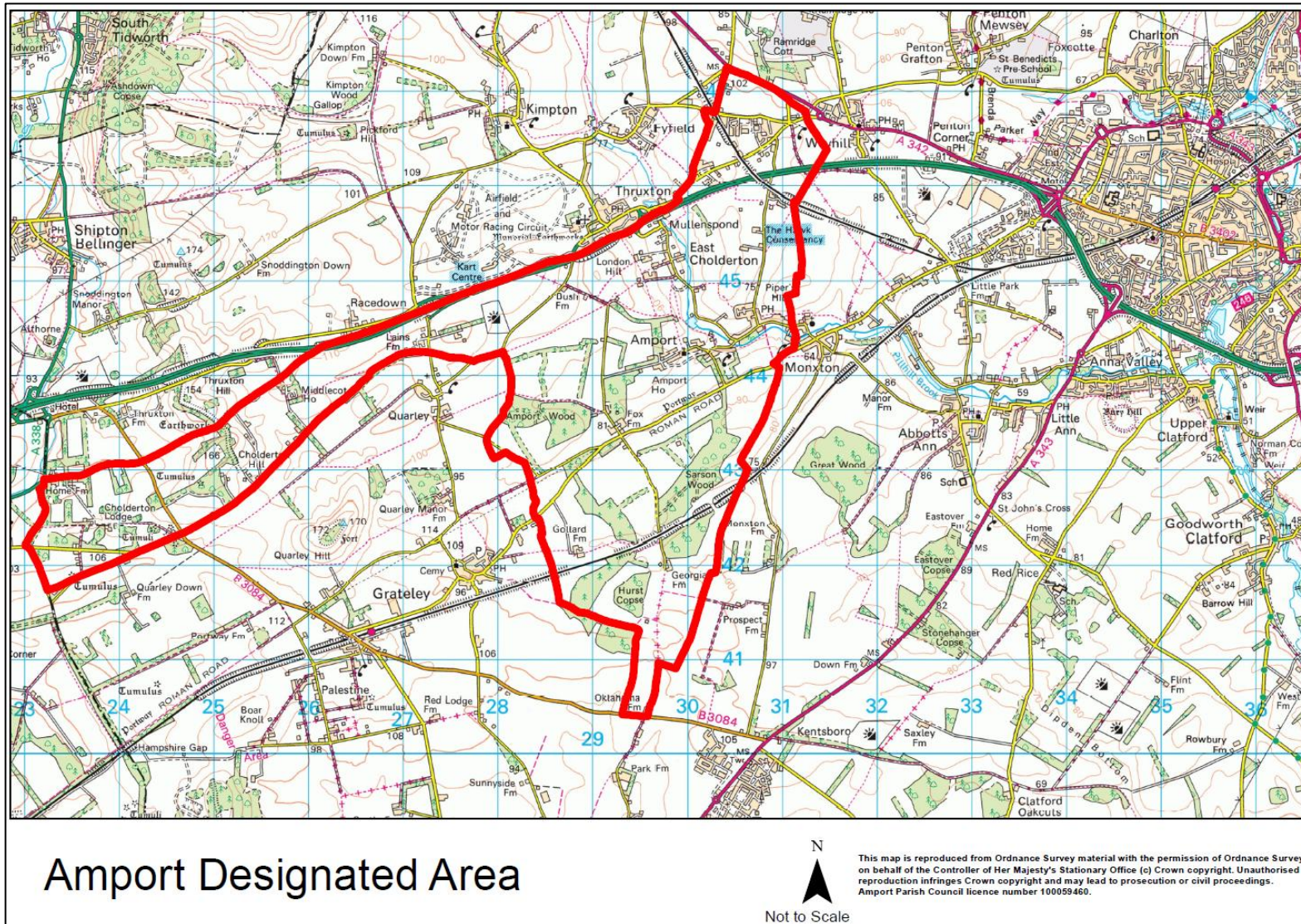
The screening report also examines the potential impact of the draft Amport Neighbourhood Plan on internationally designated wildlife sites and determines if the plan requires a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA).

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 AMPORT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN SUMMARY**

The Amport Neighbourhood Plan is a community-led framework for guiding future development and growth of the parish. 22 draft policies have been proposed, focusing on topics including, Built Environment, Natural Environment and Community and Infrastructure.

## AMPORT DESIGNATED NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA



### 1.3 DRAFT AMPORT NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN POLICY SUMMARIES

Policy	Summary of policy wording
Policy AM1: Landscape Character and Settlement Identity	Seeks development proposals to demonstrate how they preserve or enhance the distinct rural character of the landscape and features and elements highlighted in the plan, and take into consideration the recommendations of the Amport Character Appraisal and Design Code.
Policy AM2: Green and Blue Infrastructure, Landscape and Planting	Supports the expansion of the network of the green and blue infrastructure of the plan area, and seeks to preserve, enhance and maintain existing green and blue infrastructure. Seeks the replacement of any trees removed as a result of development and requires the use of native planting or planting known to be beneficial to wildlife.
Policy AM2.1: Protection of Pillhill Brook	States any development must demonstrate that there would be no increased risk of flooding, water pollution or adverse nutrient loading and that the rural landscape character, identified views and biodiversity of the Pillhill Brook will be maintained and imposes a 20m undeveloped buffer between the banks of the Pillhill Brook and any development.
Policy AM3: Flooding and Drainage	States development proposals should incorporate a sustainable and integrated approach to the management of flood risk, surface water (including run off) and foul drainage and should be robust to the expected impacts of climate change. Seeks site-specific flood risk assessments for planning applications and the use of SuDS to mitigate any anticipated increase in flood risk where appropriate.
Policy AM4: Local Green Spaces	Designates the 15 areas listed within the policy as Local Green Spaces.
Policy AM5: Important Views and Vistas	Seeks to preserve or enhance the local character of the landscape of the 38 important views identified in this policy and that new developments through their design, height and massing should recognise and respond positively to these views.
Policy AM6: Biodiversity and Habitats	States development proposals must protect and enhance the local biodiversity of Amport Parish, including the maintenance and creation of wildlife corridors, with new residential developments avoiding the loss of significant trees and vegetation.
Policy AM6.1: Protection of Amport Fen	States development proposals that are likely to impact on the nature reserve known as Amport Fen should include evidence to justify that the biodiversity of the reserve will be protected and where possible, enhanced.
Policy AM6.2: Hawk Conservancy Trust	Identifies a flight zone radius of the Hawk Conservancy Trust where development proposals must be assessed for potential adverse impact on the birds by submitting a detailed impact assessment, demonstrating either: how proposals will have no adverse impact; or how they will mitigate any potential risks to The Trust's birds and their flight zones.
Policy AM7: Dark Night Skies	Requires development proposals to conserve and enhance relative tranquillity in relation to light pollution and dark night skies.
Policy AM8: Historic Environment	Seeks to conserve and enhance designated heritage assets and their settings, both above and below ground, including the Conservation Area, listed buildings and archaeological sites. States proposals for development that affects the identified non-designated historic assets in the Amport Parish area, will be



Policy	Summary of policy wording
	considered, taking account of the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the asset.
Policy AM9: Design Principles	Requires new development to refer to the Building for a Healthy Life Toolkit and demonstrate how it preserves and enhances defining character features as set out in the Amport Character Appraisal and Design Code.
Policy AM10: Housing, Infill and Redevelopment Policy	States the requirements for replacement dwellings, infill development and extensions to existing dwellings to be considered appropriate by follow the guidance set out in the Amport character appraisal and Design Code.
AM10.1: Development and Provision of Local Infrastructure	States proposals for a small-scale, carefully considered housing site of up to 20 smaller dwellings (up to 3 bed) within the area of Weyhill to meet local needs in terms of size of dwelling and tenure (as per the latest housing needs survey), which contains provisions for public open space and equipped play facilities will be supported.
Policy AM11: Community and Local Economy	Policy supports proposals that improve the condition of the listed key facilities and resists proposals for the change of use of the identified facilities. Identifies the need for a community/public open space and play area in Weyhill.
Policy AM11B - Local Economy	Sets out the criteria required for proposals for rural business development including proposals for the change of use of existing buildings to be supported including being sensitive to the rural character of the area and avoid causing harm to the local environment and infrastructure.
Policy AM12: Accessibility, Road Safety and Sustainable Transport	Sets out criteria for new proposals.

## **1.4 STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (SEA) PROCESS**

The basis for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) legislation is European Directive 2001/42/EC which 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).

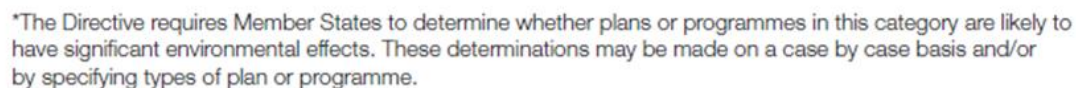
The SEA process aims to ensure that likely significant environmental effects arising from a Plan are identified, assessed, mitigated, communicated and monitored, and that opportunities for public involvement are provided. It enables environmental considerations to be accounted for in decision-making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

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 draft Amport Neighbourhood Plan in Table 1.

The implications of the policies and proposals in the Neighbourhood Plan have been assessed against any European sites within 10km of the neighbourhood area boundary in order to establish the likelihood of a significant effect on the reason for designation of the European site in question.

This assessment has been undertaken having regard to the results and information in the HRA screening assessment prepared for the Test Valley Local Plan, and in the light of the relevant European Commission guidance (as referred to above), which forms the basis for the assessment criteria set out below.

This diagram is intended as a guide to the criteria for application of the Directive to plans and programmes (PPs). It has no legal status.



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**1.6 Table 1:** Assessment of the draft Amport Neighbourhood Plan using SEA Directive Criteria

Stage	Yes / No	Reason
1. <i>Is the 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))</i>	Yes	This is a Neighbourhood Plan that is being prepared by a qualifying body the Localism Act 2011. If the Plan is passed by means of an Examination and Referendum, it will be formally made and adopted by the Local Planning Authority. It will then form part of the local development framework and be afforded significant weight in planning decisions.
2. <i>Is the Neighbourhood Plan required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions? (Art. 2(a))</i>	No	Neighbourhood Plans are not mandatory requirements, and the Amport 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 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. <i>Is the 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 (see Appendix 2) to the EIA Directive? (Art 3.2(a))</i>	No	The Amport Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared for the purposes of town & country / land use planning and will set out a framework for planning policies as part of the statutory development plan covering Amport.
4. <i>Will the 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))</i>	No	Given the range of protected habitats within and adjacent to the Neighbourhood Plan Area (including the Salisbury Plain international designation), at this stage it is concluded that the Amport Neighbourhood Plan will not have significant effects on Natura 2000 sites. The Habitat

Stage	Yes / No	Reason
		Regulations Assessment Screening Opinion that follows in Section 3 provides more detail on this and concludes that an HRA will not be required.
<i>5. Does the 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)</i>	No	A Neighbourhood Plan can only determine the use of small areas at the local level and the Neighbourhood Plan is not proposing to allocate sites for development.
<i>6. Does the Neighbourhood Plan set the framework for future development consent of projects (not just projects in annexes to the EIA Directive)? (Art 3.4)</i>	Yes	When adopted, the Amport 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.
<i>7. Is the 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)</i>	No	A Neighbourhood Plan does not deal with any of these categories of plan.
<i>8. Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment? (Art. 3.5)</i>	Yes	Given the statutory nature of the Amport Neighbourhood Plan; the range of environmental designations within and adjacent to the Amport Neighbourhood Area; and the fact that the Plan does not allocate sites for development, it is concluded that the Neighbourhood Plan <b>does not</b> require a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

## Conclusion

The Government's National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) resource recognises that a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) may be required where a Neighbourhood Plan allocates sites for development and/or the Neighbourhood Area contains sensitive natural or heritage assets that may be affected by the proposals in the plan.

The Test Valley Borough Council has concluded that this is not the case with the emerging Amport Neighbourhood Plan as the plan does not make any allocations.

Table 2 assesses the likely significance of effects on the environment in accordance with the criteria established in Regulation 9 and [Schedule 1 of the SEA Regulations](#).

Based upon the initial screening carried out against the criteria in Table 1 above, the emerging draft Amport Neighbourhood Plan is **not likely to have a significant effect on the environment**.

## **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 draft Amport Neighbourhood Plan.

This has been made in accordance with the Regulations and will be subject to consultation with the strategic environmental bodies before the 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)	Summary of significant events
1(a) the degree to which the draft Amport 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;	The Amport Neighbourhood Plan would, if adopted, form part of the statutory 'development plan' for the parish and provide the planning framework for consenting development proposals within the Borough Council area of the parish. Under Section 38(6) of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act it would therefore form part of the legal planning framework for the consideration and consenting of future development projects within the wider framework set by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the strategic policies of the Test Valley Park Local Plan (2016).
1(b) the degree to which the draft Amport Neighbourhood Plan influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy;	The policies contained within the draft Amport Neighbourhood Plan have been produced by the local community to influence the Parish areas. The policies will need to be in general conformity with the TVBC Local Plan and the relevant sections of the Government's National Planning Policy Framework and will be used alongside the documents in the determination of planning applications when formally 'made' (adopted).
1(c) the relevance of the draft Amport Neighbourhood Plan for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development;	Amport Parish Council has confirmed that the Neighbourhood Plan will include policies which seek to protect the Built Environment, Natural Environment and Community.

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (SEA Directive, Annex II)	Summary of significant events
	<p>The Amport Neighbourhood Area is located close to a range of environmental designations that will be key considerations in preparing the Neighbourhood Plan. The NPPF places the presumption in favour of sustainable development at the heart of national planning system (paragraph 11) and also includes a range of environmental policies that the Neighbourhood Plan is required to be in general conformity with. The SEA aims to ensure environmental factors are fully considered when planning for sustainable development.</p>
1(d) environmental problems relevant to the draft Amport Neighbourhood Plan;	<p>The Amport Neighbourhood Area is situated close to a range of environmental designations. In terms of habitat designations, these include the following either within the Neighbourhood Area, or in close proximity to it.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Salisbury Plain SPA / SAC / SSSI</li> <li>- The River Test SSSI</li> <li>- Quarley Fort SSSI</li> <li>- Danebury Hill SSSI</li> </ul> <p>On this basis it is concluded that the Amport Neighbourhood Plan <b>does not</b> have the potential to have significant effects on the environment.</p>
1(e) the relevance of the draft Amport Neighbourhood Plan for the implementation of community legislation on the environment (for example, plans and programmes linked to waste management and water protection);	<p>The emerging Amport Neighbourhood Plan includes several policies linked to the environment. For example, the current draft Plan includes policies on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A policy to protect Pillhill Brook.</li> <li>- A policy to protect Amport Fen</li> </ul>



Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (SEA Directive, Annex II)	Summary of significant events
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Measures to promote biodiversity and habitat creation and links between parish and surrounding local designations.</li> <li>- The designation of 'local green spaces' through the Neighbourhood Plan making process.</li> </ul>
<p>2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to:</p> <p>(a) the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects;</p>	<p><u>Changes in water quality:</u> The European sites vulnerable to a deterioration in water quality as the following that are relevant to the Amport Neighbourhood Plan - the New Forest SAC &amp; Ramsar site; Solent &amp; Isle of Wight Lagoons SAC; Solent Maritime SAC; Solent &amp; Southampton Water SPA and Ramsar site.</p> <p>The most relevant of these for the Amport Neighbourhood Plan work is the Solent designations and the impacts arising from increased levels of nitrates. Although new development only makes a small contribution to the issue, Natural England's updated methodology and budget calculator (March 2022) re-affirms that new development in the Solent catchment must be 'nitrate-neutral' to ensure compliance with the Habitats Regulations and recent legal case law.</p>
<p>2(b) the cumulative nature of the effects of the draft Amport Neighbourhood Plan;</p>	<p>The Plan doesn't allocate sites for development, therefore there will not be additional cumulative, in-combination impacts of development around the International designations. Therefore, potential impacts of increased recreational pressures on the New Forest and Solent designations <b>can be ruled out</b>.</p>

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (SEA Directive, Annex II)	Summary of significant events
2(c) the transboundary nature of effects of the draft Amport Neighbourhood Plan;	<b>No transboundary effects</b> with EU countries are considered likely to be significant.
2(d) the risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents) due to the draft Amport Neighbourhood Plan;	There are <b>unlikely</b> to be any significant risks to human health arising from the Plan
2(e) the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected);	The Designated Area covers an area of nearly 16.2 square kilometres and a population of approximately 1228 people. Given the environmental sensitivities of the area – and in particular the need to address the impacts of development on water quality and increased recreational pressure, effects are likely. There are established <b>mitigation schemes</b> in place to address these matters.
2(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 (iii) intensive land-use; and	There are a number of nationally and internationally protected nature conservation sites within and immediately adjacent to the Amport Neighbourhood Area. These sites are vulnerable to a variety of impacts, as set out in the assessment against criteria 2(a) above. The Amport Neighbourhood Area also contains a range of built environment assets (designated and non-designated), including a number of listed buildings. National (NPPF and NPPG) and the Borough Council Local Plan includes policies seeking to <b>protect</b> these assets.
2(g) the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, community or international protection status.	National Parks – including the New Forest - have the highest status of protection in relation to landscape and scenic beauty (paragraph 182 of

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (SEA Directive, Annex II)	Summary of significant events
	<p>the NPPF) and great weight should also be given to the conservation of wildlife and cultural heritage within the National Park. Section 62(2) of the Environment Act 1995 requires relevant authorities to have regard to the two statutory Park purposes in making decision that could affect National Parks. This applies to the preparation of plans and projects outside National Parks, but which could impact on them, including Neighbourhood Plans</p>

## 2.2 SEA SCREENING OPINION AND DECISION.

As it has been concluded that there is **no potential for likely significant environmental effects**, an environmental report does not need to be prepared for the Amport Neighbourhood Plan.

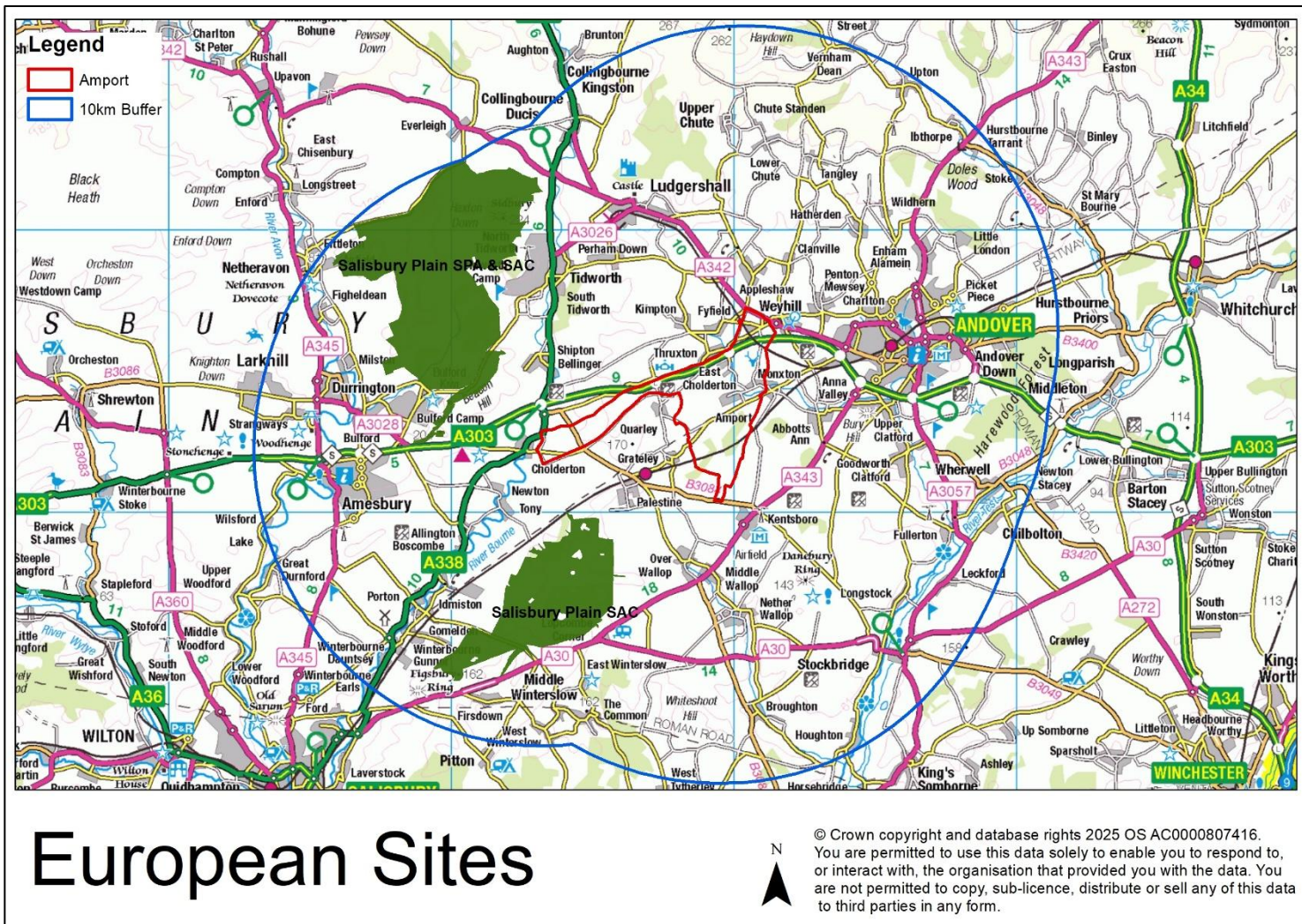
However, if the anticipated vision and scope of policies for the Neighbourhood Plan are subject to significant change, it would be appropriate to review the Screening Opinion and the position regarding the Habitat Regulations Assessment.

### 3 HRA SCREENING

### 3.1 HRA SCREENING ASSESSMENT

Amport Parish Council has also sought a formal screening opinion from the Borough Council on the need for a Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) of the emerging Neighbourhood Plan. The Authority is the 'competent authority' under the Conservation of Habitats & Species Regulations 2010, and therefore needs to ensure the emerging Neighbourhood Plan has been assessed through the Habitats Regulations process where necessary.

This process looks at the potential for significant impacts on nature conservation sites that are of international importance. The Amport Neighbourhood Area includes, or is adjacent to or within the catchment of, the Salisbury Plain SPA / SAC buffer zone. The map below illustrates these designations in relation to the Parish boundary.



### 3.2 HRA SCREENING OPINION AND APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT

This screening assessment has regard to the information that has become available since the Test Valley Local Plan was adopted in 2016. It is also recognised that the Neighbourhood Plan will be in general conformity with the higher-level development plan prepared by the Test Valley Borough Council which has itself been subject to Habitats Regulations Assessments.

From this process the Authority has determined whether the Amport Neighbourhood Plan is likely to result in significant impacts on Natura 2000 sites either alone or in combination with other plans and policies and, therefore, whether an 'Appropriate Assessment' is required.

#### Legislative Background

Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive provides that:

*"Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the [European] site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall be subject to appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site's conservation objectives. In the light of the conclusions of the assessment of the implications for the site and subject to the provisions of paragraph 4, the competent national authorities shall agree to the plan or project only after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned and, if appropriate, after having obtained the opinion of the general public."*

#### Assessment

Table 3

Salisbury Plain Designations
<b>Recreational pressure:</b> The Amport Neighbourhood Area is within the recreational 'zone of influence' of the internationally designated Salisbury Plain SPA and SAC. The AA carried out by Wiltshire council identified an increase in recreational pressure on the Salisbury Plain SPA, particularly through increased levels of dog walking leading to disturbance of nesting stone-curlew. <b>As the plan does not propose or allocate housing sites, potential disturbance therefore can be screened out.</b>

#### Conclusions

It is concluded that as the plan does not propose or allocate housing sites, the emerging Amport Neighbourhood Plan **does not require a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)**. This is based on the range of designated habitats within and adjacent to the Amport Neighbourhood Area and the recognition in published HRA work of their sensitivities to the impacts of development.



## 4 REPRESENTATIONS FROM CONSULTATION BODIES

The Borough Councils initial SEA and HRA Screening Opinion was sent to Natural England, Environment Agency and Historic England - as statutory consultation bodies under Regulation 9 of the SEA Regulations. The statutory consultees responses are summarised below and the complete response can be found in Appendix 1. They confirm that and SEA and HRA are / are not required.

Natural England	Environment Agency	Historic England
<p>It is Natural England's advice, on the basis of the material supplied with the consultation, that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• significant effects on statutorily designated nature conservation sites or landscapes are unlikely; and,</li> <li>• significant effects on Habitats sites, either alone or in combination, are unlikely.</li> </ul> <p>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 areas (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.</p>	<p>The information provided confirms that there will no development coming forward as part of this plan. Having taken this into account, we do not consider there to be any significant environmental impacts associated with this plan, and therefore it is our view that <b>a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) will not be required.</b></p>	<p>The information supplied indicates that the plan will not have any significant effects on the historic environment. We also note there are no site allocations.</p> <p>On the basis of the information supplied, and in the context of the criteria set out in Schedule 1 of the Environmental Assessment Regulations [Annex II of 'SEA' Directive], Historic England concurs with the Council that <b>the preparation of a Strategic Environmental Assessment is not required.</b></p>

<p>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.</p>		
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## 5 CONCLUSIONS

The screening process undertaken by the Test Valley Borough Council concludes that a **Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) are not required for the emerging Amport Neighbourhood Plan.**

The Authority's conclusion is based on the fact that the Amport Neighbourhood Plan will, once adopted, be a statutory planning document that will set the framework for future development in an area with a range of environmental designations. The Neighbourhood Plan is **does not propose or allocate housing sites**, and includes policies that support sustainable development, therefore **potential disturbance therefore can be screened out.**

Table 2 of this report sets out an assessment as to whether the Amport Neighbourhood Plan is not likely to have significant effects on the environment. This assessment is based on the requirements of Regulation 9 and Schedule 1 of the SEA Regulations and recognises the statutory nature of the Neighbourhood Plan; its likely scope; and the value and vulnerability of the area (including national and internationally protected landscapes and habitats).

The SEA and HRA scoping work have identified the following environmental effects as key:

- The potential for direct loss of, or physical damage, to designated habitats or habitats on which designated species rely or direct mortality of designated species. In addition, the potential for development to result in loss of habitat which lies outside European site boundaries, but which is used by the qualifying species populations requires consideration.
- Recreational pressures arising from new development on the international nature conservation sites including the Salisbury Plain SAC & SPA – this applies across the whole of the parish of Amport.
- Potential impacts on built heritage assets, both directly and indirectly (through impacts on their settings).

## **Appendix 1**

## **Response from Natural England**

Date: 18 June 2025  
Our ref: 515189  
Your ref: Amport Neighbourhood Plan

Neighbourhood Planning  
Test Balley Borough Council

**BY EMAIL ONLY**



Hornbeam House  
Crewe Business Park  
Electra Way  
Crewe  
Cheshire  
CW1 6GJ

T 0300 060 3900

Dear Sir/Madam,

Amport Neighbourhood Plan

Thank you for your consultation on the above dated 20 June 2025 which was received by Natural England on the same date.

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) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)**

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; and,
- significant effects on Habitats sites<sup>1</sup>, either alone or in combination, 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 areas (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.

<sup>1</sup> Habitats sites are those referred to in the [National Planning Policy Framework](#) (Annex 2 - glossary) as "any site which would be included within the definition at regulation 8 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 for the purpose of those regulations, including candidate Special Areas of Conservation, Sites of Community Importance, Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas and any relevant Marine Sites".

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

Caitlin Napleton  
Marine & Sustainable Development Higher Officer  
Thames Solent Team



## **Response from Environment Agency**

**From:** Anna Rabone

**Sent:** 27 May 2025 11:31

**To:** Neighbourhood Planning <NeighbourhoodPlanning@testvalley.gov.uk>

**Subject:** Amport Neighbourhood Plan – SA/SEA/HRA screening request

Dear Planning Policy team,

Thank you for consulting the Environment Agency on the screening opinion for the emerging Amport Neighbourhood Plan.

The information provided confirms that there will no development coming forward as part of this plan. Having taken this into account, we do not consider there to be any significant environmental impacts associated with this plan, and therefore it is our view that a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) will not be required. However, should you determine that this Neighbourhood Plan does require SEA, we must be consulted on the scope to ensure key environmental issues within our remit are addressed. Natural England will advise separately regarding the HRA screening opinion.

*Kind regards,*

Anna

Anna Rabone

Sustainable Places Technical Specialist | Solent & South Downs

Environment Agency | Oving Road, Chichester, West Sussex, PO20 2AG

## **Response from Historic England**

Our ref: PL00798950

Your ref: Amport Neighbourhood Plan SEA

Date: 20/08/2025

### **Amport Plan SEA Screening Opinion**

Thank you for inviting Historic England to comment on this consultation. As the Government's adviser on the historic environment Historic England is keen to ensure that the protection of the historic environment is fully taken into account at all stages and levels of the local planning process. For the purposes of this consultation, Historic England will confine its advice to the question, "Is it (the Neighbourhood Plan) likely to have a significant effect on the historic environment?". Our comments are based on the information supplied.

The information supplied indicates that the plan will not have any significant effects on the historic environment. We also note there are no site allocations.

On the basis of the information supplied, and in the context of the criteria set out in Schedule 1 of the Environmental Assessment Regulations [Annex II of 'SEA' Directive], Historic England concurs with the Council that the preparation of a Strategic Environmental Assessment is not required.

The views of the other two statutory consultation bodies should be taken into account before the overall decision on the need for an SEA is made.

I should be pleased if you can send a copy of the determination as required by REG 11 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.

We should like to stress that this opinion is based on the information provided by you with your correspondence. To avoid any doubt, this does not reflect our obligation to provide further advice on later stages of the SEA process and, potentially, object to specific proposals which may subsequently arise (either as a result of this consultation or in later versions of the plan) where we consider that, despite the SEA, these would have an adverse effect upon the environment.

Historic England strongly advises that the conservation and archaeological staff of the relevant local authorities are closely involved throughout the preparation of the plan and its assessment. They are best placed to advise on; local historic environment issues and priorities, including access to data held in the Historic Environment Record (HER), how the allocation, policy or proposal can be tailored to minimise potential adverse impacts on the historic environment; the nature and design of any required mitigation measures; and opportunities for securing wider benefits for the future conservation and management of heritage assets.

Please do contact me, via email if you have any queries.

Yours sincerely

Louise Dandy  
Historic Places Adviser