

Kate Phillipson
Thrupton Neighbourhood Plan Group

BY EMAIL ONLY

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Our ref: pp11.9
Date: 23.04.18

Dear Kate,

**Thrupton Neighbourhood Plan
Request for Screening Opinion for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and
Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)**

I write in response to your request, submitted on your behalf by the South Downs Neighbourhood and Community Planning Consultancy Services, for a screening opinion for Strategic Environmental Assessment in relation to the proposed Thrupton Neighbourhood Plan. This request was received by the Council on the 9th March 2018.

Regulation 9 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 requires that the responsible authority (Test Valley Borough Council) shall determine whether or not a plan is likely to have significant environmental effects. As part of making this assessment, the responsible authority shall —

- (a) take into account the criteria specified in Schedule 1 to these Regulations; and
- (b) consult the consultation bodies.

The Regulations advise that where the responsible authority determines that the plan is unlikely to have significant environmental effects (and, accordingly, does not require an environmental assessment), it shall prepare a statement of its reasons for the determination. This statement will be published on our website in due course.

Natural England, Environment Agency and Historic England, as the statutory consultation bodies for the Regulations, were consulted on this SEA screening request. The consultation started on 9th March 2018 for a five week period, ending on 13th April 2018.

Having reviewed the letter and associated appendix that you provided, the consultation responses from Natural England, Environment Agency and Historic England indicated that having regard to the matters within their remit, the proposed Neighbourhood Plan would not be likely to have significant environmental effects.

The Council has had due regard to the statutory consultee responses and the criteria within Schedule 1 of the Regulations in coming to a view on whether the proposed Neighbourhood Plan is likely to have significant environmental effects. Based on the summary of the proposed Neighbourhood Plan (as provided within the Briefing Note), it is the Council's opinion that the Plan would not be likely to have significant environmental effects. On this basis, a Strategic Environmental Assessment would not be required for the proposed Thruxton Neighbourhood Plan.

With regards to the Habitats Regulations Assessment and whether an Appropriate Assessment is required, the Council concludes that the proposed Neighbourhood Plan is not likely to have a significant effect on European designations. This is supported by the response from Natural England.

You are advised that 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.

Yours sincerely

Graham Smith
Head of Planning Policy