

**Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)**

Screening Questionnaire for Neighbourhood Planners

Under the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (the regulations) the district council is required to determine if a neighbourhood plan is likely to have significant environmental effects and consequently, whether a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is required alongside the neighbourhood plan.

In order determine whether a SEA is required, the council drafts a Screening Opinion, which is then sent to Historic England, Natural England, the Environment Agency and Oxfordshire County Council for consultation. The district council then publish a Screening Statement (Note this must be submitted alongside the plan, if a SEA is not required).

The main determining factor in SEA screening is the likelihood that the Neighbourhood Plan will have significant effect(s) on the environment. Government guidance suggests that a SEA may be required, for example, where:

* a neighbourhood plan allocates sites for development (outside of the allocations in the local plan)
* the neighbourhood area contains sensitive natural or heritage assets that may be affected by the proposals in the plan
* the neighbourhood plan is likely to have significant environmental effects that have not already been considered and dealt with through a sustainability appraisal of the Local Plan.

If the Screening Opinion concludes that a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is required for the Neighbourhood Plan, it is the responsibility of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group to prepare an SEA that complies with the relevant regulations. The District Council would be happy to discuss this further with you and offer guidance and support, should an SEA be necessary.

Basic Condition F[[1]](#footnote-1) relates to Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), and sets out that a neighbourhood plan must be accompanied by either;

* A statement of reasons as to why an SEA is not required, **or;**
* Where an SEA is required, an environmental report following appropriate assessment, which documents the findings of the SEA.

Please complete the questionnaire overleaf and return to your plan’s lead officer at the district council, who will then prepare a screening opinion, before consulting the statutory bodies and subsequently issuing a screening statement.

*Please provide the following information in the fields below:*

1. The name of the neighbourhood area (plan area):

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1. Outline the objectives of the plan, including any emerging draft.

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1. If you have a set of draft policies, please set them out below, or enclose/attach.

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1. Please identify the sites you are considering for allocation in the plan, indicating the source of each site (sources include; those known to the community, those identified by the neighbourhood planning group, sites allocated in the Local Plan/SHLAA/HELAA or a call for sites)[[2]](#footnote-2)

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| 1. Sites for housing, including the number of dwellings/density. |

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| 1. Sites for employment (number of sites and size (sqm or hectares)): |

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| 1. Sites for retail (number of sites and size (sqm)): |

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| 1. Sites for community uses (number of sites and sizes (sqm or hectares)): |

1. Of the sites identified above please provide any planning application reference(s), and where applicable, the date permission was granted

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1. Outline your progress in assessing sites thus far. You may attach a list of sites being considered, and any other information being considered

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1. Does your emerging neighbourhood plan support the priorities set out in the policies of the adopted local plan?

YES NO *(delete as appropriate)*

* 1. If yes, how does your plan add detail, complement and/or enhance local plan policies?

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* 1. If no, please outline your justification and relevant evidence

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1. Please explain how the policies of the plan are likely to affect, positively or negatively, any designations within the neighbourhood area or nearby (designations include, but are not limited to Conservation Area or other heritage asset, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Flood Zone 2 or 3, Site of Special Scientific Interest or the Green Belt)?

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1. What are the key environmental issues in the plan area (ie flooding, contaminated land, sewage treatment, pollution)? Please explain how the policies of the plan are likely to affect, positively or negatively, these issues

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1. What are the key social issues in the plan area (ie community facilities, shortage of affordable housing, transport issues)? Please explain how the policies of the plan are likely to affect, positively or negatively, these issues

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1. Are you aware of anything which may change the information provided by you in this questionnaire (for example, if you are waiting for the conclusion of a study/assessment, planning appeal decision, etc.). If so, please suggest how and when.

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**Declaration**

This information is correct to the best of our knowledge. If there are changes to the information provided, we will inform the district council. We understand that the district council may need to re-screen the plan in future if there are significant changes to our proposals.

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| Signed:  Name/Role: Date: |

1. Paragraph 8 of [Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/20/schedule/10/enacted)  [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Locality Toolkit ‘How to assess and allocate sites for development’ -<https://neighbourhoodplanning.org/toolkits-and-guidance/assess-allocate-sites-development/> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)