

**Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)
Screening Opinion**

Horam Neighbourhood Plan (Pre-Regulation 14)

May 2023

Prepared by Wealden District Council

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This screening report is designed to determine whether the draft Horam Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP), including the Horam Design Guidelines and Codes document requires a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in accordance with the European Directive 2001/42/EC (“The SEA Directive”)¹ and associated Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (The “SEA Regulations”)².
- 1.2 A neighbourhood plan may require a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) to comply with the SEA Directive where it is likely to have significant environmental effects. It is the Council’s responsibility to determine whether the plan is likely to have significant environmental effects taking account of the criteria set out in Schedule 1 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, and in consultation with the Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England.
- 1.3 In order to determine whether a proposed neighbourhood plan is likely to have significant effects on the environment it is ‘screened’ at an early stage once the plan remit and objectives have been formulated. This report assesses the first draft of the Horam NDP (pre-regulation 14 stage) dated February 2023, received on 28 February 2023 and the Design Guidelines and Codes Document dated October 2022, received on 3 March 2023.
- 1.4 If, after the screening assessment and consultation with the statutory bodies, the responsible authority determines that the neighbourhood plan is likely to have significant environmental effects, then a full Environmental Assessment will be required. Conversely, if it is determined through screening and consultation with the statutory bodies that the neighbourhood plan is unlikely to have significant environmental effects, then the neighbourhood planning group need not concern itself with the subsequent stages of the SEA process.
- 1.5 The Council advises neighbourhood plan groups to undertake a Sustainability Appraisal to assess the impact of the Neighbourhood Plan against social, environmental and economic factors. This is good practice and can provide evidence for how the neighbourhood plan meets the requirement to promote sustainable development.

¹ [European Directive 2001/42/EC](#)

² [The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004](#)

2. Overview of the Horam Neighbourhood Plan

- 2.1 The Horam NDP is at an early stage of production and has yet to go out to Regulation 14 consultation. The plan covers Horam Parish, which contains large areas of Ancient Woodland. The northern part of the parish is within the High Weald Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The parish falls within the Cuckmere and Pevensey Levels Management catchment area, specifically within the Cuckmere Upper Operational Catchment³.
- 2.2 There are no Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas, Ramsar Sites, Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Local or National Nature Reserves within the Neighbourhood Plan Area. There is a Local Wildlife Site (LWS) on the southern boundary of the parish, named Cowden Wood Meadow, but this falls within Hellingly Parish. The Cuckoo Trail Habitat Link is a Biodiversity Opportunity Area (BOA) that runs north to south through the parish. The Pevensey, Rother Cuckmere Watershed BOA covers a small part of the north of the parish.
- 2.3 In terms of designated heritage assets within Horam Parish, there is no Conservation Area in Horam, but the parish contains 20 Listed Buildings. There is one Scheduled Monument just outside the parish boundary to the north east. It is on the register as an iron furnace site, West of Beckington Bridge.
- 2.4 The Plan sets out a vision, objectives and policies covering a plan period to 2039. The Plan **does not allocate sites for development**. The Plan sets out a vision statement as follows:

*“The essentially **rural character** of Horam parish and its settlements, which is a primary attribute for local people, is **retained**.”*

*The parish’s landscape character, that reflects its location in the ‘Southern slopes of the High Weald’, with high woodland and tree cover and hedgerows, enclosing generally smaller fields as well as settlements, is retained and enhanced, including through a “**landscape-led**” approach to development.*

*The influence of the Parish’s topography on **the pattern and form of settlements**, on visual linkages with the surrounding countryside, and on the tendency for flash flooding of the Waldron Ghyll, have been recognised and reflected in development proposals.*

*The general “**greenness**” of the **Parish**, not only the fields and woodlands of its countryside but also in terms of its trees, hedges and green spaces within built-up areas, are retained and enhanced, including by identification of a ‘green infrastructure’ network that **promotes biodiversity and reinforces connections with the surrounding countryside**.*

³ [DEFRA Website- Cuckmere Upper Operational Catchment](#)

*Opportunities for **walking, cycling and horse riding**, provided notably by the Cuckoo Trail as well as the Public Rights of Way (PROW) network and highways, continue to be encouraged, including through new and improved links and routes, in ways that increase access to the countryside and to local shops and services.*

*The **distinct identities of individual settlements** have not been further eroded.*

*Horam retains a core of businesses and community **facilities that well serve the surrounding area**, which has been supported by a range of initiatives to encourage their use by both residents and visitors.*

*The nature and mix of development have clearly helped meet **local needs**.*

*The **local vernacular** of building forms and materials has been effectively reflected in new buildings, whilst also contributing to the mitigation of and adaptation to climate change.*

*The **heritage of the parish** has been respected, while references to Horam's historical ties with the railway and the wider parish's ties with iron making and brick making are recognised".*

2.5 The plan's objectives are as follows:

Character and Design

- To ensure that future development is consistent with protecting and maintaining the largely rural character of the Parish.
- To safeguard the Parish character and heritage with particular regard to design.
- To ensure new developments are in sustainable locations and supported by access to sufficient local infrastructure.

Housing Development

- To promote a balance of social mix and age distributions within the Parish.

Countryside and Environment

- To protect and enhance the natural environment and tranquillity of the Parish.
- To conserve and enhance areas of natural habitat.
- To help address climate change.
- To avoid flood-risk caused by new developments.

Local Economy

- To encourage businesses within the Parish that help to meet local needs & are compatible with the character and amenities of the Parish.

Transport and Movement

- To encourage cycling, walking and public transport services.

Community Cohesion

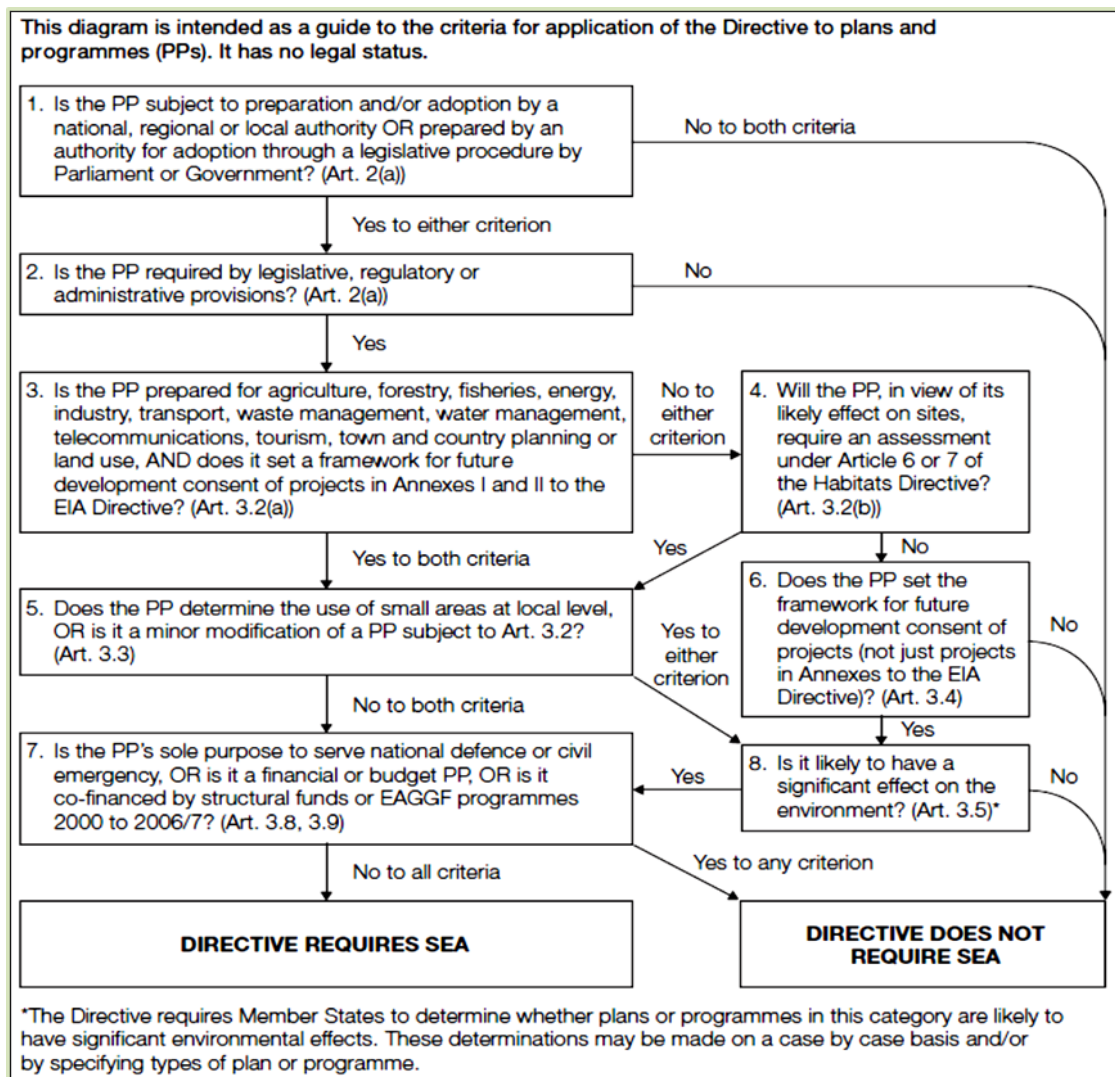
- To maintain and foster Horam's community spirit.

3. SEA Screening Assessment

- 3.1 The screening assessment for the SEA is undertaken in two parts and will firstly assess whether the Horam NDP requires an SEA as per the detailed guidance contained within 'A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive' that is shown in Figure 1 that follows below⁴. The second element of the assessment will consider whether the Horam NDP and Design Code are likely, in their current form, to have a significant effect on the environment, using the criteria drawn from Schedule 1 of the SEA Regulations. Figure 1 below is a guide as to how the criteria for the application of the Directive should be assessed.

⁴ See page 13 of '[A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive](#)' (2005) and Figure 2 – Application of the SEA Directive to plans and programmes for the original diagram.

Figure 1: Application of the SEA Directive to plans and programmes



3.2 The process in Figure 1 has been undertaken in terms of the Horam NDP and the findings can be viewed in Table 1. This establishes whether this NDP would require an SEA. The questions in Table 1 are drawn from the diagram above which sets out how the SEA Directive should be applied.

Table 1: Establishing the need for the SEA

Stage	Yes/No	Reason
<p>1. Is the PP (plan or programme) 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)).</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>The NDP has been prepared by Horam Parish Council under the provision of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Localism act 2011 and the associated Neighbourhood Plan Regulations 2012 as amended.</p> <p>Once the NDP is 'made' Wealden District Council will adopt it.</p> <p>Go to Stage 2</p>
<p>2. Is the PP required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions? (Art. 2(a))</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>The Horam NDP is not a requirement and is optional under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning (as amended by the Localism Act 2011). However, once 'made' the Horam NDP would form part of the statutory development plan and will be used when making decisions on planning applications within the designated neighbourhood plan area. Therefore, it is considered necessary to establish whether there is a need for an SEA.</p> <p>Go to Stage 3</p>
<p>3. Is the PP prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism, town and country</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>The Horam NDP is being prepared for both town and country planning and land use and therefore meets the first part of this question.</p> <p>The NDP contains a general framework for all future development consent, which</p>

Stage	Yes/No	Reason
planning or land use, AND does it set a framework for future development consent of projects in Annexes I and II to the EIA Directive? (Art. 3.2(a))		could include projects that would be listed in Annex II of the EIA Directive. Go to Stage 5
4. Will the PP, in view of its likely effect on sites, require an assessment under Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive? (Art. 3.2(b))	Not applicable.	
5. Does the PP 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)	Yes	The Horam NDP does not allocate land for a specific purpose, but does show preference for the type and form of development at a local level. Go to Stage 8
6. Does the PP set the framework for future development consent of projects (not just projects in Annexes to the EIA Directive)? (Art. 3.4)	Not applicable	
7. Is the PP's sole purpose to serve 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)	Not applicable	
8. Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment? (Art. 3.5)	No	This question is considered within the screening assessment

Stage	Yes/No	Reason
		itself that follows in Table 2 below.

- 3.3 Table 2 below sets out the Council's assessment on the likely environmental effects of the draft Horam Neighbourhood Plan and Design Guidelines and Codes document, with reference to the criteria specified in Schedule 1 of the SEA Regulations⁵.

Table 2: Determining the likely significance of effects

SEA Directive criteria	Wealden District Council assessment	Likely significant environmental effect?
Characteristics of the Neighbourhood Plan (including Design Code), having regard to:		
(a) the degree to which the plan 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 NDP would, if 'made', form part of the statutory Development Plan and as such does contribute to the framework for future development consent of projects.</p> <p>However, the neighbourhood plan must sit within a wider policy framework having regard to national planning policy while also being in general conformity with the strategic policies of the District's Development Plan.</p> <p>The NDP does not seek to allocate sites for development. It instead provides policies to help guide development by providing certain criteria in relation to design and</p>	No

⁵ [The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004](#)

SEA Directive criteria	Wealden District Council assessment	Likely significant environmental effect?
	<p>housing, countryside and environment, the local economy, tourism, transport and community uses.</p> <p>No specific details are provided in relation to the scale, type and form of development (in terms of specific sites). However, design policies and a Design Guidelines and Codes document are provided to guide design across the neighbourhood area.</p> <p>In general terms, the framework of policies seeks to guide projects which are local in nature.</p>	
(b) the degree to which the plan influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy	<p>The Horam NDP must have regard to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Council's Development Plan.</p> <p>The NDP may have a limited degree of influence over the formation of other documents and policies. However, the extent of impact is unlikely to be significant in this regard given the Plan's position within the policy hierarchy and its limited geographic scope.</p>	No
(c) the relevance of the plan for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to	The Horam NDP does not allocate sites for development. The criteria based policies and local designations are designed to promote sustainable development in line with the requirement that all neighbourhood	No

SEA Directive criteria	Wealden District Council assessment	Likely significant environmental effect?
promoting sustainable development	<p>plans contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.</p> <p>In particular, policy HCD5 (Design of Development) promotes the efficient use of energy and water, reducing energy consumption and making use of renewable energy. The Design Guidelines and Codes document also promotes sustainable construction techniques and the use of sustainable drainage systems.</p> <p>Policy HTM1 (Traffic Management) supports integrated cycle infrastructure and policy HTM2 (Active and Healthy Travel) requires applicants to incorporate a range of active travel criteria into their schemes, including integrated walking and cycling routes. Support is also given for improvements to the Cuckoo Trail in policy HTM3 (Cuckoo Trail).</p> <p>The Design Guidelines and Codes document encourages sustainable access and movement and promotes walking and cycling. It also provides detailed guidelines for cycle parking and storage.</p> <p>It will be advised for the NDP to be accompanied by a Sustainability Appraisal.</p>	
(d) environmental problems relevant to the plan	The Horam NDP area does not contain any Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation, Ramsar Sites, SSSIs, LNRs or NNRs.	No

SEA Directive criteria	Wealden District Council assessment	Likely significant environmental effect?
	<p>The area does contain Ancient Woodland and a Local Wildlife Site (LWS) that abuts the Neighbourhood Plan area, but these designations are unlikely to be affected by the policies in the plan.</p> <p>The NDP does not allocate sites for development. However, it does intend to designate Local Green Spaces, Local Settlement Gaps and has a specific policy for the Waldron Ghyll Valley to provide strong protection for such areas.</p> <p>The NDP includes policies to help protect nature and biodiversity, including the protection of trees and mature hedgerows, as well as policies to protect dark skies. Policy HCD1 (Settlement Pattern and Landscape Character) requires developments to conserve and enhance the landscape and scenic beauty of the High Weald AONB.</p> <p>Policy HCD5 (Design of Development) supports the efficient use of energy and water, maximising opportunities to reduce energy consumption and make use of carbon free sources of energy.</p> <p>There are some policies that provide support for employment, community, infrastructure and tourism uses subject to various criteria, but if such development were to come forward, it will be assessed in relation to any environmental issues as part of the</p>	

SEA Directive criteria	Wealden District Council assessment	Likely significant environmental effect?
	planning application process. It is not possible to assess this now as there are no site-specific locations or details on scale/design available.	
(e) the relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (for example, plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection).	The NDP will not affect the implementation of environmental legislation. The Habitats Regulations screening concludes that the Horem NDP will not result in a 'likely significant effect' on any SACs, SPAs or Ramsar sites.	No

SEA Directive Criteria	Wealden District Council assessment	Likely significant environmental effect?
Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to:		
(a) the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects	The Horem NDP plan period runs until 2039. The plan does not allocate sites for development but will set policies to help shape and guide development over that period and development that comes forward in the Neighbourhood Plan area will be assessed as part of the normal planning application process against these policies. It is unlikely that there will be significant	No

SEA Directive Criteria	Wealden District Council assessment	Likely significant environmental effect?
	environmental effects as a result of the policies and criteria in themselves.	
(b) the cumulative nature of the effects of the plan	<p>The scope of the policies proposed within the Horam NDP are local in nature.</p> <p>There are some policies that provide support certain types of development for employment, community, infrastructure or tourism uses subject to various criteria. However, the scale, location, type and form of development is not known and will therefore be assessed as part of the normal planning application process should development come forward. The policies and criteria in themselves will not result in a significant cumulative environmental effect.</p> <p>The Design Guidelines and Code document may result in cumulative effects but these will be largely beneficial (e.g., the use of better quality materials or local design features could cumulatively create a higher quality built environment).</p>	No
(c) the transboundary nature of the effects	There are not expected to be any trans-boundary effects on other parishes, local authority areas or wider.	No
(d) the risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents)	There are no significant risks to human health or the environment. A number of policies seek to improve human health by ensuring adequate green space and play areas are incorporated in new development,	No

SEA Directive Criteria	Wealden District Council assessment	Likely significant environmental effect?
	encouraging active and healthy travel including improving the Cuckoo Trail, improving public transport and community facilities and requiring allotment provision from major developments.	
(e) the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)	The NDP covers Horam Parish which has an area of 1,039 hectares ⁶ . The 2021 census shows a population of 3,121 ⁷ . The Plan therefore covers a relatively small geographic area with a modest population. The plan is not allocating sites for development and the effects of the plan are likely to be largely limited to the neighbourhood area.	No
(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; and (iii) intensive land-use	(i) Special natural characteristics or cultural heritage; The Neighbourhood Plan <u>Cultural Heritage</u> The Neighbourhood Area contains 20 Listed Buildings and there is a Scheduled Monument located just outside the parish boundary. The potential exists for non-designated heritage assets to be present within the neighbourhood area, both in the form of buildings and archaeology. There are a number of Archaeological Notification Areas	No

⁶ [Horam Parish- Parish.UK network](#)

⁷ [Horam Parish- Parish.UK network](#)

SEA Directive Criteria	Wealden District Council assessment	Likely significant environmental effect?
	<p>within the parish and the potential for further sites of archaeological interest.</p> <p>The NDP does not include policies to protect designated heritage assets, as there is already legislative, national and local policy protection (including the statutory development plan of Wealden District Council). However, the Horam NDP does provide a draft policy to conserve or enhance non-designated heritage assets within the Neighbourhood Plan area and has produced a list of candidate sites for a local list.</p> <p><u>The Natural Environment</u></p> <p>The Horam NDP contains policies to protect nature and biodiversity, including trees and hedgerows, and to protect dark skies in the parish. The Horam NDP seeks to designate a number of Local Green Spaces, retain settlement gaps and protect important local views. It also seeks to ensure sufficient green space is provided on new developments and that flood risk is minimised.</p> <p>Other policies at both the national and district level will also ensure no significant environmental issues.</p> <p>The Horam Design Guidelines and Codes</p> <p><u>Cultural Heritage</u></p> <p>The Horam Design Guidelines and Codes is a guidance document, with the aim of improving future design in</p>	

SEA Directive Criteria	Wealden District Council assessment	Likely significant environmental effect?
	<p>the parish so that it respects the distinct character and qualities of the existing settlements as well as meeting the needs of local people. It covers buildings protected for their cultural heritage (e.g. Listed Buildings), but provides minimal specific guidance, just a short heritage asset section.</p> <p>The northern part of the parish is within the High Weald AONB to which a fairly prescriptive housing design guide already applies (see the High Weald Housing Design Guide⁸). Heritage assets are also covered by specific legislation and policies within the statutory development plan for Wealden District, which minimises the likelihood of significant effects occurring as a result of the Design Code. The heritage policy in the proposed Neighbourhood Plan focusses on non-designated heritage assets only, looking to conserve and enhance non-designated heritage assets in the parish. The proposed design policy aims to reinforce local character and distinctiveness.</p> <p>Ultimately, the Design Code does not propose any new development by itself and will only be considered design guidance to applicants/ developers and as a material consideration within the planning</p>	

⁸ [High Weald Housing Design Guide, November 2019](#)

SEA Directive Criteria	Wealden District Council assessment	Likely significant environmental effect?
	<p>application process. The Design Code will add detail / guidance to existing statutory development plan policies and national policy rather than override them. It will also only be used as relevant and on a 'case by case' basis.</p> <p>Whilst the Horam Design Code has the potential to impact design considerations, it is not considered that it would have a likely significant environmental effect on the parish's cultural heritage due to it only being design guidance and in consideration that legislation, the NPPF, Local Plan policies and indeed the emerging neighbourhood plan policy would be in place (once adopted). It is also not possible to identify at this stage where or when development will occur, the type or scale of development, or which heritage assets may be affected and any detailed assessment of impact will need to take place with the determination of a planning application.</p> <p><u>The Natural Environment</u></p> <p>The Horam Design Guidelines and Codes document provides guidance on supporting nature, green spaces and water management, including providing for biodiversity and open space in new developments. It also provides guidance on avoiding light pollution. Other policies at a national</p>	

SEA Directive Criteria	Wealden District Council assessment	Likely significant environmental effect?
	<p>and district level will also ensure no significant environmental issues.</p> <p>(ii) Exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values;</p> <p>The neighbourhood plan does not allocate sites. It is not expected that criteria based policies in themselves will lead to an exceedance of environmental quality standards or limit values. Any development that does come forward will be considered through the normal planning application process.</p> <p>(iii) Intensive land-use.</p> <p>The Horam Design Guidelines and Codes document looks at the density of the different settlements within the parish and sets a suggested maximum dwellings per hectare (dph) for the village of Maynards Green and context driven densities elsewhere.</p>	
(g) the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status	<p>The HRA screening assessment has not identified any likely significant environmental effects on any national, community or international protected sites.</p> <p>The neighbourhood area is located partially inside the High Weald AONB. The neighbourhood plan is not proposing sites for development and contains policies that seek to protect and enhance the AONB.</p>	No

SEA Directive Criteria	Wealden District Council assessment	Likely significant environmental effect?
	It has no other nationally or internationally important ecological or landscape designations.	
Conclusion	The Horam NDP is not likely to have a significant effect on the environment and as such an SEA is not required.	

4. SEA Screening Conclusion

- 4.1 As a result of the assessment at Section 3, it is considered by Wealden District Council that an SEA will not be required for the Horam Neighbourhood Plan (including the Horam Design Guidelines and Code document).
- 4.2 This report was sent to the three statutory bodies for comment (Historic England, Natural England and the Environment Agency) in line with the SEA regulations. Historic England, Natural England and the Environment Agency concur with the Council that the Horam NDP is unlikely to cause significant environmental effects and the preparation of an SEA is not required. The consultee's responses are provided at Appendix 1.
- 4.3 This screening opinion is considered to be a 'snapshot in time' and if the scope and/or policies contained within the Horam NDP should change, then a new screening process will need to be undertaken to determine whether an SEA would be required at that time.

Appendix 1: Statutory Consultee Responses.

From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Horam Neighbourhood Plan SEA Screening
Date: 05 May 2023 11:32:59
Attachments: [image005.png](#)

From: [REDACTED]@environment-agency.gov.uk>
Sent: 21 April 2023 10:26
To: [REDACTED]@wealden.gov.uk>
Cc: [REDACTED]@wealden.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: Horam Neighbourhood Plan SEA Screening

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organisation. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognise the sender and know the content is safe.

Hi [REDACTED]

Thank you for the timely reminder about this. I hope that you enjoyed your time off.

I can confirm that having reviewed the SEA Screening opinion for Horam Neighbourhood Plan which confirms that there will be no development coming forward as part of this plan, the Environment Agency agrees with Wealden District Council that an SEA will not be required (including the design guidelines and code document). Taking into account issues within our remit we do not consider there to be any Significant Environmental Impacts associated with this plan, and therefore it is our view that a SEA will not be required.

Kind regards

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Sustainable Places
Solent and South Downs

Tel: 0208 4745902

Email: [REDACTED]@environment-agency.gov.uk

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 22 March 2023 10:16
To: [REDACTED]@environment-agency.gov.uk>
Subject: Horam Neighbourhood Plan SEA Screening

Dear Statutory Consultee,

Please find attached the SEA Screening for the draft Horam Neighbourhood Plan for your consideration. We would welcome your comments at the earliest opportunity, within the 5 week consultation period. I attach our Screening Opinion,

the draft Neighbourhood Plan and Design Guidelines and Codes document. Please let us know if you have any queries or require any further information.

Kind regards,



 | **Planning Officer (Policy)**

Planning Policy, Wealden District Council

 [@wealden.gov.uk](mailto:wealden@gov.uk)

Council Offices | Vicarage Lane | Hailsham | East Sussex | BN27 2AX

<http://www.wealden.gov.uk>



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Historic England

By email only to: [REDACTED]

Our ref: PL00792656

Your ref: Horam Neighbourhood Plan SEA

Main: 020 7973 3700

e-seast@historicengland.org.uk

Date: 03/05/2023

To whom it may concern

Horam Neighbourhood 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 Hermitage Neighbourhood Plan) likely to have a significant effect on the historic environment?". Our comments are based on the information supplied.

There are a number of designated heritage assets within the area; the information supplied however indicates that the plan will not have any significant effects on the historic environment. We also note that the plan does not propose to allocate any sites for development.

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.



Historic England, 4th Floor, The Atrium, Cannon Bridge House, 25 Dowgate Hill, London EC4R 2YA

Telephone 020 7973 3700 HistoricEngland.org.uk

Please note that Historic England operates an access to information policy.

Correspondence or information which you send us may therefore become publicly available.





Historic England

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

[Redacted Signature]

Historic Places Adviser



Historic England, 4th Floor, The Atrium, Cannon Bridge House, 25 Dowgate Hill, London EC4R 2YA

Telephone 020 7973 3700 HistoricEngland.org.uk

Please note that Historic England operates an access to information policy.

Correspondence or information which you send us may therefore become publicly available.



Date: 12 April 2023
Our ref: 427506
Your ref: Horam Neighbourhood Plan



[REDACTED]
Wealden District Council

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

BY EMAIL ONLY
[REDACTED]

T 0300 060 3900

Dear [REDACTED]

Horam Neighbourhood Plan - SEA Screening

Thank you for your consultation on the above dated and received by Natural England on 22 March 2023.

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

It is our advice, on the basis of the material supplied with the consultation, that, in so far as our strategic environmental interests (including but not limited to statutory designated sites, landscapes and protected species, geology and soils) are concerned, that there are unlikely to be significant environmental effects from the proposed plan.

Neighbourhood Plan

Guidance on the assessment of Neighbourhood Plans, in light of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (as amended), is contained within the [National Planning Practice Guidance](#). The guidance highlights three triggers that may require the production of an SEA, for instance where:

- 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.

We have checked our records and based on the information provided, we can confirm that in our view the proposals contained within the plan will not have significant effects on sensitive sites that Natural England has a statutory duty to protect.

We are not aware of significant populations of protected species which are likely to be affected by the policies / proposals within the plan. It remains the case, however, that the responsible authority should provide information supporting this screening decision, sufficient to assess whether protected species are likely to be affected.

Notwithstanding this advice, Natural England does not routinely maintain locally specific data on all potential environmental assets. As a result the responsible authority should raise environmental issues that we have not identified on local or national biodiversity action plan species and/or habitats, local wildlife sites or local landscape character, with its own ecological and/or landscape advisers, local record centre, recording society or wildlife body on the local landscape and biodiversity receptors that may be affected by this plan, before determining whether an SA/SEA is necessary.

Please note that Natural England reserves the right to provide further comments on the environmental assessment of the plan beyond this SEA/SA screening stage, should the responsible authority seek our views on the scoping or environmental report stages. This includes any third party appeal against any screening decision you may make.

For any new consultations, or to provide further information on this consultation please send your correspondences to consultations@naturalengland.org.uk.

Yours sincerely

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Consultations Team