

EAST MEON

Neighbourhood
Development
Plan
2016 - 2032

Basic Conditions Statement

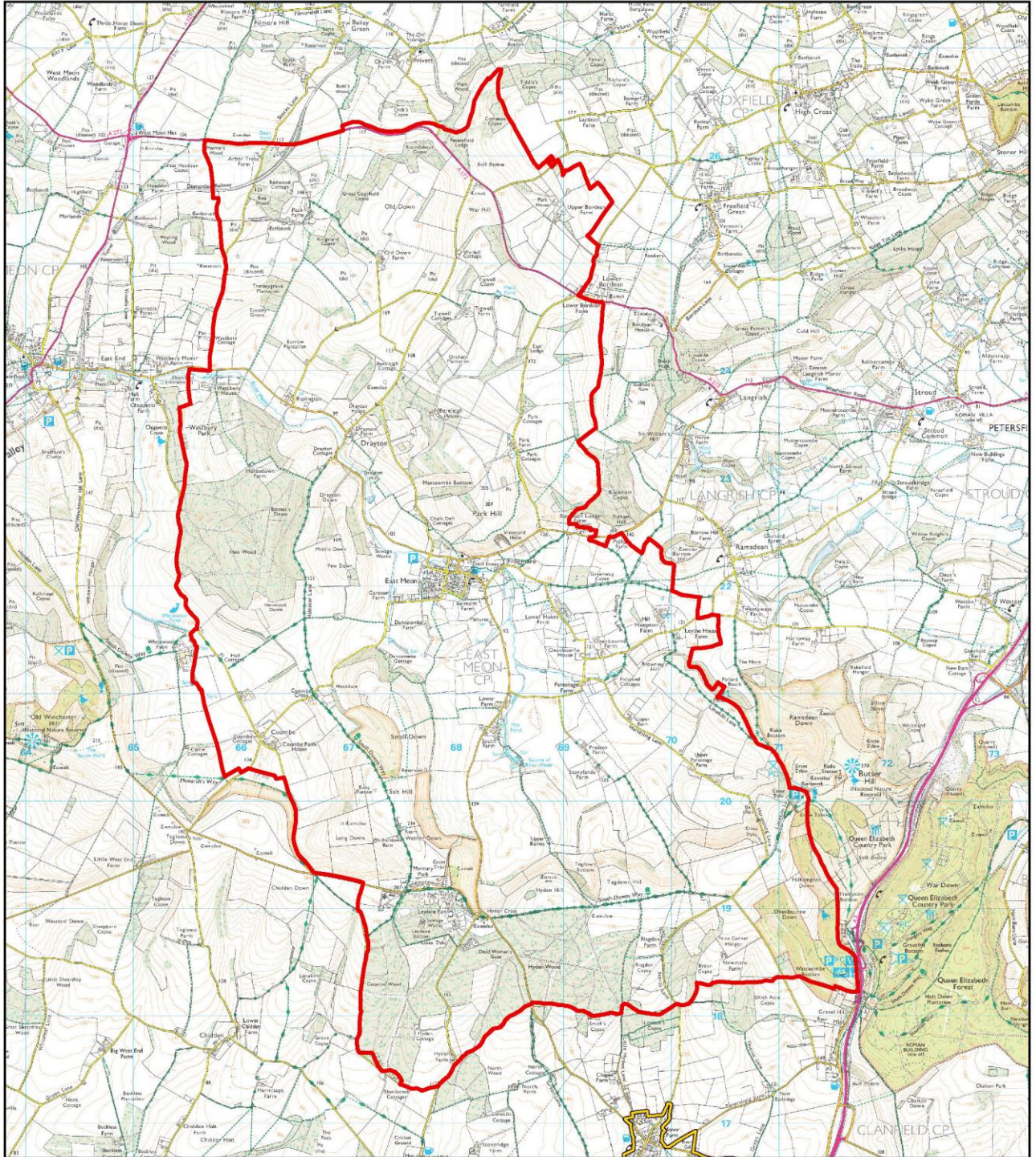
November 2016



1.1 Introduction

- 1.1 This Statement has been prepared by East Meon Parish Council (“the Parish Council”) to accompany its submission of the East Meon Neighbourhood Development Plan (“the Plan”) to the local planning authority, South Downs National Park (SDNP), under Regulations 15 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (“the Regulations”).
- 1.2 The Plan has been prepared by the Parish Council, a qualifying body, for the Neighbourhood Area covering the whole of the Parish of East Meon (see Map, section 1.6).
- 1.3 The policies described in the Plan relate to the development and use of land in the designated Neighbourhood Area. The plan period of the Plan is from November 2016 to 31st December 2032 and it does not contain policies relating to excluded development in accordance with the Regulations.
- 1.4 The Statement addresses each of the four ‘basic conditions’ required of the Regulations and explains how the submitted Plan meets the requirements of paragraph 8 of Schedule 4B to the 1990 Town & Country Planning Act.
- 1.5 The Regulations state that a Neighbourhood Plan will be considered to have met the basic conditions if:
 - having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State, it is appropriate to make the neighbourhood development plan;
 - the making of the neighbourhood development plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development;
 - the making of the neighbourhood development plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority (or any part of that area);
 - the making of the neighbourhood development plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations.

1.6 Neighbourhood Plan Area Designation



2. Background

- 2.1 The Parish Council commenced preparation of the Plan in 2013. The key drivers of that decision were that the Plan would:
- allow the residents of East Meon Parish to have a very real influence on how their environment and the places in which they live and work will change over time.
 - help to ensure any future development is sympathetic to both the village/parish setting. This would include both the natural landscape and the balance of new housing needs to maintain the present healthy socio-economic mix.
- 2.2 The Parish Council formed a Neighbourhood Development Plan Steering Group comprising a number of Councillors, a Leadership Group consisting of representatives from different areas of the village and a number of working groups.
- 2.3 The Steering and Leadership Groups were delegated authority by the Parish Council to make decisions on the Plan as the project reached specific approval milestones, for example publishing:
- the Draft Neighbourhood Plan,
 - the Pre-Submission Neighbourhood Plan (and its Regulation 14 Schedule) and
 - the Submission Neighbourhood Plan.
- 2.4 The Parish Council and the Steering and Leadership Groups worked with officers of the SDNPA during the preparation of the Plan in order to help ensure the correct positioning of the Neighbourhood development Plan in respect of the emerging SDNP Local Plan, which proposes to establish a clear policy framework for neighbourhood plans.
- 2.5 The Plan is in general conformity with the policies of the East Hampshire Joint Core Strategy 2014 (see section 4.2) and the saved policies of the East Hampshire Local Plan 2006.
- 2.6 For the most part, the plan has deliberately avoided containing policies that may duplicate the many saved and emerging development policies that are, and will be, material considerations in determining future planning applications. This has allowed the Plan to focus on a relatively small number of policies.

3. Conformity with National Planning Policy

- 3.1 The Plan has been prepared with regard to national policies as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and is mindful of the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) in respect of formulating Neighbourhood Plans.
- 3.2 Compliance with the key objectives of the NPPF ensures that the Neighbourhood Plan promotes Sustainable Development.
- 3.3 The East Meon NDP has regard to relevant policies within the NPPF in relation to:
- Conserving and enhancing the natural environment, including landscape.
 - Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes;
 - Requiring good design;
 - Promoting healthy communities;
 - Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change;

Conserving and enhancing the natural environment, including landscape

- 3.4 The East Meon NDP sets out the following policies that seek to conserve and enhance the natural environment

Policy EM5	Protection of Valued Views
Policy EM10	Local Green Spaces

- 3.5 These policies meet the aims of the NPPF by recognising the importance of the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, including designated landscapes.

Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes

- 3.6 The East Meon NDP sets out the following policies that aim to deliver a wide choice of high quality homes:

Policy EM1	East Meon Housing Allocation to 2032
Policy EM2	The Settlement Policy Boundary
Policy EM3	Size of Dwellings
Policy EM4	Allocation of Affordable Housing
Policy EM14	Site A3 - Land at Hill View
Policy EM15	Site B3/4 - Land north of Coombe Road between Garston Farm and Garston Farm Cottages
Policy EM16:	Site B2 - Land south of Coombe Road opposite Kews Meadows and Coombe Road Terrace
Policy EM17	Site B9 - Land on the south-east corner of Coombe Road

- 3.7 These policies meet the aims of the NPPF by seeking to allocate land for the provision of a mixture of new homes.

Requiring good design

- 3.8 The East Meon NDP sets out the following policies that aim to ensure that design is of a high quality

:

Policy EM6	Design Policy –Layout and Form
Policy EM7	Design Policy –Materiality and Detailing
Policy EM8	Design Policy- Outbuildings and Enclosure
Policy EM9	Design Policy- Extensions and Alterations

- 3.9 These policies meet the aims of the NPPF by seeking to ensure that new development responds to the local character of the built and natural environment
- 3.10 Additionally, East Meon has a Conservation Area and a number of listed buildings. Part of the vision for East Meon is to “...value, protect and enhance the Parish of East Meon by respecting its.....historic built environment and supporting the sustainable growth of the existing thriving community in a manner that is sympathetic to its historic form....” The policies set out in this plan aim to achieve this.

Promoting healthy communities

- 3.11 The East Meon NDP sets out the following policies that promote a healthy community:

Policy EM10	Local Green Spaces
Policy EM11	Retention of Community Uses

- 3.12 These policies meet the aims of the NPPF by recognising the challenges posed by an ageing population and providing opportunities to increase health care and leisure opportunities for all.

Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change

- 3.13 The East Meon NDP sets out the following policies that seek to meet the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change:

Policy EM12	Sewerage and Drainage
Policy EM13	Surface Water Management

- 3.14 These policies meet the aims of the NPPF by recognising the need to deal with flooding from the land.

4. General conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan for the area.

4.1 The East Meon Neighbourhood Development Plan policies are in general conformity with the policies of the East Hampshire Joint Core Strategy 2014 (see Table 1) and the saved policies of the East Hampshire Local Plan 2006. (For reference, policies in the South Downs Local Plan (SDLP): Preferred Options are also included).

Table 1: Conformity with Strategic Policies

Policy No.	Policy Title	SDLP: Preferred Options Sept 2015	East Hants Joint Core Strategy 2014	Comments
EM1	East Meon Housing Allocation to 2032	SD22, SD23	CP2, CP10	This policy relates to CP2 and CP10 in the EHDC JCS, which sets the hierarchy and the housing number for the district for the time period. The EMNDP has demonstrated that it is in line with JCS policy CP10 which sets the a minimum of 100 dwellings to be built at “ <i>other villages in the National Park</i> ” within the JCS plan period of 2011-2028
EM2	The Settlement Policy Boundary	SD5, SD7, SD22	CP2, CP10, CP19	This policy redraws the current settlement policy boundary in line with guidelines issued by SDNPA and to ultimately confine housing development to within the new East Meon Settlement Policy boundary. This is in line with JCS CP10, which looks to protect the countryside (the area outside of settlement policy boundaries for the sake of its intrinsic character and beauty, the diversity and qualities of its landscapes, heritage and wildlife, the wealth of its natural resources and to ensure it may be enjoyed by all.
EM3	Size of Dwellings	SD23	CP11	Policy EM3 is strongly aligned with JCS CP11, especially by providing a range of types and sizes to meet housing needs identify by the EMNDP Housing Needs Assessment.

EM4	Allocation of Affordable Housing	SD24	CP11, CP13	This policy accords with JCS CP11 and CP13 and provides a focus on provision of affordable housing those with a local connection to East Meon.
EM5	Protection of Valued Views	SD5, SD7, SP11	CP19, CP20, CP30	The position of East Meon in the landscape and the special views in and out of the village is covered in EM5, in line with the JCS policies covering protection of the historic environment, the SDNP natural environment and the countryside.
EM6	Design Policy – Layout and Form	SD6, SD11, SD31	CP24, CP27, CP29, CP30	Policies EM6 – EM9 especially accord with policies CP29 and CP30 of the EHDC JCS in requiring the design of development proposals to reflect the local character of East Meon.
EM7	Design Policy – Materiality and Detailing	SD6, SD11, SD31	CP24, CP27, CP29, CP30	Policies EM6 – EM9 especially accord with policies CP29 and CP30 of the EHDC JCS in requiring the design of development proposals to reflect the local character of East Meon.
EM8	Design Policy- Outbuildings and Enclosure	SD6, SD11, SD31	CP24, CP27, CP29, CP30	Policies EM6 – EM9 especially accord with policies CP29 and CP30 of the EHDC JCS in requiring the design of development proposals to reflect the local character of East Meon.
EM9	Design Policy- Extensions and Alterations	SD6, SD11, SD31	CP24, CP27, CP29, CP30	Policies EM6 – EM9 especially accord with policies CP29 and CP30 of the EHDC JCS in requiring the design of development proposals to reflect the local character of East Meon.
EM10	Local Green Spaces	SD35, SD36	CP17, CP18, CP28	This policy proposes a number of important green spaces in East Meon to be protected by development by designating them Local Green Spaces in line with the JCS policies listed
EM11	Retention of Community Uses	SD35	CP17, CP18	This policy safeguards land and buildings which serve the local community, ensuring that development on it can only occur after a rigorous assessment, in line with JCS CP17

EM12	Sewerage and Drainage	SD17, SD31	CP25, CP26, CP27	The policy seeks to refine policy CP25 and is aligned with CP26 in respect of requiring all relevant development proposals in the parish ensure adequate management of sewage and drainage. It prioritises managing the polluting impacts of specific sewerage and drainage problems in East Meon (JCS CP27)
EM13	Surface Water Management	SD17, SD31	CP25, CP26,	Policy EM13 seeks to refine policy CP25 in respect of requiring all relevant development proposals in the parish to manage the risk of surface water flooding and the impact on water quality (JCS CP26)
EM14	Site A3 - Land at Hill View	SD5, SD7, SD23, SD31	CP10, CP11, CP24, CP29	The specific site policies are consistent with a number of JCS policies, including CP10, CP11 & CP24. Each policy contains specific direction relevant to the site. EM14 includes provision of parking (JCS CP29) for the development and for impacted residents.
EM15	Site B3/4 - Land north of Coombe Road between Garston Farm and Garston Farm Cottages	SD5, SD7, SD23, SD31	CP10, CP11, CP24	The specific site policies are consistent with a number of JCS policies, including CP10, CP11 & CP24. Each policy contains specific direction relevant to the site.
EM16:	Site B2 - Land south of Coombe Road opposite Kews Meadows and Coombe Road Terrace	SD5, SD7, SD23, SD31	CP10, CP11, CP24	The specific site policies are consistent with a number of JCS policies, including CP10, CP11 & CP24. Each policy contains specific direction relevant to the site.
EM17	Site B9 - Land on the south-east corner of Coombe Road	SD5, SD7, SD23, SD31	CP10, CP11, CP24	The specific site policies are consistent with a number of JCS policies, including CP10, CP11 & CP24. Each policy contains specific direction relevant to the site.

5. Contribution to achieving Sustainable Development

5.1 A full Sustainability Appraisal was deemed not required by SDNPA (see Appendix 1) but the sustainability attributes of each policy were independently reviewed by a member of the East Meon Parish Council Planning Committee (also a member of the Neighbourhood Development Plan Steering Group) and the findings are summarised in the Table 2. The Plan can clearly demonstrate that it has taken account of the need to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development in terms of how its policies will deliver a blend of economic, social and environmental benefits for East Meon.

Table 2: Analysis of contribution to achieving sustainable development

Policy No.	Policy Title	Social	Economic	Environmental	Comments
EM1	East Meon Housing Allocation to 2032	+	+	0	This policy allocates land within and adjoining the edge of East Meon for small scale developments that may yield approximately 17 dwellings. The location and nature of the sites require a number of key development principles to be adhered to in order for satisfactory developments to be delivered; these are also set out in the Plan policies. The policy therefore has a social positive effect, a positive economic effect due to additional people paying taxes and using the village shop and pubs; the environment effects overall are neutral.
EM2	The Settlement Policy Boundary	+	+	+	The policy uses the SDNPA methodology to 'tighten' the East Meon Settlement Policy Boundary (SPB) and to confine housing ultimately to within the SPB, offering protection to the countryside and landscape around the village. The policy therefore has a social, economic (through visitors and tourism) and environmental positive effect.
EM3	Size of Dwellings	+	+	0	EM3 meets the defined need (as identified in the Housing Needs Assessment) for smaller homes for new families and downsizers. Hence it has a positive social and economic impact.

EM4	Allocation of Affordable Housing	+	0	0	Through allocating new affordable housing to those with a local connection, this has a positive social impact.
EM5	Protection of Valued Views	+	+	+	By maintaining valued views in and out of the village, East Meon will continue to attract visitors and provide a positive environment for those visitors and to inhabitants alike
EM6	Design Policy – Layout and Form	+	0	+	This policy requires the design of development proposals to reflect the local character of East Meon and especially the significance of its designated heritage assets such as the Conservation Area and listed buildings. The policy therefore has a social and environment positive effect; the economic effects are neutral.
EM7	Design Policy – Materiality and Detailing	+	0	+	EM7 requires the design of development proposals to reflect the local character of East Meon and especially the significance of its designated heritage assets such as the Conservation Area and listed buildings. The policy therefore has a social and environment positive effect and the economic effects are neutral.
EM8	Design Policy- Outbuildings and Enclosure	+	0	+	This policy requires the design of development proposals to reflect the local character of East Meon and especially the significance of its designated heritage assets such as the Conservation Area and listed buildings. The policy therefore has a social and environment positive effect and the economic effects are neutral.
EM9	Design Policy- Extensions and Alterations	+	0	+	This policy requires the design of development proposals to reflect the local character of East Meon and especially the significance of its designated heritage assets such as the Conservation Area and listed buildings. The policy therefore has a social and environment positive effect and the economic effects are neutral.

EM10	Local Green Spaces	+	0	+	This policy proposes a number of important green spaces in the parish to be protected from development by the designation as Local Green Spaces. The policy therefore has a social and environment positive effect and the economic effects are neutral.
EM11	Retention of Community Uses	+	0	0	This policy safeguards land and buildings which serve the local community, ensuring that development on it can only occur after a rigorous assessment – hence it has a positive social impact.
EM12	Sewerage and Drainage	+	0	+	The policy requires all relevant development proposals in the parish properly to manage sewerage and to manage the risk of surface water flooding. The policy therefore has social and environmental positive effects
EM13	Surface Water Management	+	0	+	The policy requires all relevant development proposals in the parish to manage the risk and impact of surface water flooding. The policy therefore has social and environmental positive effect
EM14	Site A3 - Land at Hill View	+	+	-	This policy provides additional social housing within the village, suitable for downsizers and designed for full accessibility. This provisions and the possibility of larger affordable homes being freed up as a result is a positive social and economic impact. Development is likely to have a negative environmental impact; mitigation, as far as is possible, is included in the Plan policies
EM15	Site B3/4 - Land north of Coombe Road between Garston Farm and Garston Farm Cottages	+	+	-	This policy provides additional 3-bedroom homes within the village for new families or downsizers, so has a positive social and economic impact. Development is likely to have a negative environmental impact; mitigation, as far as is possible, is included in the Plan policies

EM16:	Site B2 - Land south of Coombe Road opposite Kews Meadows and Coombe Road Terrace	+	+	-	This policy provides additional 2- and 3-bedroom homes within the village for new families or downsizers, so has a positive social and economic impact. Development is likely to have a negative environmental impact; mitigation, as far as is possible, is included in the Plan policies
EM17	Site B9 - Land on the south-east corner of Coombe Road	+	+	-	This policy provides additional 2- and 3-bedroom homes within the village for new families or downsizers, so has a positive social and economic impact. Development is likely to have a negative environmental impact; mitigation, as far as is possible, is included in the Plan policies

Sustainability Attributes Key: + = positive; 0 = neutral; - = negative

5.2 Negative environmental impacts are mitigated, as far as is possible, by the policies spelled out in the East Meon Neighbourhood Development Plan

6. Compatibility with EU Legislation

6.1 The Plan has regard to the fundamental rights and freedoms guaranteed under the European Convention on Human Rights and complies with the Human Rights Act.

6.2 The Settlement of East Meon is within 2.6km of Butser Hill SAC (Special Area of Conservation). There is the potential for impacts on this site to occur through recreational pressure. SDNPA carried out a Habitat Regulation Assessment (HRA) screening statement for the East Meon Neighbourhood Plan and the conclusion of that screening statement was that there are not likely to be significant effects arising from the proposals in the East Meon Neighbourhood Plan with regard to the integrity of the Butser Hill SAC. As such the East Meon Neighbourhood Development Plan does not require progression to the next stage of Habitats Regulations Assessment. (See Appendix 2 for the full SDNPA HRA Screening Statement).

6.3 The SDNPA concluded that East Meon Neighbourhood Development Plan should be screened out for the purposes of requiring a Strategic Environmental Assessment (see Appendix 1).

Appendix I: SDNPA SEA Screening Opinion



11 March 2016

Alan Redpath,
East Meon Neighbourhood Development Plan

Dear Alan,

I am writing in response to your request for a screening opinion to assess whether the East Meon Neighbourhood Development Plan requires a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA).

When adopted, Neighbourhood Development Plans will be used by the local planning authority to determine planning applications for the Neighbourhood Areas that they cover. As the parish falls within the South Downs National Park, the policies for the NDP, once adopted, will form the planning policy for that part of the National Park in the Parish of East Meon.

The EU's SEA Directive requires those making plans that could impact on the environment to consider whether they are likely to have a significant effect or not. Such a requirement can be screened out if it is felt, based on the information available, that the NDP would not have a likely significant environmental effect. In order to assess the likely significance of the plan on the environment, the scope of the plan has been appraised against Annex II of the directive which identifies criteria for determining significance.

The South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) has based its screening opinion on the understanding that the Parish Council will prepare a Neighbourhood Development Plan that:

- will have policies consistent with national policy;
- will have policies consistent with existing and emerging local plan policies;
- will seek to allocate housing sites to facilitate development for up to 15 dwellings;

The SDNPA has considered a number of key environmental constraints located in the vicinity of the Neighbourhood Area and the potential environmental effects on these areas that may arise as a result of the NDP. It is considered that the East Meon NDP should be screened out as requiring an SEA process. Whilst the parish has some distinctive landscapes, it is considered that the allocation of sites through the NDP in and around the village, will not have a significant effect on these. Given that the South Downs Local Plan will provide a range of policies for protecting and enhancing the natural and built environment, and the requirement for the NDP to be in conformity with these policies, the likelihood of significant effects taking place through the East Meon NDP is diminished.



The SDNPA has compiled this response following consultation with Natural England, Historic England and the Environment Agency. Please see the attached response received from Historic England.

While, at this point, the NDP has been screened out as requiring SEA, it is still incumbent upon the NDP Project Team to meet the 'Basic Condition' relating to sustainable development. This is in order to satisfy the provisions of paragraph 72 of the National Planning Practice Guidance (set out below).

This basic condition is consistent with the planning principle that all plan-making and decision-taking should help to achieve sustainable development. A qualifying body must demonstrate how its plan or Order will contribute to improvements in environmental, economic and social conditions or that consideration has been given to how any potential adverse effects arising from the proposals may be prevented, reduced or offset (referred to as mitigation measures).

This screening decision does not prevent the NDP Project Team from undertaking an SEA of their NDP, should they wish to do so and should not be viewed as in any way prejudicing such a decision.

Yours Sincerely

Amy

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Appendix 2: SDNPA HRA Screening Statement



Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening Statement
East Meon Neighbourhood Development Plan

January 2017

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The purpose of this screening statement is to provide a screening opinion as to whether there might be any potential likely significant effects on internationally important wildlife sites (also known as European sites) that may be affected by the East Meon Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP), and therefore whether further Habitats Regulations Assessment work is required.

Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening

- 1.2 Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) refers to the requirement for any plan or project to assess the potential implications for European sites. The need for HRA is set out within the EC Habitats Directive 92/43/EC which is transposed into British Law. 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."

- 1.3 The first stage of the HRA process involves an assessment or screening of whether the plan is likely to have a significant effect on one or more European sites either alone or in combination. This can include consideration of avoidance measures. The objective is to 'screen out' those plans and projects (or site allocations/policies) that can, without detailed appraisal, be said to be unlikely to result in significant adverse effects upon European sites.
- 1.4 If screening determines that there is the potential for likely significant effects, further HRA work would be required in the form of an Appropriate Assessment which considers the impact on the integrity of the European site in more detail.
- 1.5 This screening opinion statement has regard to the conservation objectives of the relevant European sites. It also makes reference to other plans and projects (the emerging South Downs Local Plan and other Local Plans/Core Strategies as appropriate).

The East Meon Neighbourhood Development Plan

- 1.6 The East Meon NDP includes general policies to guide development. It also includes local green space designations and allocations for a maximum of 17 dwellings.
- 1.7 When adopted, NDPs will be used by the local planning authority to determine planning applications for the Neighbourhood Areas that they cover. As the parish falls within the South Downs National Park, the policies for the NDP, once adopted, will form the planning policy for that part of the National Park, in the Parish of East Meon.

Relevant European sites

- 1.8 The European wildlife site relevant to this neighbourhood development plan is Butser Hill Special Area of Conservation (SAC).
- 1.9 Full details for the reason for designation, conservation objectives and key vulnerabilities are set out in Appendix 1.

2. Impact pathway screening

- 2.1 The information used for this screening statement has been gathered from the HRA for the South Downs Local Plan: Preferred Options, which was published in 2015, and as such, this screening report should be read in conjunction with it.
- 2.2 It should be noted that the South Downs Local Plan and its accompanying HRA has not been tested and accepted at Examination. Whilst this is the case, the Local Plan Preferred Options did recognise that some of the housing requirement would be allocated through NDPs. It therefore set out the expected housing figure for these various settlements, and this figure was taken into account in the Local Plan Preferred options HRA. The East Meon NDP makes provision for a slightly greater number of dwellings than set out in the Local Plan Preferred Options – an addition of two dwellings to the 15 dwellings assessed in the HRA of the Preferred Options. This increase is very small and is not considered to be significant, especially in the context of the amount of development proposed in the wider area, and as such the evidence and findings of the Local Plan Preferred Options HRA provide an important basis for the HRA screening of this NDP.
- 2.3 It is noted that, in response to the Local Plan Preferred Options consultation on 2015, no objections were raised by the statutory bodies (Natural England, Environment Agency, and Historic England) regarding the relevant conclusions of the HRA, with respect to Butser Hill SAC and the proposed quantum of development in East Meon.
- 2.4 Table 1 below draws together the conclusions and includes references to the relevant paragraphs of the HRA report, and additional commentary relating to the East Meon NDP into an HRA Screening Matrix.

Table 1 – HRA Screening Matrix

Impact pathway	Summary/extract of the screening outcome in the HRA Report for the South Downs Local Plan: Preferred Options	Comment
Butser Hill SAC		
Recreational pressure	<p>Screened out.</p> <p>'There is theoretical potential for likely significant effects on these sites by trampling, which in turn causes soil compaction and erosion. Walkers with dogs contribute to pressure on sites through nutrient enrichment via dog fouling and also have potential to cause greater disturbance to fauna as dogs are less likely to keep to marked footpaths and move more erratically. Cycling, motorcycle scrambling and off-road vehicle use can cause serious erosion, as well as disturbance to sensitive species. Whether these issues are matters of concern for species European sites depends on the circumstances on that site, including existing pressure, presence of antisocial behaviour, existing site management and factors such as topography and suitability of footpaths.'</p> <p>'Part of Butser Hill SAC lies within the Queen Elizabeth Country Park, run by Hampshire County Council and the Hampshire Wildlife Trust. Butser Hill does have footpaths and public rights of way crossing it and has been subject to organised recreational events numerous times in the past (such as 'Butserfest' and various country fairs). This implies that while calcareous grassland can be damaged by repeated excessive recreational trampling over long periods of time, the grasslands of Butser Hill SAC are not considered to be particularly vulnerable to well-managed recreational pressure and activity, even when relatively large events are held. This was the conclusion of the HRA of the East Hampshire Local Plan; Joint Core Strategy HRA, with which Natural England concurred.'</p>	<p>Screened out.</p> <p>It is noted that a maximum of 17 dwellings is proposed in the East Meon Neighbourhood Development Plan. This is an increase of 2 dwellings, from the 15 dwellings assessed in the Preferred Options HRA.</p> <p>This increase is very small and is not considered to be significant, especially in the context of the scale of development proposed in the wider area and the conclusions of the East Hampshire Joint Core Strategy HRA regarding current activity and successful management of the site.</p>

Impact pathway	Summary/extract of the screening outcome in the HRA Report for the South Downs Local Plan: Preferred Options	Comment
	<p>'It can be concluded that no likely significant effects will result upon the calcareous grassland 4.6.7 European sites as a result of increased recreational pressure resulting from the SDNPA Local Plan.'</p> <p>Reference: paragraph 4.6.1, 4.6.4, and 4.6.7 of the Preferred Options HRA</p>	
In-combination		
In-combination	<p>Screened out.</p> <p>'It should be noted that the preceding chapters have effectively already considered effects 'in combination' with respect to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> East Hampshire District Local Plan: Joint Core Strategy – This was a Joint Core Strategy between East Hampshire district and the South Downs National Park Authority. As such impacts between these authorities were considered 'in combination as an inherent part of the process. In addition, the accompanying HRA has its own 'in combination' assessment which explore impacts with other surrounding authorities affecting European sites in East Hampshire (Wealden Heaths Phase 2 SPA, Woolmer Forest SAC, East Hampshire Hangers SAC, Shortheath Common SAC, Butser Hill SAC, and River Itchen SAC). As such, impacts on European sites in East Hampshire have already been fully assessed and have informed the conclusion of this HRA report.' <p>Reference: paragraph 10.1.3 of the Preferred Options HRA</p> 	<p>Screened out.</p> <p>As above – the increase from 15 to a maximum of 17 dwellings proposed in the East Meon NDP is not considered to be significant and the conclusions of the Preferred Options HRA remain applicable.</p>

3. Conclusion

3.1 Is the potential scale or magnitude of any effect likely to be significant?

- a) Alone? **No**
- b) In combination with other plans or projects? **No**

3.2 It is the conclusion of this screening statement that there are not likely to be significant effects arising from the proposals in the East Meon Neighbourhood Plan with regard to the integrity of the Butser Hill SAC. As such the East Meon Neighbourhood Development Plan does not require progression to the next stage of Habitats Regulations Assessment.

Appendix I: Details of relevant European site

Background information on each of the relevant European Sites is set out below and was extracted from Appendix A of the South Downs National Park Local Plan Habitats Regulation Assessment, prepared by AECOM, and published as part of the Preferred Options Local Plan consultation in 2015.

2 Butser Hill SAC

2.1 Introduction

Butser Hill is a 238.66ha chalk massif with a discontinuous cap of clay-with-flints. The massif has been eroded to leave a

series of deep combes in which the modern spring-line is about 1km from the combe-head. The combes on the south-east

flank support dense yew *Taxus baccata* woods and the remaining slopes of the hill are sheep-grazed chalk grassland. The

calcareous yew woods are outstanding examples of a habitat with a very small representation in Britain. The series of

vegetation types represented in the SSSI (chalk grassland, mixed scrub and yew wood) were the subject of a series of

pioneer ecological studies.

2.2 Reasons for Designation

Butser Hill qualifies as a SAC for its habitats. The site contains the Habitats Directive Annex I habitats of:

- Semi-natural dry grassland and scrub and facies on calcareous substrate (*Festuco Brometalia*) and an important orchid site. The site contains the richest diversity lichen flora of any chalk grassland site in England. Also supports the distinctive *Scapanietum aspera* or southern hepatic mat association of leafy liverworts and mosses on north-facing chalk slopes. This association is very rare in the UK and Butser Hill supports the largest known example.
- Yew-dominated woodland

2.3 Historic Trends and Current Pressures

The site has traditionally been vulnerable to the effects of surrounding agriculture (i.e. spray drift causing eutrophication).

Most of the SAC is in favourable condition (92.13%), and landowners, supported by English Woodland Grant Schemes

have been removing inappropriate conifers and clearing excessive scrub.

The environmental vulnerabilities of the Butser Hill SAC are:

- Minimal air pollution (nitrogen deposition may cause reduction in diversity, sulphur deposition can cause acidification).
- Absence of direct fertilisation.
- No spray-drift (i.e. eutrophication) from surrounding intensive arable land.