

29 August 2017

Tony Lewis
Bury Neighbourhood Development Plan
Bean Tree Cottage, Church Lane
Bury, Pulborough
RH20 1PB

Dear Tony,

I am writing in response to your request for a screening opinion to assess whether the Bury Neighbourhood Development Plan requires a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). This Opinion provides an update on the Opinion previously provided in May 2016.

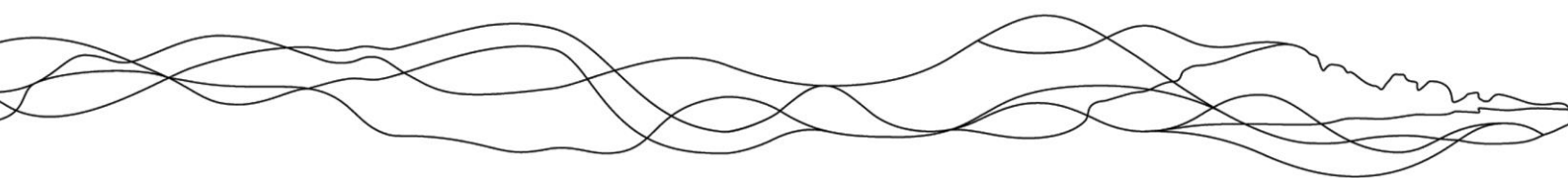
When adopted, Neighbourhood Development Plans plans will be used by the local planning authority to determine planning applications for the Neighbourhood Areas that they cover. As the parish falls within the South Downs National Park, the policies for the NDP, once adopted, will form the planning policy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

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 affect. 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 plan to allocate 6 dwellings in the period up to 2032 to meet the emerging South Downs Local Plan requirement for Bury Parish;

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. The Bury NDP seeks to allocate six dwellings in the period up to 2032. This would lead to an increase of the parish's current population of c.650 by approximately 14 people. Given the small proportional increase in the number of dwellings and resident population in the parish resulting from the Neighbourhood Plan, and the 16 year time period for delivery, it is anticipated that the significance of potential effects on the environmental designations in the parish will be minimal. For this reason it is considered that the Bury NDP should be screened out as requiring an SEA process. Whilst the parish has some distinctive landscapes, the NDP will not directly allocate housing and employments which may affect 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 Bury NDP is diminished.

A Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening Assessment of the Bury NDP has also been undertaken. This assesses whether there are likely to be any potential significant effects on internationally important wildlife sites (also known as European sites) and therefore whether further Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) work is required. The Interim Screening Statement (July 2017) concludes that the Bury NDP is not likely to result in significant effects with regard to recreational pressure, hydrology or loss of supporting habitat on the Arun Valley SAC/SPA/Ramsar, Duncton to Bignor Escarpment SAC and the Mens SAC, subject to some minor amendments to policy wording in the Bury NDP. The Assessment also finds that the level of development proposed in the Bury NDP is such that it is not likely to have significant effects alone.

In terms of air quality, the scale of development proposed at Bury (a net gain of 6 dwellings) is such that there are not likely to be significant effects alone. However, air quality is a potential issue when considered in combination with other plans and projects. Given the strategic nature of in-combination traffic and air quality effects, this issue is by definition, one that cannot be fully explored and resolved by an individual neighbourhood plan. The National Park Authority has commissioned new assessment work on air quality as part of HRA of the Pre-Submission Local Plan, which has considered these in-combination effects. This impact has therefore been screened out as it has been assessed and addressed through the HRA of the Local Plan, which will be formally published in September 2017.

Yours sincerely,

Amy

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