Screening Statement on the determination of the need for a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in accordance with the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 and European Directive 2001/42/EC for the Sydenham Neighbourhood Development Plan Review

26 MARCH 2026

SUMMARY

Following consultation with statutory bodies, South Oxfordshire District Council (the 'Council') determines that the Sydenham Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) Review does not require a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA).

INTRODUCTION

1. An initial screening opinion was used to determine whether or not the contents of the emerging Sydenham Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) Review requires a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in accordance with the European Directive 2011/42/EC (the Directive) and associated Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (the Regulations).

2. Any land use plan or programme 'which sets the framework for future development consent of projects' must be screened according to a set of criteria from Annex II of the Directive and Schedule 1 of the Regulations. These criteria include exceptions for plans 'which determine the use of a small area at local level' or which only propose 'minor modifications to a plan', if it is determined that the plan is unlikely to have significant environmental effects.

3. The initial screening opinion was subject to consultation with Historic England, the Environment Agency, Natural England and Oxfordshire County Council. The results of the screening process are detailed in this Screening Statement.

THE SCREENING PROCESS

4. Using the criteria set out in Annex II of the Directive and Schedule 1 of the Regulations, a Screening Opinion determines whether a plan or programme is likely to have significant environmental effects.

5. The extract from 'A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive' in Appendix 1 provides a flow diagram to demonstrate the SEA screening process.

6. Table 1 in Appendix 1 sets out the criteria from the Practical Guide, along with an assessment of the Sydenham NDP Review against each criterion to ascertain whether a SEA is required.

7. Also part of the screening process is the Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening, which can be found in Appendix 2, and the assessment of likely significance effects on the environment, which can be found in Appendix 3.

8. These two assessments feed into Table 1 and the SEA screening opinion.

THE SYDENHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN REVIEW

9. The Sydenham NDP Review will contain the following vision and policies:

Vision

"To preserve Sydenham Parish's rural village environment by ensuring that appropriate development occurs within the area, recognising the need for a balanced community."

Policies

SYD1	Village Boundary & Infill Development
SYD2	Housing Mix
SYD3	Design
SYD4	Local Heritage Assets
SYD5	Local Green Space
SYD6	Separation of Settlements
SYD7	Important Views
SYD8	Community Facilities
SYD9	Site Allocation
SYD10	Dark Skies
SYD11	Landscape Character and Setting
SYD12	Development Size and Form
SYD13	Rural Roads and Traffic Management

SYD14	Residential Parking Provision
SYD15	Protection of Historic Roofline
SYD16	Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation

10. The Sydenham NDP was adopted as part of the district councils development plan on 6 May 2021. The plan was tested against the now superseded Core Strategy and Saved policies from the Local Plan 2011, however it was prepared considering the emerging Local Plan, particularly the emerging policy direction and its reasoning and evidence. The Sydenham NDP Review will contain similar aims and objectives to the previous NDP, which aim to protect the built up area of the village, through protecting its design and character whilst also accommodating the identified housing and community needs.

11. This plan does include a new small site allocation for 1-2 houses and also the following new policies: SYD9- Site Allocation, SYD10-Dark Skies, SYD11-Landscape Character and Setting, SYD12- Development Size and Form, SYD13- Rural Roads and Traffic Management, SYD14- Residential Parking Provision, SYD15- Protection of Historic Roofline and SYD16- Climate Change Mitigation and Adaption.

12. Given size of the site allocation proposed (1-2 houses) combined with the new policies following the same trajectory as the existing made NDP, and the policies also placing emphasis on protecting the character and appearance of the area, it is concluded that the implementation of the Sydenham NDP Review would not result in likely significant effects on the environment.

CONSULTATION RESPONSES

13. The screening opinion was sent to Natural England, the Environment Agency, Oxfordshire County Council and Historic England on 23 February 2026 for a four week consultation period. The responses in full are presented in Appendix 4.

14. Natural England confirmed their agreement that there are unlikely to be significant environmental effects from the proposed plan and also agreed that the Sydenham NDP Review does not require further HRA assessment.

15. The Environment Agency did not provide comments on this SEA Screening.

16. Historic England confirmed their agreement that the Sydenham NDP Review does not need an SEA.

17. Oxfordshire County Council confirmed that they have no comments on the Sydenham NDP Review SEA and HRA Screening Opinion.

CONCLUSION

19. As a result of the screening undertaken by the Council, the following determination has been reached.

20. The Sydenham NDP Review is unlikely to have significant effects on Natura 2000 sites, therefore, an Appropriate Assessment for the Sydenham Neighbourhood Development Plan Review is not required.

21. Based on the assessment presented in Appendices 1 & 3, the Sydenham NDP Review is not likely to have a significant effect on the environment.

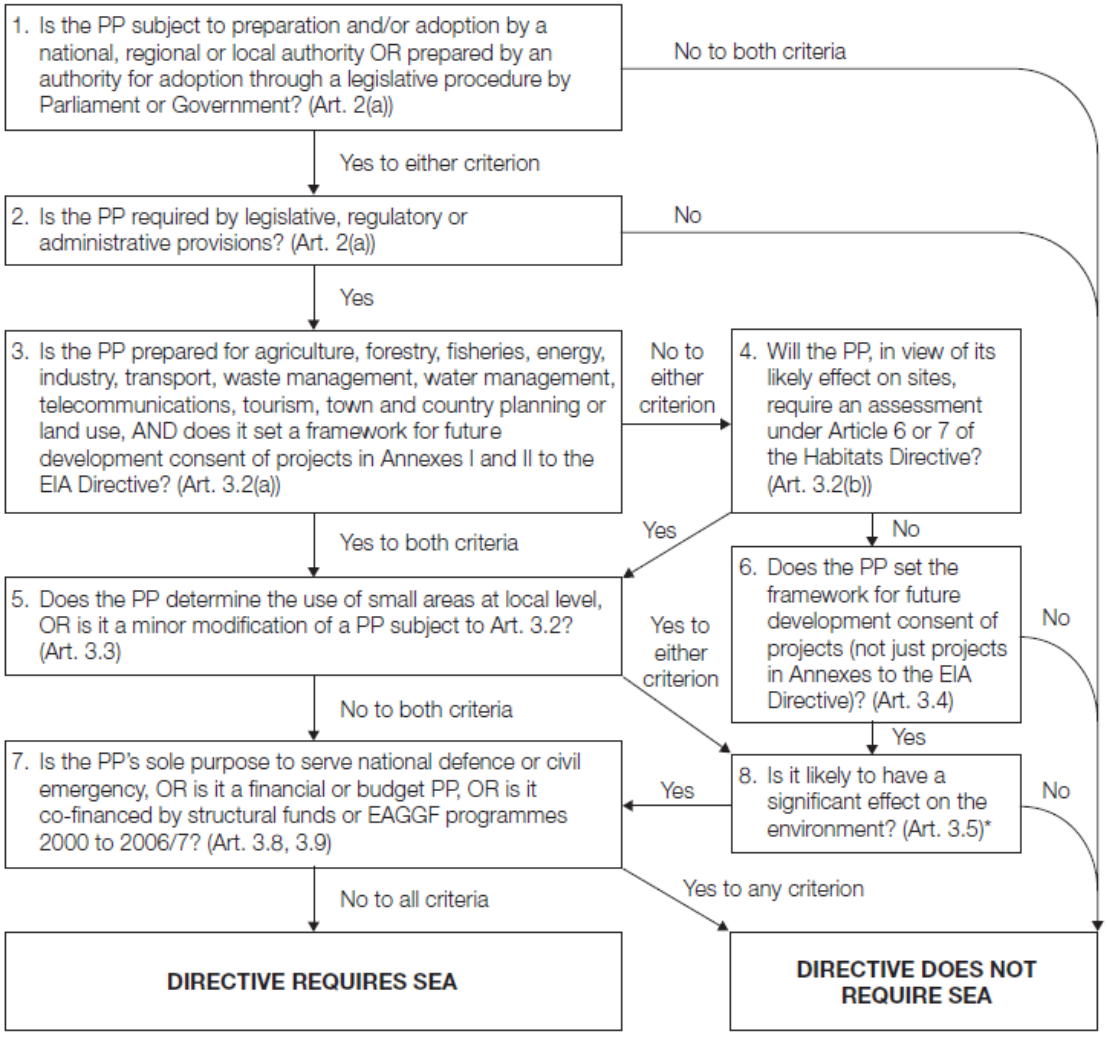
The Sydenham NDP Review does not require a Strategic Environment Assessment.

Authorised by:
Signed:
Date:

Appendix 1 – Extract from 'A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive' (DCLG) (2005)

Figure 2 – Application of the SEA Directive to plans and programmes

This diagram is intended as a guide to the criteria for application of the Directive to plans and programmes (PPs). It has no legal status.



*The Directive requires Member States to determine whether plans or programmes in this category are likely to have significant environmental effects. These determinations may be made on a case by case basis and/or by specifying types of plan or programme.

Table 1: Application of SEA Directive as shown in Appendix 1

Stage	Y/N	Explanation
1. Is the Neighbourhood Plan 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))	Y	The preparation of and adoption of the Neighbourhood Development Plan is allowed under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Localism Act 2011. The Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared by the Sydenham NDP Steering Group, a working group who report to the Sydenham Parish Council (as the "relevant body") and will be "made" by South Oxfordshire District Council as the local authority. The preparation of Neighbourhood Plans is subject to the following regulations: • The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 • The Neighbourhood Planning (referendums) Regulations 2012 • The Neighbourhood Planning (General) (Amendment) Regulations 2015 • The Neighbourhood Planning (Referendums) (Amendment) Regulations 2016 • The Neighbourhood Planning (General) (Amendment) Regulations 2016 • The Neighbourhood Planning (General) (Amendment) Regulations 2017
2. Is the NP required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions? (Art. 2(a))	Y	Whilst the Neighbourhood Development Plan is not a requirement and is optional under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Localism Act 2011, it will, if "made", form part of the Development Plan for the District. It is therefore important that the screening process considers whether it is likely to have significant environmental effects and hence whether SEA is required under the Directive.

		National Planning Practice Guidance (Paragraph: 051 Reference ID: 41-051-20150209) sets out that draft neighbourhood plan proposals should be assessed to determine whether the plan is likely to have significant environmental effects. This assessment should be undertaken in accordance with the requirements set out in regulation 9 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.
3. Is the Neighbourhood Plan prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism, town and country planning or land use, AND does it set a framework for future development consent of projects in Annexes I and II (see Appendix 2) to the EIA Directive? (Art 3.2(a))	N	The Sydenham NDP Review is prepared for town and country planning and land use and will not set out a framework for future development of projects that would require an EIA.
4. Will the Neighbourhood Plan, in view of its likely effect on sites, require an assessment for future development under Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive? (Art. 3.2 (b))	N	The Sydenham NDP Review is unlikely to have significant effects on Natura 2000 sites. See Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening Opinion for the Sydenham NDP Review in Appendix 2.
5. Does the Neighbourhood Plan 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)	Y	The Sydenham NDP Review will determine the use of sites/small areas at a local level.
6. Does the Neighbourhood Plan set the framework for future development consent of projects (not just projects in annexes to the EIA Directive)? (Art 3.4)	Y	When made, the Sydenham NDP Review will include a series of policies to guide development within the village. This will inform the determination of planning applications providing a framework for future development consent of projects.

7. Is the Neighbourhood Plan's sole purpose to serve the 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)	N	N/A
8. Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment? (Art. 3.5)	N	The plan is not likely to have significant effects on the environment. See assessment of the likely significance of effects on the environment in Appendix 3.

Appendix 2 - Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening Opinion for the Sydenham Neighbourhood Development Plan Review

INTRODUCTION

1. The Local Authority is the "competent authority" under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, and needs to ensure that Neighbourhood Plans have been assessed through the Habitats Regulations process. This looks at the potential for significant impacts on nature conservation sites that are of European importance[1], also referred to as Natura 2000.

2. This Screening Assessment relates to a Neighbourhood Development Plan that will be in general conformity with the strategic policies within the development plan[2] (the higher level plan for town and country planning and land use). This Screening Assessment uses the Habitats Regulations Assessment of South Oxfordshire District Council's Local Plan[3] as its basis for assessment. From this, the Local Authority will determine whether the Sydenham Neighbourhood Development Plan Review is likely to result in significant impacts on Natura 2000 sites either alone or in combination with other plans and policies and, therefore, whether an 'Appropriate Assessment' is required.

LEGISLATIVE BASIS

3. 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."

4. Regulations 105-106 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 state:

   "*105.—(1) Where a land use plan—*

[1] Special Protection Areas (SPAs) for birds and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) for other species, and for habitats.
[2] The South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035 (December 2020)
[3] South Oxfordshire Local Plan Habitats Regulations Assessment Report (March 2019)

(a) is likely to have a significant effect on a European site or a European offshore marine site (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects), and

(b) is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site,

the plan-making authority for that plan must, before the plan is given effect, make an appropriate assessment of the implications for the site in view of that site's conservation objectives.

(2) The plan-making authority must for the purposes of the assessment consult the appropriate nature conservation body and have regard to any representations made by that body within such reasonable time as the authority specifies.

(3) The plan-making authority must also, if it considers it appropriate, take the opinion of the general public, and if it does so, it must take such steps for that purpose as it considers appropriate.

(4) In the light of the conclusions of the assessment, and subject to regulation 107, the plan-making authority must give effect to the land use plan only after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the European site or the European offshore marine site (as the case may be).

(5) A plan-making authority must provide such information as the appropriate authority may reasonably require for the purposes of the discharge by the appropriate authority of its obligations under this Chapter.

(6) This regulation does not apply in relation to a site which is—

(a) a European site by reason of regulation 8(1)(c), or

(b) a European offshore marine site by reason of regulation 18(c) of the Offshore Marine Conservation Regulations (site protected in accordance with Article 5(4) of the Habitats Directive).

106.—(1) A qualifying body which submits a proposal for a neighbourhood development plan must provide such information as the competent authority may reasonably require for the purposes of the assessment under regulation 105 or to enable it to determine whether that assessment is required.

(2) In this regulation, "qualifying body" means a parish council, or an organisation or body designated as a neighbourhood forum, authorised for the purposes of a neighbourhood development plan to act in relation to a neighbourhood area as a result of section 61F of the TCPA 1990 (authorisation to act in relation to neighbourhood areas)(159), as

applied by section 38C of the 2004 Planning Act (supplementary provisions)(160).

(3) Where the competent authority decides to revoke or modify a neighbourhood development plan after it has been made, it must for that purpose make an appropriate assessment of the implications for any European site likely to be significantly affected in view of that site's conservation objectives; and regulation 105 and paragraph (1) apply with the appropriate modifications in relation to such a revocation or modification.

(4) This regulation applies in relation to England only."

EUROPEAN SITES

5. The HRA of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035 used a screening distance of 17km to identify European sites which could be affected by development from the plan. This distance has been subject to consultation with Natural England and reflects the average travel to work distance in the district. As such, the same distance has been applied in this HRA Screening.

6. The following European sites lie wholly or partly within 17km of Sydenham and have been taken into consideration:

Aston Rowant SAC – approximately 3.9km (South Oxfordshire District Council)

7. Aston Rowant is classified as a SAC because it supports one of the largest remaining populations of juniper in lowland Britain. It is selected as an example of juniper formations on the chalk in the south east of England. At this site juniper is present as part of a mixed scrub community but also occurs as isolated bushes in chalk grassland. In common with most lowland populations of juniper, successful reproduction and survival of new generations of bushes is extremely rare and conservation is currently dependent upon significant levels of management intervention. The low level of reproductive success is the main threat to the feature at this site. Aston Rowant also supports Asperulo-Fagetum beech forests although this is not a primary reason for classification as a SAC.

8. The main pressures and threats to this site include an unsustainable on-site population, changes in species distribution, disease of juniper as well as the impacts of air pollution and the risks of atmospheric nitrogen deposition upon juniper. Additionally, conflicting conservation objectives threaten beech.

Chilterns Beechwoods SAC – approximately 3.12km.

9. The Chilterns Beechwoods SAC comprises nine separate sites scattered across the Chilterns. There are three features of interest: semi-natural grasslands and scrubland on chalk; AsperuloFagetum beech woodland (for which this is considered to be one of the best areas in the UK and lies in the centre of the habitat's UK range); and Stag beetle Lucanus cervus, for which the area is considered to support a significant presence. The rare coralroot Cardamine bulbifera is found in these woods. 10.The main pressures and threats to this site include the impacts of forestry and woodland management, disease, deer and the invasive species of grey squirrel upon beech. Additionally, the changes in species distribution of stag beetle as well as the impact of public access and disturbance upon stag beetle. Air pollution and the impact of atmospheric nitrogen deposition also threaten the dry grasslands, beech and stag beetle.

ASSESSMENT

10. As required under Regulation 106 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (the 'Habitats Regulations'), the qualifying body (Sydenham Parish Council) provided the required information to enable South Oxfordshire District Council to determine whether the assessment under Regulation 105 is required. Consideration has been given to the potential for the development proposed by the neighbourhood plan to result in significant effects associated with:

- Physical loss of/damage to habitat;
- Non-physical disturbance e.g noise/vibration or light pollution;
- Air pollution;
- Increased recreation pressure; and
- Changes to hydrological regimes.

Physical loss of/damage to habitat;

11. Any development resulting from the Neighbourhood Plan will be located within the neighbourhood area. There are no European sites within the Neighbourhood Plan area, therefore loss of habitat from within the boundaries of a European site can be ruled out in relation to all sites.

12. Loss of habitat from outside of the boundaries of a European site could still affect the integrity of that site if it occurs in an area used by the qualifying species of the site (e.g. for off-site breeding, foraging or roosting). None of the European sites included in this assessment have

mobile species amongst their qualifying features that could travel outside of the site to make use of other areas of habitat.

Non-physical disturbance e.g. noise/vibration or light pollution;

13. The most recent HRA of the South Oxford Local Plan (March 2019) states:

> '*Using a precautionary approach, we have assumed that the effect of noise, vibration and light are most likely to be significant if development takes place within 500 metres of a European site with qualifying features sensitive to these disturbances, or known off-site breeding, foraging or roosting areas.'*

14. None of the European sites are within 500 metres of the designated area. Therefore, effects in relation to noise, vibration and light pollution can be screened out of further assessment.

Air pollution;

15. Air pollution is most likely to affect European sites where plant, soil and water habitats are the qualifying feature, but some qualifying animal species may also be affected, either directly or indirectly, by any deterioration in habitat as a result of air pollution. Deposition of pollutants to the ground and vegetation can alter the characteristics of the soil, affecting the pH and nitrogen availability that can then affect plant health, productivity and species composition.

16. Based on the Highways Agency Design for Road and Bridges (DMRB) Manual Volume 11, Section 3, Part 120 (which was produced to provide advice regarding the design, assessment and operation of trunk roads (including motorways)), it is assumed that air pollution from roads is unlikely to be significant beyond 200m from the road itself.

17. The European sites within 17km of Sydenham that are within 200m of strategic roads are Aston Rowant SAC (M40). As highlighted above Sydenham is approximately 3.9km from the Aston Rowant SAC.

18. In relation to the Aston Rowant SAC the HRA (March 2019) states:

> '*In light of the above analysis, it is concluded that the ecological effects of the predicted increase in NO_x concentrations and nutrient nitrogen deposition would either be negligible, or that any small effects would be highly unlikely to result in a deterioration in the condition of the qualifying features, and as such it is concluded that the in-combination effects of planned growth would not result in an adverse effect on the integrity of the Aston Rowant SAC.'*

19. Therefore, given the modest scale of proposed development in the Sydenham Neighbourhood Plan Review and distance of the SACs from

the proposed development, effects in relation to air quality can be screened out and do not need to be considered further.

Increased recreation pressure; and

20. The most recent HRA of the South Oxford Local Plan (March 2019) states:

> '*Natural England's Site Improvement Plans record the threats and pressures relevant to each European site. Public access or disturbance are not identified as current threats or pressures at the following sites, despite their lying close to large settlements: Aston Rowant SAC, Hartslock Wood SAC, Cothill Fen SAC, and Oxford Meadow SAC.'*

21. The HRA of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan sets out that the potential for effects depends upon the scale of development proposed and the features for which the site is designated. However, as a conservative estimate, it is assumed that any development within 7 km of a sensitive site could have impacts due to recreation. Where site specific information indicates that development beyond 7 km could produce recreation impacts, this will be taken into account; for example at Little Wittenham SAC, where development in the eastern fringes of the Vale of White Horse District could be relevant. Sydenham is approximately 17km away from the Little Wittenham SAC and it is therefore considered that the impacts of the proposed development and associated increase in recreational pressures can be screened out.

Changes to hydrological regimes.

22. European sites at which aquatic or wetland environments support qualifying features have the potential to be affected by changes in water quantity or quality. None of the European sites are within the designated area. Therefore, effects in relation to hydrological regimes noise can be screened out of further assessment.

23. The types of development that have the potential to affect water quality / quantity or flow regimes at sensitive European sites are residential or employment development that would involve significant increase in demand for water supply and treatment, and infrastructure development that requires significant excavation in proximity to watercourses or groundwater.

24. The scale of development proposed in the Sydenham Neighbourhood Plan Review is modest; therefore, likely significant effects in relation to water quality and quantity can be screened out and does not need to be considered further.

25. The Council has considered the HRA of the Local Plan (March 2019) in respect of the potential in combination effects of the proposals in the

Sydenham Neighbourhood Plan Review. This assessment has considered the scale of development through the proposed small site allocation (1-2 houses) and development caused through infill to be of a modest scale and unlikely to cause further significant effects.

26. The South Oxfordshire Local Plan covers the period from 2011 to 2035, the quantum of development proposed in the Local Plan includes some completed and committed development (Committed development includes sites under construction, with planning permission, made neighbourhood plan allocations and allocations carried forward from the Local Plan 2011 and Core Strategy). The policies that enabled those developments to be permitted have already been subject to HRA as part of the Core Strategy, Local Plan 2011 or as part of the HRA for the relevant NDP. Paragraph 5 to 37 of this assessment has considered how the development proposed in the Sydenham Neighbourhood Plan Review is unlikely to have significant effects on Natura 2000 sites.

CONCLUSION

27. The Sydenham NDP Review is unlikely to have significant effects on Natura 2000 sites, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects, therefore, an Appropriate Assessment for the Sydenham NDP Review is not required.

Appendix 3 - Assessment of the likely significance of effects on the environment

1. Characteristics of the Plan, having regard to:	
(a) the degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources;	The Sydenham NDP Review would, if adopted, form part of the Statutory Development Plan and as such does contribute to the framework for future development consent of projects. However, the Plan will sit within the wider framework set by the National Planning Policy Framework, the strategic policies of the South Oxfordshire the Local Plan 2035.
(b) the degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy;	A Neighbourhood Development Plan must be in conformity with the Local Plan for the District. It does not influence other plans. The Sydenham Neighbourhood Plan Review is unlikely to influence other Plans or Programmes within the statutory Development Plan.

(c) the relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development;	National policy requires a presumption in favour of sustainable development, which should be seen as a golden thread through plan-making, including the Sydenham NDP Review. A basic condition of the Sydenham NDP Review is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.
(d) environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme; and	The environmental impact of the proposals within the Sydenham NDP Review is likely to be minimal due to the scale of the development proposed. The Sydenham NDP Review area contains the following environmental designations: -Conservation Areas -Flood Zones – Zone 2 and 3 -Listed building structures -Archaeological constraints There are the following SACs within 17km of the Sydenham NDP Review. These are as follows: - Chilterns Beechwoods SAC 3.12km - Aston Rowant SAC 3.9km There are also the following SSSI's located within the following distances of the Sydenham NDP Review area: • Chinnor Chalk Pit SSSI- 3km • Aston Rowant SSSI- 4km • Wormsey Chalk Banks SSSI – 5.3km • Aston Rowant Woods SSSI- 3.5km • Aston Rowant cutting SSSI- 4.7km • Shirburn Hill SSSI- 5.4km • Knightsbridge Lane SSSI- 6km • Lodge Hill SSSI- 5.6km • Chinnor Hill SSSI- 3.7km • Fern Hill SSSI-7.2km Given the NDP is allocating only 1 small site for 1-2 houses and the amount of potential infill sites within the village and their relationship to the designations within the NDP area, the proposals in the plan are unlikely to harm these designations.

	Therefore, the effects are not likely to be significant.
(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 proposed development in the Sydenham NDP Review has been judged not to have an impact on Community legislation.
2. 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 Sydenham NDP Review is likely to have modest but enduring positive environmental effects. The effects are not likely to be reversible, as they relate to development. However, the proposals are minor and will be of a local scale. The NDP Review proposes to introduce the following new policies: SYD9- Site Allocation, SYD10-Dark Skies, SYD11-Landscape Character and Setting, SYD12- Development Size and Form, SYD13- Rural Roads and Traffic Management SYD14- Residential Parking Provision, SYD15- Protection of Historic Roofline and SYD16- Climate Change Mitigation and Adaption. The plan will still propose to protect local green spaces, important views and existing facilities. This will have positive cumulative benefits for the area. However given the scale of what is proposed the positive effect is not likely to be significant. The plan is also likely to have positive social effects through the provision of residential development through the small site allocation and infill and the protection of local green space. The effects will be of a local scale and the policies in the Neighbourhood Plan add detail to existing development plan policies offering protection to the natural environment, Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings to sustain and enhance their

	significance and setting. The size of the development proposed would not cause likely significant effects. Given the scale of what is proposed 1-2 dwellings, the effects are not likely to be significant.
(b) the cumulative nature of the effects;	It is intended that the positive social effects of providing residential development will have positive cumulative benefits for the area.
(c) the transboundary nature of the effects;	The effects of the Plan are unlikely to have transboundary[3] impacts.
(d) the risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents);	The policies in the plan are unlikely to present risks to human health or the environment.
(e) the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected);	The NDP Review relates to the parish of Sydenham. The potential for environmental effects is likely to be small and localised.
(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; or (iii) intensive land-use; and	The environmental impact of the proposals within the Sydenham NDP Review is likely to be minimal due to the scale of the development proposed. The Sydenham NDP Review area contains the following environmental designations: • Conservation area • Listed buildings • Flood Zones • Archaeological constraints There are the following SACs within 17km of the Sydenham NDP Review. These are as follows: - Chilterns Beechwoods SAC 3.12km - Aston Rowant SAC 3.9km There are also the following SSSI's located within the following distances of the Sydenham NDP Review area: • Chinnor Chalk Pit SSSI- 3km

[3] Transboundary effects are understood to be in other Member States.

	• Aston Rowant SSSI- 4km • Wormsey Chalk Banks SSSI – 5.3km • Aston Rowant Woods SSSI- 3.5km • Aston Rowant cutting SSSI- 4.7km • Shirburn Hill SSSI- 5.4km • Knightsbridge Lane SSSI- 6km • Lodge Hill SSSI- 5.6km • Chinnor Hill SSSI- 3.7km • Fern Hill SSSI-7.2km Given the size of the proposed site allocation (1-2 houses) and the amount of potential infill sites within the village and their relationship to the designations within the NDP area, the proposals in the plan are unlikely to harm these designations. Therefore, the effects are not likely to be significant. The Sydenham NDP Review offers an opportunity to enhance the natural environment and the cultural heritage of the area through the proposals being considered. The adopted 2021 NDP already included policies ensuring development would maintain, restore or enhance the local landscape character. Taking into consideration the proposals in the plan Review, they are not considered to cause likely significant effects to special natural characteristics or cultural heritage. The HRA Screening Assessment in Appendix 2 concluded that the Sydenham NDP Review is unlikely to have significant effects on Natura 2000 sites, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects; therefore, an Appropriate Assessment of the Sydenham NDP Review is not required. The objectives of the Sydenham NDP Review continue to set out how the plan will honour the historic and rural character of the parish and its setting, as well as maintain and enhance the natural environment and green spaces. The plan is considered to have a neutral effect on cultural heritage

	because there is no indication given in the plan Review and appendices that the plan would go beyond national and local policy and therefore, it is considered that the effects of the proposals in the plan Review are not likely to be significant. Environmental quality standards or limit values are not considered likely to be significantly affected by the Sydenham NDP Review. In light of the minor proposals in the Sydenham NDP Review, the plan is also not likely to cause significant effects in relation to intensive land use.
(g) the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.	There are no areas or landscapes with recognised national, Community or international protection status affected by the neighbourhood plan.

Appendix 4 – Consultation Responses

OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

From: [redacted] on behalf of PlanningInOxfordshire
To: Planning Policy S&V
Cc: [redacted]
Subject: RE: Sydenham Neighbourhood Plan Review SEA/HRA Screening Opinion - Please Respond by 23/3
Date: 03 March 2026 13:53:12
Attachments: image001.png

EXTERNAL

Good afternoon [redacted],

Many thanks for your email.

We have no comments to make on the SEA.

Kind regards,

Strategic Planning Team
Place Shaping Service
Economy & Place Directorate

E: planninginoxfordshire@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Oxfordshire County Council, County Hall, New Road, Oxford, OX1 1ND
https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/

From: Planning Policy S&V <planning.policy@southandvale.gov.uk>
Sent: 23 February 2026 11:55
To: 'planning_THM@environment-agency.gov.uk' <planning_THM@environment-agency.gov.uk>; 'e-seast@HistoricEngland.org.uk' <e-seast@HistoricEngland.org.uk>; Natural England <consultations@naturalengland.org.uk>; PlanningInOxfordshire <PlanningInOxfordshire@Oxfordshire.gov.uk>
Cc: [redacted]
Subject: Sydenham Neighbourhood Plan Review SEA/HRA Screening Opinion - Please Respond by 23/3

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Good morning,

I am writing on behalf of South Oxfordshire District Council to seek your views on the attached draft SEA and HRA Screening Opinion for the Sydenham Neighbourhood Plan Review. The conclusion of this report is that no further SEA or HRA work is required.

We would be grateful if you could please review this opinion and provide responses by **12pm on Monday 23 March**, even if you have no comments.

Kind regards,

HISTORIC ENGLAND

Historic England

By email only to: [redacted]@southandvale.gov.uk

Our ref: PL00801325
Your ref: Sydenham Neighbourhood Plan Review SEA

Main: 020 7973 3700
e-seast@historicengland.org.uk
[redacted]@historicengland.org.uk

Date: 20/03/2026

Dear Sir or Madam

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

Given the unlikely significant effects upon the historic environment/heritage assets, Historic England concurs with the Local Authority and hence considers that a Strategic Environmental Assessment will not be required.

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.

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 NP 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 these would have an adverse effect upon the environment.

Please do contact me, via email if you have any queries.

Yours sincerely

[redacted]

[redacted]
Historic Places Adviser

NATURAL ENGLAND

Date: 20 March 2026
Our ref: 542628
Your ref: Sydenham Neighbourhood Plan

[redacted]
South Oxfordshire & Vale of White Horse District Council

BY EMAIL ONLY
planning.policy@southandvale.gov.uk

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

T 0300 060 3900

Dear [redacted]

Sydenham Neighbourhood Plan Review - SEA/HRA Screening Opinion

Thank you for your consultation on the above dated and received by Natural England on 23 February 2026.

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 (SEA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)

It is Natural England's advice, on the basis of the material supplied with the consultation, that:

- **significant effects on statutorily designated nature conservation sites or landscapes are unlikely; and,**
- **significant effects on Habitats sites[1], either alone or in combination, are unlikely.**

The proposed neighbourhood plan is unlikely to significantly affect any Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ), Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection areas (SPA), Ramsar wetland or sites in the process of becoming SACs or SPAs ('candidate SACs', 'possible SACs', 'potential SPAs') or a Ramsar wetland. The plan area is unlikely to have a significant effect on a National Park, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty or Heritage Coast, and is unlikely to impact upon the purposes for which these areas are designated or defined.

Guidance on the assessment of Neighbourhood Plans, in line with the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 is contained within the Planning Practice Guidance. This identifies three triggers that may require the production of an SEA:

- 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.

Natural England does not hold information on the location of significant populations of protected

[1] Habitats sites are those referred to in the National Planning Policy Framework (Annex 2 - glossary) as "any site which would be included within the definition at regulation 8 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 for the purpose of those regulations, including candidate Special Areas of Conservation, Sites of Community Importance, Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas and any relevant Marine Sites".

species, so is unable to advise whether this plan is likely to affect protected species to such an extent as to require an SEA. Further information is included in Natural England's standing advice on protected species.

Furthermore, Natural England does not routinely maintain locally specific data on all environmental assets. The plan may have environmental impacts on priority species and/or habitats, local wildlife sites, soils and best and most versatile agricultural land, or on local landscape character that may be sufficient to warrant an SEA. Information on ancient woodland, ancient and veteran trees is set out in Natural England/Forestry Commission standing advice.

We therefore recommend that advice is sought from your ecological, landscape and soils advisers, local record centre, recording society or wildlife body on the local soils, best and most versatile agricultural land, landscape, geodiversity and biodiversity receptors that may be affected by the plan before determining whether a SEA is necessary.

Natural England reserves the right to provide further advice on the environmental assessment of the plan. This includes any third party appeal against any screening decision you may make. If a SEA is required, Natural England must be consulted at the scoping and environmental report stages.

Please send any new consultations, or further information on this consultation to consultations@naturalengland.org.uk

Yours sincerely

[redacted]
Consultations Team