



Dorset
Council

Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Report

Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan Review

May 2024

Strategic Environmental Assessment: Screening Report

Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan Review

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1 Introduction

- 1.0.1 Dorset Council have been asked to undertake a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) screening report for the review of the Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan on behalf of Fontmell Magna Parish Council, as part of the council's role to support the neighbourhood planning process.
- 1.0.2 SEA is a tool for identifying the potential environmental impacts of a plan, with the purpose of informing the preparation of a plan to minimise the potential negative environmental impacts and maximise the potential for positive environmental effects.
- 1.0.3 The first stage in the SEA process is the SEA screening stage, which occurs early in the plan-making process. The purpose of the SEA screening is to determine whether or not the plan requires an SEA assessment, and therefore whether the further stages of SEA are not required.
- 1.0.4 A consultation draft of the SEA screening report was produced in March 2024. The consultation bodies were consulted between 6th March and 10th April 2024. This report presents the final SEA screening for the Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan Review which was undertaken in accordance with the requirements of European Directive 2001/42/EC on the Assessment of the Effects of Certain Plans and Programmes on the Environment and the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations (2004).

2 Legislative background to Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 2.0.1 European Directive 2001/42/EC on the Assessment of the Effects of Certain Plans and Programmes on the Environment ('SEA Directive') introduces the need to undertake a strategic environmental assessment ('SEA') during the development of some plans and programmes. The main purpose of SEA, according to Article 1 of the SEA Directive, is:
- “to provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes with a view to promoting sustainable development”.
- 2.0.2 The SEA Directive is transcribed into UK law through the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, which establishes the requirement to undertake a sustainability appraisal ('SA') for some documents used for planning purposes. The SA process incorporates the requirement for SEA, but typically has a broader scope and considers the social and economic issues in addition to the environmental effects.
- 2.0.3 The Neighbourhood Planning (General) (Amendment) Regulations 2015, which amends the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012, provides clarification on the SEA documents which must be submitted alongside neighbourhood planning proposals.
- 2.0.4 Regulation 2(4) of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) (Amendment) Regulations 2015 adds to the list of documents that a neighbourhood planning group must submit to a local planning authority with a proposal for a neighbourhood plan, which is presented in regulation 6 of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012.
- 2.0.5 Regulation 6(4)(e) of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) requires one of the following documents to be submitted alongside a neighbourhood planning document:
- (i) an environmental report prepared in accordance with paragraphs (2) and (3) of regulation 12 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004; or
 - (ii) where it has been determined under regulation 9(1) of those Regulations that the plan proposal is unlikely to have significant environmental effects (and, accordingly, does not require an environmental assessment), a statement of reasons for the determination.

3 The Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan Review

3.0. FONTMELL MAGNA NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

- 3.0.1 The Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan was ‘made’ (adopted) by North Dorset District Council, a predecessor council to Dorset Council, in November 2018.
- 3.0.2 The Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan was subject to an Environmental Assessment to meet the statutory requirements relating to SEA¹.
- 3.0.3 The SEA concluded that there are no likely significant adverse impacts identified as a result of the SEA process and that overall the policies should secure significant positive benefits particularly in terms of securing opportunities for further housing to meet local needs (including a significant proportion of affordable homes), in a manner that should respect and reinforce the areas’ local landscape character, biodiversity and heritage.
- 3.0.4 The SEA process helped to identify the need to mitigate against potential adverse impacts through design and landscaping requirements and requiring more detailed technical checks at planning application stage.

3.1. FONTMELL MAGNA NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN REVIEW

- 3.1.1 Fontmell Magna Parish Council, as the neighbourhood planning group, are reviewing the adopted Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan.
- 3.1.2 There proposed changes to the plan which, other than minor changes such as grammatical changes and updates since the neighbourhood plan was made, are presented in Figure 3.1. Please note that the plan period (2017 – 2031), vision and objectives remain unchanged.

Figure 3.1: The proposed changes to the Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan through the neighbourhood plan review process.

Policy in Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan	Proposed change
FM2: Local Wildlife Corridors and Protected Species	Simplification of the policy and updates to the supporting text to reflect the latest changes on biodiversity net gain and mitigation being introduced through the Levelling Up Act and subsequent updating of the Dorset Biodiversity Protocol, including reference to incorporating wildlife-friendly features into the design and layout of new buildings and landscaping schemes.
FM4: The setting of the AONB	Amended policy title and text to reference new name (Cranborne Chase National Landscape)

¹ The SEA for the Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan may be viewed here: [af1d5ac0-0aa6-aff4-f7f2-38760e432c31 \(dorsetcouncil.gov.uk\)](https://www.dorsetcouncil.gov.uk/info/20000/strategic_environmental_assessment/10000/1)

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FM5: Local Landscape Features	Amendment of 'footpaths at the side of the road' to 'footways' for clarity.
FM6: Dark Skies	Additional detail added to policy with reference to Dark Sky Reserve status of the Cranborne Chase National Landscape, including reference to correlated colour temperature max (2700K Lux) and requirement to ensure any light spillage is directed downwards.
FM8: Development Layout	Additional text to reference the orientation of buildings to provide roof slopes within 30degrees of south in order to maximise opportunities for solar energy through roof-mounted photovoltaics.
FM9: Building Design	Insertion of reference to Table 3b within the policy that includes examples of diagrams / illustrations of vernacular designs (that the design of development should have regard to). Additional wording added with reference to energy-efficient measures and rainwater recycling. Deletion of detailed reference to photovoltaics (moved to supporting text to including in balanced consideration of design)
FM10: Creating safer roads and pedestrian route	Detail added regarding consideration of West Street and Mill Street which are shared spaces and the consideration of pedestrian / cyclist needs / impacts from development along these routes, including access to local facilities and links onto Fontmell Down. Removal of duplication within policy.
FM11: Sustainable drainage	Additional detail added in relation to requiring flood risk modelling/calculation and details of maintenance and control measures to ensure these work effectively. Location of infiltration measures to avoid flooding to the highway or built development.
FM12: Development impacting on the sewage treatment works	Policy updated to ensure that the timing of further development beyond the current capacity in the wastewater recycling centre is phased to connect after the necessary upgrades are made.
FM13: Important community facilities	Update to recognize that the Blackmore Vale Partnership is not currently operating from the Fontmell Surgery and Clinic (but the building should still be treated as an important community facility in considering any future use).
FM14: Social Infrastructure	Additional infrastructure requirement added: Parish-wide upgrades to footpaths to ensure all-weather, all-year-round access as part of a Footpaths for All project – which will include the completion of the West Street to South Street all weather footpath link.
FM16: Housing Types	Updated to recognize Dorset Local Housing Needs Assessment (November 2021) and latest Census data reinforcing the need for 1 and 2 bedroom homes as part of the housing mix (given the ageing

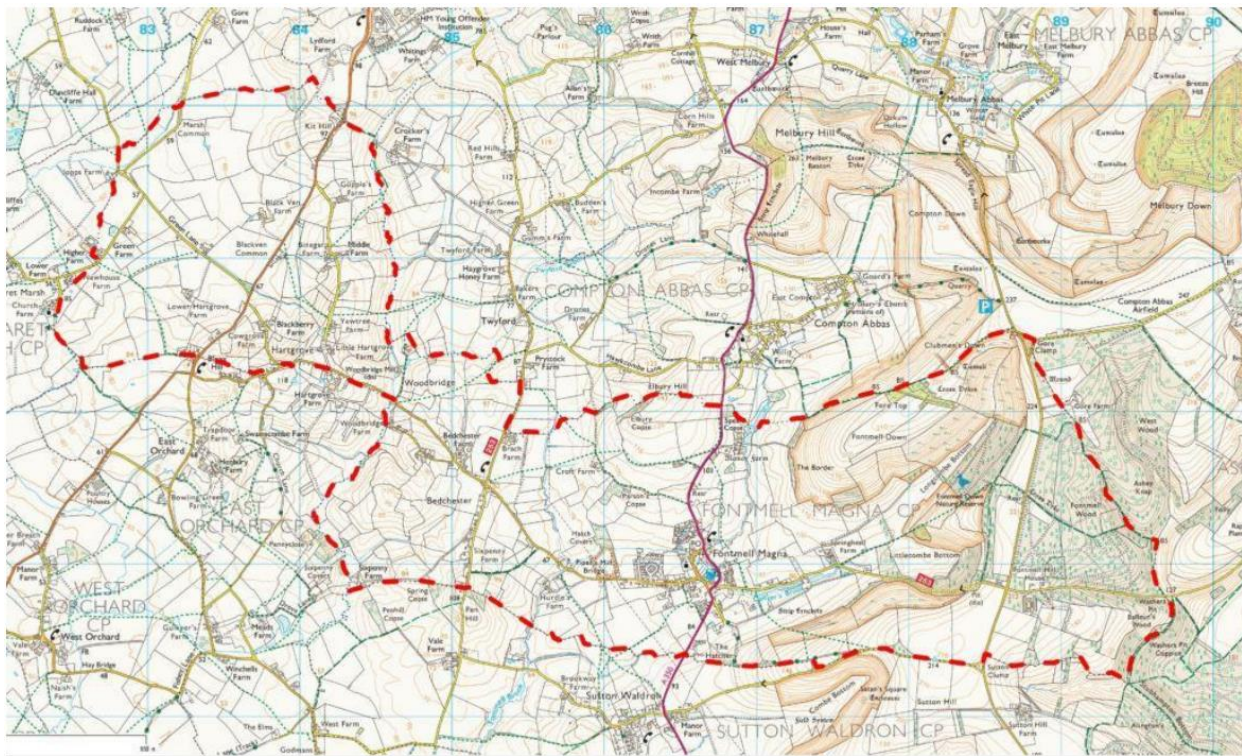
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	population and reduction in 2 bedroom homes in the parish and significant increase in 4+ bedroom homes). Additional large (4+bedroom) properties are resisted unless there is evidence to support the need for their construction.
FM18: Settlement boundary	Additional wording to clarify the consideration of policies outside of the settlement boundary (as per the Local Plan spatial strategy for development in the countryside).
FM19: Land South of Home Farm (Site 20)	<i>No change – however the site is now largely complete, and therefore this allocation may be removed once fully built out.</i>
FM20: Land at Blandfords Farm Barn (Site 22)	Amendments in relation to access arrangements taking into account the partial provision of the access road from Site 20 (Spring Meadows) and importance of delivering that option to reduce unnecessary traffic along West Street.

3.2. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE FONTMELL MAGNA NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN AREA

3.2.1 The Fontmell Magna neighbourhood plan area stretches from Blackven Common in the west to Fontmell Wood in the east, encompassing the hamlet of Bedchester, the settlements of Hartgrove, Kit Hill and Margaret Marsh, and the village of Fontmell Magna (Figure 3.2).

Figure 3.2: The Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan area



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- 3.2.2 The parish of Fontmell Magna has a population of about 730 – 740 usual residents² and 327 homes³. The area has a slightly 'older' profile than the North Dorset average, with fewer adults in their 20s and 30s, and consequently fewer children.
- 3.2.3 The neighbourhood plan area is largely rural in character, with much of the land in productive agricultural use, including areas of high grade farmland.
- 3.2.4 The neighbourhood plan area and its surroundings are highly environmentally sensitive, particularly those areas east of the A350. This is reflected in the number and magnitude of environmental designations within the plan area (Figure 3.3).
- 3.2.5 The rural areas to the east of the A350 are within the Cranborne Chase National Landscape (formerly 'Cranborne Chase and West Wiltshire Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty'), as a nationally important landscape.
- 3.2.6 In terms of heritage assets, there are 4 Scheduled Monuments (a bowl barrow NW of Gore Farm, the medieval strip lynchets south of Springhead Farm and the cross dykes on Fontmell Hill, and in Fontmell Wood) and 44 Listed Buildings in the parish, the most notable perhaps being the Church of St Andrew within the village (Grade II*). Fontmell Village, and surrounding countryside setting, is designated a Conservation Area.
- 3.2.7 The eastern area of the neighbourhood plan area include ecological designations of national and international importance to the east of the A350. The chalk grassland habitat at Fontmell Down is designated as the Fontmell and Melbury Downs Special Area of Conservation (SAC), a Habitats Site and the highest tier of ecological designation in the U.K. The SAC is also a Site of Special Scientific Interest. There are also multiple Sites of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI), which are sites of local nature conservation importance.
- 3.2.8 There are also areas prone to flood risk, most notably those areas in the vicinity of Fontmell/Collyer's Brook, at Marsh Common and along the brook at Woodbridge.

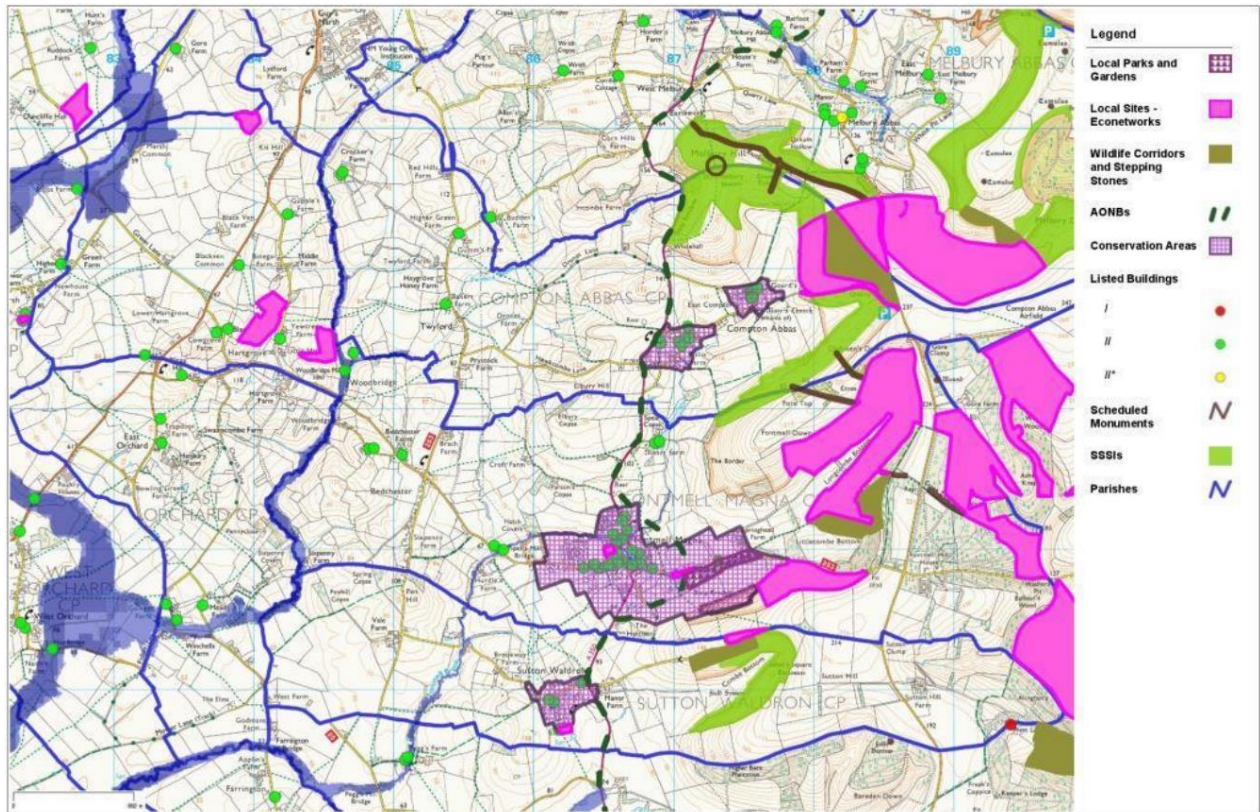
² According to 2014 Mid-Year Estimates, Office for National Statistics

³ According to 2015 Council Tax Records

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Figure 3.3: Environmental designations within the Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan area

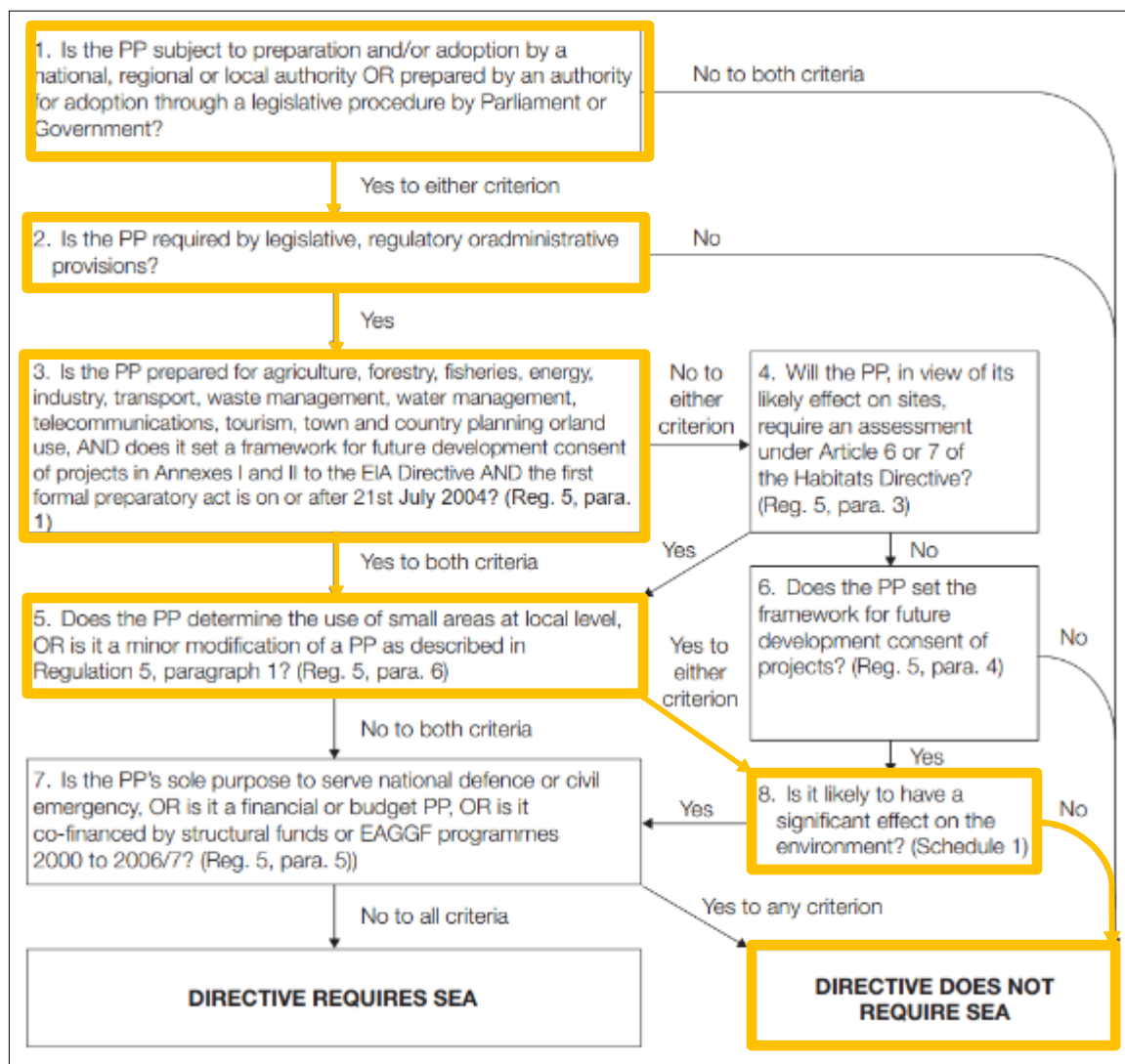


Date Created: 30-11-2016 | Map Centre (Easting/Northing): 396064 / 117988 | Scale: 1:32500 | © Crown copyright and database right. All rights reserved (100051357) 2016 © Environment Agency 2016 © English Heritage

4 Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening

- 4.0.1 This Chapter provides an account of the SEA screening exercise for the Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan Review.
- 4.0.2 Regulation 9(1) of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (as amended) sets out the types of plan and programme that require SEA.
- 4.0.3 The SEA screening process is summarised in diagrammatic form in the flowchart shown in Figure 4.1. The screening for the Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan Review is highlighted in Figure 4.1 in orange and justification for the decisions made at each stage in the SEA screening process is given in Figure 4.2.

Figure 4.1: A diagram summarising the SEA screening process with the SEA screening for the Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan Review outlined in orange.



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Figure 4.2: a summary of the justification made for the decisions during the SEA screening for the Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan Review.

Question in SEA screening flow chart (Figure 4.1)	Response
1. Is the PP 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?	<u>YES</u> The Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan Review would be adopted by Dorset Council, a local authority, through a legislative procedure.
2. Is the PP required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions?	<u>YES</u> The Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan Review would be a Statutory document, prepared in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 as amended.
3. Is the PP 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 to the EIA Directive AND the first formal preparatory act is on or after 21st July 2004?	<u>YES</u> The Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan Review is prepared for town and country planning purposes and may indicate where future development which falls under Annex II of the EIA Directive which includes urban development projects under paragraph 10(b) takes place.
5. Does the PP determine the use of small areas at local level, OR is it a minor modification of a PP as described in Regulation 5, paragraph 1?	<u>YES</u> The Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan Review would determine the use of small areas at a local level.
8. Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment?	<u>NO</u> Justification for this decision is given later in Chapter 4.1.

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4.1. IS THE FONTMELL MAGNA NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN REVIEW LIKELY TO HAVE A SIGNIFICANT EFFECT ON THE ENVIRONMENT?

4.1.1 The final question in the SEA screening process presented in Figures 4.1 and 4.2 for the Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan Review was question 8: Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment?

4.1.2 In order to answer this question, it is necessary to refer to Schedule 1 of The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations, which sets out that the relevant criteria to be taken into account when determining whether there are likely to be significant effects. Therefore, the criteria in Schedule 1 have been taken into consideration when determining whether the Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan Review requires SEA, as presented in Figure 4.3.

Figure 4.3: The assessment of the likely significance of effects of the Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan Review (Taken from Schedule 1 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004)

Criteria in Schedule 1 of The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004	Response	Is there a significant effect?
(1) Characteristics of the plan and programmes, having regard, in particular, 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 framework for development projects within the Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan area is currently set by the North Dorset Local Plan Part 1 ('Local Plan'), which provides the overarching policy for the location, size and nature of development projects in this area. The emerging Dorset Council Local Plan will set the framework for future development. The review of the Neighbourhood Plan does not propose any additional site allocations for housing or employment development than that defined in the Local Plan or in the existing Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan.	No
b) The degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans or programmes including those in a hierarchy.	The Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan, as reviewed, will be 'made' (adopted) alongside its parent document, which is currently the North Dorset Local Plan Part 1 until such time that the Dorset Council Local Plan is adopted. It will expand upon the existing policies in the Local Plan and provide supplementary information on	No

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	a local scale rather than influencing the Local Plan.	
c) The relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development.	The Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan, as reviewed, will play a role in integrating environmental considerations and delivering sustainable development on a highly localised scale. Any development which comes forward in Fontmell Magna parish will also be subject to the environmental considerations of the Local Plan, the aim of which is to achieve sustainable development, in addition to the National Planning Policy Framework.	No
d) Environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme.	The environmental problems relevant to the Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan area are not considered exclusive to the area and are similar to those considered and addressed in the Local Plan and national policy.	No
e) The relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of community legislation on the environment (e.g. plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection).	The implementation of community legislation, such as those relating to waste planning and drinking water protection, is not considered to be significantly compromised by the Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan Review.	No
(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 neighbourhood plan area is environmentally sensitive, in particular with regard to ecology, landscape and historic features. However, given the protection afforded by environmental policies in the neighbourhood plan in addition to local and national planning policies, and considering that the plan will bring forward a relatively small amount of development to meet local needs only, it is considered improbable that significant environmental effects will result. In terms of the duration of effects, whilst the plan period is until 2031, some of the effects of	No

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	<p>the development may be considered irreversible.</p>	
<p>b) The cumulative nature of the effects.</p>	<p>There is development proposed in the areas surrounding the Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan area, including in the settlements of Shaftesbury and Sturminster Newton which are considered ‘main towns’ in the North Dorset Local Plan Part 1.</p> <p>The settlement of Shaftesbury is located to the north of Fontmell Magna. Policy 6 (‘Housing Distribution’) of North Dorset Local Plan Part 1 states that at least 1,140 homes will be delivered at Shaftesbury during the period 2011-2031. This equates to approximately 20% of the overall strategic need for the District over the 20-year period. This level of growth reflects Shaftesbury’s role as one of the District’s four main towns.</p> <p>The Shaftesbury Neighbourhood Plan area is located approximately 2.6km to the north of the Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan area. Proposals for growth in the Shaftesbury Neighbourhood Plan are limited in scale, and the with the growth not exceeding that envisaged by the North Dorset Local Plan Part 1 which positions Shaftesbury as one of North Dorset’s ‘Four Main Towns’.</p> <p>Sturminster Newton is located 3.4km to the southwest of the site. Policy 6 (‘Housing Distribution’) of North Dorset Local Plan Part 1 states that at least 395 homes will be delivered at Sturminster Newton during the period 2011-2031.</p> <p>The Sturminster Newton Neighbourhood Plan allocates land for 414 dwellings for development, plus a 90 dwelling reserve site intended to cater for growth beyond 2031.</p> <p>In addition to the strategic growth in neighbourhood plans and the local plan in the surrounding areas, consideration must be given to other proposed development which may result in cumulative impacts, for example through planning permissions.</p>	<p>No</p>

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	<p>However, considering the limited scope of development which is likely to come forward through the Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan Review, it is considered unlikely that cumulative environmental effects will result.</p>	
<p>c) The transboundary nature of the effects.</p>	<p>The boundary with Wiltshire County Council is approximately 2.8km to the east of the site. The Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan Review is unlikely to have significant transboundary effects beyond the area of the Neighbourhood Plan due to the nature and scale of the proposals.</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>d) The risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents).</p>	<p>The Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan Review is unlikely to introduce significant risks to human health and the environment, for example due to accidents, in light of the scale and type of development.</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>e) The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected).</p>	<p>The Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan area occupies approximately 11.7km² and a population of approximately 740 people. The spatial extent of the Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan area and the magnitude of the population affected are not considered of a significant scale for the purposes of SEA.</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>f) The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:</p> <p>i) Special natural characteristics or cultural heritage</p>	<p>The Fontmell Down Neighbourhood Plan area is of great environmental value, as reflected by the presence of a great number and diversity of environmental designations.</p> <p>The area and its surrounding areas contain ecological designations of European value, such as the Fontmell and Melbury Downs SAC, and national importance such as the Fontmell and Melbury Downs SSSI. There are also SNCI's located in the Plan area and surrounding areas. The chalk grassland habitat of the Fontmell and Melbury Downs SAC and SSSI are particularly vulnerable to the effects of recreational pressure and air quality. The additional recreational pressure would result from the increase in local population, and air quality would be affected by the increase in traffic and associated emissions to air. However, it is not</p>	<p>No</p>

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		<p>anticipated that the review will result in effects from recreational pressure and air quality given the scale of proposed development and policies in the plan.</p> <p>The eastern portion of the Plan area lies within the Cranborne Chase National Landscape (formerly AONB). The policies of the neighbourhood plan restricts development to within the settlement boundary and protects the setting of the National Landscape (policy FM4).</p> <p>In terms of cultural heritage, the neighbourhood plan area contains 4 Scheduled Monuments, 44 Listed Buildings and the Fontmell Magna Conservation Area. Heritage assets may be vulnerable to the effects of new development. However, given that the Neighbourhood Plan allocates a limited number of dwellings for development, and the policies which protect heritage assets from visual impacts, significant impacts are not considered likely.</p>	
ii)	Exceeded environmental air quality standards or limit values	<p>The Council's air quality monitoring regime for the protection of human health has not previously identified any exceedances in air quality standards in the Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan area. Since there are no additional sites allocated in the review of the Neighbourhood Plan, it is considered unlikely that a significant increase in airborne contaminants (for example through additional traffic emissions) would result, and as such an exceedance in air quality standards is considered improbable.</p>	No
iii)	Intensive land-use	<p>The Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan is unlikely to bring forward development of an extent which would result in a significant intensification of land use, considering the scale of the development coming forward through the plan and the location of future development within the settlement boundary.</p>	No
iv)	Flood Risk	<p>The plan area includes areas prone to flood risk, most notably those areas in the vicinity of</p>	No

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	<p>Fontmell/Collyer’s Brook which runs through Fontmell Magna, at Marsh Common and along the brook at Woodbridge.</p> <p>Indicative surface water flood maps also indicate some potential for flooding on land connected to these river networks.</p> <p>Policy FM11 (Sustainable Drainage) ensures that new development is not placed at risk from flooding or contributes to increasing flood risk locally. Furthermore, local and national policy includes measures to steer development away from areas of highest flood risk, for example by applying sequential & exceptions tests.</p>	
<p>g) The effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.</p>	<p>The Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan area supports areas and landscapes which have national or international status. However, the Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan, following the review, allocates a limited number of dwellings and the review does not propose any additional development. Considering also the environmental protection afforded in the plan, alongside local and national policies, and the findings of the SEA of the adopted Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan, it is unlikely that significant impacts upon nationally or internationally recognised areas and landscapes is considered unlikely.</p>	<p>No</p>

5 Conclusion

- 5.0.1 The Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan, which was 'made' (adopted) in November 2018, allocates a limited number of dwellings. The SEA of the Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan did not identify significant adverse environmental effects.
- 5.0.2 The review of the neighbourhood plan currently being undertaken does not propose any additional development, beyond that already allocated in the 2018 Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan.
- 5.0.3 The Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan area contains areas of high environmental value, particularly with respect to ecology, landscape and heritage assets. This is reflected in the environmental designations which occupy parts of the plan area, in particular the eastern portion of the plan area which contains the Fontmell and Melbury Downs SAC and SSSI, Cranborne Chase National Landscape and Scheduled Monuments.
- 5.0.4 However, considering the scope of the neighbourhood plan review and the environmental protection afforded in policies in the neighbourhood plan, alongside local and national environmental policies, the SEA screening (Chapter 4) concluded that the neighbourhood plan review will not result in a significant environmental effect.
- 5.0.5 In coming to a final decision about whether the Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan review will result in a significant effect upon the environment, there is a statutory requirement to consult the consultation bodies, which include Natural England, Historic England and the Environment Agency, set out in Regulation 9(2)(b) of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004. The purpose of this consultation is to seek confirmation or otherwise from the statutory environmental consultees that they concur with the view that a full SEA is not required for the Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan Review.
- 5.0.6 The consultation bodies were consulted between 6th March and 10th April 2024, and their responses are summarised below with the full responses provided in the Appendix:
- *Environment Agency*: agreed that the neighbourhood plan Review is unlikely to have significant environmental effects and does not require a full SEA.
 - *Natural England*: stated that the neighbourhood plan review was unlikely to significantly affect European or national wildlife designations, AONB (now National Landscape) or Heritage Coast, but were unable to comment upon more local scale impacts.
 - *Historic England*: initially raised concerns about the implications to national heritage assets from the modifications to the allocation at Land at Blandfords Farm Barn (policy FM20) through the neighbourhood plan review. The changes to allocation FM20 relate to vehicular and pedestrian access, and are necessary as the adjacent allocation FM19: Land South of Home Farm has been developed without securing access from Old Crown Road, as anticipated in the Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan. Access to the Land at Blandfords Farm Barn site would be from West Street in the amended FM20. The site was granted outline planning permission for 9 dwellings and the access approved, with other matters reserved (planning ref: P/OUT/2023/02893). Senior Conservation Officer

Tobias Carleton-Prangnell was asked to consider the potential heritage impacts of the change in access, and expressing a view that whilst the proposed access to the site from West Street is less logical and more impactful than access from Old Crown Road, overall the scheme will result in no harm upon heritage assets. Following Tobias' assessment, Historic England confirmed no objection to the view that a full SEA is not required for the Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan review.

- 5.0.7 Therefore, the consultation bodies agree with the findings of the SEA screening. In accordance with the provisions of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, since the SEA Screening concludes that the Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan is unlikely to have environmental affects, the plan does not require a Strategic Environmental Assessment.

Appendix A: Consultation Responses

Oliver Rendle

From: Sustainable Places, WX <wx.sp@environment-agency.gov.uk>
Sent: 22 March 2024 11:23
To: Oliver Rendle
Cc: Philip Reese; Jo Witherden - DPC
Subject: RE: Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan: SEA screening consultation

Dear Oliver,

Thank you for consulting the Environment Agency on the Fontmell Magna NP SEA screening.

We agree with the conclusion of your report – the Fontmell Magna NP Review is unlikely to have significant environmental effects and does not require a full SEA.

Regards

Bob Sherrard
Planning Advisor, Wessex Sustainable Places
Environment Agency

From: Oliver Rendle <oliver.rendle@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk>
Sent: Wednesday, March 6, 2024 10:18 AM
To: SM-NE-Consultations (NE) <consultations@naturalengland.org.uk>; Sustainable Places, SWX <swx.sp@environment-agency.gov.uk>; SouthWestCasework@HistoricEngland.org.uk
Cc: Philip Reese <philip.reese@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk>; Jo Witherden - DPC <jo@dorsetplanning.co.uk>
Subject: Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan: SEA screening consultation

You don't often get email from oliver.rendle@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to consult you on the attached Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening Report for the Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan review, in accordance with regulations 4 and 9 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.

The purpose of this consultation is to seek confirmation or otherwise from the statutory environmental consultees that they concur with the findings of the SEA screening exercise set out in the attached report, which concluded that the Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan review is not likely to have significant environment effects and therefore a full SEA is not required.

Please can you respond by **10th April 2024** by replying to this email.

In the meantime, please don't hesitate to get in contact with me if you have any questions.

Best wishes,
Olly

Oliver Rendle
Senior Environmental Assessment Officer
Economic Growth and Infrastructure
Dorset Council

Date: 15 April 2024
Our ref: 467781



Oliver Rendle

BY EMAIL ONLY

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CW1 6GJ

T 0300 060 3900

Dear Mr Rendle

Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan: SEA screening consultation

Thank you for consulting Natural England on this application. Please accept our apologies for the delay in responding, due to very high workloads. Please see below for our advice.

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 consultation: Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

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 sites¹, 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

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".

- 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 species, so is unable to advise whether this plan is likely to affect protected species to such an extent as to require a 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

Please contact me if you have any queries relating to this advice.

Kind regards,
Roz

Rosalind Tuck
Lead Adviser – Sustainable Development
Wessex Team
Natural England
07443 366536

www.gov.uk/natural-england

Oliver Rendle

From: Stuart, David <David.Stuart@HistoricEngland.org.uk>
Sent: 25 April 2024 15:05
To: Oliver Rendle
Cc: Alison Turnock; Kathryn Melhuish; Tobias Carleton-Prangnell
Subject: RE: Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan: SEA screening consultation

Dear Oliver

Many thanks for getting back to me, and with such a helpfully comprehensive response. My apologies for not responding in turn before now.

Based on the additional information provided relating to the site in question I can confirm that we have no objection to the view that a full SEA is not required for the Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan review.

Kind regards

David

David Stuart | Historic Places Adviser

I now work only 2 days a week, usually Tuesdays and Wednesdays

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From: Oliver Rendle <oliver.rendle@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk>
Sent: 16 April 2024 17:10
To: Stuart, David <David.Stuart@HistoricEngland.org.uk>
Cc: Alison Turnock <alison.turnock@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk>; Kathryn Melhuish <kathryn.melhuish@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk>; Tobias Carleton-Prangnell <Tobias.Carleton-Prangnell@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk>
Subject: RE: Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan: SEA screening consultation

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Hello David,

Thank you for your response to the consultation on the SEA Screening Report, and for your guidance on assessing the potential heritage impacts of the Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan review.

Following your advice, I referred the matter to my colleague Tobias Carleton-Prangnell in the Conservation Team who has considered the potential impacts of the changes to policy FM20: Land at Blandfords Farm Barn (Site 22) upon the historic environment.

The changes to allocation FM20: Land at Blandfords Farm Barn (Site 22) relate to vehicular and pedestrian access, and are necessary as the adjacent allocation FM19: Land South of Home Farm (site 20) has been developed without securing access from Old Crown Road, as anticipated by policy FM20 of in the Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan. Access to the Land at Blandfords Farm Barn site would be from West Street in the amended FM20: Land at Blandfords Farm Barn policy.

The site at FM20: Land at Blandfords Farm Barn is currently subject to a live application for outline planning permission for 9 dwellings, with the outline application to determine the access only with other matters reserved (planning ref: P/OUT/2023/02893). The application is due to be approved in the coming days, through delegated powers. Tobias has fully considered the potential heritage impacts through this outline application, which is accompanied by a Heritage Statement, and has expressing a view that whilst the proposed access to the site from West Street is less logical and more impactful than access from Old Crown Road, overall the scheme will result in no harm and therefore no objection was raised. Since the heritage impacts of the access arrangements have been fully assessed through this application, Tobias has raised no further issues for the changes to the access arrangements for the Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan Review. I have attached both Tobias' comments on the Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan Review and the Heritage Assessment submitted with application P/OUT/2023/02893 for information.

In view of this, my opinion is that we may conclude that the change to policy FM20: Land at Blandfords Farm Barn is unlikely to result in likely significant effects upon heritage assets for the purposes of the SEA screening. Do you agree with these findings?

Thank you for your time,

Best wishes, Oliver

Oliver Rendle
Senior Environmental Assessment Officer
Economic Growth and Infrastructure
Dorset Council

[01305 252528](tel:01305252528)
[dorsetcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:oliver.rendle@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk)



From: Stuart, David <David.Stuart@HistoricEngland.org.uk>
Sent: Wednesday, April 10, 2024 1:15 PM
To: Oliver Rendle <oliver.rendle@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk>
Cc: Alison Turnock <alison.turnock@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk>; Kathryn Melhuish

[<kathryn.melhuish@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk>](mailto:kathryn.melhuish@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk)

Subject: Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan: SEA screening consultation

Dear Oliver

Thank you for your consultation on the SEA Screening associated with the Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan review.

We have recently been consulted by the community on its Regulation 14 version of the Plan review and our response is attached for information.

We note that the SEA exercise associated with the made Plan found it didn't create any significant environmental effects and the focus with the current exercise is therefore on proposed changes to extant policies and where these may generate such potential.

Our interest focuses on policies FM19 & 20 as these allocate sites for development and have in principle the greatest potential for generating significant impacts on nationally designated heritage assets thereby triggering the need for a full SEA.

We are happy that policy FM19 is essentially unchanged, and due to developments since the current Plan was made can be accommodated without generating significant environmental effects. But policy FM20 now requires modification to accommodate new access arrangements to the site but it is not clear whether, and if so in what form, this may create implications for the significance of relevant heritage assets.

For this reason we have recommended to the community input from your authority's heritage team to advise in detail on whether the policy, and current evidence base, is adequate to avoid any harm to those assets, or whether further safeguards, in the form of policy wording or enhanced evidence, is required to demonstrate that harm can be avoided in accordance with national and local policy for the protection and enhancement of the historic environment.

Until this issue has been satisfactorily resolved we believe it is difficult, and therefore premature, to conclude that a full SEA will not be required for the new Plan. While the matter in question may seem incidental, case law has shown that even modest impact on (the setting of) nationally designated heritage assets (ie a Grade II Listed Building) can be deemed to be significant environmental effects under the SEA definitions.

We have agreed to defer to your heritage team colleagues on this point and remain happy to do so as far as the outcome of this SEA Screening exercise is concerned. If they confirm that they are happy with the proposed policy changes to FM20 (with or without modification or enhanced evidence) and that as a consequence significant environmental effects to the historic environment will not occur, we would be happy to agree that a full SEA is not required.

Otherwise, we remain concerned about the text provision for Housing Exception Sites which could conceivably have potential for prompting a full SEA but acknowledge that this has already been accepted in the made Plan.

Kind regards

David

David Stuart | Historic Places Adviser

I now work only 2 days a week, usually Tuesdays and Wednesdays

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From: Oliver Rendle <oliver.rendle@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk>

Sent: 06 March 2024 10:18

To: Appleby, Alison <consultations@naturalengland.org.uk>; Sustainable Places, SWX <swx.sp@environment-agency.gov.uk>; South West Casework <SouthWestCasework@HistoricEngland.org.uk>

Cc: Philip Reese <philip.reese@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk>; Jo Witherden - DPC <jo@dorsetplanning.co.uk>

Subject: Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan: SEA screening consultation

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Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to consult you on the attached Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening Report for the Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan review, in accordance with regulations 4 and 9 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.

The purpose of this consultation is to seek confirmation or otherwise from the statutory environmental consultees that they concur with the findings of the SEA screening exercise set out in the attached report, which concluded that the Fontmell Magna Neighbourhood Plan review is not likely to have significant environment effects and therefore a full SEA is not required.

Please can you respond by **10th April 2024** by replying to this email.

In the meantime, please don't hesitate to get in contact with me if you have any questions.

Best wishes,

Oilly

Oliver Rendle
Senior Environmental Assessment Officer
Economic Growth and Infrastructure
Dorset Council

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