

Strategic Environmental Assessment - Screening Statement

Draft NA2 Whitehill, Newton Abbot Development Framework Plan Supplementary Planning Document

1. Document Background and Context

- 1.1 The draft NA2 Whitehill, Newton Abbot Development Framework Plan Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) has been prepared in line with the Teignbridge Local Plan 2013-2033.
- 1.2 The draft SPD amplifies and clarifies the requirements of Policy NA2 Whitehill, which provides for at least 450 new homes with a target of 20% affordable homes, 2 hectares of land for employment development, a community facility, road improvements to allow ease of movement through the sites and reduce traffic through Highweek Village, provision of green infrastructure, renewable energy, local; food production, formal recreation space, and greater horseshoe bat mitigation.
- 1.3 The draft SPD sets out how proposals for housing, employment land, green spaces and the required infrastructure at Whitehill should be planned, delivered and phased comprehensively and in a sustainable form across the allocation as required by Policy NA2. It will be a material consideration in determining planning applications, ensuring that the overall allocation requirements, particularly in relation to planning and delivery, are able to be met.
- 1.4 The draft SPD includes an indicative land use plan for the NA2 Whitehill allocation.

2. SEA Screening

- 2.1 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is a process to identify likely significant effects of a plan or policy on the environment. The requirement to assess certain plans and programmes is set out in the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, which transpose the European Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (2001/42/EC). An SEA is required where plans, may have significant environmental effects. Schedule 1 of the regulations set out the criteria for determining whether an SEA is required and these are considered below:

“1. The Characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular, to–

- a) The degree to which the plan or programmes sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources;

- b) The degree to which the plan or programme influence other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy;
- c) The relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development;
- d) Environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme; and
- 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).

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;
- b) The cumulative nature of the effects;
- c) The transboundary nature of the effects;
- d) The risk to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents);
- e) The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected);
- 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
- g) The effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.”

2.2 The draft SPD sets out additional detail on the implementation of Local Plan policy NA2 (Whitehill) which has already been subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment, Sustainability Appraisal and Habitat Regulations Assessment. The Local Plan assessments took account of the environmental characteristics of the area, which have not changed since those assessments were prepared. The draft SPD concentrates on the mechanisms for delivering the NA2 allocation. Therefore, whilst setting out details in relation to the implementation and requirements of these policies, this is within the reasonably detailed framework already set by the Local Plan.

2.3 The draft SPD will not influence other plans in a hierarchy, but is itself highly influenced by the Local Plan, which has already been subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment. Its room for manoeuvre is relatively limited. It supports and clarifies the policies of the Local Plan in promoting the delivery of the NA2 allocation, but does not go significantly beyond the local plan requirements. No additional quantum of development is proposed compared with the Local Plan proposals. Where there are minor variations from the Local Plan in detail, these are set out and justified, but there is no indication that these will have a significantly different environmental impact compared with the Local Plan policies.

2.4 The Local Plan has also been subject to assessment under the Habitats Regulations, and the Local Plan policies contain appropriate requirements needed to mitigate any impacts on the South Hams SAC, prepared in conjunction with Natural England. The draft SPD has itself been screened for the purpose of Habitat Regulations Assessment. It includes recommended mitigation measures that are necessary for the protection of Greater Horseshoe Bat flyways and their habitat at

the NA2 Whitehill allocation, which will be used to inform planning proposals and decisions made on these.

- 2.5 The [SA/SEA Report 2012](#) accompanying the Proposed Submission Local Plan assessed the potential environmental impacts of Policy NA2. The following table demonstrates any implications or variations which have arisen from the draft SPD and which may require further SEA:

Table 1: Local Plan SA/SEA conclusions - Policy NA2 Whitehill and draft NA2 Whitehill Development Framework Plan SPD

SA/SEA Sustainability Objective	SA/SEA comment on Policy NA2 Whitehill	Relevant SPD Details	Implications of SPD	Further SEA required?
<p>A. Natural Environment <i>To protect, conserve and enhance the area's natural environment</i></p>	<p>It is predominately agricultural with a varied topography. Daracombe Beacon forms the southern extent and will need to be safeguarded. There are trees and hedgerows throughout some of which are protected, these will need consideration in any development.</p> <p>Proposals have the potential to impact on bats, in particular the greater horseshoe bat, their strategic flyways and sustenance zones as well as curlew buntings and their wintering and breeding territories. There may also be impacts on other protected species. Any impact on protected species will need to be assessed and appropriately mitigated and compensated for.</p>	<p>The draft SPD identifies an increased area of land to be used for green infrastructure, which will include land for bat flyways across the NA2 Whitehill allocation. The area shown for development has been reduced accordingly.</p>	<p>There will be increased positive benefits in relation to this SA/SEA objective, with no additional implications than those identified in the full SA/SEA of Local Plan.</p>	<p>No</p>

<p>B. Built Environment <i>To preserve and improve the areas built environment and heritage assets</i></p>	<p>The area is primarily farmland on the edge of the town. Sensitive and high quality design of new development with appropriate density will ensure it responds to its wider context.</p> <p>There is the potential for the area to have archaeology interests, therefore appropriate assessments and mitigation will be required.</p> <p>The wider historical context of the site will also need consideration. There are a number of listed buildings including the All Saints church and careful consideration will need to be given to the siting of development. However, it is considered that the impact can be mitigated by sensitive design, layout and landscaping.</p>	<p>The draft SPD:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • highlights design issues that will need to be addressed in development proposals. • requires that development proposals respect the setting of heritage assets, including Daracombe Beacon, Grade 1 Listed All Saints Church and Grade 2 Listed Ringslade House, Whitehill House and Whitehill End. • sets out requirements for archaeological assessment. • restricts development to the lower part of the slope to the north-east and east of All Saints church consistent with the settlement limit defined on the Local Plan's Policies Map. 	<p>There will be positive benefits in relation to this SA/SEA objective, with no additional implications than those identified in the full SA/SEA of the Local Plan.</p>	<p>No</p>
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<p>C. Climate Change <i>To mitigate and adapt to possible effects of climate change</i></p>	<p>Includes the need to consider generation of onsite renewable energy at a domestic and community scale as well as rainwater harvesting, recycling and composting. Provision for community and local food production is included.</p> <p>The area is at low risk of flood but there are areas of potential surface flooding, however these could be managed through SUDS development and site planning and design. New and enhanced routes are proposed to facilitate walking and cycling and there is support for a wide range of local services and community facilities.</p>	<p>The draft SPD:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • draws attention to the need for compliance with local plan policies on renewable energy. • includes provision for local food production in the form of allotments. Additionally, green space shall include opportunities for edible landscaping. • includes detailed guidance on sustainable urban drainage. • requires permeability across NA2 Whitehill, with pedestrian / cycle links to outside the allocation as shown on its Transport and Access Plan. <p>The draft SPD supports development in a sustainable location at Newton Abbot with accessible jobs, shops, schools and other facilities, thereby helping to reduce the need to travel.</p>	<p>There will be positive benefits in relation to this SA/SEA objective, with no additional implications than those identified in the full SA/SEA of Local Plan.</p>	<p>No</p>
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<p>D. Resource Use <i>To minimise the loss or degradation of finite natural resources.</i></p>	<p>The area is greenfield with mainly lower grade agricultural land.</p> <p>The site is in a mineral consultation area, consideration needs to be given to the potential impact of sterilizing the resource.</p>	<p>The draft SPD acknowledges there is no likelihood of future mineral working within the NA2 Whitehill allocation.</p>	<p>There are no additional implications than those identified in the full SA/SEA of Local Plan.</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>E. Jobs and Local Economy <i>To foster an entrepreneurial economy with improved productivity, providing a strong employment offer.</i></p>	<p>There is employment provision including 2 hectares with a mix of uses and types to help create additional jobs, support the local economy as well as help to increase self containment. New housing will generate short term employment during build-out. New households will generate economic activity including supporting local shops and businesses.</p>	<p>The draft SPD requires that S106 planning obligations are secured towards employment land provision elsewhere, given the area allocated for employment use at NA2 Whitehill is likely to be affected by A382 road improvement proposals and will not be capable of being developed for employment uses.</p>	<p>There will be positive benefits in relation to this SA/SEA objective, with no additional implications other than those identified in the full SA/SEA of Local Plan. Potential alternative locations for employment land that are allocated in the Local Plan have been subject to SA/SEA. However, the location of potential employment land elsewhere is not known and as such potential SA/SEA implications cannot be assessed.</p>	<p>No</p>

<p>F. Town Centres <i>To strengthen and safeguard the vitality and viability of our town centres</i></p>	<p>Potential for additional expenditure to the town centre from new residents.</p>	<p>The draft SPD:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • supports development in a sustainable location at Newton Abbot which is accessible to the town centre by walking and cycling. • includes potential for a local community facility which could be in the form of a local shop, that must satisfy Local Plan Policy EC10. This will help meet day-to-day shopping needs and will be small enough that it complement rather than compete with the town centre. 	<p>There will be positive benefits in relation to this SA/SEA objective, with no additional implications than those identified in full SA/SEA of Local Plan.</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>G. Housing <i>To provide and maintain a sufficient supply of good quality, mixed housing, including an appropriate</i></p>	<p>Meeting a proportion of the area's housing need</p>	<p>The draft SPD identifies a reduced area with potential for housing development than that shown on the Local Plan Policies Map. This is as a result of the need to provide a sufficient area of green infrastructure to include bat flyways across the site.</p>	<p>There will be reduced positive benefits in relation to this SA/SEA objective, but with no additional implications than those identified in full SA/SEA of Local Plan.</p>	<p>No</p>

<i>level of affordable housing</i>				
H. Health <i>To support healthy lifestyles and a healthy local living environment</i>	It provides proximity and potential connectivity to existing health and social centres. Provision of housing, jobs, recreational opportunities and increase sustainable travel opportunities could lead to a general improvement in public health.	The draft SPD will improve the ease of movement through routes (vehicular, cycling, and pedestrian) that are connected to the wider network.	There will be positive benefits in relation to this SA/SEA objective, with no additional implications than those identified in full SA/SEA of Local Plan.	No
I. Infrastructure <i>To ensure sustainably balanced places are created or maintained providing access to an appropriate mix of services and facilities</i>	Significant infrastructure improvements will benefit the community, including; social and community infrastructure, facilities for generation of on-site renewable energy, improved road network, and widening of some roads. There will also be a network of green infrastructure routes to facilitate walking and cycling opportunities, and opportunity for local food production.	The draft SPD supports development from which CIL receipts will help contribute towards the A382 road improvements.	There will be positive benefits in relation to this SA/SEA objective, with no additional implications than those identified in full SA/SEA of Local Plan.	No

3. Variations

- 3.1 The SEA screening should assess any variations to the relevant policies that the draft SPD has introduced.

The draft SPD will provide for three variations from the adopted Teignbridge Local Plan Policy NA2 Whitehill:

- A reduced developable area for new homes;
- An increased area for green infrastructure in the central part of the allocation, which will include identified bat flyways; and
- An alternative approach to secure the delivery of 2 hectares of land for employment development, through the use of Section 106 planning obligations towards off-site provision elsewhere.

- 3.2 Each of these variations has been assessed through this SEA screening:

- A reduced developable area for new homes will have reduced positive benefits in relation to the SA/SEA objective 'Housing' since less housing need will be met.
- An increased area for green infrastructure will have increased positive benefits in relation to the SA/SEA objective 'Natural Environment', including protecting flyways and habitat for greater horseshoe bats and other wildlife.
- The delivery of 2 hectares of employment land elsewhere will maintain positive benefits in relation to the SA/SEA objective 'Jobs and Local Economy'. However, since the location of this employment land is not known, potential impacts on the natural environment and other SA/SEA factors cannot be assessed.

4. Conclusion

- 4.1 The SEA screening indicates there are no new significant effects likely to arise through the implementation of the NA2 Whitehill Development Framework Plan draft SPD that have not previously been identified through the full SA/SEA of the Teignbridge Local Plan. Therefore full Strategic Environmental Assessment of the NA2 Whitehill Development Framework Plan draft SPD is not required.