

Winterbourne Parish Council

**Winterbournes Neighbourhood Plan
(WNP) 2026**

**Strategic Environmental Assessment
(SEA)
Environmental Report**

February 2019

enfusion



Winterbournes Neighbourhood Plan (WNP) 2026

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Environmental Report

February 2019

date:	December 2018 v01 Draft February 2019 V02 Final Draft	
prepared for:	Winterbourne Parish Council	
prepared by:	Barbara Carroll Owen Jeffreys	Enfusion
quality assurance:	Barbara Carroll	Enfusion

enfusion
environmental planning and management for sustainability



Treenwood House, Rowden Lane,
Bradford-on-Avon BA15 2AU
t: 01225 867112 www.enfusion.co.uk

CONTENTS

	Page
Non-Technical Summary (NTS) (available separately)	
1 INTRODUCTION	
Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)	1
Wiltshire Core Strategy & Local Plan Review	2
The Winterbournes Neighbourhood Plan (WNP)	3
SEA Screening & Scoping	6
Consultation	7
This Environmental Report	7
2 METHODS	
Introduction & the SEA Process	8
Scoping & the SEA Framework	9
Assessing the Winterbournes Neighbourhood Plan	12
Consideration of Alternatives	13
3 ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT, OBJECTIVES & BASELINE CHARACTERISTICS	
Review of Plans and Programmes (PPs)	14
Baseline Conditions & Likely Evolution without the NP	14
Biodiversity & Geodiversity	14
Communities; Accessibility; Human Health	15
Water, Air & Climatic Factors	15
Cultural Heritage	15
Landscape	16
Material Assets & Natural Resources	16
Key Environmental Issues, Problems & Opportunities	16
4 SEA FINDINGS	
SA/SEA of Wiltshire Local Plan	18
The WNP Vision & Objectives	18
SEA of Site Options	21
Developing the Preferred Sites	26
SEA of Policies & Proposed Housing Sites	28
SEA of Implementing the WNP	34
5 PROPOSED MONITORING	
6 SUMMARY CONCLUSIONS & NEXT STEPS	
APPENDICES	
I	Statement of Compliance with the SEA Directive
II	SEA of Site Options

Tables

- 2.1 SEA Framework
- 4.1 Housing Site Options
- 4.2 Site Options SEA Summary Findings
- 4.3 Reasons for Selection or Rejection of Housing Site Options
- 4.4 Summary SEA Findings

Figures

- 1.1 Location of WNP Area

Non-Technical Summary (NTS)

(Available separately)

Contents:

This is the NTS of the Environmental Report
The Wiltshire Core Strategy & Local Plan Review
The Winterbournes Neighbourhood Plan (WNP)
Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)
Environmental Characteristics of the WNP Area
Key Environmental Issues, Problems and Opportunities
How has the Draft WNP been assessed?
What reasonable alternatives have been considered & addressed?
What are the likely significant effects of the Draft WNP?
How could negative effects be mitigated?
Were there any difficulties encountered?
How has the SEA influenced the Draft WNP?
Monitoring Proposals
Consultation & Next Steps

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

- 1.1 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is a European Union requirement implemented in the UK through the SEA Regulations (2004)¹. SEA is a systematic process that seeks to provide a high level of protection of the environment, and to contribute to promoting sustainable development by integrating environmental considerations into the process of preparing certain plans and programmes.
- 1.2 Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is a systematic process that must be carried out during the preparation of a Local Plan as required by planning legislation and the National Planning Policy Framework (revised 2018)². The purpose of SA is to promote sustainable development through assessing the extent to which an emerging plan, when judged against reasonable alternatives, will help to achieve relevant environmental, economic and social objectives³. Local Plans must also be subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Government advises that an integrated approach is taken so that the SA process incorporates the requirements for SEA – and to the same level of detail.
- 1.3 SEA (and SA) is an iterative and ongoing process that informs the preparation of draft planning documents. The scope of the assessment is determined through establishing the characterisation of the area and investigating issues and objectives relevant to the Plan Area, helping to make the SEA process proportionate and relevant. Likely significant effects are identified and assessed for the emerging elements of the draft plan and judged against reasonable alternatives. Mitigation measures are suggested for any significant negative effects identified. The role of SEA is to inform the plan-maker; the SEA findings do not form the sole basis for decision-making – this is informed also by other studies and feedback comments from consultation.
- 1.4 There is a tiering of assessment processes that aligns with the hierarchy of plans – from international, national and through to local. This tiering is acknowledged by the NPPF in paragraph 35 that states that evidence should be proportionate. At each stage of plan preparation and consultation, the accompanying SEA (or SA incorporating SEA) is also published; comments received are taken into account and considered at the next stage of plan-making and assessment. It may be noted that an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is applied to individual projects that are likely to have significant environmental effects and in accordance with the EIA Regulations (2011, amended 2017). The findings of the SEA process can help set the scope for the lower tier project level EIA process.

¹ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2004/1633/contents/made>

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/revised-national-planning-policy-framework>

³ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/strategic-environmental-assessment-and-sustainability-appraisal>

- 1.5 There is no legal requirement for a Neighbourhood Plan (NP)⁴ to have a Sustainability Appraisal (incorporating SEA) as they are unlikely to have significant effects since they must be in conformity with higher level plans – in this case, the Wiltshire Core Strategy. However, a qualifying body must demonstrate how its plan will contribute to achieving to sustainable development.
- 1.6 Government advises that in some limited circumstances, where a Neighbourhood Plan is likely to have significant environmental effects, it may require an SEA since the Localism Act 2011 requires neighbourhood plans to comply with EU legislation. This is determined through a SEA Screening⁵ process. The Wiltshire Council as the responsible authority under the SEA Regulations undertook a Screening Determination for the Winterbournes Neighbourhood Plan (March 2018).
- 1.7 This was sent for review and formal consultation with the statutory environmental bodies (Environment Agency, Historic England, Natural England). It was determined that the draft WNP falls within the scope of the SEA Regulations as it includes Policies that would allow housing development, and which have not been subject to previous SA/SEA during the preparation of the Local Plan Review; also, Historic England expressed some concern regarding the potential impacts on heritage assets and their settings.
- 1.8 Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) determines whether a plan is likely to have a significant effect on a European site, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects. The Core Strategy and the emerging Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations Plan were both subject to HRA during their development and it was concluded that there were no likely significant effects. The relevant environmental regulator, Natural England, advised⁶ Wiltshire Council during the SEA screening process that the WNP is unlikely to have significant environmental effects in so far as the natural environment is concerned. Accordingly, there is no requirement for an HRA of the Winterbournes Neighbourhood Plan.

The Wiltshire Core Strategy & Local Plan Review

- 1.9 The adopted Wiltshire Core Strategy documents (2015)⁷ were subject to SA/SEA and HRA in accordance with legislation and guidance at the time. The Core Strategy includes a wide range of Core Policies that provide protection and enhancement of environmental factors. The overall spatial approach in the Core Strategy seeks to avoid significant negative effects and promote positive effects, including through Community Areas and a settlement hierarchy.

⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/strategic-environmental-assessment-and-sustainability-appraisal#strategic-environmental-assessment-requirements-for-neighbourhood-plans>

⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/strategic-environmental-assessment-and-sustainability-appraisal>

⁶ Letter NE to Wiltshire Council (April 2017)

⁷ <http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/wiltshirecorestrategy.htm>

- 1.10 The Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations Plan (WHSAP)⁸ was submitted for independent examination in July 2018. The Plan is at the Proposed Changes stage and has been subject to SA/SEA and HRA, including a recent update to take account of certain European Court Judgments. Site options were subject to a site assessment method and all reasonable options were subject to SA/SEA. The draft WHSAP does not include any proposed housing sites within the Winterbournes Parish/NP area that is classified as a Large Village in the Core Strategy as part of Core Policy CP1.
- 1.11 The Wiltshire Local Plan Review⁹ will recast the Core Strategy (2015) as the Wiltshire Local Plan and identify land for development for the period to 2026. Work on the review is currently being paused until the Government finalises revised planning guidance. The Local Plan Review will comprise the statutory Local Plan for the Wiltshire Council with regard to determining planning applications.
- 1.12 To date, no SA/SEA has been undertaken of the emerging new Local Plan, but the first stage of the SA/SEA process has been completed with consultation. The Draft SA Scoping Report (November 2017) is available on the Council's website and has provided up to date environmental issues and a SEA framework of objectives for assessing the WNP.

The Winterbournes Neighbourhood Plan (WNP)

- 1.13 The neighbourhood planning system was introduced by the Localism Act (2011) to give communities direct power to develop a shared vision and shape the development of their local area. A Neighbourhood Plan attains the same legal status as the Local Plan once it has been approved at referendum – and thus becomes part of the statutory development plan. Applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. A Neighbourhood Plan must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan in force if it is to meet with the basic conditions as set out in the Town & Country Planning Act (1990)¹⁰.
- 1.14 The Winterbournes Neighbourhood Plan (WNP) area covers the whole of the parish administrative area and was designated by Wiltshire Council on 9 December 2015. Wiltshire Council is the responsible authority for the WNP in accordance with the SEA Regulations. The Winterbournes Parish Council is the qualifying body, as defined by the Localism Act (2011), and responsible for the development of the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 1.15 The plan making process for the WNP has included consulting with local communities on the key issues for the plan area, and a Village Questionnaire that was sent to all residents. The comments received from the initial consultations have been considered and have informed the development of

⁸ <http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/planning-whsap>

⁹ <http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/planning-policy-local-plan-review>

¹⁰ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/neighbourhood-planning--2#preparing-a-neighbourhood-plan-or-order>

the Draft Winterbournes Neighbourhood Plan that is published for Regulation 14 consultation¹¹. Comments made on the draft WNP will be taken into account in the next stage of plan-making.

- 1.16 The Draft WNP comprises an introduction outlining the NP process with the national and local planning contexts, and a section about the Winterbournes describing its character with the key opportunities and problems. The WNP Vision for how the Winterbournes should be regarded by 2026 is as follows:

"The Winterbournes will still be a predominately agricultural community conserving its natural and built heritage whilst promoting a safe, family focused and invigorating environment enabling growth and quality of life for all, including both the young and the elderly. The Winterbournes will continue to flourish as three conjoined villages, together with Hurdcott, in a rural setting that will offer the advantages of easy access to the cities of Salisbury, Winchester and Southampton. Local developments will have been carefully managed so as not to disrupt the heart and character of the community. Overall, the Winterbournes will be a sustainable, vibrant and thriving community in harmony with its environment."

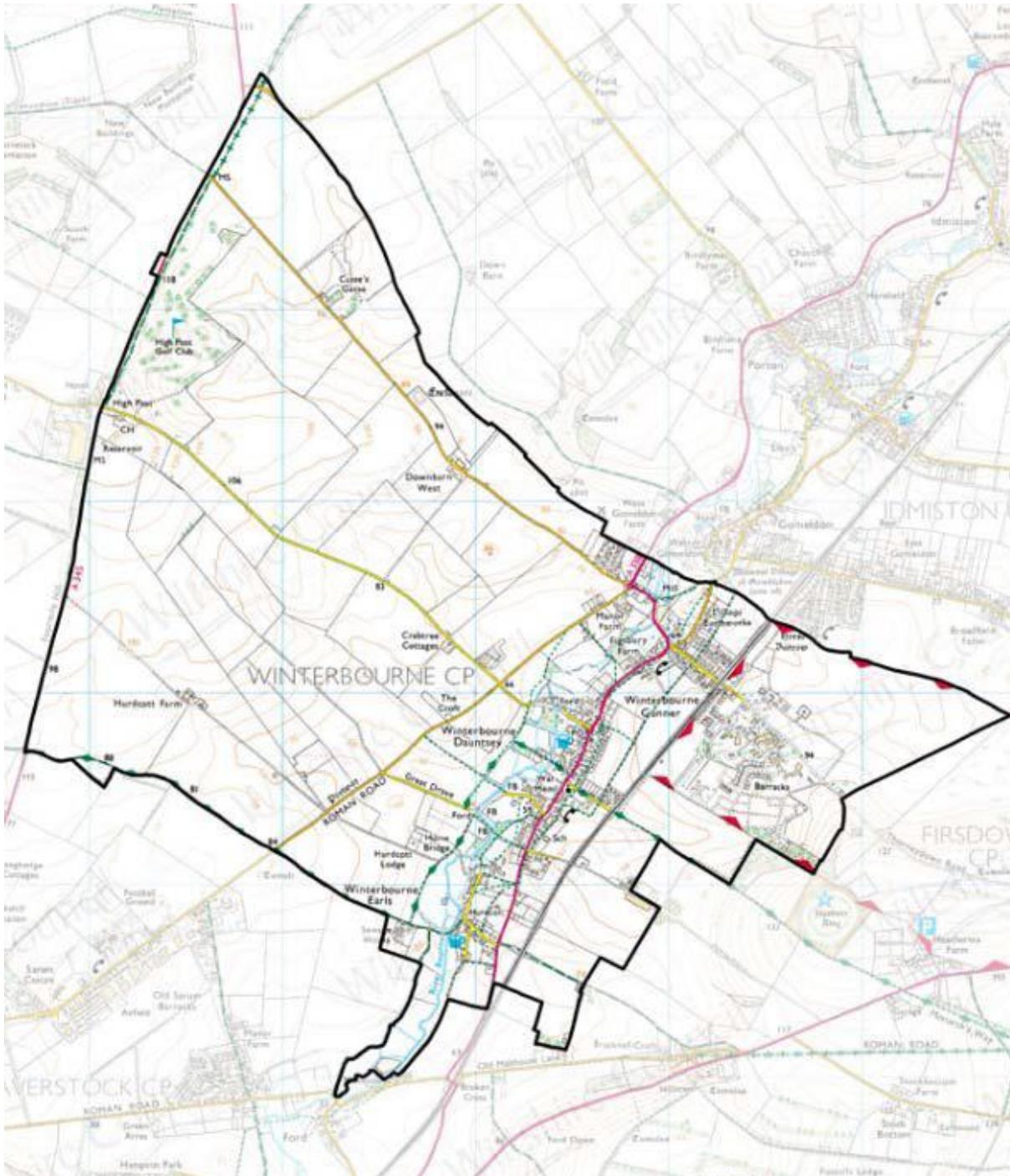
- 1.17 The Draft WNP is then structured through five further chapters, as follows:

- Chapter 2 Landscape & Countryside with seven Countryside Objectives for development and one Policy – 1 Separation between Winterbourne and Hurdcott
- Chapter 3 Housing with six Housing Objectives for new development; Policies 2-7 address the need for 18 new dwellings and propose 3 site allocations with accompanying design requirements
- Chapter 4 Community Facilities & Services with two Aspirations
- Chapter 5 Recreation & Open Spaces with one Policy 8 on Local Green Space Designations
- Chapter 6 Infrastructure & Transport with three Objectives and one Policy 9 on the Expansion of Winterbourne Primary School

- 1.18 The WNP is completed by appendices and annexes including the members of the WNP Steering Group, data sources and references, residents' responses to consultation events, maps, and other key information. The location of the WNP area is as follows:

¹¹ <http://www.winterbourneparishcouncil.com/planning/winterbournes-neighbourhood-plan.php>

Figure 1.1: Location of Winterbournes Neighbourhood Plan Area¹²



¹² Wiltshire Council SEA Screening Determination for the Winterbournes NP (March 2018)

SEA Screening & Scoping

- 1.19 In order to decide whether a Neighbourhood Plan might have significant environmental effects, it must be screened at an early stage according to the requirements set out in regulation 9 of the SEA Regulations. This includes a requirement to consult with the SEA consultation bodies (in England - Environment Agency, Historic England, Natural England); each body is able to advise on particular topics relevant to its specific area of expertise and responsibility.
- 1.20 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Planning Guidance (NPPG) advise that a Neighbourhood Plan:
- would need SEA “...in limited circumstances...”
 - should be screened early
 - screening should consult with the consultation bodies
 - if ‘screened out’, should have a ‘statement of reasons’ prepared
- 1.21 Whether a Neighbourhood Plan proposal requires an SEA, and (if so) the level of detail needed, will depend on what is proposed. Government guidance advises that an SEA may be required, for example, where:
- 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 is likely to have significant environmental effects that have not already been considered and dealt with through a sustainability appraisal of the Local Plan.
- 1.22 Government planning guidance further advises that before deciding whether significant environmental effects are likely, the local planning authority should take into account the criteria specified in Schedule 1¹³ to the SEA Regulations (2004) and consult the statutory environmental consultation bodies. Schedule 1 sets out the criteria for determining likely significant effects on the environment taking into account the characteristics of plans and the characteristics of the effects and the area likely to be affected.
- 1.23 The Wiltshire Council SEA screening concluded that the WNP does require a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). This decision was made for the following key reasons:
- The Winterbournes Neighbourhood Plan allocate sites for development that have not been previously subject to SA/SEA;
 - There is some concern from Historic England about the likely significant environmental effects on heritage assets and their setting, including the Winterbournes Conservation Area

¹³ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2004/1633/schedule/1/made>

Consultation

- 1.24 The WNP SEA Scoping Report on the proposed approach and methods for testing the draft WNP was sent to the environmental bodies in August 2018 – Environment Agency, Historic England & Natural England – in accordance with statutory requirements for a 5 weeks consultation period. Historic England confirmed that they agreed with the proposed SEA focused approach on the site options. HE advised their guidance on undertaking SEAs. Natural England confirmed that the approach of using the SA/SEA framework from the SA scoping for the Local Plan Review seemed a sensible approach. No comments were received at this stage from the Environment Agency, and this is assumed to confirm that they have no concerns on matters within their jurisdiction.
- 1.25 This Environmental Report is being sent to the environmental bodies and also made available on the Parish Council's website for 5 weeks to accompany the draft WNP on Regulation 14 consultation. Any comments received on the SEA will be considered when preparing the WNP and its accompanying Environmental Report for Submission.

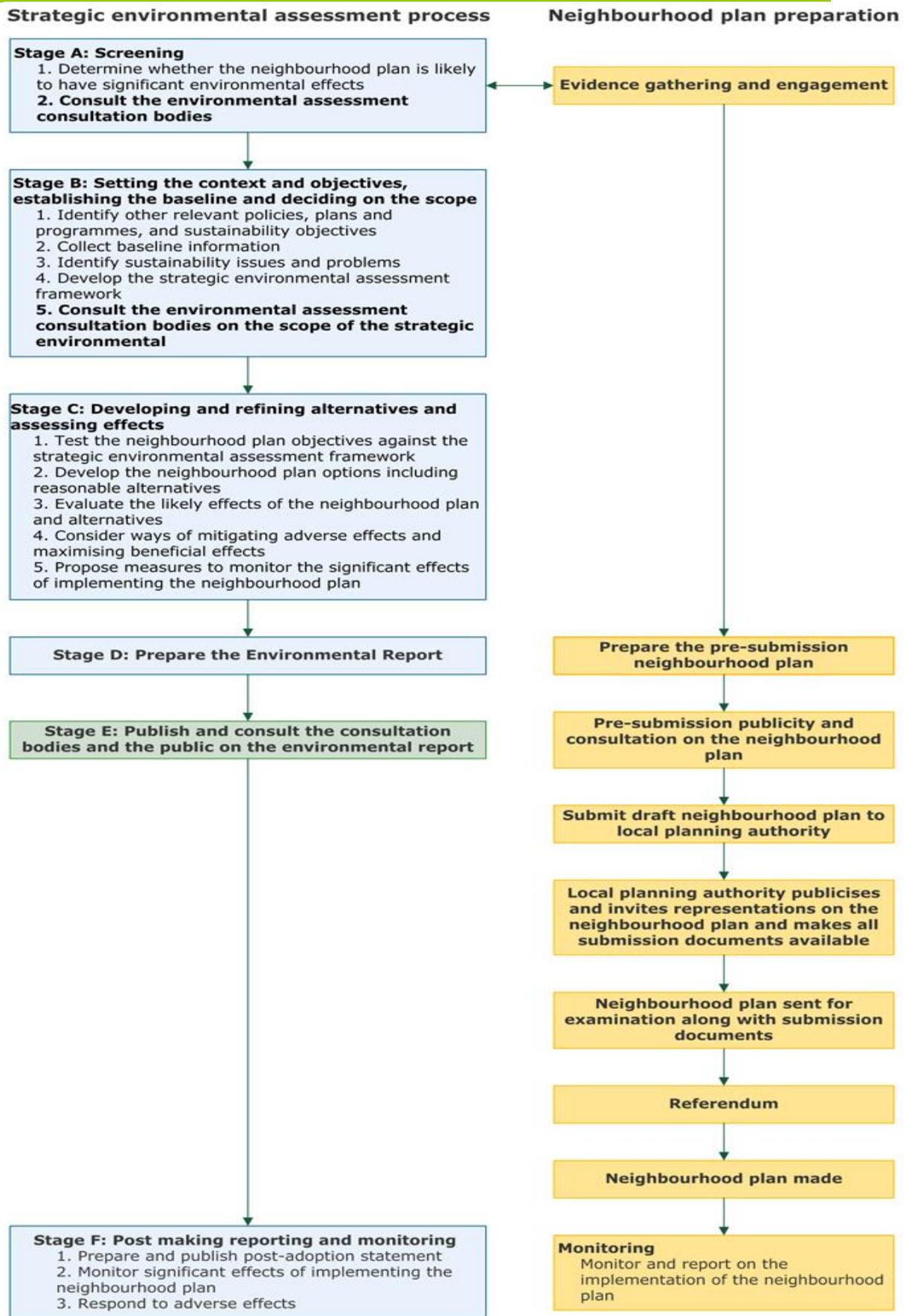
This Environmental Report

- 1.26 This SEA has been carried out in consideration of extant Government guidance¹⁴, good practice and pragmatism, taking into account proportionality - the status of the Neighbourhood Plan within the Local Plan hierarchy of documents and the tiering of assessment processes. This SEA has been undertaken in accordance with requirements of the SEA Regulations and this Environmental Report is considered to be part of the wider SA/SEA process for the emerging new Local Plan and associated documents.
- 1.27 Following this introductory section, the approach taken, and methods used is outlined in Section 2, including the consideration of alternatives. The environmental characterisation is described in Section 3. The findings of the assessment are presented and discussed in Section 4. Monitoring proposals are indicated in Section 5, together with a summary conclusion and next steps in Section 6. Appendix I signposts how the requirements of the SEA Regulations have been met, and in accordance with government guidance¹⁵. Appendix II details the SEA of the site options considered by the Parish Council. This SEA and Environmental Report have been prepared by independent SA/SEA & HRA specialists Enfusion Ltd <http://www.enfusion.co.uk/> on behalf of the Winterbournes Parish Council.

¹⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/strategic-environmental-assessment-and-sustainability-appraisal#sustainability-appraisal-requirements-for-local-plans>

¹⁵ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/580073/Strategic_Environmental_Assessment_Regulations_requirements_checklist.pdf

2.0 METHODS



- 2.1 National Planning Practice Guidance¹⁶ sets out the key stages and tasks for SA and their inter-relationships with plan-making stages and tasks – as set out in the diagram previously. Stage A screens the plan for the requirement for any SEA. Stage B of the NP SEA process identifies the scope and level of detail of the information to be included in the Environmental Report. It sets out the context, objectives and approach of the assessment; and identifies relevant environmental issues and objectives.
- 2.2 Stage C of the NP SEA process comprises the assessment of effects, including of any reasonable alternatives to the proposals in the draft plan; ways of mitigating adverse effects and maximising beneficial effects are considered, and monitoring measures proposed. Stage D of the NP SEA process includes the preparation of the Environmental Report that must include certain information. Stage E considers representations made on the Environmental Report from the consultation bodies and the public. After examination and upon adoption of the plan (the NP is made), SEA Stage F includes the preparation of the post-adoption statement.
- 2.3 It is important to note that SEA is an iterative and on-going process. Government advises a pragmatic approach to SA/SEA for plan-making and suggests that the evidence base can be used for both processes. This Environmental Report (December 2018) is Stage D in the NP SEA process and includes reporting on SEA Stages B-C.

Scoping & the SEA Framework

- 2.4 The SA/SEA Scoping Report for the SA of the emerging Wiltshire Local Plan Review was published for statutory and public consultation in November 2017¹⁷. Comments received will be taken into account, and a revised Scoping Report published in due course.
- 2.5 The SEA of the draft Winterbournes Neighbourhood Plan uses the SA/SEA Framework of Objectives (November 2017) that will be applied to the emerging Wiltshire Local Plan Review documents. In this way, the SEA is up to date and correlates with the higher-level assessment and plan-making. The SEA Framework of Objectives for the Neighbourhood Plan considers all the SA Objectives are relevant to an SEA and for environmental topics as listed in Schedule 2 (6) Regulation 12(3) of the SEA Regulations, as follows:

Table 2.1: SEA Framework¹⁸

SA Objective (WLPR) SEA Objective (WNP) <i>(SEA Topic in italics)</i>	Decision Making Criteria
1. Protect and enhance all biodiversity and geological features	1. Avoid potential adverse impacts of development on designated wildlife sites, protected species and priority species and habitats (international, national, local) and enhance these where possible?

¹⁶ <http://planningguidance.communities.gov.uk/blog/guidance/strategic-environmental-assessment-and-sustainability-appraisal/sustainability-appraisal-requirements-for-local-plans/>

¹⁷ <http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/spp-wlpr-2017-11-wiltshire-sustainability-appraisal-draft-scoping-report.pdf>

¹⁸ Ibid

<p>and avoid irreversible losses <i>(biodiversity, flora, fauna)</i> <i>(human health)</i></p>	<p>2. Ensure that all new developments protect Local Geological Sites (LGSs) from development? 3. Aid in the delivery of a network of multifunctional Green Infrastructure?</p>
<p>2. Ensure efficient and effective use of land and the use of suitably located previously developed land and buildings <i>(soil, material assets)</i></p>	<p>1. Ensure efficient use of land? 2. Lead to the reuse of Previously Developed Land where possible/appropriate? 3. Encourage remediation of contaminated land? If so, would this lead to issues of viability and deliverability? 4. Result in the permanent loss of the Best and Most Versatile Agricultural land (Grades 1, 2, 3a)? 5. Lead to the sterilisation of viable mineral resources? If so, is there potential to extract the mineral resource as part of the development?</p>
<p>3. Use and manage water resources in a sustainable manner <i>(water)</i></p>	<p>1. Protect surface, ground and drinking water quality? 2. Direct development to sites where adequate water supply, foul drainage, sewage treatment facilities and surface water drainage is available?</p>
<p>4. Improve air quality and minimise all sources of environmental pollution <i>(air, climatic factors)</i></p>	<p>1. Minimise and, where possible, improve on unacceptable levels of noise, light pollution, odour, and vibration? 2. Minimise impacts on and where possible improve air quality and locate sensitive development away from areas of poor air quality (such as AQMAs)? 3. Lie within a consultation risk zone for a major hazard site or hazardous installation?</p>
<p>5a. Minimise our impacts on climate change – through reducing greenhouse gas emissions <i>(air, climatic factors, human health)</i></p>	<p>1. Promote the development of renewable and low carbon sources of energy?</p>
<p>5b. and reduce our vulnerability to future climate change effects <i>(air, climatic factors, human health)</i></p>	<p>1. Be located within flood zone 2? If so, are there alternative sites in the area that can be allocated in preference to developing land in flood zone 2? (To be determined through the application of the Sequential Test). 2. Minimise vulnerability to surface water flooding and other sources of flooding, without increasing flood risk elsewhere?</p>
<p>6. Protect, maintain and enhance the historic environment. <i>(cultural heritage)</i></p>	<p>1. Conserve or enhance World Heritage Sites, Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas and Historic Parks & Gardens, sites of archaeological interest, undesignated heritage assets and their settings? 2. Maintain and enhance the character and distinctiveness of settlements through high quality and appropriate design, taking into account the management objectives of Conservation Areas?</p>
<p>7. Conserve and enhance the character and quality of rural and urban landscapes, maintaining and strengthening local</p>	<p>1. Minimise impact on and where appropriate enhance nationally designated landscapes and their settings and locally valued landscapes? 2. Protect rights of way, public open space and common land?</p>

distinctiveness and sense of place <i>(landscape)</i>	
8. Provide everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality, affordable housing, and ensure an appropriate mix of dwelling sizes, types and tenures. <i>(population & human health)</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide an adequate supply of affordable housing? 2. Support the provision of a range of house types and sizes to meet the needs of all sectors of the community? 3. Deliver high quality residential development?
9. Reduce poverty and deprivation and promote more inclusive and communities with better services and facilities <i>(population & human health, material assets)</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maximise opportunities within the most deprived areas? 2. Be accessible to educational, health, amenity greenspace, community and town centre facilities which are able to cope with the additional demand? 3. Promote/create public spaces and community facilities that might support public health, civic, cultural, recreational and community functions? 4. Reduce rural isolation, including access to affordable services for those without a car in rural areas?
10. Reduce the need to travel and promote more sustainable transport choices <i>(health, material assets, climatic factors)</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Promote mixed-use developments, in accessible locations, that reduce the need to travel and reliance on the private car? 2. Provide suitable access and not significantly exacerbate issues of local transport capacity (unless there is evidence that such impacts can be mitigated)? 3. Make efficient use of existing transport infrastructure? 4. Provide the opportunity to create additional sustainable transport infrastructure including safe active travel?
11. Encourage a vibrant and diversified economy and provide for long-term sustainable economic growth <i>(population & human health)</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Support the vitality and viability of town centres (proximity to town centres, built up areas, station hub)? 2. Protect and enhance the vitality and viability of existing employment areas? 3. Achieve reasonable access to principal employment areas?
12. Ensure adequate provision of high quality employment land and diverse employment opportunities to meet the needs of local businesses and a changing workforce <i>(population & human health)</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide a variety of employment land to meet all needs, including those for higher skilled employment uses? 2. Provide employment land in areas that are (or can be made) easily accessible by sustainable transport? 3. Contribute to the provision of infrastructure that will help to promote economic growth? 4. Correct imbalances between residential and employment development to help reduce travel distances to work

2.6 The SEA Regulations require consideration of the objectives of other relevant Plans and Programmes (PP) during the SA/SEA scoping stage. The PP Review was undertaken and reported for the SA Scoping in 2017¹⁹; it was considered

¹⁹ Wiltshire Local Plan Review Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report (November 2017)

that the other objectives remain relevant to the SEA of the Neighbourhood Plan.

- 2.7 The SEA Regulations require that the likely significant effects on the relevant aspects of the environment should be assessed and reported. The characteristics of the plan area should be described, including the likely evolution without the plan. Government advises a pragmatic approach to the collation, analysis and reporting of this baseline information - and much of it is shared between the plan-making and SA/SEA processes. The baseline characteristics were identified, and consulted upon, in the SA/SEA scoping 2017. Issues for sustainable development were identified and contributed to the preparation of the SA Framework of Objectives.

Assessing the Winterbournes Neighbourhood Plan (WNP)

- 2.8 As explained previously, this SEA is part of an assessment tier that correlates with the hierarchy of plan-making and, in line with Government guidance, is proportionate to the stage of plan-making and assessment. The Neighbourhood Plan must be in conformity with the higher level Local Plan that must be subject to SA/SEA.
- 2.9 Therefore, the same SEA Framework of Objectives (Table 2.1) was used for the assessment of the draft Neighbourhood Plan and to demonstrate conformity with the higher-level SA/SEAs. This assessment used the SA/SEA baseline information²⁰ (2017), relevant evidence from the Local Plan Review, and the preparation of the WNP itself. This formed the basis for testing the emerging elements of the draft Neighbourhood Plan against the SEA Objectives, together with professional judgment in the absence of any relevant information, particularly with regard to cumulative effects.
- 2.10 In compliance with the SEA Regulations, the assessment considered the likely significant effects, including short, medium and long term, permanent, and temporary, positive and negative, secondary, cumulative and synergistic, wherever possible and relevant. Any gaps or difficulties were also reported. The assessment recognised six levels of significance in the same way as the SA/SEA of the higher-level WLPR and as shown in the following table:

Table 2.2: Categories of Significance

Categories of Significance		
Symbol	Meaning	Sustainability Effect
- -	Major Negative	Problematical because of known sustainability issues; mitigation likely to be difficult and/or expensive
-	Minor negative	Potential sustainability issues: mitigation and/or negotiation possible
+	Minor positive	No sustainability constraints and development acceptable

²⁰ Ibid

++	Major Positive	Development encouraged as would resolve existing sustainability problem
?	Uncertain	Uncertain or Unknown Effects
0	Neutral	Neutral effect

2.11 The SEA considered the likely significant effects of the implementation of the Winterbournes Neighbourhood Plan on the sustainability objectives for the Plan area. The SEA Objectives were grouped by themes so that the assessment could focus on the key aspects, as follows:

- Biodiversity & Geodiversity
- Communities & Accessibility; Human Health
- Water, Air & Climatic Factors
- Cultural Heritage
- Landscape
- Material Assets & Natural Resources

2.12 The Vision, Objectives, the site options, and the draft WNP Policies were assessed. Many of the issues and aspects of the draft Neighbourhood Plan are inter-related and the assessment sought to focus on the key matters, avoid duplication, and retain the readability of the report. For each environmental theme, the relevant SEA Objectives are recorded, and a narrative provided describing any significant effects identified, the potential for mitigation of any significant adverse effects, and any suggestions for enhancing beneficial effects.

Consideration of Alternatives

2.13 The EU SEA Directive requires assessment of the likely significant effects of implementing the plan and “reasonable alternatives” taking into account “the objectives and geographical scope” of the plan and the reasons for selecting alternatives should be outlined in the Report. The Directive does not specifically define the term “reasonable alternative”; however, UK SA/SEA guidance advises that it should be taken to mean “realistic and relevant” i.e. deliverable and within the timescale of the plan. This is confirmed by the NPPF (paragraph 35) that requires that evidence should be proportionate to the level and scope of decision-making.

2.14 The Winterbournes Neighbourhood Plan is limited in the extent that alternatives can be considered since it must be in general conformity with the WLPR. However, there were a number of potential housing site options that the Parish Council considered and all these options that were considered to be potentially reasonable were tested through the SEA process.

2.15 The SEA Regulations require consideration of the do nothing or “business as usual” scenario. Wherever possible and relevant, the SEA sought to consider the effects of doing nothing in the assessment of plan options and the implementation of the WNP.

3.0 ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT, OBJECTIVES & BASELINE CHARACTERISTICS

Review of Plans and Programmes (PPs)

- 3.1 In order to establish a clear scope for the SA/SEA, it is a requirement of the SEA Regulations to review and develop an understanding of the wider range of plans and programmes that are relevant to the Plan. The Winterbournes Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared to be in conformity with the Wiltshire Core Strategy and the emerging Local Plan Review. Therefore, the PPs have already been addressed in the higher-level plans and their SA/SEAs.

Baseline Conditions & Likely Evolution without the NP

- 3.2 The SEA Regulations require the collation of baseline information to provide a background to, and evidence base for, identifying sustainability problems and opportunities in the Plan area. This then provides the basis for predicting and monitoring effects of the Plan. The aim is to collect only relevant and sufficient data on the present and future state of the Plan area to allow the potential effects of the WNP to be adequately predicted.

Biodiversity & Geodiversity

- 3.3 With regard to European protected sites, the Winterbournes Parish area is over 8km from the Pewsey Downs SAC to the south, over 10km from the Kennet & Lambourn Floodplain SAC to the east, and over 16 km from the Salisbury Plain SPA²¹ to the south, indicating that significant effects are not likely on the European designated sites due to distance and the small amount of development (some 18 dwellings) being proposed. However, the Parish does include areas of the River Avon SAC²², a large lowland river system with the primary reason for designation of habitats being the aquatic *Ranunculus* species, and the water-crowfoot species – particularly in certain winterbourne reaches. Species that are the primary reason for designation include Desmoulin's whorl snail, seas lamprey, brook lamprey, Atlantic salmon and bullhead.
- 3.4 The River Avon system is also designated a SSSI and recorded as being in an unfavourable condition but recovering. There are also areas of Priority Habitats of Deciduous and Broadleaved Woodlands throughout the Winterbournes Parish area²³. Priority Habitats of Lowland Fens and Grazing Marsh are located with the River Avon SAC and extend wider to the north in Gomeldon, and to the south in Winterbourne Earls. Undesignated biodiversity features in the Plan area include hedgerows, woodland and the wide footpath network throughout the Parish.

²¹ And outside the buffer zone for the Stone Curlew Mitigation Strategy – draft available at www.wiltshire.gov.uk/

²² <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/protectedsites/sacselection/sac.asp?EUCODE=UK0013016>

²³ <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx> [accessed November 2018]

Communities & Accessibility; Human Health

- 3.5 The Neighbourhood Plan Area had a population of 1,238 usual residents as at the census day 2011 and in a total of 537 household spaces²⁴. Of these usual residents, 260 are 18 years old and under; 275 are 60 years old and over. The majority at 1,182 are of White ethnic groups with small numbers of Asian and Black British ethnic groups. Of the 510 households, 353 are owned with the rest a mix of social or private rentals. Only 44 households are reported as having no car or vans, whilst the others have at least one vehicle and generally 2-3 cars or vans per household. Most residents are recoded as being in fair to very good health with 34 residents reported as being in bad/very bad health. 100 persons are listed as having a long-term health problem or disability. Of the 661 residents that are economically active (aged 16-74), 616 are in employment.
- 3.6 The Winterbourne NP area is relatively well served with community services and facilities, including the village shop and post office, two public houses (the Black Horse in Hurdcott & the Winterbourne Arms in Winterbourne Dauntsey), the Glebe Hall venue, Winterbourne primary school, the Bourne Valley Nursery School, and three churches. Other local amenities include a sports field, cricket pitch, children's playground, and allotments. There are local bus services²⁵, including to Salisbury, Amesbury, Pewsey, Marlborough and Swindon. Without the Local Plan or the Neighbourhood Plan, development could result in accessibility issues if development is not located appropriately to existing services and facilities.

Water, Air & Climatic Factors

- 3.7 The WNP area includes the River Bourne that is within the River Avon System SSSI impact zone for potential impacts on European designated sites – the River Avon Special Area of Conservation (SAC and see also below under biodiversity)²⁶. The groundwater in the WNP area is within the South Wessex Nitrate Vulnerable Zone. The Winterbournes Parish includes significant areas of Flood Risk Zone 2&3 along the route of the River Bourne. There is no Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) within the Winterbournes area. Without the Local Plan and the Neighbourhood Plan the risk of fluvial flooding posed by the River Bourne could be an issue if new development is located within the flood zone.

Cultural Heritage

- 3.8 The Winterbournes includes a designated Conservation Area – made up of three sub-areas that cover the villages of Winterbourne Earls, Dauntsey and Gunner. Each sub-area follows the parts of the settlements centred on the A338, the three historic manors and the meadowland adjacent to the River

²⁴ <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/localarea?compare=1170220972>

²⁵ <https://bustimes.org/localities/winterbourne-wilts>

²⁶ <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx>

Bourne²⁷. It may be noted that there is no management plan or appraisal for the Winterbournes Conservation Area listed on the Wiltshire Council website²⁸.

- 3.9 The Winterbournes have a rich cultural and heritage environment, as evidenced by the numbers of Listed Buildings throughout the villages and the 2 Scheduled Monuments²⁹ of Gomeldon deserted to the north – and Figsbury Ring to the south-east. Without the Local Plan and the Winterbournes Neighbourhood Plan the heritage assets and their settings could be affected adversely by the location of new development; development would be less likely to contribute to the conservation and enhancement of the historic character of the Plan area.

Landscape

- 3.10 There is no nationally important landscape Area of Outstanding National Beauty (AONB) designation in the WNP area. It is not within the Wiltshire Green Belt but each of the settlements have distinct identities that are important to maintain. The local landscape is characterised by chalk river valley and the high chalk plain³⁰. Without the Local Plan and the Winterbournes Neighbourhood Plan the locally important landscape and settlement identities could be adversely affected by new development.

Material Assets & Natural Resources

- 3.11 Although there is some woodland in the plan area, there are no commercially operating forestry operations. There is no recorded known best and most versatile agricultural land within the Winterbournes³¹; however, the area is rural and much of the greenfield land in the villages is used for agricultural activities. Without the Local Plan and the Neighbourhood Plan, there will be limited management of development, which could result in the inefficient use of soil resources.

Key Environmental Issues, Problems & Opportunities

- 3.12 The key environmental issues identified through the SA/SEA scoping process (November 2017) for appraisal of the emerging Wiltshire Local Plan Review remain relevant and valid for the SEA of the Winterbournes Neighbourhood Plan. The area-specific issues identified from the baseline characterisation and relevant plan objectives are summarised below;
- Habitat loss and modification
 - Adaptation and mitigation for climate change effects
 - Preservation and enhancement of the rich cultural and heritage environment
 - Preserving the quality of the landscape whilst meeting development needs

²⁷ Heritage Assessment for WPC by Elaine Milton Heritage & Planning Ltd (January 2018)

²⁸ <http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/planning-conservation-areas>

²⁹ <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx>

³⁰ <http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/landscapeconservation/wiltshirelcafinalreport.htm>

³¹ Defra (2018) Magic Map: <http://www.natureonthemap.naturalengland.org.uk/magicmap.aspx>

- Opportunities for enhancement of green infrastructure network
- In line with national trends, there will be a higher proportion of older age groups by 2036
- Lack of good housing stock and affordability especially in the rural areas
- In line with national trends, need to encourage a healthier lifestyle
- Rural isolation
- Scope to increase sustainable transport

4.0 SEA FINDINGS

SA/SEA of Wiltshire Local Plan

- 4.1 The adopted Wiltshire Core Strategy documents (2015)³² were subject to SA/SEA and HRA in accordance with legislation and guidance at the time. The Core Strategy includes a wide range of Core Policies that provide protection and enhancement of environmental factors. The overall spatial approach in the Core Strategy seeks to avoid significant negative effects and promote positive effects, including through Community Areas and a settlement hierarchy.
- 4.2 The Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations Plan (WHSAP)³³ was submitted for independent examination in July 2018. The Plan is at the Proposed Changes stage and has been subject to SA/SEA and HRA, including a recent update to take account of certain European Court Judgments. Site options were subject to a site assessment method and all reasonable options were subject to SA/SEA.
- 4.3 The Wiltshire Local Plan Review³⁴ will recast the Core Strategy (2015) as the Wiltshire Local Plan and identify land for development for the period to 2026. Work on the review is currently being paused until the Government finalises revised planning guidance. To date, no SA/SEA has been undertaken of the emerging new Local Plan, but the first stage of the SA/SEA process has been completed with consultation. The Draft SA Scoping Report (November 2017) is available on the Council's website and has provided up to date environmental issues and a SEA framework of objectives for assessing the WNP.
- 4.4 Thus, the Wiltshire Core Strategy Policies have been subject to SA/SEA. The SA/SEA has been updated with a draft SA Scoping Report. The housing sites proposed in the WNP have not previously been through SA/SEA, and therefore, this SEA focuses on the site options and the preferred site allocations – in accordance with the requirements of the SEA Regulations.

The WNP Vision & Objectives

- 4.5 The Vision for the Winterbournes Neighbourhood Plan is as follows:

Vision Statement:

“In 2026 the Winterbournes will still be a predominately agricultural community conserving its natural and built heritage whilst promoting a safe, family focused and invigorating environment enabling growth and quality of life for all, including both the young and the elderly. The Winterbournes will continue to flourish as three conjoined villages, together with Hurdcott, in a rural setting

³² <http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/wiltshirecorestrategy.htm>

³³ <http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/planning-whsap>

³⁴ <http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/planning-policy-local-plan-review>

that will offer the advantages of easy access to the cities of Salisbury, Winchester and Southampton. Local developments will have been carefully managed so as not to disrupt the heart and character of the community. Overall, the Winterbournes will be a sustainable, vibrant and thriving community in harmony with its environment."

4.6 The Vision is supported by the following Objectives within the Plan:

Countryside Objectives:

- Care for and protect the most valuable and versatile farmland.
- Retain the Winterbournes as three villages with a distinct identity sitting in a rural setting.
- Preserve Hurdcott, with its historical identity as a separate hamlet.
- Retain and enhance the character and appeal of the existing conservation areas and unique assets of the parish, including the water meadows and the wildlife that thrive there.
- Protect the countryside, and access to it, surrounding the Winterbournes from inappropriate development.
- Protect public green spaces.
- Prevent development which has harmful impacts in terms of flooding & surface water drainage.

Housing Objectives:

- Respond to the housing needs and Wiltshire Council requirements of the Winterbournes and Hurdcott through sympathetic development on infill and appropriate greenfield sites.
- Seek to extract the maximum community benefit from these houses.
- Promote a mix of dwellings, through affordable housing, to enable young first-time buyers, the single and the elderly to remain in the village.
- Build all new dwellings to 'Lifetime Homes' standards so that they are capable of adaptation as people's needs change through their lives.
- Ensure all new development respects the character of the Winterbournes.
- Ensure that historic buildings and their settings remain protected.

Community Facilities & Services Objectives:

- To safeguard all existing amenities within the Parish including the Glebe hall, the Village Shop and Post Office, the two Public Houses, the Day Nursery, Winterbourne Primary School, and the three churches. This includes protecting these amenities from adjacent incompatible new development which could prejudice the existing use.
- To support any potential expansion of the Village Shop and Post Office, whether through improvements to the existing or adjoining buildings, or through the provision of a new or re-used building in a suitable central and accessible location
- To support existing and new local businesses which are compatible with the village environment in which they are situated

Infrastructure & Transport Objectives:

- To plan and maintain a resilient drainage system to mitigate the risk of flooding, and to implement Sustainable Drainage Systems in known problem areas.
- To improve road and pedestrian safety in the Parish by careful planning of new developments and implementing measures to mitigate road safety hazards.
- To maintain a safe network of access for pedestrians, cyclists, motorists and horse riders throughout The Winterbournes, and improve cycle links to Salisbury and other local employment/service centres.

- 4.7 The Vision for the Winterbournes Neighbourhood Plan will have major positive effects for communities and health/well-being through promoting quality of life for all, including both the young and the elderly, and within easy access of the three nearby cities. The Vision seeks to conserve the natural and built heritage – with neutral effects. The SEA noted that further positive effects could be achieved if the Vision included “*and enhance*”. Positive effects indicated for economy as the Vision seeks to enable growth – and for all.
- 4.8 The Countryside Objectives in Chapter 2 of the Plan will have positive effects for several SEA topics – biodiversity, land/soils, historic environment, landscape, and health/communities; some objectives are not directly relevant and/or will have neutral effects, no significant negative effects were found.
- 4.9 The Housing Objectives in Chapter 3 of the Plan are likely to have positive effects on the economy, sustainable transport, health and communities – by promoting identified housing needs, and including adaptability to changing needs. Major positive effects are indicated for the SEA Objective No 8 Housing. Neutral effects are indicated for SEA Objectives on biodiversity, water, air, climate change, historic environment, and landscape – since the overall Vision and other Objectives seek to protect these factors.
- 4.10 The Community Facilities & Services Objectives in Chapter 4 of the Plan are likely to have major positive effects on SEA Objective No 9 Healthy & Inclusive Communities by protecting and seeking to enhance existing assets. This will have further positive effects on sustainable transport by helping support people to use local facilities and services, reducing the need to travel by private vehicle beyond the area. Neutral effects are indicated for other SEA Objectives.
- 4.11 The Infrastructure & Transport Objectives in Chapter 6 of the Plan seek to plan and maintain a resilient drainage system that will promote likely positive effects for SEA Objective Nos 3 Water Resources and 5 Climatic Factors. The WNP Objectives to improve road/pedestrian safety, maintain a safe access network, and improve cycle links will promote positive effects for SEA Objective No 9 Healthy Communities, and No 10 Transport. The third objective sets out all users indicating that the network should be safe for all with positive effects for inclusivity.

- 4.12 Overall, the SEA found positive or neutral effects for the WNP Objectives; there was no incompatibility found between the Plan Objectives and the SEA Objectives.

SEA of Site Options

- 4.13 The Parish Council investigated site options put forward by landowners for consideration as sites for new development in the emerging WNP; these were given the notation N1 onwards. Subsequently, some of these site options were submitted to Wiltshire Council through the Call for Sites in connection with the Wiltshire Local Plan Review³⁵. As such, they were investigated through the Wiltshire Housing & Employment Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA, 2017) and were notated with a S reference and numbering.
- 4.14 The Parish Council tested site options for potential housing development through 2018, as follows:

Table 4.1: Housing Site Options

Housing Site Options	Size/Capacity
N1 Adjacent Rose Farm	0.5 ha;
N2 Opposite Hurdcott Lane	1.6 ha
N3 Adjacent Marsh Motors	0.5 ha
S26; S122; S1045 Adjacent Portway & Down Barn Road	S26 (2.05 ha), S122 (0.66 ha), S1045 (0.3ha)
S90 Land between Primary School & Railway Line	4.56 ha
S91 Land between Summerlug & Railway Line	2.9 ha
S92 Figsbury Road	0.46 ha
S118 Land at Black Horse Lane, Hurdcott	0.45 ha
S1055 Adjacent East Farm, Winterbourne Gunner	3.3 ha
3222 Gaters Lane, Winterbourne Dauntsey	5.5 ha
3529 Rear of Telephone Exchange	0.29 ha
3553 Garden at End Cottage	0.44 ha

- 4.15 The Parish Council applied a site assessment method that comprised background information on location, area, land use, and planning history. The following themes were investigated:
- Sustainability – considering access to facilities and services, footpaths
 - Visual/Landscape impacts – including local characteristics
 - Access/highway safety
 - Site-specific issues and local environmental factors
- 4.16 Each site option that had been submitted to the Parish Council or Wiltshire Council at the time was considered within the WNP questionnaire that was sent to all residents and asked the following questions:
- Is the area suitable for housing?
 - Could it be considered for housing?

³⁵ <http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/planning-policy-local-plan-review>

- Not suitable for development
- No opinion

4.17 The results of the questionnaire were ranked (1-10) and taken into account in developing a summary for each site option and informing which site options are preferred and have been developed into draft Policies. The site assessments available as evidence to support the draft WNP and available on the WNP website. The SEA investigated the 12 site options using the full SA/SEA framework (scoped as the most up to date and proposed for the Wiltshire Local Plan Review). Details are provided with an SEA matrix for each site option in Appendix II of this Environmental Report. The summary findings are as follows:

Table 4.2: Site Options SEA Summary Findings

SA Objectives Housing Site Options	Biodiversity & Green Infrastructure	Land & Soil Resources	Water Resources	Improve Air Quality	Minimise Climate Change; Improve Resilience	Historic Environment	Landscape Quality	Housing	Healthy & Inclusive Communities	Sustainable Transport	Economy	Employment
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
N1	+2	-	0	0	0	0	-2	++	+	+	+	0
N2	+2	-	0	0	0	0	-2	++	-2	02	+	0
N3	-2	-	0	0	0	-2	--	++	+	+	-2	-2
S26;122;1045	+2	-	0	0	0	-2	0 -2	++	+	+2	+	0
S90	+2	-	0	0	0	02	-2	++	+	+	+	0
S91	+2	-	0	02	0	0	-2	++	+	+	-2	-2
S92	+2	-	0	0	0	-2	+ -	++	+	+2	+	0
S118	0	-	0	-2	0	0	-2	++	-2	-2	-2	-2
S1055	+2	-	0	0	0	-2	-2	++	+	+	+	0
3222	+2	-	0	0	0 -2	-2	--	++	+	+	+	0
3529	0	-	0	0	0	-2	--	++	+	+	+	0
3553	-2	-	0	0	0 -	-2	--	++	+	+	+	0

- 4.18 All site options are greenfield sites mostly in agricultural use and thus negative effects are indicated that will be permanent and irreversible through loss of the soil resource. It is not known what classification of agricultural land quality is within the Winterbournes. However, it is noted that the Winterbournes are within the Environmental Stewardship Target Area administered by Natural England aiming for the most appropriate management where environmental outcomes are likely to be greatest.
- 4.19 The Winterbournes are within a groundwater nitrate vulnerability area and therefore there is some risk of pollution to the aquifer particularly associated with farming and use of fertilisers. The site options do not include any surfacewater courses and therefore risk of pollution or negative effects on water quality or levels is negligible – neutral effects for water objectives. All development can promote renewable and low carbon sources of energy – neutral effects. The Winterbournes Parish includes significant areas of Flood Risk Zone 2&3 along the route of the River Bourne. However, nearly all the site options are located in Flood Zone 1 indicating low risk of flooding³⁶ – neutral effects. Small parts of two site options (3222 and 3553) are in Flood Zone 3 and mitigation measures may be possible but uncertain at this stage of assessment.
- 4.20 The Winterbournes are in a rural environment and with no designated Air Quality Management Area (AQMA), indicating that there are no significant problems associated with traffic emissions. The levels of development proposed are only 18 dwellings and it is considered that this will not give rise to any significant effects on air quality or environmental pollution. Neutral effects indicated for most of the site options. Site option S91 and much of S90 is within the 400m radius at which there may be odour problems from the existing pig farm – minor negative effects. The site option S118 is near to the Black Horse Pub and there could be issues for noise, light and odour pollution – potential for mitigation but uncertainty at this stage for the minor negative effects.
- 4.21 All site options will contribute to meeting the identified Parish needs for modest new housing including affordable housing – with major positive effects indicated. SEA objectives for healthy inclusive communities relate to issues for access to services and facilities. Most of the site options are within walking or bus journeys to access with minor positive effects. The Winterbournes area is well served by a network of footpaths and bridleways to support sustainable transport and encourage a healthier lifestyle. Most of the site options are readily accessible to the sustainable transport network, with positive effects that could be cumulative and/or synergistic in the longer term.
- 4.22 Site options N2 and S118 are more remote than other options and have no direct access to pavements so minor negative indicated but uncertainty as unclear at this stage if mitigation measures could be suitable. Site option S26, S122, S1045 is also relatively remote, although does benefit from paved

³⁶ <https://flood-map-for-planning.service.gov.uk/>

footpaths into the village, as well as a much shorter route via footpaths across fields, and is well located for access to the allotments and cricket pitch which are situated at this end of the village.

- 4.23 Provision for identified local housing needs will contribute to supporting the vitality and viability of village services/facilities with minor positive effects for most site options. The WNP does not propose allocation of any new employment land but does seek to support existing businesses – neutral effects for all site options.
- 4.24 For site option S91, some concern was recorded that new housing development in the vicinity of the existing pig farm could cause some issues for odour and compliance with environmental permitting through the Environment Agency – any requirement to install further odour abatement technology could adversely affect the viability of the farm, so some uncertainty of effects for the SEA objective to protect existing employment areas. Similarly, for site options S118, some concern was recorded that new housing development in the vicinity of the existing public house could cause some issues for noise/odour and compliance with environmental permitting through the Environment Health – any requirement to curtail noise/odour could adversely affect the viability of the pub so some uncertainty of effects for the SEA objective to protect existing employment areas.
- 4.25 Likely significant effects on landscape quality and visual impact varied for the site options with neutral effects indicated for sites N1, N2, and S26, 122, 1045 in part. Potential minor negative effects were indicated for site options N2, S26, 122, 1045 in part, S90, S118, S1055 – some uncertainty recorded as the effectiveness of any mitigation measures that could be implemented through design, layout and screening are not known at this stage. The SEA suggested that this could be investigated through site-specific requirements. The site option 3222 has a strong rural character comprising open fields surrounded by belts of woodland. It is poorly related to existing development, being separated from the village by the floodplain – likely major negative effects.
- 4.26 The Winterbournes includes a designated Conservation Area – made up of three sub-areas that cover the villages of Winterbourne Earls, Dauntsey and Gunner. Each sub-area follows the parts of the settlements centred on the A338, the three historic manors and the meadowland adjacent to the River Bourne³⁷. It may be noted that there is no management plan or appraisal for the Winterbournes Conservation Area listed on the Wiltshire Council website³⁸.
- 4.27 The Winterbournes have a rich cultural and heritage environment, as evidenced by the numbers of Listed Buildings throughout the villages and the two Scheduled Monuments³⁹ of Gomeldon deserted to the north – and Figsbury Ring to the south-east. Six of the site options are predicted to have neutral effects on the heritage assets and their settings. Site options N2, S1055 and 3222 are likely to have minor negative effects on the Conservation Area

³⁷ Heritage Assessment for WPC by Elaine Milton Heritage & Planning Ltd (January 2018)

³⁸ <http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/planning-conservation-areas>

³⁹ <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx>

and/or its setting with some uncertainty as the effectiveness of any mitigation possibilities is investigated.

- 4.28 Some concern was expressed⁴⁰ by Historic England regarding potential negative effects on the setting of the Conservation Area and impacts on non-designated heritage assets nearby. Accordingly, a Heritage Assessment⁴¹ was undertaken by specialists and this concluded that development of site option S26/S122/S1045 would have a negative impact on the designated and non-designated heritage assets within the locality due to the erosion of the predominantly open rural qualities of the area – even by development of modest scale – therefore negative effects indicated but with some uncertainty until the effectiveness of mitigation measures is investigated.
- 4.29 The Winterbournes Parish area is over 8km from the Pewsey Downs SAC⁴² to the south, over 10km from the Kennet & Lambourn Floodplain SAC to the east, and over 16 km from the Salisbury Plain SPA to the south, indicating that significant effects are not likely on the European designated sites due to distance and the small amount of development (some 18 dwellings) being proposed. However, the Parish does include areas of the River Avon SAC⁴³, a large lowland river system with the primary reason for designation of habitats being the aquatic *Ranunculus* species, and the water-crowfoot species – particularly in certain winterbourne reaches.
- 4.30 It may be noted that the nature conservation regulator Natural England⁴⁴ considered that the WNP is unlikely to have significant environmental effects on the natural environment. This was in response to the SEA Screening Report and may be assumed to include consideration of Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Scoping. The small amount of development with only 18 dwellings being proposed in the WNP indicates that significant effects on European designated sites is unlikely – alone or in-combination. None of the site options involve any land take on designated River Avon SAC land, so no effects for habitat loss or fragmentation. Nonetheless, this SEA considered the implications of site options on the River Avon SAC with regard to disturbance or water and air quality and confirmed that there would be no likely significant effects (LSEs) due to the location and small size of the site options.
- 4.31 Priority Habitats of Lowland Fens and Grazing Marsh are located with the R Avon SAC and extend wider to the north in Gomeldon, and to the south in Winterbourne Earls. The R Avon system is also designated a SSSI recorded as being in an unfavourable condition but recovering. There are also areas of Priority Habitats of Deciduous and Broadleaved Woodlands throughout the Winterbournes Parish area⁴⁵ and none of the site options are likely to have any significant effects on these nationally protected areas due to location and small size. Neutral effects on biodiversity were indicated for site options

⁴⁰ Email correspondence April- August 2017 in response to the initial SEA Screening by Wiltshire Council

⁴¹ Heritage Assessment for WPC by Elaine Milton Heritage & Planning Ltd (January 2018)

⁴² SAC Special Area of Conservation, SPA Special Protection Area – European designated sites under the Habitats Regulations

⁴³ <http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/protectedsites/sacselection/sac.asp?EUCODE=UK0013016>

⁴⁴ Letter NE to Wiltshire Council April 2017 in response to WNP SEA Screening Decision

⁴⁵ <https://magic.defra.gov.uk/MagicMap.aspx> [accessed November 2018]

S118 and 3529. Site options N3 and 3553 are within the Winterbourne Gunners County Wildlife Site and an Area of High Ecological Value – therefore, potential for negative effects but uncertainty of mitigation measures at this stage.

- 4.32 For the other 8 site options, N1, N2, S26/S122/S1045, S90, S91, S92, S1055 and 3222, the SEA found at least neutral effects but taking into account the rich network of footpaths and other areas of ecological importance and local value, it is considered that there is the potential for biodiversity gain through enhancements to green infrastructure associated with new development with positive effects. There is uncertainty at this stage as the extent and possibilities for such mitigation/enhancement measures is unknown, but the SEA suggested that these could be considered and included in any site-specific requirements for preferred sites.

Developing the Preferred Sites

- 4.33 The Parish Council took into consideration the site assessments, the results of the Village Questionnaire and the relative preference rankings from residents and was further informed by the SEA in order to develop the preferred site options that would deliver the identified housing need for 19 dwellings. The outline reasons for selection or rejection of site options is provided in the following table and in accordance with the SEA Regulations:

Table 4.3: Reasons for Selection or Rejection of Housing Site Options

Housing Site Option	Outline Reasons for Selection or Rejection in the Draft WNP
N1 Adjacent Rose Farm	Progressed as Policy 6 Land Adjacent Rose Farm for 2 dwellings (planning consent granted already for 2 dwellings) as no significant concerns and ranked 2/10 by residents completing village consultation questionnaire.
N2 Opposite Hurdcott Lane	Not progressed further at this stage as concern about negative effects on landscape settings and separation between Winterbourne and Hurdcott; poor access to main village services. Although ranked 3/10 by residents completing village consultation questionnaire, concern that potential negative effects could not be readily mitigated.
N3 Adjacent Marsh Motors	Not progressed further at this stage as concern about negative effects on the Conservation Area, the County Wildlife Site/Area of High Ecological Area, and challenges relating to the public footpath that dissects the site and the topography. Although ranked 5/10 by residents completing village consultation questionnaire, concern that potential negative effects could not be readily mitigated.
S26 Portway	Not progressed further at this stage as concern about negative effects on the Conservation Area (and see S1045) that could not be readily mitigated. Sites S26/

	S122/1045 ranked joint 1/10 by residents completing village consultation questionnaire.
S90 Adjacent School	Progressed as Policy 2 Land between Glebe Hall and Winterbourne Primary School. Large majority of the overall site is unsuitable due to proximity to pig farm, railway line, and visual impact due to elevation above village. However, the north-west corner of the site is on the lowest ground, close to the heart of the village, reasonably well contained within the landscape, furthest from the pig farm (>400m away), and benefits from appropriate access onto Earls Rise. 13 dwellings would be similar in density to nearby King's Paddock and would meet the threshold for providing affordable housing, thus providing 4 affordable homes. Ranked 6/10 by residents completing village consultation questionnaire.
S91 Adjacent Summerlug	Not progressed further as too close to the pig farm and concern about noise and odour pollution, conflicting land uses, that would not be possible to mitigate (although ranked 4/10 by residents completing village consultation questionnaire).
S92 Figsbury Road	Not progressed further at this stage as concerns about poor vehicular access and negative impacts on setting of Conservation Area. Also, site not favoured by residents - ranked 9/10 by residents completing village consultation questionnaire.
S118 Black Horse Lane	Not progressed further at this stage as concerns about poor access to main village services, compatibility with neighbouring pub use, and uncertainty about flooding. Also, site not favoured by residents - ranked 8/10 by residents completing village consultation questionnaire.
S122 Portway	Relates to one available building plot within a wider area of already developed bungalows; concern about negative effects on Conservation Area and S1045 preferred as being further distance from the Conservation Area. Sites S26/ S122/1045 ranked joint 1/10 by residents completing village consultation questionnaire.
S1045 Portway	Progressed as Policy 4 Land on The Portway for 3 dwellings – includes parts of both S122 (one dwelling in garden of south-western most bungalow “Durley” and S1045 (two dwellings in field).
S1055 East Farm	Not progressed further at this stage as concerns about inappropriate vehicle access and negative effects on the setting of the Conservation Area. Also, site not favoured by residents - ranked 7/10 by residents completing village consultation questionnaire.
3222 Gaters Lane	Not progressed further as concerns about vehicular access, negative effects on the landscape setting of the village, and flooding. Also, site not favoured by residents - ranked 10/10 by residents completing village consultation questionnaire.

3529 Rear of Telephone Exchange	Not progressed further as concerns about vehicular access, negative effects on the Conservation Area, and concern about impacts on the amenity of neighbouring properties.
3553 Garden at End Cottage	Not progressed further as concerns about vehicular access, negative effects on the Conservation Area and valued ecological area.

4.34 The 3 site options were developed into three Policies 2 (S90), 4 (S1045), and 6 (N1) each supported respectively Policies 3, 5 & 7 with site-specific design requirements, as follows:

- Policy 2 Land between Glebe Hall & Winterbourne Primary School (north-western part of site option S90)
- Policy 3 Design Principles require that new development should work with contours, be predominantly single-storey, utilise high quality local buildings materials, introduce appropriate landscape treatment including tree & hedge planting to screen the north-east boundary with the Conservation Area.
- Policy 4 Land on the Portway (northern part of site option S1045 & south-western part of S122)
- Policy 5 Design Principles requires a similar building line to existing dwellings, narrow plot widths, limited height (1.5 storey maximum), avoid uniformity, modest, and native hedgerow planting on the south-west boundary to screen
- Policy 6 Land Adjacent Rose Farm (northern part of site option N1)
- Policy 7 Design Principles requires a similar building line, narrow plot widths, avoid uniformity, and be modest.

4.35 Thus development of the preferred sites for delivery of housing requirements has integrated mitigation measures by selecting those smaller parts of the site option areas that are likely to have least negative effects (such as visual impacts on the Conservation Area) and optimise opportunities (such as better connectivity to the existing built environment). The site-specific requirements through design principles in Policies 3, 5 & 7, provide further mitigation measures with regard to landscape/visual impacts and including tree and hedgerow planting in respect of Policies 2 & 4. These embedded mitigation measures were taken into account in the SEA.

SEA of Policies & Proposed Housing Sites

4.36 As explained previously in Section 2 on methods, the SEA considers the environmental factors grouped within themes to better address inter-relationships and seeking to avoid duplication of assessment. This considers the likely significant effects of the following:

- Policy 1 Separation between Winterbourne and Hurdcott

- Policies 2 & 3 Land between Glebe Hall & Winterbourne Primary School (allocated for 13 dwellings)
- Policies 4 & 5 Land at The Portway (allocated for 3 dwellings)
- Policies 6 & 7 Land adjacent to Rose Farm (allocated for 3 dwellings)

Biodiversity & Geodiversity

[SEA Topics: biodiversity, flora, fauna]

SEA/SA Objectives:

1. Protect and enhance all biodiversity and geological features and avoid irreversible losses.

- 4.37 With regard to European protected sites, the Winterbournes Parish area is over 8km from the Pewsey Downs SAC to the south, over 10km from the Kennet & Lambourn Floodplain SAC to the east, and over 16 km from the Salisbury Plain SPA to the south, indicating that significant effects are not likely on the European designated sites due to distance and the small amount of development (some 19 dwellings) being proposed. However, the Parish does include areas of the River Avon SAC⁴⁶, a large lowland river system with the primary reason for designation of habitats being the aquatic *Ranunculus* species, and the water-crowfoot species – particularly in certain winterbourne reaches. Species that are the primary reason for designation include Desmoulin's whorl snail, seas lamprey, brook lamprey, Atlantic salmon and bullhead. The River Avon system is also designated a SSSI recorded as being in an unfavourable condition but recovering.
- 4.38 The Wiltshire Core Strategy⁴⁷ (adopted January 2015 & subject to SA/SEA) includes Policy CP50 Biodiversity and Geodiversity. The Policy CP50 requires development proposals to demonstrate how they protect features of nature conservation and to ensure no net loss of the local biodiversity resource, securing the integrity of local ecological networks and provision of ecosystem services. Core Policy CP60 specifically relates to protection of the River Avon SAC. Core Policy 52 Green Infrastructure (GI) requires that new development should retain and enhance GI; projects and initiatives that contribute to delivery of a high quality multi-functional GI network in accordance with the Wiltshire GI Strategy will be supported.
- 4.39 Policies CP50 & CP52 provide strong mitigation measures against potential negative effects on biodiversity and WNP Policies 2-7 will need to be in compliance with the Core Strategy ensuring that there will be no significant residual effects. The SEA of the site options ((S90, S1045, N1) (details in Appendix II of this Environmental Report) had identified at least neutral effects and the possibilities for minor positive effects if new development could contribute to and link with the GI network of the Parish.

⁴⁶ <http://incc.defra.gov.uk/protectedsites/sacselection/sac.asp?EUCode=UK0013016>

⁴⁷ <https://pages.wiltshire.gov.uk/adopted-local-plan-jan16-low-res.pdf>

- 4.40 Policy 3 requires additional tree and hedge planting for Policy 2 to provide visual screening for the Conservation Area. The initial SEA findings of the emerging draft policies suggested that this planting could contribute to and link with the GI network in the Parish with further positive effects for biodiversity and GI.

SEA Suggestion:

- Policy 3 additional wording to provide explicit further guidance on biodiversity & GI – perhaps add to criterion (d) “and to contribute to and link to the local green infrastructure network.” This is now added to the Policy 3.
- 4.41 Policy 5 requires additional native hedge planting for Policy 4 to provide visual screening. The SEA found that site option S1045 was not directly associated with any footpaths of open space/GI such that opportunities for new development to contribute to biodiversity and the GI network was less possible than other site options and only a neutral effect was recorded. However, criterion (e) in Policy 5 requires new native hedgerow planting and this will contribute to the wider biodiversity and GI resource with minor positive effects that will be cumulative in the longer-term.
- 4.42 Policy 7 does not include any tree/hedgerow planting requirements and Policy 6 is only for 2 dwellings, such that opportunities are limited. However, as this site is the nearest to the River Avon SAC and Priority Habitats, the initial SEA suggested that consideration could be given to inviting new development to contribute to native planting including nearby ecological assets/value. It is noted that the part of the site option N1 that is proposed is to the north and as such is not associated directly with footpaths.

Communities & Accessibility; Human Health

[SEA Topics: Population, Health, Material Assets]

SEA/SA Objectives:

4. Improve air quality and minimise all sources of environmental pollution
8. Provide everyone with the opportunity to live in good quality, affordable housing, and ensure an appropriate mix of dwelling sizes, types and tenures.
9. Reduce poverty and deprivation and promote more inclusive communities with better services and facilities.
10. Reduce the need to travel and promote more sustainable transport choices.
11. Encourage a vibrant and diversified economy and provide for long-term sustainable economic growth.
12. Ensure adequate provision of high-quality employment land and diverse employment opportunities to meet the needs of local businesses and a changing workforce.

- 4.43 The adopted Wiltshire Core Strategy includes a range of Policies regarding communities, accessibility and human health, as follows:
- CP55 Air Quality
 - CP43 Providing Affordable Homes
 - CP44 Rural Exception Sites
 - CP45 Meeting Wiltshire's Housing Needs
 - CP48 Supporting Rural Life
 - CP49 Protection of Rural Services and Community Facilities
 - CP57 Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping
 - CP60 Sustainable Transport
 - CP35 Existing Employment Land
 - CP4 Spatial Strategy for the Amesbury Community Area
- 4.44 These Policies provide guidance and mitigation measures to ensure that new development is located appropriately. Policy CP4 defines The Winterbournes as a Large Village in the settlement hierarchy. Most new development will be identified at Amesbury with approximately 345 homes to be provided in the rest of the Community Area. The Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations Plan (WHSAP) was submitted in July 2018 and is currently undergoing independent examination⁴⁸. The draft Plan does not include any proposed site allocations in the Winterbournes⁴⁹. It does include a review of the settlement boundary for The Winterbournes prepared to inform the WHSAP, but this is unclear, and the Parish Council is awaiting further information and clarification.
- 4.45 The Policies promote sustainable transport and ensure new development does not result in significant effects on traffic with associated benefits for reducing emissions associated with traffic and contributing to health improvements. Human health is positively affected through the Policies in the Core Strategy as existing open/green space and sports facilities are safeguarded, and also seeks for enhancements and new provision of recreational facilities, with positive effects. Policy CP57 requires consideration of compatibility and amenity, including pollution, with existing buildings and uses – all with positive effects for health and well-being. These Policies within the Wiltshire Core Strategy were subject to SA/SEA, and positive effects found, with no negative effects identified.
- 4.46 The Winterbournes Neighbourhood Plan Policy 1 requires maintenance of the existing physical and visual separation between Winterbourne and Hurdcott. This will support community identities and resident's well-being with positive effects for SEA Objective No 5.
- 4.47 WNP Policy 8 Local Green Space Designations protects existing recreational areas and public open spaces within the NP area and prevents the loss of any community facilities. There is a presumption against development on Local Green Space except in very special circumstances. the Policy is likely to have long-term major positive effects on health for residents.

⁴⁸ <http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/planning-whsap>

⁴⁹ <https://cms.wiltshire.gov.uk/documents/s152212/WHSAP0101WiltshireHousingSiteAllocationsPlanSubmissionDocumentJuly2018.pdf>

- 4.48 Policy CP60 Sustainable Transport promotes new development that encourages use of footpaths and cycleways that then support and promote health. The Winterbournes area is well served by a network of footpaths and bridleways to support sustainable transport and encourage a healthier lifestyle. The Parish Council has selected housing site allocations that are within walking distance and/or a bus for access to services and facilities. Provision of housing to meet identified local needs will help to allow local people to live in the parish – this in itself will help to maintain the vitality of communities, health & well-being, and further support existing services and facilities – indicating minor positive effects for SEA Objective Nos 8 & 9. WNP Policy 9 recognises the issues identified for increased traffic and parking associated with the primary school and provides mitigation measures to reduce any potential negative effects from new development.
- 4.49 The WNP does not seek to allocate any new employment land with neutral effects. However, the Parish Council has selected housing site allocations to avoid any potential negative effects on existing businesses – providing strong mitigation measures through avoidance. Overall neutral effects for SEA Objective Nos 11 & 12.

Water, Air & Climatic Factors

[SEA Topics: Water, Air, Material Assets, Health, Climatic Factors]

SEA/SA Objectives:

- 3. Use and manage water resources in a sustainable manner
- 5a. Minimise our impacts on climate change – through reducing greenhouse gas emissions
- 5b. and reduce our vulnerability to future climate change effects.

- 4.50 The adopted Wiltshire Core Strategy includes a range of Policies regarding water, air and climatic factors, as follows:

- CP68 Water Resources
- CP67 Flood Risk
- CP55 Air Quality
- CP60 Sustainable Transport

The above Policies were subject to SA/SEA and found to have positive or neutral effects, with no significant negative effects identified.

- 4.51 The Winterbournes Neighbourhood Plan is only proposing limited new development of around 18 dwellings and therefore, it is limited in the extent of any significant effects on this SEA theme. Nonetheless, the Parish Council has selected proposed housing site allocations in locations that will avoid risk of flooding and support sustainable transport modes with help towards improving air quality. Overall, likely neutral effects on SEA Objective Nos 3 & 5.

Cultural Heritage

[SEA Topics: Cultural Heritage, including Architectural & Archaeological Heritage]

SEA/SA Objectives:

6. Protect, maintain & enhance the historic environment

- 4.52 Wiltshire Core Strategy Policy CP57 Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping, and Policy CP58 Ensuring the Conservation of the Historic Environment require that development should protect, conserve and where possible enhance the historic environment and its setting. The SA/SEA of these Policies found positive or neutral effects, with no significant residual negative effects identified.
- 4.53 The Parish Council has selected housing site allocations to avoid adverse impacts on the Conservation Area and its setting through careful selection of sites by location and size. Policy 6 (part of site option N1) & 7 Adjacent Rose Farm is not within the Conservation Area and the SEA found neutral effects.
- 4.54 Site-specific requirements are included for allocation Policy 2 within design Policy 3 to screen the site (part of site option S90) from the Conservation Area and use natural local materials to complement the adjoining Conservation Area – all providing mitigation measures. The Heritage Assessment⁵⁰ concluded that the site makes only a low contribution to the setting of the Conservation Area; given the low inter-visibility and physical separation, development is unlikely to result in harm to the setting of the Grade II listed church or other heritage assets identified – with neutral effects.
- 4.55 With regard to the proposed site allocation Policy 4 & design Policy 5 Land on the Portway, only a small part of the original site option is proposed – to the south of the existing dwellings and thus furthest away from the heritage assets and their settings at Manor Farm. A Heritage Assessment⁵¹ was undertaken by specialists and this concluded that development of the smaller site option S1045 would have 'less than substantial' harm on the designated and non-designated heritage assets within the locality, and suggested mitigation could be considered in order to reduce the impact of development, such as the proposal for housing of one-and-a-half storeys maximum, the replication of the narrow plot widths of the existing houses in the row, and the introduction of native hedgerow planting on the south-west boundary to screen the development from the south-west approach on The Portway. Therefore, due to the mitigation measures provided by the small size and distance from the heritage assets and their settings, the SEA identified that residual effects are likely to be neutral.

⁵⁰ Heritage Assessment for WPC by Elaine Milton Heritage & Planning Ltd (January 2018)

⁵¹ Heritage Assessment for WPC by Elaine Milton Heritage & Planning Ltd (January 2018)

Landscape

[SEA Topics: Landscape, Material Assets]

SEA/SA Objectives:

7. Conserve and enhance the character and quality of rural and urban landscapes, maintaining and strengthening local distinctiveness and sense of place.

- 4.56 The Wiltshire Core Strategy includes various Policies associated with landscape, as follows:
- CP51 Landscape
 - CP52 Green Infrastructure
 - CP57 Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping
 - CP58 Ensuring the Conservation of the Historic Environment
 - CP4 Spatial Strategy for the Amesbury Community Area
- 4.57 Policy CP51 requires that development should protect, conserve and where possible enhance landscape character and must not have a harmful impact. The new development proposed in the WNP must comply with this Policy and others indicating that strong mitigation measures are in place. The SA/SEA of these Policies found positive or neutral effects, with no significant residual negative effects identified.
- 4.58 The Parish Council has recognised the importance and value of the local landscape and character. It has selected housing site allocations that are located and sized to minimise likely effects on the landscape and its character. WNP Policy 1 requires maintenance of the existing separation between Winterbourne and Hurdcott with visual breaks – and this will help ensure that any potential local negative effects on identity and distinctiveness will be mitigated.
- 4.59 The SEA found potential minor negative effects for SEA Objective No 7 on landscape for site option N1 (in part - Policy 6), S26/122/1045 (in part – Policy 6) and site option S90 (in part- Policy 2) but with uncertainty until the effectiveness of potential mitigation was investigated further. The Parish Council has mitigated these negative effects through selecting only a part of each of the site options where negative effects would be minimised. Design Policies 3, 5 & 7 include site-specific requirements on layout, dwelling heights, and use of natural high-quality local building materials – all of which provide specific mitigation measures for the WNP. Overall, therefore, neutral effects indicated for landscape.

Natural Resources: Land/Soil, Energy & Waste

[SEA Topics: Soil, Health, Material Assets]

SEA/SA Objectives:

- 2. Ensure efficient and effective use of land and the use of suitably located previously developed land and buildings
- 5a. Minimise our impacts on climate change – through reducing greenhouse gas emissions

4.60 The Wiltshire Core Strategy includes principles for use of land and includes Policies for natural resources management such as follows:

- CP41 Sustainable Construction and Low Carbon Energy
- CP56 Contaminated Land
- CP57 Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping

The SA/SEA of these Policies found positive or neutral effects, with no significant residual negative effects identified.

4.61 The proposed housing site allocations in the WNP will have to be in compliance with these Policies that provide strong mitigation measures against potential negative effects. There is no known best and most versatile agricultural land or mineral safeguarded areas in the WNP area; however, the housing sites are on greenfield land that is currently in predominantly agricultural use and therefore, the SEA found minor negative effects for the loss of the soil resource and that will be permanent.

SEA of Implementing the Winterbournes Neighbourhood Plan (WNP)

4.62 The SEA Regulations require consideration of the effects of implementing a plan as a whole. For the draft WNP this means the Vision, Objectives and the Policies 1-9. The SEA findings for each section of the draft WNP are presented in the table, as follows:

Table 4.4: Summary SEA Findings

SA Objectives WNP Chapters – Objectives & Policies	Biodiversity & Green Infrastructure	Land & Soil Resources	Water Resources	Improve Air Quality	Minimise Climate Change; Improve Resilience	Historic Environment	Landscape Quality	Housing	Healthy & Inclusive Communities	Sustainable Transport	Economy	Employment
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
WNP Vision	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	++	++	0	+	0
Objectives & Policy 1	+	+	0	0	0	+	+	0	+	0	0	0
Objectives, Policies 2-7 Housing & Design	+	-	0	0	0	0	0	++	+	+	+	0
Policy 8 Local Green Space	+	+	0	0	0	0	+	0	+	0	0	0
Objectives & Policy 9 School & Traffic	0	0	0	+?	0	0	0	0	+?	?	0	0

4.63 Overall, the SEA found potential major positive effects for housing with further minor positive effects for SEA objectives on communities, health & well-being, sustainable transport and protection of existing employment. Countryside Objectives in the WNP are likely to have positive effects for landscape quality and the historic environment and its settings. Potential negative effects arising from the proposed new housing development in Policies 2, 4 & 6 have been mitigated through location, size and site-specific requirements – with likely neutral residual effects. New development is proposed on greenfield land that is currently in agricultural use – with minor negative effects that are permanent.

4.64 Major positive effects are indicated for housing objectives through provision of identified need within the Winterbournes area; this will contribute to further positive effects on communities and health/well-being by helping local people to stay living in the villages. This will also help maintain the vitality of the villages and help maintain the viability of existing businesses, services and facilities. Overall, the WNP will not have any significant negative effects on biodiversity and the SEA found that there could be minor positive effects that would be synergistic and cumulative in the longer-term. Some uncertainty at this stage of assessment.

4.65 The SEA made one suggestion – that the WNP could make more explicit requirements for new development to contribute to and link into the green infrastructure network – and this was progressed, confirming the positive effects indicated.

- 4.66 Overall, the WNP will have positive effects for new development with policies to protect the unique local characteristics of the area and to help progress the aspirations for the WNP communities.

5.0 PROPOSED MONITORING

- 5.1 The SEA Directive and Regulations require that the significant effects (positive and negative) of implementing the plan should be monitored in order to identify at an early stage any unforeseen effects and to be able to take appropriate remedial action. Government guidance⁵² on SA/SEA advises that existing monitoring arrangements should be used where possible in order to avoid duplication. Government requires local planning authorities to produce Monitoring Reports (MRs), and the Wiltshire Council Monitoring Report (produced annually)⁵³, the monitoring proposals suggested by the SA of the Core Strategy, is considered sufficient to ensure appropriate monitoring takes place.

⁵² http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/?post_type=&s=sustainability+appraisal

⁵³ <http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/annualmonitoringreport.htm>

6.0 SUMMARY CONCLUSIONS, CONSULTATION & NEXT STEPS

- 6.1 The SEA has been undertaken according to good practice and in line with Government guidance. It is aligned with the SEA of the Local Plan Review, following the same methods and approach, and is proportionate - acknowledging the hierarchy of plan-making and the tiering of assessments processes. Overall, the SEA has found that the implementation of the WNP will have positive effects on SEA Objectives within the scope and sphere of influence of the Neighbourhood Plan; Policies in the Wiltshire Core Strategy and the WNP provide mitigation measures to protect environmental assets and their settings – indicating likely residual neutral effects.
- 6.2 The SEA made one suggestion that the WNP could make more explicit requirements for new development to contribute to and link into the green infrastructure network. This has been taken forward, removing uncertainty and confirming the positive effects on biodiversity and green infrastructure.
- 6.3 This document reports the SEA process for the WNP and is submitted for public consultation to accompany the Draft WNP on Regulation 14 consultation. This SEA Environmental Report has been prepared in accordance with planning and SEA legislation and guidance. Any comments on the SEA will be taken into account, together with comments on the Draft WNP, in order to prepare the next stage of the WNP.
- 6.4 Any comments on this SEA Report should be sent to:
- <http://www.winterbourneparishcouncil.com/planning/winterbournes-neighbourhood-plan.php>

Appendix I: Statement on Compliance with SEA Directive & Regulations

The EU SEA Directive⁵⁴ (Annex 1) requires certain information to be provided in the Environmental Report. This requirement is implemented into UK legislation through the SEA Regulations (2004)⁵⁵. This is Appendix 1 of the Environmental Report as required by the SEA Directive and the UK SEA Regulations. This Appendix 1 sets out how the requirements for SEA have been met and signposts where this information is found in the Environmental Report (April 2018) - and in accordance with paragraph 165 of the National Planning Policy Framework (2012)⁵⁶.

SEA Directive & Regulation Requirements	SEA Report Section	Summary of Contents
<i>An outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan and relationship with other relevant plans</i>	Section 1 Introduction	Sets out the contents and purpose of the Draft WNP
	Section 3 Context & Baseline	Outlines context, baseline & including the relationship with other relevant plans; also signposts links with the WLPR Local Plan & SA/SEA Scoping (2017)
<i>The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without the implementation of the plan</i>	Section 3 Context & Baseline	Summarises the relevant baseline conditions for environmental aspects in the WNP area, and likely evolution without the WNP
<i>The environmental characteristics of the area likely to be affected</i>	Section 3 Context & Baseline	Summarised in Section 3 of Environmental Report.
<i>Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan including, in particular, those in relation to any areas of a particular environmental importance</i>	Section 3 Context & Baseline	Summarises existing environmental issues/problems for the WNP area
<i>The environmental protection objectives relevant to the plan and the way those objectives and any environmental</i>	Section 2 SEA Methods Section 3 Context & Baseline	Detailed SEA Framework guiding assessment of effects against the Objectives – grounded in the SA/SEA Framework for the Local Plan as reported in Scoping (2017).

⁵⁴ <http://ec.europa.eu/environment/eia/sea-legalcontext.htm>

⁵⁵ <http://www.parliament.uk/documents/post/postpn223.pdf>

⁵⁶ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf

SEA Directive & Regulation Requirements	SEA Report Section	Summary of Contents
<i>considerations have been taken into account during its preparation</i>		
<i>The likely significant effects on the environment including on issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors. These effects should include secondary, cumulative, synergistic, short, medium and long-term permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects</i>	Section 2 SEA Methods Table 2.1	Presents the SEA Framework of objectives that shows the issues listed by the SEA Regulations that are progressed by which SEA objective. This ensures that all the issues are considered during the assessment of each element of the Draft WNP. The draft WNP was assessed against SEA objectives by themes to avoid duplication and address inter-relationships.
	Section 4 Appendix II	Describes the likely significant effects of implementing the Draft WNP. Where possible, an indication is given of whether the effect is likely to be cumulative, short, medium and long term.
<i>The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the plan</i>	Section 4	No significant negative effects were predicted; the SEA noted where the Core Strategy provided mitigation measures.
<i>An outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with, and a description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties encountered in compiling the required information</i>	Section 2 Section 4 table 4.3	There are no other reasonable alternatives to the WNP; site options detailed in Appendix II. The do nothing scenario is assessed & this is explained in section 2.
	Section 2 Method	Outlines how the assessment was undertaken.

SEA Directive & Regulation Requirements	SEA Report Section	Summary of Contents
<i>A description of the measures envisaged concerning monitoring</i>	Section 5	Outlines measures proposed for monitoring the environmental effects of the implementation of the Draft WNP.
<i>A non-technical summary of the information provided under the above headings</i>	Report preface	Provides a non-technical summary.