

Date: 14<sup>th</sup> June 2016

Our ref: 186015

Your ref: Claverham Neighbourhood Plan SEA.



## Screening Letter Template

Celia Dring

**BY EMAIL ONLY**

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Dear Celia Dring

**Screening consultation:** Claverham Neighbourhood Plan SEA.

**Location:** Claverham, Somerset.

Thank you for your consultation on the above dated 17<sup>th</sup> May 2016, which was received by Natural England on the 18<sup>th</sup> May 2016.

Natural England is a non-departmental public body. Our statutory purpose is to ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced, and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development.

### **Screening Request: Strategic Environmental Assessment**

It is our advice, on the basis of the material supplied with the consultation, that, in so far as our strategic environmental interests are concerned (including but not limited to statutory designated sites, landscapes and protected species, geology and soils), there are unlikely to be significant environmental effects from the proposed plan. We therefore concur with the conclusion that Strategic Environmental Assessment is not needed provided the draft NP is not allocating additional development sites..

We also advise that a likely significant effect on European sites from the Claverham Neighbourhood Plan can be ruled out and therefore further assessment through a Habitats Regulations Assessment will not be needed. Depending on the nature of development proposals for the re-use of an existing employment site, a project level HRA screening may need to be undertaken when a planning application is submitted. This is due to the proximity of the North Somerset and Mendip Bat SAC.

We must be consulted on draft Neighbourhood Development Orders and Community Right to Build Orders where proposals are likely to affect a Site of Special Scientific Interest or 20 hectares or more of Best and Most Versatile agricultural land. We must also be consulted on Strategic Environmental Assessments, Habitats Regulations Assessment screening and Environmental Impact Assessments, where these are required. Your local planning authority will be able to advise you further on environmental requirements.

In addition we are not aware of significant populations of protected species which are likely to be affected by the policies / proposals within the plan. It remains the case, however, that the responsible authority should provide information supporting this screening decision, sufficient to assess whether protected species are likely to be affected.

Notwithstanding this advice, Natural England does not routinely maintain locally specific data on all potential environmental assets. As a result the responsible authority should raise environmental issues that we have not identified on local or national biodiversity action plan species and/or habitats, local wildlife sites or local landscape character, with its own ecological and/or landscape advisers, local record centre, recording society or wildlife body on the local landscape and biodiversity receptors that may be affected by this plan, before determining whether an SA/SEA is necessary.

Please note that Natural England reserves the right to provide further comments on the environmental assessment of the plan beyond this SEA/SA screening stage, should the responsible authority seek our views on the scoping or environmental report stages. This includes any third party appeal against any screening decision you may make.

For any queries relating to the specific advice in this letter only please contact Andrew Burns on 02080266592.. For any new consultations, or to provide further information on this consultation please send your correspondences to [consultations@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:consultations@naturalengland.org.uk).

We really value your feedback to help us improve the service we offer. We have attached a feedback form to this letter and welcome any comments you might have about our service.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Burns.

Sustainable Development Team