



## Lewes District Council

### Hamsey Neighbourhood Plan

#### Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Statement of Reasons

This statement has been produced to comply with Regulation 15(1) e (ii) of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) (Amendment) Regulations 2015.

A neighbourhood plan is required to meet a number of basic conditions, one of which being it must not breach and be otherwise compatible with EU and Human Rights obligations. This requires neighbourhood plans to fully consider the requirements of the SEA regulations<sup>1</sup> which transpose the EU's SEA Directive<sup>2</sup> into law and which requires those making plans that could impact on the environment to consider whether they are likely to have a significant effect or not.

A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening Assessment was prepared by Lewes District Council Officers for the Hamsey Neighbourhood Plan (see Appendix 1). This Assessment was made available to the statutory environmental bodies (Natural England, Historic England and Environment Agency) for a 6 week period from 24 November 2014.

The Assessment concluded that the neighbourhood plan was not likely to have significant environmental effects and consequently that a strategic environmental assessment was not required. This conclusion was not objected to by the statutory environmental bodies.

The conclusion was based on the assumptions set out in (3) of the Screening Assessment in Appendix 1 and for the following reasons:

- 1) The Hamsey Neighbourhood Plan was not allocating development sites<sup>3</sup>
- 2) The Hamsey Neighbourhood Plan was not expected to have any significant environmental effects that had not already been considered through the Lewes District Council Core Strategy Sustainability Appraisal/SEA which was an important consideration in the conclusions of the screening assessment
- 3) The characteristics and issues of the Parish have been recognised through the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report

Since the Screening Assessment was made, further National Planning Practice Guidance has been published in regards to SEA requirements for neighbourhood plans<sup>4</sup>. At present, the Lewes District Core Strategy is undergoing an Examination in

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<sup>1</sup> Known fully as The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004

<sup>2</sup> Known fully as Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 June 2001 on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment

<sup>3</sup> the HNP allocates local green space designations which were not known at the time the screening assessment was made

<sup>4</sup> Para 046 (Reference ID: 11-046-20150209)

Public. Following the Hearing Sessions in January 2015, the Inspector published his Interim Findings Letter<sup>5</sup> which clarified that he is essentially satisfied that all statutory and legal requirements have been met.

In consideration of the above updates, the District Council is satisfied that the screening assessment carried out in November 2014 remains valid and that no further assessment is required.

**James Garside**  
**Neighbourhood Planning Officer**

**September 2015**

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

<sup>5</sup> [http://www.lewes.gov.uk/Files/plan\\_ID-05\\_Letter\\_to\\_Councils\\_10\\_Feb\\_2015.pdf](http://www.lewes.gov.uk/Files/plan_ID-05_Letter_to_Councils_10_Feb_2015.pdf)

## Appendix 1

### Hamsey Neighbourhood Plan SEA Screening Assessment

1. As part of the process of making the Neighbourhood Development Plan, the Parish Council have requested a screening opinion to see whether a Strategic Environmental Assessment is required as part of the plan-making process. Such a requirement can be screened out if it is felt, based on the information available, that the Neighbourhood Development Plan would not have a likely significant environmental affect.
2. In order to assess the likely significance of the plan on the environment, the purpose of the plan has been appraised against the criteria detailed in the regulations and Directive. This analysis has been made in Table 1.
3. The District Council has based its screening opinion on the understanding that the Hamsey Parish Council will prepare a Neighbourhood Plan that:
  - will have policies consistent with national policy
  - will have policies consistent with existing and emerging local policies
  - will not allocate sites for housing
  - will base policies on the evidence it has gained from documents such as this Sustainability Scoping Report.
4. If it is presented with additional information that changes its understanding as to what the Hamsey Neighbourhood Plan will cover, the District Council reserves the right to undertake another Screening Assessment which may have different conclusions.

**Table 1: Screening Assessment**

Criteria	Notes	Likely Significant Effect?
<b>1. The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular, to—</b>		
<b>(a)the degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources;</b>	Neighbourhood Development Plans are the lowest-level statutory planning documents in the UK. As such, the Hamsey Neighbourhood Development Plan does not set a framework for other projects or plans outside of the Parish but will be used for guiding development in the Parish until 2030.	No

<b>(b)the degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy;</b>	Neighbourhood Development Plans are influenced by other plans, such as the Lewes District Core Strategy, currently at examination, as well as national planning policy and guidance. The plan is at the base of the hierarchy of national policy and is not intended to influence other plans and programmes.	No
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<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Notes</b>	<b>Likely Significant Effect?</b>
<b>(c)the relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development;</b>	The Neighbourhood Development Plan, as directed by the National Planning Policy Framework, will help promote sustainable development and will consider the environment of the Parish.	No
<b>(d)environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme;and</b>	The state of the environment has been considered by those making the plan and the Sustainability Scoping Report has been produced to help with such consideration. Based on the information received to date, it is likely that the plan will attempt to reduce environmental problems and thus no significant negative impact is envisaged through the provisions in the Neighbourhood Development Plan.	No
<b>(e)the relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (for example, plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection).</b>	Not applicable for the Neighbourhood Development Plan	No
<b>2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to—</b>		
<b>(a)the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects;</b>	The Neighbourhood Development Plan will guide development in the parish until 2030, with the aim of having a positive impact on the parish and by promoting sustainable development.	No
<b>(b)the cumulative nature of the effects;</b>	The sustainability appraisal of the Core Strategy considered the impact of development in the Parish alongside development in other settlements and parishes.	No
<b>(c)the trans-boundary nature of the effects;</b>	Development in the Neighbourhood Plan is likely to be consistent with the amount of development proposed in the Core Strategy. Neighbouring authorities have not objected to the Core Strategy and thus it is not thought the cross-boundary effects will occur. The Habitats Regulations Assessment of the Core Strategy also considered the effects of development in neighbouring districts	No
<b>(d)the risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents);</b>	It is not thought that anything in the Neighbourhood Development Plan will increase risks to human health.	No
<b>(e)the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected);</b>	The Neighbourhood Development Plan, unlike most plans, is to be written for a very small area and population. Its impacts are unlikely to be extensive.	No

<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Notes</b>	<b>Likely Significant Effect?</b>
<b>(f)the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to—</b> <b>(i)special characteristics or natural heritage;</b> <b>(ii)exceeded environmental standards or quality limit values;</b> <b>or</b> <b>(iii)intensive land-use; and</b>	In collecting information for the Neighbourhood Development Plan, information has been gained on the characteristics of the area – including information on land use, listed buildings, TPOs and SSSIs. There are no known environmental quality standards being exceeded. The plan is unlikely to lead to a significant intensification of land use nor is it felt that its provisions are likely to harm natural and cultural characteristics.	No
<b>(g)the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, European Community or international protection status.</b>	The Habitats Regulations Assessment for the Core Strategy considered the impact of development in Lewes District and development will accord with that identified in the Core Strategy. A Habitats Regulation Screening has been undertaken and no significant effects are noted on European protected sites. It is not envisaged that SSSIs in the parish will be significantly affected by the provisions of the Neighbourhood Development Plan.	No

5. The above analysis was undertaken by Lewes District Council on behalf of the Parish Council. In light of the analysis, it is not thought likely that the Neighbourhood Development Plan would have a significant environmental effect. As such it is not considered that the Parish Council must undertake a Strategic Environmental Assessment.

6. This Screening Opinion has been made available to the 3 statutory environmental bodies (Natural England, Environment Agency and English Heritage) for their views on the Screening Opinion. Comments on this screening opinion can be submitted by the following means.

- Email – [ldf@lewes.gov.uk](mailto:ldf@lewes.gov.uk)
- Mail – Neighbourhood Planning, Lewes District Council, Southover House, Southover Road, Lewes, BN7 1AB.