

APPENDIX D – STRATEGIC
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT
SCREENING REPORT AND
CONSULTATION RESPONSES

Standish Neighbourhood Plan

SEA Screening – Internal Exercise

The need to consider Strategic Environmental Assessment is driven by the European Directive 2001/42/EC “on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment”. The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (the Strategic Environmental Assessment Regulations, SI 1633), July 2004, transposes the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive into UK legislation.

SEA is required for all plans which may have a significant effect on the environment, particularly if the plan designates sites for development.

The purpose of the SEA is to ensure consideration of the environment in the preparation and adoption of plans, to ensure a high level of environmental protection and to promote sustainable development.

To determine whether SEA is required for a plan, a screening exercise is undertaken. The Standish NP proposals have been reviewed against criteria within the SEA Directive to determine whether significant effects are likely, in accordance with the flow diagram overleaf (taken from ‘A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive’, ODPM (2005)). Table 1 presents this review.

Any formal screening exercise will need to be issued to the statutory consultation bodies (Natural England, the Environment Agency and Historic England).

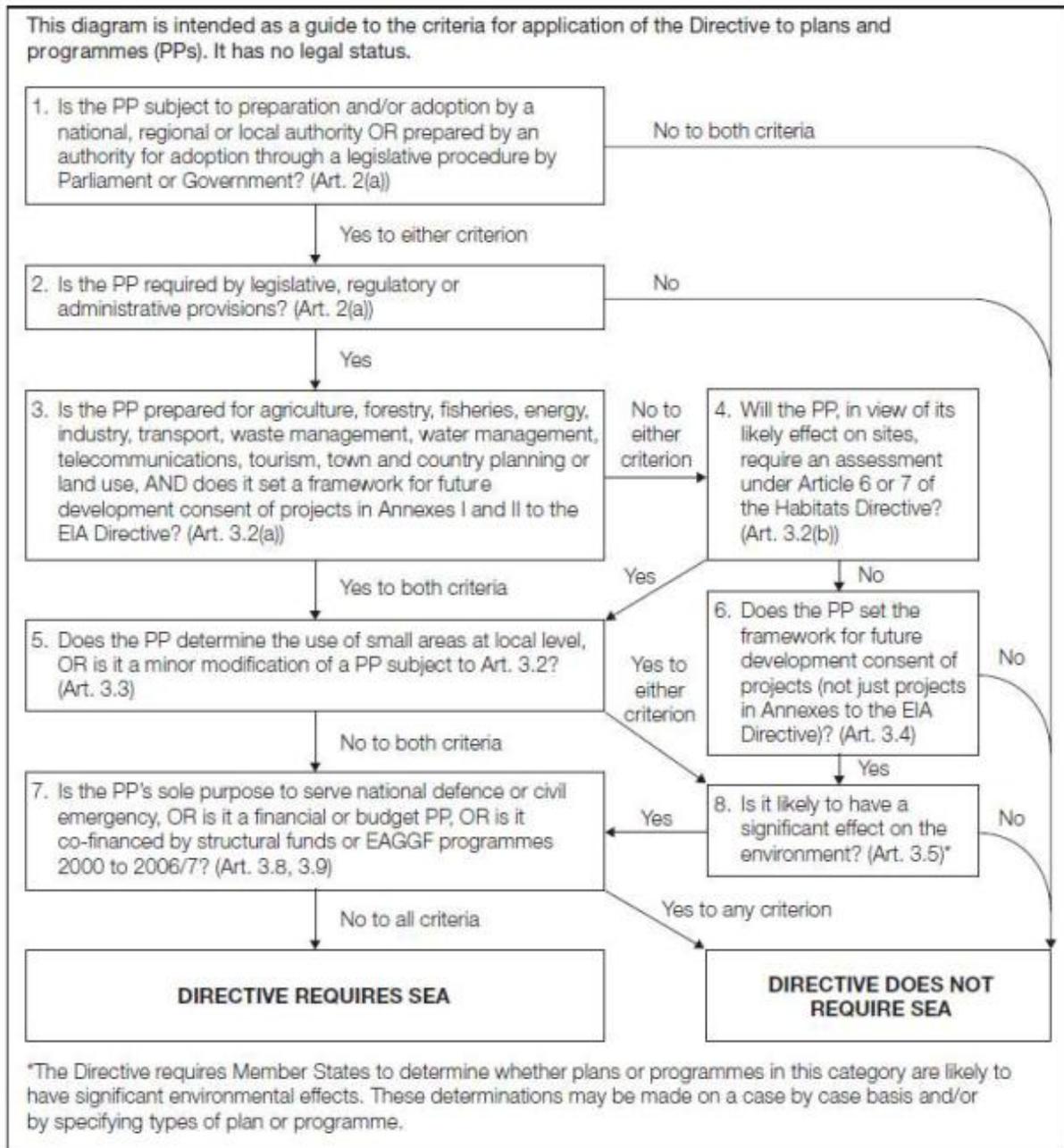


Table 1 – Screening of Standish Neighbourhood Plan

Stage in Flow Diagram	Yes / No	Justification
Is the plan subject to preparation and/or adoption by a national, regional or local authority OR prepared by an authority for adoption through a legislative procedure by Parliament or Government?	Yes	Neighbourhood Plans are prepared by a qualifying body (Parish/Town Councils) under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended). This Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared by Standish Voice (as the "relevant body") and will be adopted by Wigan Council as the local authority. The preparation of Neighbourhood Plans is subject to The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 and The Neighbourhood Planning (Referendums) Regulations 2012.

Stage in Flow Diagram	Yes / No	Justification
Is the plan required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions?	No	<p>Although local communities have a right to be able to produce a Neighbourhood Plan, it is not a legislative, regulatory or administrative requirement.</p> <p>However, once the NP is adopted, it will form part of the Wigan Council statutory development plan. The remainder of the flow diagram has therefore been considered, to determine whether full SEA is required.</p>
Is the plan prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism, town and country planning or land use, AND does it set a framework for future development consent of projects in Annexes I and II to the EIA Directive?	Yes	<p>The NP includes policies relating to agriculture, energy, industry, transport, waste management, town (village) planning and land use. Furthermore, once adopted it will set the framework for future developments (at the NP level) that could fall within Annex II of the EIA Directive.</p>
<p>Will the plan, in view of its likely effect on sites, require an assessment under Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive?</p> <p>(Although this question is skipped on the flow diagram, it is included for robustness.)</p>	No	<p>Under Article 6 of the Habitats Directive, an assessment is required where a plan or project may give rise to significant effects upon a Natura 2000 site (also known as a 'European Site'). This includes Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), designated under the Habitats Directive for their habitats and/or species of European importance, and Special Protection Areas (SPA), classified under Directive 2009/147/EC on the Conservation of Wild Birds (the codified version of Directive 79/409/EEC as amended) for rare, vulnerable and regularly occurring migratory bird species and internationally important wetlands. In addition, it is a matter of law that candidate SACs (cSAC) and Sites of Community Importance (SCI) are considered in this process; furthermore, it is Government policy that sites designated under the 1971 Ramsar Convention for their internationally important wetlands (Ramsar sites) and potential SPA (pSPA) are also considered.</p> <p>HRA Screening is the process which initially identifies the likely impacts upon a European site of a project or plan, either alone or in-combination with other projects or plans, and considers whether these impacts may have a significant effect on the integrity of the site's qualifying habitats and/or species. If significant effects are anticipated, Appropriate Assessment under the Habitats Directive is required.</p>

Stage in Flow Diagram	Yes / No	Justification
		For HRA Screening, consideration of European sites within 10 km should be ensured, due to the potential for connection via hydrological links or if mobile species from neighbouring sites have a significant functional link with areas within the plan boundary, such as for foraging. There are no European sites within the NP area, nor within 10km of the NP boundary. The nearest European site is the Martin Mere SPA, which is located approximately 12km from the NP boundary. Appropriate Assessment is therefore not deemed to be required.
Does the Plan determine the use of small areas at local level OR is it a minor modification of a PP subject to Article 3.2?	Yes	The NP seeks to determine the use of small areas at a local level, identifying some land / sites for certain development.
Does the plan set the framework for future development consent of projects (not just projects in annexes to the EIA Directive)? (Included for consistency and robustness as the answer to the HRA question was no.)	Yes	Once adopted the NP will form part of the Wigan Council statutory development plan and will therefore be used in the determination of planning applications in the Neighbourhood Area. Therefore, it sets the framework for future developments at a local level.
Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment?	No	<p>The NP will accord with the strategic policies contained within the Wigan Council statutory development plan (Core Strategy and associated Sustainability Appraisal, and Emerging Site Allocations Plan), and therefore the non-site specific policies are not anticipated to generate significant environmental effects. However, the NP seeks to allocate a number of sites within the Neighbourhood Area for various provisions / land uses as presented in the bullet points below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Protect and enhance the existing green infrastructure and biodiversity in: the Victoria Pit reclamation area north and eastwards towards Rectory Lane and Chorley Road to link up with other nearby green corridors; and also in the area of the ponds at Almond Brook Road, the ponds to the south of Pepper Lane; and the land in between. It is considered that such provisions would not generate significant environmental effects as there is no change of use proposed. · Protect the following areas as Local Green Space (and will be afforded protection from new development): Victoria Pit reclamation site, the ponds at Almond Brook extending into Robin Hill Lane; and land to the west of it, to the north of the line; and the playing field to the south

Stage in Flow Diagram	Yes / No	Justification
		<p>west of Standish High School, bounded by The Line and footpath no. 37. Although these would be new designations, it is considered that such provisions would not generate significant environmental effects as there is no change of use proposed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The following brownfield sites are allocated for housing development to meet the Standish Housing Needs Assessment (for local needs of older people or 100% affordable housing): the former Chinese Delight restaurant and associated car park on Preston Road; and the former Standish Ambulance Station on Glebe Road). Although these sites are proposed for a change of use, significant environmental effects are not anticipated due to the nature and scale of the proposals, and their previous brownfield use. • Proposals for new, extended and/or improved leisure and sport facilities within Ashfield Park will be supported. It is considered that such provisions would not generate significant environmental effects as there is no change of use proposed. • Southlands Rec is proposed for a new community park. Designating this site as a community park has the potential to generate environmental effects associated with increased car use, biodiversity, air quality and flood risk. However, it is considered that due to the scale and nature of the proposals, i.e. that the overall use remains to be leisure and recreation, such effects would not be significant. Furthermore, positive effects could also be realised in relation to human health. • The following community facilities (designated as Assets of Community Value) will be enhanced and protected: Standish Library; Standish Community Centre; and The Line. It is considered that such provisions would not generate significant environmental effects as there is no change of use proposed. • The NP contains a policy relating to the future masterplanning of the village. It is considered that the provisions contained in this policy would not generate significant environmental effects. <p>This justification is considered further against Annex II of the SEA Directive, as presented in Table 2 below.</p>
OVERALL CONCLUSION		DIRECTIVE DOES NOT REQUIRE SEA

Table 2 – Likelihood of Significant Environmental Effect for the NP

This sets out the Annex II series of criteria for determining the likely significance of effects, as represented in the left hand column of the table.

Stage in Flow Diagram Criteria for Determining Likely Significant Effect (Annex II)	Significant Effect?
<i>1. The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular, to:</i>	
<i>(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;</i>	Not significant. Once adopted the NP will form part of the Wigan Council statutory development plan and will therefore be used in the determination of planning applications in the Neighbourhood Area. It seeks to allocate land for development and sets out positive planning policies seeking to encourage sustainable development. The NP will influence the masterplanning of the village centre. However, the majority of policies are in line with the Wigan Core Strategy, which has been subject to SEA, and the policies that allocate land are not anticipated to generate significant environmental effects due to their nature and scale.
<i>(b) the degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy;</i>	Not significant. Although it is possible that the Neighbourhood Plan could inform future supplementary guidance in the area, such provisions would be in line with the adopted Core Strategy which has already been subject to SEA.
<i>(c) the relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development;</i>	Not significant. The Neighbourhood Plan seeks to promote sustainable development overall in accordance with sustainable development principles set out in higher-level plans. Furthermore, it does not seek to support any large-scale development.
<i>(d) environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme;</i>	Not significant. Due to the scale of development proposed, the environmental impact of the Neighbourhood Plan is not anticipated to be significant.
<i>(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).</i>	Not significant. The Neighbourhood Plan will be in conformity with the strategic policies contained within other relevant planning documents. Once adopted the Neighbourhood Plan will become part of the statutory development plan for Wigan and will be used in the determination of planning applications.
<i>2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to:</i>	
<i>(a) the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects;</i>	Not significant. The Neighbourhood Plan is supportive of sustainable development within the overall protective policy context of the development plan in terms of the built and natural environment. Furthermore, the scale and nature of development is not likely to have significant environmental effects. Largely positive effects are expected as a result of the NP.
<i>(b) the cumulative nature of the effects;</i>	Not significant. No significant cumulative effects with other developments are anticipated, particularly due to the small scale and nature of the proposed site allocations within the NP.

Stage in Flow Diagram Criteria for Determining Likely Significant Effect (Annex II)	Significant Effect?
<i>(c) the transboundary nature of the effects;</i>	No. The NP lies wholly within the Wigan borough, and no transboundary effects (i.e. within neighbouring borough boundaries) are conceivable.
<i>(d) the risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents);</i>	No. It is not likely that risks to human health or the environment would be generated by the NP.
<i>(e) the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected);</i>	Not significant. Although the Neighbourhood Plan seeks to allocate land for development, no significant environmental effects are anticipated. Therefore the local population would not be significantly effected. All effects would be local.
<i>(f) the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to— (i) special natural characteristics or cultural heritage; (ii) exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values; or (iii) intensive land-use;</i>	Not significant. The Neighbourhood Area contains a number of notable local designations, including a conservation area, Sites of Biological Importance and wildlife corridors. However, the NP polices would not adversely impact such sites, but would seek to protect and enhance them (although the benefits are not considered to be significant).
<i>(g) the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.</i>	Not significant. The Neighbourhood Area contains a number of notable local designations, including a conservation area, Sites of Biological Importance and wildlife corridors. However, the NP polices would not adversely impact such sites, but would seek to protect and enhance them (although the benefits are not considered to be significant).

Conclusion

It is considered that, with reference to the criteria for assessing the likely significance of effects as set out in Annex II of the SEA Directive (Table 2) and Schedule 1 of the SEA Regulations, a full SEA is not required. Where relevant in the future, as polices containing site allocations are progressed, project level environmental assessment will be undertaken.



Historic England

Nic Macmillan
(Standish Voice Committee Member)

Our Ref: PL00239202
Your ref: E-mail 21st Nov 2017
Tel: 07500 121974

To: nic_macca@hotmail.co.uk

4th Dec 2017,

Dear Nic,

Re: Draft SEA Screening Opinion, Standish Neighbourhood Plan.

Thank you for consulting Historic England on your Draft SEA Screening in compliance with the *Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004*. The draft Opinion prepared by your Forum concludes that Strategic Environmental Assessment is not required. We note that the Plan appears to propose no site allocations/policies which would have significant environmental effects upon the historic environment and as such we concur that in this regard Strategic Environmental Assessment is **not** required.

If you have any queries about this matter or would like to discuss anything further, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours Sincerely

Darren Ratcliffe RIBA
Historic Places Adviser



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Please note that Historic England operates an access to information policy.
Correspondence or information which you send us may therefore become publicly available.



Date: 24 November 2017
Our ref: 232076
Your ref: Standish Neighbourhood Plan



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Dear Nic

Standish Neighbourhood Plan - SEA Screening

Thank you for your consultation on the above dated 21 November 2017 which was received by Natural England on the same date.

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) are concerned, that there are unlikely to be significant environmental effects from the proposed plan.

Neighbourhood Plan

Guidance on the assessment of Neighbourhood Plans in light of the SEA Directive is contained within the National Planning Practice Guidance¹. The guidance highlights three triggers that may require the production of an SEA, for instance 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 may have significant environmental effects that have not already been considered and dealt with through a sustainability appraisal of the Local Plan.

We have checked our records and based on the information provided, we can confirm that in our view the proposals contained within the plan will not have significant effects on sensitive sites that Natural England has a statutory duty to protect.

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 or for any new consultations please send your correspondences to 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

Jacqui Salt
Consultations Team
