

3 September 2024

East Dean & Friston Parish Council c/o Alison Eardley Consulting
By Email

Dear Alison

South Downs National Park Authority screening of the need for an environmental assessment of the East Dean & Friston Neighbourhood Development Plan 2024 to 2040 Version for SEA/HRA Screening May 2024.

The South Downs National Park Authority (hereafter “SDNPA” or the “Authority”) support the community’s decision to produce a Neighbourhood Development Plan. The government is clear that the intention of Neighbourhood Development Plans should be to set out policies on the development and use of land in a neighbourhood area and that the local planning authority has a duty to support production of the plan.

The SDNPA’s duty in this respect includes screening to determine if the expected contents of the Plan and environmental information outlined require Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and/or Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA). As such we will also be determining at the same time, or later if one is required, whether the basic condition is satisfied. This will allow the Examiner at a forthcoming examination to see that this condition has been met and recommend that the proposed Plan goes ahead to referendum.

These comments only relate to the need for either a Strategic Environmental Assessment (2001/42/EC) or an assessment under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (the “Habitats Regulations” (as amended)). They are based solely on the information submitted and/or provided to this Authority with respect to satisfying these basic conditions – regulation 15(1)(e) and (g) specifically.

SDNPA comments

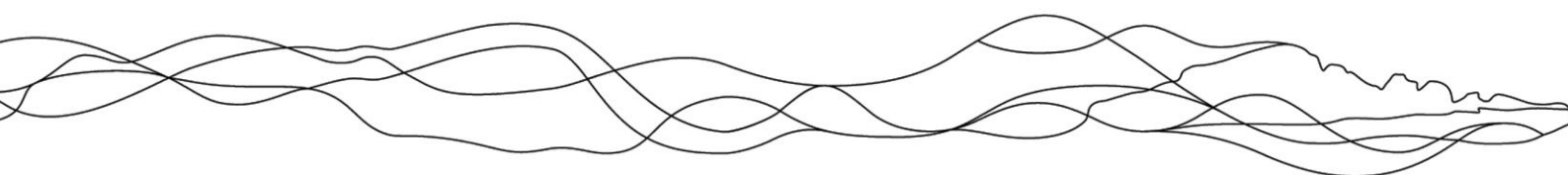
The information contained in the East Dean & Friston Neighbourhood Plan 2024 to 2040 Version for SEA/HRA Screening May 2024 is sufficient to determine that:

- There will be no significant environmental effects to result from the proposals in the Plan, which have not been appraised through other development plan processes.

Conclusion

It is determined there is no requirement for an environmental assessment, based on the information provided within the East Dean & Friston Neighbourhood Plan 2024 to 2040 Version for SEA/HRA Screening May 2024 provided to this Authority on 21 May 2024:

- There are no sites being allocated for development through the proposed Neighbourhood Plan and as such will not be affecting either the natural or historic environments.



There would not be expected to be any effects on any internationally designated nature sites as no allocations are proposed. As such, it also meets the basic requirement of not breaching the requirements of Chapter 8 of Part 6 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.

In the opinion of the SDNPA this plan meets the two basic conditions of:

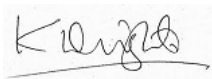
- not breaching, and otherwise being compatible with retained EU law.
- and
- not breaching the requirement of Chapter 8 of Part 6 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended).

It must be emphasised that this determination as explicitly mentioned above, is based on the information submitted to this authority. This determination does not preclude any comments from any statutory consultees during further stages of the review process.

However, if the contents of the Neighbourhood Development Plan or later versions have significant alterations, and/or there is a material change in the environmental characteristics in the locality (e.g. any new or changes to nature conservation designations), then the comments contained in this letter would need to be reconsidered to take account of the changes.

The SDNPA has made this determination following consultation with the statutory bodies, Natural England, Historic England, and the Environment Agency. Provided to you with the letter are the responses from all three statutory bodies.

Yours sincerely



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