

Mr C Emmett  
Clerk  
Upper Clatford Parish Council

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**Your ref:**  
**Our ref:** Upper Clatford NDP  
**Date:** 23 October 2019

Dear Mr Emmett

### **Upper Clatford Neighbourhood Plan**

### **Request for Screening Opinion for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)**

I write in response to your request for a screening opinion for Strategic Environmental Assessment in relation to the proposed Upper Clatford Neighbourhood Plan. This request was received by the Council on the 18<sup>th</sup> July 2019.

Regulation 9 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 requires that the responsible authority (Test Valley Borough Council) shall determine whether or not a plan is likely to have significant environmental effects. As part of making this assessment, the responsible authority shall —

- (a) take into account the criteria specified in Schedule 1 to these Regulations; and
- (b) consult the consultation bodies.

The Regulations advise that where the responsible authority determines that the plan is unlikely to have significant environmental effects (and, accordingly, does not require an environmental assessment), it shall prepare a statement of its reasons for the determination. This statement will be published on our website in due course.

Natural England, Environment Agency and Historic England, as the statutory consultation bodies for the Regulations, were consulted on this SEA screening request. The consultation started on 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2019 for a five week period, ending on 9<sup>th</sup> September 2019.

Having reviewed the letter and associated report provided, the consultation response from Natural England indicates that having regard to the matters within their remit, the proposed Neighbourhood Plan would not be likely to have significant environmental effects.

The Council has had due regard to the statutory consultee responses and the criteria within Schedule 1 of the Regulations in coming to a view on whether the proposed Neighbourhood Plan is likely to have significant environmental effects. Based on the summary of the proposed Neighbourhood Plan (as provided within the supporting report), it is the Council's opinion that the Plan would not be likely to have significant environmental effects. On this basis, a Strategic Environmental Assessment would not be required for the proposed Upper Clatford Neighbourhood Plan.

With regards to the Habitats Regulations Assessment and whether an Appropriate Assessment is required, the Council concludes that the proposed Neighbourhood Plan is not likely to have a significant effect on European designations. This is also supported by the response from Natural England.

You are advised that if the anticipated vision and scope of policies for the Neighbourhood Plan are subject to significant change, it would be appropriate to review the Screening Opinion and the position regarding the Habitat Regulations Assessment.

Yours sincerely

Sarah Hughes

Neighbourhood Planning Officer