

The background of the cover is a photograph of a large, historic stone church with a prominent square tower, situated behind a cemetery with numerous headstones. Bare tree branches are visible in the foreground. A thick, bright green curved line sweeps across the bottom right of the page.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) for the Over Wallop Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan

Environmental Report

May 2023

Quality information

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Non-Technical Summary

Introduction

AECOM is commissioned to lead on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in support of the emerging Over Wallop Parish Neighbourhood Development Plan (OWNP).

SEA is a mechanism for considering and communicating the likely effects of an emerging plan, and alternatives, with a view to avoiding and mitigating negative effects and maximising positive effects. SEA of the OWP is a legal requirement.¹ This is a Non-Technical Summary (NTS) of the SEA Environmental Report.

The OWP is being prepared in the context of the local planning framework for Test Valley Borough Council (TVBC). Once 'made' the OWP will have material weight when deciding on planning applications, alongside the Local Plan.

The OWP SEA Environmental Report (and this NTS) is being published alongside the 'submission' version of the Plan, under Regulation 16 of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations (2012, as amended).

Structure of the Environmental Report/ this NTS

SEA is undertaken in-line with the procedures prescribed by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 ('the SEA Regulations'). In creating a structured approach, SEA reporting essentially involves answering the following questions in turn:

1. What has plan-making / SEA involved up to this point?
 - i.e., in relation to exploring and appraising 'reasonable alternatives' (as prescribed by the SEA Regulations²).
2. What are the SEA findings at this stage?
 - i.e., in relation to the draft plan that is being consulted on.
3. What happens next?

Each of these questions is answered in turn within a discrete 'part' of the Environmental Report (Part 1, Part 2, and Part 3) and summarised within this NTS. However, the scene is first set by answering the questions 'What is the Plan seeking to achieve?' and 'What's the scope of the SEA?'

¹ Regulation 15 of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations (2012, as amended) requires that each Neighbourhood Plan is submitted to the Local Authority alongside either: a) an environmental report; or, b) a statement of reasons why SEA is not required, prepared following a 'screening' process completed in accordance with Regulation 9(1) of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations ('the SEA Regulations'). The OWP was subject to screening in July 2022 (undertaken by Test Valley Borough Council) which determined SEA is required.

² The SEA Regulations are not prescriptive as to what constitutes reasonable alternatives but identifies that a report (known as the Environmental Report) must be published for consultation alongside the draft plan that "*identifies, describes, and evaluates*" the likely significant effects of implementing "*the plan, and reasonable alternatives*" considering the plan objectives and geographical scope.

What is the Plan seeking to achieve?

The OWNP has identified the following vision:

“The unique mix of an historic village, Conservation Area(s), agriculture, and small-scale businesses within a sparsely populated, tranquil, and sustainable rural setting will be maintained, conserved, and enhanced. The Parish will remain a place where its diverse population, community spirit, and environment is supported by local services and sensitive developments which are appropriate to its needs.”

To support this vision, 21 objectives have been identified, and categorised under the four themes of Parish Character, Environment and Landscape, Development and Design, and Infrastructure and Community (see pages 6 and 7 of the main Environmental Report for a full list of OWNP objectives).

What is the scope of the SEA?

The scope of the SEA is reflected in a list of themes and objectives, which, taken together indicate the parameters of the SEA and provide a methodological ‘framework’ for assessment. The SEA framework for the OWNP is provided below. The preferred approach of the plan, alongside reasonable alternatives are appraised in relation to each of the objectives identified through scoping.

SEA theme	SEA objective
Biodiversity	Protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity.
Climate change	Reduce the contribution to climate change made by activities within the neighbourhood area and increase resilience to the potential effects of climate change.
Community wellbeing	Ensure growth in the neighbourhood area is aligned with the needs of all residents, improving accessibility, anticipating future needs and specialist requirements, and supporting cohesive and inclusive communities.
Historic environment	Protect, conserve, and enhance the historic environment within and surrounding the neighbourhood area.
Landscape	Protect and enhance the character and quality of the immediate and surrounding landscape.
Water quality	Protect and improve water quality in the neighbourhood area.

Plan-making/ SEA up to this point (Part 1 of the Environmental Report)

An important element of the required SEA process involves assessing 'reasonable alternatives' in time to inform development of the draft proposals, and then publishing information on reasonable alternatives for consultation alongside the plan proposals.

As such, Part 1 of the Environmental Report explains how work was undertaken to develop and assess a 'reasonable' range of alternative approaches to the allocation of land for housing, or alternative sites.

Specifically, Part 1 of the report -

1. Explains the process of establishing the reasonable alternatives.
2. Presents the outcomes of assessing the reasonable alternatives.
3. Explains reasons for establishing the preferred option, considering the assessment.

The decision was taken to develop and assess reasonable alternatives in relation to the matter of allocating land for housing, given the following considerations:

- OWNP objectives, particularly the objectives to ensure that future developments are of a scale appropriate to the needs of the Parish, and to prioritise brownfield development.
- Housing growth is known to be a matter of key interest amongst residents and other stakeholders.
- The delivery of new homes is most likely to have a significant effect compared to the other proposals within the Plan. National Planning Practice Guidance is clear that SEA should focus on matters likely to give rise to significant effects; and
- Sites have been promoted for development within the neighbourhood area. The OWNP preferred approach is to not allocate any sites for development and (in-line with the local plan) take a permissive approach to small-scale development within the identified settlement boundaries. Alternatives can be identified in relation to this preferred approach.

Establishing the reasonable alternatives

The Environmental Report explains how reasonable alternatives were established after the process of considering the strategic policy context ('top down' factors) and the site options in contention for allocation ('bottom-up' factors).

Headline considerations in forming alternatives are summarised below:

- There is no strategic housing growth target set for the OWNP, and the preferred approach for the plan is to not allocate sites but to take a permissive policy approach to sustainable development within the existing settlement boundaries at Over Wallop and Palestine. Further, there is an identified community preference for small-scale development.
- None of the development sites being promoted at this time lie within the existing settlement boundaries, although some lie adjacent. It is likely that an NP

allocation site would need to at least connect to existing settlement boundaries to allow for a settlement boundary adjustment through the NP process and to align with the strategic directions of the local plan (when considering an alternative approach).

- There are large-scale sites being promoted in the neighbourhood area, which are deemed strategic local plan considerations. Pursuit of large-scale development opportunities will reduce the potential for the NP to align with the strategic directions of the local plan.
- One of the sites being promoted (Site 372) lies at the edge of the neighbourhood area boundary, more closely relating with the settlement area of Middle Wallop (falling outside the defined neighbourhood area) and lying adjacent to the designated Middle Wallop Conservation Area.

These considerations reduced a 'long-list' of twelve promoted development sites to a 'short-list' of six sites, and the identification of two alternative options to the preferred plan approach. The preferred approach and alternatives are identified below and carried forward for further appraisal:

- **Option 1 (the preferred approach):** Do not allocate sites but take a permissive policy approach to sustainable development within the identified settlement boundaries.
- **Option 2:** Allocate one or more small-scale development sites at the settlement edge (from the choices of Site 326 in Over Wallop and/ or Sites 87 and 343 in Palestine). This option could allocate land to deliver between 27 and 115 new homes.
- **Option 3:** Allocate one or more medium-scale development sites at the settlement edge (from the choices of Sites 325 and 327 in Over Wallop and/ or Site 198/ 199 in Palestine). This option could allocate land to deliver between 120 and 488 new homes.

Appraising the reasonable alternatives

Chapter 6 of the Environmental Report assesses the three options identified above in relation to the SEA themes and objectives established through scoping, examining likely significant effects. Red is used to indicate the potential for significant negative effects and green indicates the potential for significant positive effects. Where appropriate uncertainty will also be noted with grey shading.

Efforts are also made to comment on the relative merits of the alternatives in more general terms and to indicate a rank of preference. This is helpful, as it enables a distinction to be made between the alternatives even where it is not possible to distinguish between them in terms of significant effects. Numbers are used to highlight the option or options that are preferred from an SEA perspective with 1 performing the best. An 'equals' sign ("=") indicates options are ranked on par with each other and occurs when no significant/ meaningful differences can be drawn between options.

The following summary findings are reached in the appraisal of the options and supporting text can be found within the main report:

SEA theme	Summary findings	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Biodiversity	Significant effect?	No	No	Uncertain
	Rank	1	2	3
Climate change	Significant effect?	No	No	No
	Rank	1	3	2
Community wellbeing	Significant effect?	Yes – positive	Yes – positive	Yes – positive
	Rank	3	2	1
Historic environment	Significant effect?	No	Yes - negative	Yes - negative
	Rank	1	3	2
Landscape	Significant effect?	No	No	No
	Rank	1	2	3
Water quality	Significant effect?	No	No	No
	Rank	1	2	1

Developing the preferred approach

The OWINP Steering Group provide the following reasoning for continuing with the preferred approach (Option 1):

“Option 1 remains the preferred approach for the plan, it promotes a reasonable scale of development appropriate to the area and contained within identified settlement boundaries. Of the options tested, Option 1 best aligns with the agreed plan objectives outlined for development and design and consultation feedback to date. The approach will continue to protect the landscape of the neighbourhood area and retain important views which have been identified as part of the plan process. Options to allocate land outside the settlement boundary are constrained by sensitive heritage settings at Over Wallop, a lack of safe active travel connections between Over Wallop and Palestine, and biodiversity in the vicinity of Palestine”

SEA findings at this stage (Part 2 of the Environmental Report)

Part 2 of the Environmental Report presents an assessment of the 'Submission' version of the OWNPN. Assessment findings are presented as a series of narratives under the 'SEA framework' theme headings and consideration is given to cumulative effects. The following conclusions are reached:

Overall, no significant negative effects are concluded as likely in relation to the SEA themes explored through the appraisal. The positive planning for design quality, economic vitality, infrastructure enhancement, asset protection (both natural and built form), and water quality improvements are considered likely to lead to significant positive effects in relation to community wellbeing and minor positive effects in relation to climate change, historic environment, landscape, and water quality SEA themes. Neutral effects are concluded as most likely in relation to biodiversity, as whilst the plan is supportive of biodiversity enhancement, this is not over and above existing policy provisions (including 10% biodiversity net gains now regulated under the Environment Act).

No recommendations are made for the OWNPN at this stage, particularly considering that no significant negative effects are associated with implementing the plan.

Next steps (Part 3 of the Environmental Report)

Part 3 of the Environmental Report explains the next steps that will be taken as part of plan-making and SEA.

Plan submission

Following submission, the plan and supporting evidence will be published for further consultation, and then subjected to Independent Examination. At Independent Examination, the plan will be considered in terms of whether it meets the Basic Conditions for Neighbourhood Plans and is in general conformity with the Local Plan.

If the examination leads to a favourable outcome, the plan will then be subject to a referendum, organised by Test Valley Borough Council. If more than 50% of those who vote agree with the Neighbourhood Plan, then it will be 'made'. Once 'made', the plan will become part of the Development Plan for Test Valley, covering the defined neighbourhood area.

Monitoring

The SEA regulations require 'measures envisaged concerning monitoring' to be outlined in this report. This refers to the monitoring of likely significant effects of the Neighbourhood Plan to identify any unforeseen effects early and take remedial action as appropriate.

It is anticipated that monitoring of effects of the Neighbourhood Plan will be undertaken by Test Valley Borough Council as part of the process of preparing its Annual Monitoring Report (AMR). No significant negative effects are considered likely in the implementation of the OWNPN that would warrant more stringent monitoring over and above that already undertaken by the Council.

1. Introduction

Background

- 1.1 AECOM is commissioned to lead on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in support of the emerging Over Wallop Neighbourhood Plan (OWNP).
- 1.2 The OOWNP is being prepared under the Localism Act 2011 and the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 and in the context of the local planning framework for Test Valley Borough Council (TVBC). Once 'made' the OOWNP will have material weight when deciding on planning applications, alongside the adopted Local Plan for Test Valley.
- 1.3 SEA is a mechanism for considering and communicating the likely effects of an emerging plan, and alternatives, with a view to avoiding and mitigating negative effects and maximising positive effects. SEA of the OOWNP is a legal requirement.³

SEA explained

- 1.4 It is a requirement that SEA is undertaken in-line with the procedures prescribed by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004. In-line with the Regulations, a report (known as the Environmental Report) must be published for consultation alongside the draft plan that "*identifies, describes and evaluates*" the likely significant effects of implementing "*the plan, and reasonable alternatives*".⁴ The report must then be considered, alongside consultation responses, when finalising the plan.
- 1.5 More specifically, the Report must answer the following three questions:
 1. What has plan-making/ SEA involved up to this point?
 - including in relation to 'reasonable alternatives'.
 2. What are the SEA findings at this stage?
 - i.e., in relation to the draft plan.
 3. What happens next?
- 1.6 This report is the Environmental Report for the OOWNP. It is published alongside the 'submission' version of the Plan, under Regulation 16 of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations (2012, as amended).
- 1.7 This report essentially answers questions 1, 2 and 3 in turn, to provide the required information.⁵ Each question is answered within a discrete 'part' of the report. However, before answering Q1, two initial questions are answered to further set the scene; what is the plan seeking to achieve? And what is the scope of the SEA?

³ Regulation 15 of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations (2012, as amended) requires that each Neighbourhood Plan is submitted to the Local Authority alongside either: a) an environmental report; or, b) a statement of reasons why SEA is not required, prepared following a 'screening' process completed in accordance with Regulation 9(1) of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations ('the SEA Regulations'). The OOWNP was subject to screening in July 2022 (undertaken by Test Valley Borough Council) which determined SEA is required.

⁴ Regulation 12(2) of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.

⁵ See **Appendix A** for further explanation of the regulatory basis for answering certain questions within the Environmental Report, and a 'checklist' explaining more precisely the regulatory basis for presenting certain information.

2. What is the plan seeking to achieve?

Introduction

- 2.1 This section considers the strategic planning policy context provided by TVBC's local planning framework before presenting the vision and objectives of the OWNP. The neighbourhood area is depicted in Figure 2.1 below.

Figure 2.1: Over Wallop neighbourhood area



Strategic planning policy context

- 2.2 TVBC's local planning framework consists of the Test Valley Borough Revised Local Plan Development Plan Document (DPD), adopted in 2016. TVBC are also currently developing the Test Valley Borough Local Plan 2040, which most recently consulted on Refined Issues and Options in 2020.
- 2.3 The adopted Local Plan DPD identifies Over Wallop, Palestine, and the intersecting Middle Wallop settlement areas as 'rural villages' in the settlement hierarchy. In these areas, small-scale development is acceptable in principle within the defined settlement boundaries. Kentsboro is identified as a village in the countryside, where policies applicable to development within the countryside apply. No development sites are identified within the neighbourhood area.
- 2.4 The Local Plan 2040 is in relatively early stages of development. An Issues and Options consultation was undertaken in 2018 and again in 2020 (with Refined Issues and Options). A 'Stage 1' Regulation 18 consultation shared the

draft strategic policies and priorities for Test Valley in early 2022, and a ‘Stage 2’ Regulation 18 consultation is expected next.

- 2.5 The Stage 1 Regulation 18 consultation document⁶ continues to identify Middle Wallop and Over Wallop as rural settlements, at Tier 3 of the settlement hierarchy. Palestine also continues to be recognised as a rural settlement, though within Tier 4 of the settlement hierarchy. Kentsboro remains a village within the countryside. Middle Wallop and Over Wallop are placed within the higher tier (Tier 3) as the consultation document proposes that these settlement areas contain key facilities and are determined to have a good level of public transport access. However, potential site allocations/ growth levels within these areas have not been identified at this stage.

Neighbourhood Plan vision and objectives

- 2.6 The OOWNP has established the following vision:

“The unique mix of an historic village, Conservation Area(s), agriculture, and small-scale businesses within a sparsely populated, tranquil, and sustainable rural setting will be maintained, conserved, and enhanced. The Parish will remain a place where its diverse population, community spirit, and environment is supported by local services and sensitive developments which are appropriate to its needs.”

- 2.7 To support this vision, 21 objectives have been identified, and categorised under four themes as follows:

Parish Character

- To conserve and maintain the character of Over Wallop village, Palestine, and Kentsboro.
- To enhance and preserve the peaceful and pleasant nature of the Parish as a place to live.

Environment and Landscape

- To conserve and enhance the rural character of the Parish and support appropriate planting which must be representative of the local area.
- To preserve and enhance the Over Wallop Conservation Area, listed buildings, historic monuments, and other non-designated heritage assets of the Parish.
- To protect and designate the NDP identified important views and green spaces.
- To protect and enhance access to the countryside between the three settlements.
- To conserve and enhance the natural environment by reducing noise, water, air, light, and traffic pollution.
- To preserve and maintain the countryside surrounding the Parish’s various settlements including rights of way.

⁶ [Local Plan 2040 Stage 1 Regulation 18 Consultation Document](#)

- To conserve and enhance the natural environment/ biodiversity of the Parish, e.g., wildlife habitats, ecological corridors, etc., and ensure that all developments must result in a biodiversity net gain for the Parish.

Development and Design

- To ensure that future developments are of a scale appropriate to the needs of the Parish.
- To ensure that future developments are of a design which respects the heritage nature of the Parish and its individual identity.
- To identify and promote the use of brownfield sites within the existing settlement boundary or development of existing derelict/ disused buildings.
- To conserve and enhance the natural environment by managing flood risk and by assessing the environmental impact of any new development.
- To support the use of sustainable construction techniques and materials, as well as promoting energy conservation and supply from renewable sources.

Infrastructure and Community

- To improve highway safety, including ensuring that traffic volumes and speed are reduced on residential and village roads.
- To conserve and enhance park and recreation facilities across the Parish.
- To improve the safety of active travellers (e.g., walkers/ runners/ cyclists/ horse riders, etc.) using residential and village roads and lanes.
- To preserve and enhance the community spirit by improving the scale/ scope of local amenities and cultural services to ensure that they are accessible for all members of the community.
- To seek improvements to the provision of public transport.
- To seek improvements in the provision of fibre broadband and mobile across the Parish.
- To improve the provision, scope, and support the development of small-scale businesses and local shops, appropriate to the needs of the Parish.

3. What is the scope of the SEA?

Introduction

- 3.1 The aim here is to introduce the reader to the scope of the SEA, i.e., the sustainability themes and objectives that should be a focus of the assessment of the plan and reasonable alternatives. Further information, i.e., the key issues which supported the development of the objectives, is presented in Appendix B.

Consultation

- 3.2 The SEA Regulations require that “*when deciding on the scope and level of detail of the information that must be included in the report, the responsible authority shall consult the consultation bodies*”. In England, the consultation bodies are the Environment Agency, Historic England, and Natural England.⁷ As such, these authorities were consulted in February 2023 and TVBC were also invited to comment. Responses were received from Natural England, Historic England, and TVBC, the details of which are provided in Appendix B. No response was received from the Environment Agency.

The SEA framework

- 3.3 The SEA scope is summarised in a list of themes and objectives, known as the SEA framework. Table 3.1 presents the SEA framework as broadly agreed in 2022.

Table 3.1: SEA framework

SEA theme	SEA objective
Biodiversity	Protect and enhance biodiversity and geodiversity.
Climate change	Reduce the contribution to climate change made by activities within the neighbourhood area and increase resilience to the potential effects of climate change.
Community wellbeing	Ensure growth in the neighbourhood area is aligned with the needs of all residents, improving accessibility, anticipating future needs and specialist requirements, and supporting cohesive and inclusive communities.
Historic environment	Protect, conserve, and enhance the historic environment within and surrounding the neighbourhood area.
Landscape	Protect and enhance the character and quality of the immediate and surrounding landscape.
Water quality	Protect and improve water quality in the neighbourhood area.

⁷ These consultation bodies were selected “by reason of their specific environmental responsibilities, [they] are likely to be concerned by the environmental effects of implementing plans and programmes” (SEA Directive, Article 6(3)).

Part 1: What has plan-making/ SEA involved to this point?

4. Introduction (to Part 1)

Overview

- 4.1 Whilst work on the OWNP has been underway for some time, the aim here is not to provide a comprehensive explanation of all the work carried out to date, but rather to explain work undertaken to development and appraise reasonable alternatives to the preferred plan approach.
- 4.2 More specifically, this part of the report presents information on the consideration given to reasonable alternative approaches to addressing a particular issue that is of central importance to the Plan, namely the allocation of land for housing, or alternative sites.

Why focus on housing land?

- 4.3 The decision was taken to develop and assess reasonable alternatives in relation to the matter of allocating land for housing, given the following considerations:
- OWNP objectives, particularly the objectives to ensure that future developments are of a scale appropriate to the needs of the Parish, and to prioritise brownfield development.
 - Housing growth is known to be a matter of key interest amongst residents and other stakeholders.
 - The delivery of new homes is most likely to have a significant effect compared to the other proposals within the Plan. National Planning Practice Guidance is clear that SEA should focus on matters likely to give rise to significant effects; and
 - Sites have been promoted for development within the neighbourhood area. The OWNP preferred approach is to not allocate any sites for development and (in-line with the local plan) take a permissive approach to small-scale development within the identified settlement boundaries. Alternatives can be identified in relation to this preferred approach.

Structure of this part of the report

- 4.4 This part of the report is structured as follows:
- **Chapter 5** - explains the process of establishing reasonable alternatives.
 - **Chapter 6** - presents the outcomes of appraising reasonable alternatives; and
 - **Chapter 7** - explains reasons for selecting the preferred option, considering the appraisal.

5. Establishing reasonable alternatives

Introduction

- 5.1 The aim here is to explain the process that led to the establishment of alternative sites and thereby present “*an outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with*”.⁸
- 5.2 Specifically, there is a need to explore the context for the OWNP and explain the parameters that have a bearing on the establishment of options, as well as the work that has been undertaken to date to examine site options (i.e., sites potentially in contention for allocation in the OWNP). These parameters are then drawn together in order to arrive at ‘reasonable alternatives’.

Strategic parameters

- 5.3 The strategic context is mainly provided by the adopted TVBC Local Plan DPD, which does not identify a need for further development within the neighbourhood area but allows for small-scale development within the identified settlement boundaries at Over Wallop and Palestine. Kentsboro is determined as a village in the countryside, where policies applicable to development within the countryside apply.
- 5.4 The Local Plan DPD plans for the period up to 2029 and it is recognised that the OWNP is likely to plan for a longer period (up to 2035). In the absence of a growth figure for the neighbourhood area, the OWNP Steering Group have investigated housing monitoring figures and levels of growth between 2011 and 2020. Over this period, the Parish experienced 13% growth with a total of 98 new dwellings built or permitted. The OWNP identifies that Local Planning Authorities and Neighbourhood Planning Examiners often consider a growth rate of 5-10% (increases relating to the current number of dwellings) reasonable for rural settlements and asserts that recent development in the neighbourhood area has exceeded this margin.
- 5.5 Also of note, the emerging Local Plan 2040 proposes changes to the settlement hierarchy. Consultation documents to date continue to identify Over Wallop and Palestine as rural settlements, but Over Wallop now lies within Tier 3 and Palestine within Tier 4 of the hierarchy. The higher Tier 3 is judged to reflect the key facilities provided by Over Wallop alongside a good level of public transport access. Whilst no site allocations or growth levels for the Parish have been identified through consultation documents to date, it is recognised that the Local Plan 2040 may pursue further growth in the Parish, particularly within Over Wallop as a higher settlement.
- 5.6 Additionally, a Parish wide survey was undertaken in developing the evidence for the OWNP and this work identified a local preference for continued organic growth arising from windfall and infill sites and at brownfield residential sites. It was felt that this would also allow time for more recent developments in the Parish to assimilate. The survey also identified a need for more 2-3-bedroom

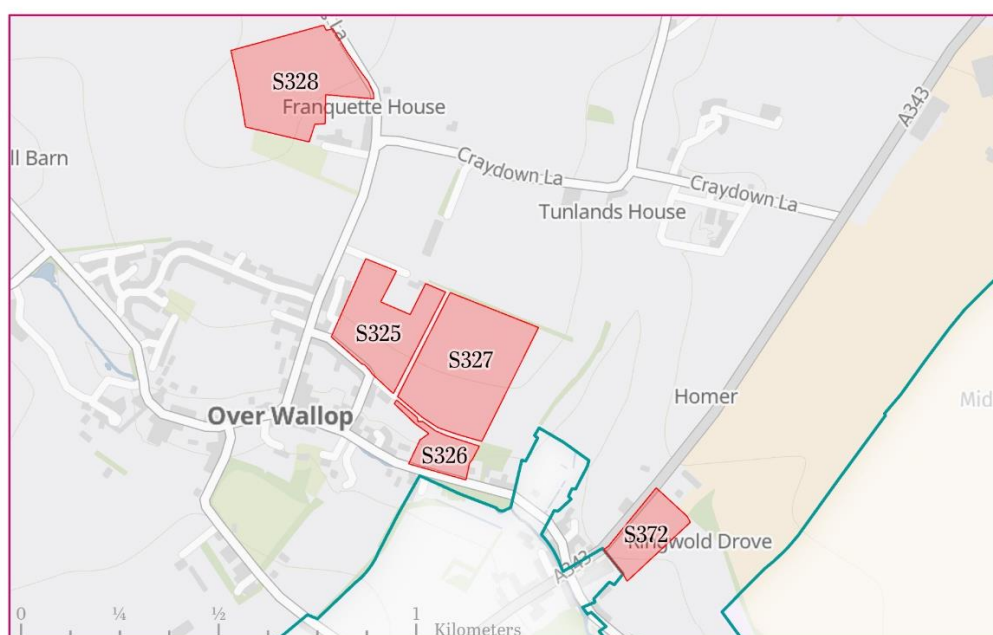
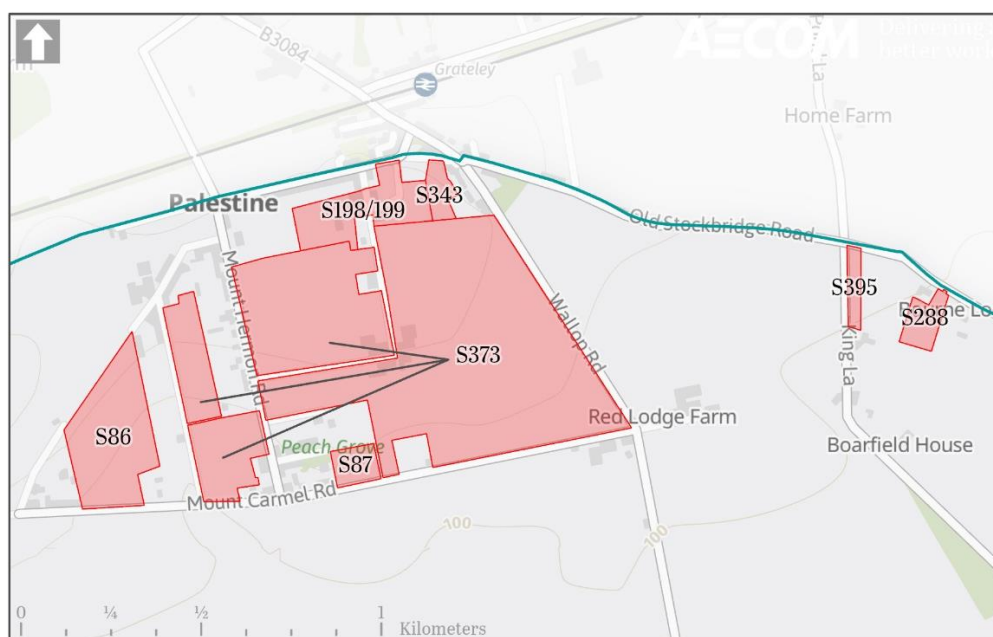
⁸ Schedule 2(8) of the SEA Regulations

homes, and more affordable housing, with average house prices currently around 8.8 times the average salary in the area.

Site options

- 5.7 TVBC produced an updated Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) in 2021. This identifies a total of twelve sites submitted by landowners in Over Wallop and Palestine (and bordering Middle Wallop) – see Figure 5.1. No additional call for sites has been undertaken locally by the OWP Steering Group.

Figure 5.1: SHELAA sites in the neighbourhood area

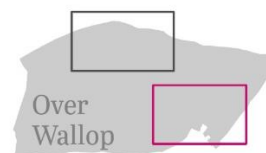


Over Wallop Neighbourhood Plan: Site Options

Over Wallop

Sites

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5.8 The twelve sites are discussed in turn below:

Over Wallop:

- **SHELAA Site 325 – Land north of Orange Lane**

This 4.5ha greenfield site has capacity for around 135 new homes. It is agricultural land at the settlement edge, adjacent to the settlement boundary and Conservation Area.

- **SHELAA Site 326 – Land north of Station Road**

This 1.7ha greenfield site has capacity for around 50 new homes. The site is occasionally used as grazing land and adjoins the Over Wallop settlement boundary and falls partially within the Conservation Area.

- **SHELAA Site 327 – Land northeast of Orange Lane**

This 7.76ha greenfield site has capacity for around 233 new homes. It is agricultural land at the settlement edge (connected to a corner of the settlement boundary), occasionally used as grazing land.

- **SHELAA Site 328 – Land west of King Lane**

This 6.79ha greenfield site has capacity for around 204 new homes. The site lies further north of Over Wallop (removed from the settlement boundary), connecting with the existing housing at King Lane which provides a direct connection to Station Road.

Middle Wallop:

- **SHELAA Site 372 – Land to the east of A343**

This 2.3ha greenfield site has capacity for around 23 homes, lying at the edge of the neighbourhood area boundary. The site lies adjacent to the Middle Wallop settlement boundary and Middle Wallop Conservation Area.

Palestine:

- **SHELAA Site 86 – Land south of Zion Road**

This 7.95ha greenfield site has capacity for around 238 new homes. It is agricultural land and removed from the settlement boundary.

- **SHELAA Site 87 – Land north of Mount Carmel Road**

This 1.27ha greenfield site has capacity for around 38 new homes. It is agricultural land close to the settlement boundary.

- **SHELAA Site 198/ 199 – Land at Station View Farm**

This 4.8/ 5ha site is a mix of greenfield and brownfield land adjoining the settlement boundary. The site has capacity for around 120 new dwellings. Two alternative boundaries are provided for this site, which include or remove an existing dwelling at Streetway Road.

- **SHELAA Site 288 – Land adjacent to Adanac, Old Stockbridge Road**

This 1.37ha site is predominantly greenfield but includes a smaller area of brownfield land (0.23ha). The site has capacity for around 5 new dwellings. It is current garden land in an area of sparse development, removed from the main Palestine settlement area and settlement boundary.

- **SHELAA Site 343 – Land adjoining Tabora, Wallop Road**

This 0.8ha greenfield site has capacity for around 27 new homes. It is land in equestrian use adjoining the settlement boundary.

- **SHELAA Site 373 – South View Farm**

This is a 57ha strategic greenfield development opportunity (i.e., large-scale site) that could deliver up to 1,500 new homes and a new local centre. Development would significantly change the character and identity of Palestine extending the settlement east to Wallop Road.

- **SHELAA Site 395 – Land at King Lane**

This 0.81ha greenfield site has capacity for around 8 new homes. It is grazing land in an area of sparse development, removed from the main Palestine settlement area and settlement boundary.

Establishing reasonable alternatives

5.9 There are some headline considerations in forming alternatives, which are summarised below:

- There is no strategic housing growth target set for the OOWNP, and the **preferred approach for the plan is to not allocate sites** but to take a permissive policy approach to sustainable development within the existing settlement boundaries at Over Wallop and Palestine. Further, there is an identified community preference for small-scale development.
- None of the development sites being promoted at this time lie within the existing settlement boundaries, although some lie adjacent. It is likely that an NP allocation site would need to at least connect to existing settlement boundaries to allow for a settlement boundary adjustment through the NP process and to align with the strategic directions of the local plan. **This removes Sites 328, 86, 288, and 395 from further consideration.**
- There are large-scale sites being promoted in the neighbourhood area, which are deemed strategic local plan considerations. Pursuit of large-scale development opportunities will reduce the potential for the NP to align with the strategic directions of the local plan. **This removes Site 373 from further consideration.**
- One of the sites being promoted (Site 372) lies at the edge of the neighbourhood area boundary, more closely relating with the settlement area of Middle Wallop (falling outside the defined neighbourhood area) and lying adjacent to the designated Middle Wallop Conservation Area. Given the cross-boundary considerations and heritage sensitivities extending the neighbourhood area, and the availability of alternative sites, **Site 372 is also not considered a 'reasonable' option for further consideration.**

5.10 These considerations reduce the 'long-list' of twelve sites to a 'short-list' of six sites (Sites 325, 326, 327, 87, 198/ 199, and 343). The short-listed sites provide the NP Steering Group with the options to either allocate one or more small-scale development sites at the settlement edge or allocate one or more medium-scale sites at the settlement edge, as alternatives to the preferred approach. These are the options taken forward for detailed appraisal in the next section. For clarity the options are:

- **Option 1 (the preferred approach):** Do not allocate sites but take a permissive policy approach to sustainable development within the identified settlement boundaries.
- **Option 2:** Allocate one or more small-scale development sites at the settlement edge (from the choices of Site 326 in Over Wallop and/ or Sites 87 and 343 in Palestine). This option could allocate land to deliver between 27 and 115 new homes.
- **Option 3:** Allocate one or more medium-scale development sites at the settlement edge (from the choices of Sites 325 and 327 in Over Wallop and/ or Site 198/ 199 in Palestine). This option could allocate land to deliver between 120 and 488 new homes.

6. Assessing reasonable alternatives

6.1 This chapter presents the findings for the appraisal of alternative options. As established in the previous chapter, the following three options are taken forward for appraisal:

- **Option 1 (the preferred approach):** Do not allocate sites but take a permissive policy approach to sustainable development within the identified settlement boundaries.
- **Option 2:** Allocate one or more small-scale development sites at the settlement edge (from the choices of Site 326 in Over Wallop and/ or Sites 87 and 343 in Palestine). This option could allocate land to deliver between 27 and 115 new homes.
- **Option 3:** Allocate one or more medium-scale development sites at the settlement edge (from the choices of Sites 325 and 327 in Over Wallop and/ or Site 198/ 199 in Palestine). This option could allocate land to deliver between 120 and 488 new homes.

Methodology

- 6.2 For each of the options, the assessment examines likely significant effects on the baseline, drawing on the sustainability themes and objectives identified through scoping (see Table 3.1) as a methodological framework. Red is used to indicate the potential for significant negative effects and green indicates the potential for significant positive effects. Where appropriate uncertainty will also be noted with grey shading.
- 6.3 Every effort is made to predict effects accurately; however, where there is a need to rely on assumptions to reach a conclusion on a significant effect, this is made explicit in the appraisal text.
- 6.4 Where it is not possible to predict likely significant effects based on reasonable assumptions, efforts are made to comment on the relative merits of the alternatives in more general terms and to indicate a rank of preference. This is helpful, as it enables a distinction to be made between the alternatives even where it is not possible to distinguish between them in terms of 'significant effects'. Numbers are used to highlight the option or options that are preferred from an SEA perspective with 1 performing the best. An 'equals' sign ("=") indicates options are ranked on par with each other and occurs when no significant/ meaningful differences can be drawn between options.
- 6.5 Finally, it is important to note that effects are predicted considering the criteria presented within Regulations.⁹ So, for example, account is taken of the duration, frequency, and reversibility of effects.

⁹ Schedule 1 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 20004.

Summary findings

SEA theme	Summary findings	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Biodiversity	Significant effect?	No	No	Uncertain
	Rank	1	2	3
Climate change	Significant effect?	No	No	No
	Rank	1	3	2
Community wellbeing	Significant effect?	Yes – positive	Yes – positive	Yes – positive
	Rank	3	2	1
Historic environment	Significant effect?	No	Yes - negative	Yes - negative
	Rank	1	3	2
Landscape	Significant effect?	No	No	No
	Rank	1	2	3
Water quality	Significant effect?	No	No	No
	Rank	1	2	1

Biodiversity

- 6.6 Of importance, internationally designated biodiversity sites intersect the neighbourhood area in the west, lying closer to the settlement area of Palestine than Over Wallop. Any development would need to consider impact pathways, and Options 2 and 3 notably have greater potential for direct impacts resulting from the OOWNP (i.e., by allocating sites for development). The Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) undertaken in support of the OOWNP has identified a range of impact pathways and multiple internationally designated habitats that could be affected. Most notably, the preferred approach (Option 1) is assessed through HRA screening which concludes no likely significant effects and no requirement for Appropriate Assessment, particularly given no specific development sites are allocated, thus removing the mechanism for negative interaction with designated sites.
- 6.7 Nationally designated Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) coincide with the internationally designated sites discussed above, where similar observations are drawn. The corresponding SSSI Impact Risk Zones (IRZs) extend the designated habitats to identify types of development in the vicinity of the sites that pose a risk. Most of Palestine falls within an IRZ which identifies development of 50 or more homes may pose risks and require further consultation with Natural England. West of Palestine Road is considered particularly sensitive with developments of 10 or more homes captured as a

potential risk. Most of Over Wallop falls slightly further afield within an IRZ that does not capture housing development as a risk factor.

- 6.8 Priority habitats are dispersed through the neighbourhood area, most notably intersecting the Over Wallop settlement area (and to a much lesser extent within Palestine). As part of the evidence base the Steering Group have prepared a Parish Wildlife and Biodiversity Report and within this, Site 326 in Over Wallop (Option 2) is identified entirely as Important Green Space containing a Wildlife Corridor (OW-WC2) and lying adjacent to an important group of trees recognised as deciduous woodland Priority Habitat. The site is also identified by the Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre as part of a Biodiversity Opportunity Area. In Palestine, the Report identifies that all site options (under Options 2 and 3) intersect biodiversity opportunity areas. This coincides with the National Habitat Network which identifies that the sites intersect a 'Network Expansion Zone' which stretches north-south across the neighbourhood area in the west.
- 6.9 Overall Option 1 is not considered likely to lead to significant effects in relation to biodiversity. Option 2 has the potential to avoid significant effects arising by allocating small-scale development (of less than 50 homes at any of the given site options) and avoiding the allocation of Site 326 or providing mitigation to avoid significant effects arising (in relation to established wildlife corridors and important species on/ adjacent to the site). Option 3 which would trigger a need for further consultation with Natural England, and consideration through a HRA process. The potential for significant effects is therefore greater and uncertainty is noted at this stage in the absence of more detailed assessment. Given the potential to avoid impacts entirely under Option 1, this Option is considered to rank best, followed by Option 2 which may require further mitigation. Option 3 is ranked last given the greater potential for impacts and uncertainty noted in relation to significant effects.

Climate change

- 6.10 In relation to flood risk, Wallop Brook flows through Over Wallop south of Station Road, though none of the proposed sites under Options 2 and 3 directly intersect an area of flood risk, Site 326 lies adjacent to an area at medium risk of fluvial flooding and low risk of surface water flooding, where future-proofing mitigation would be recommended. Development on valley sides in Over Wallop (Option 3) should also consider any off-site flood pressures on existing development that sits within the valley and provide mitigation as necessary. Palestine is not affected by fluvial or surface water flood risk areas. No significant effects in relation to flood risk are anticipated under any of the options.
- 6.11 In relation to climate change mitigation, it is recognised that Option 1 does not propose allocation sites, avoiding any direct increases in emissions within the plan area (and the potential for significant effects). All sites being considered under Options 2 and 3 are settlement edge sites that provide connectivity to main settlement areas. Development in Over Wallop is supported by relatively good access to local services and facilities, whilst development in Palestine is well connected to a rail station. By promoting development within the existing settlement boundaries, Option 1 has greater potential to ensure connectivity, reduce reliance on the private vehicle, and manage local impacts by means of

small-scale growth. Larger scale growth (Option 3) has greater potential to lead to traffic and congestion impacts, though equally the scale of development provides greater opportunities (through economies of scale) to mitigate such impacts and provide more measures to better connect sites (such as new footpath connections). Effects in relation to climate mitigation under Options 2 and 3 are thus considered unlikely to be of significance.

- 6.12 Considering the above, no significant effects are considered likely under any option. Option 1 is ranked best as it avoids any direct increase in emissions in the settlement areas. Both Options 2 and 3 propose relatively well-connected development and Option 3 is considered to rank marginally better than Option 2 as the slightly larger-scale proposals at individual sites provide greater opportunities to deliver benefits such as new open spaces which increase climate resilience.

Community wellbeing

- 6.13 In relation to community wellbeing, Option 1 performs well in relation to protecting settlement character and identity by restricting future growth to small-scale sites within the identified settlement boundaries of Over Wallop and Palestine. Supported by a design code this option could allow the settlement to grow more organically and protect the quality of life for existing and future residents.
- 6.14 Options 2 and 3 perform notably well in relation to supporting local housing needs, particularly housing type, size, and tenure needs if supported by appropriate policy directions. All development sites proposed under Options 2 and 3 connect well with the existing settlement boundaries and settlement offer. Option 3, by means of larger scale development proposals also provide greater potential for development benefits such as new green spaces or community facilities.
- 6.15 Overall, all options are considered likely to support positive effects of significance in relation to community wellbeing. By targeting the identified housing needs however, Options 2 and 3 are ranked marginally better than Option 1. Option 3 is also ranked better than Option 2 given the greater housing contribution under this option and greater potential for development benefits.

Historic environment

- 6.16 Development in Over Wallop is considered far more constrained in relation to designated heritage assets than development in Palestine. Though there is a need for appropriate archaeological assessment prior to any development at either settlement area.
- 6.17 At Over Wallop, all sites under Options 2 and 3 are constrained by the settings of the designated Conservation Area and nearby listed buildings. Most notably, Site 326 is greenfield land falling partially within the Conservation Area which is noted within the Conservation Area Appraisal as an important open area.
- 6.18 Options 2 and 3 could avoid significant effects arising in relation to the historic environment by directing development to Palestine only. Any development within Over Wallop is considered for potential negative effects of significance at this stage (as currently highlighted in the summary table under Options 2 and

3), and mitigation measures would need to be considered. As Option 2 includes Site 326 within the Conservation Area, this option is ranked last. Option 1 is ranked best overall, reflecting its potential to avoid significant impacts entirely by not allocating sites.

Landscape

- 6.19 By not allocating sites for development and taking a permissive policy approach to small-scale sites within the existing settlement boundary Option 1 has good potential to avoid significant effects arising in relation to landscape.
- 6.20 Options 2 and 3 involve greenfield development at the settlement edge that has greater potential to impact landscape character and quality. Despite this, given that the landscape surrounding the settlement areas is not designated, no significant effects are considered likely. Most notably, Site 326 is proposed Important Green Space that supports a landscape gap between Over Wallop and Middle Wallop and Sites 87, 198/ 199 and 343 form part of a significant gap in the Parish Wildlife and Biodiversity Report, the loss of which could lead to minor negative effects in relation to landscape objectives. Options 2 and 3 also have greater potential to affect identified important local views in new development areas – most notably at Over Wallop (in particular, at Site 326 under Option 2, and Sites 325 and 327 under Option 3).
- 6.21 Overall, no significant effects are considered likely under of the Options, but Option 1 is ranked best as the option is most likely to minimise landscape impacts. Option 3 would involve larger scale development sites and thus a greater loss of greenfield land at the settlement edge than Option 2 and for this reason it is ranked last.

Water quality

- 6.22 Only one site lies close to a waterbody (Wallop Brook); Site 326 in Over Wallop. Whilst the site is separated by Station Road, mitigation would be required to ensure to polluted water run-off affect the chemical and ecological quality of Wallop Brook. Improved drainage systems at Station Road may even lead to water quality benefits but further drainage assessment would be required to determine this. Overall, no significant effects are considered likely under any of the options but Option 2 is ranked last as it would require mitigation.

7. Developing the preferred approach

- 7.1 The OWNP Steering Group provide the following reasoning for continuing with the preferred approach (Option 1):

“Option 1 remains the preferred approach for the plan, it promotes a reasonable scale of development appropriate to the area and contained within identified settlement boundaries. Of the options tested, Option 1 best aligns with the agreed plan objectives outlined for development and design and consultation feedback to date. The approach will continue to protect the landscape of the neighbourhood area and retain important views which have been identified as part of the plan process. Options to allocate land outside the settlement boundary are constrained by sensitive heritage settings at Over Wallop, a lack of safe active travel connections between Over Wallop and Palestine, and biodiversity in the vicinity of Palestine”

Part 2: What are the SEA findings at this stage?

8. Introduction (to Part 2)

8.1 The aim of this section of the Environmental Report is to present appraisal findings and recommendations in relation to the current ‘submission’ version of the OOWNP. This section presents:

- An appraisal of the current version of the OOWNP under the six SEA theme headings (Chapter 9).
- Consideration of potential cumulative effects (Chapter 9); and
- The overall conclusions at this current stage and recommendations for the next stage of plan-making (Chapter 10).

8.2 This introductory chapter outlines the draft plan policies and the methodology for the appraisal.

Draft plan policies

8.3 The OOWNP puts forward 24 policies to guide development in the neighbourhood area, as identified in Table 8.1.

Table 8.1: OOWNP policies

Reference	Policy Name
EL P1	Conservation Areas
EL P2	Listed Buildings and Locally Important Heritage Assets
EL P3	Archaeology and Scheduled Ancient Monuments
EL P4	Important Views
EL P5	Public Rights of Way
EL P6	Trees and Hedgerows
EL P7	Settlement Character and Coalescence
EL P8	Local Green Spaces
EL P9	Biodiversity
EL P10	Water Courses
EL P11	Dark Night Skies
EL P12	Air and Noise Pollution
EL P13	Water Pollution
DD P1	New Housing Development
DD P2	Affordable and Community-led Housing
DD P3 A, B, C, D	Design Principles
DD P4	Flood Management
IC P1	Highways – Sustainable Travel
IC P2	Highways and Traffic

Reference	Policy Name
IC P3	Quiet Lanes
IC P4	Community Infrastructure and Services
IC P5	Renewable Energy
IC P6	Local Business
IC P7	Community Facilities

Methodology

- 8.4 The assessment identifies and evaluates 'likely significant effects' on the baseline, drawing on the sustainability objectives identified through scoping (see Table 3.1) as a methodological framework.
- 8.5 Every effort is made to predict effects accurately; however, this is inherently challenging given the strategic nature of the policies under consideration and understanding of the baseline (now and in the future under a 'no plan' scenario) that is inevitably limited. Given uncertainties there is a need to make assumptions, e.g., in relation to plan implementation and aspects of the baseline that might be impacted. Assumptions are made cautiously and explained within the text (with the aim of striking a balance between comprehensiveness and conciseness). In many instances, given reasonable assumptions, it is not possible to predict 'significant effects', but it is possible to comment on merits (or otherwise) of the draft plan in more general terms.
- 8.6 Finally, it is important to note that effects are predicted taking account of the criteria presented within Schedule 1 of the SEA Regulations. So, for example, account is taken of the probability, duration, frequency, and reversibility of effects as far as possible. Cumulative effects are also considered, i.e., the potential for the Neighbourhood Plan to impact an aspect of the baseline when implemented alongside other plans, programmes, and projects. These effect 'characteristics' are described within the assessment as appropriate.

9. Assessment of the draft plan

Biodiversity

- 9.1 Porton Down is in the west of the neighbourhood area (NA) and is both internationally and nationally designated. Land defined as Priority Habitat and a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) is also located within the NA. A Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) has been developed in support of the OOWNP which concluded no likely significant effects and no need for Appropriate Assessment, predominantly given that the OOWNP does not allocate sites and thereby removes the mechanism for negative interaction with designated sites.
- 9.2 Considering the key sensitivities listed above, one of the key objectives within the OOWNP (objective EL7) is to conserve and enhance the natural environment and biodiversity of the NA. This is recognised and acknowledged throughout several OOWNP policies which will 1) help limit potential effects on features and areas of ecological interest and 2) support the resilience of green infrastructure networks.
- 9.3 Whilst the OOWNP is not allocating, future development will likely come forward in the form of small infill sites within the settlement boundaries of Over Wallop and Palestine. These areas fall into the Impact Risk Zones (IRZs) of three separate Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs). IRZs are a GIS tool/dataset which map zones around each SSSI according to the sensitivities of the features for which it is notified. They specify the types and thresholds of development that have potential adverse impacts, including residential, rural-residential, and rural non-residential. Whilst the sites within the settlement boundary overlap with SSSI IRZs, the total amount and type of development to be brought forward is not likely to exceed the IRZ thresholds at any locations. Specifically, none of the IRZs identify residential development of less than 50 new dwellings as having potential for adverse effects.
- 9.4 Nevertheless, Policies within the OOWNP pay close attention to preserving the integrity of SSSI's within the NA. Specifically, Policy EL P10 stipulates that: *“proposals that impact on the source of the Wallop Brook, which ultimately forms part of the tributary of the River Test SSSI, should evidence that its character and biodiversity will be protected and enhanced.”*
- 9.5 An environmental net gain principle for development is embedded within the goals and policies of the Environment Act¹⁰ (which received Royal Assent in November 2021). Schedule 14 of the Act makes provision for biodiversity gain to be a condition of planning permission in England. In this regard, several policies within the OOWNP recognise the need for net gain including Policy EL P9 – Biodiversity, which sets out the need for future proposals to deliver a biodiversity net gain of at least 10%.
- 9.6 The nature, scale, timing, and duration of some development activities can result in the disturbance of protected species. This can include effects of poor air quality on designated sites, and severance of ecological networks from new development areas. In this respect, the OOWNP also sets out provisions which

¹⁰ GOV.UK (2021): 'Environment Act', [online] available to access via [this link](#)

will support and enhance habitats, species, and ecological networks. For example, Policy EL P6 – Trees and Hedgerows, ensures that trees not to be retained as a result of the development should be replaced at a minimum planting ratio of three new trees for every non-woodland tree removed.

- 9.7 Recognising this, Policy EL P9 seeks to prevent the unnecessary loss of mature and veteran trees and requires the creation of new wetland in appropriate areas. These provisions will safeguard and enhance areas which are likely to provide roosting and foraging sites for protected species, maintaining habitat connectivity and reducing fragmentation.
- 9.8 Ecological networks will also be strengthened through Policy EL P8, which only supports development where the integrity of Local Green Spaces remain intact. It is anticipated that the provision of this policy (in its current form) is likely to enhance the natural environment of the NA, even if no specific targets are mentioned.
- 9.9 Overall, OOWNP policies should help ensure that ecological sensitivities are appropriately considered during the planning, construction, and operational phases for new development proposals which come forward within settlement boundaries during the plan period, whilst also delivering net gains. On this basis, **broadly neutral effects** are concluded as most likely.

Climate change

- 9.10 The extent to which the OOWNP can support climate change mitigation efforts is dependent (in part) on a distribution strategy which promotes development at locations in closer proximity to the existing services, facilities, and transport connections in the NA. The permissive policy approach to development within settlement boundaries should therefore ensure a good level of connectivity with the settlement offer of either Over Wallop or Palestine.
- 9.11 Several policies within the OOWNP, consider the impact that development will have on local services, facilities, and the environment. Key Policies in this regard are Policy IC P4 – community Infrastructure and Services; Policy IC P1 Highways – Sustainable Travel; and Policy DD P3 – Design Principles, which seek to integrate new development.
- 9.12 Further, Policy EL P5 supports the creation of new Public Rights of Way (or permissive routes). This will help improve connectivity within the NA, further reduce the reliance on vehicles, and contribute towards reducing emissions. As such, new development that may come forward has the potential to limit the need to travel by car to local facilities for some day-to-day activities (and lower associated greenhouse gas emissions).
- 9.13 Climate change is already causing overheating in buildings, and this is likely to get worse in the future. Accordingly, Policy DD P3, promotes the appropriate use of low carbon heating and cooling techniques. This will reduce impacts on climate change by minimising internal heat generation through energy efficient design. This concept is further supported by Policy IC P5 Renewable Energy, and collectively, both policies support one of the key objectives of the OOWNP (Objective DD5): promoting energy conservation and supply from renewable sources.

- 9.14 The long-term impact of climate change with milder, wetter winters means that development without appropriate surface water and drainage mitigations may make flooding events more frequent. This is particularly true for the NA, which is home to a chalk stream running through the entire length of Over Wallop village. With reference to adapting to the effects of climate change, the OOWNP recognises that developments should, wherever possible, be sympathetic to the surrounding landscape while avoiding development on flood plains and areas at risk from seasonal flooding from springs and ground water.
- 9.15 Recognising this vulnerability, Policy DD P4 – Flood Management stipulates that development must ensure that water run-off and foul water drainage do not impact the Wallop Brook or its source and that effective Sustainable urban Drainage System (SuDS) should be implemented in all designs. The policies listed above will help ensure that development within the NA will not impede the flow or quality of local water courses.
- 9.16 More broadly, in relation to adapting to the effects of climate change, open spaces and habitats within the OOWNP area are protected through the provisions of Policy EL P8. These policy provisions will positively respond to the potential effects of climate change (particularly from extreme weather events) through providing summer shading, shelter, and reducing surface water run-off issues. It is also anticipated that the provisions of the NPPF and Local Plan policies will help to guide development away from the areas at highest risk of flooding, along with objective DD4 in the OOWNP: *“To conserve and enhance the natural environment by managing flood risk and by assessing the environmental impact of any new development.”*
- 9.17 Considering the above, no significant effects are considered likely in relation to climate change. **Minor positive effects** are concluded as most likely given the identified measures to improve climate resilience in the NA.

Community wellbeing

- 9.18 Over Wallop ranks in the top 10% of most deprived areas when it comes to physical proximity of local services. Therefore, a key aspect of the OOWNP is to ensure that the provision of community facilities for its residents. As such, Policy IC P7, encourages the retention, improvement, or reuse of community assets to maintain a vibrant community spirit, and includes a list of community facilities which are highly valued by residents such as ‘Wallops Parish Hall’ and ‘St Peter’s Church’.
- 9.19 OOWNP policies are therefore consistent with the NPPF (paragraph 93), which encourages planning policies and decisions to *“plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities”* and *“ensure an integrated approach to considering the location of housing, economic uses and community facilities and services.”* Other key policies in this respect are IC P4 – Community Infrastructure and Services and Policy DD P2 – Affordable and Community-led Housing.
- 9.20 Based on the results of the residents’ surveys and business survey, there is broad consensus that the economy of the Parish should sustain employment. This is reflected in policy IC P6 – Local Business, which seeks to provide for

expansion or growth of existing or new rural businesses which generates employment for local people. This policy helps ensure that farming and equestrian facilities and interests are supported, which is highly valued in the NA according to the Parish survey¹¹.

- 9.21 With regards to the deprivation score for the parish of Over Wallop, when compared to the rest of Test Valley, Over Wallop ranks 24,711th out of 32,844 areas across the country. This places the parish in the top 30% least deprived areas in the country.
- 9.22 More broadly, policies and proposals have a strong emphasis on delivering public realm improvements (including through green infrastructure provision). Green infrastructure provides space for recreation and relaxation, and access to nature has been evidenced to improve people's health and wellbeing, through encouraging healthy outdoor recreation and relaxation¹². Key policies in this respect include EL P8 – Local Green Spaces and Policy EL P4 – Important Views. This will support the physical and mental health and wellbeing of the local community.
- 9.23 With reference to new housing, policies such as DD P1 – New Housing Development, supports an approach which seeks to deliver sustainable development which is sensitive to environmental constraints, and which is intended to meet specific housing requirements and other community objectives.
- 9.24 Policies and proposals within the OOWNP have a strong emphasis on delivering public realm improvements. Moreover, the OOWNP seeks to promote the economic vitality of the Parish by supporting employment opportunities, chiefly through Policy IC P6, which helps preserve the NA's vibrant farming community. Considering these points, **significant positive effects** are considered a likely outcome in relation to this SEA theme.

Historic Environment

- 9.25 The NA has a rich historic environment, recognised through the diversity of features and areas that are nationally and locally valued for their heritage interest. There are 95 Listed buildings scattered throughout the NA; five scheduled monuments; and two conservation areas which incorporate the majority of Over Wallop village.
- 9.26 These sensitivities are reflected by policies which focus on the conservation and enhancement of both designated and non-designated heritage assets, and their settings. Namely, EL P2 – Listed Buildings and Locally Important Heritage Assets and Policy EL P3 – Archaeology and Scheduled Ancient Monuments.
- 9.27 Policy EL P1 directly addresses the constraints associated with the NA's Conservation Area and will benefit this theme over the long-term. Specifically, this policy states that the open spaces, and features of importance within the Conservation Area should be preserved and enhanced through future development. These provisions support the views of local residents, with 72%

¹¹ Respondents indicated the most support for farming, the shops and pubs, with 85% of respondents agreeing that local businesses are an important (or very important) part of the community.

¹² Natural England (2021): 'Green Infrastructure Network Framework' [online] available to access via: [this link](#)

of respondents to the Parish survey (Q4) feeling that protecting the character of the Conservation Areas was of “High importance”.

- 9.28 Policy EL P7 – Settlement Character and Coalescence is also supportive of the historic environment, identifying that proposals are required to maintain the distinctive character of each settlement. This is reinforced by Policy DD P3 – Design Principles, which stipulates that consideration should be made to the setting of designated heritage assets (refer to EL P7 a, viii). Direct links are also made to the Design Guide, which has sought to identify key features that contribute to the historic character of the Parish. Given this document sets out a comprehensive range of provisions relating to the built environment, this will help provide an appropriate basis for the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment surrounding any new developments (be that windfall, infill, or larger proposals) which may be brought forward during the plan period.
- 9.29 More broadly, delivering net gains in biodiversity and facilitating green infrastructure enhancements can have beneficial impacts in terms of the built environment, and by extension, the setting of the historic environment. Key policies in this regard include EL P8 and EL P9.
- 9.30 Collectively these policies have the potential to support and strengthen the ‘Vision for Over Wallop Parish’, which seeks to conserve and enhance the unique mix of an historic village, Conservation Area, agriculture, and small-scale businesses within a sparsely populated, tranquil, and sustainable rural setting. Considering this, **minor positive effects** are concluded as most likely.

Landscape

- 9.31 The spatial strategy of the OOWNP seeks to maximise the use of available brownfield sites within the settlement boundaries of Over Wallop and Palestine to reduce landscape impacts. This is recognised by objective DD3 which seeks to promote the development of existing derelict/disused buildings, as well as Policy EL P7 – Settlement Character and Coalescence, which promotes brownfield redevelopment within the existing settlement boundary. Further, Policy EL P8 states that proposed development on the NA’s Local Green Spaces will be managed in a manner consistent with that of designated Green Belt Development and will only be considered acceptable in very special circumstances. These policies are central in ensuring that all areas of landscape value, including open countryside, are enhanced, and protected, which is a key objective for the OOWNP and expressed wish of residents.
- 9.32 Landscape character plays an important part in understanding the relationship between people and place, identifying recognisable and distinct patterns which make one area different from another. Landscape character can assist in the assessment of the likely significance of effects of change resulting from new development areas, both in visual and amenity terms. The relationship between the NA and the Thruxton and Danebury Chalk Downland and the hills of Porton Down, for example, is a defining feature and contributes strongly to the NA’s sense of place and quality of its environment. In this context, proposals within the OOWNP have a strong focus on protecting the sense of place and special qualities which contribute to its character.
- 9.33 Through the residents’ surveys, candidate views within and around the NA, with several around Palestine, have been identified as being particularly important.

This is recognised though Policy EL P4 – Important Views, which seeks to consider height and massing through design. This will help to preserve (or enhance) the local character of the landscape and responds positively to the ‘Important Views’ identified in the OOWNP, including Palestine’s linear views south. OOWNP policies have a strong focus on protecting and enhancing landscape character, the quality of the public realm, sense of place, and local distinctiveness. Key policies in this respect include Policy EL P11 – Dark Night Skies and Policy DD P3 – Design Principles. Policy DD P3, will also help preserve and respect the prevailing density in each of the NA’s (15) character areas and sub-areas and sets out criteria that proposals will be expected to meet. This includes, making materials compatible with those used in the immediate area and respecting the character of the street scene by considering spacing between buildings.

- 9.34 Alongside the Over Wallop Parish Character Appraisal and Design Code which accompanies the OOWNP, these policies will help to facilitate opportunities for high quality design and layout to be incorporated within new development areas.
- 9.35 With future development focussed within existing settlement boundaries, long-term protection for the surrounding countryside is expected. This is supported by Policy EL P7, which stresses the need to retain the settlement character of the landscape and pays close consideration to avoiding coalescence, such as between Over Wallop and Middle Wallop. This policy also identifies green gaps to be retained between Over Wallop and Middle Wallop, between Over Wallop/ Middle Wallop and Kentsboro, and between Palestine and Grateley.
- 9.36 The OOWNP policy framework does not propose development sites but delivers a permissive policy approach to sustainable development within settlement boundaries and places much emphasis on high-quality design in development, including with the supporting Design Guide. Notably, detailed guidance is provided in relation to the built form, the street scene, and the protection of key views, including protection for night skies though Policy EL P11. These detailed design parameters provide significant guidance for future development in the NA. On this basis, **minor positive effects** are concluded as most likely.

Water quality

- 9.37 New legal advice from Natural England recommends that new developments should only be permitted if they are nutrient neutral. However, this is a regional issue which is beyond the scope of the OOWNP to address. Screening has noted that the OOWNP intends to protect water quality, which is a focus for this theme. The Test Valley Revised Local Plan sets out the long-term spatial vision which avoids development near waterbodies, and the promoted application of SuDS. Accordingly, the OOWNP has a dedicated watercourses policy (EL P10) which includes provisions to help improve the natural environment around Wallop Brook and its catchment.
- 9.38 This is emphasised by Policy EL P13 – Water Pollution, which stipulates that increased intensity of farming will be required to confirm with a nitrogen budget. It should be noted that this policy has been requested by TVBC, in support of the emerging local plan which supports nutrient management of the Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Solent Maritime SAC.

- 9.39 Recognising this vulnerability, Policy DD P4 – Flood Management, stipulates that development must ensure that water run-off and foul water drainage do not impact the Wallop Brook. These policies will help ensure that development within the NA will not impede the flow of local water courses and perform positively in retaining the integrity of the NA's waterbodies.
- 9.40 The additional policy provisions in relation to water quality are considered likely to lead to **minor positive effects** (considering that the OWNP does not allocate sites for development).

Cumulative effects

- 9.41 The Test Valley Borough Revised Local Plan DPD (2011 – 2029) recognises Over Wallop (with Middle Wallop) and Palestine, and as 'rural villages' where small-scale development is acceptable in principle within the defined settlement boundaries. Alongside the provisions of the local plan and NPPF, the OWNP is not seeking to allocate sites for development but does seek to bring forward planning policies that will shape future development in certain areas of the Parish and has strong links to policies within the wider area. No negative cumulative impacts are therefore predicted.
- 9.42 Policy EL P13 – Water Pollution within the OWNP, is in accordance with the views of TVBC, and in support of nutrient management schemes emerging for the Solent and Southampton Water SPA and Solent Maritime SAC. Minor positive cumulative effects are anticipated from this additional policy support.

10. Conclusions and recommendations

- 10.1 Overall, no significant negative effects are concluded as likely in relation to the SEA themes explored through the appraisal. The positive planning for design quality, economic vitality, infrastructure enhancement, asset protection (both natural and built form), and water quality improvements are considered likely to lead to significant positive effects in relation to community wellbeing and minor positive effects in relation to climate change, historic environment, landscape, and water quality SEA themes. Neutral effects are concluded as most likely in relation to biodiversity, as whilst the plan is supportive of biodiversity enhancement, this is not over and above existing policy provisions (including 10% biodiversity net gains now regulated under the Environment Act).
- 10.2 No recommendations are made for the OWNP at this stage, particularly considering that no significant negative effects are associated with implementing the plan.

Part 3: What are the next steps?

11. Next steps

11.1 This part of the report explains the next steps that will be taken as part of plan-making and SEA.

Plan finalisation

11.2 Following consultation, responses received will be considered and the OWNP and SEA Environmental Report will be finalised for submission.

11.3 Following submission, the plan and supporting evidence will be published for further consultation, and then subjected to Independent Examination. At Independent Examination, the plan will be considered in terms of whether it meets the Basic Conditions for Neighbourhood Plans and is in general conformity with the Local Plan.

11.4 If the examination leads to a favourable outcome, the plan will then be subject to a referendum, organised by Test Valley Borough Council. If more than 50% of those who vote agree with the Neighbourhood Plan, then it will be 'made'. Once 'made', the plan will become part of the Development Plan for Test Valley, covering the defined neighbourhood area.

Monitoring

11.5 The SEA regulations require 'measures envisaged concerning monitoring' to be outlined in this report. This refers to the monitoring of likely significant effects of the Neighbourhood Plan to identify any unforeseen effects early and take remedial action as appropriate.

11.6 It is anticipated that monitoring of effects of the Neighbourhood Plan will be undertaken by Test Valley Borough Council as part of the process of preparing its Annual Monitoring Report (AMR). No significant negative effects are considered likely in the implementation of the OWNP that would warrant more stringent monitoring over and above that already undertaken by the Council.

Appendix A Regulatory requirements

As discussed in **Chapter 1**, Schedule 2 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans Regulations 2004 (the SEA Regulations) explains the information that must be contained in the Environmental Report; however, interpretation of Schedule 2 is not straightforward. **Table AA-1** links the structure of this report to an interpretation of Schedule 2 requirements, whilst **Table AA-2** explains this interpretation. **Table AA-3** identifies how and where within the Environmental Report the regulatory requirements have/ will be met.

Table AA-1 Questions answered by this Environmental Report, in-line with an interpretation of regulatory requirements

Environmental Report question	In line with the SEA Regulations, the report must include... ¹³
What's the scope of the SEA?	What is the plan seeking to achieve? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> An outline of the contents and main objectives of the plan.
	What is the sustainability 'context'? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relationship with other relevant plans and programmes. The relevant environmental protection objectives established at international or national level. Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan including those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance.
	What is the sustainability 'baseline'? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan. The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected. Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan including those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance.
	What are the key issues and objectives? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key problems/issues and objectives that should be a focus of (i.e., provide a 'framework' for) assessment.
What has plan-making / SEA involved up to this point?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outline reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with. The likely significant effects associated with alternatives. Outline reasons for selecting the preferred approach in-light of alternatives appraisal/a description of how environmental objectives and considerations are reflected in the current version of the plan.
What are the assessment findings at this stage?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The likely significant effects associated with the Regulation 14 version of the plan. The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects of implementing the Regulation 14 version of the plan.

¹³ NB this column does not quote directly from Schedule II of the Regulations. Rather, it reflects a degree of interpretation.

Environmental Report question

In line with the SEA Regulations, the report must include...¹³

What happens next?

- The next steps for the plan making /SEA process.

Table AA.2 Questions answered by the Environmental Report, in-line with an interpretation of regulatory requirements

<u>Schedule 2</u>	<u>Interpretation of Schedule 2</u>		
<i>The report must include...</i>	<i>The report must include...</i>		
(a) an outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan and relationship with other relevant plans and programmes;	An outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan and relationship with other relevant plans and programmes	i.e. answer - <i>What's the plan seeking to achieve?</i>	
(b) the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan	Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance	i.e. answer - <i>What's the 'context'?</i>	i.e. answer - <i>What's the scope of the SA?</i>
(c) the environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected;	The relevant environmental protection objectives, established at international or national level		
(d) any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan or programme including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance, such as areas designated pursuant to Directives 79/409/EEC and 92/43/EEC;	The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan	i.e. answer - <i>What's the 'baseline'?</i>	
(e) the environmental protection objectives, established at international, Community or Member State level, which are relevant to the plan and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation;	The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected		
(f) the likely significant effects on the environment including on issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors;	Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance	i.e. answer - <i>What are the key issues & objectives?</i>	
(g) the measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the plan;	Key environmental problems / issues and objectives that should be a focus of appraisal		
(h) an outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with and a description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties (such as technical deficiencies or lack of know-how) encountered in compiling the required information	An outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with (i.e. an explanation of the 'reasonableness of the approach')	i.e. answer - <i>What has Plan-making / SA involved up to this point?</i> [Part 1 of the Report]	
(i) a description of the measures envisaged concerning monitoring.	The likely significant effects associated with alternatives, including on issues such as... ... and an outline of the reasons for selecting the preferred approach in light of the alternatives considered / a description of how environmental objectives and considerations are reflected in the draft plan.		
	The likely significant effects associated with the draft plan	i.e. answer - <i>What are the assessment findings at this current stage?</i> [Part 2 of the Report]	
	The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects of implementing the draft plan		
	A description of the measures envisaged concerning monitoring	i.e. answer - <i>What happens next?</i> [Part 3 of the Report]	

Table AA.3 'Checklist' of how (throughout the SEA process) and where (within this report) regulatory requirements have been, are, and will be met.

Regulatory requirement	Discussion of how requirement is met
Schedule 2 of the regulations lists the information to be provided within the SA Report	
1. An outline of the contents, main objectives of the plan or programme, and relationship with other relevant plans and programmes;	Chapter 2 ('What is the plan seeking to achieve') presents this information.
2. The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan or programme;	These matters have been considered in detail through scoping work, which has involved dedicated consultation on a Scoping Report. The 'SEA framework' – the outcome of scoping – is presented within Chapter 3 ('What is the scope of the SEA?'). Key messages, established through a context and baseline review are also presented in Appendix B of this Environmental Report.
3. The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected;	
4. Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan or programme including those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance, such as areas designated pursuant to Directives 79/409/EEC and 92/43/EEC.;	
5. The environmental protection, objectives, established at international, Community or national level, which are relevant to the plan or programme and the way those objectives and any environmental, considerations have been considered during its preparation;	The SEA framework is presented within Chapter 3 ('What is the scope of the SEA'). Also, Appendix B presents key messages from the context review. With regards to explaining "how...considerations have been taken into account", Chapter 7 explains the Steering Group's 'reasons for supporting the preferred approach', i.e., explains how/ why the preferred approach is justified in light of alternatives appraisal.
6. The likely significant effects on the environment, including on issues such as biodiversity, population, human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air, climatic factors, material assets, cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, landscape and the interrelationship between the above factors. (Footnote: These effects should include secondary, cumulative, synergistic, short, medium and long-term permanent and temporary, positive and negative effects);	Chapter 6 presents alternatives appraisal findings (in relation to housing growth, which is a 'stand-out' plan policy area). Chapters 9 presents an appraisal of the plan. With regards to assessment methodology, Chapter 8 explains the role of the SEA framework/scope, and the need to consider the potential for various effect characteristics/ dimensions, e.g., timescale.
7. The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme;	The assessment highlights certain tensions between competing objectives, which might potentially be actioned by the Examiner, when finalising the plan. Also, specific recommendations are made in Chapter 10.
8. An outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with, and a description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties (such as technical deficiencies or lack of know-how) encountered in compiling the required information;	Chapters 4 and 5 deal with 'Reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with', in that there is an explanation of the reasons for focusing on particular issues and options. Also, Chapter 7 explains the Parish Council's 'reasons for selecting the preferred option' (in light of alternatives assessment).

9. Description of measures envisaged concerning monitoring in accordance with Art. 10;	Chapter 11 presents measures envisaged concerning monitoring.
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10.A non-technical summary of the information provided under the above headings	The NTS is provided at the beginning of this Environmental Report.
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The SA Report must be published alongside the Draft Plan, in accordance with the following regulations

authorities with environmental responsibility and the public, shall be given an early and effective opportunity within appropriate time frames to express their opinion on the Draft Plan or programme and the accompanying environmental report before the adoption of the plan or programme (Art. 6.1, 6.2)	At the current time, this Environmental Report is published alongside the Over Wallop Neighbourhood Plan, with a view to informing Regulation 14 consultation.
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The SA must be considered, alongside consultation responses, when finalising the plan.

The environmental report prepared pursuant to Article 5, the opinions expressed pursuant to Article 6 and the results of any transboundary consultations entered into pursuant to Article 7 shall be taken into account during the preparation of the plan or programme and before its adoption or submission to the legislative procedure.	Assessment findings presented within this Environmental Report, and consultation responses received, have been fed back to the Steering Group and have informed/ will continue to inform plan finalisation.
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Appendix B Scoping information

Linked to Chapter 3 of the Environmental Report, this appendix provides further scoping information.

Consultation responses

Statutory authorities were consulted in February 2023. Responses were received from Natural England and Historic England and are documented below. No response was received from the Environment Agency. TVBC were also invited to comment and provided a response which is also documented below.

Consultation response	Considerations
Natural England Georgie Findlay, Sustainable Development Lead Adviser Thames Solent Area Team	
<p>Over Wallop Parish Council - AECOM working on behalf of Parish Council - Over Wallop Neighbourhood Plan - SEA Scoping Report (Test Valley)</p> <p>Thank you for your consultation on the above dated 02 February 2023.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Natural England is a statutory consultee in neighbourhood planning and must be consulted on draft neighbourhood development plans by the Parish/Town Councils or Neighbourhood Forums where they consider our interests would be affected by the proposals made.</p>	<p>Thank you for your response, we note no specific comments are made but opportunities for the plan process are identified.</p>
Natural England has no specific comments to make on this neighbourhood plan SEA scoping.	
<p>However, Natural England would like to recommend the following opportunities to consider as part of the Neighbourhood plan development process.</p> <p>The Neighbourhood Plan states that no housing sites are allocated within the Neighbourhood Plan but, based on existing housing trends, it is considered that up to 15 dwellings identified in the Parish surveys within the remaining years would represent a sustainable form of development. It is anticipated that smaller housing developments and single dwellings will be the predominant form of development in the Neighbourhood Plan area. Therefore, it may be useful to consider a strategic approach to mitigating for any adverse impacts arising from additional housing at an early stage within the Neighbourhood Plan, or beneficial to consider the following opportunities.</p> <p>- Opportunities for the provision of Green Infrastructure</p> <p>There may be opportunities to deliver additional green infrastructure provision or enhance the quality of green infrastructure in Over Wallop through the Neighbourhood Plan process. Green infrastructure refers to the living network of green spaces, water and other environmental features in both urban and rural areas. It is often used in an urban context to provide multiple benefits including space for recreation, access to nature, flood storage and urban cooling to support climate change mitigation, food production, wildlife habitats and health and well-being improvements provided by trees, rights of way, parks, gardens, road verges, allotments, cemeteries, woodlands, rivers and wetlands. Green infrastructure is also relevant in a rural context, where it might additionally refer to the use of</p>	

Consultation response

Considerations

farmland, woodland, wetlands or other natural features to provide services such as flood protection, carbon storage or water purification.

Natural England's Green Infrastructure Framework provides evidence-based advice and tools on how to design, deliver and manage green infrastructure (GI). GI should create and maintain green liveable places that enable people to experience and connect with nature, and that offer everyone, wherever they live, access to good quality parks, greenspaces, recreational, walking and cycling routes that are inclusive, safe, welcoming, well-managed and accessible for all. GI provision should enhance ecological networks, support ecosystems services, and connect as a living network at local, regional, and national scales.

Development should be designed to meet the 15 Green Infrastructure Principles. The Green Infrastructure Standards can be used to inform the quality, quantity, and type of green infrastructure to be provided. Relevant aspects of local authority green infrastructure strategies should be delivered where appropriate.

GI mapping resources are available [here](#) and [here](#). These can be used to help assess deficiencies in greenspace provision and identify priority locations for new GI provision.

For further advice on the issues and opportunities that should be considered when preparing a Neighbourhood Plan, we refer you to the advice in the attached annex. For any further consultations on your plan, please contact: consultations@naturalengland.org.uk

Historic England

Louise Forsyth, Inspector of Historic Buildings and Area

OVER WALLOP NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (SEA) SCOPING OPINION

Thank you for consulting us on the above SEA Scoping Report.

We consider the report has identified an appropriate strategy for identifying designated and non-designated heritage assets, (including archaeology) and their settings within and surrounding the neighbourhood area. The designated heritage assets which are of most relevance to the development of the plan are identified forming an appropriate baseline against which to assess the plan's proposals. We support the SEA objective and assessment questions. We consider that the Scoping Report Historic environment section provides an appropriate framework for assessing significant effects on the historic environment.

Historic England strongly advises that conservation and archaeological advisers are closely involved throughout the preparation of the SEA of this plan. Historic England has produced guidance for all involved in undertaking SEA/SA exercises which gives advice on issues relating to the historic environment. This can be found [here](https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/sustainability-appraisal-and-strategic-environmental-assessment-advice-note-8/) <<https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/sustainability-appraisal-and-strategic-environmental-assessment-advice-note-8/>>

Thank you for your response, we note no specific comments are made and the proposed approach is supported.

Test Valley Borough Council (TVBC)

TVBC provided comments within the draft Scoping Report which are summarised by AECOM here:

- A need to acknowledge Salisbury Plain SAC

Many thanks for your response, these points have been considered in greater detail

Consultation response**Considerations**

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acknowledge that NE has provided advice on the impacts of nutrients from new development on internationally designated sites within and around the Solent. | through the subsequent appraisal stages. |
|--|--|

Key issues

The following key issues for each of the SEA themes that form the SEA framework have been established through scoping, noting that in the absence of site allocations the SEA themes of air quality, land and soil resources, water resources, and transportation and movement were scoped out of the assessment:

Biodiversity

Potential impact pathways and potential impacts at internationally designated biodiversity sites will be informed by a separate Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) process.

85.20% of the Porton Down SSSI unfavourable recovering. To maintain and improve the condition of biodiversity in the future, it will be important to not only protect this SSSI but to enhance any unfavourable units; utilising opportunities for net-gain where possible, as a recognised enhancement zone.

Climate change and flood risk

Whilst the OOWNP is not seeking to allocate sites for development, the screening process has recognised the plan intentions to support appropriate renewable energy development and implement policies that support resilience. In the absence of site allocations, flood risk is unlikely to be a focus for the SEA, but it is recognised that wider plan policies have the potential to affect the baseline in respect of climate change mitigation and adaptation.

CO₂ emissions associated with transport remain high in Test Valley (more than the domestic and industry and commercial totals combined in 2018), highlighting the importance of accessible development and the delivery of sustainable transport infrastructure, which the OOWNP can seek to address locally, particularly by strengthening active travel routes and opportunities to increase self-containment.

Community wellbeing

Over Wallop ranks in the top 10% of most deprived areas when it comes to physical proximity of local services, which measures the road distance to key community facilities like schools, supermarkets, GP surgeries and post offices. Over Wallop is also in the top 30% of most deprived areas in relation to the living environment domain; this is defined by the amount of houses with central heating as well as the proportion of social and private houses that are in a poor condition (as defined by the Decent Homes Standard).

Historic environment

The dense concentration of listed buildings in Over Wallop village presents a constraint to future development within the neighbourhood area. The OOWNP can help overcome this by ensuring that any development that comes forward during the

plan period is sensitive to the historic setting of the village in terms of design and layout, particularly in relation to the Over Wallop Conservation Area.

In addition to the Wallops Conservation Area Character Appraisal, the OOWNP presents an ideal opportunity to provide policy that protects the key characteristics of this area, and identifies the significance associated with different settings and non-designated assets.

Landscape

It will be important for the Over Wallop Neighbourhood Plan to protect the local landscape, including its coherence and characteristics. This will bring benefits to other SEA themes, including biodiversity and climate change, by maintaining features that contribute to the biodiversity network and climate mitigation.

Water quality

Given that the OOWNP is not looking to allocate sites for development, the plan is not expected to influence changes to land and soil resources or water resources. However, screening has noted that the plan intends to protect water quality with a dedicated watercourses policy. As such, water quality will be a focus for this theme.

