



Southwater Neighbourhood Development Plan

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA): Post Adoption Statement Nov 2021

The Southwater Neighbourhood Development Plan was 'made' on the 23 June 2021 and now forms part of the Development Plan for the determination of planning applications in the Southwater Parish.

This statement has been prepared in accordance with Regulation 16 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (16) (3) and (4), which require a statement to be produced on adoption of a plan or programme, to detail:

1. *'How environmental considerations have been integrated into the plan or programme?'*
2. *How the environmental report has been taken into account?*
3. *How opinions expressed in response to*
 - a. *The invitation referred to in regulation 13(2)d;*
 - b. *Action taken by the responsible authority in accordance with regulation 13(4);**Have been taken into account*
4. *How the results of any consultations entered into under regulation 14(4) have been taken into account;*
5. *The reasons for choosing the plan or programme as adopted – in light of other reasonable alternatives dealt with;*
6. *The measures that are to be taken to monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the plan or programme.'*

This statement addresses each of these points in turn:

1. How have environmental (sustainability) considerations been integrated into the Made Neighbourhood Development Plan?

The Draft Scoping Report was prepared in Feb 2016 and provided a collection of baseline data for the Parish. The document sought to establish the key sustainability challenges facing the Parish of an economic, environmental and social nature. The Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) for the Southwater Parish Neighbourhood Plan sets out the baseline information about Southwater as the Neighbourhood Plan Area. The Plan identifies the environmental issues affecting the plan area. As required by the

regulations, SEA has been developed as an iterative process and has informed decision making at every stage of developing the Southwater Neighbourhood Plan. Additionally, the Southwater Neighbourhood Plan SEA has been informed through detailed Evidence Base Documents which identify key plans, policies, and guidance, which have influenced the content of the Neighbourhood Plan. The issues identified informed the setting of environmental objectives (Fig 1. 9 Sustainability Objectives), which the objectives for the Southwater Neighbourhood Plan were assessed against. These objectives have helped ensure that the most sustainable location options were identified. The identification of environmental issues also helped shape the policy requirements for each site that is allocated or identified in the Southwater Neighbourhood Plan. Below are the 9 objectives in the Southwater SEA report to which all allocations and policies have been assessed against.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) To provide high quality Housing in sustainable locations to meet the needs of existing and future residents with an appropriate range of size, types and tenures (ii) To ensure everyone has access to appropriate, affordable community facilities including facilities for the elderly, education, childcare, leisure and recreation facilities and public open spaces. (iii) To create a sustainable community through the promotion of community engagement, the development of a sense of ownership and a sense of place and the provision of appropriate infrastructure. To create a safe, secure and healthy environment. (iv) To protect and enhance the quality and level of biodiversity; natural habitats; and, the best and most versatile agricultural land, within Southwater and where appropriate provide new green infrastructure. (v) To conserve and enhance the quality of landscape and character in Southwater and the quality and distinctiveness of the historical and cultural environment of the Parish. (vi) To maintain flood risk; promote the use of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS); and, maintain or improve water quality. (vii) To encourage sustainable design and construction through the promotion of exemplary sustainable design standards. To increase energy efficiency and the proportion of energy generated from renewable and low carbon sources. To maximise opportunities for the reduction, reuse and recycling of waste in Southwater/ Parish (viii) To improve accessibility to and within the parish by ensuring the transport network can accommodate any future growth and by encouraging a range of sustainable transport options, including walking, cycling and public transport. (ix) To encourage vitality, vibrancy and overall stability within the local Southwater economy and to improve the availability of opportunities for local employment. To maintain and improve the local retail offer across the Parish including the town centre of Southwater. |
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Fig 1. Southwater Sustainability Objectives

2. How has the SEA Report been taken into account through the preparation of the Made Neighbourhood Development Plan?

The production of the Sustainability Appraisal Report incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) for the Southwater Neighbourhood Development Plan 2017-2031 has been an iterative process, carried out concurrently with the development of the Southwater Neighbourhood Development Plan. The SA/SEA process began with the production of the Scoping Report for Southwater Village (Feb 2016).

The SEA process contributed to the development of the Southwater Neighbourhood Plan by providing an assessment of all reasonable policy and potential site options. In this assessment, the SA Framework was used to compare each policy option alongside reasonable alternatives (Section 7), and the option of having no Neighbourhood Plan at all. 6 options were considered with Option 5 taken forward with the Neighbourhood Plan. The significant effects of the options were identified and those which had the most potentially negative impacts were not recommended for inclusion within the Southwater Neighbourhood Plan. The outcome of this assessment is documented within Section 6 and Section 7, the Assessment of Neighbourhood Plan allocation and policies in the final SA/SEA Report.

For certain policies, potential negative impacts on the environment were identified; however, it was possible to overcome these impacts through the use of appropriate mitigation.

The Southwater SA/SEA Report demonstrates how sustainability considerations have been taken into account and provides an audit trail and formal statement on the consideration and assessment of all policy options.

3. How have opinions expressed in response to the following matters been taken into account in the production of the ‘Made’ Neighbourhood Development Plan?

- a. Various consultation has been undertaken with members of the public and statutory consultees during the Scoping Report, Regulation 14 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) draft-submission consultation and Regulation 16 submission-draft consultation. All comments are documented in the Consultation Statement and there has been extensive consultation with local stakeholders.

4. How the results of any consultations entered into under regulation 14(4) (cross-boundary consultations with neighbouring Parishes/ Districts) have been taken into account;

Key Environmental Bodies

The Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive requires that the authorities referred to in article 6(3) shall be consulted when deciding upon the scope and level of detail of the information to be included in the SA/SEA (Environmental) Report. In England the statutory consultees are the Environment Agency, English Heritage (now known as Historic England) and Natural England. The Statutory Consultees, together with any locally significant

stakeholders were consulted on the SEA. Option 5 had the potential negatively impact a Grade II* Listed Building but following further consultation and a meeting onsite with Historic England it is considered through careful design and site layout these harms can be mitigated and minimised to an extent that they would be considered acceptable.

Public Consultation

The SA/SEA of the Southwater Neighbourhood Plan was consulted upon along the Southwater Neighbourhood Plan for a minimum six weeks at the Neighbourhood Plan Regulation 14 stage, on 22 June 2019 – 17 August 2019.

Neighbouring Authorities

All neighbouring authorities was consulted on the initial scope of the SA/SEA and the Regulation 14 and 16 Consultations.

All comments are recorded in the Consultation Statement. Compliance with the Basic Conditions is recorded within the Basic Conditions Statement.

5. What were the reasons for choosing the Plan as adopted – in light of other reasonable alternatives dealt with?

The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes 2004 (12) (2) requires environmental reports to examine reasonable alternatives for the plan or programme whilst taking into account the objectives and scope of the plan or programme. This statement is required to set out the reasons for choosing the plan or programme as ‘made’ in light of other reasonable alternatives dealt with.

The final assessment in the SEA demonstrates that the policies in the SNP make a positive contribution towards the achievement of sustainable development. They are expected to have a number of positive effects. Mitigation has been applied where negative effects are present and all are considered capable of being mitigated in full. In total, 6 options were considered and assessed. Option 5 was considered the most appropriate option to take forward. By grouping all development into one location new large scale development would be contained in one area and not ‘spread’ across the parish. This was considered to have some benefits as any impacts could be more readily mitigated against. A larger development on land such as this with few costs is also likely to result in a more viable development. This, it is hoped would then mean it can be policy compliant with regards to affordable housing and other policy requirements.

Option 5 does have the potential to negatively impact a Grade II* Listed Building but it is considered through careful design these harms can be mitigated and minimised to an extent that they would be considered acceptable. However, the principle potential negative impact would be on the Worthing Road (north and south) with vehicular movements to/from the A24. The option would also not resolve the issue surrounding poor vehicular links with the railway station at Christs Hospital. That said it abuts the Downs Link and there would be potential for this to be improved so that a direct cycle route to the station can be provided. Option 5 offers an improvement on Option 4 as it would ensure that all new homes are within 15 minute walking distance of Lintot Square ensuring the local economy is supported by the new development and is a key objective of the SNP.

6. What measures are to be taken to monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the plan or programme?

The SEA process does not finish with the publication of the document. Under Regulation 17 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulation 2004, the SNP will be subject to on-going monitoring. This will be carried out by jointly Southwater Parish Council and Horsham District Council. The latter will monitor the continuing suitability of the Neighbourhood Plan's policies, including in terms of significant environmental effects, through its Local Plan Monitoring Report.

The policies associated with the site allocations in the SNP will be monitored by the Parish Council through its assessment of the planning applications for the allocated sites. The Parish Council will expect the conditions associated with granting of planning permission by HDC to fully reflect those policies.