

Mr R Drabble
Sustainability Policy Officer
South Downs National Park Authority
South Downs Centre
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West Sussex, GU29 9DH.

Our ref: HD/P3331/01
Your ref:
Telephone 01483 252040
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8th March 2016

Dear Ray,

East Meon Neighbourhood Plan SEA Screening Opinion

Thank you for your telephone call and subsequent e-mail of 23rd February which I am treating as a formal consultation seeking our opinion on whether the East Meon Neighbourhood Plan is likely to have significant environmental effects in accordance with section 9(2)(b) of The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.

East Meon parish has a conservation area and 75 listed building entries, including the grade I The Court House and Church of All Saints and three grade II* buildings. It is, therefore, a sensitive historic environment.

We note that the Plan proposes to allocate five sites for development. According to our records, there are no designated heritage assets on or nearby these sites, nor do they lie within the Conservation Area. We do not consider therefore that the development of these proposed sites would be likely to have significant effects on designated heritage assets.

As always, it is important to consider the potential for non-scheduled archaeological remains, including any identified on the Historic Environment Record. We note that Hampshire County Archaeologist has confirmed that there are no archaeological sites currently recorded within any of those allocations nor any substantial archaeological sites within their vicinities. Mr Hopkins has further confirmed that although he nevertheless anticipates some archaeological issues arising, he considers that these are likely to be limited.

Therefore, on the basis of the information currently available, we consider that the East Meon Neighbourhood Plan is unlikely to have any significant effects on the historic environment and therefore that it does **not** need to be subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment. However, should there be any change in the sites proposed to be allocated, we ask to be informed and we reserve the right to reconsider this position.

In addition, although a formal SEA is not believed to be necessary, we would nevertheless suggest that the Plan is subject to a form of sustainability appraisal to assess the potential site allocation against a set of agreed criteria and to assess and monitor the Plan's policies and proposals against a set of agreed objectives.

We also suggest that it might be appropriate, in the light of Mr Hopkins's comments, for the neighbourhood plan to require an archaeological investigation of the proposed sites prior to development commencing, or, at least, to advise that the permissions for the development of these sites, if and when granted, should be subject to a condition requiring an archaeological watching brief.

We hope these comments are helpful.

Thank you again for consulting Historic England.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Martin Small". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Martin Small
Principal Adviser, Historic Environment Planning
(Bucks, Oxon, Berks, Hampshire, IoW, South Downs National Park and Chichester)

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