

# **Final Screening Report for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of Cheddar Neighbourhood Development Plan**

May 2017

This Screening Report is based on the content of the “Cheddar Neighbourhood Plan – Vision and Policies (Document 9)” that was published for public consultation between September and November 2016.

If necessary it will be refreshed when the draft NDP is published (this should only be necessary if there is a major change to the purpose and content of the NDP). If such a refresh is not necessary, this version will stand as the Screening Report.

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## Executive Summary

This Screening Report considers the potential need for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) to be undertaken during the preparation of the Cheddar Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP).

The relevant legislation is outlined in Section 1 and interpretation is explored in more specific detail in Section 3.

In respect of SEA, it is possible that the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) (which incorporated SEA) of the Core Strategy and the emerging Local Plan has been a sufficient examination of environmental effects, but this judgement can only be made through consideration of specific tests set out in the regulations. The findings are set out in Section 3: Table 1, with a conclusion (at 3.11) that:

| <i>SEA Screening Opinion</i>   |
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| <p>The Council considers that the Cheddar NDP is not a “plan or programme” of a type described at Regulation 5(2), 5(3) or 5(4) of The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 and therefore does not require SEA.</p> <p>[The reasons are as set out in Table 1 and Appendix 1 (the Regulation 9(1) Determination)]</p> |

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Cheddar Parish Council is currently producing the Cheddar Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) which will supplement (and partially supersede) the adopted Sedgemoor Core Strategy and form part of the local development plan when finalised. As part of the production of a NDP the District Council is required to advise and assist the “qualifying body” (Parish Council), including in ensuring that the NDP does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, European Union obligations.
- 1.2 This screening report is designed to determine whether or not the contents of the Cheddar Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) requires a **Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)** in accordance with the European Directive 2001/42/EC (“SEA Directive”) and associated Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (“SEA Regulations”).
- 1.3 A separate ‘test of likely significance’ arising from the Cheddar NDP has been undertaken by the County Ecologist as part of the **Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)** process. The test determines whether an Appropriate Assessment of the NDP is required under European Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and Wild Flora (the “Habitats Directive”) and associated Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (“Habitat Regulations”). The test concluded that an Appropriate Assessment of the Cheddar NDP was not required.
- 1.4 The SEA Regulations require an environmental assessment to be carried out during the preparation of all “plans and programmes” that are deemed to have significant environmental effects. The parameters for determining if a particular plan is likely to have significant environmental effects are set out in the Regulations. If a SEA is thought not to be required, the Council may be required to consult further.
- 1.5 There is some potential overlap between these two types of assessment, in particular an identified requirement for an “Appropriate Assessment” under the Habitat Regulations will automatically trigger a requirement for SEA (unless a “local level” or “minor modification” exemption applies, as explained at 3.6 below). In this report, Section 2 outlines the nature of the NDP and Section 3 considers SEA.
- 1.6 An NDP must be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan [i.e. Sedgemoor Core Strategy] but can make provision for additional development. It is important to recognise that the Core Strategy was subject of Sustainability Appraisal (incorporating SEA) and HRA, but in some instances subsequent planning applications could still need project level HRA or Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). If the NDP does not propose development of a scale not anticipated in the Core Strategy or which could affect a sensitive environment there is potential for the higher-level SA and HRA to have been sufficient.
- 1.7 This screening report is based on the content of the “Cheddar Neighbourhood Plan – Vision and Policies (Document 9)” that was published for public consultation between September and November 2016.

## 2. **Outline of the purpose and content of Cheddar Neighbourhood Development Plan**

- 2.1 The particular purpose of the Cheddar NDP is to shape development in the parish of Cheddar, under the powers introduced through the Localism Act 2011.
- 2.2 The village of Cheddar is identified as one of 17 “Key Rural Settlements” (KRS) in the Sedgemoor Core Strategy; as such it is expected to be a focus for local growth that promotes greater self-containment and stronger local communities. The Core Strategy does not set a specific quantum of development for Cheddar but KRSs collectively are expected to accommodate about 1,260 new homes and at least 945 new jobs in total between 2006 and 2027. The Cheddar NDP must be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the Sedgemoor Core Strategy.
- 2.3 Whilst, the Core Strategy is the development plan that is currently adopted by Sedgemoor District Council it should be noted that the Council is in the process of reviewing this document and a Proposed Submission draft Local Plan was published in January 2017. Whilst this Plan does not yet hold any weight as a material planning consideration the Proposed Submission Local Plan amends the approach taken to settlement hierarchies within the District. If adopted in its proposed form, this will mean that Cheddar village will be recognised as a Tier 1 settlement that benefits from a breadth of services and facilities that serve the wider district as well as the village itself. It is therefore proposed that development amounting to 310 homes and 3.8 hectares of employment land is allocated to the village.
- 2.4 The Cheddar NDP seeks to allocate land for housing development. Local consultation on a range of sites has led to the proposed allocation of 2 preferred sites outside but adjacent to the defined “development boundary”:
- Land at Helliars Lane for approximately 70 new dwellings; and
  - Land at Round Oak Farm for approximately 110 new dwellings.
- (However, it should be noted that these sites have been considered through the Local Plan preparation process and in the case of the Round Oak Farm site through the Development Management process and the yields considered to be more appropriate are now 60 and 100 respectively.)
- 2.5 The draft Cheddar NDP does not include indicative layouts for either site, although both have been subject to outline planning applications (neither of which has been determined to date) and so indicative layouts are available to view on the Sedgemoor District Council website. The planning application reference for the site at Helliars Lane is 17/15/00096 and the planning application reference for the site at Round Oak Farm is 17/15/00095.
- 2.6 There is no proposal to allocate land for employment uses outside of the existing development boundary.
- 2.7 The draft NDP proposes a number of localised policies, grouped under the headings:
1. Built Environment;
  2. Employment and Economy;
  2. Sport, Leisure and Wellbeing;
  3. Roads, Transport and Access; and
  4. Landscape, Environment and History

2.8 The NDP policies are designed to achieve the objectives of the vision for Cheddar, the matters addressed by the draft policies can be summarised as:

- Mitigating the effects of climate change and increasing sustainability of the built environment;
- Seeking to development approximately 200 new homes within the parish (with 40% of the total being affordable housing);
- Setting the criteria for eligibility to occupy affordable housing within the parish;
- Achieving high quality design in new developments;
- Preventing ribbon developments and coalescence with adjacent settlements;
- Identifying the preferred locations for new housing developments;
- Rejuvenating the commercial centre of Cheddar;
- Supporting, protecting and enhancing the existing tourism offer;
- Expansion of the Cheddar Business park;
- Retaining the Yeo Valley site as an industrial area;
- Retaining existing sports and leisure facilities and extending the playing fields;
- Ensuring that all development that generate traffic movements provide safe and convenient access to the public highway;
- Extending the Strawberry Line to provide a safe walking and cycling route;
- Enhancing pedestrian space within the village;
- Reducing the impact of car parking on the natural beauty of the Cheddar Gorge;
- Resisting the loss of agricultural, market garden and horticultural land; and
- Preserving tranquillity.

### 3. Consideration of the possible need for Strategic Environmental Assessment

3.1 National Planning Practice Guidance states that: *“Whether a neighbourhood plan proposal requires a strategic environmental assessment, and (if so) the level of detail needed, will depend on what is proposed. A strategic environmental assessment may be required, for example, where:*

- *a neighbourhood plan allocates sites for development*
- *the neighbourhood area contains sensitive natural or heritage assets that may be affected by the proposals in the plan*
- *the neighbourhood plan is likely to have significant environmental effects that have not already been considered and dealt with through a sustainability appraisal of the Local Plan.”*

[Paragraph: 046, Reference ID: 11-046-20150209]

3.2 The SEA Directive requires SEA to be carried out for specified types of plan or programme (as specified in Regulation 5(2), 5(3) and 5(4)):

- a plan which is prepared for ... town and country planning or land use, and sets the framework for future development consent of projects listed in Annex I or II to Council Directive 85/337/EEC ... [i.e. the EIA Directive], or
- a plan which, in view of the likely effect on sites, has been determined to require an assessment pursuant to Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive [i.e. effects on Natura 2000 sites]
- a plan which sets the framework for future development consent of projects; and is the subject of a determination under regulation 9(1) or a direction under regulation 10(3) that it is likely to have significant environmental effects

3.3 The first of the above parameters (from Regulation 5(2)) would not normally implicate a NDP because unless the NDP is allocating land for EIA development, it is the NPPF and Sedgemoor Core Strategy [or emerging Local Plan] which “sets the framework for future development consents” of EIA development. There are also “local level” and “minor modification” exemptions, as explained in paragraph 4.6.

3.4 The second of the parameters identified at paragraph 3.2 (from Regulation 5(3)) relates to the Habitats Directive and this was examined separately by the Somerset County Ecologist, see separate report. Again, there are also “local level” and “minor modification” exemptions, as explained in paragraph 3.7.

3.5 The third parameter (from Regulation 5(4)), requires consideration of “does the plan set the framework for future development consent of projects?” - in this case (unlike the first parameter) this is not limited to EIA development.

3.6 Initially, this Council was of the opinion that the supplementary nature of a NDP is such that it does not “set the framework”. However, recent amendments (SI 2015/20) to the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012 suggest that all NDP’s should be regarded as having the potential to “set the framework”. The amendment set a requirement that when they are submitted for examination all Neighbourhood Development Plans must be accompanied by either:

i) an environmental report prepared in accordance with paragraphs (2) and (3) of regulation 12 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004(1); or

(ii) where it has been determined under regulation 9(1) of those Regulations that the plan proposal is unlikely to have significant environmental effects (and, accordingly, does not require an environmental assessment), a statement of reasons for the determination.

3.7 Therefore it is necessary for each Neighbourhood Development Plan to be subject to further consideration of whether it is “likely to have significant environmental effects” - the “determination under regulation 9(1)” – regardless of whether the Plan is allocating development sites or not. This further consideration requires assessment of the Plan against the criteria specified in Schedule 1 to the Regulations. These same criteria are also utilised in assessing “local level” and “minor modification” exemptions which may apply in respect of plans initially caught under Regulation 5(2) or Regulation 5(3).

3.8 The SEA Regulations require SEA for plans which:

- a) “determine the use of small areas at a local level” or which are
- b) “minor modifications” to plans,

**only** when these are determined to be likely to cause significant environmental effects (Reg 5(6)). Therefore even if a NDP were considered to “set the framework”, these exceptions to SEA may well apply, but Reg 9 sets out the determination procedure - this would require the Council to:

- a) take into account the criteria specified in Schedule 1 to the Regulations; and
- b) consult the consultation bodies (Environment Agency, Natural England and English Heritage).

3.9 The Council’s screening decision on whether SEA is required needs to consider all these various possibilities. This is achieved through a step-by-step review using Table 1 (below) - this looks at the “Regulation 5 questions”. Part A3 is informed by the results of the assessment against the Regulation 9 / Schedule 1 criteria. The completed Regulation 9/Schedule 1 criteria table forms the “Statement of Reasons” and is provided at Appendix 1. Consideration of the Regulation 9/Schedule 1 criteria has been further informed by reference to the Core Strategy Sustainability Appraisal, the emerging Local Plan Sustainability Appraisal and other relevant evidence reports such as those submitted in support of recent planning applications (where the information has been accepted as accurate by the relevant consultation body).

3.10 A formal conclusion in the form of a “Screening Opinion” is set out after Table 1 (paragraph 3.11).

**Table 1**

**Establishing if the Cheddar NDP is a “plan or programme” of a type which requires SEA under the provisions of The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004**

**Part A – The “Regulation 5” questions**

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| <p>A1</p> | <p><b>Is the plan of a description set out in Regulation 5(2)?, i.e.:</b><br/> <b>(a) prepared for</b> agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism, <b>town and country planning or land use, and</b><br/> <b>(b) sets the framework for future development consent of projects listed in Annex I or II to Council Directive 85/337/EEC on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment, as amended by Council Directive 97/11/EC(a).</b></p> <p>- and if “yes”, does the Regulation 5(6) exemption potentially apply? [i.e. for (a) a plan which determines the use of a small area at local level; or (b) for a minor modification to a plan].</p> | <p><u>Response</u></p> <p><b>NO.</b><br/> This NDP is prepared in relation to town and country planning, but does not “set the framework for future development consent for EIA development” because:<br/> (i) it doesn’t specifically relate to EIA development; and<br/> (ii) the policy framework is set at a higher level (Core Strategy / NPPF).</p> |
| <p>A2</p> | <p><b>Is the plan of a description set out in Regulation 5(3)?, i.e.:</b><br/> <b>A plan which, in view of the likely effect on sites, has been determined to require an assessment pursuant to Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive.</b></p> <p>- and if “yes”, does the Regulation 5(6) exemption potentially apply? [i.e. for (a) a plan which determines the use of a small area at local level; or (b) for a minor modification to a plan].</p>   | <p><u>Response</u></p> <p><b>NO</b> (As concluded by the separate Habitat Regulations Assessment)</p>   |
| <p>A3</p> | <p><b>Is the plan of a description set out in Regulation 5(4)? i.e.:</b><br/> <b>(a) sets the framework for future development consent of projects; and</b><br/> <b>(b) is the subject of a determination under regulation 9(1) or a direction under regulation 10(3) that it is likely to have significant environmental effects</b></p>  | <p><u>Response</u></p> <p><b>NO</b></p> <p>In respect of element (a) of this test, the policy framework is primarily set at a higher level (Core Strategy / NPPF) but the NDP allocates small sites at a local level and so could be considered to be setting the</p>   |

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|  |  | <p>framework for future consents. Therefore a determination under Regulation 9(1) has been made. This concludes that the plan is <u>not</u> likely to have significant environmental effects and therefore element (b) of the test is negative.</p> <p>The Determination under Regulation 9(1) (The “Statement of Reasons”) is set out at Appendix 1.</p> |
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- 3.11 **SEA Screening Opinion:** The Council considers that the Cheddar NDP is not a “plan or programme” of a type described at Regulation 5(2), 5(3) or 5(4) of The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 and therefore does not require SEA. The reasons are as set out in Table 1 and Appendix 1.
- 3.12 The Draft Determination under Regulation 9(1) incorporating the formal “Statement of Reasons” under Regulation 9(3) has been prepared as a separate document – reproduced here at Appendix 1. In accordance with Regulation 11(1) and (2) copies of the Determination and Statement of Reasons have been sent to each consultation body and made available at the Council’s principal office and on the Council’s website.

The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004

Sedgemoor District Council

**SEA Screening Opinion / Determination under Regulation 9(1) as to whether the Cheddar Neighbourhood Development Plan is likely to have significant environmental effects.**

Cheddar Parish Council is currently producing the Cheddar Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) which will supplement (and partially supersede) the adopted Sedgemoor Core Strategy and form part of the local development plan when finalised. As part of the production of a NDP the District Council is required to advise and assist the “qualifying body” (Parish Council), including in ensuring that the NDP does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, European Union obligations.

This includes deciding whether the NDP requires a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in accordance with the European Directive 2001/42/EC (“SEA Directive”) and associated Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (“SEA Regulations”).

Insofar as the Cheddar NDP can be regarded as a “plan or programme which sets the framework for future development consent of projects” (albeit to a limited degree, and primarily because it seeks to allocate sites for residential development with an estimated capacity of circa 180 dwellings) it is potentially caught by SEA Regulation 5(4) [which could require an environmental assessment to be carried out]. Therefore the District Council needs to determine (under the provisions of Regulation 9) whether or not the Cheddar NDP is “likely to have significant environmental effects”.

Regulation 9(2) requires that before making such a determination, the District Council shall:

- a) take into account the criteria specified in Schedule 1 to these Regulations; and
- b) consult the consultation bodies [Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England].

Regulation 9(3) requires that if the Council’s conclusion is that the plan is unlikely to have significant environmental effects (and, accordingly, does not require an environmental assessment), it shall prepare a statement of its reasons for the determination.

**Determination under SEA Regulation 9(1)**

**Having regard to the criteria set out in Schedule 1 of the SEA Regulations, and consultation with Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England the District Council has made a determination under Regulation 9 that the Cheddar Neighbourhood Development Plan is unlikely to have significant environmental effects (and, accordingly, does not require an environmental assessment).**

## Statement of Reasons

The District Council has had regard to:

1. the characteristics of the plan, and
2. the characteristics of the potential effects and of the area potentially affected

- including all of the particular matters under each of these headings as set out in Schedule 1 of the SEA Regulations.

A response to each of the individual criteria is set out below in tabular form. This was shared in draft form with the consultation bodies and has been agreed by (following slight modification in response to their comments) Natural England and Historic England and has not been disputed by the Environment Agency.

This review of the individual criteria indicates that potential effects are limited / localised / negligible / totally absent and therefore the conclusion is that the plan is unlikely to have significant environmental effects.

### 1. The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular, to —

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| (a) the degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources; | <b>Very limited degree</b> - the Cheddar NDP is a localised (parish level) refinement of the framework set by the development plan (Core Strategy) for Sedgemoor District. The scale and location of housing development (180 houses) is wholly consistent with (and could potentially be granted planning permission under the provisions of) the Sedgemoor Core Strategy.                        |
| (b) the degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy;   | <b>None</b> - the Cheddar NDP is at the lowest level of the plan-making hierarchy.   |
| (c) the relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development;  | <b>Minor and localised</b> relevance - it is a “basic condition” of any NDP that it should “ <i>contribute to the achievement of sustainable development</i> ” but there is no requirement for NDPs to be subject to sustainability appraisal.<br><br>The plan includes an indication of how it supports the sustainability objectives which were used to shape the overarching SDC Core Strategy. |
| (d) environmental problems  | The Cheddar NDP is neither   |

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| <p>relevant to the plan or programme; and</p> | <p>(a) primarily responding to, nor<br/>(b) heavily constrained by significant environmental problems.</p> <p>The aim of the Cheddar NDP is to address local concerns and issues – design and location of new development / affordable housing / road safety and parking / the local economy / local facilities.</p> <p>A review of potential environmental constraints reveals that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the majority of Cheddar village and environs are not a flood risk area (EA Flood Zone 1)</li> <li>• The Round Oak Farm site and part of the Helliars Lane site are located over a minor aquifer</li> <li>• The boundary of the Mendip Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty is within 150m of the Round Oak Farm site. In their responses to planning application 17/15/00095 the Mendip Hills AONB Unit and the SDC Landscape officer noted that the revised development would still have effects on the character and views to/from the AONB but did not conclude that these effects would be significant and proposed revisions to the plan to be taken in to consideration at the detailed design stage that would make the site acceptable in terms of landscape impacts. The SDC landscape officer agreed with the conclusions of the landscape appraisal that the Helliars Lane site was some distance from the AONB and was in an area where the view is already dominated by the existing built form of Cheddar.</li> <li>• The Round Oak Farm Site is within the SSSI Impact Risk Zones for the Cheddar Reservoir SSSI (favourable condition) and the Perch SSSI (unfavourable recovering). In their response to planning application 17/15/00095, for Round Oak Farm, Natural England concluded that the development was unlikely to have a significant effect on the five SSSI sites within close proximity to the site. The</li> </ul> |
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|  | <p>Helliars Lane site is within the SSSI Impact Risk Zone for the Cheddar Reservoir SSSI and the scale of development is above the threshold for triggering consultation with Natural England. The developer has carried out an additional Ecological Survey which assessed the impacts on the Cheddar Reservoir SSSI and concluded there would be no significant impacts. <i>[Natural England have advised it is more appropriate to consider matters of recreational pressures on designated sites strategically at the Local Plan level].</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Data from Somerset Environmental Record Centre identifies five non-statutory local wildlife sites and one or more legally protected &amp; priority species within 1km of the site. The County Ecologist has interpreted this data and the HRA has concluded that there are unlikely to be significant effects.</li> <li>• There is a County Wildlife Site within the Round Oak Farm preferred site that may be affected by the proposal in the plan. The County Ecologist has addressed these concerns through the Development Management process.</li> <li>• There is a “BAP priority habitat” (lowland meadows) within the preferred Round Oak Farm preferred site that may be affected by the proposal in the plan.</li> <li>• Agricultural Land Classification (provisional) of land at Round Oak Farm is Grade 2, the agricultural land classification of land at Helliars Lane is made up of Grades 2, 3 (undifferentiated) and 4. The Helliars Lane application was supported by an Agricultural Land Classification and Soil Resources report which concluded that all of the land was in fact poor quality Grade 4.</li> <li>• There is no record of contaminated land in the locality of the two preferred housing sites.</li> <li>• There is no scheduled monument in the vicinity of the two</li> </ul> |
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|  | <p>preferred housing sites. There is a conservation area in Cheddar but it is located in the east of the village over 500m from the nearest of the two preferred housing sites.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• There are numerous listed buildings and TPOs in and around the village, and also sites which feature on the Somerset Historic Environment Record, but the presence of such features is not unusual and they are given appropriate protection in the context of any development proposals which may affect them.</li><li>• The Archaeological Assessment for the Hellier’s Lane site noted the presence of scheduled monuments, listed buildings and conservation areas near to the site but did not conclude that the proposal would result in significant adverse effects on the designated heritage assets.</li><li>• The Round Oak Farm application was supported by a heritage assessment, undertaken in Sept 2015, which focussed on a study area comprised of the site plus a 1km buffer. The report concluded that “Development within the site would not lead to physical harm to heritage assets, and would not lead to harm to the setting or significance of any designated heritage assets including Listed Buildings or the Conservation Area.”</li><li>• A Historic Environment Assessment (Jan 2017) has been prepared by Somerset Heritage Centre as part of the evidence base for the Proposed Submission Sedgemoor Local Plan. The site-by-site assessment concluded that there were unlikely to be any impacts on buried archaeological remains or designated assets from development of either of the two sites identified in the Cheddar NDP.</li><li>• In their consultation response to planning application 17/15/00096, for Helliars Lane, the Somerset Heritage Centre concluded partial agreement with the submitted</li></ul> |
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|  | <p>archaeological desk-based assessment in that any remains present are likely to be of local significance and they have advised that further pre-determination work is not required but the applicant will be required to archaeologically investigate the heritage asset and provide a report on any discoveries made. They had no concerns with regards to the Round Oak Farm site. The Somerset Heritage Centre has not disputed the conclusions of the archaeology and heritage assessments submitted in support of the two proposals.</p> <p>The two sites proposed for housing allocations in the Cheddar NDP were also considered as strategic housing site options as part of the Sustainability Appraisal of the emerging Local Plan 2011 – 2032, undertaken in July 2015. The results of these appraisals did not indicate that development of these sites would result in significant effects. However, potential minor negative effects were identified for both sites in relation to water quality, biodiversity impacts, landscape impacts and loss of good quality agricultural land.</p> <p><b>No serious environmental problems</b></p> |
| <p>(e) the relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (for example, plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection).</p> | <p><b>Not directly relevant to implementation of EC environmental legislation.</b></p> <p>[The plan does not contain policies linked to waste management or water protection.]</p>  |
| <p><b>2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to</b></p> <p>—</p>   |   |
| <p>(a) the probability, duration,</p>  | <p>The potential for effects arises from housing development. There will be a direct permanent effect through land use change (loss of</p>  |

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| frequency and reversibility of the effects;  | Grade 2 agricultural land) if either of the sites is developed for housing. Any indirect effects resulting from an increase in local population (emissions, traffic, recreational disturbance etc.) are negligible and have already been considered in the SA of the Sedgemoor Core Strategy. Therefore <b>no significant environmental effects</b> are anticipated. |
| (b) the cumulative nature of the effects;  | <b>None</b><br>(No reason to anticipate the limited minor / negligible effects being significant cumulatively)   |
| (c) the trans-boundary nature of the effects;  | <b>None</b>  |
| (d) the risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents);  | <b>None</b>  |
| (e) the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects<br>(geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected);   | The effects referenced at 2a are <b>small scale and localised</b> , and no effect on population is identified.<br>[The Neighbourhood Plan affects the parish of Cheddar which is approximately 3470 Hectares in area and has a population of approximately 5800 people.]   |
| (f) the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to—<br><br>(i) special natural characteristics or cultural heritage;<br><br>(ii) exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values; or<br><br>(iii) intensive land-use; | <b>No effect on valuable / vulnerable areas</b> is predicted (see 1d).   |

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| and  |   |
| (g) the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status. | <b>No effect on nationally / internationally protected sites.</b> [There are a number of SSSI and SAC sites partly or wholly within the parish of Cheddar, including the Cheddar Woods SSSI, the Cheddar Reservoir SSSI, the Mendip Woodlands SAC, the Perch SSSI, the North Somerset and Mendip Bats SAC, the Axbridge Hill and Frys Hill SSSI and the Kingdown and Middledown SSSI. No significant effect is anticipated for any of the sites]. |

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