



Charfield Neighbourhood Plan
Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Opinion
21 January 2020



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Purpose of the Screening Opinion

1. The screening opinion has two purposes:
 - Firstly, to determine whether the Charfield Neighbourhood Development Plan (CNDP) is likely to have significant environmental effects and require strategic environmental assessment (SEA).
 - Secondly, to determine whether the plan has potential negative or uncertain effects on Natura 2000 sites of relevance, which would require further consideration under the Habitat Regulations.
2. This screening opinion has been produced by South Gloucestershire Council, in accordance with the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 and Habitat Regulation 2010.
3. As required by Regulation 9(2)(b) of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, and Habitats Regulation (2010), the screening opinion is required to be reviewed by the statutory consultation bodies¹ with a five week period allowed for response, in order for the Council to arrive at a determination, in consultation with the statutory consultees. The consideration of likely environmental effects, against the criteria in Schedule I, (of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004), is set out in Appendix 1 of this screening opinion.

Assessing Likely Effects

4. A draft of the CNDP, received by the council in December 2019 has been utilised to consider the likely environmental effects, and effects on Natura 2000 sites of relevance. This version of the Neighbourhood Plan has been supplied alongside this Screening Opinion.
5. In considering likely effects, baseline data and findings within the Sustainability Appraisals of the Core Strategy (2013) and the Policies Sites and Places Plan (2017) have been used, where they relate to the CNDP area. The Habitat Regulations screening opinion has been informed by the conclusions of the Core Strategy Habitat Regulation Assessment (2011) and Screening Determination of the Policies, Sites and Places Plan.
6. In addition to this information, the most current and available data for certain environmental issues were considered as the basis for the screening opinion.

¹ Environment Agency, Natural England, Historic England

Flood Risk

7. A number of studies have taken place to determine the extent and vulnerability of flood risk in and around Charfield. The primary studies of relevance in this screening opinion were:
 - Environment Agency National Flood Zone data;
 - South Gloucestershire Council Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (February 2009); and
 - South Gloucestershire Council Level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (December 2011).
8. The Charfield Neighbourhood Plan does not make any allocations within the plan for housing, however does set out specific development and design standards. These standards seek to minimise any potential increase in surface water run off as a result of additional development within the CNDP area.
9. Although the policies within the CNDP do not identify new development areas they do attempt to ensure that development and the existing community are safe, that development does not increase flood risk elsewhere and, where possible, reduces flood risk overall.

Heritage and material assets

10. The South Gloucestershire Historic Environment Record contains regularly maintained and updated information on:
 - Conservation Area boundaries;
 - Article 4 directions;
 - Registered Parks and Gardens both nationally and locally designated; Scheduled Ancient Monuments; and
 - Listed Buildings.
11. The record also has information on undesignated assets, such as known archaeology and non-designated above ground heritage assets.
12. The CNDP does not seek to adopt a specific policy for heritage assets however development affecting these assets will be subject to policies currently in the adopted Local Development Plan for South Gloucestershire. These include the Policies, Sites and Places Plan policy PSP17 Heritage Assets and the Historic Environment, as well as the Core Strategy Policy CS9 Managing the Environment and Heritage. The CNDP does include Policy 002 Appearance of Dwellings and Policy 005 Housing Density which seek to protect the rural character of the village and will therefore act to protect the rural setting of heritage assets. These policies are not expected to create further negative impacts over and above the adopted policy already assessed through the SA process. In some cases CNDP policy is expected to add detail to Local Plan policy already adopted to protect and enhance local assets.

Nature Conservation

13. The Local Authority holds information on the following sites of nature conservation:
 - International designations: Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation and Ramsar Sites
 - National Designations; Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
 - Local Sites of Nature Conservation Interest
14. This has been supplemented by confidential data on protected species, habitats and related information held by South Gloucestershire Council.
15. The CNDP area will cover the Charfield Parish boundary which, at its closest edge, is over 10 kilometres from the Severn Estuary Natura 2000 site. The policies proposed within the CNDP are not considered to create further negative impacts over and above policies already adopted through South Gloucestershire's development plan which has already been assessed through the SA process.

South Gloucestershire Council - Screening Opinion

16. The consideration of likely environmental effects, against the criteria in Schedule I, is set out in Appendix 1 of this screening opinion.
17. From the analysis of likely effects South Gloucestershire Council considers policies to support a wide range of issues within the CNDP, are:
 1. Unlikely to have any significant environmental effects. Therefore Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Charfield Neighbourhood Development Plan is **not required**.
 2. It has also determined that no significant negative or uncertain effects on the Severn Estuary SPA/SAC/ Ramsar site arise as a result of this Neighbourhood Plan. Therefore the CNDP can be **screened out** from further consideration under the Habitat Regulations.
18. **Please can you provide support or objection on this initial screening opinion, so a determination on the need for full SEA can be given.**

South Gloucestershire Local Plans Team 21st January 2020

<p>SEA DIRECTIVE CRITERIA FOR DETERMINING THE LIKELY SIGNIFICANCE OF EFFECTS</p>	<p>RESPONSE IN RELATION TO: CHARFIELD NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN</p>
<p>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.</p>	<p>The Charfield Neighbourhood Development Plan (CNDP) would, if made, form part of the statutory Development Plan for South Gloucestershire, (henceforth 'the Local Plan'). It therefore would contribute to the framework for future development consents of projects within the boundary of the CNDP.</p> <p>The plan sits within a wider framework, set by the South Gloucestershire Local Plan (Core Strategy 2013 and the Policies, Sites and Places Plan 2017) and the National Planning Policy Framework.</p> <p>However, the framework set by this plan is for localised projects and activities, with limited effects and resource implications.</p>
<p>The degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in the hierarchy.</p>	<p>The CNDP adds local level detail to assist in determining planning applications within the plan area, in this case the parish of Charfield. The CNDP will become a material consideration in the determination of applications for planning permission.</p> <p>The policies within the CNDP are considered to be in general conformity with the wider framework and strategic direction set by the South Gloucestershire Core Strategy and Policies Sites and Places (PSP) Plan.</p> <p>The CNDP does seek to influence planning applications through the adoption of detailed policies which are considered to add a further level of detail over and above that already adopted in the South Gloucestershire Development Plan, and therefore, policies that have already been appropriately assessed through the Sustainability Appraisal.</p> <p>The wider framework and strategic direction set by the Core Strategy and PSP Plan documents have each been subject to Sustainability Appraisal incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment in their own rights.</p>
<p>The relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental consideration in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development</p>	<p>The CNDP demonstrates the neighbourhood vision through local level policy. Specific policies in relation to the environment focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy 001 Electric Car Charging Points • Policy 002 Appearance of Dwellings • Policy 003 Design of Buildings • Policy 006 Broadband Connectivity

- Policy 015 Wotton-Kingswood-Charfield Greenway
- Policy 018 Green Space
- Policy 019 Allotments
- Policy 020 Climate Change
- Policy 021 Emissions
- Policy 022 Gas Energy
- Policy 023 Street Trees
- Policy 024 Landscape Buffering
- Policy 025 Hedgehog Preservation
- Policy 026 Wildlife Migration Routes
- Policy 027 Tree and Hedgerow Preservation
- Policy 028 Tree and Hedgerow Netting

These policies are considered to maintain and add local direction to the overarching policy approaches set out in South Gloucestershire's adopted development plan.

Policy 001 and 006 reflect Core Strategy Policy CS8 Improving Accessibility. These policies add further detail to the objectives of promoting alternative means of travel or reducing the need to travel.

Policy 002 and 003 reflect Core Strategy Policy CS1 High Quality Design and CS3 Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Generation. These policies also add detail to Policies, Sites and Places Plan (PSP) Policy PSP6 Onsite Renewable and Low Carbon Energy.

Policy 015 adds detail to CS policy CS2 Green Infrastructure and identifies a specific local project which can help improve Green Infrastructure provision over the plan period.

Policy 018 and 019 are considered to add a level of detail to adopted PSP Policies PSP44 Open Space, Sport and Recreation and CS Policy CS24 Green Infrastructure, Sport and Recreation Standards.

Policy 020, 021 and 022 add further detail to PSP policies PSP6 Onsite Renewable and Low Carbon Energy and PSP21 Environmental Pollution and Impacts.

Policy 023 and 027 add detail to PSP Policy PSP3 Trees and Woodland for the provision of tree planting and also supports the objectives set out in policies PSP1 Local Distinctiveness, PSP2 Landscape and CS1 High Quality Design.

Policy 024 reflects PSP policies PSP1 Local Distinctiveness and PSP2 Landscape as well as CS1 High Quality Design.

Policy 025, 026 and 027 add specific detail to adopted PSP policy PSP19 Wider Biodiversity, in particular, concerning the protection of Hedgehogs during and after development as well as the habitats of nesting birds.

	<p>It is considered that CNDP policy is aimed at improving the sustainability of development, quality of life and consideration of sustainability issues within the CNDP area by adding further detail to policies adopted at the wider South Gloucestershire Local Authority Level. The plan is therefore unlikely to cause negative impacts and in some cases may increase positive impacts supporting policies already in the adopted development plan.</p>
<p>Environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme</p>	<p>The CNDP area contains areas of Flood Zone 3 and 2 the majority of which lies along the Little Avon River corridor.</p> <p>The CNDP does not intend to allocate sites and instead seeks to ensure that sites brought forward through other plans and programmes will reduce the risk of flooding using development control policies. It is envisaged that this will protect the Little Avon River and its flood zone.</p> <p>The CNDP area contains a number of designated heritage assets, including the grade I listed St James Church and a number of other listed buildings. Further details of these are contained below (see section relating to the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected).</p> <p>The CNDP area is in proximity to a number of sites of international and local nature conservation importance, including the European protected Severn Estuary (SPA, SAC and Ramsar site). Further details of these are contained below (see section relating to the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected).</p> <p>The plan aims to provide a further level of detail to policies currently in place in South Gloucestershire's Local Development Plan. The Core Strategy and Policies, Sites and Place Plan have already be assessed through the Sustainability Appraisal process. It is not considered that significant effects will arise from the further detailed policies set out within the CNDP.</p>
<p>The relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of community legislation on the environment (e.g. plans and programmes linked to waste-management or water protection).</p>	<p>Although the plan does not allocate sites for development itself, the plan does include a construction management policy with the objective of preventing harm to the environment. Policy 029 seeks to put in place Construction Environmental Management Plans for any large scale development that may take place within the CNDP area.</p>
<p>The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects</p>	<p>The plan is not considered to create any effects of significance.</p>
<p>The cumulative nature of the effects</p>	<p>The plan is not considered to create any effects of significance.</p>
<p>The trans boundary nature of the effects</p>	<p>The plan proposes a greenway link from the Charfield CNDP area to the neighbouring communities of Kingswood and Wotton-under-Edge under policy 015. The effects from the implementation of this policy are</p>

	<p>considered to be positive in environmental terms considered against the reasonable alternative (non-adoption of the plan).</p>
<p>The risks to human health or the environment (e.g due to accidents)</p>	<p>The plan area does include areas of flood zone 3 and 2 as well as identified areas for potential surface water flooding. The CNDP does not intend to allocate sites for development and instead seeks to ensure that sites brought forward through other plans and programmes will reduce the risk of flooding using development control policies. The CNDP Policy 029 requiring the use of Construction Environmental Management Plans on large development also adds further detail regarding the treatment of additional surface water run off as a result of activity taking place within the CNDP area.</p> <p>With reference to the existing evidence base compiled and localised nature of allocations and associated minimal effects, there is not considered to be a need for further more detailed SEA in respect of flood risk issues.</p> <p>The CNDP sets out a policy 029 relating to Construction Environmental Management Plans for large development which aims to minimise the risk to human health and environment. The policy covers the topics below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hours of Work • Access and Deliveries to Site • Delivery/Collection of Plant prior to the Construction of On-site Roads • Wheel washing and Prevention of Soiling of the Highways • Traffic Signals and Working in the Highway • Flood Prevention and Drainage • Pollution of Local Watercourse and Drainage Systems • Permitted Noise Levels • Protecting the Environment from Dust Pollution • Protecting the Environment from Air Quality Pollution <p>The CNDP also sets out a series of policies which will aim to reduce the risks to human health and the environment over the life of the plan. These can be found below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy 003 - Design of Buildings • Policy 004 – Size of Dwellings • Policy 005 – Housing Density • Policy 006 – Broadband Connectivity • Policy 010 – Pavement Size • Policy 011 – Footpaths • Policy 017 – Recreational Space • Policy 018 – Green Space • Policy 019 – Allotments • Policy 020 – Climate Change

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy 021 – Emissions • Policy 022 – Gas Energy • Policy 023 - Street Trees • Policy 025 - Hedgehog Preservation • Policy 026 – Wildlife Migration Routes <p>Policy 004 and 005 are considered to influence human health over the lifetime of the policy by promoting choice and change giving options to lead a different lifestyle. Policy 010, 017, 018 and 019 are also considered to positively influence human health but also promote active life styles.</p> <p>Policy 006, 020, 021 and 023 will positively influence the level of emissions and air quality over the lifetime of the plan and reduce the risk to human health and the environment.</p> <p>Policy 003 and 022 have the potential to promote the use of clean energy over the lifetime of the plan and therefore reduce the risks to human health and the environment from emissions and poor air quality.</p> <p>Policy 025 and 026 will actively promote the safeguarding of wildlife and therefore reduce the risk to the environment from development activity.</p> <p>The level of risk (or reduction to) is reliant on the level of growth within the CNDP area as many of these policies are directly linked to development within the parish. The CNDP itself makes no allocations and so is not considered to create any effects of significance.</p>
<p>The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected).</p>	<p>The CNDP relates to Charfield Parish, a specific and contained area within South Gloucestershire. The parish area covers 665 hectares and has a population of 2538, people at the time of the 2011 Census. South Gloucestershire council has utilised the 2011 Census data and information on dwellings completed to estimate that within the defined village of Charfield there are 2264 residents in 927 households. This information is set out in the 2018 Sustainable Access profile for Charfield Village.</p> <p>Although the CNDP area covers the entire parish, the plan does not propose any development allocations within the plan and instead the policies aim to set out more detailed development management proposals than set out in the adopted South Gloucestershire Development Plan documents which have already been subject to sustainability appraisal.</p> <p>Therefore, it is considered that effects arising from policy are considered to have very localised effects e.g. on immediately adjacent buildings or building users or localised areas within Charfield Parish.</p>

	<p>The magnitude and spatial extent of any potential effects are also not considered to be of significance to warrant Strategic Environmental Assessment.</p>
<p>The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:</p> <p>Special natural characteristics or cultural heritage;</p> <p>Exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values; Intensive land uses.</p> <p>And;</p> <p>The effects on areas or landscapes, which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.</p>	<p><u>Flood Risk</u></p> <p>Please see the section above on “The risks to human health or the environment (e.g due to accidents)” which includes consideration of potential significant effects, on flood risk issues in the area, due to allocation of four small scale housing sites in the CNDP.</p> <p><u>Natural Environment Considerations</u></p> <p>The Charfield neighbourhood plan area is 10km from the Severn Estuary European protected site (Special Protection Area (SPA), Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and RAMSAR site). There is also a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) located within the plan area and others in close proximity of the area. There are several Sites of Nature Conservation Interest located within the plan area and immediately adjacent.</p> <p>The plan does not allocate sites and instead consists of a series of development management policies. As outlined above under the previous section (The risks to human health or the environment) it is considered that these policies do not negatively impact these ecological sites and in some cases may actually support their long term protection. The plan is therefore not considered to create any negative effects of significance and in some instances may encourage positive effects over the life of the plan.</p> <p>It is considered that CNDP Policy 018 Green Space, 023 Street Trees and 024 Landscape Buffering may create positive effects by extending the local wildlife network through improvement to land/areas of poor wildlife diversity.</p> <p>The plan does not allocate any sites for development and instead seeks to add detail to development management policies already in place. The Plan is therefore not considered to have potential effects, significant or otherwise on nature conservation assets. And therefore does not warrant more detailed consideration through either Strategic Environmental Assessment or Appropriate Assessment, under the Habitat Regulations.</p> <hr/> <p><u>Heritage considerations</u></p> <p>The CNDP area includes several Listed Buildings including the grade I listed St James Church. The area also includes a large number of locally listed and undesignated heritage assets.</p>

The plan does not propose any site allocations and so the impact on heritage assets is considered to be limited. The plan does not include specific heritage policies and so considerations of these matters would be left to the adopted Core Strategy and Policies, Sites and Places Plan policies CS9 Managing the Environment and Heritage and PSP17 Heritage Assets and the Historic Environment. The CNDP does include Policy 002 appearance of Dwellings which seeks to protect the rural environment and local character of Charfield.

The adopted Policy Framework within the Core Strategy and PSP Plan, along with the NPPF will ensure any applications arising from allocated sites will be sited and designed to mitigate potential for effects, on the setting of listed buildings within Charfield Neighbourhood Plan area.

The plan through its policies is considered to create a further level of detail and positive approach to the consideration of heritage and cultural assets of value and vulnerability within the plan area.

It is not considered that the plan creates the potential for significant negative effects on historic, cultural or material assets that would warrant SEA.