

Siddington Draft Neighbourhood Plan

Reg 14 – Jan 2026

**Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) &
Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)**

Screening Report

Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) Screening

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This HRA screening report will be issued to Siddington Parish Council to assist in supporting the Reg. 14 consultation of the draft Neighbourhood Plan. Statutory consultees (Natural England, Environment Agency and Historic England) must be consulted on this HRA/SEA screening opinion. It is intended for that consultation to be simultaneous with the Reg. 14 consultation.
- 1.2 Siddington Parish Council are leading the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan to provide locally specific planning policies intended to address issues identified as being important to the local community, particularly where those issues are perceived as not being adequately addressed through existing planning policies.
- 1.3 As the 'competent authority' under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (the Regulations) Cotswold District Council is required to assess development plans through the HRA process.
- 1.4 The purpose of a HRA is to assess possible effects of development plans on the nature conservation interests of sites designated under the Habitats and Wild Birds Directives. These sites consist of Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and also include Ramsar Sites.
- 1.5 The integration of the HRA process as part of the preparation of development plans is fundamental to the plan making process as policies in the plan can potentially affect designated sites.
- 1.6 HRA is an iterative process and the remaining stages will be completed alongside and will inform preparation of the Plan. **This is a screening opinion to ensure that any changes required can be made to the plan to facilitate the next stages of assessment under the Regulations.**

How do we do this?

- 1.7 The following assessment methodology will be followed to meet the requirements of the Habitats Directive:

Stage One – Screening

- 1.8 This comprises an initial analysis to determine whether the Neighbourhood Plan is likely to have a significant effect on any European sites. The Neighbourhood Plan will require appropriate assessment unless it is certain that it will not have a significant effect on any European sites.

1.9 Where there is a credible risk of an effect and in the absence of objective evidence demonstrating that there will not be it has to be concluded that there is a likely significant effect.

- Stage 1A: Identification of European sites relevant to the assessment, and analysis of them in terms of reasons for designation, factors affecting their integrity and trends affecting them.
- Stage 1B: Identification of underlying trends that could affect the integrity of sites.
- Stage 1C: Analysis of the Neighbourhood Plan objectives, proposals and proposed policies in terms of their possible adverse effects on the integrity of European sites, examination of options and alternatives to avoid or reduce these effects.
- Stage 1D: Identification of other plans and projects relevant to the assessment, to identify any likely in-combination effects. Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive requires that plans and projects likely to have a significant effect on a European site alone or in combination with other plans or projects shall be subject to appropriate assessment.

1.10 The ruling of the Court of Justice of the European Union in case C-323/17 People over Wind in given in April 2018 has had a profound effect on the approach to screening. Prior to this ruling it was established practice to take account of mitigation measures included in a plan or project when determining if that plan or project was likely to have a significant effect. However, paragraph 40 of the ruling states that:

Article 6(3)... must be interpreted as meaning that, in order to determine whether it is necessary to carry out, subsequently, an appropriate assessment of the implications, for a site concerning, of a plan or project, it is not appropriate, at the screening stage, to take account of measures intended to avoid or reduce the harmful effects of the plan or project on that site'

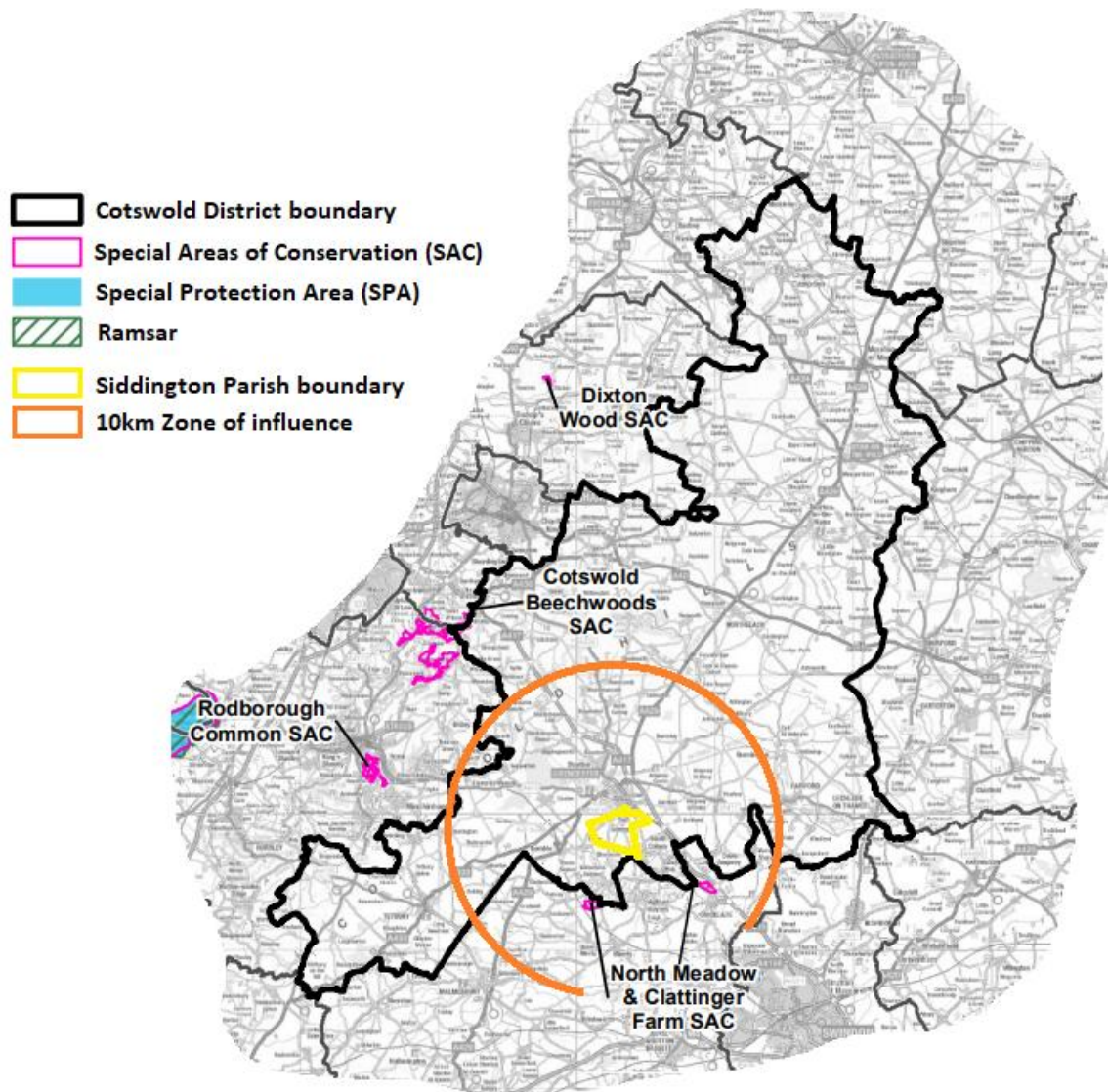
1.11 Accordingly, the benefit of measures intended to avoid or reduce the harmful effects of a plan or project must be disregarded when determining whether it is likely to have a significant effect on a European site.

Stage Two – Appropriate Assessment

1.12 Determination of whether any proposals or policies in the Neighbourhood Plan identified at the screening stage as having a likely significant effect would have an adverse effect on the integrity of any European sites, in view of the conservation objectives for those sites and the nature of the likely significant effect that has been

identified. Modifications to those proposals or policies are identified to avoid any adverse effects on site integrity.

2. Designated Sites (European) within a 10km Zone of Influence



North Meadow & Clattinger Farm SAC

2.1 Natural England Conservation Advice for Protected Sites:

Site name:	North Meadow & Clattinger Farm SAC
Designation type:	SAC
Site identification:	UK0016372
Location:	Wiltshire
Latest designation date:	01 Jan 1996
Qualifying features:	Lowland hay meadows (<i>Alopecurus pratensis</i> , <i>Sanguisorba officinalis</i>)
Designated area (ha):	104.14
Moderation/boundary changes:	Not applicable
Component Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI):	Clattinger Farm SSSI, North Meadow, Cricklade SSSI
Overlapping Protected Areas:	North Meadow, Cricklade National Nature Reserve (NNR)

This SAC comprises North Meadow and Clattinger Farm, two individual sites located approximately 4.5 miles apart in north Wiltshire close to the county boundary with Gloucestershire. Both sites lie within the floodplain of the Upper Thames and fall within the Cotswold Water Park.

Both parts of the SAC are located at the western end of the Upper Thames Clay Vales National Character Area (108). Clattinger Farm is 59.88 hectares in size and North Meadow is 44.25 hectares in size. North Meadow is a National Nature Reserve which is owned and managed by Natural England.

Both parts of the SAC sit within the Cotswold Water Park which is a manmade wetland created by the restoration of sand and gravel workings. The Water Park covers an area of 40 square miles with over 150 lakes of varying size. Prior to the exploitation of sand and gravel this area of the Upper Thames catchment was made up of floodplain grassland, river habitats and arable farming.

The SAC, along with a number of other associated smaller grassland SSSI, is a relic of the floodplain grazing farming system which was widespread in this area. Both sites sit on shallow glacial limestone gravel deposits which create free draining conditions that help to maintain the characteristic designated flora. The shallow gravel deposits at both sites result in a great seasonal variation in water table depth which has traditionally helped with hay meadow management leading to the sites characteristic flora.

North Meadow, which is located on the outskirts of Cricklade, between the River Thames and the River Churn is a Lammas floodplain meadow which has been managed by hay cutting and aftermath grazing for over 150 years. North meadow is known for a rich diversity of meadow plants, including the presence of around 95% of the UK's surviving

*population of the nationally scarce Snake's head fritillary *Fritillaria meleagris*. The snake's head fritillary is also present at Clattinger Farm in a lower abundance.*

Management of both sites aims to maintain traditional hay-meadow management of hay cutting from mid-summer, followed by grazing with livestock through the autumn and into the winter as ground conditions permit. This management allows plants to flower and set seed prior to hay cutting. Both sites, but in particular North Meadow, are regularly flooded by their adjacent watercourses.

In recent years, both sites have suffered prolonged periods of flooding which has threatened the continuation of traditional meadow management, particularly at North Meadow. The underlying shallow gravel deposits and adjacent watercourses at both sites present challenges for future management in the context of expected changes in climatic conditions.

As an NNR a significant amount of management at North Meadow is focused on managing visitor pressure, especially during fritillary flowering season, in order to balance conservation of the characteristic flora whilst allowing it to be accessible to the public.

Conservation objectives

The site's conservation objectives apply to the site and the individual species and/or assemblage of species for which the site has been classified (the 'Qualifying features' listed above).

The objectives are to ensure that, subject to natural change, the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its qualifying features, by maintaining or restoring:

- the extent and distribution of qualifying natural habitats and habitats of the qualifying species*
- the structure and function (including typical species) of qualifying natural habitats*
- the structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying species*
- the supporting processes on which qualifying natural habitats and the habitats of qualifying species rely*
- the populations of each of the qualifying species*
- the distribution of qualifying species within the site*

3. Screening of Policies

- 3.1 North Meadow and Clattinger Farm SAC is located outside the parish and therefore would not be subject to direct impacts as a result of the proposed Neighbourhood Plan.

- 3.2 As the SAC is within 10km of the parish, there could be effects in relation to recreational disturbance. The site description above particularly mentions managing visitor pressure as part of a National Nature Reserve.
- 3.3 Recreational pressure could be increased by allocating land for development. The draft Siddington Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate any plan for development.

Screened In:

- 3.4 None

Screened Out:

Policy S1 – Preventing Coalescence of Siddington with Cirencester

- 3.5 This policy proposes a “green gap” restricting development, to prevent the coalescence of Cirencester and Siddington, and is not considered likely to have any significant effect on a European Site.

Policy S2 – Settlement Boundary and Infill Development

- 3.6 This policy proposes a settlement boundary tight to the existing built form. Outward expansion of the settlement is specifically not supported. Infill development within the settlement boundary is supported in this policy. However, Local Plan policy DS3 (Small-Scale Residential Development in Non-Principal Settlements) already permits small-scale residential development subject to some criteria.
- 3.7 To note, in the Local Plan any settlement with a settlement boundary is considered a principal settlement. Neighbourhood Plans should not change the spatial strategy of a Local Plan. We are assuming that Siddington intends to be a non-principal settlement with a settlement boundary, meaning the provision of Local Plan policy DS3 still applies.
- 3.8 Overall, this policy gives clarity as to what constitutes ‘inside’ or ‘outside’ the settlement, but should not increase housing numbers disproportionately above those anticipated and taken cumulatively and in-combination with other plans.
- 3.9 This policy is unlikely to increase recreational pressure causing significant effects on a European site.

Policy S3 – Housing Mix

- 3.10 This policy specifies the type of housing supported in the Parish, with specific reference to affordable housing, but does not increase the housing numbers. This policy is not therefore likely to have any significant effect on a European site.

Policy S4 – Housing to meet the needs of the community

- 3.11 The policy indicates the type of housing supported within the proposed Settlement Boundary (Policy S1) for Siddington, based on local needs. This policy is not therefore likely to have any significant effect on a European site.

Policy S5 – General Design Principles

- 3.12 This policy supports high quality design and sets out a list of criteria which should be met by all development. This design policy is not therefore likely to have any significant effect on a European site.

Policy S6 – Old Talland School of Equitation

- 3.13 This policy supports development on a brownfield site, which conserves, re-uses and enhances heritage assets on the site. This is primarily a heritage and design policy and does not specifically support or seek to allocate the site for housing, for example. The policy is not therefore likely to have any significant effect on a European Site.

Policy S7A – Designated Heritage Assets

- 3.14 This policy aims to prevent harm to designated heritage assets. This heritage policy is not therefore likely to have any significant effect on a European site.

Policy S7B – Conversion of Non-Domestic Historic Buildings

- 3.15 This policy supports the conversion to new uses providing it adheres with several criteria set out in the policy. This heritage policy is not therefore likely to have any significant effect on a European site.

Policy S8 – Local Green Space Policy

Policy S9 – Important Views Policy

Policy S10 – Trees, Hedgerows and Woodland

Policy S11 – Flooding

Policy S12 – Sustainable Transport and Active Travel

Policy S13 – Community Facilities

- 3.16 These are environmental and community protection policies and are not therefore likely to have any significant effect on a European Site.

4. Required Mitigation

- 4.1 In the opinion of CDC's Neighbourhood Plans Officer, **there are no likely significant effects on European sites, arising from the Plan's policies. Therefore, there is no trigger for an Appropriate Assessment**, or a need to avoid adverse impacts through mitigation.

5. Other Ecological Considerations

- 5.1 Siddington parish includes five areas recognised for the importance of their habitats and wildlife. Protection of these sites is supported by CDC Policy EN9.

Cotswold Lakes SSSI

- 5.2 The Cotswold Lakes has been designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest by Natural England. It covers over 2,000 hectares straddling three counties and includes 25 hectares in the south of Siddington parish. A SSSI is the highest national designation for nature protection and restricts both development within the SSSI and in adjacent areas which could have a negative impact.
- 5.3 However, in the case of Cotswold Lakes, as there are no SPAs or SACs (European designations) within the SSSI, the requirement for HRA is not applicable.

Local Wildlife Sites:

Shorncote Local Wildlife Site

- 5.4 Part of Shorncote Local Wildlife Site, within Siddington parish, is rough grassland with deep ditches and is selected for its importance in connecting habitats as well as bird assemblages. It has been regularly used by nesting Barn owls who hunt for small mammals in the grassland. The adjacent reedbeds are in the neighbouring parish of Somerford Keynes and Shorncote.

River Churn corridor

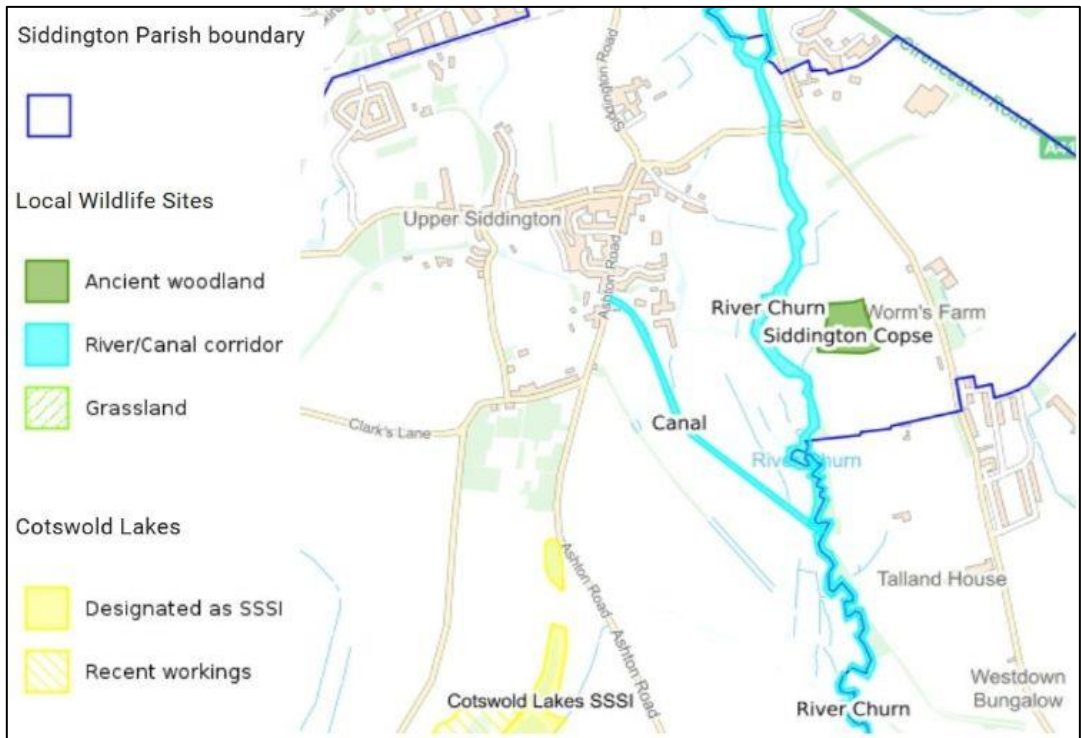
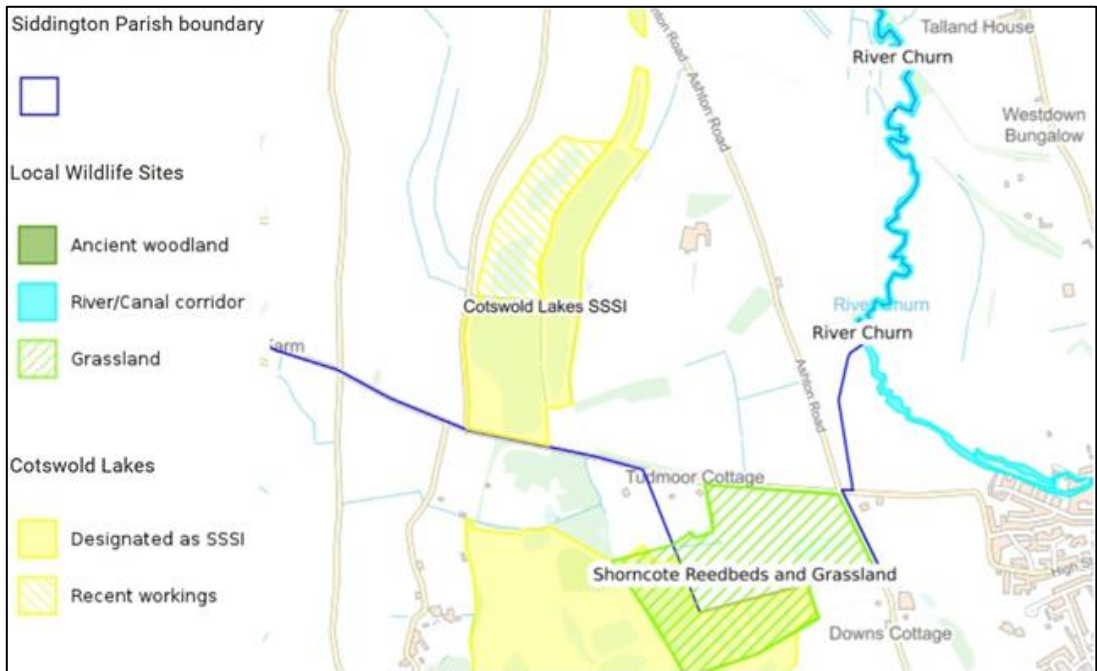
- 5.5 Local species of conservation concern include Watervole, as well as Otter and Dipper. The river also offers sightings of Kingfisher and supports various breeding birds including warblers as well as common freshwater fish species.

Canal (from Ashton Road to the Churn)

- 5.6 The Canal at Siddington, from Ashton Road to the Churn, is also designated as a Local Wildlife Site as supporting habitat for mammals. There is water in the canal seasonally and it supports many riparian plant species which provide habitat and food used by Water Voles.

Siddington Copse (Ancient Woodland)

- 5.7 Siddington Copse is Ancient Woodland, also registered as a Local Wildlife Site. It covers an area of 2 hectares and is broad-leaved woodland. It is classified as 'Ancient Replanted Woodland' in Natural England's Ancient Woodland inventory.



Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening

6. Introduction

Summary of Screening Opinion

- 6.1 Siddington Parish Council, as the qualifying body, is preparing a Neighbourhood Plan for Siddington Parish. The Plan seeks to address a number of local issues around protecting the village from coalescence, losing its rural and distinct identity, and protecting the natural environment, local green spaces and heritage assets.
- 6.2 It will be ‘made’ (or adopted) by Cotswold District Council as the local planning authority, and will form part of the statutory development plan for the area.
- 6.3 Based on the characteristics of the draft Siddington Neighbourhood Plan (December 2025) and the area characteristics, the conclusion of this initial SEA Screening Opinion is that the plan is ***unlikely to have significant effects on the environment and SEA is therefore not required.***
- 6.4 This screening opinion is to be sent (as part of the Reg. 14 consultation) to the statutory consultation bodies, that is: The Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England in order to seek their views on its conclusions.

Neighbourhood Planning

- 6.5 Neighbourhood Plans are prepared by a qualifying body under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended). The Siddington Neighbourhood Plan is being prepared by Siddington Parish Council (as the ‘qualifying body’) and will be ‘made’ by Cotswold District Council as the local planning authority.
- 6.6 The preparation of Neighbourhood Plans is subject to The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 and The Neighbourhood Planning (Referendums) Regulations 2012 (and subsequent amendments) and the Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017.
- 6.7 Communities have a right to be able to produce a Neighbourhood Plan. However, communities are not required by legislative, regulatory or administrative purposes to produce such a plan.
- 6.8 Siddington Parish Council is devising a Neighbourhood Plan for the Siddington neighbourhood area (parish). Once ‘made’ it will form part of the statutory development plan for the area.

Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 6.9 To be ‘made’, a neighbourhood plan must meet certain Basic Conditions (as set out in Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, and in the Neighbourhood Planning General Regulations (2012) [as amended]) including compliance with EU obligations. One such obligation is the assessment of the effects of the plan on the environment. The procedures to be followed in determining whether a plan would be likely to have significant effects on the environment are set out in European Union Directive 2001/42/EC (the ‘SEA Directive’), which is transposed into UK legislation through The Environmental Assessment of Plans and programmes Regulations 2004 (the ‘SEA Regulations’).
- 6.10 The purpose of the SEA Directive is to provide a high level of protection of the environment and to integrate considerations of the environment into the preparation and adoption of plans with a view to promoting sustainable development.
- 6.11 The SEA Directive sets out criteria for assessing the significance of the impact of a plan or programme on the environment. Any assessment must consider both positive and negative effects.
- 6.12 In the first instance, it is necessary to ascertain if SEA is required. This process is referred to as ‘screening’.
- 6.13 This report presents the findings of an SEA screening opinion on the draft Siddington Neighbourhood Plan, provided by the Neighbourhood Plans Officer at Cotswold District Council. It adopts a proportionate approach in applying a series of criteria, as set out in Schedule 1 the SEA Directive, to look at the draft Siddington Neighbourhood Plan and determine whether any significant effects are likely.

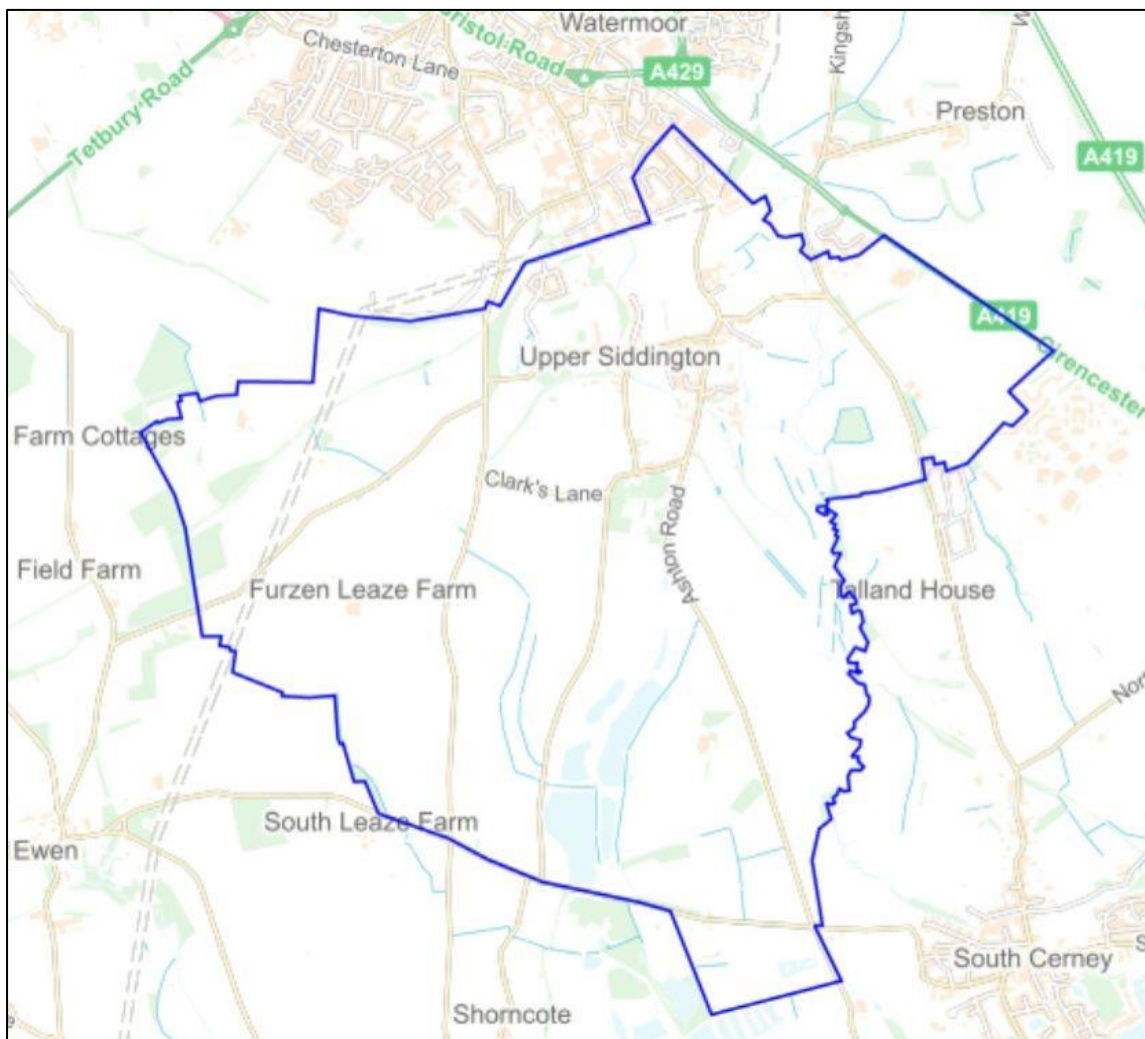
Habitat Regulations Assessment

- 6.14 A Neighbourhood Plan could potentially have impacts on sites covered by the Habitats Regulations. The Siddington Neighbourhood Plan will be subject to a separate HRA screening assessment to ascertain whether an Appropriate Assessment is required under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017, which relate to Articles 6(3) and (4) of the European Union Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild flora and fauna (the ‘Habitats Directive’).
- 6.15 A screening opinion has been provided confirming that appropriate assessment under the Habitats Regulations is not required (see Section 1 of this report).

Siddington Neighbourhood Area

6.16 Siddington is a rural parish, which adjoins Cirencester to the north. Some of the built sprawl of Cirencester town is within Siddington Parish at the NE corner around Siddington Road.

6.17 The Neighbourhood Area covers the entire civil parish of Siddington.



Siddington Neighbourhood Area

7. Siddington Draft Neighbourhood Plan

Vision and Objectives

Over the Plan period, the Parish of Siddington will retain its own identity as a village settlement distinct from the nearby urban centre of Cirencester and maintain its rural character and landscaping setting. The community will continue to be a peaceful, friendly, and inclusive place to live with thriving facilities for all age groups. New development will be sensitively integrated into the existing settlement and contribute positively to the immediate surroundings.

7.1 To achieve this vision, four key objectives have been set:

- *Protecting Siddington's identity as a rural village distinct from Cirencester*
- *Protecting and enhancing the natural environment*
- *Supporting, maintaining and improving the facilities in the community for all age groups*
- *Minimising the impact of traffic by maintaining and enhancing connectivity on foot, bicycle and bus.*

Draft Planning Policies

7.2 There are 13 draft planning policies to deliver the objectives, summarised below:

Policy S1 – Preventing Coalescence of Siddington with Cirencester

7.3 This policy proposes a “green gap” restricting development, to prevent the coalescence of Cirencester and Siddington.

Policy S2 – Settlement Boundary and Infill Development

7.4 This policy proposes a settlement boundary tight to the existing built form. Outward expansion of the settlement is specifically not supported. Infill development within the settlement boundary is supported in this policy.

Policy S3 – Housing Mix

7.5 This policy indicates the type of housing supported in the Parish, with specific reference to affordable housing.

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Policy S7A – Designated Heritage Assets

7.9 This policy aims to prevent harm to designated heritage assets.

Policy S7B – Conversion of Non-Domestic Historic Buildings

7.10 This policy supports the conversion to new uses providing it adheres with several criteria set out in the policy.

Policy S8 – Local Green Space Policy

7.11 The policy designates two Local Green Spaces within the Neighbourhood Area.

Policy S9 – Important Views Policy

7.12 The policy identifies six important views to be taken account of in development proposals and avoid adverse impact on the views.

Policy S10 – Trees, Hedgerows and Woodland

7.13 This policy supports measures to conserve and enhance valuable trees, hedgerows and woodland in the parish.

Policy S11 – Flooding

7.14 This policy sets out a series of criteria in relation to flood prevention, water management and drainage.

Policy S12 – Sustainable Transport and Active Travel

7.15 This policy seeks to preserve existing routes and encourage new routes as set out in part 2 of the policy. This policy also promotes active travel choice, and sustainable modes of transport.

Policy S13 – Community Facilities

7.16 This policy identifies seven community facilities within the parish to be protected in accordance with the criteria set out in the policy.

8. Baseline Information

Context

8.1 Siddington is a rural village in Gloucestershire, located within close proximity to the main urban centre of Cirencester, in the Churn Valley. Situated within the setting of the Cotswold National Landscape with its renowned local vernacular, it is an attractive place to live and work.

Biodiversity, flora and fauna

8.2 Siddington parish includes five areas recognised for the importance of their habitats and wildlife. Protection of these sites is supported by CDC Policy EN9.

Cotswold Lakes SSSI

8.3 The Cotswold Lakes has been designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest by Natural England. It covers over 2,000 hectares straddling three counties and includes 25 hectares in the south of Siddington parish. An SSSI is the highest national designation for nature protection and restricts both development within the SSSI and in adjacent areas which could have a negative impact.

Local Wildlife Sites:

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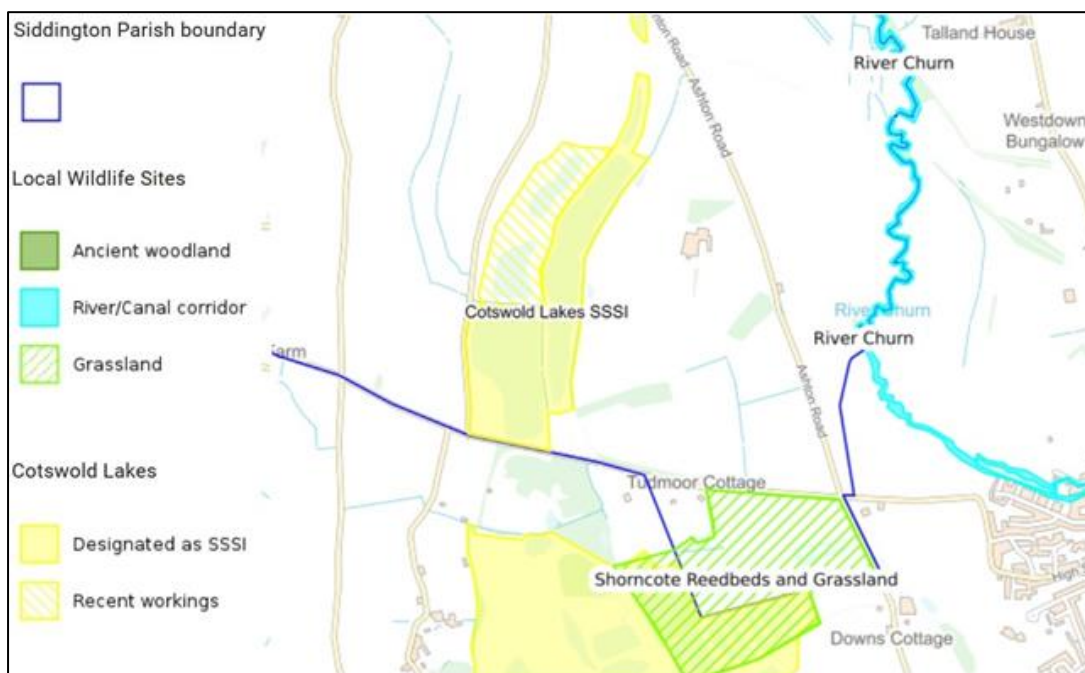
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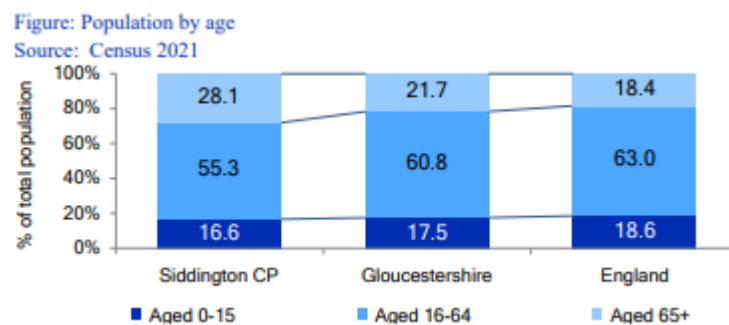
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Population, human health

8.8 The most recent (March 2023) Local Insight profile for Siddington Parish, produced by OCSI for Gloucestershire County Council, and based on Census 2021 data, shows that the civil parish had a population of 1,350. This was over a 25% increase since 2001. The age structure is as follows:



8.9 This shows Siddington has a significantly older population than the county and national average.

8.10 Unemployment rates are low (below 2%) and about half the national average rate. 9.4% of people claim disability Attendance Allowance, whilst 5.3% claim Personal Independence Payment (both below the national average).

8.11 There is nobody in Siddington living in one of the 20% most deprived areas of England. In fact, the entire parish is in the 20-40th percentiles for least deprivation.

Issue: Ageing population

Climatic factors

8.12 No emissions data is available for the Siddington Parish. At district level, Cotswold has emissions of 2.76m KgCO₂e (2023). This has followed a downward trend since 2009 where it was 4.14m KgCO₂e. The district has a net zero target for 2045.

8.13 Car ownership levels in Siddington are higher than national and county levels. 87.4% of households have at least one car. This is typical of a rural parish with limited transport links. However, Gloucestershire reported that 24% of countywide emissions are for transport (GCCS, Dec 2023).

Issue: CO₂ emissions from transport

Soil

8.14 The majority of agricultural land in the Parish is Grade 3 i.e. Good to Moderate quality, with some pockets of Grade 2, Very Good quality agricultural land.

Issue: n/a

Water

8.15 The Swindon/ Wycombe/ Oxfordshire (SWOX) Water Resource Zone (WRZ) serves the parish. There is a High deficit of supply for demand in the SWOX WRZ and the area can be considered as seriously water stressed.

8.16 Most of the parish is within a Zone II Groundwater source Outer Protection Zone indicating there is some risk of contamination from activities that might cause groundwater pollution in the area.

Issues: Some level of risk to groundwater source pollution

Flooding

8.17 Much of Siddington, particularly parts of the settlement east of Siddington Road along the west bank of the River Churn are in Flood Zone 3 (with some pockets of Flood Zone 2), meaning there is the highest probability of flooding.

Issues: Flood Zone 3

Air

8.18 There are currently no Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) in either the parish, district or county. There are no significant and tangible air quality issues in the parish.

Issues: n/a

Material assets

8.19 The parish of Siddington has a number of facilities and services, all of which are in the main village of Siddington. They encourage and enhance a strong sense of community and contribute to the community's wellbeing:

- Siddington Village Shop
- The Greyhound pub
- Siddington Village Hall
- Siddington Church of England School
- St. Peter's Church

Issues: Other facilities easily accessible by car, in larger nearby settlements, could shrink demand and the viability of some of these assets.

Heritage assets

8.20 The parish has 15 listed assets and 2 scheduled monuments:

- Siddington House – Grade II (1340985)
- St Peter's Church – Grade II listed (1340986)
- Tithe Barn and one other adjacent to St Peter's (1090073); also a Scheduled Monument (1003445)
- Animal Shelter to east of Tithe Barn (1090074)
- Church Farmhouse – Grade II listed (1340987)
- Siddington Manor – Grade II listed (1340988)
- Roberts House – Grade II listed (1304080)
- The Round House – Grade II listed (1090069)
- Siddington Hall (Frazier's Folly) – Grade II (1090070)
- The Greyhound – Grade II (1090075)
- Upper Siddington House – Grade II (1340989)
- Upper Siddington Bridge – Grade II (1090036)
- School House – Grade II listed (1153896)
- Barton Farmhouse – Grade II (1090075)
- The Old Rectory – Grade II (1379927)

- Settlement SE of Chesterton Farm – Scheduled Monument (1003444). This is currently on the Historic England At Risk Register. The condition of the archaeology is extensive with significant problems. The vulnerability of the asset is Medium. An action/ strategy has been agreed but not yet implemented.

Issues: At Risk Scheduled Monument

Landscape

- 8.21 Natural England has divided the country up into 159 areas with similar landscape character, which are called National Character Areas (NCAs). Gloucestershire County Council has added further subdivisions referred to as Local Character Areas (LCAs).
- 8.22 Siddington is located on the edge of the Upper Thames Clay Vales (108), bordering the Cotswold National Character Area (107) to the north which encompasses Cirencester. The northern and western parts of the settlement and environs are located within the Dip Slope Lowland landscape type in the Kemble Dip Slope LCA. The southern and eastern environs lie in the River Basin Lowland landscape type in the Somerford Keynes LCA.
- 8.23 The dip slope land is primarily arable with medium to large fields. Hedgerows are well maintained and feature occasional hedgerow trees. There are numerous trees in belts and copses and along the defunct canal and railway. There are substantial tree belts enclosing the village, including mature trees in the disused nursery at Nursery View, and the limes and chestnuts flanking the canal.
- 8.24 The water meadows of the Churn flood regularly in winter with the river bursting its banks sending floodwater across the floodplain and inundating the fields for extended periods.
- 8.25 The Cotswold Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty is less than 1 mile northwest of Siddington, and the Cotswold Water Park SSSI is partly within the parish. Part of the Kemble and Ewen Special Landscape Area is within the western borders of the parish.

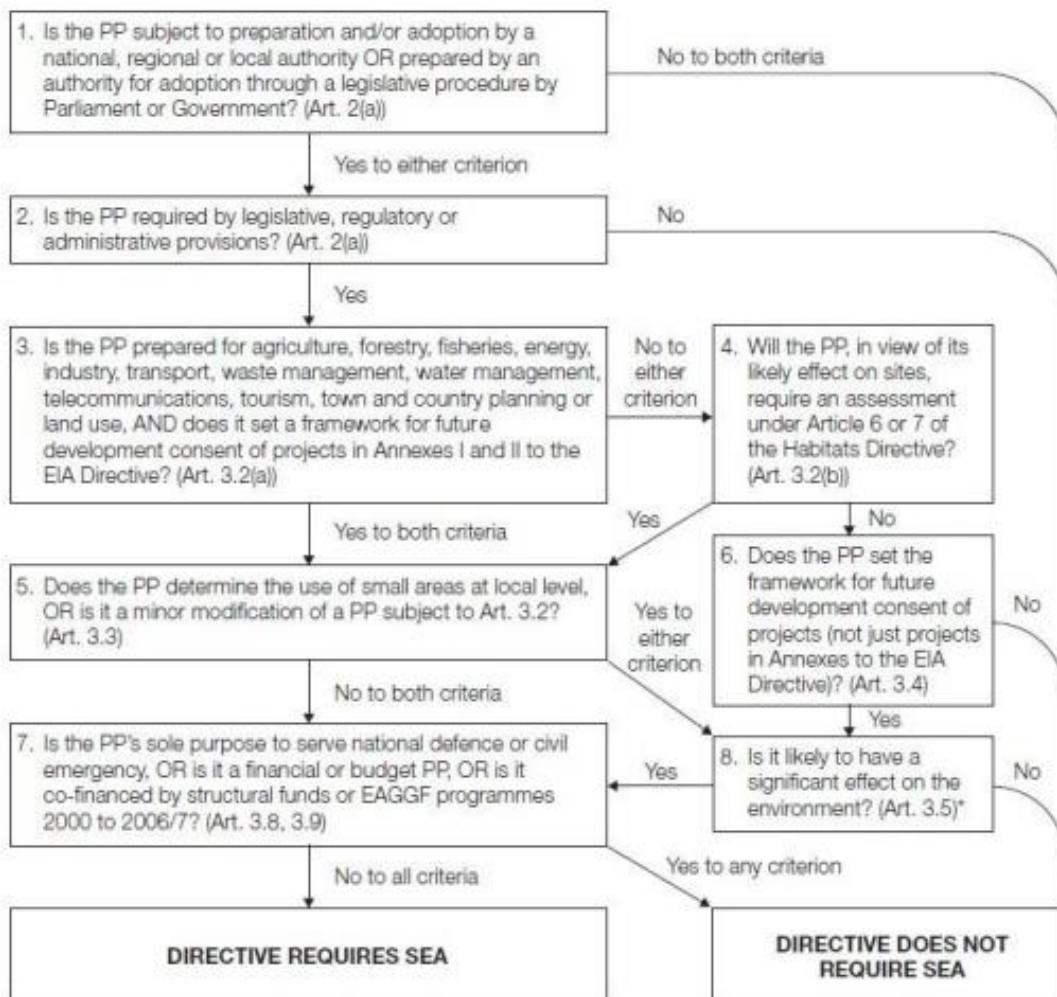
Issues: Continued pressure for development, which could have negative impacts on the landscape

9. SEA Screening

9.1 This section presents the SEA screening opinion assessment which is undertaken in two parts. The first part will assess whether the plan requires SEA (as per the flow chart which follows). The second part of the assessment will consider whether the Neighbourhood Plan is likely to have a significant effect on the environment, using criteria drawn from Schedule 1 of the EU SEA Directive and the UK Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004. The statutory consultation bodies (Historic England, Environment Agency and Natural England) will need to be consulted to determine whether they agree with the conclusion of this screening opinion.

Figure 1 Application of the SEA Directive to Plans and Programmes²

This diagram is intended as a guide to the criteria for application of the Directive to plans and programmes (PPs). It has no legal status.



*The Directive requires Member States to determine whether plans or programmes in this category are likely to have significant environmental effects. These determinations may be made on a case by case basis and/or by specifying types of plan or programme.

Table 1: Establishing the need for SEA

Stage	Answer	Reason
1. Is the PP subject to preparation and/ or adoption by a national, regional or local authority OR prepared by an authority for adoption through a legislative procedure by Parliament or Government? (Art. 2 (a))	YES	This neighbourhood plan is prepared by Siddington Parish Council (as the Qualifying Body) under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Localism Act 2011. Once the plan is 'made' it will be adopted by Cotswold District Council and become part of the statutory development plan for the area.
2. Is the PP required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions? (Art. 2 (a))	YES	Communities have a right to be able to produce a Neighbourhood Plan, however communities are not required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions to produce a Neighbourhood Plan. This plan however is subject to 'provisions' that require it to be prepared in a formal way and if adopted would form part of the statutory development plan.
3. Is the PP required for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism, town and country planning or land use, AND does it set a framework for future development consent of projects in Annexes I and II to the EIA Directive? (Art.3.2(a))	YES	The Siddington Neighbourhood Plan is prepared for town and country planning and land use. The plan sets out a framework for future development in the neighbourhood area. Once 'made' the Siddington Neighbourhood Plan would form part of the statutory development plan and will be used when making decisions on planning applications which may include development which may fall under Annex I and II of the EIA directive.
4. Will the PP, in view of its likely effect on sites, require an assessment under Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive? (Art.3.2(b))	n/a	See HRA screening assessment in this report.
5. Does the PP determine the use of small areas at local level, OR is it a minor modification of a PP	YES	The Siddington Neighbourhood Plan does not identify land for allocation at the local level. However, once 'made' the Plan would form part of the statutory development plan

subject to Art. 3.2? (Art. 3.3)		and be used when determining decisions on planning applications of small areas at the local level.
6. Does the PP set the framework for future development consent of projects (not just projects in Annexes to the EIA Directive)? (Art. 3.4)	n/a	
7. Is the PP's sole purpose to serve national defence or civil emergency, OR is it a financial or budget PP, OR is it co-financed by structural funds or EAGGF programmes 2000 to 2006/7 (Art. 3.8, 3.9)	n/a	
8. Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment? (Art 3.5)	NO	See Table 2 below

9.2 Criteria for determining the likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from plans and programmes are set out in Schedule 1 of the SEA Directive. The criteria are split into two categories: those relating to the characteristics of the plan and those relating to the characteristics of the effects and areas likely to be affected.² An assessment of the draft Siddington Neighbourhood Plan against these criteria is set out in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Assessment of the likelihood of significant effects on the environment

Criteria (Schedule 1)	Summary of significant effects
(a) the degree to which the plan sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources.	The Neighbourhood Plan does not seek to allocate land for residential or other forms development. Once made, the Neighbourhood Plan will form part of the statutory development plan for Siddington Parish and will be used in conjunction with the Cotswold Local Plan to determine planning applications in the area.
(b) the degree to which the plan influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy	Due to the locally-specific nature of the policies, the effects of the Neighbourhood Plan on other plans and programmes within the wider development plan will be slight.

	<p>Its policies are in general conformity with strategic policies in the existing development plan (the Cotswold Local Plan). The Plan has been prepared having regard to national planning policies and guidance.</p>
<p>(c) the relevance of the plan for the integration of environmental considerations, in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development.</p>	<p>One of the Basic Conditions which the Neighbourhood Plan must meet is to contribute to sustainable development.</p> <p>The approach adopted in the Neighbourhood Plan is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • protect Siddington’s identity as a rural village settlement distinct from the nearby urban centre of Cirencester. • protect and enhance the local natural environment for the benefit of future generations including biodiversity, green and open spaces, views, and footpaths. • encourage and enhance a strong sense of community by working together to support, maintain and improve the existing facilities for all age groups. • maintain and enhance connectivity throughout the parish on foot, bicycle, and bus to minimise traffic problems and reduce emissions.
<p>(d) environmental problems relevant to the plan</p>	<p>The following potential environmental problems have been identified in relation to the plan:</p> <p>National designations: Cotswold Lakes SSSI</p> <p>Local wildlife sites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shorcote Local Wildlife Site • River Churn corridor • Canal (from Ashton Road to the Churn) • Siddington Copse (Ancient Woodland) <p>Climate: CO2 emissions from transport</p> <p>Water: Some level of risk to groundwater source pollution</p> <p>Flooding: Flood Zone 3</p> <p>Heritage: At Risk Scheduled Monument</p> <p>Landscape: Continued pressure for development, with negative impacts on the landscape</p>

<p>(e) the relevance of the plan for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (e.g. plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection).</p>	<p>Neighbourhood plans cannot contain policies or proposals in respect of waste management since this is 'excluded development' by virtue of the Planning Acts.</p> <p>The Neighbourhood Plan has no particular relevance for the implementation of other Community legislation, apart from its limited association with legislation designed to ensure continued protection of European designated sites.</p>
<p>(a) the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects.</p>	<p>The Neighbourhood Plan covers the period 2025-2031 i.e. a period of 6 years.</p> <p>However, the Plan does not allocate any land for development and will therefore not have any direct, permanent effects. Instead, the Plan establishes through its policies, a settlement boundary to direct new housing development to the existing built up area, protecting rural setting and the identification and protection of important green spaces, community assets and valued views. The Neighbourhood Plan is therefore highly unlikely to result in either temporary or permanent significant adverse environmental effects.</p> <p>The Neighbourhood Plan will also be subject to monitoring to ensure that a review of the Plan can be triggered in the event of non-delivery of its objectives or undesired or unintended consequences.</p>
<p>(b) the cumulative nature of the effects</p>	<p>The cumulative effects of proposals within the Plan are unlikely to be significant on the local environment given the relatively that the level of development proposed does not exceed that identified within the adopted local plan.</p>
<p>(c) the transboundary nature of the effects</p>	<p>Effects will be local with limited effects on neighbouring areas as the policies within the Plan only apply to the designated area.</p>
<p>(d) the risks to human health or the environment.</p>	<p>There are no anticipated risks to human health or the environment from the Neighbourhood Plan.</p>
<p>(e) the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected).</p>	<p>The population of the Parish is currently 1,350.</p> <p>The Plan is restricted to the neighbourhood area, and it is unlikely that the effects of proposals</p>

	within the neighbourhood plan will have much, if any, effect beyond the Parish.
(f) the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • special natural characteristics or cultural heritage; • exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values; • intensive land-use; 	<p>The Parish can be assessed of being of medium/high environmental value, comprising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1x SSSI (Cotswold Lakes) 4x Local Wildlife Sites 15x listed heritage assets 2x scheduled monuments <p>The parish is within a 10km impact zone of an SAC (North Meadow and Clattinger Farm)</p>
(g) the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, community or international protection status	<p>The Cotswold Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty is less than 1 mile northwest of Siddington, and the Cotswold Water Park SSSI is partly within the parish. Part of the Kemble and Ewen Special Landscape Area is within the western borders of the parish.</p>

SEA Screening Conclusion

- 9.3 On the basis of the assessment of the likely significance of effects on the environment of implementing the Plan as set out in Table 2 of this Screening Opinion, the conclusion is:
- 9.4 The draft Siddington Neighbourhood Plan does not propose more development than is set out within the adopted Local Plan, nor does it allocate sites for development.
- 9.5 In the opinion of the Neighbourhood Plans Officer at Cotswold District Council, having regard to the criteria set out in Schedule 1 of the SEA Regulations, the Siddington Neighbourhood Plan **is unlikely to have any significant positive or negative effects on the environment. Therefore, Strategic Environmental Assessment is NOT required.**
- 9.6 This conclusion is to be consulted with the statutory bodies at Reg. 14: Natural England, Historic England and the Environment Agency.