



**BRISTOL**  
**2015 EUROPEAN GREEN CAPITAL**

Reply to Helen Ross  
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Minicom 0117 92 23854  
Fax 0117 9036681  
E-mail [helen.ross@bristol.gov.uk](mailto:helen.ross@bristol.gov.uk)  
Our ref  
Your ref  
Date 03/12/2015

Dear Mr Pepper,

### **Lawrence Weston Neighbourhood Development Plan – SEA and HRA Determination**

To assist in the production of the Lawrence Weston Neighbourhood Development Plan, Bristol City Council undertook a Strategic Environmental Assessment screening exercise. This was intended to determine whether or not the Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) would require a Strategic Environmental Assessment.

#### **SEA Screening Opinion – Bristol City Council**

A pre-submission version of the Lawrence Weston NDP, received in November 2014 by Bristol City Council (and document updates received to August 2015) were used to consider the likely environmental effects. To ensure legal compliance and a robust screening opinion Bristol City Council considered the likely effects of the NDP against the criteria in Schedule I, of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004. The consideration of likely effects against the Schedule I criteria are available to view in **Appendix I**.

Following analysis of likely significant effects, Bristol City Council considered that the Lawrence Weston NDP was unlikely to have any significant effects on the environment. And therefore, determined that a Strategic Environmental Assessment, of the Lawrence Weston Neighbourhood Development Plan, was not required.

As required by Regulation 9(2) (a) of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, the screening opinion and determination was then sent to Historic England, Natural England and the Environment Agency, to arrive at a determination in consultation with the statutory consultees. This was sent on 15 September 2015 and is available to view in **Appendix I**.

#### **SEA Screening Opinion**

All three statutory consultees agreed with Bristol City Councils screening opinion, that the Lawrence Weston Neighbourhood Development Plan was unlikely to give rise to significant environmental effects and therefore would not require Strategic Environmental Assessment.

**Strategic City Planning Team**  
Brunel/Floor 2/Brunel Wing  
Bristol City Council, PO Box 3176  
BS3 9FS

**Sarah O'Driscoll**  
Service Manager

**Website**  
[www.bristol.gov.uk](http://www.bristol.gov.uk)

The response of Historic England, Natural England and the Environment Agency can be viewed in **Appendix II**.

### **Habitat Regulation Assessment Screening Opinion**

Natural England utilised the information within the analysis of likely significant effects to also determine that the Lawrence Weston NDP would be unlikely to give rise to significant environmental effects on European Designated Sites and can therefore be screened out from any requirement for further assessment under the Habitat Regulations. This determination is also available to view in **Appendix II**.

### **Determination**

The Lawrence Weston Neighbourhood Development Plan is unlikely to give rise to significant environmental effects which would require Strategic Environmental Assessment, or have significant effects on European Designated Sites that would require consideration under the Habitats Directive. This determination has been arrived at in agreement with relevant statutory consultees.

For the purpose of demonstrating that the NDP is unlikely to have significant effects on the environment; as required by regulation 15 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended by the Neighbourhood Planning (General) (Amendment) Regulations 2015), **Appendix I** of this document could be considered to form the statement of reasons.

Regards,

Helen Ross

Strategic City Planning Team

### **Enclosed**

Appendix I – 15 September 2015, BCC screening letter and appendix (Likely Effects)  
Appendix II – Response of Natural England, Environment Agency and Historic England to BCC screening opinion.

# **APPENDIX I**

## **LAWRENCE WESTON NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

### **STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT & HABITAT REGULATIONS – SCREENING OPINION AND DETERMINATION**

**September 2015**

## **1. Purpose of Screening Opinion**

The screening opinion has two purposes. Firstly, to determine whether the Lawrence Weston Neighbourhood Development Plan (LWNDP) 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.

This screening opinion has been produced by Bristol City Council, in accordance with the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 and Habitat Regulation 2010,

As required by Regulation 9(2)(a) of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, and Habitats Regulation (2010), this screening opinion has been sent to English Heritage, Natural England and the Environment Agency. In order for the council to arrive at a determination, in consultation with the statutory consultees.

## **2. Likely Effects**

The pre-submission version of the LWNDP, received in November 2014 by Bristol City Council and document updates received to August 2015, were used to consider the likely environmental effects, and effects on Natura 2000 sites of relevance.

The criteria in Schedule I, of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, have been utilised in this screening opinion. To assist Bristol City Council considered the likely effects of the LWNDP and make a robust determination.

In considering likely effects baseline data and findings within the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan, Sustainability Appraisal has been utilised, where they relate to Lawrence Weston Neighbourhood.

The Habitat Regulations screening opinion has been informed by the conclusions of the Core Strategy, Habitat Regulation Assessment (2011) and Screening Determination for the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan (2013).

In addition to this information the most current and available data for certain environmental issues were considered as the basis for the screening opinion;

### **Flood Risk**

A number of studies have taken place to determine the extent and vulnerability of different parts of the city to flood risk. The primary studies of relevance to Lawrence Weston utilised in this screening opinion were;

- Environment Agency National Flood Zone data.
- Surface Water Management Plan 2014

The Surface Water Management Plan used hydraulic modelling software to predict the flood risk posed to the entire city from surface water and sewer flooding. This data was not intended to assess individual sites. However, the study identified a number of High Risk Area across the city are potentially at greater risk of flooding.

### **Heritage and material assets**

The Bristol Historic and Environmental Records contain 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

The record also has information on undesignated assets, such as known archaeology and non-designated above heritage ground assets.

### **Nature Conservation**

- International designations; Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation and Ramsar Sites
- National Designations; Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
- The Bristol Wildlife Network, consisting of Sites of Nature Conservation Interest and Wildlife Corridors. Taken from the Bristol City Council, online mapping tool; <http://www.bristol.gov.uk/page/explore-bristol-city-centre>

## **3. Bristol City Council - Screening Determination**

The consideration of likely environmental effects, against the criteria in Schedule 1, is set out in Appendix 1 of this screening opinion.

From the analysis of likely effects (contained within appendix 1) Bristol City Council considers that the LWNDP is unlikely to have any significant environmental effects. Therefore Strategic Environmental Assessment, of the Lawrence Weston Neighbourhood Development Plan is not required.

From the information contained within the schedule it is also determined that no significant negative or uncertain effects, on the Severn Estuary SPA/SAC Natura 2000 site, arise as a result of this Neighbourhood Plan. Therefore the LWNDP can be screened out from further consideration under the Habitat Regulations.

**APPENDIX 1 – SCHEDULE I CRITERIA, LIKELY ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS**

<p><b>SEA DIRECTIVE CRITERIA FOR DETERMINING THE LIKELY SIGNIFICANCE OF EFFECTS</b></p>	<p><b>RESPONSE IN RELATION TO: LAWRENCE WESTON NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN</b></p>
<p><b>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></p>	<p>The Lawrence Weston Neighbourhood Development Plan would if adopted form part of the Statutory Development Plan. It therefore would contribute to the framework for future development consents of projects.</p> <p>The plan sits within a wider framework, set by National Planning Policy Framework and Bristol Local Plan document (Core Strategy and Site Allocations and Development Management Policies). However, the framework set by this plan is for localised projects and activities, with limited effects and resource implications.</p>
<p><b>The degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in the hierarchy.</b></p>	<p>The plan adds local level detail to assist in determining planning applications within the plan boundary. The plan will become a material consideration in the determination of applications for planning permission.</p> <p>The policies and development sites within the plan are considered to be in conformity with the wider framework and strategic direction of the Core Strategy, Site Allocations and Development Management Policies. The wider framework and strategic direction within these Local Plan documents have been subject to Sustainability Appraisal incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment.</p>

## APPENDIX 1 – SCHEDULE I CRITERIA, LIKELY ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

**The relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental consideration in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development**

The Lawrence Weston Neighbourhood Development Plan demonstrates the neighbourhood forums vision through local level policy, which complements Local Plan policies to shape and direct high quality sustainable development in the plan area. The existing Local Plan policies have been subject to Sustainability Appraisal incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment.

In relation to open space and biodiversity proposed policies OPR1 (Protect and enhance existing open spaces and allotments) and OPR2 (Local Green Space) reflect the broad approach of adopted Local Plan policies, the policies also provide for an enhanced level of protection through local policies. In addition OPR3 (Improved Play Facilities), requires new development to incorporate or provide commuted provision of play facilities, where local need exists.

OPR1 proposes four additional open spaces, which are not currently designated as Important Open Space on the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Proposals Map.

Policy OPR2 'Local Green Space' proposes the first Local Green Spaces within Bristol, to provide long term, robust protection for selected spaces in Lawrence Weston. Four spaces are designated as Local Green Spaces, The BMX track and Ridingleaze Greenspace (for recreational and community value), Roman Villa (Historic Significance) and City Farm (recreation and biodiversity value).

Site Specific policies on major sites (SPP1 – SPP5) require consideration of flood risk, through Site Specific Flood Risk Assessments, and integration of SUDS schemes to address potential surface water flooding issues.

Policies MA1 to MA3, within the plan 'Getting around better' are focussed upon improving walking, cycling and sustainable travel within the plan area.

## APPENDIX 1 – SCHEDULE I CRITERIA, LIKELY ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

	<p>These policies in the LWNDP are considered to create generally positive effects on a range of environmental considerations and promote sustainable development. Although given the small scale nature of the areas involved, it is not considered the effects need to be investigated in detail through a formal SEA.</p>
<p><b>Environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme</b></p>	<p>The plan will assist in addressing wider problems relevant to the Northern Arc of Bristol in this particular location. Specifically redundant and poor range of housing stock, improving links to employment opportunities, protection and enhancement of generous open space provision.</p>
<p><b>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).</b></p>	<p>The plan is not considered to be directly responsible or related to implementing community legislation on the environment.</p>
<p><b>The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects</b></p>	<p>The plan is not considered to create any effects of significance.</p>
<p><b>The cumulative nature of the effects</b></p>	<p>The plan is not considered to create any effects of significance.</p>
<p><b>The trans boundary nature of the effects</b></p>	<p>The plan is not considered to create any cross boundary issues.</p>



## APPENDIX 1 – SCHEDULE I CRITERIA, LIKELY ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

<b>The risks to human health or the environment (e.g due to accidents)</b>	The plan is not considered to create any significant risks to human health or the environment.
<b>The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected).</b>	<p>The neighbourhood plan relates to a specific and contained area of the city centre covering 260 hectares. The plan area had a population of approximately 7000 people, as set out in the background chapter of the LWNDP.</p> <p>Effects arising from policy and sites set out in the plan are considered to have very localised, effect e.g. on immediately adjacent buildings or building users or localised areas within the Lawrence Weston neighbourhood.</p> <p>The larger sites allocated for development in the LWNDP (SSP1, SSP2, SSP3, SSP4 and SSP5), were subject to sustainability appraisal, incorporating SEA, as part of the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies plan. The LWNDP has individual policies for these sites these policies adds further detail as to the way development should come forward.</p> <p>No effects of significance for the environment are considered to arise on these sites.</p>

## APPENDIX 1 – SCHEDULE I CRITERIA, LIKELY ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

**The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to: Special natural characteristics or cultural heritage; Exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values; Intensive land uses.**

**And;**

**The effects on areas or landscapes, which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.**

There are no international or national ecological conservation designations within the plan boundary.

However, Lawrence Weston is approximately 1.5 to 2.5 kilometres to ponds and areas of inland wetlands habitats which contribute to the integrity of the Severn Estuary SPA, SAC and Ramsar site. These wetland habitats, along with land in the Hallen Marsh area, that has value as compensatory habitat for wetland creation, are protected by Habitat Regulations, as they contribute to the Natura 2000 network of sites.

The neighbourhood plan area and allocation sites within are separated by the M5, M49 motorways, and considerable tracts of open land (designated as the Avonmouth Levels, policy DM18 in the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies plan) from known inland wetland sites. The housing led allocations, the majority of which are for under 40 dwellings, and other policies within the LWNDP are not considered to impact or have any effects on the internationally protected bird habitats or species.

The neighbourhood plan area does contain local ecological sites, Sites of Nature Conservation Interest (SNCI) and Wildlife Corridors (WC).

Site SSP1 is covered by a Wildlife Corridor, which links to other areas of Lawrence Weston and adjacent SNCIs. Policy SSP1 of the LWNDP requires an ecological survey and mitigation measures to protect the wildlife corridor. Furthermore any potential effects on this site or as yet unidentified assets will be managed and if necessary mitigated by policy DM19 'Development and Nature Conservation'. This requires wildlife corridors to be maintained on sites through on site design and mitigation.

The proposals for development of the site covered by SSP1 site were subject to sustainability appraisal as part of the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Plan, no

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**And;**

**The effects on areas or landscapes, which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.**

significant effects were appraised.

The LWNDP is not considered to have a significant effect on local ecological sites.

Policies OPR1 to OPR3 seek to protect and enhance existing recreation facilities and space. OPR3 contains specific encouragement for creation of a new children’s play space. These policies provide for an enhanced level of protection of some spaces not identified formally in the Local Plan and elevate the protection of selected open space to Local Green Spaces. The effects are considered largely positive for the natural environment and creation of high quality open space in Lawrence Weston. This potential effect is not considered to necessitate a full SEA to investigate significance.

The latest floodrisk data covering the plan area suggest only a small area is at risk of a 1 in 100 year flood, in the forecasted period to 2100 (with climate change modelling). No allocations or changes are proposed by the plan within this forecast flood risk zone 3.

For major allocated development sites, (SPP1 – SPP5) although not within the highest flood risk zone for tidal and fluvial flooding, there remains a risk of flooding due to the proximity of the Rhine network and surface water issues. However, the LWNDP contains provisions requiring appropriate SUDS schemes on these sites, along with the provision in the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies document requiring a site specific Flood Risk Assessment on these sites. This requirement is reiterated within the LWNDP site specific policies.

It is not considered that the plan allocations and policies will have effects, significant or otherwise, on human health and related flood risk issues.

The plan area includes 11 Listed Buildings and a Scheduled Ancient Monument. The

## APPENDIX 1 – SCHEDULE I CRITERIA, LIKELY ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

**The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to: Special natural characteristics or cultural heritage; Exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values; Intensive land uses.**

**And;**

**The effects on areas or landscapes, which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.**

Kingsweston and Trym Valley Conservation Area covers a large section of the south and western part of the LWNDP area. Sections of the Kings Weston House, Registered Park and Garden are within the western part of the LWNDP area, including a large part of the 'Tump' Open Space. In addition Blaise Castle and Hamlet Registered Park and Garden, are adjacent the south and eastern side of the NP boundary.

The plan contains proposals for a number (seven) of development sites not included in the Site Allocation and Development Management Policies Plan. These are mostly regeneration of existing prefabricated dwellings. Whilst this may create concern as to effects, no proposals are suggested on the sites which contain listed buildings, adjacent to listed buildings, or the Roman Villa, Scheduled Ancient Monument. The SAM is intended to be identified as a Local Green Space, adding additional long term protection in the planning system to the immediate site.

SSP3 'Deering Close' is partly within the Kings Weston and Trym Valley Conservation Area. This site was considered as part of the sustainability appraisal of the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies document, as BSA0103. No significant effects on the conservation area were appraised as arising.

The plan through a careful and considered approach to development sites and associated site policies is considered to create a robust and positive approach to the consideration of heritage and cultural assets, open spaces, registered parks and gardens and the nearby Conservation Area. It is not considered that the additional development sites create potential for significant effects.

It is not considered that the plan creates the potential for significant negative effects on any assets from international to local that would warrant consideration and investigation through SEA.

## **APPENDIX II**

### **LAWRENCE WESTON NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

### **STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT – SCREENING OPINION AND DETERMINATION**

### **RESPONSES BY STATUTORY CONSULTEES**

Date: 01 October 2015  
Our ref: 165923  
Your ref: -



Carl McClure BSc (Hons) DipTP  
Planning Policy Officer  
Bristol City Council.  
**BY EMAIL ONLY**  
blp@bristol.gov.uk

Customer Services  
Hornbeam House  
Crewe Business Park  
Electra Way  
Crewe  
Cheshire  
CW1 6GJ

T 0300 060 3900

Dear Mr McClure

## **Lawrence Weston Neighbourhood Development Plan - SEA and HRA Screening Opinion and Determination**

Thank you for your consultation on the above dated 17 September 2015 which was received by Natural England on the same date.

Natural England is a non-departmental public body. Our statutory purpose is to ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced, and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development.

### **Strategic Environmental Assessment**

We have considered the draft Screening Report for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA).

As noted in the Lawrence Weston Neighbourhood Development Plan (LWNDP) and the screening assessment, the development plan will be in close proximity to the following site:

- Severn Estuary Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
- Severn Estuary Special Area of Conservation (SAC),
- Severn Estuary Special Protection Area (SPA)
- Severn Estuary Ramsar Site

It is our advice, on the basis of the material supplied with the consultation, that, in so far as our strategic environmental interests are concerned (including but not limited to statutory designated sites, landscapes and protected species, geology and soils) are concerned, that there are unlikely to be significant environmental effects from the proposed plan.

We are not aware of significant populations of protected species which are likely to be affected by the policies / proposals within the plan. It remains the case, however, that the responsible authority should provide information supporting this screening decision, sufficient to assess whether protected species are likely to be affected.

Notwithstanding this advice, Natural England does not routinely maintain locally specific data on all potential environmental assets. As a result the responsible authority should raise environmental issues that we have not identified on local or national biodiversity action plan species and/or habitats, local wildlife sites or local landscape character, with its own ecological and/or landscape advisers, local record centre, recording society or wildlife body on the local landscape and

biodiversity receptors that may be affected by this plan, before determining whether a SEA is necessary.

Please note that Natural England reserves the right to provide further comments on the environmental assessment of the plan beyond this SEA screening stage, should the responsible authority seek our views on the scoping or environmental report stages. This includes any third party appeal against any screening decision you may make.

### **Habitat Regulations Assessment**

We are satisfied that the LWNDP is not likely to result in significant effects on the Severn Estuary Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection Area (SPA) and Ramsar site and can be screened out from further stages of assessment.

We would be happy to comment further should the need arise but if in the meantime you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact us.

For any queries relating to the specific advice in this letter only please contact Amanda Grundy on [REDACTED]. For any new consultations, or to provide further information on this consultation please send your correspondences to [consultations@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:consultations@naturalengland.org.uk).

We really value your feedback to help us improve the service we offer. We have attached a feedback form to this letter and welcome any comments you might have about our service.

Yours sincerely

Amanda Grundy  
Somerset, Avon & Wiltshire Area Team

## Helen Ross

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**From:** Bristol Local Plan  
**Sent:** 13 October 2015 11:02  
**To:** Helen Ross  
**Subject:** FW: Lawrence Weston Neighbourhood Development Plan - SEA and HRA Screening Opinion and Determination

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**From:** Stuart, David [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 12 October 2015  
**To:** Bristol Local Plan  
**Subject:** Lawrence Weston Neighbourhood Development Plan - SEA and HRA Screening Opinion and Determination

Dear Sir / Madam

Thank you for your consultation below.

We are happy to concur with your authority's view that an SEA is not required for this neighbourhood plan.

Kind regards

David Stuart | Historic Places Adviser South West  
Direct Line: 0117 975 0680 | Mobile: 0797 924 0316

Historic England | 29 Queen Square | Bristol | BS1 4ND

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**From:** Bristol Local Plan [<mailto:blp@bristol.gov.uk>]  
**Sent:** 17 September 2015 12:57  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Cc:** Helen Ross  
**Subject:** Lawrence Weston Neighbourhood Development Plan - SEA and HRA Screening Opinion and Determination

Dear Sir/Sirs,



Please find attached the SEA & HRA Screening Opinion and Determination for the Lawrence Weston Neighbourhood Development Plan. The pre-submission version of the Neighbourhood Plan, on which the opinion and determination is largely based, is also attached.

Bristol City Council has determined that the Lawrence Weston Neighbourhood Development Plan is unlikely to have significant effects on the environment, or Natura 2000 Sites. Therefore, this plan does not require Strategic Environmental Assessment or further consideration under the Habitat Regulations.

In accordance with Regulation 9(2)(a) of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, and the Habitat Regulations 2010, Bristol City Council is writing to seek your opinion on whether you agree with the councils opinion and determination.

- A response from only Natural England is requested in respect of screening under the Habitat Regulations.
- Natural England, Historic England and the Environment Agency are requested to provide an opinion in respect of SEA.

We look forward to your response within 21 days of the date of this email, after which time we will consider the responses received and, as the responsible authority, make a determination as set out in the attached screening opinion.

If you have any queries relating to this matter, please contact Helen Ross on 0117 9036723.

Regards,

Carl McClure

Carl McClure BSc (Hons) DipTP,  
Planning Policy Officer. Bristol City Council. Strategic City Planning,  
Brunel House, St Georges Road. Bristol. BS1 5UY



Ms Sarah O'Driscoll  
Bristol City Council  
Brunel House St. Georges Road  
Bristol  
Avon  
BS1 5UY

**Our ref:** WX/2006/000199/AP-  
02/SB1-L04  
**Your ref:**  
**Date:** 30 October 2015

Dear Ms O'Driscoll

### **Lawrence Weston Neighbourhood Plan Submission**

Thank you for consulting the Environment Agency on the above neighbourhood plan, received 17 September 2015. Please accept our apologies for the delay in response.

The Agency welcomes the aspirations of the plan in terms of sustainable development and provision of green infrastructure.

### **Flood Risk and Drainage**

The neighbourhood plan should acknowledge the different flood risks in the area. It should consider whether there is any desire for growth in areas known to be at risk of fluvial, tidal, surface water, or groundwater flooding. If there is development proposed in any area of risk then the Sequential Test / Approach need to be considered, and only water compatible uses considered in the high flood risk areas. This is in accordance with [National Planning Policy Framework and its associated Practice Guidance](#).

You can find a copy of our Flood Maps and other environmental information on our ['What's in Your Backyard'](#) website

Please note that whilst development sites may not be within a mapped Flood Zone it may still be at risk from other sources of flooding from other sources e.g. groundwater and overland run-off. Therefore, the plan should acknowledge and consider any known surface water problems and allow for this within any proposed development strategy. Please note that since the 15 April 2015 matters relating to surface water are now dealt with by the Lead Local Flood Authority.

Surface water run-off should be controlled as near to its source as possible with sustainable drainage systems (SuDS). This reduces flood risk through the use of soakaways, infiltration trenches, permeable pavements, grassed swales, ponds etc. SuDS can also increase groundwater recharge, improve water quality and provide

Environment Agency  
Rivers House East Quay, Bridgwater, Somerset, TA6 4YS.  
Customer services line: 03708 506 506  
[www.gov.uk/environment-agency](http://www.gov.uk/environment-agency)

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amenity opportunities. A SuDS approach is encouraged by the Building Regulations.

For information we support the planting of trees within catchments, especially headwaters, to reduce surface water runoff. Therefore, opportunities for increasing the amount of tree planting, in appropriate locations, is considered beneficial.

There should also be consideration about the foul drainage network in the area to understand if there may be existing capacity constraints on the system.

### **Biodiversity / Green Space**

The Neighbourhood plan should acknowledge the need for green spaces to be preserved and enhanced to improve the rich biodiversity of the area. Especially any area that includes wetlands or water bodies (e.g. rivers, streams, ditches) as these provide ecological interest and diversity. Opportunities to enhance any wetland feature should be identified and delivered through development, as this approach is promoted in the National Planning Policy Framework and is desired outcome of the Water Framework Directive.

We would recommend that Natural England are consulted if any proposed developments may impact on any conservation designations and / or [protected species](#).

### **Contaminated Land**

The rivers and groundwater should be protected and enhanced to ensure that the aims and objectives of the Water Framework Directive are met. Any site that may have been contaminated through its former use will need to be factored into the neighbourhood plan and any redevelopment strategy. Accordingly an appropriate site investigation should be undertaken to inform any remediation measures required.

There are a number of historic landfill sites in the vicinity. Appropriate checks should be made in respect of sites that are known to be gassing or where the current status is unknown.

Yours sincerely

**Mark Willitts**  
**Sustainable Places - Planning Advisor**

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## Helen Ross

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**From:** Willitts, Mark [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 17 November 2015 15:29  
**To:** Helen Ross  
**Subject:** RE: Lawrence Weston Neighbourhood Development Plan - SEA and HRA Screening Opinion and Determination

Dear Helen

Thank you for your email and voicemail. Please accept my apologies for the delay in responding to you.

I can confirm, the Agency is in broad agreement with the initial screening opinion.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any queries.

Regards

Mark

Mark Willitts  
Planning Advisor  
Sustainable Places Team (Wessex Area)

✉ Environment Agency | Rivers House | East Quay | Bridgwater | Somerset | TA6 4YS



[REDACTED]



[www.gov.uk/environment-agency](http://www.gov.uk/environment-agency)



### Charging for Planning Advice

We now charge for technical input in to areas of the planning process. For further advice please contact your local Sustainable Places team