

MELKSHAM NEIGHBOURHOOD DEVELOPMENT PLAN HABITATS REGULATIONS ASSESSMENT (HRA)

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)/Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) screening prior to Regulation 14 consultation relates to the Melksham Neighbourhood Development Plan (Working Policy Table 02.11.2019, hereafter referred to as the NDP).
- 1.2. The HRA has been carried out to comply with Regulation 105 of the Habitats Regulations 2017. Under these Regulations, a competent authority must consider whether a relevant plan is likely to have a significant effect on any European sites before deciding to give any consent, permission or other authorisation. If the screening exercise demonstrates significant effects are likely, whether or not these are addressed through mitigation measures¹, the competent authority must undertake an appropriate assessment to examine the effects of the plan on the conservation objectives of the European Sites in question, consult the appropriate nature conservation body and have regard to its representations. Both the screening, and any subsequent appropriate assessment, must consider the impacts of the plan alone and in combination with other plans or projects.
- 1.3. It is usually the case that a plan of this nature does not go into the detailed aspects of development proposals and therefore the full effects of potential development cannot be accurately assessed at the plan making stage. Those details will typically be identified through a planning application which would be subject to further, more detailed HRA. The principle that a HRA need only consider the effects of a proposal or policy in as much detail as is specified by the plan was explained by Advocate General Kokott in a judgement brought against the UK government in 2005:

“Many details are regularly not settled until the time of the final permission. It would also hardly be proper to require a greater level of detail in preceding plans or the abolition of multi-stage planning and approval procedures so that the assessment of implications can be concentrated on one point in the procedure. Rather, adverse effects on areas of conservation must be assessed at every relevant stage of the procedure to the extent possible on the basis of the precision of the plan. This assessment is to be updated with increasing specificity in subsequent stages of the procedure.”²
- 1.4. Where appropriate assessment is undertaken, the competent authority may go on to authorise the plan or project provided it will not adversely affect the integrity of any European sites. Otherwise the plan cannot be authorised unless it meets specific statutory tests.
- 1.5. Wiltshire Council has conducted the following HRA as competent authority for the Melksham NDP. Where risks to European Sites are identified, changes are recommended to remove or reduce the risks, and these should be incorporated into the plan before it is made. Likewise, if

¹ Court of Justice of the European Union, Case C 323/17 “People Over Wind”/P. Sweetman v Coillte Teoranta

² Commission of the European Communities v UK and NI, opinion of Advocate General KoKott, 9 June 2005, Case C-6/04

the policies or planning context change after the HRA is completed, the HRA process must be repeated before the final plan is considered by a referendum and adopted.

2. Screening Methodology

2.1. Each element of the plan has been categorised against screening criteria developed by Natural England to provide a clear audit trail for the screening assessment.

2.2. The screening criteria used are as follows:

- Category A1: The policy will not itself lead to development e.g. because it relates to design or other qualitative criteria for development;
- Category A2: The policy is intended to protect the natural environment;
- Category A3: The policy is intended to conserve or enhance the natural, built or historic environment;
- Category A4: The policy would positively steer development away from European sites and associated sensitive areas;
- Category A5: The policy would have no effect because no development could occur through the policy itself, the development being implemented through later policies in the same plan, which are more specific and therefore more appropriate to assess for their effects on European Sites and associated sensitive areas.
- Category B: No significant effect;
- Category C: Likely significant effect alone; and
- Category D: Likely significant effects in combination.

2.3. The effect of each policy has been considered both individually and in combination with other plans and projects (see table in section 4 below). Where potential for likely significant effects have been identified, an appropriate assessment is undertaken in subsequent sections.

3. Higher Level HRAs

Wiltshire Core Strategy

3.1 The Wiltshire Core Strategy HRA (October 2009, February 2012³, March 2013⁴, February 2014⁵ and April 2014⁶) identified general parameters to determine the likelihood of potential impacts on Natura 2000 (European protected) sites. The following potential impact pathways and associated parameters were identified and assessed for the Natura 2000 sites stipulated below.

³ Wiltshire Core Strategy Submission Draft – Assessment under the Habitats Regulations, Wiltshire Council, February 2012

⁴ Wiltshire Core Strategy – Assessment under the Habitats Regulations, Wiltshire Council, March 2013

⁵ Update to the Wiltshire Core Strategy habitats Regulations Assessment, February 2014 (Exam/89)

⁶ Wiltshire Core Strategy Updated Habitats Regulations Assessment, April 2014

- *Recreation – Natura 2000 sites within 5km, or where Salisbury Plain SPA/SAC is within 15km (it should be noted that the relevant parameter for the latter has since been revised on the basis of data obtained by means of visitor surveys and is now 6.4km):*
 - Salisbury Plain SPA / SAC
 - River Avon SAC
 - New Forest SAC / SPA
 - Bath and Bradford on Avon Bats SAC (added post adoption of Wiltshire Core Strategy)
- *Hydrology / Hydrogeology - Sites that fall wholly or partly within the Wessex Water Resource Zone may be susceptible to impact:*
 - Salisbury Plain SAC / SPA
 - Bath and Bradford on Avon Bats SAC
 - Pewsey Downs SAC
 - North Meadow and Clattinger Farm SAC
 - River Avon SAC
 - River Lambourn SAC
 - Kennet & Lambourn Floodplain SAC
- *Air Pollution / Nitrogen Deposition – Natura 2000 sites within 200m of a main road*
 - Porton Down SPA
 - Salisbury Plain SAC / SPA
 - Southampton Water SPA
 - North Meadow and Clattinger Farm SAC
 - River Avon SAC
 - Rodborough Common SAC
 - Cotswolds Beechwoods SAC
- *Physical Damage / Interruption of Flight Lines / Disturbance*
 - Bath and Bradford on Avon Bats SAC
 - Porton Down SPA
 - Chilmark Quarries SAC (added post adoption of Wiltshire Core Strategy)
 - Mottisfont Bats SAC (added post adoption of Wiltshire Core Strategy)

Recreation

- 3.2 In terms of recreational pressure, the NDP area lies well beyond the 8km radius around the New Forest SAC/SPA within which the majority (75%) of day visitors to the New Forest originate⁷.
- 3.3 Recreational pressure on the River Avon SAC is recognised to occur in limited circumstances predominately where significant development lies in close proximity to the SAC, and this will not occur as a result of this NDP as the NDP area lies over 20km from the SAC.
- 3.4 In relation to Salisbury Plain, the SAC habitat features were screened out of appropriate assessment for the Core Strategy on the advice of Natural England. The Salisbury Plain SPA can also be screened out of appropriate assessment with respect of this NDP as the NDP area is beyond the 6.4km zone around the SPA within which the majority (75%) of visitors to the Plain are expected to live. This is based on the data collated by means of a visitor survey commissioned by the Council in 2015.

Hydrology / Hydrogeology

- 3.5 In terms of hydrology/hydrogeology, Melksham is located within the catchment of the Bristol Avon, rather than the Hampshire Avon, and as such there is no potential for a likely significant effect on the River Avon SAC as a result of the NDP.
- 3.6 There have been no water resource issues identified for the Bath and Bradford on Avon Bats SAC which is the only SAC from the above list to lie fully within the Bristol Avon catchment. Furthermore, the Bristol Avon has not been identified as a cause of water resource issues for the Salisbury Plain SAC/SPA.

Air Pollution / Nitrogen Deposition

- 3.7 The Wiltshire Core Strategy HRA identified that increased traffic would lead to potential effects through an increase in atmospheric pollution and nitrogen deposition upon a range of Natura 2000 sites within 200m of a main road. Such effects were considered to be very small and difficult to predict at the strategic level⁸. The allocation in the NDP for approximately 30 dwellings is considered to be a small number in relation to the total for the county. The Melksham NDP does not allocate any sites for development or propose any housing allocation that could generate significant additional traffic. Furthermore, all of the Natura 2000 sites listed above are a considerable distance from the NDP area and as such it is concluded that the NDP will not result in significant effects on Natura 2000 sites as a result of nitrogen or particulate matter deposition.

Physical Damage / Interruption of Flight Lines / Disturbance

- 3.8 In terms of the potential to cause physical damage to features which provide habitat for bats, such as breeding, roosting and foraging habitat, and the potential to interrupt or fragment bat flight lines, or to cause disturbance to such features, it is deemed that the NDP area is too remote to have implications for bats at the Bath and Bradford on Avon Bats SAC, Chilmark Quarries SAC or indeed the Mottisfont Bats SAC.

⁷ Wiltshire Core Strategy Updated Habitats Regulations Assessment, April 2014

⁸ Update to the Wiltshire Core Strategy Habitats Regulations Assessment, February 2014 (Exam/89)

- 3.9 The NDP area is also beyond the potential zone of influence with respect of stone curlews breeding at Porton Down SPA and Salisbury Plain SPA and will not result in physical damage to the habitats within the Natura 2000 sites, nor will it result in the interruption of flight lines or disturbance to breeding stone curlew, such as by means of the introduction of visual stimuli or noise.

Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations Plan

- 3.10 Since the Core Strategy was adopted, the Council has published a pre-submission draft of the Wiltshire Housing Site Allocations Plan (HSAP) together with a HRA dated 21 June 2017. A schedule of proposed changes was considered by Cabinet supported by an Addendum to the HRA dated May 2018. A final schedule of changes and an Addendum to the HRA incorporating minor factual changes were published in September 2018 for public consultation.
- 3.11 The screening criteria for the HSAP were modified for some European sites from those used for the Core Strategy subsequent to the acquisition of results from new surveys, and in light of advice from Natural England. The following screening applies the most up to date criteria available from the HSAP and HRA.

4. Screening of Policies in Melksham Neighbourhood Development Plan (Working Policy Table 02.11.2019)

- 4.1 The Melksham NDP comprises 17 planning policies; these are detailed and assessed in Table 1 below.
- 4.2 There is only one policy within the NDP that would lead to development, namely Policy 6, and this would comprise approximately 30 dwellings at Whitley Farm. It is deemed that development at this allocated site would not result in a likely significant effect on any Natura 2000 sites, either alone or in-combination with other plans or projects. Furthermore, it is considered that none of the other policies within the NDP would lead directly to development, nor would they result in a likely significant effect on any Natura 2000 sites, either alone or in-combination with other plans or projects. This is due to the nature, scope and scale of the proposals set out in the NDP, and on account of the distance of the NDP area from any Natura 2000 sites and the absence of a potential pathway for effect.

TABLE 1: Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening of the Melksham Neighbourhood Development Plan

A / B (Green) – Screened out

C / D (Red) – Screened in

Policy	Screening Category	Policy Summary and Assessment under Habitats Regulations
Policy 1: Responding to Climate Change	A1	<p>The policy states: <i>‘Development and infrastructure proposals that demonstrate a positive contribution to tackling climate change through low/zero carbon design, construction and management will be supported.’</i></p> <p>The policy then stipulates various means by which it is expected that development will contribute to addressing climate change under the headings of ‘sustainable design and construction’ and ‘flood risk and natural flood management’. The policy also specifies: <i>‘Micro-generation and community led renewable energy and heat generation schemes will be supported.’</i></p> <p>The policy will not result in development itself but instead aims to steer and positively influence development to use low/zero carbon design, construction and management techniques and to be resilient to climate change. The policy will not result in a likely significant effect upon any Natura 2000 sites. Details of any development that comes forward would be considered at the planning application stage to ensure it aligns with this policy and that there will be acceptability with respect of other Development Plan policies and the National Planning Policy Framework 2019 (NPPF).</p>
Policy 2: Low Emission Vehicles	A1	<p>This policy requires that all new houses with on-plot parking spaces and/or garages provide technology for charging low emission vehicles, and that where shared or off-plot parking spaces are provided one charging point is provided for every 10 houses. It also encourages planning applications that propose new employment, leisure or retail developments to incorporate the provision of electric charging points.</p> <p>The policy will not result in development itself but instead aims to steer and positively influence development. Furthermore, the policy will not result in a likely significant effect upon any Natura 2000 sites. Details of any development that comes forward would be considered at the planning application stage to ensure it aligns with this policy, and other Development Plan policies and the NPPF 2019.</p>
Policy 3: Green Infrastructure and Biodiversity	A1/A3	<p>This policy aims to protect, enhance and manage the GI network in the Plan area. It indicates that development that will make a positive contribution to the GI network of the Plan Area will be supported. The policy stipulates: <i>‘Proposals for major development should be accompanied by:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>I. a plan of the existing green infrastructure assets within and around the development site; and,</i> <i>II. a GI “proposal” demonstrating how GI has been incorporated into the scheme in order to increase function and improve connectivity of GI assets including links to existing assets and networks in the Plan area.’</i>

HRA of Melksham Neighbourhood Development Plan
(EF V1 19.02.20)

Policy	Screening Category	Policy Summary and Assessment under Habitats Regulations
		<p>The policy then focuses on biodiversity and states: <i>'Development that is likely to have either a direct or indirect adverse impact upon local priority habitats as shown on Figure X should demonstrate that appropriate mitigation and/or compensation could be provided and where possible achieve a net enhancement to the biodiversity within the Plan Area.'</i></p> <p>The policy will not result in development itself but instead sets out criteria that development must meet with the objective of protecting and enhancing the GI network within the NDP area. Furthermore, the policy will not result in a likely significant effect upon any Natura 2000 sites. Details of any development that comes forward would be considered at the planning application stage to ensure acceptability with respect of other Development Plan policies including Core Policy 50 (Biodiversity and Geodiversity), 51 (Landscape) and 52 (Green Infrastructure) of the Wiltshire Core Strategy (Adopted January 2015), and the National Planning Policy Framework 2019 (NPPF).</p>
Policy 4: Housing Development	A1	<p>This policy lends support to the delivery of small 'windfall' housing developments within the settlements of the plan area, where they conform with the policies of the Development Plan and accord with the limits of development as set out in Core Policy 2 of the Wiltshire Core Strategy; include a suitable mix of house types and tenures; and have regard to the character and quality of the surrounding townscape. The policy also specifies that in principle, the reuse of suitable brownfield land for small 'windfall' housing development is supported.</p> <p>The policy will not directly lead to development, but it does set out criteria that small 'windfall' housing developments should meet in order to be acceptable within the NDP area. The policy will not result in a likely significant effect upon any Natura 2000 sites. Details of any development that comes forward would be considered at the planning application stage to ensure acceptability with respect of other Development Plan policies and the National Planning Policy Framework 2019 (NPPF).</p>
Policy 5: Infrastructure Phasing	B	<p>This policy stipulates: <i>'Infrastructure requirements necessary to ensure the sustainability of housing development must consider, assess and address their infrastructure requirements and plan the related programmes of work in parallel with the housing to ensure that community infrastructure keeps pace with the needs of the community.'</i></p> <p>The policy will not itself lead to development and will not result in a likely significant effect upon any Natura 2000 sites. Details of any development that comes forward would be considered at the planning application stage to ensure acceptability with respect of other Development Plan policies and the National Planning Policy Framework 2019 (NPPF).</p>
Policy 6: Land at Whitley Farm, Melksham Without	B	<p>This policy allocates land at Whitley Farm for the development of approximately 30 dwellings. The policy stipulates that proposals will be expected to conform with relevant policies within the Development Plan as well as five criteria listed within the policy. These criteria focus on local flood alleviation; protection and conservation of on-site listed structures and management and maintenance of the heritage assets; enhancement of the setting of on-site listed structures and rural setting, and reinforcement of the distinct farm character of the site and its</p>

HRA of Melksham Neighbourhood Development Plan
(EF V1 19.02.20)

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		<p>heritage; provision of a landscape conservation scheme that restores field boundaries and hedgerow; and delivery of community benefits.</p> <p>The development of the site allocated in this policy will not result in a likely significant effect upon any Natura 2000 sites. Nonetheless, the details of any proposal(s) for development of the site at Whitley Farm will need to be considered at the planning application stage to ensure acceptability with respect of other Development Plan policies including Core Policy 50 (Biodiversity and Geodiversity) of the Wiltshire Core Strategy (Adopted January 2015), and the National Planning Policy Framework 2019 (NPPF).</p>
Policy 7: Pre-application Engagement	B	<p>This policy specifies: <i>'In order to ensure a positive and structured Pre-Application engagement, potential applicants bringing forward development proposals are strongly encouraged to follow the Pre-Application Protocol as included in Appendix 2 of this Neighbourhood Plan, and as adopted by Melksham Town Council and Melksham Without Parish Council.'</i></p> <p>The policy will not itself lead to development and will not result in a likely significant effect upon any Natura 2000 sites. Details of any development that comes forward would be considered at the planning application stage to ensure acceptability with respect of other Development Plan policies and the National Planning Policy Framework 2019 (NPPF).</p>
Policy 8: Town Centre	B	<p>This policy specifies that proposals which will maintain and enhance the vitality of Melksham Town Centre will be supported. It stipulates that proposals for the redevelopment of existing employment uses within edge of centre locations should be considered on the basis of their relationship to the existing town centre and potential to expand the town centre. It goes on to specify that proposals for the change of use of existing employment land within edge of centre locations to retail, commercial and other main town centre uses will be supported where the proposed development will generate the same number, or more permanent full time equivalent jobs than could be expected from the existing, or any potential employment use, subject to the relevant retail impact and sequential assessments. The policy sets out that the Town Council will prepare a masterplan for the town centre.</p> <p>The policy will not itself lead to development and will not result in a likely significant effect upon any Natura 2000 sites. Details of any development that comes forward would be considered at the planning application stage to ensure acceptability with respect of other Development Plan policies and the National Planning Policy Framework 2019 (NPPF).</p>
Policy 9: Employment Sites	B	<p>This policy supports the redevelopment of brownfield sites within identified Principal Employment Areas for employment uses falling within Classes B1, B2, and B8 where the proposed development will generate the same number, or more permanent full time equivalent jobs than could be expected from the existing, or any potential employment use.</p>

HRA of Melksham Neighbourhood Development Plan
(EF V1 19.02.20)

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		<p>It also supports the redevelopment of brownfield sites within an identified Commercial Area Boundary in the town centre where this will involve change of use to retail, commercial and other main town centre uses falling within Classes A1, A2, A3, A4, B1, D1, and D2 and where the proposed development will generate the same number, or more permanent full time equivalent jobs than could be expected from the existing, or any potential employment use.</p> <p>The policy also supports the redevelopment of other suitable brownfield sites outside of the previously specified areas where proposals accords with the other policies of the Neighbourhood Plan. Proposals for live/work premises within the settlement framework boundary will be supported provided the work element of the properties falls within Class B1 of the Use Classes Order.</p> <p>The policy will not itself lead to development and will not result in a likely significant effect upon any Natura 2000 sites. Details of any development that comes forward would be considered at the planning application stage to ensure acceptability with respect of other Development Plan policies and the National Planning Policy Framework 2019 (NPPF).</p>
Policy 10: Encourage Small and New Businesses	B	<p>This policy specifies that in principle the provision of local employment, the expansion of small employers and the establishment of new start- up businesses is encouraged and will be supported, subject to an assessment of the impact of the proposals on</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> I. residential amenity; II. the transport network and parking conditions; and, III. biodiversity and the environment. <p>The policy will not itself lead to development and will not result in a likely significant effect upon any Natura 2000 sites. Details of any development that comes forward would be considered at the planning application stage to ensure acceptability with respect of other Development Plan policies and the National Planning Policy Framework 2019 (NPPF).</p>
Policy 11: Sustainable Transport and Active Travel	B	<p>This policy seeks to ensure that development proposals demonstrate how opportunities for the use of sustainable modes of transport can be maximised. It also sets out that accessible, safe and attractive infrastructure that promotes and enables walking, cycling and public transport choices for local journeys will be supported. Moreover, the policy stipulates that further improvements to the accessibility and quality of Melksham Railway Station environment will be supported.</p> <p>The policy will not itself lead to development and will not result in a likely significant effect upon any Natura 2000 sites. Details of any development that comes forward would be considered at the planning application stage to</p>

HRA of Melksham Neighbourhood Development Plan
(EF V1 19.02.20)

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		ensure acceptability with respect of other Development Plan policies and the National Planning Policy Framework 2019 (NPPF).
Policy 12: Open Space	A1	<p>This policy sets out that new development that will result in the loss of identified open space, which is detailed in the Green Infrastructure Topic Paper, will not ordinarily be supported. It goes on to specify that development on areas of open space will only be supported if that development protects and enhances the use and community value of that open space, and that where there is an unavoidable loss of open space, there is an expectation that an equivalent or higher quality open space, accessible by walking or cycling will be provided.</p> <p>The policy will not itself lead to development and will not result in a likely significant effect upon any Natura 2000 sites. Details of any development that comes forward would be considered at the planning application stage to ensure acceptability with respect of other Development Plan policies including Core Policies 50 (Biodiversity and Geodiversity), 51 (Landscape) and 52 (Green Infrastructure) of the Wiltshire Core Strategy (Adopted January 2015), and the National Planning Policy Framework 2019 (NPPF).</p>
Policy 13: Landscape Character and Views	A1	<p>This policy stipulates that development will be supported where it conserves or enhances local landscape character and landscape features; incorporates green space within the scheme that positively contributes to creating a high quality environment; and is demonstrated that the whole scheme, including hard landscape and planting proposals, will contribute positively to the local area. It also specifies that development proposals should aim to conserve or enhance locally valued views.</p> <p>The policy will not itself lead to development and will not result in a likely significant effect upon any Natura 2000 sites. Details of any development that comes forward would be considered at the planning application stage to ensure acceptability with respect of other Development Plan policies including Core Policy 50 (Biodiversity and Geodiversity), 51 (Landscape) and 52 (Green Infrastructure) of the Wiltshire Core Strategy (Adopted January 2015), and the National Planning Policy Framework 2019 (NPPF).</p>
Policy 14: Trees and Hedgerows	A2	<p>This policy sets out that development that will result in the loss or deterioration of Ancient woodlands and ancient or veteran trees will not be supported, unless the need for, and benefits of, the development in that location clearly outweigh the loss. The policy also specifies that existing trees and hedgerows on development sites should be retained where possible and incorporated as placemaking features in new development. Where there is an unavoidable loss of trees on site, the number and type of replacement trees should be informed by quality and size of trees lost. Integration of existing hedgerows into private curtilage should be avoided where possible. The policy also states that tree planting in development proposals, and across the Plan Area will be supported.</p> <p>The policy aims to protect Ancient woodland and veteran trees and to promote tree planting, although it does detail the expectation if there were to be an unavoidable loss of trees as a result of a development. The policy will</p>

HRA of Melksham Neighbourhood Development Plan
(EF V1 19.02.20)

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		not itself lead to development and will not result in a likely significant effect upon any Natura 2000 sites. Details of any development that comes forward would be considered at the planning application stage to ensure acceptability with respect of other Development Plan policies including Core Policy 50 (Biodiversity and Geodiversity), 51 (Landscape) and 52 (Green Infrastructure) of the Wiltshire Core Strategy (Adopted January 2015), and the National Planning Policy Framework 2019 (NPPF).
Policy 15: Locally Distinctive, High Quality Design	A1	<p>This policy stipulates that proposals for new buildings and places should demonstrate positive planning to achieve high quality design that relates to locally distinctive and positive characteristics of the place. The policy goes in to list example measures to achieve locally distinctive, high quality design such as the use of local materials, use of local or regional plant species throughout the development and use of public art.</p> <p>The policy will not itself lead to development but aims to steer and positively influence the design and quality of any new development coming forward. The policy will not result in a likely significant effect upon any Natura 2000 sites. Details of any development that comes forward would be considered at the planning application stage to ensure acceptability with respect of other Development Plan policies including Core Policy 57 (Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping) and 58 (Ensuring the Conservation of the Historic Environment) of the Wiltshire Core Strategy (Adopted January 2015), and the National Planning Policy Framework 2019 (NPPF).</p>
Policy 16: Local Heritage	A1/A3	<p>This policy specifies that any development within the Melksham Conservation Area should demonstrate how proposals enhance and protect the characteristics and special qualities that make up the architectural and historic character of the Area.</p> <p>The policy will not itself lead to development but aims to protect the historic environment and stipulates criteria to be met for any new development within the Melksham Conservation Area. The policy will not result in a likely significant effect upon any Natura 2000 sites. Details of any development that comes forward would be considered at the planning application stage to ensure acceptability with respect of other Development Plan policies including Core Policy 57 (Ensuring High Quality Design and Place Shaping) and 58 (Ensuring the Conservation of the Historic Environment) of the Wiltshire Core Strategy (Adopted January 2015), and the National Planning Policy Framework 2019 (NPPF).</p>
Policy 17: Community Facilities	A3	This policy stipulates that there will be a presumption in favour of safeguarding existing community facilities in the Melksham Plan area against any proposals that would result in their loss, and that proposals that could result in loss of any facility will only be supported where it can be demonstrated that the facility is no longer fit for purpose or viable, or where an equivalent facility is available in the Plan Area. The policy goes on to specify that proposals for major housing development should be accompanied by an assessment of the accessible existing community facilities against the additional need that will be generated by the development proposals; and seeks new infrastructure.

HRA of Melksham Neighbourhood Development Plan
 (EF V1 19.02.20)

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		<p>This policy seeks to retain existing community facilities and to ensure that proposals for new development are accompanied by details of provision for new community facilities and infrastructure where there will be a need. The policy will not itself lead to development and will not result in a likely significant effect upon any Natura 2000 sites. Details of any development that comes forward would be considered at the planning application stage to ensure acceptability with respect of other Development Plan policies and the National Planning Policy Framework 2019 (NPPF).</p>

5. Conclusion

- 5.1 The HRA screening exercise presented in this document has concluded that the Melksham NDP will not result in a likely significant effect on any European Sites or their qualifying features either alone or in-combination with other plans and projects. Therefore, it has not been necessary for the NDP to be subject to an appropriate assessment under the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017.
- 5.2 It should be noted that if any changes are made to the NDP or the policies contained therein, it will be necessary for the amended NDP to be subject to a repeat HRA screening exercise before the NDP can be 'made.'

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