Chichester District Council

To: Ms Jane Bromley (Clerk)
Plaistow and Ifold Parish Council

If calling please ask for: Andrew Frost
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Our ref:

Your ref:

4 November 2026

Dear Ms Bromley,

Submission Draft Plaistow and Ifold Neighbourhood Plan 2023-2039 (Submitted May 2026)

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Opinion Screening Determination under Regulation 9 and Schedule 1 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004

This letter addresses the issue of whether or not there is a need for environmental assessment of the submission version of the Submission Draft Plaistow and Ifold Neighbourhood Plan 2023-2039 (Submitted May 2026), and as such whether it meets one of the basic conditions that a neighbourhood plan must meet in order to proceed to referendum: that it does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations that are translated into current UK law by the above regulations.

On the basis of the contents of the neighbourhood plan as proposed and consultation with the relevant statutory agencies in accordance with Regulation 9(2) of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, the following determination can be made.

The screening determination is that **an environmental assessment of the Submission Draft Plaistow and Ifold Neighbourhood Plan 2023-2039 (Submitted May 2026) is not required** due to there not being a likely significant environmental effect as a result of the proposals in the plan, acting alone or in-combination with other plans and programmes. This view is informed by comments received from Statutory Consultees and for the reasons set out in the Criteria and responses to the screening process which are attached as part of this letter.

Plaistow and Ifold parish includes areas within the functionally linked conservation zones for Ebernoe and The Mens SACs, designated habitats for Bechstein and Barbastelle bat populations. Chichester Local Plan 2021-2039 (adopted August 2025) includes Policy NE6 Chichester's Internationally and European Designated Habitats, that sets out strategic requirements in relation to the SAC to ensure that new development does not have an adverse impact by requiring mitigation to negate the harm caused. New development will be required to ensure mitigation is in place to safeguard against disturbance and disruption to habitats used by these bats for commuting and foraging.

However, the Submission Draft Plaistow and Ifold Neighbourhood Plan 2023-2039 (Submitted May 2026) does not allocate any sites for housing development, and potential

new development would therefore only result from windfall provision and be mitigated by adopted Local Plan Policy NE6 identified above. Therefore, no Appropriate Assessment of the Neighbourhood Plan 2023-2039 is required, as sufficient mitigation is already ensured by Policy NE6 of the adopted Local Plan. As no other environmental effects have been identified through the screening process, an SEA is not required.

This decision has been based on the information provided. If the contents of the Plan are revised and/or there is a material change in the environmental characteristics in the locality (e.g. any additional nature conservation or other environmental designations), then the comments contained in this decision would need to be reconsidered in order to take account of the changes.

Yours sincerely,



Andrew Frost
Director of Planning and Environment

Submission Draft Plaistow and Ifold Neighbourhood Plan 2023-2039 (Submitted May 2026)

Criteria and response of screening

Criteria (from Annex II of SEA Directive and Schedule I of Regulations)	Relevance in context of this screening report
The characteristics of plans and programmes	
(a) the degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources;	The Submission Draft Plaistow and Ifold Neighbourhood Plan 2023-2039 (Submitted May 2026) (NP) would, if 'made', form part of the Statutory Development Plan and as such will establish the development management framework for Plaistow and Ifold parish. The NP is prepared for town and country planning and land use and a framework for future development in Plaistow and Ifold parish. The NP is not identifying any sites for allocation for residential development. The only potential new housing in the parish will result from 'windfall' development. The NP includes policies on design principles, supporting the local economy, flood risk and foul drainage as well as local green space designations and non-designated heritage assets.
(b) the degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy;	The NP is the lowest tier in the planning hierarchy and must be in conformity with the National Planning Policy Framework, the strategic polices of the development plan and European Directives. The NP is not intended to influence other plans or programmes.
(c) the relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development;	The NP aims to ensure the four settlements in the parish evolve naturally, maintaining a sense of community, respecting character, protecting the environment and quality of life for those who live and work in the parish. There are policies within the NP which reflect this approach: Policy H1 Housing need

Criteria (from Annex II of SEA Directive and Schedule I of Regulations)	Relevance in context of this screening report
	Policy H2 Housing density and design principles Policy EE1 Supporting the local economy Policy NDHA1 Non-designated heritage assets Policy FR1 Flood risk and foul drainage Policy EHS1 Ensuring highway safety Policy LGS1 Local green space
(d) environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme; and	The NP is not identifying any sites for allocation for residential development. The only potential new housing in the parish will result from 'windfall' development. The implications of development permitted under the NP on the following environmental issues will need further consideration and in some cases securing of site specific mitigation through the process of preparing the Modified NP: • impact on nationally important historic assets and the historic environment; • impact on biodiversity, including protected species and habitat fragmentation • potential for impacts on the bat species features of interest for the designated sites at Ebernoe and The Mens SACs; • impact on the landscape with increased urbanisation; • loss of agricultural land.
(e) the relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (for example, plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection).	This NP has no relevance to the implementation of Community legislation. The NP is a land-use plan and sets the framework for future development management within the Plaistow and Ifold Parish Neighbourhood Plan area.
Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected,	
(a) the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects;	The impact of the proposals for development in the NP is unlikely to result in significant effects on historic environment/heritage assets, statutorily designated nature conservation sites or landscapes, or result in other significant environmental effects. This is due to the lack of housing allocation policies in the NP.

Criteria (from Annex II of SEA Directive and Schedule I of Regulations)	Relevance in context of this screening report
(b) the cumulative nature of the effects;	Plaistow and Ifold parish includes areas within the functionally linked conservation zones for the Ebernoe and The Mens SACs, designated habitats which provide commuting and foraging habitats for the Bechstein and Barbastelle bat populations. Adopted Chichester Local Plan Policy NE6 Chichester's Internationally and European Designated Habitats, sets out strategic requirements in relation to the SACs to ensure that new development does not have an adverse impact by requiring mitigation to negate the harm caused. New development will be required by the Local Plan policy to ensure mitigation is in place to safeguard against disturbance.
(c) the transboundary nature of the effects;	As a neighbourhood plan no transboundary effects on other counties are likely
(d) the risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents);	Plaistow and Ifold parish does not currently have any AQMAs.
(e) the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected);	Plaistow and Ifold parish lies in the north east of Chichester District, with a small area in the west lying within the South Downs National Park. Plaistow / Ifold is defined as a service village in the adopted Chichester Local Plan Policy S2 Settlement Hierarchy. The parish includes the settlements of Ifold, Plaistow, Durfold Wood and Shillinglee
(f) the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to: (i) special natural characteristics or cultural heritage; (ii) exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values; or (iii) intensive land-use; and	Ifold has a settlement boundary. It was originally a large, landed estate until the 1930's and now forms a residential area characterised by low density housing on large plots serviced by private unadopted roads. Plaistow is the original village of the parish, has a conservation area and is characterised by many grade II listed dwellings and a large village green. The parish itself has over 60 grade II listed buildings. Durfold Wood established in the 1930's on former estate land, features large garden plots with trees and hedges. Shillinglee is historically tied to the Arundel Estate and home to Shillinglee House now restored and converted to residential units.

Criteria (from Annex II of SEA Directive and Schedule I of Regulations)	Relevance in context of this screening report
	Plaistow and Ifold parish includes areas within the functionally linked conservation zones for the Ebernoe and The Mens SACs, designated habitats for Bechstein and Barbastelle bat populations. Adopted Chichester Local Plan Policy NE6 Chichester's Internationally and European Designated Habitats, sets out strategic requirements in relation to the SAC to ensure that new development does not have an adverse impact by requiring mitigation to negate the harm caused. New development will be required to ensure mitigation is in place to safeguard against disturbance.
(g) the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.	The settlements of Ifold, Plaistow, Durfold Wood and Shilinglee lie outside the South Downs National Park, with only a small area of land in the west of the parish falling within the National Park boundary. There is therefore potential for development within the parish to affect the setting of the National Park and, depending on its location, scale and visibility, aspects of its landscape character and special qualities. There is also potential for localised effects on landscape character and visual amenity within the parish, particularly from development at the edges of existing settlements and at the transition between built form and the surrounding countryside. Such development could result in incremental erosion of rural character, affect views from the local road network and Public Rights of Way and lead to the loss or fragmentation of characteristic landscape features including hedgerows, mature trees and woodland.

Submission Draft Plaistow and Ifold Neighbourhood Plan 2023-2039 (Submitted May 2026)

Summary of Statutory Consultations – Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

Statutory Consultee	Summary of Comments
Historic England	
Historic England (HE) – Reply 03/09/26	Historic England considers that the Plan is unlikely to have any significant effects on the historic environment. Therefore, having regard to the criteria set out in Schedule 1 of the Environmental Assessment Regulations (Annex II of the SEA Directive), we conclude that the preparation of a Strategic Environmental Assessment is not required in relation to heritage matters. The views of the other two statutory consultation bodies should be taken into account before the overall decision on the need for an SEA is made. To avoid any doubt, this does not reflect our obligation to provide further advice on later stages of the SEA process and, potentially, object to specific proposals which may subsequently arise (either as a result of this consultation or in later versions of the plan) where we consider that, despite the SEA, these would have an adverse effect upon the environment.
Environment Agency	
Environment Agency – reply – 15/09/26	The information provided confirms that there will no development coming forward as part of this plan. Having taken this into account, we do not consider there to be any significant environmental impacts associated with this plan, and therefore it is our view that a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) will not be required. However, should you determine that this Neighbourhood Plan does require SEA, we must be consulted on the scope to ensure key environmental issues within our remit are addressed.
Natural England	
Natural England Reply 27/09/26	It is Natural England's advice, on the basis of the material supplied with the consultation, that significant effects on statutorily designated nature conservation sites or landscapes are unlikely. The proposed neighbourhood plan is unlikely to significantly affect any Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Marine Conservation Zone (MCZ), Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), Special Protection area (SPA), Ramsar wetland or sites in the process of becoming SACs or SPAs ('candidate SACs', 'possible SACs', 'potential SPAs') or a Ramsar wetland. The

	plan area is unlikely to have a significant effect on a National Park, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty or Heritage Coast, and is unlikely to impact upon the purposes for which these areas are designated or defined. Guidance on the assessment of Neighbourhood Plans, in line with the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 is contained within the Planning Practice Guidance. This identifies three triggers that may require the production of an SEA: • a neighbourhood plan allocates sites for development • the neighbourhood area contains sensitive natural or heritage assets that may be affected by the proposals in the plan • the neighbourhood plan may have significant environmental effects that have not already been considered and dealt with through a sustainability appraisal of the Local Plan. Natural England does not hold information on the location of significant populations of protected species, so is unable to advise whether this plan is likely to affect protected species to such an extent as to require an SEA. Further information is included in Natural England's standing advice on protected species. Furthermore, Natural England does not routinely maintain locally specific data on all environmental assets. The plan may have environmental impacts on priority species and/or habitats, local wildlife sites, soils and best and most versatile agricultural land, or on local landscape character that may be sufficient to warrant an SEA. Information on ancient woodland, ancient and veteran trees is set out in Natural England/Forestry Commission standing advice. We therefore recommend that advice is sought from your ecological, landscape and soils advisers, local record centre, recording society or wildlife body on the local soils, best and most versatile agricultural land, landscape, geodiversity and biodiversity receptors that may be affected by the plan before determining whether a SEA is necessary. Natural England reserves the right to provide further advice on the environmental assessment of the plan. This includes any third party appeal against any screening decision you may make. If a SEA is required, Natural England must be consulted at the scoping and environmental report stages.
South Downs National Park Authority	
South Downs national Park Authority – reply 18/09/26	The SDNPA considers that the Plaistow and Ifold Neighbourhood Plan 2023-2039 (the 'Plan') is not likely to have significant environmental effects. This screening opinion is based on the following:

	• There are no sites allocated for residential development in the Plan. • The Chichester Local Plan 2021-2039 identifies a housing figure for the parish of 25 dwellings. The identification of sites to meet this requirement will be carried out by Chichester District Council (CDC). The Chichester Local Plan has already been subject to strategic environmental assessment through the Sustainability Appraisal process. **Habitats Regulations Assessment** The SDNPA concurs with the conclusion of CDC in the Screening Matrix and Appropriate Assessment Statement.