

Claverton Neighbourhood Plan (CNP) 2018-2036

HRA screening & review

Background

Under Regulations 102-105 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (the Habitat Regulations) all strategic and local development plans must be assessed for their impacts upon a network of European wildlife sites (European Sites). These regulations transpose the requirements the EC Habitats Directives into to UK law and are designed to protect the integrity of European Sites. They require the assessment of impacts and avoidance of harm to the Conservation Objectives of European sites. The process is generally referred to as a Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA).

The vision and policies within the draft Neighbourhood Plan for Claverton Parish were assessed for possible issues and impacts for European Site protection, and specifically for possible impacts upon the Bath and Bradford on Avon Bat Special Area of Conservation (SAC).

The ENP area falls entirely within the 4km buffer zone of this European Site (see Map1).

Bath & Bradford on Avon Bat SAC

Greater Horseshoe Bats and Bechstein's Bats are the primary reasons for the designation of this SAC. Lesser Horseshoe bats are also a qualifying feature.

Site Vulnerabilities

This site in southern England includes the hibernation sites associated with 15% of the UK greater horseshoe bat *Rhinolophus ferrumequinum* population and is selected on the basis of the importance of this exceptionally large overwintering population. Summer and winter roosts are usually less than 20-30 km apart. The bats are vulnerable to the loss of insect food supplies due to insecticide use, changing farming practices and the loss of broad-leaved tree-cover, and to the loss or disturbance of underground roost sites. Their use of the landscape can also be compromised by artificial light spill onto key habitat features.

For Lesser Horseshoe bats summer and winter roosts are usually less than 5-10 km apart. The bats are vulnerable to the loss or disturbance of both summer and winter roost sites and the removal of linear habitat corridors.

Small numbers of Bechstein's bats *Myotis bechsteinii* have been recorded hibernating in abandoned mines in this area, though maternity sites remain unknown. The species is closely associated with mature deciduous woodland and appears to select old woodpecker holes or rot holes in trees for breeding. It also occurs in coniferous woodland in some areas. Maternity colonies may move between suitable crevices within a small area, such as a piece of woodland. Bechstein's bats are believed to hibernate in hollow trees and sometimes in underground localities.

Potential effects to Bat sites

Potential Issues
Landuse change
Landtake
Increased recreational pressures
Increased noise and light pollution
Traffic generated air pollution
Increased urban-fringe pressures (domestic cats; noise; disturbance –potentially reducing agricultural viability)
Reduced viability and potential loss of existing agricultural landuse
Potential Effects
Reduction of habitat quality and function close to some sites (including function as foraging grounds or access ways)
Habitat loss close to some sites
Habitat fragmentation









Screening

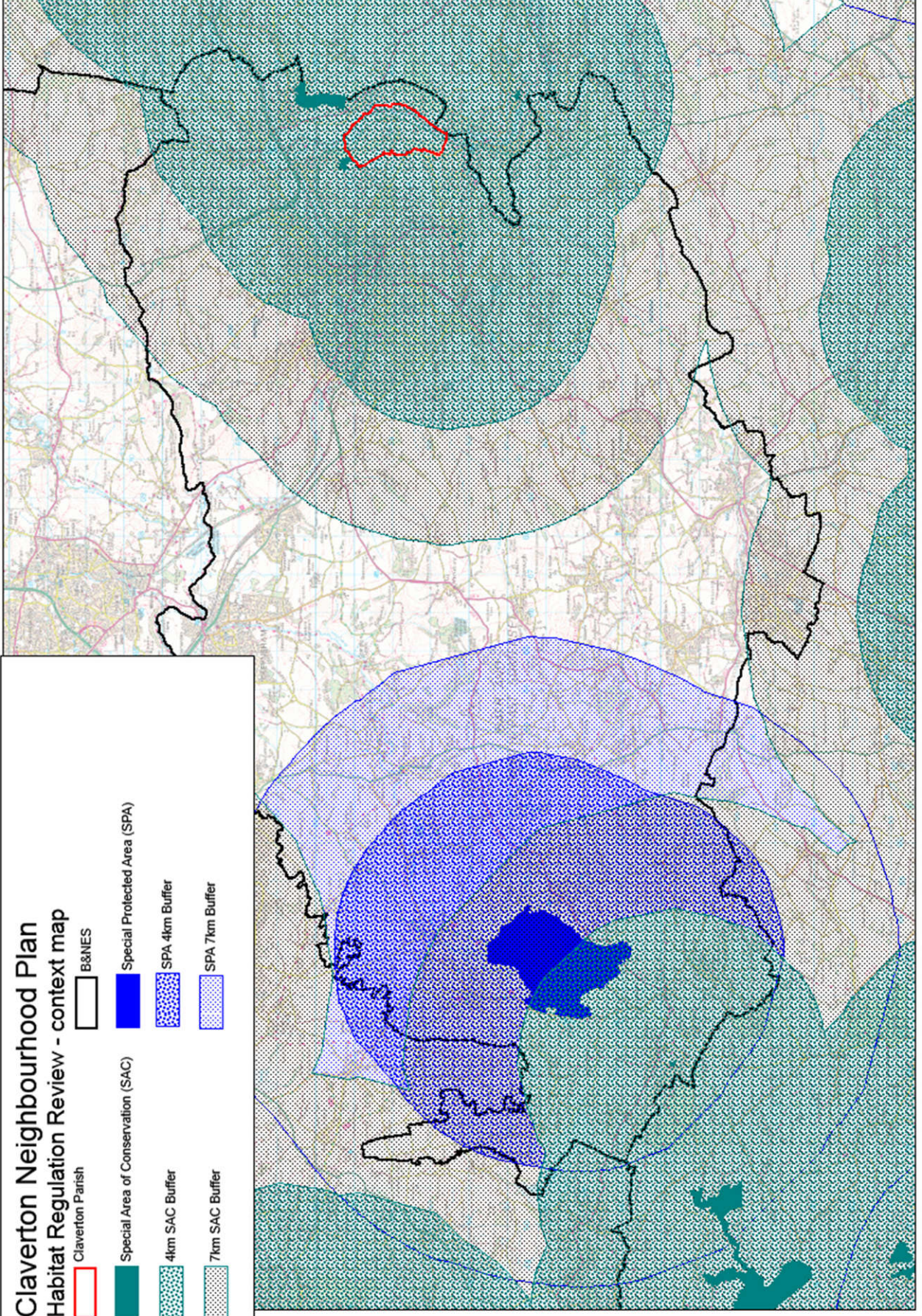
The screening to assess the likelihood of significant effects upon European sites is based on the approach set out in *The Habitat Regulations Assessment Handbook 2013* as updated by emerging case law.

The plan does not propose nor allocate specific development but includes policies to guide new development that may come forward. The vision and policies have a very clear and strong ambition to protect and enhance the natural and cultural qualities of the neighbourhood, and clearly recognises the important wildlife of the Parish, including its location to key features of the Bath & Bradford on Avon SAC. The screening indicates no likelihood of significant effects upon the Bath and Bradford SAC and the plan can be screened out from any further HRA review.

Claverton Neighbourhood Plan

Habitat Regulation Review - context map

-  Claverton Parish
-  BS&NES
-  Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
-  Special Protected Area (SPA)
-  4km SAC Buffer
-  SPA 4km Buffer
-  7km SAC Buffer
-  SPA 7km Buffer



Screening categories	Code
A general statement of policy	A
Policy listing general criteria for testing proposals	B
proposals referred to but not proposed by the plan	C
environmental protection policies	D
steering change away from positive sites	E
do not propose change, but control approach (eg design)	F
no conceivable effect	G
actual or theoretical effects cannot undermine conservation objectives	H
LSE on a site alone	I
no LSE alone but an effect - check in combination	J
no LSE even in combination	K
LSE in combination	L

Any policy or site allocated screening category I,J or L and highlighted in yellow will require action / amendment. Recommendations to address these issues are listed in the screening matrices and will require a response from plan authors

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Policy Objective	Policy Clauses	Screening
Planning and Development (PD) To preserve and protect the rural valley and historical character of the parish.		
	PD1a Development proposals must demonstrate how they protect and enhance existing green infrastructure whilst not adversely impacting the current agricultural pastures and woodlands	D
	PD1b Given the heavy traffic on the main roads (A36 and Claverton Hill) planning applications for developments that generate significant levels of movement should be accompanied by a transport assessment or transport statement in accordance with National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance.	B
	PD2a Development proposals should promote the retention of the landscape setting of the Parish and its surrounding countryside as an essential part of Claverton’s character and important views. Nine key viewpoints were identified in the Claverton Conservation Area Appraisal.	D
	PD3a Proposals for the development of existing buildings for housing are supported.	A
	PD4a Proposals relating to buildings of architectural or historic distinction including non-designated heritage assets should seek to preserve or enhance their character and setting. Restoration of original features and/or improvements to previous unsympathetic alterations will be supported.	A
Buildings (B) To maintain the integrity of the buildings to preserve the Parish’s historical setting and heritage.		
	B1a Development within or affecting the setting of the Conservation Area will only be supported where the proposal preserves or enhances those elements which contribute to its special character, including the historical assets identified in Appendix IV	D
	B1b Development within or affecting the setting of the Conservation Area will only be supported where the proposal preserves or enhances those elements which contribute to its special character, including the historical assets identified in Appendix IV. Any new development must ensure there will be no detrimental impact of traffic which adversely affects the village environment.	D

	B2a In line with the Claverton Landscape Assessment and the Claverton Conservation Area Appraisal, development proposals which do not sit well, and which dominate the landscape or historical assets, including the form and shape of the rooflines, will not be supported	D
Environment (E) To safeguard and enhance the biodiversity and natural habitat within the Parish and encourage measures to reduce its carbon footprint and increase resilience to climate change		
	E1a Any development proposal should demonstrate how it will: ensure the preservation and protection of hedgerows; support planting of native species of hedging on site boundaries; preserve and protect existing and important flora and fauna (i.e. hedgerows, trees, wildlife sites). It must not result in any damage to designated wildlife sites.	D
	E2a Development should not increase any form of pollution which would have a detrimental impact on the valley's flora and fauna.	D
	E3a Support will be given to developments which; • incorporate sustainable and natural building materials • seek to maximise energy efficiency • provide renewable energy generation • These should be on a scale which is sympathetic to and do not detract from the visual character of the Parish.	A/D
	E4a Any development should take account of all the lighting associated with it to include spillage beyond the site boundary into neighbouring properties, the wider countryside and night sky. Lighting should be designed to protect light sensitive species and dark skies.	D
	E4b Development which would increase noise pollution is unacceptable as it would be detrimental to tranquillity, biodiversity, community health and wellbeing.	A/D
	E4c Any development along the River Avon and the Kennet & Avon Canal within the Parish should take into consideration B&NES Water Space Design Guidance (June 2018) relating to bat protection and lighting.	D
Community Amenities (CA) To support and enhance existing amenities and services within the Parish for the benefit of the community and other stakeholders while preserving its essential local character		

	CA1a Proposals to enhance, footpaths, towpaths, cycling routes and bridleways that maintain their original character for public enjoyment of these facilities would be supported	A
	CA2a Proposals for recreational and educational facilities will be supported providing that the siting, design and scale of the development conserves or enhances the quality of the Parish's historic setting, the ecology and surrounding use of the land	D
	Ca2b Proposals to ensure the retention, improve the quality of, or extend and are compatible with the existing local amenities, such as the American Museum, Pumping Station, and Church will be supported provided it is of a scale appropriate to the needs of the community.	A
	CA2c Any development of the church building should maintain its heritage character while enhancing its potential as a community heritage asset.	A/D

George Blanchard

From: Stonehouse, Simon <Simon.Stonehouse@naturalengland.org.uk>
Sent: 17 April 2019 09:21
To: George Blanchard; SM-NE-Consultations (NE)
Subject: RE: Claverton Neighbourhood Plan - Draft SEA and HRA Screening

Dear George

Apologies for not responding sooner.

Natural England supports the conclusions of the draft SEA and HRA screening for the above Plan. Given that the Neighbourhood Plan does not allocate sites for development and is in accordance with Local Plan policy framework, Natural England has no concerns regarding natural environment interests.

Kind regards
Simon

Simon Stonehouse
Senior Planning Adviser
Somerset, Avon & Wiltshire Team

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From: George Blanchard [mailto:George_Blanchard@BATHNES.GOV.UK]
Sent: 16 April 2019 12:35
To: SM-NE-Consultations (NE) <consultations@naturalengland.org.uk>
Cc: Stonehouse, Simon <Simon.Stonehouse@naturalengland.org.uk>
Subject: FW: Claverton Neighbourhood Plan - Draft SEA and HRA Screening

Dear Natural England

Please can I check if you have comments to make regarding the SEA and HRA Screening for Claverton NDP?

Simon, I have copied you in as I understand that you provided comments to the NDP group for their Regulation 14 consultation

Kind regards

George

George Blanchard
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