

**Egloshayle, St Breock and Wadebridge Area  
Neighbourhood Plan to 2030  
(1<sup>st</sup> Consultation Version January 2017)**

**Strategic Environmental Assessment  
Habitats Regulations Assessment**

**Screening Report**

**Draft for consultation**

**10<sup>th</sup> February 2017**

**Egloshayle, St Breock and Wadebridge Area Neighbourhood Plan  
Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Report**

# **Egloshayle, St Breock and Wadebridge Area Neighbourhood Plan Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Report**

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# **Egloshayle, St Breock and Wadebridge Area Neighbourhood Plan Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Report**

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 This screening report is designed to determine whether or not the contents of the Egloshayle, St Breock and Wadebridge Area Neighbourhood Plan to 2030 (1<sup>st</sup> consultation version Jan 2017) requires a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in accordance with the European Directive 2001/42/EC and associated Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004. The report also considers whether Habitats Regulations Assessment is required under Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive (HRA).
- 1.2 The purpose of the Egloshayle, St Breock and Wadebridge Area Neighbourhood Plan to 30 (Jan 2017 draft) is to allocate land and set out planning policies to guide development in the area of the three parishes.
- 1.3 The legislative background set out below outlines the regulations that require the need for this screening exercise. Section 4, provides a screening assessment of the likely significant environmental effects of the Neighbourhood Plan and the need for a full SEA or HRA.

## **2. Legislative Background**

- 2.1 The basis for Strategic Environmental Assessments and Sustainability Appraisal legislation is European Directive 2001/42/EC and was transposed into English law by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, or SEA Regulations. Detailed Guidance of these regulations can be found in the Government publication ['A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive' \(ODPM 2005\)](#)
- 2.2 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 required Local Authorities to produce Sustainability Appraisals (SA) for all local development documents to meet the requirement of the EU Directive on SEA. It is considered best practice to incorporate requirements of the SEA Directive into an SA.
- 2.3 However, Neighbourhood Plans are not Local Development Documents and are not required to be subject to sustainability appraisal by legislation (although it is advisable to carry out some form of sustainability assessment.) Neighbourhood plans are produced under the Localism Act 2011. The Localism Act requires neighbourhood plans to be compatible with EU and Human rights legislation, therefore, depending on their content, neighbourhood plans may trigger the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive and Habitats Directive and unless they choose to complete a full SA plans will need to be screened for SEA separately.

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2.4 This report focuses on screening for SEA and HRA and the criteria for establishing whether a full assessment is needed.

## **3. Criteria for Assessing the Effects of the Neighbourhood Plan**

3.1 Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects referred to in Article 3(5) of Directive 2001/42/EC are set out below:

1. The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular, to

- 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 degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy,
- the relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development,
- environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme,
- 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).

2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to

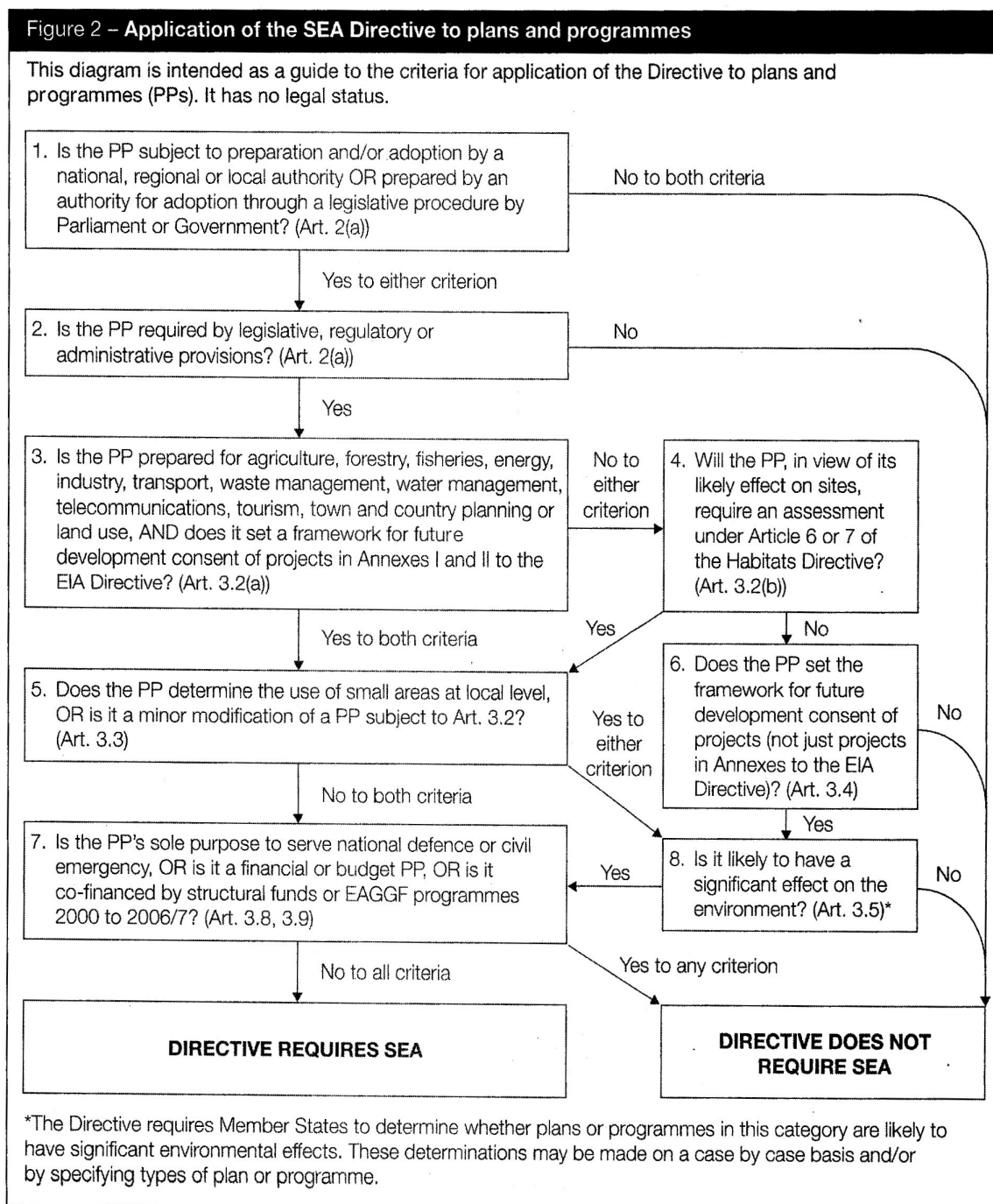
- the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects,
- the cumulative nature of the effects,
- the transboundary nature of the effects,
- the risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents),
- the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected),
- 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-use,
- the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.

Source: Annex II of SEA Directive 2001/42/EC

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## 4. Assessment

4.1 The diagram below illustrates the process for screening a planning document to ascertain whether a full SEA is required<sup>1</sup>.



<sup>1</sup> Source: A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive

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4.2 The table below shows the assessment of whether the neighbourhood plan will require a full SEA. The questions below are drawn from the diagram above which sets out how the SEA Directive should be applied.

Stage	Y/N	Reason
1. Is the PP (plan or programme) subject to preparation and/or adoption by a national, regional or local authority OR prepared by an authority for adoption through a legislative procedure by Parliament or Government? (Art. 2(a))	Y	Will be 'made' by Cornwall Council and used as part of the planning policy framework
2. Is the PP required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions? (Art. 2(a))	Y	Localism Act 2011
3. Is the PP prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism, town and country planning or land use, AND does it set a framework for future development consent of projects in Annexes I and II to the EIA Directive? (Art 3.2(a))	N	Annex I and II projects are (typically) large scale industrial and commercial processes – the plan does not deal with this scale of development.
4. Will the PP, in view of its likely effect on sites, require an assessment for future development under Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive? (Art. 3.2 (b))	N	<p>River Camel SAC: the Camel runs along the boundary of St Breock and Egloshayle and the River Allen tributary of the river bisects Egloshayle Parish and joining the Camel at Wadebridge, where the designated area ends. The qualifying features are European dry heaths, old sessile oak woods with Ilex and Blechnum and Alluvial forests with Alnus glutinosa and Fraxinus excelsior, Bulklead, Otter and Atlantic Salmon. Drainage is identified as a current pressure. Drainage has a number of damaging effects on both the wet heath and the surrounding environment through, for example, lowering of the water table, increased erosion of peat, siltation of streams and rivers and increased risk of flooding. This site is therefore highly sensitive to water abstraction.</p> <p>Otter and bullhead are dependent on water quality. During the EA Review of Consents Stage 3 process several STWs were cited as potentially contributing to adverse effects on the SAC through phosphorus discharges. These are upstream of the Wadebridge area and development that affects these areas is to be phased, contingent on the necessary improvements to sewage treatment works. This is outside the area of the neighbourhood plan. Details can be found in</p>

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		<p>the: <a href="#">Site Improvement Plan</a></p> <p>The plan proposes a built up area boundary and a growth area within that. These areas are downstream of the SAC; the settlement boundary at Sladesbridge (adjacent to the SAC) which was included in a previous draft of the plan has been removed and the plan specifically resists development which is not within the identified built up area and names Sladesbridge as one of the rural settlements where growth would not be considered sustainable.</p>
5. Does the PP Determine the use of small areas at local level, OR is it a minor modification of a PP subject to Art. 3.2? (Art. 3.3)	Y	<p>The Plan contains land use planning policies to guide development within the parishes. It creates a settlement or 'built up area' boundary for Wadebridge, and allocates proposed growth areas which are adjacent to the built up area boundary and within the by-pass (A39/A389). These are areas of land allocated for housing, economy and community related development, provided that they are in accordance with Cornwall Local Plan policies and other policies in the NDP. (map C1, Policy SD01) Development outside the built up area boundary will only be allowed in very limited circumstances (Policy SD02)</p> <p>Policy SD03 allocates an employment land site (Map C3). The plan also identifies a further direction of growth (north) if further development is required within the plan period.</p> <p>There is also an allocation for mixed use development at Trevilling Quay (map J Policy SR05) This area currently has industrial buildings, boat storage and a slipway.</p> <p>Policy RE03 allocates areas that are suitable for wind turbines. This allocation relies on the Landscape character assessment and associated sensitivity study carried out by Cornwall Council. Policy RE03 also requires individual applications to demonstrate that there are no adverse impacts on landscape character and/or on the setting and character of historic assets. Other policies within the plan relate to the design and quality of development, giving protection to the environment and designating landscape, ecological, local green space and protected recreation areas. A town centre zone is identified where retail and commercial uses will be protected.</p>
6. Does the PP set the framework for future development consent of projects (not just projects in annexes to the EIA Directive)? (Art 3.4)	Y	The NDP will be 'made' and used as part of the development plan for determining planning applications in the Plan area.
7. Is the PP's sole purpose to serve the national defence or civil emergency, OR is it a financial or budget PP, OR is it co-financed by structural funds or EAGGF programmes 2000 to 2006/7? (Art 3.8, 3.9)		N/A
8. Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment? (Art. 3.5)	Y	The proposed growth areas provide for the level of growth set out in the Cornwall Local Plan which is 1,100 dwellings during the plan period 2010 - 2030. Over 380 of these dwellings are already committed (over 150 are already built and approx. 230 have planning permission) This scale of development has the potential to have a significant effect on the environment.



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<b>Table 2 likely significant effects</b>	
<b>SEA requirement</b>	<b>Comments</b>
The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular, to:	
1. 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 Plan establishes a built up boundary and growth area for Wadebridge and provides local criteria based policies to control the quality of development within the 3 parishes.
2. the degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy	The neighbourhood plan must be in general conformity with the National Planning Policy Framework and the Local Plan (currently the saved policies of the North Cornwall District Local Plan)
3. the relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development,	The neighbourhood development plan will be examined against four basic conditions, one of which is whether the plan contributes to sustainable development. Neighbourhood plans are required to be in general conformity with local and national strategic policies, which are subject to sustainability appraisal and must be compatible with EU Directives, such as the SEA and Habitats Directives.
4. environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme,	Key designations in the area are the River Camel SAC, Amble Marshes SSSI and AONB in the north of the NDP area.
5. 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).	N/A
Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to:	
6. the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects,	The plan period is up to 2030, reflecting the plan period of the emerging Local Plan and aims to provide for development demand within that period.
7. the cumulative nature of the effects,	The plan does not seek to increase development rates above local need, or the requirements of the Cornwall Local Plan. Cumulative impacts will be phased over the plan period and are subject to design and natural environment policies to control, avoid and mitigate adverse effects.
8. the transboundary nature of the effects,	The plan supports development to meet local need, within the parishes. The majority of development will be in and around Wadebridge at the centre of the plan area, so transboundary effects are minimal.
9. the risks to human health or the	N/A

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environment (e.g. due to accidents),	
10. the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected),	<p>The combined area of the three parishes is approx. 5682 hectares.</p> <p>The 2011 census records 3,677 dwellings, 3,100 of which are in the urban area in Wadebridge parish.</p> <p>Housing need, according to the Homechoice register, is 269 - and past rates of development have been 26 per year for the urban area. There are over 380 commitments and completions for the plan period. Wadebridge is a main town and local service centre within Cornwall.</p>
<p>11. the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-special natural characteristics or cultural heritage,</li> <li>- exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values,</li> <li>- intensive land-use,</li> </ul>	<p>Conservation areas are designated in the centre of Wadebridge and for St Breock. The Wadebridge bridge is a scheduled ancient monument (SAM), and there are several other SAMs in the rural areas of Egloshayle and St Breock parishes including Killibury Castle in St Breock and a large number of barrows on St Breock and Rustyn Downs. These rural features are not likely to be affected by the proposals in the plan.</p> <p>The areas identified for development around Wadebridge are not within the conservation areas, but some are adjacent to it and could affect its setting, particularly the setting of the bridge which is prominent in long views, for example from the A39. General policies SD05 – Local Character, SD02 – development in the countryside and HS03 – infill housing, have criteria which require protection of the historic environment or heritage assets. Designated assets and conservation areas also have their own protection, and higher level policies (NPPF and Cornwall Local plan) will also give protection to these assets. However the allocation of sites requires assessment of environmental impacts to inform the options – this does not appear to be demonstrated through the available background evidence <a href="http://wadebridge-tc.gov.uk/nhp/148-documents.html">http://wadebridge-tc.gov.uk/nhp/148-documents.html</a></p> <p>Renewable Energy:</p> <p>Policy RE02 requires solar array development to comply with Cornwall Council's Landscape Character Assessment guidance for siting.</p> <p>Policy R03 allocates areas for wind turbine development and RE04 requires a cumulative visual impact assessment to accompany all wind turbine applications. The areas identified as potentially suitable for wind turbines (marked in yellow on Map O), have been selected with a minimum distance of 1.5 km from designated areas. Further criteria require landscape character, heritage assets and their setting and wildlife and biodiversity impacts to be taken into account.</p> <p>The plan does not propose intensive land use and the areas allocated for development are well related to the existing built up area. Natural Environment policies recognise and protect sensitive areas and protect and enhance wildlife habitats.</p>

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12. the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.	Part of the Cornwall AONB (Camel Estuary) covers the northern parts of St Breock and Egloshayle parishes. The plan seeks to restrict site allocations to areas within the A39 by-pass, and the A389 Egloshayle by-pass, which is not within or adjacent to the AONB and keeps development within or adjacent to the built up area of Wadebridge preserving the setting of the AONB. The growth areas are also away from the designated SSSI (Camel River.), will not drain into the SSSI/SAC and water abstraction is not proposed in the plan. Plan policies refer to the Cornwall Landscape guidance for renewables, stating that areas in or within the setting of the AONB will not be suitable for large renewable energy installations.
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## **5. Screening Outcome**

5.1 HRA: the HRA screening recognises the proximity of the River Camel SAC and the current issues with water quality in the SAC. Measures are in place from South West Water to implement phosphorous stripping at Nanstallon and to investigate the need for improvements to other upstream Sewage Water Treatments, St Teath, St Breward, Delabole and St Mabyn. Development in Wadebridge is not identified as a risk to water quality and the built up area boundary for Wadebridge does not allocate land along the banks of the Camel or Allen for development, so will not cause disturbance to wildlife or loss of habitat. The plan does not propose or increase water abstraction. HRA is therefore not required.

SEA: National Planning Policy Guidance states that a neighbourhood plan may require SEA if;

- The plan contain site allocations
- The area is environmentally sensitive
- The plan is likely to have significant environmental effects that have not already been considered and dealt with through a sustainability appraisal of the Local Plan.

The emerging Cornwall Local Plan has been subject to sustainability appraisal, but does not allocate sites. Due to the quantum of development in the Wadebridge neighbourhood plan and the land allocations around Wadebridge, which have the potential to impact on the historic environment, SEA is required.