

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)
and Habitats Regulation Assessment Screening Report

Wraxall and Failand Neighbourhood Plan

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and
Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) Screening Report

North Somerset Council

January 2023



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1. Introduction - purpose of this report

- 1.1. The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) states that one of the basic conditions that will be tested at examination stage is to see if the Neighbourhood Plan is compatible with the European Union obligations (including under the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive).
- 1.2. As the Neighbourhood Plan will become a statutory development plan document, there is a legal requirement to assess the policies and proposals in the Neighbourhood Plan against the requirements of European Union Directive 2001/42/EC; also known as the “Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive”. The objective for SEA is: “to provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes with a view to promoting sustainable development, by ensuring that, in accordance with this Directive, an environmental assessment is carried out of certain plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment.” (SEA Directive, Article 1). A full SEA is only required if the plan proposals are likely to have significant environmental effects. This screening report assesses the likelihood of this.
- 1.3. Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) will only be required for a Neighbourhood Plan if it is likely to cause significant environment effects. Neighbourhood plans that are located near to a European wildlife site may also trigger the Habitats Directive depending on how complex the proposed policies are, or their implications.
- 1.4. The Habitats Regulations (2010) require an assessment of land use planning proposals associated with neighbourhood plans. The assessment process examines the likely significant effects of the policies on the integrity of the designated European sites of international importance for wildlife within, close to or connected to the plan area. Such sites are protected for the benefit of the habitats and species they support. This assessment is known as a Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA). For the purposes of the HRA, international wildlife sites are Special Protection Areas (SPA), Special Areas of Conservation (SAC), and Ramsar wetland sites.
- 1.5. The Duty to Cooperate requires the Local Planning Authority (alongside Natural England, Environment Agency, and English Heritage) to advise and assist on SEA and HRA requirements. This involves the Local Planning Authority undertaking a screening assessment of the emerging neighbourhood plan proposals at an early stage to ascertain whether they will trigger any EU directives or Habitat directives and thus to avoid the community and local authority undertaking unnecessary work.
- 1.6. This screening report is in two parts. Section 3 sets out whether or not the contents of the Neighbourhood Plan require a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in accordance with the European Directive 2001/42/EC and associated Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations

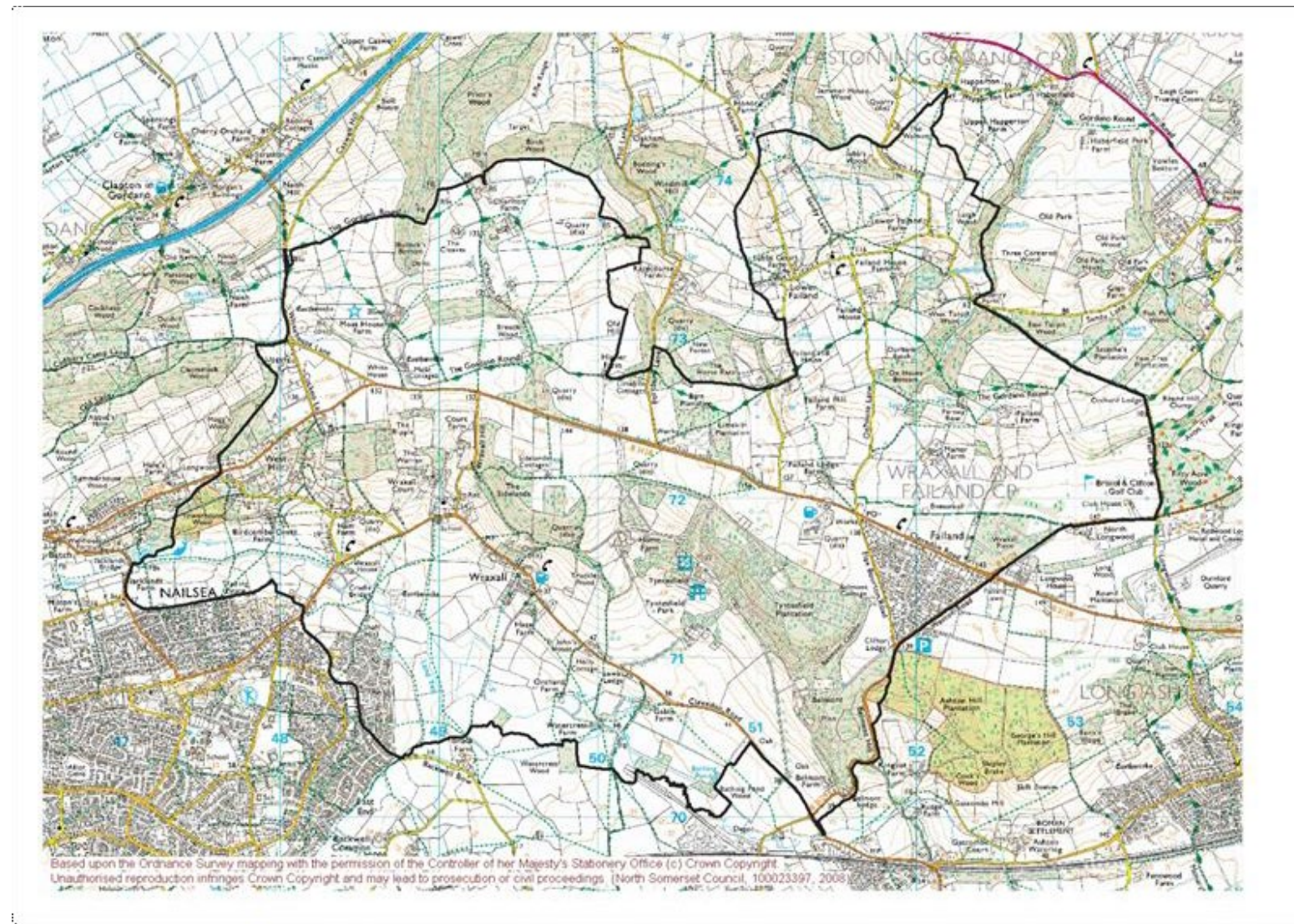
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2004. Section 4 looks at whether a full HRA is required under the Habitat Regulations 2010.

- 1.7. The area covered by the Wraxall and Failand Neighbourhood Plan is shown in Figure 1 below. The neighbourhood area was designated on 4 August 2021. Figure 2 shows the Wraxall and Failand neighbourhood area in the context of other neighbourhood areas in North Somerset.

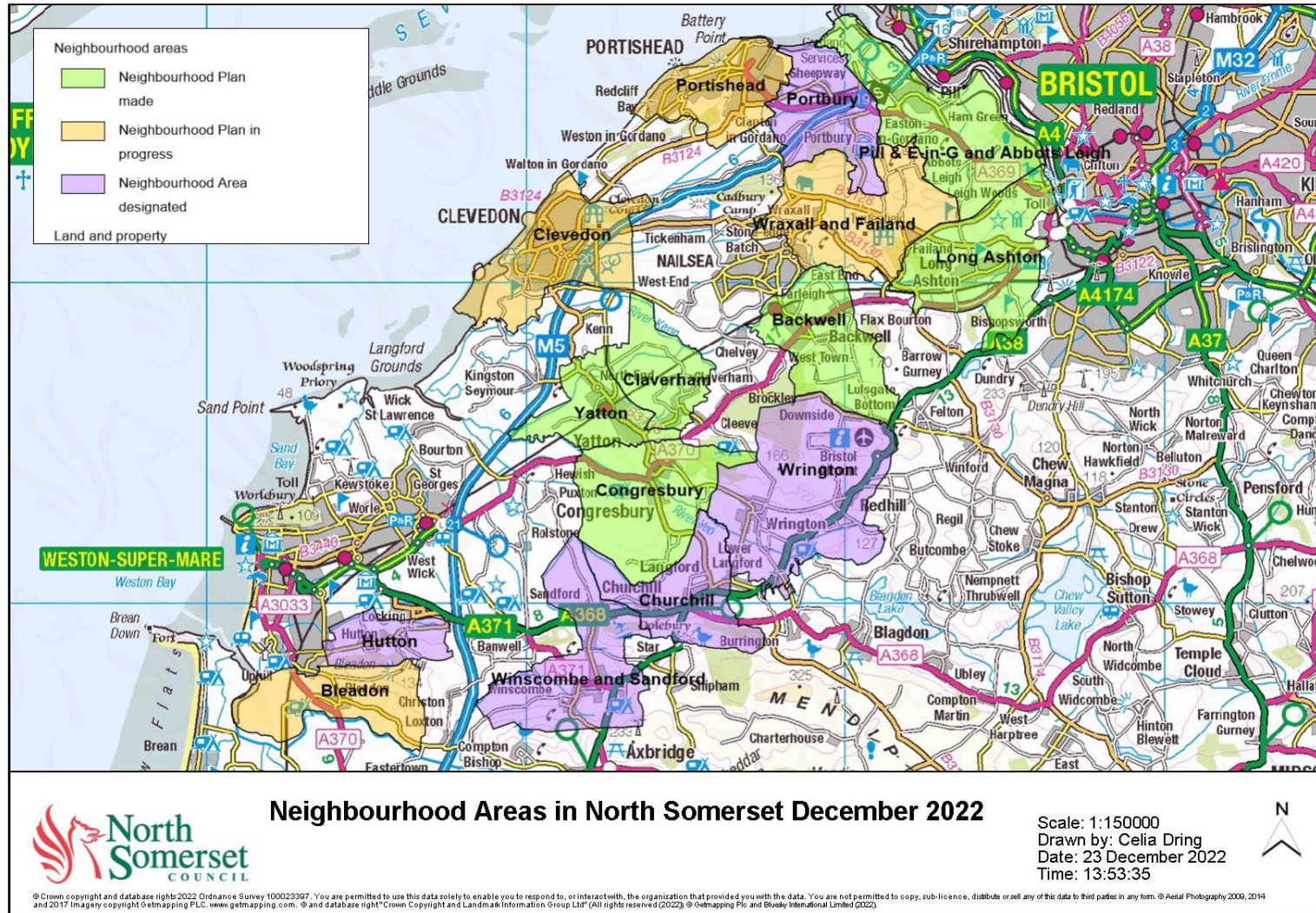
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Figure 1 Wraxall and Failand Neighbourhood Area



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Figure 2 Wraxall and Failand Neighbourhood Area in the context of other neighbourhood areas.



2. Scope of the Neighbourhood Plan

- 2.1 The Wraxall and Failand Neighbourhood Area lies within North Somerset covering a mainly rural area immediately to the east of the town of Nailsea. The Neighbourhood Plan covers the whole of Wraxall and Failand parish.
- 2.2 The Plan is being prepared on behalf of the residents of the parish by planning consultants Polden Planning under the authority of Wraxall and Failand Parish Council. This screening report was undertaken by North Somerset Council on the Regulation 14 version of the Plan in December and January 2022/2023. The Neighbourhood Plan timescale is to 2038 to align with the new draft Local Plan 2038 which is being prepared by North Somerset Council. The Local Plan has been through Preferred Options consultation (Regulation 18) and is timetabled to be submitted for examination in July 2023. However this is likely to change pending the outcome of the governments planning reforms and issue of a revised NPPF. North Somerset Council issued a press release on [20 December 2022](#).
- 2.3 Neighbourhood Plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan. At the time of undertaking this assessment the current strategic context is provided by the adopted North Somerset Core Strategy. The policies within the draft Neighbourhood Plan are therefore written within this context but also align themselves to the new Local Plan 2038. The Core Strategy was subject to a full Sustainability Appraisal which included a SEA assessment. This ensured that there were no likely significant effects which would be produced from the implementation of the Core Strategy and if so ensured mitigation measures were in place. The Council considers that there is general conformity between the Wraxall and Failand Neighbourhood Plan and the Core Strategy and that there are no significant changes introduced by the Neighbourhood Plan which would have implications for the SEA. Paragraph 2.2 above outlines the progress towards a new Local Plan for North Somerset.
- 2.4 The Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) will add local context to emerging planning policy with respect to Wraxall and Failand Parish. It specifically considers the following:-

Draft vision

“Wraxall and Failand will continue to seek protection and enhancement of the area’s rural character, maintaining and improving access to the Green Belt to promote healthy lifestyles, and bringing the community together through the provision and improvement of local services and engagement with local residents. By 2038, the Parish will have built upon its existing distinctiveness to deliver the type of places that allow people of all backgrounds to live, play and work peacefully in the Parish.”

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Draft Objectives

It contains the following draft objectives:-

1. To protect and enhance the Green Belt.
2. Retain and enhance important local facilities and green spaces.
3. In circumstances where growth is identified, fund, provide and phase adequate strategic and local infrastructure.
4. Encourage high quality and locally distinctive design which blends with the local vernacular rather than competing.
5. Support the expansion and diversification of existing and new local businesses and homes for local people.

It contains the following draft policies to do this:-

WF1-Development proposals affecting community facilities

WF2-Designation of Local Green Space

WF3-Community cohesion

WF4-Protection of cycling, walking and wheeling networks

WF5-Traffic and transport

WF6-Rural diversification

WF7 Planning for green infrastructure, biodiversity and food production

WF8-Phasing of infrastructure within development

WF9 Building design and sustainability

3. SEA requirements

- 3.1 This screening report follows the ODPM guidance on SEA's on ascertaining whether a full SEA is required. That guidance is set out in a flow diagram which is reproduced in appendix 1.
- 3.2 The process followed to complete the assessment accords with the diagram (Figure 2) of the Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment (reproduced below). The table which follows (Table 1) sets out the assessment undertaken in accordance with that diagram.

Table 1
Application of SEA Directive to the Portishead Neighbourhood Plan

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 Go to Q2	The preparation of and adoption of the Neighbourhood Plan (NP) is allowed under The Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as amended by the Localism Act 2011. The NP is prepared by Wraxall and Failand Parish Council (as the "relevant body") and will be made by NSC as the local authority. The preparation of NPs is subject to The Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended)
2. Is the PP required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions? (Art. 2(a))	N Go to Q3	Communities have a right to be able to produce a NP, however communities are not required by legislative, regulatory or administrative purposes to produce a NP. This plan however if adopted, would form part of the statutory development plan, therefore it is considered necessary to answer the following questions to determine further if an SEA is required.
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 Go to Q4	The Wraxall and Failand Neighbourhood Plan is prepared to set out a framework for town and country planning and the future development of a number of land uses within the neighbourhood area, however it does not anticipate being the tool to manage development of the scale and nature envisaged by Annex I
4. Will the PP, in view of its likely effect on sites, require an assessment for future development	N Go to Q5	The HRA screening assessment is undertaken at Section 4 of this report. It concludes that no Appropriate Assessment is required as the implementation of the plan is unlikely to have any significant adverse effects on protected species or their habitats

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Stage	Y/N	Reason
under Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive? (Art. 3.2 (b))		
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). European Commission guidance suggests that plans which determine the use of small areas at local level might include “a building plan which, for a particular, limited area, outlines details of how buildings must be constructed, determining, for example, their height, width or design”	Y Go to Q8	The adopted North Somerset Core Strategy sets the framework for development across the whole of the North Somerset Council area and the NP sets out specific policies for one parish within the Core Strategy area. The Plan does not allocate specific local sites for development however but instead contains policies which guide and manage any development within the neighbourhood area boundary, which is the same as the parish boundary.
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 Go to Q8	The NP is to be used for determining future planning applications.
7. Is the PP’s sole role 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	n/a

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Stage	Y/N	Reason
8. Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment? (Art. 3.5)	N	<p>A screening exercise has identified that an Appropriate Assessment was not required (see section 4 of this report).</p> <p>No development or policies are proposed in locations which would have a significant adverse effect on either areas at risk of flooding, heritage assets, landscape or protected species and their habitats.</p> <p>In the absence of relevant policies in the Neighbourhood plan, policies of the adopted Core Strategy, Development Management Plan and Site Allocations Plan will be used.</p> <p>Table 2 sets out the process for arriving at the conclusion that the Wraxall and Failand Neighbourhood Plan would not have a significant effect on the environment.</p>
3.3		<p>In relation to 8 in the table above the criteria for determining the likely significance of effects referred to in Article 3(5) of Directive 2001/42/EC include two sets of characteristics for determining the likely significance of effects on the environment. These relate to i) the characteristics of the Wraxall and Failand Neighbourhood Plan and ii) the characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected by the Wraxall and Failand Neighbourhood Plan. These form the basis for the conclusion set out in 8, that there is unlikely to be a significant effect on the environment as a result of the Plan.</p>
3.4		<p>In making a determination, North Somerset Council has taken into account the criteria specified in Schedule I of the Regulations as set out in table 2 below. This sets out the process for considering the likely significant effects on the environment of the neighbourhood plan.</p>

Table 2

Criteria for determining the likely significant effects referred to in Article 3 (5) of Directive 2001/42/EC and assessment of these.

Criteria in Annex II of the SEA Directive	Significant environmental effects likely?	Response
1) Characteristics of the plan 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.	No	The Plan will set a framework for development proposals within the Neighbourhood Area of a level which conforms with the adopted Development Plan for the district, that being the North Somerset Core Strategy, Development Management Policies (Sites and Policies Plan part 1 2016) and the Site Allocations Plan (Sites and Policies Plan part 2 2017). Wraxall and Failand Parish is washed over by the Bristol and bath Green Belt. The plan contains no proposals for development, but does contain policies which would control and manage the nature of any future planning proposals within the neighbourhood area alongside the existing development plan and the forthcoming (once adopted) North Somerset Local Plan 2038.
The degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy	No	The NP will be subordinate to the strategic policies of the adopted Core Strategy and the currently emerging Local Plan 2038 and will sit alongside the detailed policies of the Development Management Plan and Site Allocations Plan policies. Once the emerging Local Plan is adopted it will sit alongside the detailed policies of that plan. It does not set the framework for lower order plans or programmes.
The relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development	No	The NP is a land use plan and is required to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The Plan itself contains policies to promote sustainable development in particular WF7 and WF9 and the protection of important environmental assets. Development proposals will also need to be in accordance with environmental protection policies of the North Somerset Core Strategy and those of the NPPF.

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Criteria in Annex II of the SEA Directive	Significant environmental effects likely?	Response
Environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme	No	<p>The neighbourhood area contains an area of fluvial flood risk associated with the Land Yeo which runs through the southern extremity of the parish in a south-east to north-westerly direction. A Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment was produced for North Somerset Council in June 2020. The area immediately surrounding the Land Yeo is subject to fluvial flood zone 3a and Flood zone 2, as shown on map 1. The neighbourhood plan does not contain policies relating to flooding or drainage. NPPF para 159 and adopted Core Strategy policy CS3 will apply to any subsequent proposals within flood risk areas.</p> <p>The neighbourhood plan does not allocate development sites but protects some areas of existing open space as Local Green Space (policy WF2) Policy WF1 also protects some land and buildings as community facilities therefore it is not considered that a flood risk assessment is required for policies within the Neighbourhood Plan.</p>
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)	No	<p>There are no significant air quality issues originating inside the neighbourhood area.</p> <p>The implementation of community legislation is unlikely to be significantly compromised by this Neighbourhood Plan.</p>

2) Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular to the criteria below:-

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Criteria in Annex II of the SEA Directive	Significant environmental effects likely?	Response
a) The probability, duration, frequency, and reversibility of the effects.	No	In light of the policies contained in the Plan it is considered very unlikely that significant effects will result, since the Plan contains no proposals for development or policies which would control development in such a way that would give rise to significant effects.
b) The cumulative nature of the effects.	No	None have been identified.
c) The trans boundary nature of the effects.	No	The neighbourhood area is abutted to the south-west by Nailsea parish and to the east by Long Ashton parish (Long Ashton Neighbourhood Area and Neighbourhood Plan), Abbots Leigh and Easton in Gordano parish to the North East (Abbots Leigh, Ham Green, Pill and Easton-in-Gordano neighbourhood area and Neighbourhood Plan) Portbury Parish Council to the North (Portbury neighbourhood area); and Clapton-in-Gordano Parish to the north east. The operation of the Plan policies is not considered to give rise to any likely significant adverse effects and there will not be any cross-boundary effects on these parishes and neighbourhood plan areas in combination with any proposals in the adjacent neighbourhood plans.
d)The risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents).	No	The Wraxall and Failand Neighbourhood plan is unlikely to introduce significant risks to human health in general in light of the nature and scale of the policies.
e) The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely)	No	The policies within the neighbourhood plan relate to the whole of the population of Wraxall and Failand parish (2021 census - 2,410). No significant adverse effect is likely within the neighbourhood area or adjacent parishes.
f) The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:		

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Criteria in Annex II of the SEA Directive	Significant environmental effects likely?	Response
i) Special natural characteristics or cultural heritage	No	The HRA screening assessment at section 4 of this report concludes there are unlikely to be significant effects on bats or their habitat (bat SAC consultation zones). There are a number of listed buildings within the neighbourhood area, Scheduled Monuments, as well as registered park and garden of Tyntesfield Estate (Appendix 3a) There are no policies or proposals relating to the historic environment and therefore none which would lead to any significant adverse impacts on these assets. Any development proposals will be assessed in relation to the NPPF and North Somerset Councils adopted development plan policies within the Core Strategy (CS5 Landscape and the historic environment) and Development Management Policies Plan (DM4 Listed Buildings, DM5 Historic Parks and Gardens, DM6 Archaeology, DM7 Non-designated Heritage Assets).
ii) Exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values	No	The NP is unlikely to result in the exceedance of environmental quality standards, such as those relating to air, water and soil quality, due to the nature and scale of policies proposed within the plan.
iii) Intensive land use	No	The NPPF stresses the importance of optimising land use and the efficient use of land. The Plan is unlikely in itself however to result in development of an extent which would amount to significant intensification of local land use sufficient to cause significant environmental effects. The Plan does not contain proposals for development and policies are proposed to guide development which is appropriate to the character of the parish.
g) The effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.	No	The Tyntesfield Estate covers a large area in the south of the neighbourhood Area and is a Grade II* Registered Historic Park and Garden. The Plan contains no policies which directly or indirectly relate to either land or buildings in this area, or which would have any other effect on its historic significance. The neighbourhood area abuts the Ashton Court Grade II*

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**Criteria in Annex II of the
SEA Directive**

**Significant
environmental
effects likely?**

Response

Registered Historic Park and Garden at the south east corner of the neighbourhood area, although Ashton Court itself is outside the neighbourhood area. The Plan contains no policies which would either individually or cumulatively adversely affect this asset.

Further explanation of table 2

Heritage Assets

- 3.5 The map at appendix 3a shows the location of 2 Schedule Monuments (an iron age defended settlement at Failand and a deserted medieval settlement 300m east of Wraxall House), a Grade II* registered Historic Park and Garden at Tyntesfield Estate and numerous listed buildings most notably the Grade 1 listed Tyntesfield House servants wing and chapel, as well as two Grade II* buildings at Birdcombe Court and Home Farm buildings within the Tyntesfield Estate. The neighbourhood plan contains no site allocations or site proposals for development.
- 3.6 Relevant protective designations proposed are those for areas of Local Green Space (LGS) which are additional to those which are designated in the North Somerset Site Allocations Plan 2017. These are protective designations. The implication of a LGS designation would be to retain the sites as open undeveloped land and as such would not impact on the historic asset, or its setting. This applies to The Elms Open Space area of proposed LGS which includes a Scheduled Monument identified as a “deserted medieval settlement 300m west of Wraxall House” (as shown on inset map 7 of the Neighbourhood Plan and identified as “earthworks” in the southwest of the neighbourhood area at appendix 3a of this report. Similarly an area of LGS is proposed for an area known as Bathing Pond Wood on the south east edge of the neighbourhood area as shown on inset map 10 of the neighbourhood plan. This feature of the bathing pond itself is Grade II listed. The proposed LGS designation would act to retain the area of Bathing Pond Wood in its current form and protect it from any development which would detract from the LGS character.

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- 3.7 The map at appendix 3b identifies the many undesignated heritage assets which lie within the Wraxall and Failand Neighbourhood Plan area. Although a number lie within areas proposed as LGS for the reasons given above it is not considered that the proposed LGS designation would directly impact on the historic assets either alone or in combination.
- 3.8 Policy WF1 Community facilities specifies a number of buildings and spaces which should be safeguarded for their community value. This includes All saints Church Wraxall (Grade I), St Bartholomew's Church Failand (Grade II), The Battleaxes pub (Grade II). This policy is not considered to directly impact on these listed buildings, or their historic significance. It does not relate to their historic significance, but to their community use.
- 3.9 None of the policies either directly or indirectly are considered to have an adverse effect on the Grade 11* Registered Historic Park and Garden of Tyntesfield. None of the proposals for LGS or protection of community facilities relate to land or buildings within the boundary of the listing. The same conclusion has been reached in respect of the adjacent Ashton Court Estate Grade II* Registered Park and Garden a corner of which abuts the Wraxall and Failand neighbourhood area.
- 3.10 The draft neighbourhood plan does not contain policies which address the historic environment. The neighbourhood plan will however be read alongside North Somerset Councils Core Strategy, Development Management Plan and Site Allocations Plan policies which will therefore be used to assess the impact of future development proposals on the historic environment.
- 3.11 It is therefore not considered that any policies or proposals within the Wraxall and Failand Neighbourhood Plan either in isolation or combination, would have a significant effect on these assets.
- 3.12 In relation to section 8 in the table 1 above the criteria for determining the likely significance of effects referred to in Article 3(5) of Directive 2001/42/EC include two sets of characteristics for determining the likely significance of effects on the environment. These relate to i) the characteristics of the Wraxall and Failand Neighbourhood Plan and ii) the characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected by the Wraxall and Failand Neighbourhood Plan. These form the basis for the conclusion set out in 8, that there is unlikely to be a significant effect on the environment as a result of the Plan. In making a determination, North Somerset Council has taken into account the criteria specified in Schedule I of the Regulations as set out in table 2 above.

Conclusions with respect to SEA Screening

- 3.13 On the basis of the SEA screening assessment set out in tables 1 and 2 above, it is concluded that the Wraxall and Failand Neighbourhood Plan is unlikely to have significant environmental effects either within the Plan boundaries or cumulatively.

4. HRA Screening

4.1 Consistent with the regulations, the screening exercise has taken account of whether significant effects are likely from the Wraxall and Failand Neighbourhood Plan alone, and also whether in-combination effects are likely (taking account of other plans and projects in combination with it). The map at appendix 4b demonstrates the extent of European protected sites in relation to the area covered by the Wraxall and Failand Neighbourhood Plan.

It depicts where in existence:-

- RAMSAR-Severn Estuary
- Special Protection Area (SPA)
- Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
 - Severn Estuary SAC
 - North Somerset and Mendip Bat SAC
- Sites of Special Scientific Interest

4.2 The Wraxall and Failand neighbourhood area contains none of the above designations but does include the North Somerset and Mendip Bat SAC Consultation Zones. Explanation is given below of the relevance of the North Somerset and Mendips Bat SAC and the consultation zones and these are shown at appendix 4b.

4.3 Although there are no SSSI within the neighbourhood area, there are two within 1 km of the boundary. Within 1 km of the neighbourhood area to the east at Ashton Court there lies an area of “unimproved and semi-improved calcareous and neutral grassland, with semi-natural broad-leaved woodland, mixed and broad-leaved woodland plantation”. There is also an SSSI within 500m of the western edge of the neighbourhood area known as Tickenham and Nailsea Moors which are described as “Running water (stream) and standing water (ditches) and associated marginal habitats, semi-natural broad-leaved woodland (carr), marshy grassland, and semi-improved neutral grassland.” The HRA needs to take into account any policies or proposals within the neighbourhood plan which might impact on these designations.

North Somerset and Mendips Bat SAC consultation zones

4.4 Whilst no part of the neighbourhood area falls within the Bat SAC itself, it is affected by the consultation zones. The consultation zones are set out in the North Somerset Council Bat SAC guidance on development SPD adopted 2018. The SPD is intended as a guide to developers at project level, however regard has also been had to it in the formulation of this screening exercise.

- 4.5 The Bat SAC is important for two bat species, Greater and Lesser Horseshoe bats. The SAC itself comprises component SSSIs which in North Somerset include, for example, the two maternity roosts at the Brockley Hall Stables SSSI and King's Wood SSSI, and also hibernation roosts like the Banwell Bone Caves and, in Somerset, the maternity and hibernation roosts in the Cheddar Complex SSSI and the hibernation roosts at Wookey Hole SSSI.
- 4.6 However the landscapes around the SAC itself are also important in providing foraging habitat needed to maintain the favourable conservation status of the horseshoe bats. Therefore the SPD guidance sets out strong requirements for consultation, survey information and appropriate mitigation, to demonstrate that development proposals will not adversely impact on the designated bat populations.
- 4.7 The "Bat Consultation Zone" comprises areas where horseshoe bats may be found, divided into bands reflecting the density at which horseshoe species may be found at a distance from a roost site-A (most sensitive/greater bat density), B and C (potentially with lower densities), reflecting the likely importance of the habitat for the bats and proximity to maternity and other roosts. These are largely based on the distances recorded through radio tracking studies at Brockley Hall Stables and Cheddar Caves and research into densities of occurrence throughout the species range. Within the Consultation Zone development is likely to be subject to particular requirements, depending on the sensitivity of the site. It sets out where surveys will be needed to identify likely impacts on bat populations.
- 4.8 The Conservation Objectives for the SAC2 are: With regard to the SAC and the natural habitats and/or species for which the site has been designated (the 'Qualifying Features' which include the bat species listed above), and subject to natural change, ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, and ensure that the site contributes to achieving the Favourable Conservation Status of its Qualifying Features, by maintaining or restoring:
- The extent and distribution of qualifying natural habitats and habitats of qualifying species;
 - The structure and function (including typical species) of qualifying natural habitats;
 - The structure and function of the habitats of qualifying species;
 - The supporting processes on which qualifying natural habitats and the habitats of qualifying species rely;
 - The populations of qualifying species; and,
 - The distribution of qualifying species within the site.

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- 4.9 The habitats and features which support the populations of SAC bats outside the designated site are considered a material consideration in ensuring the integrity of the designated site.
- 4.10 Within the Bat Consultation Zone, where SAC bats would be affected or potentially affected by development appropriate mitigation will be required. The aim should be to retain and enhance habitat and features of value to horseshoe bats. Where this is not possible replacement habitat may be needed.
- 4.11 Much of North Somerset is covered by the consultation zones.
- 4.12 As the Bat SAC consultation zones are intended to be a project level tool they are of relevance to any development occurring within the neighbourhood plan area which lies within these zones. The Wraxall and Failand Neighbourhood Plan does not propose any development and therefore no development within these zones.

HRA Screening of the Wraxall and Failand Neighbourhood Plan

- 4.13 Section 2 above sets out the scope of the Wraxall and Failand Neighbourhood Plan. Considering the existing policy context and scope of the Plan, and the absence of any European Sites or Protected Species within the neighbourhood area it is unlikely that the neighbourhood plan policies could have a significant effect on any European Site or Protected Species. A screening has been done in relation to the Bat Consultation Zones however and given their proximity to the neighbourhood area this has been extended to the two nearby SSSI's.
- 4.14 An explanation of the categorisation of effects is set out in table 3. The screening assessment of each policy is shown below in table 4.
- 4.15 The Plan contains no development proposals and in the absence of relevant policies in the Neighbourhood Plan any development proposals will be judged against NSC adopted Core Strategy Policy CS4 and Development Management policies Plan policy DM8.

Table 3
Categorisation of effects

Category	Sub category	Description
1. No negative effect	A	Policy/proposal will not lead directly to development in that it relates to design or other qualitative criteria, or it is not a land-use planning policy.
	B	Policy/proposal intended to conserve or enhance the natural, built or historic environment, where enhancement measures will not be likely to have any negative effect on a European Site or Bat Consultation Zone.

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Category	Sub category	Description
2. No significant effect		No significant effect either alone or in combination with other plans or projects, because effects are trivial or minimal.
3. Likely significant effect alone		Policy could indirectly affect a European Site or Bat Consultation Zone, because it provides for, or steers, a quantity or type of development that may be very close to it, or ecologically, hydrologically or physically connected to it, or it may increase disturbance as a result of increased recreational pressure.
4. Likely significant effect in combination		The policy alone would not be likely to have significant effects but its effects combined with the effects of other policies or proposals provided for or coordinated by the relevant plans or projects mean the cumulative effects would be likely to be significant.

Table 4

Assessment of likely significant effects within the Bat Consultation Zones affecting North Somerset through implementation of the Wraxall and Failand Neighbourhood Plan

Draft Plan Policy and proposals		SSSI	Bat consultation zones
WF1	Community Facilities	1A	1A
WF2	Local Green Space	1B	1B A number of LGS proposals are within zone C of the bat consultation zones however the designation will retain the proposed site as an open area commensurate with Green Belt policy and will therefore not impact on the purposes of the bat consultation zone.
WF3	Community Cohesion	1B	1B
WF4	Cycling, walking and wheeling networks	1A	1A
WF5	Traffic and Transport	1A	1A
WF6	Rural diversification	1B	1B Rural diversification may include re-use of rural

**Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)
and Habitats Regulation Assessment Screening Report**

Draft Plan Policy and proposals		SSSI	Bat consultation zones
			buildings and associated land. Any proposals will be judged against CS4 and DM8 in relation to any potential impact on protected species or their habitats.
WF7	Green infrastructure, biodiversity and food production	1B	1B
WF8	Phasing of infrastructure and development	1A	1A
WF9	Building design and sustainability	1A	1A

4.16 As set out in table 4 there are unlikely to be any significant adverse effects either on nearby Protected Species or habitats, or the purposes of the Bat Consultations Zones from the operation of the Wraxall and Failand Neighbourhood Plan policies.

Conclusions - screening outcomes

4.17 **SEA-**As a result of the assessment in section 3 above it can be concluded that there are not likely to be significant environmental effects arising from the Wraxall and Failand Neighbourhood Plan.

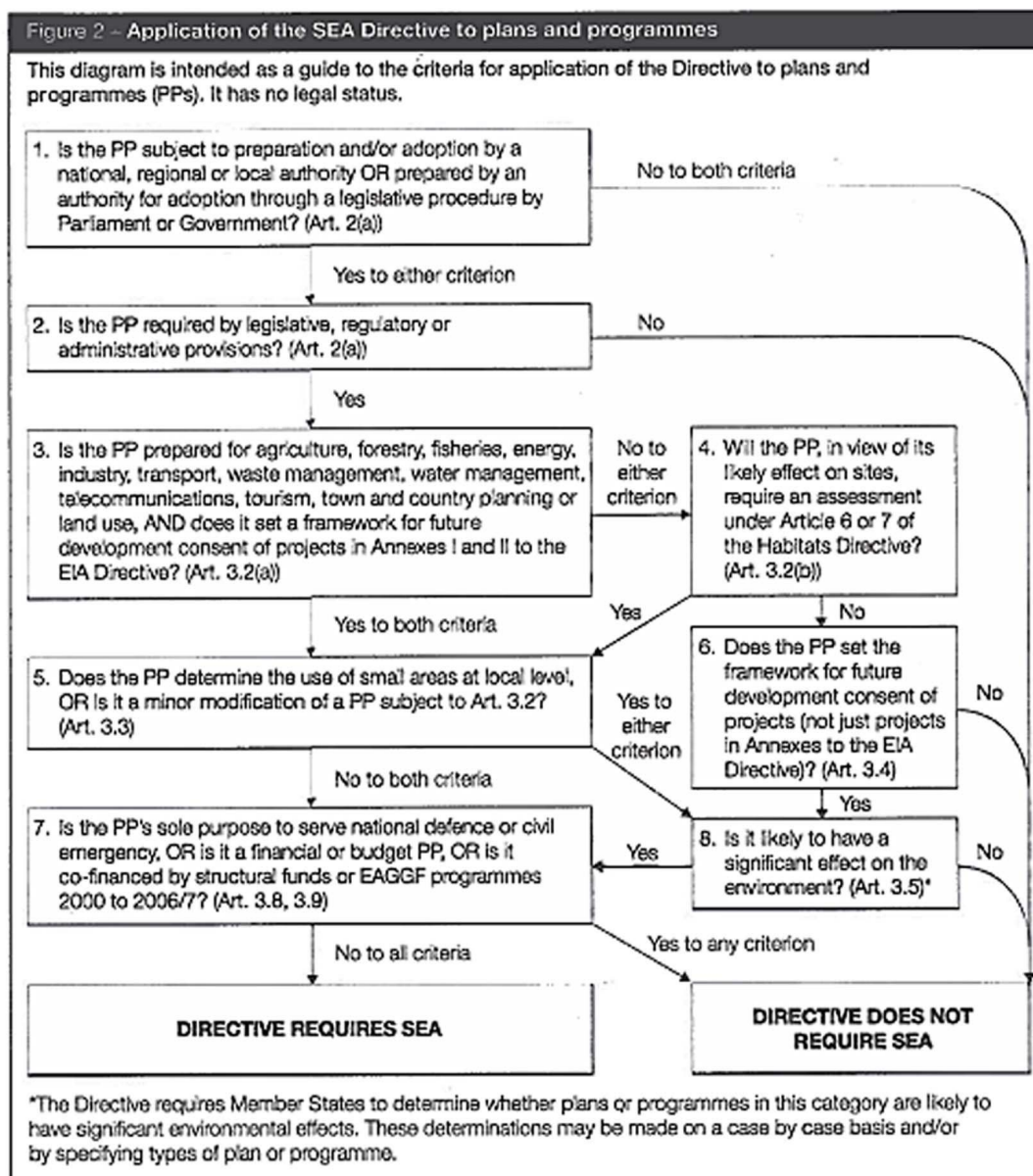
4.18 **HRA-**As a result of the assessment in section 4 above it is unlikely that there will be any significant effects on protected species or their habitats and therefore a full HRA is not required.

4.19 These assessments have been undertaken at draft plan (Regulation 14) stage and therefore if any changes are made to the plan post-consultation then these should be considered and a revised screening completed as necessary.

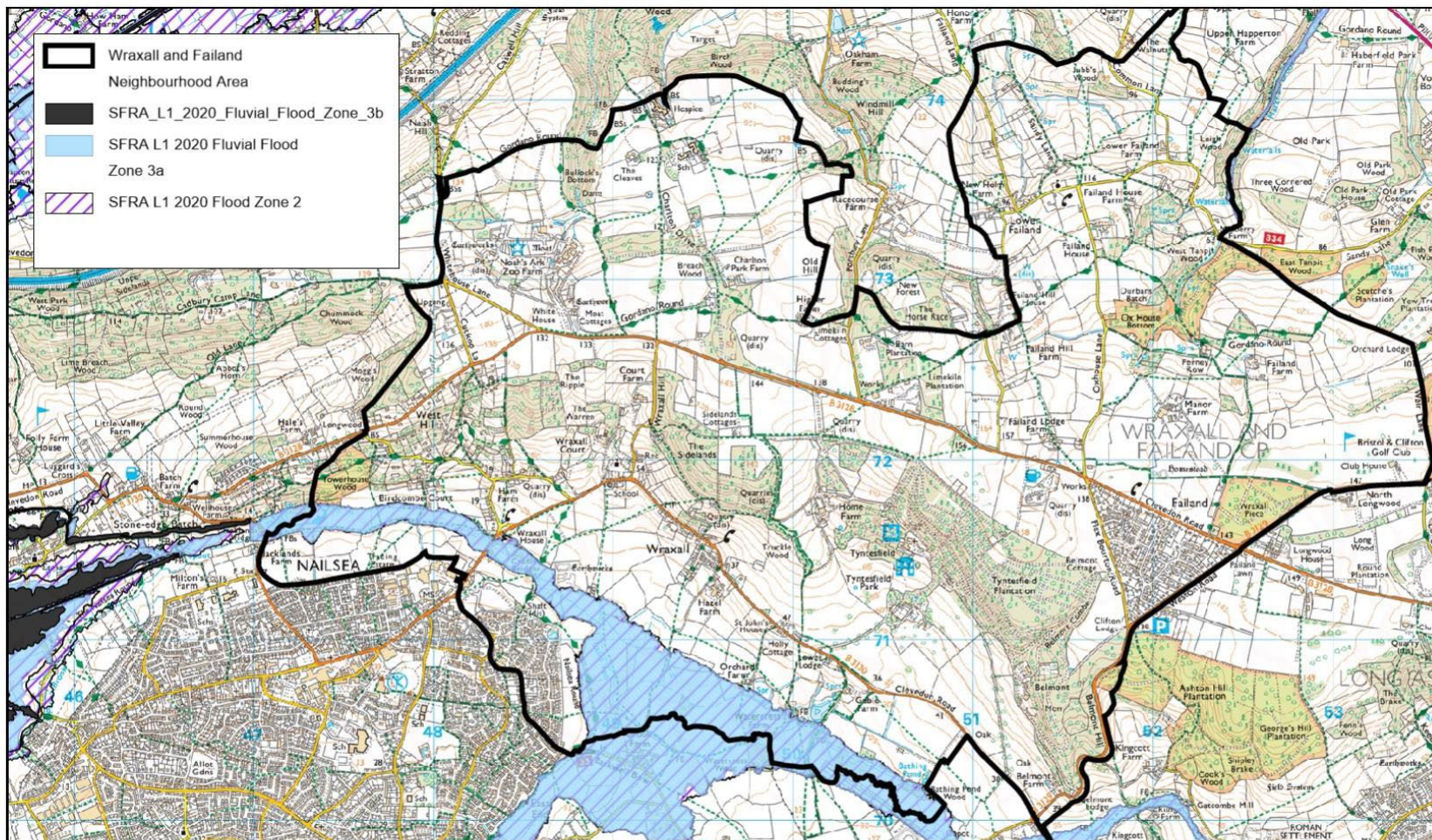
4.20 The Environment Agency, Natural England and Historic England were consulted on this screening report on 17 January 2023. All three bodies agreed with the above conclusion that no SEA or HRA was necessary. The responses are included at appendix 5 to this report.

Appendix 1

Application of the SEA Directive to the Wraxall and Failand Neighbourhood Plan



Appendix 2 SFRA Flood Zone 2, 3a and 3b



SFRA Flood Risk zones 2, 3a and 3b

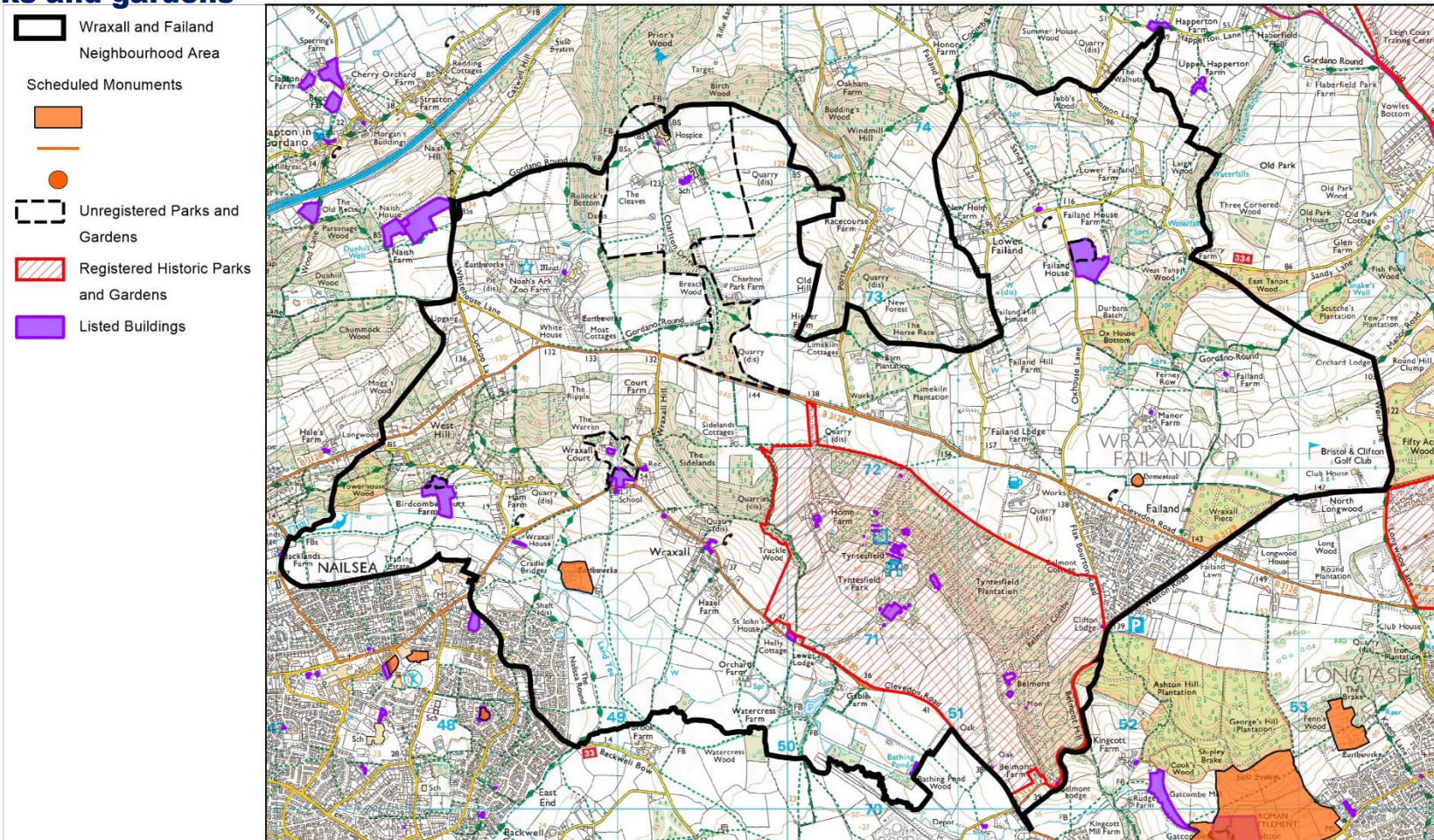
Wraxall and Failand Neighbourhood Plan

Scale: 1:29000
Drawn by: Celia Dring
Date: 09 January 2023
Time: 16:26:53



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Appendix 3a Historic Environment- Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments and registered/unregistered parks and gardens

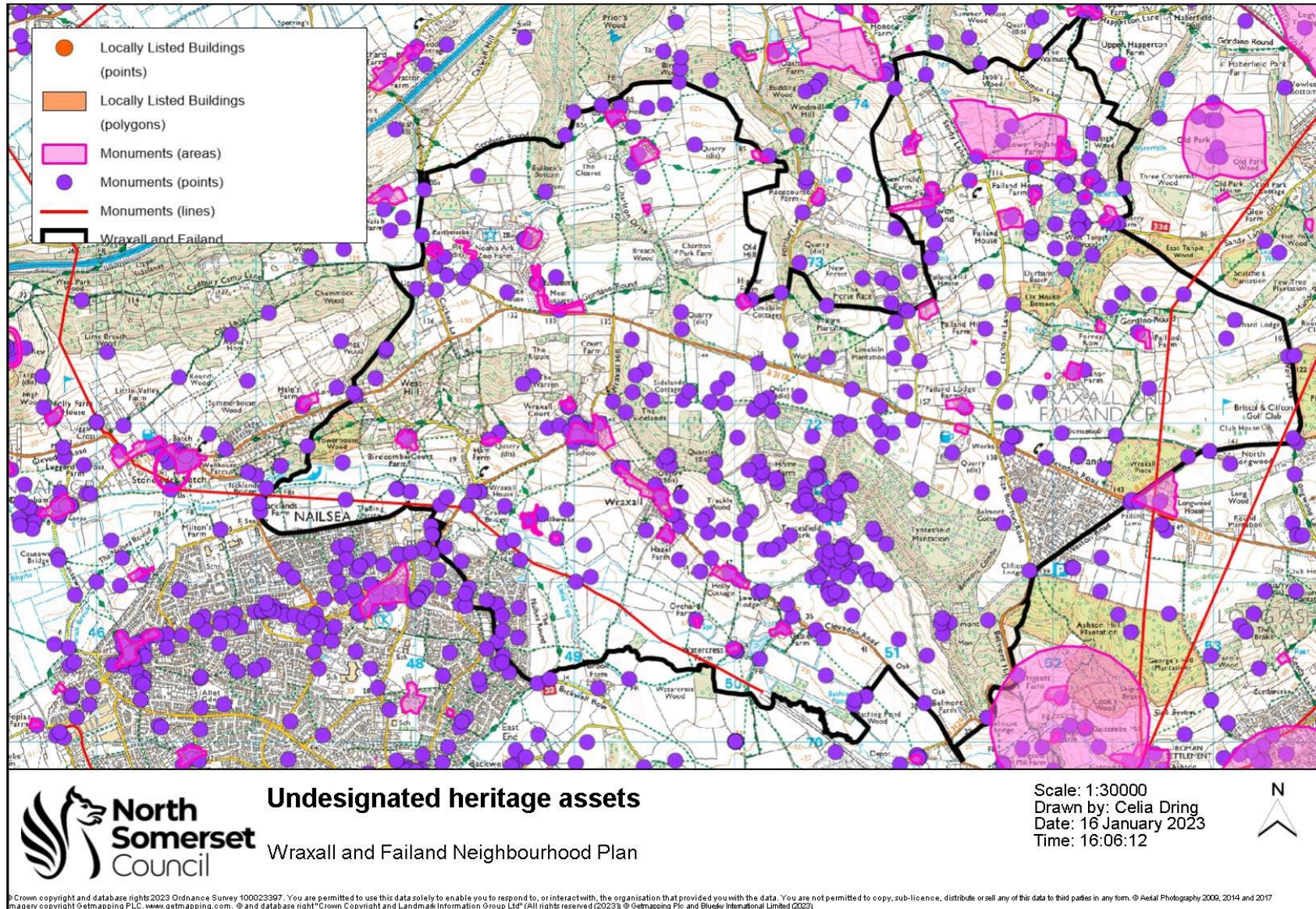


Historic environment
Wraxall and Failand Neighbourhood Plan

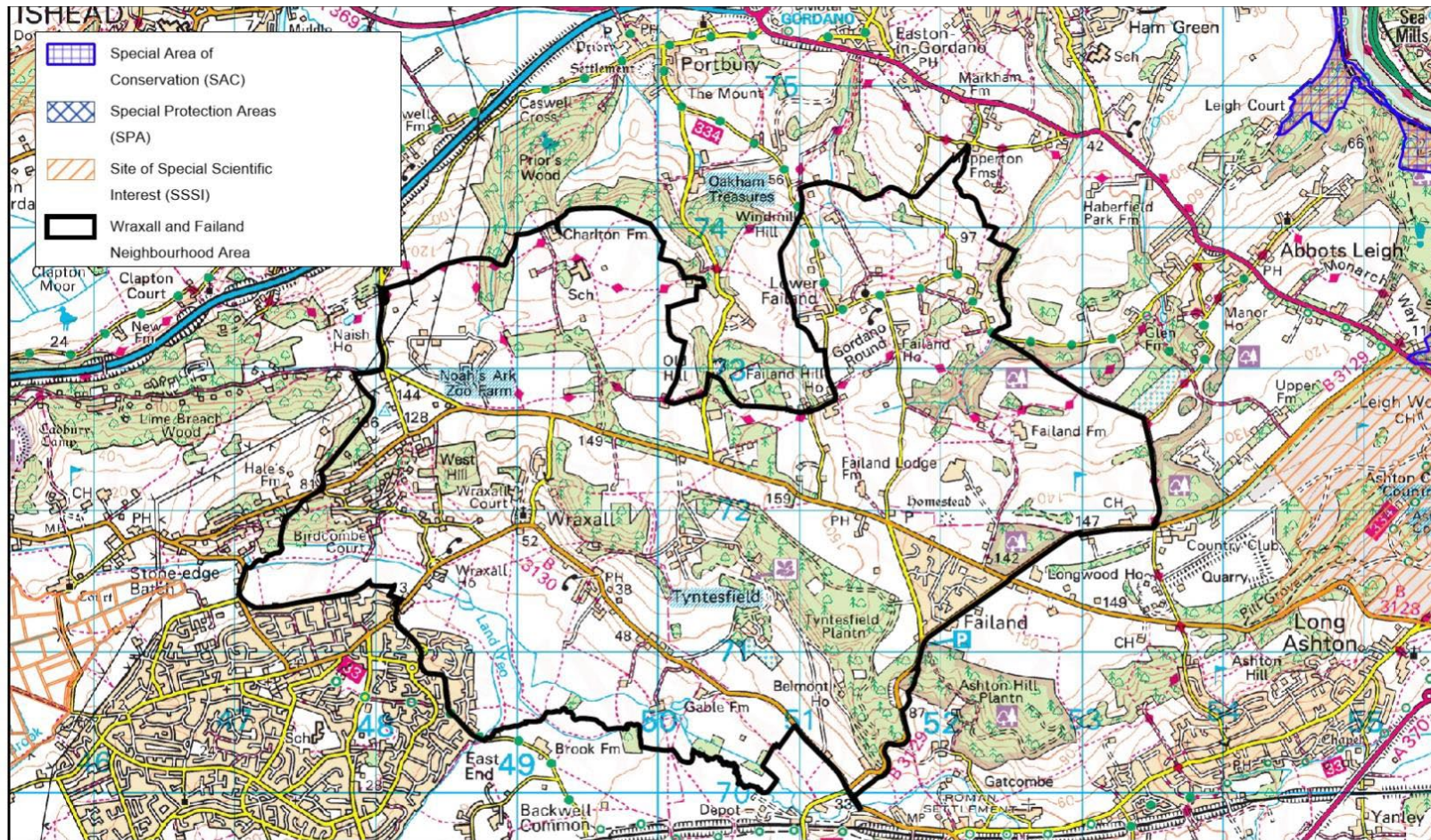
Scale: 1:30768
Drawn by: Celia Dring
Date: 23 December 2022
Time: 16:14:40



Appendix 3b Historic environment- undesignated heritage assets



Appendix 4a European Protected Species and their habitats



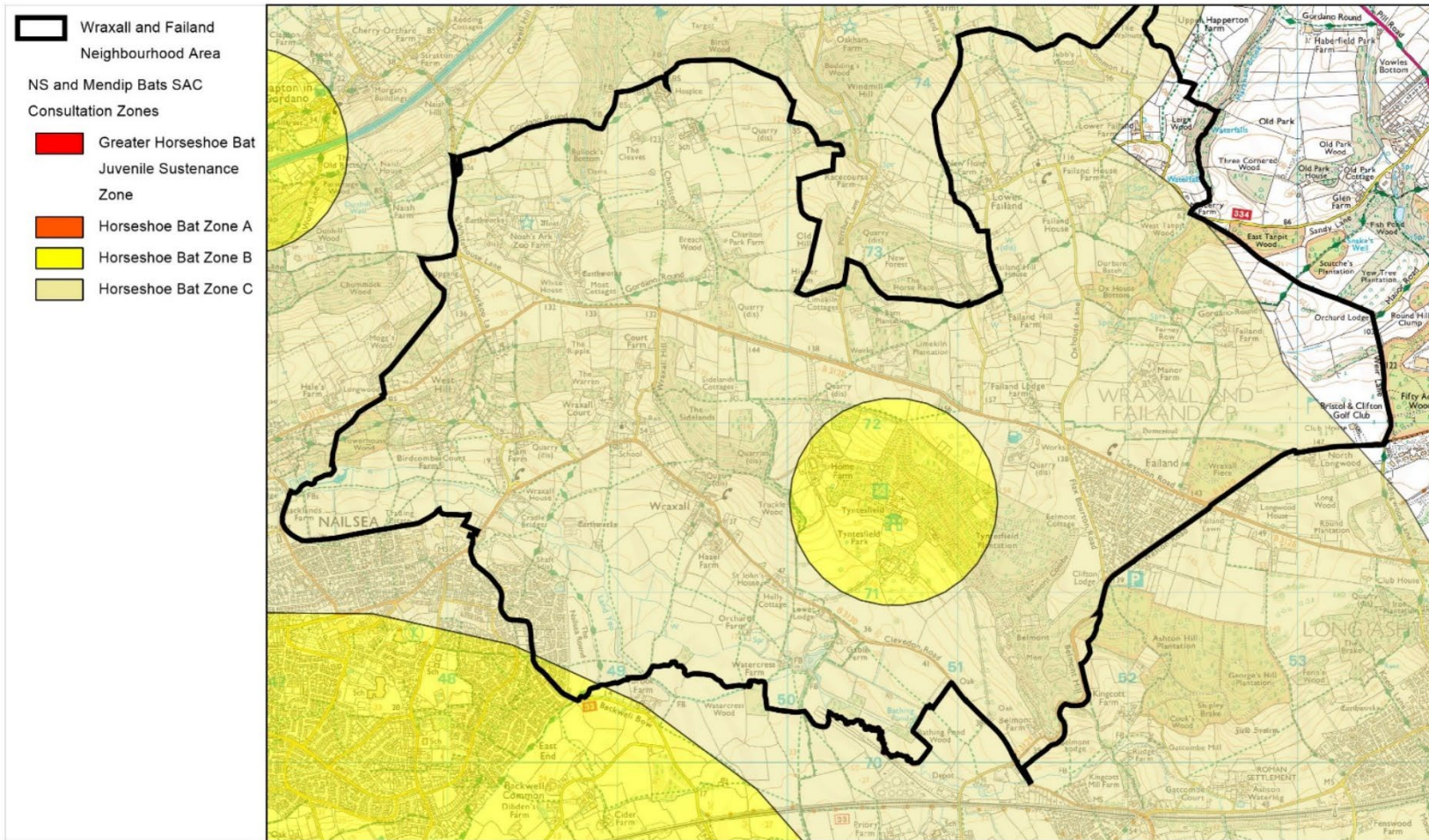
European Sites in relation to the Neighbourhood Plan


Wraxall and Failand Neighbourhood Area

Scale: 1:37000
Drawn by: Celia Dring
Date: 13 January 2023
Time: 14:18:04



Appendix 4b NS and Mendip Bat SAC Consultation Zones






North Somerset Council

North Somerset Bat Consultation Zones

Wraxall and Failand Neighbourhood Area

Scale: 1:30768
 Drawn by: Celia Dring
 Date: 13 January 2023
 Time: 14:25:13



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Appendix 5
Natural England, Historic England and Environment Agency response to SEA and HRA
screening report

Date: 06 February 2023
Our ref: 418323
Your ref: -



Celia Dring
Principal Planning Policy Officer
North Somerset Council
BY EMAIL ONLY
Celia.Dring@n-somerset.gov.uk

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

T 0300 060 3900

Dear Ms Dring

Planning consultation: Wraxall and Failand Neighbourhood Plan Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) Screening Report

Thank you for your consultation on the above dated 17 January 2023 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 (SEA)

We have considered the SEA Screening Assessment of the Neighbourhood Plan against the requirements of the criteria set out in the SEA Directive. Based on the information provided, Natural England agrees with your conclusion that the Wraxall and Failand Neighbourhood Plan is unlikely to give rise to significant environmental effects and that a Strategic Environmental Assessment is not required.

Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA)

We have considered the HRA Screening Report. Based on the information provided, Natural England agrees with your conclusion that the Wraxall and Failand Neighbourhood Plan is unlikely to give rise to significant effects on European sites and that an appropriate assessment is not required.

We note that these assessments have been undertaken at draft plan (Regulation 14) stage and that the Council recognises that if changes are made to the Neighbourhood Plan post-consultation these should be considered and a revised screening completed as necessary (*Conclusion – screening outcomes, paragraph 4.19*).

We would be happy to comment further should the need arise but if in the meantime you have any queries relating to the specific advice in this letter, please contact me on 07900 608311. For any new consultations, or to provide further information on this consultation please send your correspondences to consultations@naturalengland.org.uk.

Yours sincerely

Amanda Grundy
Wessex Team

From: [Stuart, David](#)
To: [Celia Dring](#)
Subject: Action-Wraxall and Failand Neighbourhood Plan SEA/HRA screening report
Date: 02 February 2023 09:38:52
Attachments: [image001.jpg](#)
[image04f23f.JPG](#)

Dear Celia

Thank you for your consultation on the SEA Screening associated with the emerging Wraxall and Failand Neighbourhood Plan.

I can confirm that based on the version of the Plan made available we have no objection to the view that a full SEA is not required.

We note that the draft Plan is stated as currently undergoing its Regulation 14 consultation but we have not received anything from the community. We only need to be consulted if it is felt that our interests are likely to be affected and from the version of the Plan we have seen this does not seem likely and we would not anticipate commenting on its contents. However, we know from past experience that Examiners often prefer for all the statutory agencies to be consulted at formal stages of a Plan's preparation as a matter of course, and as the community did seek our advice at earlier informal stages consultation may also be useful in the interests of continuity.

You may therefore feel it desirable to highlight this point to the community so they can formally consult us.

Kind regards

David

David Stuart | Historic Places Adviser

I now work only 2 days a week, usually Tuesdays and Wednesdays

Historic England | South West
1st Floor Fermentation North | Finzels Reach | Hawkins Lane | Bristol | BS1 6WQ
Direct Line: 0117 975 0680 | Mobile: 0797 924 0316
<https://historicengland.org.uk/southwest>



Work with us to champion heritage and improve lives. Read our Future Strategy and get involved at historicengland.org.uk/strategy.

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From: Celia Dring <Celia.Dring@n-somerset.gov.uk>

Ms C Dring
North Somerset Council
Local Plans
Town Hall
Walliscote Grove Road
Weston-super-Mare
North Somerset
BS23 1UJ

Our ref: WX/2006/000025/SE-
09/SC1-L01
Your ref:
Date: 17 February 2023

Dear Ms Dring

WRAXELL AND FAILAND NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN SEA AND HRA SCREENING REPORT

Thank you for consulting the Environment Agency regarding the Wraxell and Failand SEA/HRA Screening Report, which was received 10 February 2023.

For issues that fall within the Environment Agency's remit I can agree to the screening outcome of the SEA / HRA, and that there is unlikely to be any significant environmental effects arising from the Wraxell and Failand Neighbourhood Plan, providing:

All new development is in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), including the requirements of the Sequential Test.

It is noted that on page 12 "no development or policies are proposed in locations which would have a significant adverse effect on areas at risk of flooding, etc"

And on page 14 "it is not considered that a flood risk assessment is required for policies within the Neighbourhood Plan".

It should be noted that a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) would be required for any new development that is sited within the floodplain. The FRA would be required to demonstrate the proposal is not at risk from flooding, and that there is no increase in risk for any third parties. This would be for the lifetime of development and include an allowance for climate change.

Our comments on the Wraxell and Failand Neighbourhood Plan remain as set out under separate correspondence dated 30 January 2023 attached for you information.

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

Cont/d..

Please quote the Agency's reference on any future correspondence regarding this matter.

Yours sincerely

Richard Bull
Sustainable Places - Planning Advisor

Direct dial 02030 250287

Direct e-mail nwx.sp@environment-agency.gov.uk