Dear Tony,

Re: Determination under Regulation 9(1) of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004

I am writing with regards to the Maresfield Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) and the recent Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening Opinion which was undertaken by Wealden District Council. Wealden District Council prepared an SEA Screening Opinion for the Maresfield NDP and consulted on this with the statutory bodies, including the Environment Agency, Natural England and Historic England.

The preparation of, and consultation on, the Screening Opinion was undertaken to meet the requirements of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, specifically Regulation 4(1); Regulation 9(2) and Regulation 11(1) and 11(2).

Natural England and Historic England have considered the Screening Opinion and have responded that the Maresfield NDP does require an environmental assessment to be undertaken in line with the requirements of the legislation.

In accordance with the Screening Opinion and the resulting consultation responses it is the conclusion of Wealden District Council, under Regulation 9(1) of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, that the Maresfield Neighbourhood Development Plan, as provided to Wealden District Council, is likely to have significant environmental effects and an environmental assessment is required.

As you will be aware one of the basic conditions that a neighbourhood plan must meet in order to proceed to referendum is that it does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations. An appropriate environmental assessment is therefore required in order to help meet this basic condition.
If you require any advice on, or assistance with, the environmental assessment of the Maresfield NDP, please do not hesitate to get in touch with the Planning Policy Team.

Yours sincerely

Nigel Hänham
Director of Planning Policy and Economic Development