

The Parish of
Ardington & Lockinge Neighbourhood Plan 2026 - 2041
Basic Conditions Statement

Published by the Ardington & Lockinge Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group on behalf of Ardington
& Lockinge Parish Council under the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012

March 2026

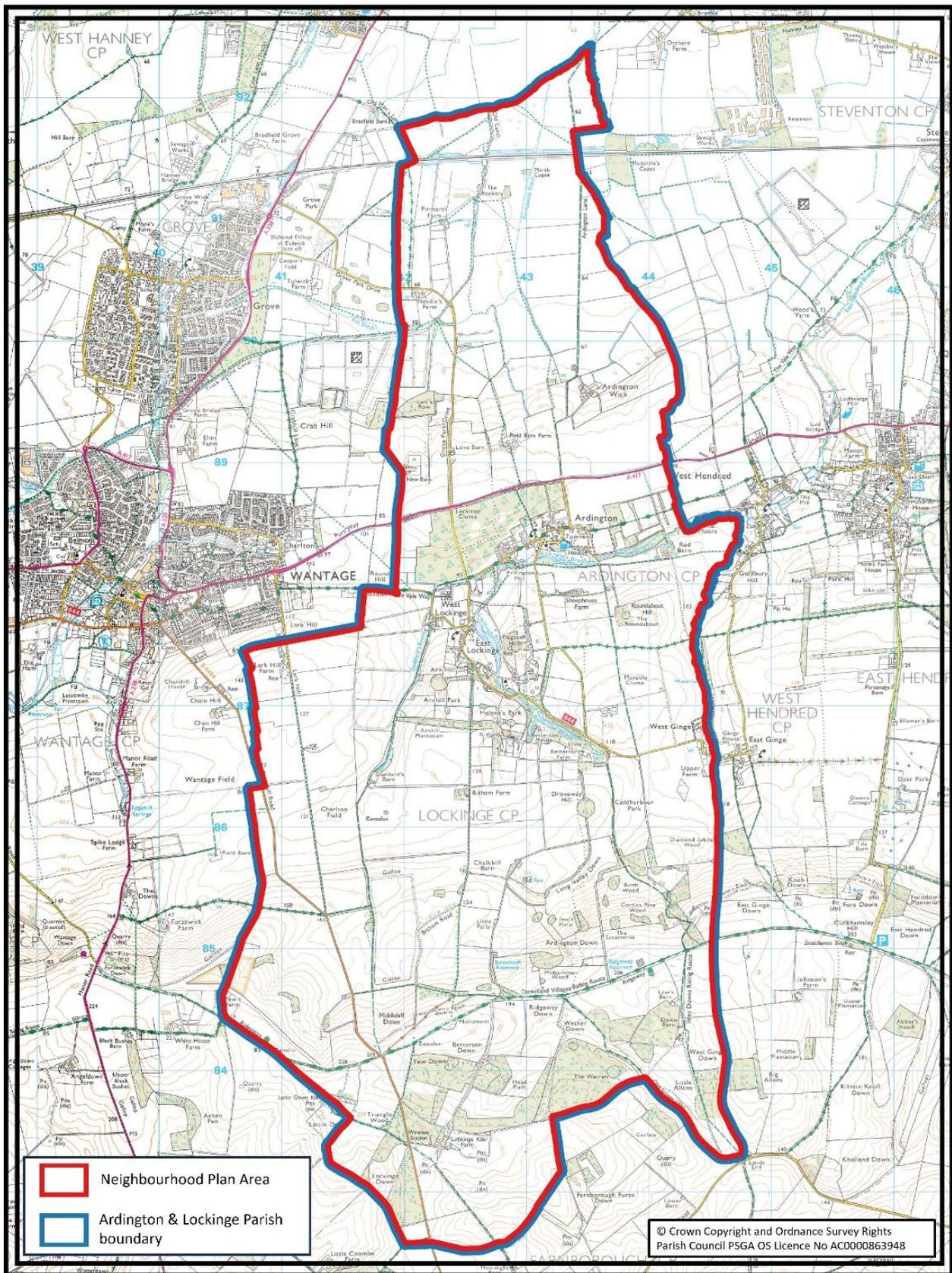
CONTENTS

1. Introduction
2. Background to the Neighbourhood Plan
3. Neighbourhood Plan Requirements
4. Related Statements
5. Conformity with National Planning Policy
6. Contribution to the Achievement of Sustainable Development
7. General Conformity with the Strategic Policies of VWHDC Development Plan
8. Compatibility with EU Obligations & Legislation and Prescribed Conditions
9. Final Observation

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Statement has been prepared by the Parish of Ardington and Lockinge Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group on behalf of Ardington and Lockinge Parish Council (“the Parish Council”) to accompany its submission to the local planning authority, the Vale of White Horse District Council (“the District Council”), of the Parish of Ardington and Lockinge Neighbourhood Plan (“the ALNP”) under Regulation 15 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (“the Regulations”).
- 1.2 The ALNP has been prepared on behalf of the Parish Council, a qualifying body, for the Neighbourhood Area covering the whole of the Parish of Ardington and Lockinge, as designated by the District Council on the 10th January 2024 (see Fig 1 below). The policies described in Section 5 of the ALNP all relate to the development and use of land in the designated Neighbourhood Area. It does not contain policies relating to excluded development as defined by, and in accordance with, the Regulations. The plan period of the ALNP is from 1st May 2026 to 31st March 2041.
- 1.4 The main purpose of the ALNP is to define land-use policies that can be used to help determine planning applications and appeals within the designated area. The resulting policies, which have been the subject of significant consultation within the designated Neighbourhood Area, do not allocate land for development, and therefore the resultant plan is ‘non-allocating’. Consequently, the District Council determined on 4th December 2025 that neither a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) nor a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) was required.
- 1.5 The Steering Group of the qualifying body has sought to create a plan which addresses the issues of today, and a positive and directed view of future development, to meet the needs of appropriate housing for local people, and new incoming residents, whilst meeting the need for sustainable development, without detriment to the nature of the locality. This is a fine balance, but it is believed that with the evidence base submitted, that justification for the declared policies, achieves the need to meet the basic conditions, and establishes ‘general conformity’ with the strategic policies of the Development Plan.
- 1.6 The Statement addresses each of the five ‘basic conditions’ required of the Regulations and explains how the submitted ALNP meets the requirements of paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B to the 1990 Town & Country Planning Act (as amended).

Fig 1 - The Designated Parish of Ardington and Lockinge Neighbourhood Plan Area



2 BACKGROUND TO THE NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

- 2.1 The decision to proceed with a NP was made by the Parish Council in 2023. A chief concern was to ensure that local planning policies were sufficiently robust & specific to protect the character of the Parish, and especially the unique historic character of the settlements, at a time when the trend towards relaxation of planning restrictions was gathering pace. For this reason, the ALNP is designed to complement and refine as appropriate the policies of the Vale of White Horse Local Plan 2031 Part 1 (LPP1) adopted on 14th December 2016, and the Local Plan 2031 Part 2 (LPP2) adopted on 19th October 2019.
- 2.2 A Steering Group was formed by the Parish Council, comprising parish councillors and members of the local community and it was delegated authority to make day-to-day decisions on the ALNP. However, as a qualifying body, the Parish Council itself approved the publication of the Pre-Submission Neighbourhood Plan of November 2025 and now the Submission Neighbourhood Plan in March 2026.
- 2.3 There has been very considerable community engagement activity on the Plan. This is laid out in detail in the separate Consultation Statement, which is published by the Parish Council as part of the submission documentation. The Parish Council has worked closely with officers of the District Council during the preparation of the ALNP to ensure the relationship between the Plan and the policies of LPP1 and reasoning and evidence of the emerging LPP2 have been properly understood. The Steering Group has also benefited from the professional planning and design advice of Bluestone Planning Partnership LLP, a consultancy based in Wantage.
- 2.4 The ALNP does not seek to allocate development sites but instead contains thirteen land use policies intended to take a positive and directed view toward future development. For this reason, the Parish Council has deliberately sought to focus policies on the key issues that matter to the local community and to avoid proposing policies that may duplicate national planning guidance and/or development plan policies that are already material considerations in determining future planning applications.
- 2.5 The ALNP and its supplementary evidence documents, are supported by a Design Code, a Consultation Statement, a SEA and HRA Screening Statement Opinion document, and this Basic Conditions Statement.

3 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN REQUIREMENTS

- 3.1 The objective of this Basic Conditions Statement is to explain how the ALNP has been prepared in accordance with Section 15 of the Regulations.
- 3.2 The Basic Conditions Statement addresses each of the five 'basic conditions' required of the Regulations and explains how the submitted ALNP meets the requirements of Paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B to the 1990 Town & Country Planning Act.
- 3.3 The Regulations state that a Neighbourhood Plan will be considered to have met the basic conditions if:
 - ***Having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State, it is appropriate to make the neighbourhood plan;***
 - ***The making of the neighbourhood plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development;***
 - ***The making of the neighbourhood plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority (or any part of that area);***

- ***The making of the neighbourhood plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations; and***
- ***Prescribed conditions are met in relation to the Neighbourhood Plan and prescribed matters have been complied with, in connection with the proposal for the Neighbourhood Plan.***

4 RELATED STATEMENTS

- 4.1 The Parish Council is a qualifying body and entitled to submit a Neighbourhood Plan. The ALNP expresses policies that relate to the development and use of land, only within the designated Neighbourhood Plan Area.
- 4.2 The Neighbourhood Plan Area is contiguous with the Parish boundaries, as shown in the map accompanying the neighbourhood area designation. See Figure 1.
- 4.3 The ALNP covers the period from 2026 to 2041 – i.e. from the year the ALNP was submitted to the end of the District Council's adopted Local Plan period.
- 4.4 The ALNP does not deal with excluded development such as County matters (mineral extraction and waste development), nationally significant infrastructure, or any other matters set out in Section 61K of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).
- 4.5 The ALNP does not relate to more than one neighbourhood area. It is solely related to the Parish of Ardington and Lockinge as designated by the District Council on 10th January 2024.
- 4.6 There are no other NPs in place for the Parish of Ardington and Lockinge.

5 CONFORMITY WITH NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY

- 5.1 The ALNP has been prepared with regard to national policies as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and is mindful of the PPG in respect of formulating NPs.
- 5.2 The ALNP is subject to the governance of the revised NPPF published in December 2024.
- 5.3 In overall terms, there are two NPPF paragraphs that provide general guidance on neighbourhood planning, to which the ALNP has directly responded:

Paragraph 13

- 5.4 The Parish Council believes the ALNP is planning positively for future development in the Parish within the considerable environmental constraints that apply, and that it is consistent with the provisions of the LPP1 and LPP2. The parish is very rural in character and remote from the larger populations of the district and the principal areas of habitation comprise spring-line settlements located against the escarpment that leads onto the North Wessex Downs.
- 5.5 In fact some 76% of Ardington and Lockinge Parish is located within the North Wessex Downs, a designated National Landscape. Most of Ardington and East Lockinge are within a single designated Conservation Area, containing many listed buildings and other buildings of significant interest, as do the hamlets of Ardington Wick, Betterton and West Ginge. Ardington village is designated as a 'smaller village' in the district settlement hierarchy, while the other settlements are all considered 'open countryside', and so there is no expectation of any major development within the Parish. However, Policy 2 allows for small infill development schemes within suitable locations in the settlement of Ardington.

Paragraph 18

- 5.6 The Parish Council believes the ALNP, as is highlighted below, is in general conformity with all the relevant policies of LPP1 and the emerging LPP2 and this has been confirmed by officers of VOWHDC. The ALNP is considered to strike a positive balance between the considerable policy constraints of the Parish and the need to support some degree of change within the settlements.
- 5.7 The ALNP avoids duplicating the local development plan policies by focusing on policies that translate the general requirements of that plan and other adopted supplementary planning guidance into specific policies that better address the social needs and unique qualities of the Parish. Once made, the ALNP will form part of the District Council's development plan and sit alongside the LPP1 and the LPP2.
- 5.8 The ALNP policies are listed in Table 1 below together with a brief summary of how each has regard for one or more of the specified NPPF policies. The particular paragraphs referred to in the respective table are those considered the most relevant to each policy. Having regard to national policy and guidance it is considered appropriate to make the ALNP.

Table 1

ALNP Policy	Relevant NPPF 2024 paragraphs	Alignment of the ALNP Policies with the NPPF 2024
Policy AL1 – Separation of Settlements	8, 124-126, 131-141, 189 & 196-221	This policy seeks to ensure that future development maintains the separation of the Parish's settlements, to maintain the distinctive settlement character, historical context and land use of the NP Area in line with NPPF Chapters 2, 11, 12, 15 and 16.
Policy AL2 - Ardington Settlement Boundary	8, 82-84, 124-126, 131-141, 189 & 196-221	This policy defines a settlement boundary for Ardington and seeks to ensure that future development is focused on optimising 'infill sites' within that part of the NP area, aligning with Chapters 2, 5, 11, 12, 15 and 16 of the NPPF.
Policy AL3 - Outside the Ardington Settlement Boundary	8, 82-84, 124-126, 131-141, 189 & 196-221	This policy makes clear that development in open countryside will not be supported unless a list of criteria are met. This approach reflects the paragraphs of the NPPF to the left, which highlights that development in the open countryside will only be considered acceptable in specific circumstances.
Policy AL4 - Resource and Access	8, 109-114, 119-123, 131-141, 161-169 & 196-201	This policy provides a framework which sets out requirements that future development proposals will have to incorporate in their design to ensure well-designed places with appropriate infrastructure, in line with NPPF Chapters 2, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, and 16.
Policy AL5 - Thermal Efficiency	8, 131-141, 161-169 & 196-201	This policy draws particularly upon Chapter 14 of the NPPF and supports development proposals which deliver higher energy efficiency and renewable energy standards.
Policy AL6 - Key Views	8, 131-141, 189, 190(c)	This policy seeks to ensure that the natural environment, character and key views of the Parish are protected to maintain its rural character & historical context in line with Chapter 12 and 15 of the NPPF.
Policy 7 - Community Facilities	8, 96-99, 103-104, 131-141, 189	This policy seeks to support enhancement of existing community facilities, addressing particularly Chapters 8 and 12 of the NPPF.
Policy 8 - Conservation of Key Habitats	8, 96, 131-141, & 187-195	This policy seeks to protect significant habitats that support biodiversity that are of particular value to the community in the framework of the National Landscape and NPPF Chapters 12 and 15.
Policy AL9 - Dark Night Skies	8, 131-141, 189, 190(c) & 198	By encouraging good design, this policy seeks to minimise light pollution within the NP area in order to maintain its rural character in the context of NPPF Chapters 12 and 15
Policy AL10 - Impact on Leisure Facilities	88, 89, 96, 98, 103 & 104	This policy seeks to support existing community facilities and services, guarding against their loss other than where justified, addressing particularly Chapters 8 and 12 of the NPPF.
Policy AL11 - Enhancement of Leisure Facilities	88, 89, 96, 98, 103 & 104	This policy seeks to support enhancement of community facilities and services.
Policy AL12 - Commercial Development	85-89	This policy seeks to support development of new businesses as part of the economic development of the Parish in line with NPPF Chapter 6.

Policy AL13 - Businesses in Residential Properties	88-89	This policy seeks to support development of new small businesses located in residential properties in line with Chapter 6 of the NPPF.
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7 GENERAL CONFORMITY WITH THE STRATEGIC POLICIES OF VOWHDC DEVELOPMENT PLAN

- 7.1 The VOWHDC Development Plan currently comprises the following:
- The VOWHDC Local Plan Part1 2011-2031 [LPP1].
 - The VOWHDC Local Plan Part 2 2019-2031 [LPP2].
- 7.2 The policies of the ALNP are shown in Table 2 below together with a brief summary of how each conforms with the relevant strategic policies of the Development Plan. Any Development Plan policy that is not referenced is not considered relevant to the ALNP as it does not have any related policies.

Table 2

ALNP Policy	VOWHDC Strategic Policy	Relevance to VOWHDC Strategic Policies
Policy AL1 – Separation of Settlements	CP1, CP3, CP4, CP15, CP37	This policy especially reflects the classification of the settlements in the Parish in Core Policy CP3 and the need to maintain the distinctive separation between them.
Policy AL2 - Ardington Settlement Boundary	CP1, CP3, CP4, CP15, CP22, CP23, CP24, CP37	This policy reflects the status of Ardington in CP3, and that no housing allocation was given to the Parish in CP4, while surveys conducted during the ALNP process indicated that there was no significant local need. This policy also aligns well with CP37 & CP40, to promote good design, local distinctiveness and sustainable construction as applicable.
Policy AL3 - Outside the Ardington Settlement Boundary	CP1, CP3, CP5, CP15, CP37, CP43 CP44	This policy reflects the status on Open Countryside in the Parish in CP3, maintaining the distinct rural character of the ALNP area (CP37). Any development should therefore be measured against CP43 and CP44.
Policy AL4 - Resource and Access	CP1, CP15, CP33, CP35, CP37, CP40	This policy particularly aims for sustainable development (CP1) in terms of provision of resources (CP43) and appropriate access (CP33 and CP35).
Policy AL5 - Energy Efficiency	CP1, CP15, CP37, CP40, CP41	This policy particularly aims for sustainable development (CP1) in the context of good design (CP40) and renewable energy (CP41)
Policy AL6 - Key Views	CP15, CP39, CP44	This policy, based on CP39 and CP44, outlines the need for all proposed new development to maintain or enhance key views and vistas in our landscape, to better appreciate heritage assets and their historical setting.
Policy 7 - Community Facilities	CP15	This policy seeks to enhance local amenities & facilities, some of which are of prime importance to the community. This approach aligns with CP15.
Policy 8 - Conservation of Key Habitats	CP15, CP43, CP44, CP45, CP46	This policy seeks to ensure that any development integrates with the landscape (CP44), and that it retains or adds to green features and biodiversity, while mitigating any habitat loss (CP45 and CP46).

Policy AL9 - Dark Night Skies	CP15, CP44, CP46	This policy seeks to ensure that within the landscape, light pollution from any new development does not adversely impact the dark skies of the ALNP area as included in CP44.
Policy AL10 - Impact on Leisure Facilities	CP15	This policy seeks to support local amenities & facilities, some of which are of prime importance to the community. This approach aligns to CP15.
Policy AL11 - Enhancement of Leisure Facilities	CP15	This policy seeks to enhance local amenities & facilities and aligns to CP15.
Policy AL12 - Commercial Development	CP15, CP29	This policy seeks to foster re-use of existing agricultural buildings in line with CP29.
Policy AL13 - Businesses in Residential Properties	CP15, CP29	This policy seeks to foster change of use of existing buildings in line with CP29.

7 CONTRIBUTION TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

- 7.1 There are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental (paragraph 8, NPPF). The three dimensions are mutually dependent. In addressing the above basic conditions, the ALNP pays particular regard to NPPF, Paragraph 9, which requires that: *‘Planning policies and decisions should play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable solutions, but in doing so should take local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area’*; i.e. ‘sustainable development’ will differ from one area to another. In addition, the ALNP relates to Paragraph 30 which states that: *“Neighbourhood plans can shape, direct and help to deliver sustainable development, by influencing local planning decisions as part of the statutory development plan”*.
- 7.2 In considering the economic role, the ALNP does not seek to overly restrict employment development, but the policies will help to maintain the local rural economy by seeking to retain and enhance local community infrastructure which will in turn help to support local jobs remaining in the Parish (policies 12 and 13).
- 7.3 Turning to the social role, the ALNP policies fully meet the social element of sustainable development, by seeking to ensure that an appropriate level of infrastructure is maintained commensurate with the needs of the community and by guarding against the loss of valued community facilities (policies 10 and 11).
- 7.4 In considering the environmental role, the ALNP seeks, where appropriate, to protect and/or enhance the local character and quality of the Parish and its settlements, the surrounding landscape and heritage assets, resources and access, thermal efficiency, views throughout the Parish, community spaces, key habitats, and dark skies (policies 1–9).
- 7.5 The LPP1 defines Ardington as a Small Village, while the settlements of East and West Lockinge, Ardington Wick, Betterton and West Ginge are all deemed to be ‘open countryside’.
- 7.6 Applying these principles, the Parish Council has sought to fulfil its obligations to sustainable development by supporting development:

In Ardington: i) Through the use of infill sites within the built-up area of the settlement where this does not adversely impact on adjacent historical or otherwise important sites, or as otherwise allocated in the VOWHDC Local Plan; and

Elsewhere: ii) Where it is limited to that which is considered appropriate development within the countryside as specified by the relevant policies of the Development Plan or national planning policy – e.g. under ‘permitted development rights’ legislation in respect of redundant agricultural buildings.

- 7.7 Proposals to redevelop brownfield sites within the Parish will also be determined in accordance with the policies of the Development Plan and national planning policy.

8 COMPATIBILITY WITH EU OBLIGATIONS AND LEGISLATION AND PRESCRIBED CONDITIONS

- 8.1 The ALNP has regard to the fundamental rights and freedoms guaranteed under the European Convention on Human Rights and complies with the Human Rights Act, 1998.
- 8.2 As referenced in 1.3 above the ALNP Steering Group, on behalf of the Parish Council, submitted a formal screening request regarding the need for a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and a Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) of the draft Neighbourhood Plan on 19th September 2025. On 4th December 2025, the District Council formally certified neither a SEA nor HRA were required. It is therefore considered that the making of the Parish of Ardington and Lockinge Neighbourhood Plan is not likely to have a significant effect on a European site (as defined in the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2012) or a European offshore marine site (as defined in the Offshore Marine Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 2007) (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects).

9. FINAL OBSERVATION

- 9.1 In submitting the Parish of Ardington and Lockinge NP and the policies therein for examination, the Parish Council consider that the Basic Conditions as set out in Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) and Regulation 32 of the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended) have been met.