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# **Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening Statements**

Review Date: October 2024

**Albion Eco Limited**

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## Section A Strategic Environmental Assessment

### 1.0 Summary

This document reviews and, if necessary, updates Albion Eco's approach and conclusions in meeting the requirements of a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) for its Drought Plan and its Water Resources Management Plan. Our approach to the SEA is consistent with European Directive 2001/42/EC, associated Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulation 2004 and with the Welsh Government's ambitions for biodiversity, resilient economy and wellbeing as set out in legislation and guidance.

The screening exercise, conducted below, established that our Drought Plan and Water Resources Management Plan would not give rise to any significant environmental effects. Therefore a Strategic Environmental Assessment is not required for these Plans.

### 2.0 Introduction

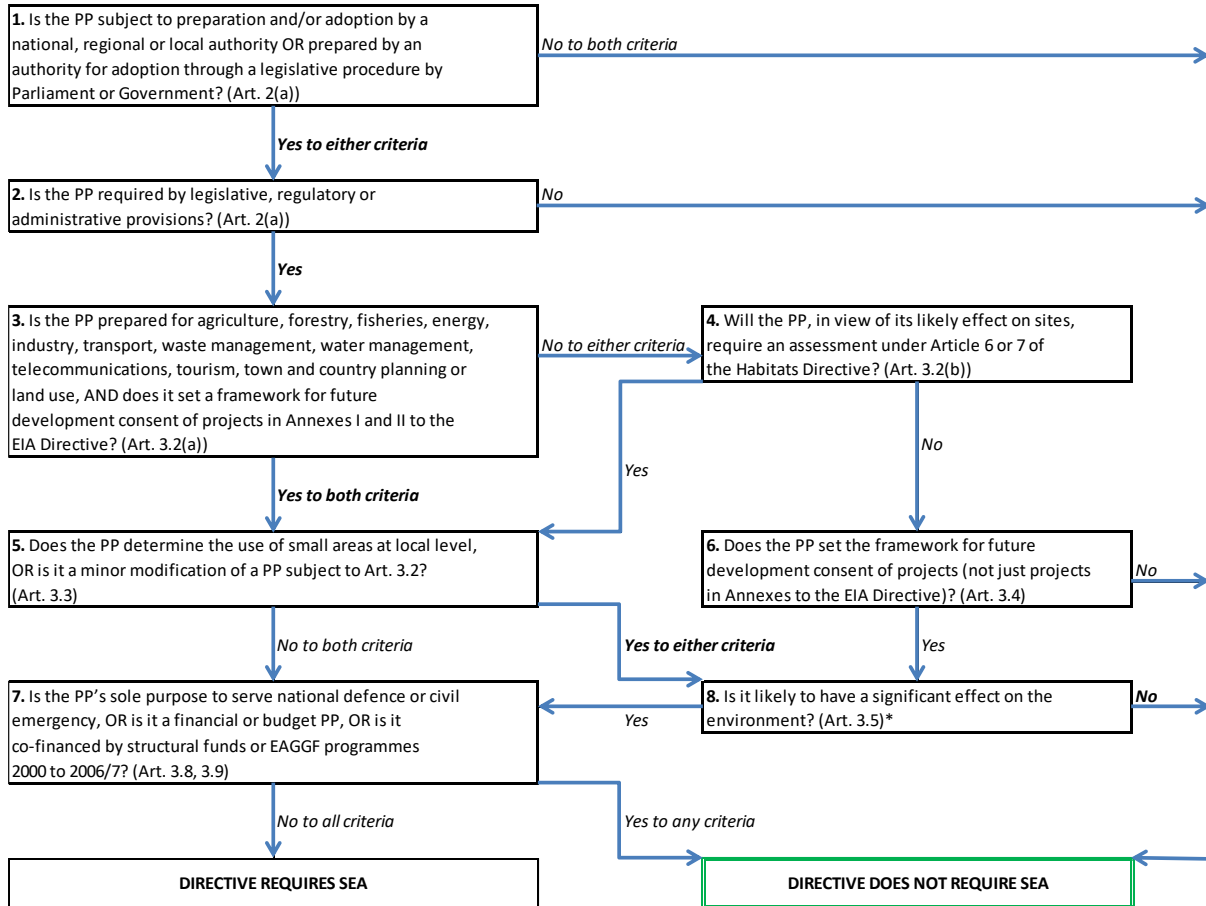
The objective of the SEA Directive is to "provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes with a view to promoting sustainable development". The Directive also states that "...an environmental assessment is carried out of certain plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment" and "...small areas at local level...require an environmental assessment only where the Member States determine that they are likely to have significant local effects".

Whilst plans and programmes associated with water management are specifically identified in the Directive as of a type that may have significant effects on the environment, we have approached this Screening exercise mindful of the requirement for proportionality embedded within Article 1 of the Directive.

### 3.0 Screening

Albion Eco has reviewed available guidance and literature in order to produce a structured approach to consider whether a Strategic Environmental Assessment is required for its Plans or Programmes. Figure 1 overleaf reproduces a flowchart that reflects previous Government guidance and which we have adopted for the purpose of this Screening exercise

Figure 1 Application of the SEA Directive to Plans and Programmes (PP)



Albion Eco's responses to the questions set out in Figure 1 are highlighted in bold italics and result in the outcome highlighted by green – that no SEA is required.

## Section B Habitats Regulations Assessment

### 1.0 Summary

This statement sets out Albion Eco's conclusion that its Drought Plan and Water Resources Management Plan do not require a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) in accordance with the European Directive 1992/43/EEC and associated Habitats Regulations [The Conservation (Natural Habitats & c.)(Amendment)(England and Wales)) Regulations 2007].

The screening exercise, conducted below, established that the Drought Plan and Water Resources Management Plan would not give rise to any significant environmental effects on relevant habitats (those designated as Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas, Ramsar Sites or any other candidate or marine sites). Therefore a Habitats Regulations Assessment is not required for the Plans.

### 2.0 Introduction

A Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) is the process required of a competent authority to consider whether a proposed development plan or programme is likely to have a significant effect on a European site designated for its nature conservation interest. Specific projects may similarly require an assessment of possible effects. The HRA is also referred to as an 'Appropriate Assessment' (or 'AA') although an AA is in effect the second step in 3 key stages for HRA – screening, AA and mitigation procedures.

These steps require site specific observations in relation to the proximity and connectivity of designated areas and can be expected to vary between individual NAV sites (those areas within England and Wales covered by Albion Eco's water and/or sewerage appointment).

### 3.0 Screening

For each of our operational inset sites preliminary sorting was undertaken to identify those locations for which Albion Eco's operations might create a relevant environmental impact (i.e. on one or more designated area) through the implementation of a proposed development plan or programme. The only such site identified being:

Shotton Inset Area, Deeside [for one or more SAC sites]

For this inset area a follow-on assessment was made to consider whether any action open to Albion Eco could have a significant detrimental impact on a designated site. For this purpose, and as a first step, sites receiving a bulk water supply from another water company were assessed as having a negligible potential impact if future supply characteristics are likely to be consistent with, or below, historic trends. This is the case for our only identified operation with the potential to impact a designated site. To establish that no further action

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is required an exercise was undertaken to demonstrate that no likely detrimental effect occurred on conservation objectives within the designated area's core management plans.

Figure 2. Potential detrimental impact matrix of Albion Eco's DP/WRMP

Designated Site (ref.)	Conservation Objective (summary)	Physical Impact	Biological Impact	Chemical Impact	Comment
Dee Estuary (0030131)	Estuary features (inc. mud & sand flats)	x	x	x	No impact pathway
	<i>Salicornia</i> & other annuals (inc. drift line)	x	x	x	No impact pathway
	Atlantic salt meadow	x	x	x	No impact pathway
	River & sea lamprey	x	x	x	No impact pathway
River Dee & Bala Lake (0030252)	Water course and lake/wetlands	x	x	x	No impact pathway
	Fish (various)	x	x	x	No impact pathway
	Vegetation (various)	x	x	x	No impact pathway
	Otters	x	x	x	No impact pathway
	Glutinous snail	x	x	x	No impact pathway
Halkyn Mountain (0030163)	Various heaths & grasslands	x	x	x	No impact pathway
	Great crested newt	x	x	x	No impact pathway
Newt Sites (0030132)	Great crested newt	x	x	x	No impact pathway
	Oak woodland	x	x	x	No impact pathway
Key: x = no likely impact, 1 to 3 = potentially little (1)/moderate (2)/serious (3) impact					

In the absence of potential detrimental impact to designated sites no further action is required. We will review this outcome periodically and in the event of significant change.

**Signed on behalf of Albion Eco**

*David Knaggs*

Managing Director