

Royal Borough of Greenwich

SEA Screening Statement

**Residential Extensions, Basements and
Conversions Guidance**

Supplementary Planning Document

October 2018

SEA Screening Statement

On the determination of the need for a Strategic Environmental Assessment in accordance with the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 and European Directive 2001/42/EC of the:

Residential Extensions, Basements and Conversions Guidance Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) – September 2018 consultation draft

Subject: The draft Residential Extensions, Basements and Conversions Guidance SPD has been prepared by the Royal Borough of Greenwich to provide guidance to be used in the preparation and assessment of planning applications.

Consultation: 2 October 2018 to 30 October 2018

This refers to the consultation on this Screening Statement with the statutory consultees: Environment Agency, Historic England, Natural England.

Address: Royal Borough of Greenwich
Planning Policy Team
5th Floor, The Woolwich Centre
35 Wellington Street
London, SE18 6HQ
planning.policy@royalgreenwich.gov.uk

1. Purpose of Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

- 1.1 The requirement for a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is set out in the ODPM's practical guidance on applying European Directive 2001/42/EC, and in the *Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004*. These documents place an obligation on local planning authorities to undertake an SEA on any land use plan or programme '*which sets the framework for future development consent of projects*'.
- 1.2 Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is the process by which this Directive is applied to Local Plan documents. An SA is required under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 for all Development Plan Documents (DPDs) and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs). The EU Strategic Development Directive also requires a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) to be carried out on certain types of plans with significant environmental effects.
- 1.3 The Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2009 removes the automatic need for an SA of SPDs. For instance, an exception is granted for plans '*which determine the use of small areas at a local level*' or which only propose '*minor modifications to plans*', if the local planning authority determines that the plan is unlikely to have significant environmental effects.
- 1.4 Both SA and SEA processes are undertaken during the preparation of a plan or strategy to aid the implementation of sustainable development. The main difference between them is that while an SEA has more of an environmental focus, the SA should focus on social, economic and environmental issues.
- 1.5 Although SA and SEA are distinct requirements, government guidance has recommended a single appraisal process. The SA process for planning documents translates the requirements of the European SEA Directive, and Government guidance on undertaking SAs has been prepared so as to incorporate the requirements of the SEA Directive.
- 1.6 Relevant Development Plan Documents (DPD) that have been subject to a SA include the Royal Greenwich Local Plan Core Strategy with Detailed Policies.

2. Residential Extensions, Basement and Conversions SPD

- 2.1 Policy DH(a) Residential Extensions of the Core Strategy with Detailed Policies sets out criteria for rear, side and other additions (including basements) to residential properties. Policy H(b) Conversions of the Core Strategy with Detailed Policies sets out criteria for the subdivision of residential property.
- 2.2 The purpose of the Residential Extensions, Basements and Conversions SPD is to provide further guidance on those Development Plan policies which relate to the design of residential extensions, basements and conversions, particularly providing more information relating to design and what is considered appropriate within the context of Royal Greenwich. It applies across the whole borough.

- 2.3 The current Residential Extensions, Basements and Conversions Guidance SPD was adopted in July 2016. The SEA Screening Statement published alongside the current SPD confirmed that an SEA was not required for the SPD.
- 2.4 The Royal borough has carried out a limited review of the guidance within the current SPD, focusing only on basements and houses in multiple occupation (HMOs). Regardless, the Royal Borough has undertaken a screening process for the draft SPD.

3. The Screening Process

- 3.1 Though not part of the statutory Development Plan, Supplementary Planning Documents cover a range of issues, which generally interpret policies in the Development Plan. If an SPD is considered unlikely to have significant environmental effects through the screening process, then the conclusion will be that the SEA is not necessary.
- 3.2 To assess whether an SEA is required the Responsible Authority (Royal Borough of Greenwich) must undertake a screening process based on a standard set of criteria. Where the Responsible Authority determines that the plan or programme is unlikely to have significant environmental effects, and therefore does not need to be subject to full Strategic Environmental Assessment, it must prepare a statement showing the reasons for this determination.
- 3.3 This must be subject to consultation with Historic England, the Environment Agency and Natural England¹. Following consultation, the results of the screening process must be detailed in a Screening Statement, which is required to be made available to the public.
- 3.4 Key to the screening decision is the determination of whether the SPD is likely to have significant environmental effects, using the criteria set out in Annex II of the SEA Directive. These criteria are set out in the table in Appendix I, alongside the Royal Borough's response in relation to the SPD.
- 3.5 This screening demonstrates that the draft Residential Extensions, Basements and Conversions Guidance SPD is unlikely to have significant effects on the environment. It will not therefore be necessary to carry out a SEA on this document.

4. Statement of Reasons for Determination

- 4.1 The Royal Borough believes that the impact of the draft SPD, through responses to the SEA Directive Criteria, will have beneficial environmental effects on Royal Greenwich. In addition, the draft SPD is not setting new policy. It is supplementing and providing further guidance on existing policies. Therefore it is currently considered that an SEA is not required for the draft Residential Extensions, Basements and Conversions SPD. This Screening Statement will be updated after public consultation has taken place.

¹ This will be undertaken as part of the public consultation process.

Appendix I Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects

SEA Directive Criteria and Schedule I of Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004	Royal Borough of Greenwich Response
1. Characteristics of the draft Residential Extensions, Basements and Conversions SPD, having particular regard to:	
The degree to which the SPD sets out a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources.	The SPD will provide guidance on the design of residential extensions, basements and conversions. This guidance is supplementary to a Development Plan Document which provides the overarching framework for development in Greenwich. No resources are allocated.
The degree to which the SPD influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy	The guidance in the SPD is supplementary and will be in line the policies in the Core Strategy with Detailed Policies, which has been subject to full Sustainability Appraisal.
The relevance of the SPD for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development	The SPD will promote sustainable development by providing guidance on the implementation and compliance with policies contained within the Core Strategy with Detailed Policies which have been subject to full Sustainability Appraisal.
Environmental problems relevant to the SPD	The SPD will not introduce or exacerbate any environmental problems.
The relevance of the SPD for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (for example plans and programmes related to waste management or water protection)	The SPD will not impact on the implementation of community legislation on the environment.
2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having particular regard to:	
The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects	The anticipated effects on the sustainability of future development are expected to be minor positive for the duration (lifetime) of the development. The SPD will provide a framework to encourage residential extensions, conversions and basements to be built sustainably respecting the character of the area and the amenity of neighbouring properties in line with the Core Strategy.
The cumulative nature of the effects of the SPD	The likely effects of the SPD will be minor positive therefore any cumulative impacts will be minor.
The trans boundary nature of the effects of the SPD	The effects are limited to developments in the Royal Borough of Greenwich.
The risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accident)	No significant risks to human health have been identified.

SEA Directive Criteria and Schedule I of Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004	Royal Borough of Greenwich Response
The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected) of the SPD	The SPD is applicable to developments within the whole borough.
<p>The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected by the SPD due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Special natural characteristics or cultural heritage ▪ Exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values ▪ Intensive land use <p>And</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status 	<p>The SPD is applicable to developments within the whole of the borough, which includes many conservation areas and listed buildings. Policy impacts on heritage have been assessed through the Sustainability Appraisal of the Core Strategy with Detailed Policies. The SPD will be consistent with the Development Plan approach that seeks to preserve and enhance heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance.</p> <p>The overall likely effect of the SPD will be positive by maximising the positive environmental effects of development and minimising or avoiding negative impacts. Royal Greenwich has two SSSIs as well as a number of sites of importance for nature conservation and these are protected by separate policies in the Core Strategy with Detailed Policies, which have been subject to full Sustainability Appraisal.</p>