

DRAFT SEA Screening Assessment

Alterations and Extensions Draft SPD

Prepared by Pro Vision on behalf of
the London Borough of Lewisham

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ALTERATIONS AND EXTENSIONS DRAFT SPD
DRAFT SEA SCREENING ASSESSMENT
PROJECT NO. 2517

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This report has been prepared on behalf of the London Borough of Lewisham to determine the need for a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) for their forthcoming Alterations and Extensions Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).
- 1.2 For SPDs it is necessary to undertake an SEA in instances where there is potential for significant environmental impacts that have not already been assessed during the preparation of the Development Plan.
- 1.3 This Screening Report has been prepared in accordance with Section 9 (3) of the Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 and is based on the Council's current scope of the draft SPD.

2.0 Scope of the Alterations and Extensions Draft SPD

2.1 The SPD is intended to ensure that the highest design quality is achieved in residential extensions and alterations within the Borough of Lewisham .

2.2 The document is intended as a working tool, essential for all those involved with the preparation and assessment of planning applications for residential alterations and extensions, including:

- Householders;
- Design professionals, in drawing up proposals;
- Development management officers, as a material consideration in assessing the suitability of applications;
- Statutory and non-statutory consultees and the public in commenting on planning applications, and
- The Council, in determining planning applications and in upholding decisions at planning appeals.

3.0 SEA Screening Procedure

3.1 The SEA screening procedure comprises 6 stages, detailed below:

1. **Preliminary Assessment:** initial tests applied to determine whether screening is necessary;
2. **Assessment of likely Environmental Impacts:** if screening is required the an assessment of the likely environmental impacts will be undertaken in accordance with the 2004 Regulations;
3. **Draft Screening Report:** a draft screening report will be prepared summarising the results of Stage 2 and including a draft determination that provides sufficient information to demonstrate whether the SPD is likely to have significant environmental effects;
4. **Consultation with statutory bodies:** before a final screening report can be published it will be necessary to undertake consultation with the Environment Agency, English Heritage and Natural England. If these statutory bodies consider that the SPD is likely to have significant environmental effects, then a full SEA will be required;
5. **Final Screening Report:** consideration to be given to the responses from the three statutory bodies and then a final version of the screening report prepared confirming:
 - a. The result of the screening;
 - b. Responses from the consultation bodies;
 - c. The final determination, and
 - d. The statement of reasons if no SEA is required
6. **Final Screening Report made publically available:** the Council will issue the Final Screening Report to each of the three statutory consultees and make it public available for inspection on the Council's website and within public libraries.

3.2 This report constitutes stage 3 of the process.

4.0 Assessment of Environmental Effects

4.1 It is necessary to undertake screening of the likely significant environmental effects of the SPD because the SPD meets the following SEA Directive criteria¹:

1. the SPD is subject to preparation and adoption by a Local Authority;
2. the SPD is required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions
3. the SPD is prepared for town planning and land use purposes

4.2 The criteria for determining the significance of effects are taken from schedule 1 of the Regulations. The SPD has been judged against each of these criteria and the results are detailed in Table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1

| Criteria (from Annex II) of SEA Directive and Schedule I of the Regulations) | | Assessment |
|--|--|---|
| 1. Characteristics of the plan or programme | | |
| (a) | 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; | <p>The draft SPD sits at the lowest tier of the development plan hierarchy. The function of the document is to provide amplification to the policies and strategies set out within the Development Plan</p> <p>The document provides detailed design guidance for residential extensions and alterations. This is intended to be a reference tool rather than prescriptive policy. The guidance may influence the location, nature and size of proposals but at a small scale.</p> <p>The SPD makes no provision for the allocation of resources.</p> |
| (b) | the degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy; | <p>The draft SPD is a function of the adopted Development Plan, its purpose being to expand upon and clarify the requirements of the Plan. The SPD is required to be in conformity with the Plan and other higher tier policy documents (which have been subject to full Sustainability Appraisals and independent examination). The SPD does not influence other plans and programmes.</p> |
| (c) | the relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental | <p>The guidance seeks to promote good design. Good design is intended to ensure attractive, usable, durable and adaptive places and is</p> |

¹ A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (2005)

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| | considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development; | considered a key element in achieving sustainable development. |
| (d) | environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme; | It is not anticipated that any environmental problems will be introduced or intensified as a result of the draft SPD. Conversely, the intention of the draft SPD is to promote good design which has the potential to help deliver environmental improvements. |
| (e) | 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). | The guidance has potential links to environmental and community legislation, as it considers matters such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refuse and recycling storage; • Sustainable Transport (and cycle storage); • Waste water and Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS). Notwithstanding this, as a low tier document, the guidance is intended to respond to environmental policy and legislation rather than influence it. |
| 2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected | | |
| (a) | the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects, | The impact of the SPD is likely to be positive, with the document having the potential to have positive impacts in the short, medium and longer term. The positive effects of the guidance should be felt whenever proposed alterations or extensions to residential property come forward. Effects will only be reversed when buildings or alterations are demolished. |
| (b) | the cumulative nature of the effects | Once adopted it is expected that the guidance will be applied to all planning applications for alterations and extensions to residential properties. The guidance is expected to have a positive cumulative impact over time as the number of proposals designed and built out (influenced by the SPD) increases. |
| (c) | the trans-boundary nature of the effects of the SPD | The positive effects of the draft SPD will be experienced in areas close to new development. Due to the minor nature of the development proposals there are unlikely to be any significant trans-boundary effects resulting from the SPD. |
| (d) | the risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents) | The draft SPD seeks to encourage and guide good design. Good design should seek to reduce the risks to human health and promote environmental |

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| | | enhancement. Therefore, the SPD can be expected to have a positive impact on human health. |
| (e) | the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected), | <p>Individually the magnitude of effects will be limited due to the minor scale of individual proposals for domestic extensions and alterations. Cumulatively the guidance may have a more significant impact over time. The impacts, although likely positive, will be difficult to measure as the guidance will impact upon the design of extensions and alterations in many small and subtle ways.</p> <p>This is a boroughwide SPD: the spatial extent of effects will be limited to land and buildings within the borough.</p> |
| (f) | the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to: i) special natural characteristics or cultural heritage ii) exceeded environmental quality standards or limit | <p>The borough is characterised by a range of different and sometimes vulnerable natural and manmade environments. These include SINCS, Local Nature Reserves, 27 Conservation Areas and approximately 540 Listed Buildings. It is the role of development plan policies to protect, conserve and in many instances enhance these areas which set out specific standards for environmental quality and land use.</p> <p>The draft SPD places particular emphasis on the protection and enhancement of Conservation Areas and heritage assets.</p> |
| (g) | the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status | <p>Within the Borough there are a range of areas which have a recognised protection status. These are protected, conserved and enhanced by adopted plan policies and through separate legislation in some instances. The draft SPD will not impact on these areas.</p> <p>It is the intention of the draft SPD to introduce higher standards of design. Improving standards of design has the potential to generate environmental improvements.</p> |

5.0 Draft Determination

- 5.1 The assessment detailed in table 4.1 indicates that that the SPD is unlikely to generate significant environmental effects by itself. Any effects resulting from higher tier planning documents including the 'parent policies' relevant to this SPD have already been assessed by a separate full SEA.
- 5.2 The SPD does not propose any new policies, or the amendment of existing policies, and will not allocate resources or direct other plans and programmes

Next Stage

- 5.3 The draft determination is that a SEA will not be required for the SPD. However, before a final determination is made it will be necessary to:
1. Consult on this draft determination with the three statutory consultees, and
 2. Prepare a final screening report, which is to be made publicly available.