

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Final Screening Report

Deptford High Street and St Paul's Church Conservation Area Appraisal Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report details the results of the consultation of the Screening Assessment report and determines whether a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is required for the Deptford High Street and St Paul's Church Conservation Area Appraisal Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), in line with the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (Directive 2001/42/EC), transposed into law by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations (the 'SEA Regulations') 2004.
- 1.2 Recognising that the Deptford High Street and St Paul's Church Conservation Area Appraisal SPD will be capable of being a material consideration in the determination of future planning applications, the council is required to consider whether the SPD has the potential to result in significant environmental effects, particularly where such effects may not have already been assessed during the preparation of the council's statutory Development Plan.
- 1.3 A Draft Screening Report was prepared in accordance with Section 9(3) of the SEA Regulations and the prescribed statutory consultation bodies Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England were consulted. This Final Screening Report has been prepared taking into account feedback received.

2 Scope of the proposed Conservation Area Appraisal SPD

- 2.1 The draft Deptford High Street and St Paul's Church Conservation Area Appraisal SPD has been prepared as supplementary planning guidance to support implementation of Lewisham's statutory Development Plan. It sets out in detail why the defined area is considered to be of special architectural and historic interest, and includes guidance to inform any future development proposals and decisions within the area.
- 2.2 The Conservation Area Appraisal is intended to be used:
 - As a tool to demonstrate the area's special interest
 - As an explanation to owners, businesses and inhabitants of the reasons for designation
 - As educational and informative documents created with the local community, expressing what the community particularly values about the place they live and work in
 - To give greater understanding and articulation of its local character
 - To inform those considering investment in the area and support policies in guiding the scale, form and content of new development, consistent with the spatial strategy for the borough
 - To support a management plan for the conservation area by providing the analysis of what is positive and negative, and in opportunities for beneficial change and enhancement or the need for additional protection and restraint (including the use of Article 4 directions)
- 2.3 When adopted, the Conservation Area Appraisal will be a material consideration to the determination of planning decisions and to Secretary of State Decisions, including those where urgent works are proposed to preserve an unlisted building in a conservation area, as well as resisting complete demolition.

3 SEA Screening Procedure

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

1. Preliminary Assessment: to determine whether screening is necessary;
2. Assessment of likely Environmental Effects: if screening is required the an assessment of the likely environmental effects, including any significant effects, will be undertaken in accordance with the SEA Regulations 2004;
3. Draft Screening Report: a draft screening report will be prepared summarising the results of Stage 2 and including a draft determination as to whether the SPD is likely to have significant environmental effects;
4. Consultation with statutory bodies: the Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England will be consulted on the draft Screening Report.
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 publicly available for inspection.

3.2 This is the stage 5 report, which will be issued to the 3 statutory consultees and be made available on the Council's website in accordance with Stage 6.

4 Assessment of Environmental Effects

4.1 The council, as the "responsible authority", must determine whether the plan or programme (in this case, the draft Deptford High Street and St Paul's Church Conservation Area Appraisal SPD) is likely to have significant environmental effects. The criteria for determining the significance of effects are set out in Schedule 1 of the SEA Regulations 2004, which are set out in the Table 4.1 below. The SPD has been assessed against each of these criteria and the results are also detailed in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 - SEA Screening Assessment

SEA Directive Criteria		Assessment	Likely Significant Effects?
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 comprises guidance to support implementation of the council's statutory Development Plan. 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 information of why the area is considered to be of architectural, historic and social importance to the borough of Lewisham. It 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 and therefore it is considered that the extent of effects is unlikely to be significant.</p> <p>The SPD makes no provision for the allocation of resources.</p>	No
(b)	the degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy;	<p>The draft SPD helps give effect to the adopted Development Plan and spatial strategy for the borough, its purpose being to expand upon and clarify the requirements of the Plan – it does not set any new policies. The SPD is required to be in conformity with the Plan and other higher tier policy documents (which have been subject to full Strategic Environmental Assessment, Sustainability Appraisal and independent examination).</p>	No
(c)	the relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development;	<p>The guidance seeks to demonstrate the areas special interest, and as an explanation of the reasons for a future Conservation Area designation, and as a promotional and informative tool to be used by all stakeholders. The document is produced to assist the public, development industry and other stakeholders, in understanding what is of significance in the area, to promote good design, and to ensure development does not adversely affect the areas special interest. Good design is intended to ensure attractive, usable, durable and adaptive places and is considered a key element in achieving sustainable development. However as the SPD is not introducing new policy the overall extent of positive effects are considered to be limited.</p>	No
(d)	environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme;	<p>It is not anticipated that any environmental problems will be introduced or intensified as a result of the draft SPD.</p>	No

		Conversely, the intention of the draft SPD is to promote the positive management of the local environment and securing 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).	<p>The SPD has potential links to environmental and community legislation, as it considers matters such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tree Protection Orders (TPO's), and the Felling and lopping of trees; • Protects residential green space from inappropriate loss of gardens ; • Street trees <p>Notwithstanding this, as a lower tier guidance document, the guidance is intended to respond to environmental policy and legislation rather than influence it.</p>	No
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, particularly on cultural heritage. Effects will only be reversed when buildings or alterations are demolished.	No
(b)	the cumulative nature of the effects	<p>Once adopted it is expected that the guidance will be relevant to all planning applications which fall within the proposed area..</p> <p>The guidance is expected to have a positive cumulative impact, particularly on cultural heritage, over time, however these are not considered to result in likely significant effects.</p>	No
(c)	the trans-boundary nature of the effects of the SPD	There are no trans-boundary effects anticipated from the SPD.	No
(d)	the risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents)	There are unlikely to be risks to human health or the environment arising from the SPD in respect of this criterion.	No
(e)	the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected),	<p>The magnitude of effects is expected to be limited due to the minor scale of individual proposals anticipated to be considered against the guidance.</p> <p>This is a SPD which affects a relatively small and clearly defined area within the borough: the spatial extent of effects will therefore be limited.</p>	No

(f)	<p>the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:</p> <p>i) special natural characteristics or cultural heritage</p> <p>ii) exceeded environmental quality standards or limit</p>	<p>The area is located in the north east of borough and contains approximately 284 address points. The core of the proposed conservation area is made up of residential development of the Victorian and Edwardian period. Three 1960s century tower blocks fall within the area but are not identified to be important to the special character of the area. The built form is arranged around a central park, with significant mature tree cover in the Park, on the streets, and in the front and rear gardens.</p> <p>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 key characteristics that are outlined within the appraisal, including the natural environment in order to maintain biodiversity, wildlife habitats, and the quality of air in line with local and national policies and statutory duties.</p>	No
(g)	<p>the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status</p>	<p>It is the intention of the draft SPD to highlight the desirability of enhancing the character and appearance of the area. Improving standards of planning applications through the use of this document has the potential to generate environmental improvements, particularly to the historic environment. However, it is not expected that the SPD will result in any significant adverse effects in this regard.</p>	No

4.2 Consultation responses

Statutory Consultee	Response
Environment Agency	As with the whole of Government and the rest of the public sector, we (the Environment Agency) are preparing responsibly for all scenarios as we exit the European Union...given this we have currently decided that we will not be responding to screening opinions consultations to allow focus our resource on development with the highest environment impact.
Natural England	Whilst we welcome this opportunity to give our views, Natural England does not have any specific comments on the SEA Screening for the proposed Conservation area for Deptford High Street and St Pauls Church.
Historic England	The draft documents do not, in our view, raise sufficient heritage or environmental issues, consistent with a need for full SEA.

5 Determination

- 5.1 The screening assessment detailed in table 4.1 indicated that that the SPD may result in some positive environmental effects, particularly on the historic environment. It is noted that the SEA Regulations 2004 do not specify the nature of effects (i.e. positive or negative) that would give rise to a full SEA. However, this assessment has identified that the SPD is unlikely to generate *significant* environmental effects by itself, and there are no negative effects on the environment anticipated. The spatial extent of the SPD is limited to a contained area of the borough, and the scope of the guidance is focussed principally on management of local heritage assets, particularly in relation to smaller scale development proposals, such as extensions and alterations.
- 5.2 Any effects resulting from higher tier planning documents including the 'parent policies' relevant to this SPD have already been considered and assessed by a separate full SEA through the Development Plan process.
- 5.3 The SPD does not propose any new policies, or the amendment of existing policies, and will not allocate resources or direct other higher level plans and programmes.
- 5.4 As set out in the table at 4.2, the responses from the statutory consultees supported the council's assessment, and agree that a full SEA is not required.
- 5.5 In conclusion, the final determination is that a SEA will not be required.

Statement

- 5.6 The final determination is that a SEA will not be required for the SPD, for reasons set out in Section 5 above. In line with stage 6 of the SEA requirements the Council will issue the Final Screening Report to each of the three statutory consultees and make it publicly available on the Council's website for inspection.