

Draft SEA/SA Screening Statement

Draft Town Centre SPD

December 2020

Screening Statement

This statement sets out Warrington Borough Council's determination of the need for a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in accordance with *Regulation 9(3) of the Environmental*

Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 and European Directive 2001/42/EC for the Draft Town Centre SPD.

- 1.1. The SEA Directive (2001/42/EC) identifies the purpose of SEA as “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”.
- 1.2. Under separate legislation (The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and associated Regulations), the Council is also required to carry out a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) for all Development Plan Documents (DPDs). SA is the process by which the SEA Directive is applied to Development Plan Documents (DPD). The SA process aims to promote sustainable development through the integration of social, environmental and economic considerations into the preparation of plans.
- 1.3. The Planning Act 2008 and the associated Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2009 removed the automatic need for SA of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs). However, National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG) states that SPDs may in exceptional circumstances still require a SEA if they are likely to have significant environmental effects that have not already have been assessed during the preparation of the Local Plan (parent DPD).
- 1.4. The purpose of the Town Centre SPD is to supplement Policies CS1, CS4, CS7, PV4, PV5, SN1, SN2, SN7, QE1, QE3, QE6, QE7, QE8, MP1, MP3, MP4, MP8, MP10, TC1, TC2 and IW1 of the adopted Warrington Local Plan Core Strategy (LPCS) and will be used to inform Development Management decisions. The Warrington LPCS is the “parent DPD”, which has already been subject to SA incorporating SEA prior to adoption in July 2014.

- 1.5. The emerging Local Plan is seeking to continue the current policy of promoting the sustainable regeneration of the town centre. Following adoption of the new Local Plan the SPD will need to be reviewed to ensure it effectively supplements the new Plan. It should be noted that the emerging Plan has itself been subject to SA/SEA throughout its preparation to date.
- 1.6. The information and guidance in the SPD will be of particular use to developers, architects and agents looking to promote development sites in Warrington Town Centre. It will provide practical advice to help developers comply with the Warrington LPCS's sustainable design and construction requirements. It also sets out the procedure for determining planning applications, what information will be required and when it will be required.
- 1.7. The Town Centre SPD will determine design and amenity considerations within a specific area at a local level of Warrington's Local Plan – The Local Plan Core Strategy (Adopted July 2014). The Council must therefore still determine whether the SPD is likely to have significant environmental effects that have not already have been assessed during the preparation of the Local Plan. This assessment must be made taking account of the criteria set out in Schedule 1 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 and in consultation with the Environment Agency, English Heritage and Natural England.
- 1.8. The results of this screening process for the Town Centre SPD are set out in Appendix 1 of this statement, which confirms that the SPD is unlikely to have significant environmental effects.
- 1.9. The Council will consult statutory consultees (Environment Agency, English Heritage and Natural England) before finalising its Screening Determination.

2. Conclusion

- 2.1 The draft Town Centre SPD will supplement adopted Local Plan policies, and will set out additional guidance on design and amenity requirements with regard to Town Centre developments and adjacent areas as identified in the SPD. A screening of the proposed document has led to the conclusion that it is not likely that the SPD will result in any significant additional sustainability impacts, and therefore SA is not required. A screening of the document has also led to the conclusion that it is not likely that the SPD will have any significant environmental impacts and therefore SEA is not required.
- 2.2 The Council considers it is not be necessary to carry out a full SA/SEA on the draft Town Centre SPD as its purpose is only to determine the use of a small area at a local level and is unlikely to have significant effects on the environment.

Appendix 1: SEA Screening of the Draft Town Centre SPD

Schedule 1 Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004

SEA Directive Criteria	Summary of Environments effects
1. Characteristics of the Draft Town Centre SPD having particular regard to:	
a) The degree to which the plan or programme sets out a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size or operating conditions or by allocating resources.	The draft SPD will provide supplementary guidance to the Local Plan Core Strategy (LPCS) which provides the overarching framework for development in Warrington. This SPD will not itself allocate resources, although it will help secure resources for the delivery of the LPCS and the programmes of other infrastructure and service providers.
b) The degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy.	The SPD is at the lower tier of the development plan hierarchy. The purpose of the document is to support the delivery of policies in the adopted Warrington LPCS and to guide the preparation and determination of planning applications. The SPD will be kept under review and will need to be updated following the adoption of the Council's new emerging Local Plan.
c) The relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development.	The SPD will promote sustainable development by encouraging reduced or zero carbon developments. It will also provide environmental enhancements wherever possible, promote new green spaces and encourage active travel.
d) Environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme.	The SPD will not introduce or exacerbate any environmental problems. It has the potential to have a positive impact in reducing of poor air quality in Town Centre and its impact on residential amenity. It will also seek to improve streetscape and amenity provision through greening of the Town Centre the environment.
e) The relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of community legislation on the environment (e.g. plans and programmes related to waste management or water).	The SPD will help support the implementation of other plans and programmes related to community legislation on the environment through the delivery of the LPCS polices.

2. Characteristics of the effects and area likely to be affected having particular regard to:	
a) The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects	The draft SPD supplements Policies CS1, CS4, CS7, PV4, PV5, SN1, SN2(?), SN7, QE1, QE3, QE6, QE7, QE8, MP1, MP3, MP4, MP8, MP10, TC1, TC2 and IW1 of the adopted Warrington LPCS and provides the context and framework for the determination of planning applications. The SPD encourages growth and development in a sustainable way.
b) The cumulative nature of the effects	The effect of this SPD will be largely beneficial therefore any cumulative impact will also be beneficial.
c) The trans-boundary nature of the effects	The application of the SPD will be limited to developments in Warrington. Therefore, the effects of the SPD will not result in any significant environmental effects of a trans-boundary nature.
d) The risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accident)	It is not envisaged that there will be any risks to human health or the environment arising from the implementation of this SPD.
e) The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographic area and size of the population likely to be affected)	The SPD will directly benefit residents, businesses and visitors to the Town Centre. It will indirectly benefit the residents of the borough through improved sustainable transport links into town centre and through supporting environmental quality improvement for instance in better air quality.
f) The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Special natural characteristics or cultural heritage ii) Exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values iii) Intensive land use 	There are policies in the adopted LPCS that seek to protect these areas. The SPD will support this protection.
g) The effects on areas or landscapes which have recognised national, Community or international protected status	Policies in the adopted LPCS seek to protect areas and landscapes with recognised protection status (e.g. heritage assets). The SPD supports these policies by helping to identify appropriate development approaches and environmental treatments.

Draft Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening Statement

Draft Town Centre SPD

December 2020

Screening Statement

This statement sets out Warrington Borough Council's determination of the need for a Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) in accordance with *Regulation 61(1)* of the *Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010* and *European Directive 92/43/EEC* for the revised Planning Obligations SPD.

- 1.1. The European Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and Wild Flora and Fauna – the 'Habitats Directive' provides legal protection for habitats and species of European importance. Article 2 of the Directive requires the maintenance or restoration of habitats and species of interest to the EU in a favourable condition.
- 1.2. The need for an Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) is set out within the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 and Articles 6(3) and 6(4) of the Habitats Directive which require an Appropriate Assessment of any plan or project to be undertaken to assess if it is likely to have significant adverse effects upon the integrity of internationally designated sites of nature conservation importance, known as European sites of nature conservation importance or Natura 2000 sites. The Town Centre Supplementary Planning Document is such a plan.
- 1.3. The purpose of a HRA is to assess the impacts of a land-use plan against the conservation objectives of Natura 2000 Sites. The assessment must determine whether the plan would adversely affect the integrity of the site in terms of its nature conservation objectives. Where negative effects are identified other options should be examined to avoid any potential damaging effects.
- 1.4. The adopted Warrington Local Plan Core Strategy (July 2014) has been subject to a full Habitat Regulation Assessment (HRA). The HRA assessed all of the policies in the plan, concluding that it was unlikely to have a significant effect on the integrity of any European sites, either alone or in combination with other projects and plans, directly or indirectly.

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- 1.5 As the purpose of this draft SPD is to expand on existing policies of the Local Plan Core Strategy, the council has determined that an HRA is not required.



Mr Kevin Usher
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Your ref:
Mobile 07557 834316
Date 16 December
2020

Sent by email to kusher@warrington.gov.uk

Dear Mr Usher,

RE: Consultation on Screening Opinion for Warrington Town Centre SPD for Warrington Borough Council

Thank you for consulting Historic England about the above Screening Opinion.

In terms of our area of interest, given the nature of the SPD, we would concur with your assessment that the document is unlikely to result in any significant environmental effects and will simply provide additional guidance on existing Policies contained within an Adopted Development Plan Document which has already been subject to a Sustainability Appraisal/SEA. As a result, we would endorse the Authority's conclusions that it is not necessary to undertake a Strategic Environmental Assessment of this particular SPD.

The views of the other three statutory consultation bodies should be taken into account before the overall decision on the need for an SEA is made.

If you have any queries about this matter or would like to discuss anything further, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

MR HENRY CUMBERS

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Our ref: SO/2006/000276/SE-05/SC1-L01

Date: 15 January 2021

FAO Kevin Usher

Dear Sir

Town Centre SPD - SA/SEA Screening

Thank you for submitting the above SEA screening opinion request for the Town Centre SPD. This referral was received on the 11th December 2020.

We have reviewed the following submitted documents:

- Draft Town Centre SPD SEA/SA Screening Statement December 2020

Environment Agency Position

We note and acknowledge the Councils screening decision that no SA/SEA is required and have no further comments to make.

Should you have any queries regarding this response, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully

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