



# **Urban Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document**

**Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening  
Statement – September 2022 (with post-  
consultation update June 2023)**

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

1.1. This Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) screening is being prepared in accordance with the requirements of European Directive 2001/42/EC (“the Directive”); and the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (“the Regulations”). The following guidance has also been taken into account:

- The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (July 2021)<sup>1</sup>.
- The National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) in relation to SEA/SA<sup>2</sup>.
- A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (ODPM, 2005)<sup>3</sup>.

1.2. Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is the process by which the 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 Directive also requires a SEA to be carried out on certain types of plans with significant environmental effects.

1.3. 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.

1.4. 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 Directive, and Government guidance on undertaking SAs has been prepared so as to incorporate the requirements of the SEA Directive.

1.5. Bromley’s Development Plan consists of the Bromley Local Plan and the London Plan. The Bromley Local Plan and the London Plan have both been subject to a SA/SEA

1.6. The PPG<sup>4</sup> states that:

*“Supplementary planning documents do not require a sustainability appraisal but may in exceptional circumstances require a strategic environmental assessment if they are likely to have significant environmental effects that have not already have been assessed during the preparation of the relevant strategic policies.*

*A strategic environmental assessment is unlikely to be required where a supplementary planning document deals only with a small area at a local level (see regulation 5(6) of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes*

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<sup>1</sup> Available from:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1005759/NPPF\\_July\\_2021.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1005759/NPPF_July_2021.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Available from: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/strategic-environmental-assessment-and-sustainability-appraisal>

<sup>3</sup> Available from:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/7657/practicalguidesea.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/7657/practicalguidesea.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> Paragraph: 008 Reference ID: 11-008-20140306, available from:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/strategic-environmental-assessment-and-sustainability-appraisal>

*Regulations 2004), unless it is considered that there are likely to be significant environmental effects.”*

## 2. Urban Design Guide SPD

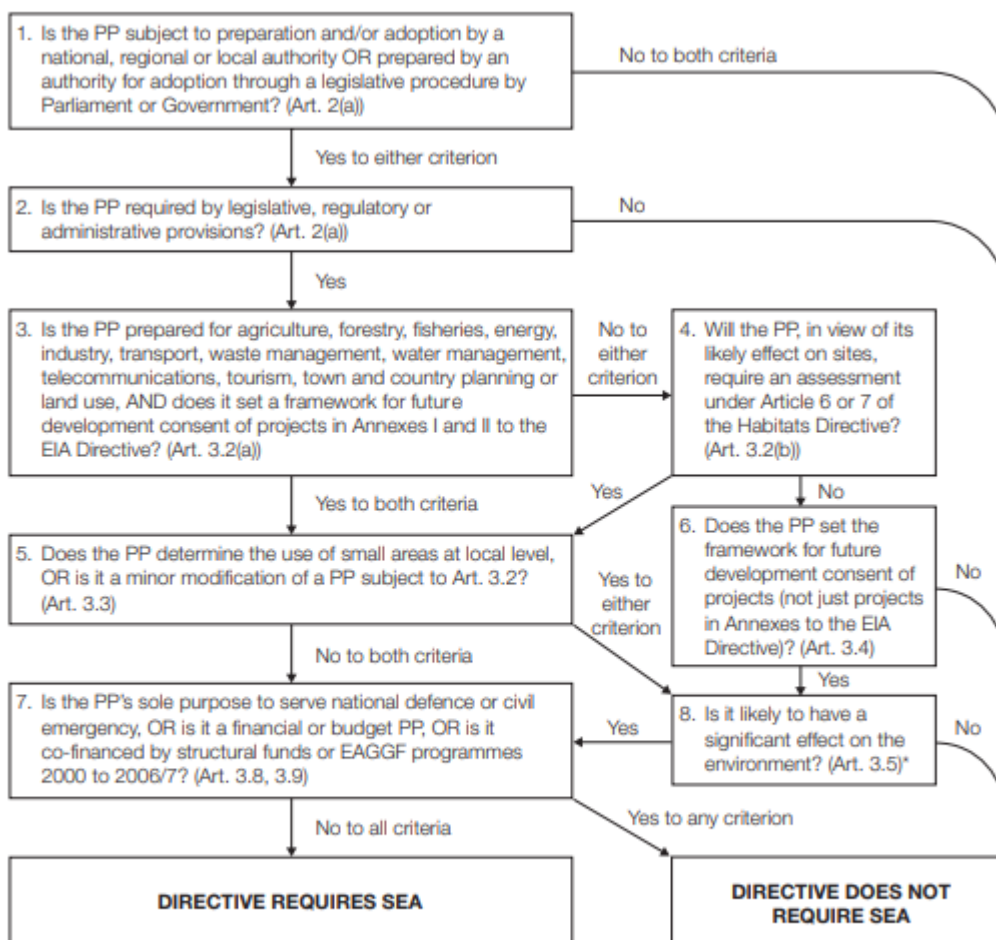
- 2.1. The Urban Design Guide SPD provides guidance on urban design to inform and engage developers, applicants, planning officers, residents and all other interested parties in bringing forward proposals for development in Bromley.
- 2.2. The SPD sets out the following principles for achieving good design with the aim of significantly raising the quality of development within the borough:
  - Contextual (Character and Identity)
  - Responsive (Architecture and Landscape)
  - Connected (Movement and Connectivity)
  - Inclusive (Access and Inclusion)
  - Healthy (Health and Well-being)
  - Sustainable (Sustainable Design, Adaptability and Resilience)
- 2.3. Key aspects of local character are highlighted alongside illustrative design guidance to ensure that new development is delivered sensitively and cohesively, achieving a sense of unity without uniformity.
- 2.4. The guidance is not intended to be overly prescriptive but aims to provide an overarching spatial vision outlining key design principles that should be followed, whilst also allowing for flexibility to encourage richness, variety and innovation in future detailed designs.
- 2.5. The aim is to promote good quality design for buildings, landscape, and public realm, establishing the desired characteristics for successful places and providing a quality benchmark for how new development should look and feel.

## 3. The Screening Process

- 3.1. Though not part of the statutory Development Plan, SPDs can 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 (Bromley Council) 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 SEA, 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 England. 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. The three consultation bodies were consulted during the preparation of this SEA screening statement; details of their responses are provided at Appendix 1. Only Natural England provided a response to the initial screening consultation, which notes agreement with the Council that an SEA would not be required for the proposed SPD.
- 3.4. As of the end of the draft SPD consultation (December 2022), no responses to the SEA screening statement were received from the Environment Agency or Historic England, although both organisations did provide comments on the draft SPD itself.

- 3.5. Key to the screening decision is the determination of whether the SPD is likely to have significant environmental effects. To assess this, the Council has taken a two-step approach:
- First, to assess the plan against the guidance set out in 'A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive'<sup>5</sup>. The guidance sets out a flow chart to guide application of the Directive to plans and programmes (shown in Figure 1); the screening questions from the guidance are set out in Table 1, alongside the Council's response in relation to the Urban Design Guide SPD.
  - Second, using the criteria set out in Schedule 1 of the Regulations to determine whether the SPD will have significant environmental effects. These criteria are set out in Table 2, alongside the Council's response in relation to the Urban Design Guide SPD.

**Figure 1: flow chart to assist with the application of the SEA Directive to plans and programmes**



\*The Directive requires Member States to determine whether plans or programmes in this category are likely to have significant environmental effects. These determinations may be made on a case by case basis and/or by specifying types of plan or programme.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid

## 4. Screening assessment

**Table 1: assessment against criteria in A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive**

	Screening Question	Screening Assessment
1	Is the SPD subject to preparation and/or adoption by a national, regional or local authority OR prepared by an authority through legislative procedure by Parliament or Government?	Yes. The SPD will be prepared and adopted by the London Borough of Bromley in its role as Local Planning Authority.
2	Is the SPD required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions?	No. The preparation of a SPD is optional. However, once adopted by the London Borough of Bromley, it will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.
3	Is the SPD prepared for agricultural, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport or waste management, telecommunications, tourism, town and country planning or land-use, AND does it set a framework for future development consent of projects in Annexes I and II to the EIA Directive?	Yes. The SPD will not create new policy or land use designations, but it will provide further guidance to support the Local Plan and London Plan, which is the town planning policy framework for its area and includes policies for land-use. However, the Local Plan and London Plan has been subject to full SA (including SEA).
4	Will the SPD, in view of its likely effects on sites, require an assessment under Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive?	No. The Local Plan and London Plan were subject to screening for the need for assessment under the requirements of the Habitats Directive and it was concluded that such assessment was unnecessary. As the SPD will not change or add to policy, proposals or designations within the Core Strategy it is not considered that further screening for such assessment is necessary as there would be no likely effects on European Sites.
5	Does the SPD determine the use of small areas at local level, OR is it a minor modification of a plan subject to Article 3.2?	No. The SPD will complement the policies that have already been set within the Local Plan and London Plan. No aspects of the SPD will modify existing adopted policies nor seek to change existing site allocations, nor add new ones. The SPD will provide guidance on interpreting a number of Development Plan policies in relation to the design of development.
6	Does the SPD set the framework for future development consent of projects (not just projects in Annexes to the EIA Directive)?	No. This framework is already set within the Development Plan. The SPD will provide further guidance on the implementation of these policies.
7	Is the SPD's sole purpose to serve the national defence or civil emergency, OR is it a financial or budget plan, OR is it co-financed by structural funds or	No. The SPD does not fall into any of the criteria listed.

	<b>Screening Question</b>	<b>Screening Assessment</b>
	EAGGF programmes 2000-2006/7?	
8	Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment?	It is not likely that the SPD will have any significant effect on the borough, beyond those effects that have already been assessed through the SA (including SEA) of the Local Plan and London Plan.

**Table 2: assessment against SEA Directive criteria**

<b>SEA Directive Criteria and Schedule 1 of Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004</b>	<b>London Borough of Bromley Response</b>
<b>1. Characteristics of the Urban Design Guide SPD having particular regard to:</b>	
The degree to which the SPD sets 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 supplementary guidance to the Local Plan and London Plan which provide the overarching framework for assessing development in the Borough (and which were both subject to an SA/SEA)
The degree to which the SPD influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy.	The SPD is a non-statutory document, subsidiary to policies in the adopted Local Plan and London Plan, and therefore will have limited (if any) influence over other plans and programmes, including national policy in the NPPF.
The relevance of the SPD for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development.	The SPD provides guidance on various aspects of design, derived from policies in the adopted Development Plan, including open space and green infrastructure, and sustainable design.
Environmental problems relevant to the SPD.	The SPD will provide further design guidance on environmental Development Plan policies.
The relevance of the SPD for the implementation of community legislation on the environment (for example, plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection).	The SPD will not impact on the implementation of community legislation on the environment.
<b>2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having particular regard to:</b>	
The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects.	The overall impact of the SPD will be positive, by ensuring that guidance is in place to improve design outcomes, which addresses several key policy requirements and will help to deliver sustainable development.
The cumulative nature of the effects of the SPD.	Cumulative effects have been assessed through the Local Plan and London Plan SA/SEAs. The SPD is unlikely to have specific cumulative effects which differ from those assessed as part of the Local Plan and London Plan; the effect of the SPD will therefore be neutral.
The trans-boundary nature of the effects of the SPD.	The SPD will only apply to developments in Bromley Borough, and will therefore have limited, if any, transboundary impacts.
The risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents)	No significant risks to human health are envisaged through the application of this SPD.
The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected) by the SPD.	The likely positive effects of the SPD will potentially extend across the whole Borough, by improving the quality of design.
The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected by the SPD	The SPD will be consistent with the Development Plan approach that seeks to conserve and enhance



<b>SEA Directive Criteria and Schedule 1 of Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004</b>	<b>London Borough of Bromley Response</b>
<p>due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Special natural characteristics or cultural heritage;</li> <li>ii. Exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values; or</li> <li>iii. Intensive land use.</li> </ul>	<p>the borough's heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance.</p> <p>The SPD also includes guidance relating to sustainable design and recognises that nature contributes to the quality of a place, and to people's quality of life, and is a critical component of well-designed places.</p> <p>The SPD will not result in a significantly more intensive land use than that expected via application of the adopted Development Plan policies.</p> <p>The overall likely effect of the SPD will be positive by securing the positive environmental effects of development and minimising or avoiding negative impacts.</p>
<p>The effects of the SPD on areas or landscapes which have recognised national, community or international protection status.</p>	<p>The Borough includes part of an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and several Sites of Special Scientific Interest. The SPD is unlikely to have specific effects on these areas which differ from those assessed as part of the Local Plan and London Plan; the effect of the SPD will therefore be neutral.</p>

## **5. Statement of Reasons for Determination**

- 5.1. The Council believes that the impact of the SPD, through responses to the Criteria identified in Tables 1 and 2, will not have significant environmental effects (positive or negative) on Bromley, further to the effects that have already been assessed during the preparation of the Local Plan and the London Plan. In addition, the SPD is not setting new policy; it is supplementing and providing further guidance on existing policies. Therefore, it is considered that an SEA will not be required for the Urban Design Guide SPD.

**Appendix 1: responses to draft SEA screening statement from Historic England, the Environment Agency and Natural England (covering the initial screening consultation and the draft SPD consultation)**

Consultee	Response	LBB comment
Environment Agency	No response	N/A
Historic England	No response	N/A
Natural England	<p>Natural England is a non-departmental public body. Our statutory purpose is to ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced, and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development.</p> <p><b>Screening Request: Strategic Environmental Assessment</b> It is our advice, on the basis of the material supplied with the consultation, that, in so far as our strategic environmental interests (including but not limited to statutory designated sites, landscapes and protected species, geology and soils) are concerned, that there are unlikely to be significant environmental effects from the proposed plan.</p> <p><b>Natural England is in agreement that “as this SPD does not formulate new policy and the effects of the SPD are likely minor in nature, an SEA will not be necessary.”</b></p> <p>We have checked our records and based on the information provided, we can confirm that in our view the proposals contained within the plan will not have significant effects on sensitive sites that Natural England has a statutory duty to protect.</p> <p>We are not aware of significant populations of protected species which are likely to be affected by the policies / proposals within the plan. It remains the case, however, that the responsible authority should provide information supporting this screening decision, sufficient to assess whether protected species are likely to be affected.</p> <p>Notwithstanding this advice, Natural England does not routinely maintain locally specific data on all potential environmental assets. As a result the responsible authority should raise environmental issues that we have not identified on local or national biodiversity action plan species and/or habitats, local wildlife sites or local landscape character, with its own ecological and/or landscape advisers, local record centre, recording society or wildlife body on the local landscape and biodiversity receptors that may be affected by this plan, before determining whether an SA/SEA is necessary.</p> <p>Please note that Natural England reserves the right to provide</p>	Noted

<b>Consultee</b>	<b>Response</b>	<b>LBB comment</b>
	further comments on the environmental assessment of the plan beyond this SEA/SA screening stage, should the responsible authority seek our views on the scoping or environmental report stages.	