

SCREENING STATEMENT

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

For the proposed:

Residential Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document

August 2009

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 explain how Local Planning Authorities should undertake the Strategic Environment Assessment Directive (SEA) in respect of plans and programmes. Government guidance advises that plans and programmes that make minor modifications, such as Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) that supplement policies in parent Development Plan Documents (DPDs) (see 2.1 below), will only require SEA where the Local Authority determines that they are likely to have significant environmental effects¹.
- 1.2 To assess whether an SEA is required the Local Authority must undertake a screening process based on a standard set of criteria. This must be subject to consultation with English Heritage, 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.

2. Residential Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document

- 2.1 Exeter City Council is preparing its Local Development Framework (LDF) in accordance with Government advice set out in Planning Policy Statement 12: Local Spatial Planning. The LDF is a set of DPDs and SPDs which provide the spatial strategy for Exeter.
- 2.2 Planning Policy Statement 12 advises that a planning authority may prepare SPDs to provide greater detail on the policies in its DPDs² but they do not have development plan status. They must not be used to allocate land or contain policies that should be subject to independent examination.
- 2.3 The Exeter Local Plan First Review 1995-2011 was formally adopted by Exeter City Council on 31 March 2005. The Exeter Local Plan together with the Devon County Structure Plan 2001-2016, provides the statutory land use planning framework for Exeter City, and contains policies to determine planning applications and proposals for specific land uses. The Council has 'saved' most of the Local Plan policies pending replacement through the documents that make up the LDF.

3. The Screening Process

The 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 1, alongside the Council's response in relation to the SPD.

¹ **ODPM, 2005:** *Sustainability Appraisal of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Documents*, Guidance for Regional Planning Bodies and Local Planning Authorities (Appendix 2 – Screening and possible exemptions from the SEA Directive).

² **CLG, 2008:** *Planning Policy Statement 12: creating strong safe and prosperous communities through Local Spatial Planning*, <http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/pps12lsp> accessed 26/06/09.

4. Statement of Reasons for Determination

4.1 It is demonstrated, through the attached responses to the SEA Directive Criteria, that the impact of the Residential Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document will not have significant environmental effects.

4.2 Each of the three statutory consultation bodies were consulted on the initial screening statement.

The responses received were as follows:

English Heritage: no comments made.

Natural England: no comments made.

Environment Agency: no comments made.

4.3 It is considered that as a result of the assessment undertaken by the Council, along with the responses received from the statutory consultations bodies, an SEA is not required for the purposes of the Residential Design Guide SPD.

10 August 2009

CRITERIA FOR DETERMINING THE LIKELY SIGNIFICANCE OF EFFECTS

SEA Directive Criteria ³ and Schedule 1 of Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 ⁴	Summary of significant effects (negative and positive)
1. Characteristics of the Residential Design Guide SPD, having regard to	
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.	<p>The SPD will not set a new framework for projects, and will not allocate resources. It offers guidance to supplement Local Plan saved policies and, in the interim before adoption of Core Strategy policies.</p> <p>The SPD will be a significant piece of design guidance for all new residential development across the City and will be a very important planning aid to assist Development Management in all residential planning applications / consultations.</p>
The degree to which the SPD influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy.	The SPD will be in conformity with national planning guidance, the emerging Regional Spatial Strategy, the Adopted Structure Plan, the Adopted Local Plan and the emerging Core Strategy. It will be in the form of a design guide / brief to the above statutory policy guidance.
The relevance of the SPD for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development.	Sustainable development is an inherent theme that runs through the whole document but more specifically will promote sustainable development through layout design and design of buildings. It does not provide environment policy in its own right.
Environmental problems relevant to the SPD.	Any negative environmental effect will be identified and accompanied by proposals for mitigation as part of the planning process.

³ **ODPM, 2005:** *A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive*, Practical guidance on applying European Directive 2001/42/EC “on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment” (Annex II of Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, p.105). September 2005.

⁴ **ODPM, 2004:** *The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations*, (Schedule 1, <http://www.opsi.gov.uk/si/si2004/20041633.htm> accessed 29/04/09). July 2004.

SEA Directive Criteria³ and Schedule 1 of Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004⁴	Summary of significant effects (negative and positive)
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 have a positive effect on the compliance with EC legislation – specifically on the storage of refuse and recycling; sustainable urban drainage systems; grey water recycling; passive solar gain and more.
2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to	
The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects.	The anticipated effects on the sustainability of future development are expected to be positive and enduring with no negative effects. The SPD will provide much needed detailed guidance to encourage good design and best practice in conformity with Adopted Local Plan and emerging LDF Policy.
The cumulative nature of the effects of the SPD.	The cumulative nature of the effects will be the delivery of high quality residential development with the aim of creating sustainable communities which will endure.
The trans-boundary nature of the effects of the SPD.	Any possible trans-boundary effects will be across the authority boundary and are likely to be positive.
The risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents).	There are no perceived risks to human health or the environment arising from the SPD. Risks cannot be ruled out through the construction process of any development.
The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected) by the SPD.	The document will influence all proposals for residential development within the City boundary (population 122,400). Whilst the effects are mostly likely to be restricted to Exeter, there are likely to be positive effects outside the City area through the likely improvement of air quality and reduction of traffic. It is therefore expected that only positive effects will be felt by the wider community.
<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 or • Intensive land use 	The SPD requires a clear design process which involves a detailed site appraisal to identify all physical and natural characteristics of the site and its environs. It is considered that the SPD will not adversely affect the value and vulnerability of the City. If anything, new residential development should incrementally improve and enhance the

SEA Directive Criteria³ and Schedule 1 of Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004⁴	Summary of significant effects (negative and positive)
	quality and sustainability of the immediate environs and in due course the City as a whole.
The effects of the SPD on areas or landscapes which have recognised national, Community or international protection status.	Good design will be encouraged on all landscapes. Protected landscapes will require particular care. Detailed advice on protected landscapes will continue to lie within parent Development Plan Documents (DPD) which the SPD will not affect.