

Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA) Screening Statement for the Wimbledon Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

January 2020 public consultation



1. Introduction

- 1.1 The aim of this document is to determine if, a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in accordance with the Environmental Assessment of plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 and European Directive 2001/402EC is the required for, this draft of Wimbledon Supplementary Planning Document (2020), locally known also as the Wimbledon Masterplan.
- 1.2 Merton's Local Plan¹ comprises of the following documents as well as the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG) :
-) South London Waste Plan (2012) and emerging new waste plan (expected adoption in 2021)
 -) Core Planning Strategy (2011)
 -) Sites and Policies Plan (2014)
 -) Policies Map (2014)
 -) [Draft Local Plan \(emerging\)](#)
 -) Draft London Plan (2019)
- 1.3 All of the above mentioned documents have been subject to a full Sustainability Appraisal. The National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG) states: *“Strategic environmental assessment alone can be required in some limited situations where sustainability appraisal is not needed. This is usually only where either neighbourhood plans or supplementary planning documents could have significant environmental effects.”*
- 1.4 The SEA Directive requires SEA for plans which (i) ‘*determine the use of small areas at a local level*’ or (ii) ‘*minor modification*’ is to plans, only when these are likely to cause significant environment effects. The criteria for determining the significance of effects are taken from schedule 19(2) (a) and 10(4) (a) of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and programmes Regulations 2004 and are redefined in Appendix 1. These can be split into criteria related to:
- (i) the scope and influence of the document
 - (ii) the type of impact and area likely to be affected
- 1.5 The purpose of this SPD is to provide detailed advice and guidance to the public, developers, decision makers and other interested parties regarding the implementation and compliance with policies in Merton's Local Plan¹.

¹ <https://www2.merton.gov.uk/environment/planning/planningpolicy/localplan.htm>



Environmental Bodies consultation

- 1.6 In accordance with the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (part 3) (6). Merton Council will be consulting with the environmental bodies (Environment Agency, Natural England and Historic England) to determine if they agree with the findings of this SEA statement; that a SEA is not required.

2 2018 public consultation

- 2.1 A number of comments were raised during the 2018 consultation for example on the topics of; building heights, greening Wimbledon, more public space, traffic interchanges and a need for cultural space. Some of the issues and comments raised during the consultation were not within the scope of a SPD and its role in planning terms but, were more appropriate for emerging Local Plan and/or for existing development planning policies.
- 2.2 The changes that have been made to the SPD provide more clarity and details of the council's vision and priorities for Wimbledon, development and design led approach for Wimbledon in accordance with planning policies (local, regional and national). In addition incorporate comments received from environmental bodies such as Historic England. All responses can be viewed via [Merton's website](#). Other changes to the SPD are as follows:
-) Dividing the SPD into 3 phases covering the following periods - 2020 to 2025, 2025 to 2030, and 2030 to 2040s
 -) Reducing proposed building heights in the town centre
 -) Enhancing the design guidance and heritage sections
 -) Improving the public realm guidance and details of potential enhancements
 -) Detailing the delivery and implementation plan

3 SEA Screening Procedure

- 3.1 It is the responsibility of the Responsible Authority (in this case Merton Council) to determine whether the plan or programme under assessment is likely to have a significant adverse environmental effect. This assessment must be made taking account of the criteria set of in Schedule 1 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 and in consultation with:
- The Environment Agency
 - Historic England and;
 - Natural England.

Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (part 3) (6):

Where a consultation body wishes to respond to a consultation under paragraph (5), it shall do so within the period of 5 weeks beginning with the date on which it receives the responsible authority's invitation to engage in the consultation.



3.2 Where the Responsible Authority determines that a plan or programme is unlikely to have a significant effect and therefore does not need to be subject to a full Strategic Environmental Assessment; the Responsible Authority must prepare a statement showing the reason for this determination. Figure 1 below shows the results of this screening process for the SPD.

Figure 1: Determining the likely significant of effects on the environment

SEA Directive Criteria schedule 1 Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulation 2004	Summary of significant effects
1. Characteristics of the SPD	
(a) <i>The degree to which the SPD sets out a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to location, nature, size or operating conditions or by allocating resources</i>	The SPD will provide guidance to the Wimbledon policy in Merton’s Local Plan. The Local Plan is the statutory framework for planning development in the London Borough of Merton.
(b) <i>The degree to which the SPD influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy</i>	<p>The guidance within the SPD is in line with the strategic objectives, spatial vision and policies within Merton Local Plan.</p> <p>All the above mentioned documents have all been subject to full Sustainability Appraisal and SEA at each consultation stage and at adoption stage.</p>
(c) <i>The relevance of the SPD for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development.</i>	<p>The SPD promotes sustainable development by providing guidance on the implementation of, and compliance with, the strategic objectives, spatial vision and policies within Merton Local Plan documents.</p> <p>The SPD relates to a number of policies within Merton’s Local Plan¹ for example:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Core Planning Strategy (2011) – (strategic policies) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CS 6 Wimbledon town centre CS 7 Centres and table 17.2 town centre aims CS 12 Economic development CS14 Design 2. Sites and policies plan (2014) – (development policies and site allocations): a number of policies such as employment, design, environmental protection, transport. <p><i>The above documents will be replaced with a new (emerging) Local Plan. s</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Draft Local Plan (emerging) <p>All of Merton’s Local Plan documents have been subject to Sustainability Appraisal and SEA.</p>



(d) <i>Environmental problems relevant to the planning brief</i>	The SPD itself, will not introduce or increase any environmental problems.
(e) <i>The relevance of the SPD for the implementation of community legislation on the environment (e.g. plans and programmes related to water and waste).</i>	The SPD will not impact on the implementation of the community legislation on the environment.
2. Characteristics of the effects and area likely to be affected having particular regard to:	
(a) <i>The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects</i>	The overall impact of the SPD will be positive by maximising the positive environmental effects of development and minimising or avoiding negative impacts on the environment in Merton.
(b) <i>The cumulative nature of the effects of the SPD</i>	The effects of SPD supports sustainable development, therefore any cumulative impact will also be beneficial.
(c) <i>The trans boundary nature of the effects of the SPD</i>	The effects are limited to developments within Merton's geographical boundary.
(d) <i>The risk to human health or environment (e.g. due to accident)</i>	There are no significant risks to human health envisaged through the application of the SPD.
(e) <i>The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographic area and size of the population likely to be affected) by the planning brief</i>	The SPD is only applicable to developments and the population of Merton.
(f) <i>The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected by the planning brief due to:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">) <i>Special nature characteristics or cultural heritage</i>) <i>Exceed environmental quality standards or limits values Intensive</i> 	The SPD is applicable to developments within the borough of Merton, which includes a number of conservation areas, listed buildings and other heritage assets. Policy impacts on heritage assets have been subject to full Sustainability Appraisals and SEA for Merton's Local Plan.
(g) <i>The effects of the SPD on areas or landscapes which have recognised national Community or international protected status.</i>	The overall, impact of the SPD will be positive by maximising the positive environmental effects of development in Merton and minimising or avoiding negative and adverse impacts.

4 Screening outcome

4.1 This section sets out Merton's formal determination in the regard to SEA of the SPD, made in accordance with regulation 9 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004. It sets out the reasons for the determination. Following the screening process Merton Council has determined that the SPD would not be likely to have '*significant environmental effects*' in itself.

4.2 Following the screening above the Council has determined that the SPD does not, require a SEA for the following reasons:



- J The SPD provides clarity and further guidance on Local Plan policies for Wimbledon.
- J Its purpose has not changed since the previous consultation, it will still provide additional guidance for anyone wishing to develop in Wimbledon town centre.
- J The SPD is in compliance with Merton Local Plan policies in regard to future development, ensuring the vitality of Wimbledon town centre, enhancing and preserving historic heritage found within Wimbledon town centre and its surrounds, requiring good design.
- J Changes to the document following the previous public consultation (2018), do not create new development planning policies or amend existing policies.
- J It does not allocate sites for any specific land use – this is done by way of the Local Plan.
- J The SPD does not change the Wimbledon town centre boundary or its designation as Major centre, as per its designation by the Mayor of London by way of the London Plan.
- J The SPD guidance does not create or raise any cross boundary issues.
- J Merton's Local Plan policies have all been subjected to Sustainability Appraisals/ SEAs for their environmental impact at each consultation stage towards adoption. At each stage the Council has consulted with the environmental bodies. The council has and will consult the environmental bodies as part of the new Local Plan process towards adoption at each consultation stage(s).

5 Conclusion

- 5.1 In conclusion the Council believes the changes to the SPD are, unlikely to have significant effects on the wider environment for the reasons outlined above. More importantly, as it provides guidance on the implementation of Local Plan policies which will have largely positive impacts it will not be necessary to carry out a SEA for this SPD.

