



SCREENING OPINION ON:

STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT OF THE

OPEN SPACE AND PLAYING PITCH SUPPLEMENTARY

PLANNING DOCUMENT (SPD)

Introduction

1. This screening report has been prepared to determine whether the Open Space and Playing Pitch Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) prepared by East Staffordshire Borough Council should be subject to a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in accordance with the European Directive 2001/42/EC (SEA Directive) and associated Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (SEA Regulations).

Strategic Environmental Assessment

2. 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 Local Plan.
3. A strategic environmental assessment is unlikely to be required where a supplementary planning document deals only with a small area at a local level¹, unless it is considered that there are likely to be significant environmental effects.
4. Before deciding whether significant environment effects are likely, the local planning authority should take into account the criteria specified in schedule 1 to the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 and consult the consultation bodies.
5. The process for determining whether or not an SEA is required is called screening. In order to screen, it is necessary to determine if a plan will have significant environmental effects using the criteria set out in Annex II of the SEA Directive and Schedule I of the SEA Regulations. A determination cannot be made until the three statutory consultation bodies have been consulted: The Environment Agency, Natural England and Historic England.
6. The SEA Directive requires plans and programmes to be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the adopted development plan for the local area.
7. Schedule 1 of the 2004 Regulations sets out criteria for determining the likely significance of effects on the environment. The criteria are:
8. The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular, to:

¹ regulation 5(6) of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004

- (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,
- (b) the degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy,
- (c) the relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development,
- (d) environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme,
- (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).

2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to

- (a) the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects,
- (b) the cumulative nature of the effects,
- (c) the transboundary nature of the effects,
- (d) the risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents),
- (e) the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected),
- (f) the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:
 - (i) special natural characteristics or cultural heritage,
 - (ii) exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values,
 - (iii) intensive land-use, and
- (g) the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.

9. It is the responsibility of the local authority to decide whether or not any of the proposals of the SPD are significant enough for the Plan to require an SEA.

The Supplementary Planning Document and relationship with the Adopted East Staffordshire Local Plan

10. The SPD sets out the Borough Council's approach to securing open space and playing pitches associated with new residential development, and the mechanism for securing financial contributions for improving and maintaining open space and sports pitches.
11. The aim of the SPD is to promote and encourage health and wellbeing in East Staffordshire through appropriate and sustainable outdoor sport and recreation provision.
12. The SPD when adopted will replace the Open Space SPD adopted in 2010, and provides further detail and guidance to the East Staffordshire Local Plan 2012 - 2031, adopted in October 2015, in particular the following policies:
 - SP23 Green Infrastructure
 - SP26 National Forest
 - SP32 Outdoor Sports and Open Space
 - SP33 Indoor Sports
 - SP34 Health and Well being
13. The SPD provides further detail and guidance on the Council's quantitative, qualitative and accessibility standards for children's play space, outdoor sport, and informal open space for new developments. It also provides clear guidance on how to calculate the requirements of individual developments, and the steps that applicants and officers will need to go through during the planning application process.
14. The SPD also includes guidance on how to calculate off site contributions, including contributions for future maintenance. Where sites are expected to be taken on by a management company, the process for this is also set out.
15. The SPD sets out in general terms the role of the planning and decision making in the delivery of the East Staffordshire Playing Pitch Strategy.

2. ASSESSMENT OF OPEN SPACE AND PLAYING PITCH SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT

Planning Practice Guidance Criterion or Environmental Regulation Criterion	Significant Effect Identified	Comment
<p>PPG Criteria</p> <p>(1) The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular, to—</p> <p>(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> <p>(b) the degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy;</p> <p>(c) the relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development;</p> <p>(d) environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme; and</p>	No	<p>The SPD sets a framework for decision making by providing detail on adopted policies of the Local Development Plan. The SPD forms a material consideration for the nature and operating conditions of projects.</p> <p>The SPD does not introduce new policies</p> <p>The SPD has taken the opportunity to integrate environmental considerations within the SPD.</p> <p>The SPD contains topics on site connectivity, planning obligations towards open space contributions, open space design and management and surface water run off.</p>

<p>(e)the relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (for example, plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection).</p>		
<p>(2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to—</p> <p>(a)the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects;</p> <p>(b)the cumulative nature of the effects;</p> <p>(c)the transboundary nature of the effects;</p> <p>(d)the risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents);</p> <p>(e)the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected);</p> <p>(f)the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to—</p> <p>(i)special natural characteristics or cultural heritage;</p>	<p>No</p>	<p>There are no additional proposals in the SPD that would have significant environmental effects.</p> <p>Where the SPD will be used to collect S106 monies for individual works to open spaces, these will have environmental effects, but the scale of these is small and they are of a positive nature and their location is not sensitive.</p> <p>The East Staffordshire Local Plan 2013 – 2031 makes provision for additional guidance to influence decision making.</p> <p>The SPD will contribute towards the achievement of sustainable development.</p> <p>The revised guidance relates to the whole area of East Staffordshire, however does not alter the aim of the Local Plan or National Planning Policy Framework.</p> <p>The SPD recognises the following environmental problems: pressure on open spaces and playing pitches as a result of an increased population, multifunctional and well connected open spaces, and surface water run-off.</p> <p>The Local Plan is in general conformity with the Waste Management and Minerals Local Plans produced by Staffordshire County Council and with the Water Framework Directive. The SPD does not alter this.</p> <p>It is unlikely that, as a result of the policies within the revised SPD, that there will be any significant environmental impacts that are highly likely, long-term, of frequent occurrence or irreversible.</p>

<p>(ii)exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values; or</p> <p>(iii)intensive land-use; and</p> <p>(g)the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.</p>		<p>The types of development, either the provision of new spaces, loss of spaces or enhancement of spaces which are covered in the guidance are unlikely to give rise to any significant cumulative effects.</p> <p>It is not considered that there are any transboundary effects.</p> <p>None of the policies will in themselves create hazards to human health, with an aim of the guidance being healthier lifestyles through the provision of quality open spaces and sport provision</p> <p>The magnitude and spatial extent of all the proposals is likely to be limited.</p> <p>Local built heritage assets are referenced in the plan and there is a policy relating to flood risk. No intensive land uses are proposed.</p> <p>There are no areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, community or international protection status.</p> <p>It is not thought that any site designated as of European nature conservation significance will be affected by the guidance. This is informed by the Habitat Regulations Assessment, accompanying the East Staffordshire Local Plan and a separate Habitat Regulations Assessment related to the SPD.</p>
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8. The Government's PPG advises that the local planning authority should consult the statutory consultation bodies. The three statutory consultation bodies whose responsibilities cover the environmental considerations of the Regulations (Environment Agency, Natural England and Historic England) will be consulted on this document and the SEA Screening Opinion will be updated if necessary.

9. As a result of the above, East Staffordshire Borough Council believes that the above SPD would not have significant environmental effects and, as a result, a Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Plan will not be required.