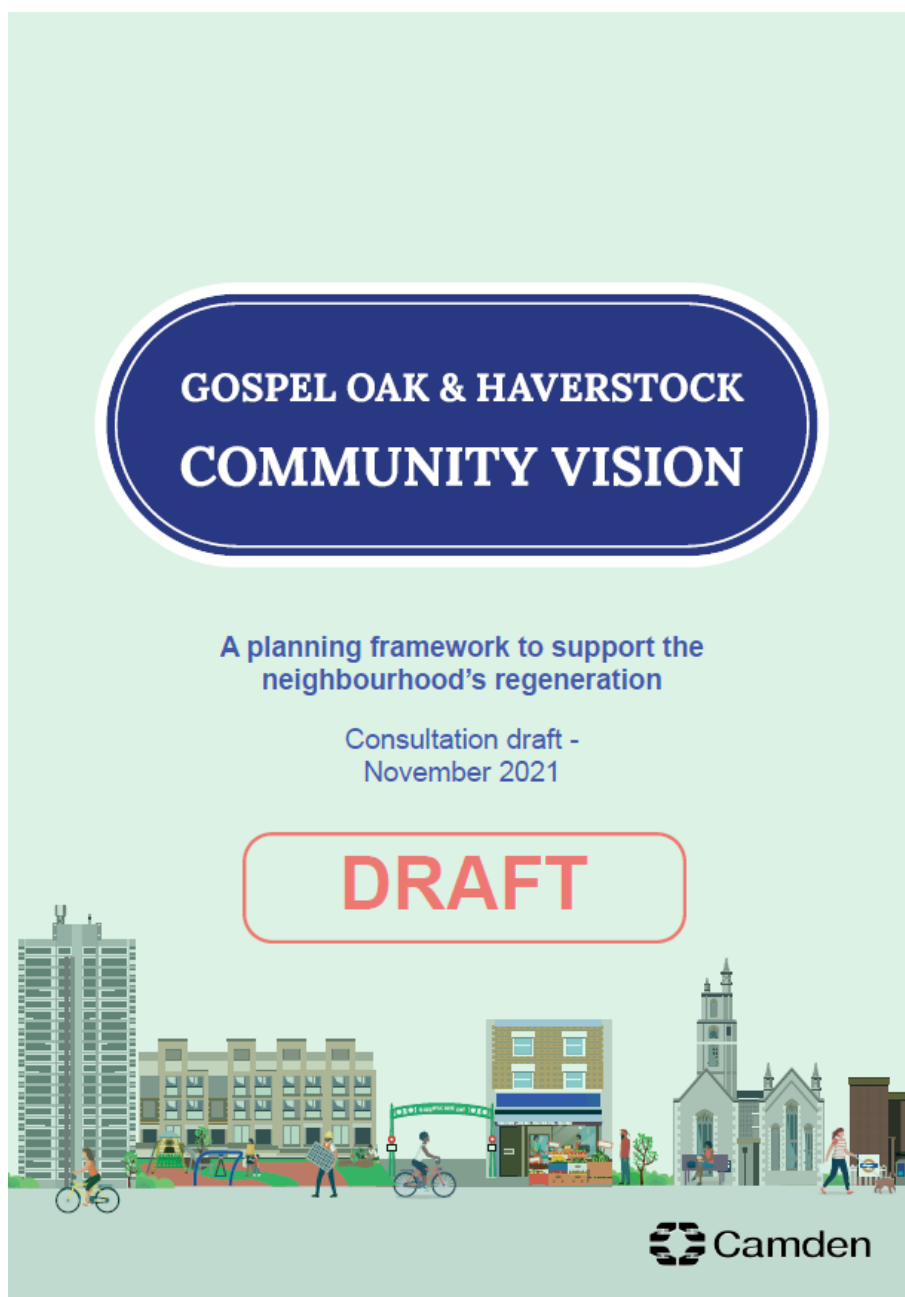


Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulation Assessment Screening Report

Gospel Oak and Haverstock Community Vision

Supplementary Planning Document



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London Borough of Camden
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1.0 Introduction

1.1 This screening report has been prepared to consider whether the “The Gospel Oak and Haverstock Community Vision” Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) should be subject of Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) in accordance with the related national legislation and regulations.

1.2 The report outlines the legislative and policy framework for the respective screening regimes, before considering whether significant environmental effects are likely to arise through the SPD that would require more detailed assessments.

1.3 The SPD was prepared on the basis of feedback received via a series of public engagement activities between September 2020 and August 2021. Following that the draft SPD was the subject of formal public consultation from November 2021– January 2022¹. The SPD is intended to establish some key objectives and principles to guide future regeneration efforts in the neighbourhood and related improvements in the area covered. The nature and level of guidance is intended to support and complement other adopted and emerging development plan documents and policies, which have undergone (or will be undergoing) equivalent and more detailed assessments² :

- Camden Local Plan (adopted July 2017)
- Camden Site Allocations Plan (adopted September 2013)
- Kentish Town Neighbourhood Plan (adopted September 2016)
- Kentish Town planning framework (adopted July 2020)
- New Camden Site Allocations Plan (initial consultation on the draft plan took place in February-March 2020)

1.4 In accordance with the SEA and HRA Regulations the screening report and its conclusions were subject to consultation with the relevant statutory bodies; the Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England.

2.0 Legal Framework

Strategic Environmental Assessment

2.1 SEA is a procedure that evolved in accordance with European Directive 2001/42/EC (the SEA Directive) “on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment”. The SEA Directive aimed to ensure a high level of protection for the environment and to integrate environmental considerations into the preparation of plans.

2.2 This has been transposed into legislation by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (the SEA Regulations), which requires the formal environmental assessment of certain plans and programmes if they are determined to be likely to have significant effects on the environment.

2.3 The Government’s National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) defines an SPD as a document which adds further detail to the policies in the development plan (which encompasses the London Plan, Local Plans and Neighbourhood Plans) and can be used to

¹ <https://www.camden.gov.uk/gospel-oak-and-haverstock-community-vision#dfmo>

² Where any required Sustainability Appraisals undertaken on these other plans will also incorporate the SEA requirements of the [Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004](#)

provide further guidance for development on specific sites, or on particular issues, such as design.

2.4 National Planning Practice Guidance states that whilst SPDs do not generally require Sustainability Appraisals (SA)³ they *may in exceptional circumstances* (our emphasis) require a SEA if they are assessed to be likely to have significant environmental effects that have not already been assessed during the preparation of the relevant strategic policies⁴. The guidance goes on to state SEA is unlikely to be required where a SPD deals only with a small area at a local level, unless it is considered that there are likely to be significant environmental effects⁵.

2.5 In order to determine whether significant environment effects are likely, the local planning authority as “the responsible authority” need to take the criteria specified in Schedule 1 to the SEA Regulations⁶ into account (reflecting Annex II of the SEA Directive) and consult the relevant bodies. The outcome of Camden’s SEA screening process is detailed further in this report.

Habitat Regulation Assessment (HRA)

2.6 HRA relates to the procedures that originally evolved in accordance with European Directive (92/43/EEC) (the HRA Directive) to assess the possible impacts of a plan or project on designated European Sites of international nature conservation importance, that are protected for the benefit of the habitats and species they support, before deciding whether to undertake, permit or authorise them.

2.7 The Directive was transposed into legislation by the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) (the HRA Regulations). These have since been amended by the Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019, which became operable on 1st January 2021⁷.

2.8 The designated European Sites included Special Areas of Conservation (SAC) relating to habitats and Special Protection Areas (SPA) relating to birds. Although not covered by the HRA Regulations, Ramsar sites (which are designated wetland sites of international importance) have previously been treated in the same way as designated European Sites. Collectively these were known as internationally designated sites (and assessments also extend to potential new sites) and formed part of the EU’s “Natura 2000” ecological network.

2.9 As a result of the EU Exit Regulations amendments, SACs and SPAs in the UK no longer form part of the Natura 2000 network and the 2019 Regulations create what is now termed the “national site network”. For the purposes of HRA, these sites are referred to as “habitats sites” in the National Planning Policy Framework and defined as any site included within the definition at regulation 8 of the HRA Regulations. Ramsar sites do not form part of the national network, but still remain protected in the same way as SACs and SPAs.

2.10 Government guidance states that “*all plans and projects (including planning applications) which are not directly connected with, or necessary for, the conservation*

³ The Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2009 removed the duty to produce a sustainability appraisal report for Local Development Documents other than Development Plan Documents

⁴ [Strategic Environmental Assessment](#)

⁵ [Regulation 5\(6\) of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004](#)

⁶ [Schedule 1 to the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004](#)

⁷ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/changes-to-the-habitats-regulations-2017/changes-to-the-habitats-regulations-2017>

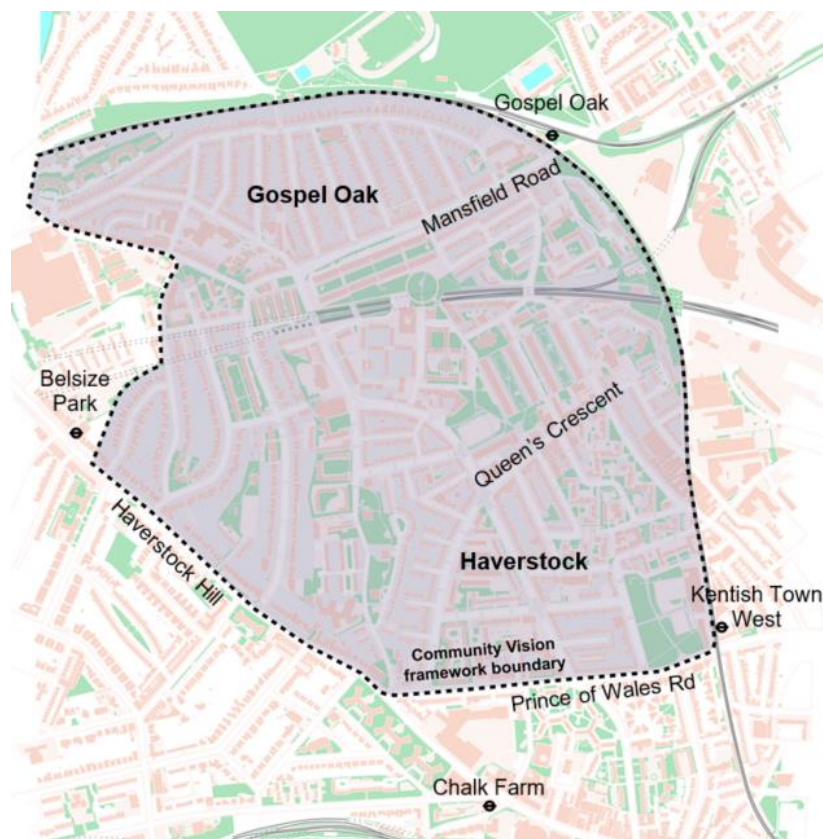
management of a habitat site, require consideration of whether the plan or project is likely to have significant effects on that site. This consideration – typically referred to as the ‘Habitats Regulations Assessment screening’ – should take into account the potential effects both of the plan/project itself and in combination with other plans or projects.”

2.11 The Council as “the competent authority” must consult Natural England for the purposes of the initial screening (and subsequent appropriate assessment if required) and must have regard to any representations that Natural England make and may agree to the plan or project only after ascertaining that it will not adversely affect the integrity of relevant habitats sites. The outcome of Camden’s HRA screening process is detailed further in this report.

3.0 Purpose, priorities and objectives of the SPD

3.1 The NPPF defines SPDs as “documents which add further detail to the policies in the development plan. They can be used to provide further guidance for development on specific sites, or on particular issues, such as design. Supplementary planning documents are capable of being a material consideration in planning decisions, but are not part of the development plan.”

3.2 The area of Camden covered by this SPD, is located at the centre of the Borough. This previously included the whole of the Gospel Oak ward (prior to its enlargement through boundary reviews) and the northern half of Haverstock ward and is reflective of where future change is anticipated. The framework area is broadly contained by Hampstead Heath to the north, Prince of Wales Road to the south, Haverstock Hill to the west and over ground train viaduct to the east. This area is designated as a focus for regeneration as part of the Council’s Community Investment Programme (CIP) in the Camden Local Plan (2017). The CIP is Camden Council’s plan to invest over £1billion in new council homes, schools and community spaces.



3.3 The SPD area is characterised as a residential neighbourhood, save for the Queen's Crescent local neighbourhood centre which provides much of the area's day to day retail and social infrastructure, together with several smaller retail frontages, for example on Malden Road and Mansfield Road. Located within Transport for London's 'Zone 2' area, the neighbourhood is highly accessible by public transport with London Overground (Gospel Oak and Kentish Town West) and Underground (Belsize Park and Chalk Farm) stations on its periphery. It is also serviced by several bus routes that provide services into Central London.

3.4 The area began to be developed in the mid-18th Century with grand plans to deliver elegant homes emanating from Lismore Circus, though the coming of the railways led to a downgrading of the ambitions with the mainline route cutting through the heart of the area and severing it north/south, and from Kentish Town to the east. Modest two and three storey terraced properties were delivered instead, many of which were later considered sub-standard. The area was heavily bombed in the war and significant areas cleared and rebuilt in the years that followed. The area saw considerable change through the 20th Century with much of the historic housing and street pattern replaced by a series of post-war estates of varied form and character. In some places the layout is confusing and illegible. Combined with the presence of rail lines this makes navigation through the area difficult.

3.5 In addition to the barriers to convenient and accessible movement, the area also has significant variations in the quality and attractiveness of its streets, public realm and spaces; contributing to unfriendly and unsafe feeling environments. Poor quality design, overcrowding and the age of buildings means that much of the housing stock on the core housing estates is in need of significant investment in order to meet the Decent Homes Standard.

3.6 In contrast, historic street patterns and housing have been preserved in areas which were spared from heavy bombing. These tend to feature semi-detached or terrace housing ranging from London stock brick in the late Georgian style, to late Victorian red brick gabled houses in the Italianate style, through to garden suburb style and 1930s modernism. As a result, the area also now contains a number of conservation areas (including the Mansfield, Parkhill and West Kentish Town) as well as a number of nationally, and locally listed buildings.

3.7 Redevelopment and the more effective use of pockets of land creates an opportunity to address these issues and deliver a significant number of new homes, including affordable homes, alongside the shops, workspaces and social and green infrastructure that are needed to support existing and new residential communities. This is The SPD has been prepared to support Camden's adopted Local Plan policies and priorities and in particular Policy G1(Delivery and location of growth) that identifies the growth areas where major development can be expected and seeks development that will be consistent with the area priorities and principles set out in the plan.

3.8 Camden's Local Plan, Site Allocations Plan (current and emerging) recognise the opportunities for significant housing led development within this area and set out policies to guide new development. The Local Plan expects development in the neighbourhood to contribute to:

- new and improved housing;
- improved community safety through better street design;
- greater opportunities for jobs and training;
- support for local businesses and new enterprises;
- regeneration of Queen's Crescent through improvements to the street environment and a better mix of market/retail offer;

- greater legibility throughout the area;
- better community facilities, that are coordinated and tailored to community needs; and
- new and improved quality open spaces.

3.9 Part of one of the largest estate regeneration sites (the health centre on the Wendling estate) is already allocated in the adopted Site Allocations Plan (2013) and the SPD reflects this allocation. The emerging Site Allocation Plan also seeks to include the remainder of the Wendling estate as well as introduce a new allocation for the West Kentish Town estate as well as an area-wide policy for the neighbourhood to support its regeneration. This emerging area policy would apply to all development sites identified in the SPD. This will provide the higher level policies and requirements for the development and use of land and has been undergoing its own Sustainability Appraisal and HRA screening assessments⁸.

3.10 The guidance is intended to support the objectives contained in higher level plans and focuses on some key design and environmental principles to guide the high quality development that is required. These are supported by a number of other policies in the Local Plan in particular those seeking to make more effective use of land and to maximise the supply of new and affordable housing in well-designed and sustainable places.

3.11 With new homes already approved at the Maitland Park estate, and the successful outcome of recent residents' ballots at West Kentish Town and Wendling estates, we now have a clearer picture of the overall level of development expected across the area over the coming decade. As a result, the area will be receiving significant investment over the next ten years. These developments will provide new or replacement homes that are safe, fit for purpose and meet strict sustainability requirements as well as enhancing the quality of the public spaces surrounding the new buildings. In addition, new developments also help to deliver other public benefits for the wider community beyond that of their immediate sites. Whilst the opportunities remain great, this amount of change also has the potential to disrupt and impact the local community unless carefully planned. This SPD will therefore seek to set out strategic objectives and guidance for development in the area to ensure that it helps deliver against local priorities.

3.12 With major redevelopment coming forward, these factors have contributed to a need for guidance to supplement and complement existing and emerging planning policies. It aims to guide future proposals which will be consistent with strategic policies, and respect and enhance the area's character, through high quality design, public realm and green infrastructure. It also seeks to establish clear investment priorities across the neighbourhood to ensure that sufficient services and spaces are provided to meet the existing and growing community's needs.

3.13 Within the guidance six principles for future change have been identified, on which the vision for the future of the area, its objectives as well as investment priorities have been based:

- **Delivering the homes we need** – Ensuring that housing developments are brought forward with the upmost care for existing residents, and maximise their potential to deliver new and replacement affordable homes alongside homes for sale.
- **A strong and inclusive community** - Ensuring that investment actively works to increase the inclusivity of the space and places within the neighbourhood to increase cohesion, social integration and reduce loneliness

⁸ Published here: <https://www.camden.gov.uk/draft-site-allocations-consultation>

- **A healthy and safe neighbourhood** – Delivering improved health and youth infrastructure alongside improvements to walking routes, cycle routes and open spaces can help ensure that all residents benefit from convenient choices to live an active and healthy life. Investments in housing estates, open spaces and social infrastructure can also help make the area feel safer
- **Making the best use of land** – Ensuring that we are making the most out of the land available, converting vacant spaces before building new and protecting green open spaces for the community
- **An inclusive economy** – Investing in the Queen’s Crescent neighbourhood centre as well as bringing vacant spaces into use will help to support existing enterprise thrive as well as start up’s and SMEs. Providing additional employment support and training will also help to support the community to find meaningful and rewarding employment.
- **Creating a sustainable and resilient neighbourhood** - A greener and environmentally friendly place; with a network of green and urban spaces of different forms and functions and requiring innovative measures to reduce environmental impacts.

3.14 The aim of the SPD is to supplement and build upon the priorities identified for the area in the adopted Local Plan and other plans and guidance. As an SPD, it cannot create new planning policies, allocate sites or set out policies for the development and use of land. However, it aims to provide the additional guidance needed to help ensure that emerging development is planned and designed in a coherent and integrated way and can deliver identified priorities, in particular a high-quality environment and a more connected, accessible and greener place. In doing so, it complies with Development Plan policies and also strongly complies with the NPPF and its evolving emphasis on the importance of high quality design.

4.0 SEA screening assessment

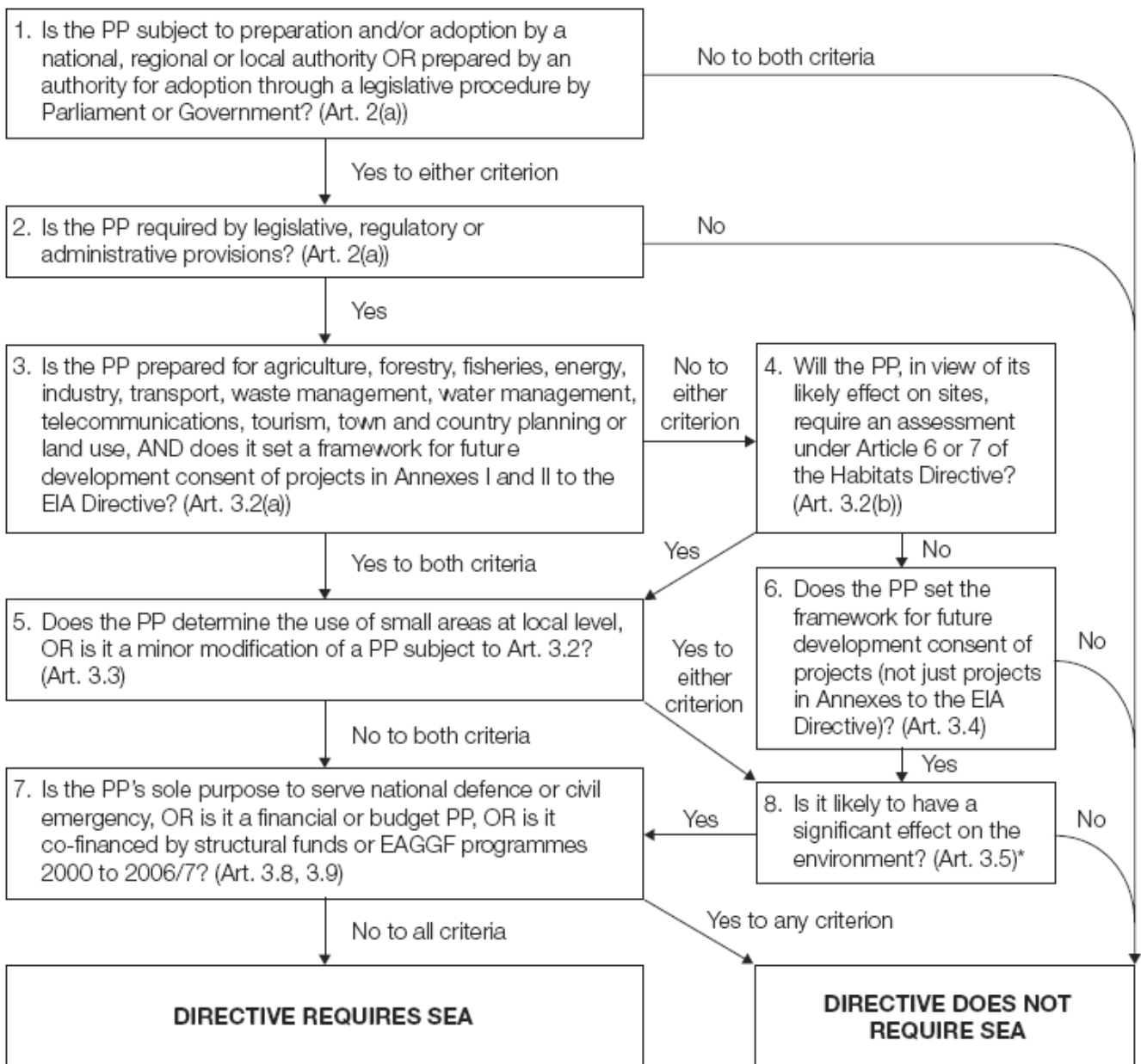
4.1 The “responsible authority” (in this case the London Borough of Camden) must determine whether a plan or programme, in this case the SPD, is likely to have significant environmental effects with reference to the criteria specified in Schedule 1 of the SEA Regulations.

4.2 Whilst there is no up to date guidance, a checklist guide to the application of the SEA Directive to plans and programmes from Government guidance (reproduced below)⁹ has been used as a starting basis to help consider whether SEA is required, with further assessment in the tables below this checklist.

⁹ ODPM (2005) A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive

Figure 2 – Application of the SEA Directive to plans and programmes

This diagram is intended as a guide to the criteria for application of the Directive to plans and programmes (PPs). It has no legal status.



*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.

Application of SEA Directive to Plans and Programmes(PP)		
1. Is the PP subject to preparation and/or adoption by a national, regional or local authority OR prepared by an authority for adoption through a legislative procedure by Parliament or Government? (Art. 2(a))?	Yes-The SPD is being prepared and is planned to be adopted by the local authority	Go to Step 2
2. Is the PP required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions? (Art. 2(a))?	No - There is no statutory requirement to produce SPD. However, as it has been decided to produce the SPD, its preparation and adoption will be subject to relevant legislative, regulatory and administrative provisions and if adopted it will become a material consideration in decision-making	Go to Step 3
3. Is the PP prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water 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? (Art. 3.2(a))?	No – The SPD is prepared for town and country planning purposes. However, whilst it identifies potential development sites in the area where future proposals may meet thresholds for which EIA may be required when they come forward, it does not allocate sites or set out policies for the development or use of land. It does not set a framework for future development consent of projects listed in Annexes I and II to the EIA Directive ¹⁰ .	Go to Step 4
4. Will the PP, in view of its likely effect on sites, require an assessment under Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive? (Art. 3.2(b))	No - The SPD is supplementary to the adopted Local Plan and a Site Allocations Plan which have been subject of screening assessments under the Habitats Directive where no significant adverse effects have been identified. The SPD is subject of its own HRA screening assessment outlined in Section 5 of this report.	Go to Step 6
6. Does the PP set the framework for future development consent of projects (not just projects in Annexes to the EIA Directive)? (Art. 3.4)	No - The SPD does not allocate sites or set out policies for the development or use of land and does not set a framework for future development consent of projects (even those not listed in Annexes I and II to the EIA Directive).	This indicates the SPD does not require SEA
8. Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment? (Art 3.5)	The answers above indicate that SEA is unlikely to be required for the SPD. However potential effects have been considered further and the SPD is subject of its own SEA screening assessment outlined below.	See table below: Determining the Likely Significance of Effects on the Environment

¹⁰ Transposed into Schedule 1 and 2 Development in The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017)

Criteria for determining likely significance of effects

4.3 The criteria for assessing the likely significance of effects in Annex II of the SEA Directive and Schedule 1 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations are set out in the table below, along with consideration of the potential impact of the SPD against each. This screening assessment has also taken into account that Sustainability Appraisal (incorporating SEA) has taken place on the adopted Camden Local Plan and Site Allocations DPD.

4.4 In the case of the former, the SA process (2016) highlighted that changes could be made to enhance the positive effects of the Plan and changes were incorporated. The SA also highlighted areas where there would be negative effects in relation to SA objectives and criteria and informed the inclusion of mitigation measures to eliminate or reduce the effects. In the case of the Site Allocations Plan, the SA process (2012) found that the plan delivered positive sustainability effects and that the allocated sites overall delivered positive outcomes in sustainability terms against the relevant sustainability objectives. The Inspector reports on both plans confirmed compliance with relevant legal requirements.

SEA Directive Criteria and Schedule 1 of Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004	Comments	Likely Significant Effects?
Characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular to:		
1a) 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>The SPD, if adopted, would contribute to an existing framework of policies and guidance for future projects and activities in the area and includes some broad themes and principles, but does not set a framework that would consent development or prejudice the outcome of subsequent applications for planning. It has regard to national policy and is in general conformity with the strategic policies of the borough. The SPD does not create new policies or allocate sites for particular development or uses or address issues outside of those already assessed in the Council's Local Plan and Site Allocations DPD SA (incorporating SEA), and as such is not considered to have significant effects in this regard.</p> <p>Whilst the SPD identifies potential funding sources and local priorities the SPD does not allocate resources.</p>	No
1b) The degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy	<p>Whilst a material consideration in decision-making, SPD sit at a lower level in the hierarchy of planning policy documents and are weighted accordingly.</p> <p>Providing supplementary guidance to support existing policies in the NPPF and the Development Plan (which includes the London Plan and Local Plan) the SPD will have a limited influence on other plans and programmes at higher levels in the hierarchy and acts to provide more detail to some of the priorities and principles established in higher level plans, which have been subject to SA and SEA.</p> <p>The SPD provides a context and some principles which may be incorporated in an emerging Site Allocations Plan which is also undergoing SA. This is</p>	No

	not considered to have significant effects in this regard.	
1c) The relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development	<p>The SPD promotes sustainable development in accordance with the principles of the NPPF and Development Plan and seeks to make a positive contribution to the three dimensions of sustainable development (social, economic and environmental).</p> <p>In particular, the potential redevelopment of sites creates opportunities, which the SPD supports, to reduce the dominance of cars and encourage other modes of transport, deliver improvements to the quality of streets and connections across the area for walking and cycling and new areas of open and green spaces as part of an enhanced green infrastructure network. It also sets out the need to consider embodied carbon carefully, whether that be in reusing buildings or using waste materials in the construction of new buildings.</p>	No
1d) Environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme	<p>The SPD is not considered to introduce or exacerbate any environmental problems. It has appropriately identified, and responded to, some of the environmental issues in the SPD area.</p> <p>Together with the Local Plan and other adopted plans and guidance, this SPD adds to a policy context and framework within which acceptable development proposals and associated improvements can be prepared. It addresses local environmental problems and should positively assist in mitigating identified issues with an emphasis on more sustainable forms of development, improving the public realm and connectivity of the area and creating new areas of open and green spaces which are currently deficient. Overall, it should have beneficial effects.</p>	No
1e) 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).	<p>The SPD through its objectives and the encouragement of high quality and sustainable design will be indirectly relevant to the implementation of Community legislation on the environment. However, this will not be to any significant extent in the scope and nature of the localised positive outcomes envisaged, e.g. supporting improved air quality through promotion of walking/cycling, improved health and well-being through provision of green spaces/tree planting as part of redevelopment proposals.</p>	No
Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to:		
2a) The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects	<p>The SPD guidance, objectives and principles are not considered to extend significantly beyond the policies which have already been subject to SEA and SA where no significant effects were identified. The phasing of development can be appropriately managed and mitigated through measures such as s106 agreements and Construction Management Plans.</p>	No
2b) The cumulative nature of the effects	<p>Cumulative effects occur where the outcome of one or more policies, when put together, have a</p>	No

	significant combined effect. The SPD does not allocate sites for development nor does the guidance extend beyond supplementing the plans and policies which have already been subject to SEA and SA.	
2c) The trans-boundary nature of the effects	Whilst the SPD supports the creation of better links between the SPD area And adjacent areas there are not considered to be any significant trans-boundary effects arising from the SPD.	No
2d) The risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents)	The SPD will not create significant risks to human health or the environment. Instead there are expected to be positive outcomes, e.g. through the creation of new green spaces and enhancement of green infrastructure, improved health and wellbeing through realigned transport priorities to encourage walking, cycling and use of public transport.	No
2e) The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)	The SPD guidance applies to a local area and the magnitude and spatial extent of potential effects will be limited. An Equalities Impact Assessment has been prepared to assess the community profile and the potential effects (negative and positive) of the SPD on the local population and the extent of effects are not considered sufficient to warrant SEA.	No
2f) 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	Development Plan policies relating to land use, design, cultural heritage, amenity and environmental protection will apply alongside the principles and guidance in the SPD. The SPD highlights the character of the area and the need for appropriate and contextual design responses and includes a number of sustainability objectives to reflect adopted policies. The extent of effects are not considered sufficient to warrant SEA.	No
2g) The effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status	The SPD does consider potential effects on the character of the local area, however there are no areas or landscapes of national, Community or international protection status within the SPD area or in close proximity to be directly affected by the guidance in the SPD. The HRA screening opinions on other plans confirm this position (see HRA section at 5.0 below).	No

4.7 The SPD highlights that there are a number of constraints in the SPD area and local environmental issues to resolve with neighbouring locally designated nature conservation assets to protect, preserve or enhance. The guidance is intended to support the delivery of the high quality design of sites, streets, connections and public spaces and green infrastructure that can assist this and there should be positive local effects.

4.8 The SPD is in broad conformity with the policies of development plan documents that have undergone SA and SEA screening, which concluded they were unlikely to have significant environmental effects. The guidance contained in the lower level SPD is considered to be similarly unlikely to give rise to significant environmental effects in accordance with the criteria considered.

5.0 HRA screening assessment

5.1 In addition to the screening of the SPD in relation to SEA, there is a requirement to consider whether a plan or project is likely to have significant effects on internationally designated sites of nature conservation importance or an adverse impact on the integrity of those sites.

5.2 The regulations set out a process to assess the potential implications of a plan or project on these sites, the first stage of which is a screening assessment where designated sites within the area or a reasonable distance from the area are identified to see if there is any potential for a plan or project to have an adverse impact on any of these sites. These sites include Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) Special Protection Areas (SPAs), Offshore Marine Sites (OMSs) as well as Ramsar sites, previously known as the “Natura 2000” network.

5.3 This screening assessment has taken into account that HRA screening has taken place on the adopted Local Plan and the Site Allocations Plan respectively.

5.4 Camden Council’s screening of the Draft Local Plan (2015) identified four Natura 2000 sites within 10 km of the borough – three Special Areas of Conservation: Epping Forest, Richmond Park and Wimbledon Common; and one Special Protection Area: the Lee Valley (also a Ramsar site). Whilst these are no longer part of the Natura 2000 network they are still designated sites within the new national site network.

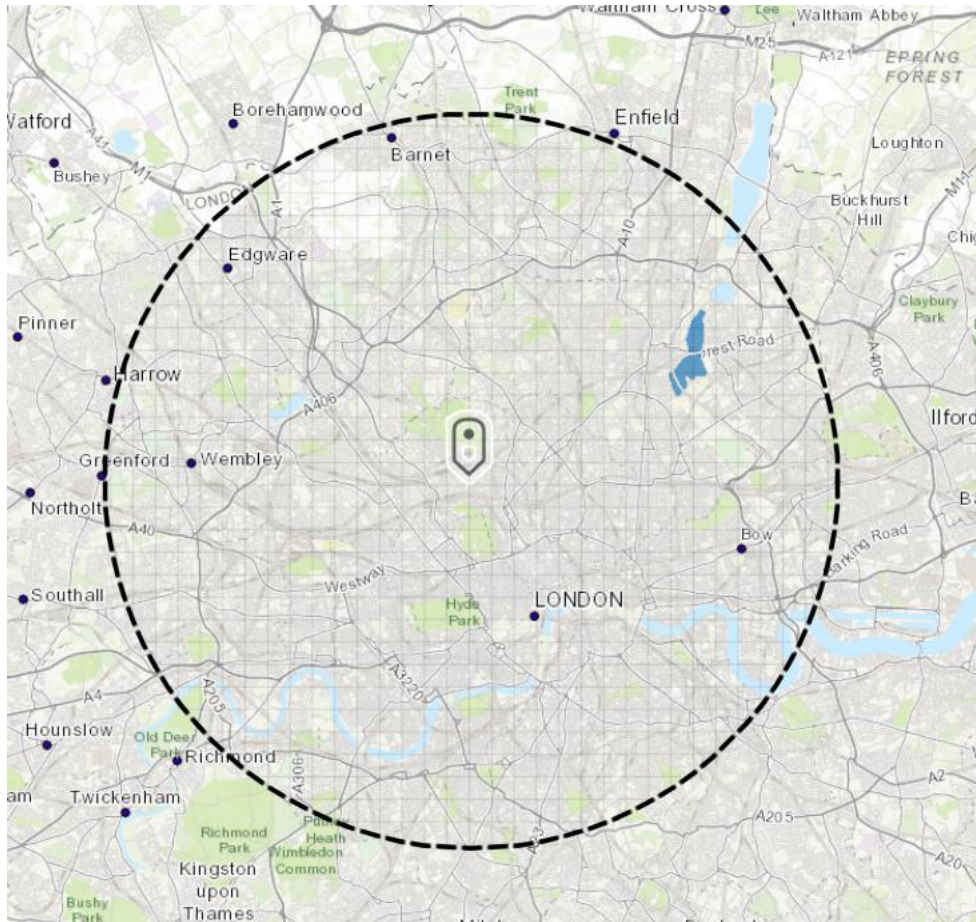
5.5 The Screening opinion concluded that: *“It is considered that the policies contained in the draft Local Plan are unlikely to have significant effects on sites of European importance for habitats or species, or an adverse impact on the integrity of those sites. Therefore it is not considered necessary to carry out Task 2 (Appropriate Assessment) and Task 3 (mitigation and alternative solutions) of the Habitats Regulations Appropriate Assessment.”*

5.6 The Inspectors report (2017) confirmed that the HRA screening complied with legal requirements and that the determination that further assessment was not required was supported by Natural England.

4.5 The adopted Site Allocations Plan was subject of HRA screening (2012) and concluded that *“None of the proposed sites were found to have likely significant effects on the sites of European importance for habitats or species, or an adverse impact on the integrity of the sites”*. The inspectors report confirmed compliance with relevant legal requirements. The new SALP consultation draft has also been subject of initial HRA screening (2020) and has concluded *“The proposed draft SALP policies in combination with other plans and projects are not considered likely to have significant effects on the sites of European importance for habitats or species, or an adverse impact on the integrity of the sites.”*

5.7 For the purposes of this HRA screening assessment a “reasonable distance” has been taken to be sites within approximately 15 km of the SPD area itself¹¹ (see map below). It reconfirms that no designated national network sites or Ramsar sites are located within the borough and identifies the same four sites which have been subject of previous screenings. This screening has also considered whether any further potential candidate sites exist or have been designated since previous screenings and none have been identified.

¹¹ Previous screenings looked at sites within 10 km of the borough boundary.



5.8 The SPD is in broad conformity with the policies of development plan documents that have undergone HRA screening, which concluded they were unlikely to have significant effects on relevant sites of importance for habitats or species, or an adverse impact on the integrity of those sites. The guidance contained in the lower level SPD is therefore similarly unlikely to have significant effects or an adverse impact on the integrity of those sites.

5.9 This does not mean other locally designated sites of nature conservation interest may not be affected by proposals and this will need relevant ecological assessments. As development proposals come forward they will be required to assess the impacts on the local area, landscapes and ecological context.

5.10 The SPD does not include any land within Hampstead Heath (Metropolitan Open Land), however, the railway embankments to the south of the Heath as well as to the south of Kentish Town City farm are designated as SINC's (Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation).

5.11 One of the key principles of the guidance is the creation of a mix of open and green spaces of different forms and functions and to boost access to nature and biodiversity in the area. It supports measures to improve and add to green infrastructure and networks, and development creates the opportunity to create new areas of greenspace and strengthen existing biodiversity corridors. These should have positive local effects.

6.0 SEA and HRA Screening Conclusions

6.1 The Council has considered the scope and content of the SPD for the purposes of determining whether the guidance is likely to give rise to any significant environmental effects or is likely to have significant effects on designated national network or Ramsar sites of importance for habitats or species, or an adverse impact on the integrity of those sites.

6.3 In making its assessments, the Council has had regard to the respective SA and SEA/HRA screening opinions that have been previously undertaken on higher level development plan documents.

6.4 The Council has determined through the SEA screening assessment that the SPD is unlikely to give rise to significant environmental effects.

6.5 The Council has determined through the HRA screening assessment that the SPD is unlikely to have significant effects on sites of importance for habitats or species (previously Natura 2000 sites), or an adverse impact on the integrity of those sites.

6.6 These conclusions will not negate the need to consider whether further assessments, such as an Environmental Impact Assessment, tree and ecology assessments, will be required for specific development proposals and related planning applications in the area covered by the SPD.

7.0 Consultations with relevant bodies

7.1 In accordance with the respective regulations the Council consulted the statutory consultation bodies on the screening report in November 2021:

- Environment Agency
- Historic England
- Natural England (in respect of both SEA and HRA screening)

7.2 In respect of the SEA and HRA assessments we received the following responses:

- **Environment Agency-** *Thank you for your consultation on this document [draft Community Vision SPD and draft SEA and HRA November 2021]. We have no comments to make at this time. Received 09.12.21*
- **Historic England-** *We would agree that the SPD in question does not require a separate SEA given that the adopted local plan from which the content has been derived has been subject to a full Sustainability Appraisal, and that the draft SPD is unlikely to have significant effects on the environment. Received 16.12.21.*
- **Natural England-** *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. Natural England does not feel that an SEA is required. Received 15.12.21*

7.3 The outcome of the screening determined that neither SEA nor HRA are required, and in accordance with regulations, this report will be published on the Council's website to demonstrate that SEA and HRA issues have been taken into account and considered during the preparation of the SPD.