



## Draft Houses in Multiple Occupation Supplementary Planning Document

### Strategic Environmental Assessment: Screening Assessment



October 2025



## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive (2001/42/EC) requires an environmental assessment to be carried out for certain plans or programmes. The SEA Directive has been transposed into UK law through the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (hereafter referred to as “the Regulations”).
- 1.2 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 required Local Authorities to produce Sustainability Appraisals (SA) for all local development documents and it is considered best practice to incorporate requirements of the SEA Directive into an SA. Subsequently, the 2008 Planning Act removed the requirement to undertake a SA for a Supplementary Planning Document, but not the requirement for a SEA.
- 1.3 Government advice in Paragraph: 008 Reference ID: 11-008-20140306 of Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) makes clear that SPDs do not require a sustainability appraisal but may in exceptional circumstances require a SEA if they are likely to have significant environmental effects that have not already been assessed during the preparation of the Local Plan.
- 1.4 In addition, the guidance states that a SEA is unlikely to be required where an SPD deals only with a small area at local level, unless it is considered that there are likely to be significant environmental effects.

## 2. SEA screening criteria and procedure

- 2.1. To assess whether an SEA is required, there is a requirement to undertake a screening assessment, based on a standard set of criteria as set out in the Regulations, to determine whether the draft SPD is likely to have significant environmental effects. The screening must then be subject to consultation with the three statutory bodies Historic England, Natural England and the Environment Agency.
- 2.2. Following consultation, the results of the screening process must be detailed in a publicly available statement.

### 3. SEA Screening Assessment

3.1. The following table sets out the Council's assessment of whether significant environmental effects are likely and is based on the criteria specified in Schedule 1 to the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 and consult the consultation bodies.

*Table 2 Determining the likely significance of effects on the environment.*

Criteria		Assessment	Likely significant effect?
1.	<b>Characteristics of the plan or programme</b>		
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 is a low level planning policy document providing supplementary guidance to support the implementation of a higher level policy (principally H2/4 of the Bury Unitary Development Plan).</p> <p>Whilst the SPD will establish a framework for projects, it does not determine the detail of the framework i.e. it does not establish policy.</p>	No
1b	The degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy.	The SPD adds further detail to existing policies within the Development Plan. It is not intended to influence other plans and programmes.	No
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 is relevant in terms of promoting sustainable development as it ensures HMO proposals meet appropriate standards and seeks to reduce potential for negative impacts.</p> <p>Given the topics in the SPD, it is not likely that there would be any significant environmental effects arising from the SPD.</p>	No
1d	Environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme.	The SPD supplements adopted policy and aims to ensure that appropriate standards for HMOs are met. It is not anticipated that there will be any environmental problems introduced because of the SPD.	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 supplements the higher level UDP policy and seeks to ensure that appropriate waste management provision is made for HMOs.</p> <p>It is not likely that there would be any significant environmental effects arising from the SPD.</p>	No

Criteria		Assessment	Likely significant effect?
2	<b>Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected</b>		
2a	The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects.	<p>The anticipated effects are expected to be positive as the SPD will ensure that HMOs provide appropriate standards of accommodation and seeks to reduce potential for negative impacts.</p> <p>The duration of the effects is difficult to define but are (usually) permanent unless HMOs are subsequently converted to other uses.</p> <p>The frequency of the effects will be linked to the submission of planning applications for HMOs.</p>	No
2b	The cumulative nature of the effects.	The SPD supplements the higher level UDP policy. Its implementation will assist in mitigating potential negative effects that may arise from development of HMOs.	No
2c	The trans-boundary nature of the effects.	There are no trans-boundary effects anticipated from the SPD.	No
2d	The risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents).	<p>None identified.</p> <p>The SPD seeks to ensure suitable standards are met in applications for HMOs.</p>	No
2e	The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected).	<p>The SPD will cover the whole of the Borough of Bury. It supplements a higher level UDP policy and will be used in the determination of planning applications across the Borough.</p> <p>The SPD will be applied to all HMO planning applications in Bury although the effects of the SPD will be more likely felt at a more local scale (i.e. street or neighbourhood level).</p> <p>The SPD will not result in any additional development than would otherwise be the case.</p>	No
2f	<p>The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected 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 SPD supplements the higher level UDP policy and will not in itself result in any additional development.</p> <p>The SPD will not give rise to any significant effects on special natural characteristics or cultural heritage.</p> <p>The SPD provides guidance on determination of planning applications for HMOs. It does not promote development which is likely to lead to environmental quality standards or limit values being exceeded.</p>	No

Criteria		Assessment	Likely significant effect?
		The SPD will not give rise to any significant effects because of the intensification of land use – it will not in itself result in any additional development. Any applications for development will be required to satisfy the relevant policies for the protection of the character of the area before permission is granted.	
2g	The effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, community or international protection status.	The SPD will not give rise to any significant adverse effects on nearby protected areas or landscapes.	No

## 4. Conclusions

- 4.1. In conclusion, as a result of the assessment carried out in Table 1, it is considered that it is unlikely that any significant environmental effects will arise as a result of the Houses in Multiple Occupation SPD.
- 4.2. Notably, the SPD does not propose any policies or allocations, instead offering clarity on national guidance and local policies. The SPD will supplement and provide further guidance on an existing adopted policy (H2/4) of the adopted Bury Unitary Development Plan. The SPD seeks to ensure that HMOs provide suitable living standards for future occupants and reduce the potential for detrimental impacts on local communities. Any impacts on the environment are likely to be local and small in scale. The SPD will not result in any significant new development, it simply provides additional guidance on proposals for HMOs.
- 4.3. The Council has therefore determined that a Strategic Environmental Assessment is not necessary for the Houses in Multiple Occupation SPD.
- 4.4. However, it is important to note that this screening assessment is based on the consultation version of the SPD. Consequently, if the content or purpose of the SPD should materially change then the SEA/HRA screenings will need to be re-assessed and updated.

Bury  
Council