

Draft Screening Assessment on the  
determination of the need for Strategic  
Environment Assessment and  
Sustainability Appraisal for the Nuneaton  
and Bedworth Concept Plan  
Supplementary Planning Documents  
(SPDs)

October 2019

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council has prepared site concept plans for strategic housing and employment sites identified in the Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Plan 2011-2031<sup>1</sup>. The concept plans provide visual representation and clarity to Borough Plan policies and will be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).
- 1.2 This document is a screening report to determine if the SPD will require a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in accordance with the 'European Directive 2001/42/EC'<sup>2</sup> and associated 'Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004'<sup>3</sup>.

## 2. Background

- 2.1 The Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Plan 2011-2031 was adopted in June 2019. The policies to which the SPD refers have been subject of an integrated Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)<sup>4</sup> produced in line with the requirements of 'The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004'
- 2.2 The Borough Plan reference to the site concept plans occurs at paragraph 7.6 and is presented below:

“Detailed site concept plans for each of the strategic site allocations will be created and adopted within a supplementary planning document to sit alongside the Borough Plan”.

- 2.3 Supplementary Planning Documents are produced to provide detailed advice and guidance on policies in Local Plans.

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<sup>1</sup> Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Plan 2011-2031 <https://nuneatonbedworthboroughcouncil.sharefile.eu/d-s56969f3fadf4b108>

<sup>2</sup> European Directive 2001/42/EC <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32001L0042&from=EN>

<sup>3</sup> Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2004/1633/contents/made>

<sup>4</sup> Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Plan Sustainability Assessment August 2018 [https://www.nuneatonandbedworth.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/2699/borough\\_plan\\_sustainability\\_appraisal\\_2018\\_v2.pdf](https://www.nuneatonandbedworth.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/2699/borough_plan_sustainability_appraisal_2018_v2.pdf)

2.4 The National Planning Policy Framework<sup>5</sup> (NPPF) describes 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” (page, 72).

2.5 The Concept Plans SPD produced to support the Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Plan provides information and guidance on the following topics:

- Proposed locations for residential and employment allocations
- Vehicle access points and spine roads
- Utility routes
- Primary and secondary schools
- District and local centres
- Allotments
- Landscape and open space
- Delivery and timescales

### 3. Strategic Environment Assessment

3.1 A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) concerns the evaluation of the environmental impacts of a plan or programme. The requirement for an SEA is detailed in the ‘European Directive 2001/42/EC’ which is adopted into UK legislation as the ‘Environmental Assessment of Plans or Programmes Regulations 2004’. Local Plans often comply with SEA requirements by being subject of a Sustainability Appraisal.

3.2 Planning Practice Guidance<sup>6</sup> states Supplementary Planning Documents are not required to be accompanied by a Sustainability Appraisal. In exceptional circumstances a SPD may require a SEA if they are likely to have significant effects on the environment which have not been assessed as part of the Local Plan SA.

3.3 A screening process has been followed to assess if the Concept Plans SPD produced by Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council requires a SEA

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<sup>5</sup> National Planning Policy Framework

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/779764/NPPF\\_Feb\\_2019\\_web.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/779764/NPPF_Feb_2019_web.pdf)

<sup>6</sup> Planning Practice Guidance, Paragraph: 008 Reference ID: 11-008-20140306, Revision date: 06 03 2014

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/strategic-environmental-assessment-and-sustainability-appraisal>

## 4. Screening Process

- 4.1 To determine if a SPD is likely to have significant environment effects, Planning Practice Guidance recommends local planning authorities consider the criteria specified in [schedule 1 to the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004](#). Table 1 of this report presents the criteria in table form with a commentary on the SPD under consideration. Section 5 presents the conclusion and rationale for the decision.
- 4.1 Planning Practice Guidance also recommends consulting the consultation bodies cited in the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004; Historic England, Natural England and the Environment Agency will be consulted to determine if the SPD has a significant environment effect.

**Table 1: Criteria for Likely Significant Environment Effect**

SEA Directive Criteria	Response	Is there a likely significant environment effect?
<b>1. The Characteristics of Plans and Programmes, having regard, in particular, to:</b>		
<p><b>1a)</b> 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>The SPD acts in support of polices in the Local Plan, providing a visual representation which will provide guidance for developers and decision makers to ensure Borough Plan polices are implemented. The SPD clarifies the framework for developments which are localised and will have a limited impact on resources. The Borough Plan determines land allocation and contains polices regarding the nature and size of development. The Borough Plan has been the subject of an integrated SA/SEA.</p>	<p><b>No</b></p>

<p><b>1b)</b> The degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy.</p>	<p>The National Planning Policy Framework is the top tier policy in the planning process. The Borough Plan is produced in alignment with the NPPF and contains the policies which the SPD supports. The SPD cannot produce new policy and is the lowest tier of the hierarchy, it cannot significantly influence policies at a higher tier.</p>	<p><b>No</b></p>
<p><b>1c)</b> The relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development.</p>	<p>The SPD will help to promote sustainable development offering limited guidance on the following: sustainable construction, surface water drainage and flooding, safety and security, noise and air quality. The guidance accords with policies within the Borough Plan and wider policies.</p>	<p><b>No</b></p>
<p><b>1d)</b> Environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme.</p>	<p>The SPD does not add to existing or create new environmental problems. Detailed planning applications will be assessed regarding environmental issues when submitted.</p>	<p><b>No</b></p>
<p><b>1e)</b> 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>	<p>The SPD contains a small amount of information regarding surface water drainage and flooding. The information references the Borough Plan policy concerning flood risk and water management.</p>	<p><b>No</b></p>
<p><b>2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to:</b></p>		
<p><b>2a)</b> The probability, duration, frequency and</p>	<p>The effects of the SPD are expected to be positive on the sustainable development</p>	

reversibility of the effects.	of the borough. The frequency of the effects will depend upon planning applications received which will be judged on the merits of the application. The reversibility of the effects depend on future requests for planning permission and future land use requirements.	<b>No</b>
<b>2b)</b> The cumulative nature of the effects.	The cumulative effect of the SPD will be positive, helping the borough to create needed development in a managed process and which is sustainable.	<b>No</b>
<b>2c)</b> The trans-boundary nature of the effects.	The SPD is only concerned with guidance for site allocations within the Borough Plan. The Borough Plan is local to the Nuneaton and Bedworth area, only indirect effects are likely to be trans-boundary.	<b>No</b>
<b>2d)</b> The risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents).	The SPD offers guidance based on the Borough Plan site allocations to improve the environment and human health through high quality development. There are no risks to human health or the environment anticipated from the SPD. Any environmental effects of development will be considered at the planning application stage.	<b>No</b>
<b>2e)</b> The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected).	The SPD will apply to site allocation within the borough of Nuneaton and Bedworth. The effects of the SPD are more likely to be felt in a localised area in the vicinity of the areas to which planning permission has been granted.	<b>No</b>

<p><b>2f)</b> The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:</p> <p><b>i)</b> special natural characteristics or cultural heritage.</p> <p><b>ii)</b> exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values.</p> <p><b>iii)</b> intensive land-use.</p>	<p>i and ii) The SPD offers guidance related to polices in the Borough Plan, they cannot supersede any national or local environmental/ cultural designation. The SPD offers guidance regarding natural and cultural assets. The guidance follows Borough Plan policies.</p> <p>iii) The SPD does not set policy for land use. Policy for land use is set by the Borough Plan</p>	<p><b>No</b></p>
<p><b>2g)</b> The effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.</p>	<p>The SPD refers to protected areas within site allocations and the surrounding area. The SPD follows polices in the Borough Plan. Planning applications will have to satisfy the requirements of relevant national polices and polices in the Borough Plan before permission can be granted. The SPD cannot override any local or national designation.</p>	<p><b>No</b></p>

## 5. Determination and Reasoning

- 5.1 The SPD is consistent with the Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Plan which has already been subject of a Sustainability Appraisal. The appraisal found there would be no environmental effects which could not be mitigated and would have positive socio-economic benefits.
- 5.2 The SPD is a lower tier document which provides guidance on local policies, it cannot be used as justification for non-compliance with national environmental legislation and national and local environmental policy.
- 5.3 Applying the criteria of schedule 1 to the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough Council finds that with regards to the Concept Plans Supplementary Planning Document: **there are no likely significant**

**environmental effects and does not require a full SEA to be undertaken.**