

ANNEX D

Strensall with Towthorpe Village Design Statement

Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Report, June 2014

Produced by City of York Council in accordance with the European Directive 2001/42/EC (The SEA Directive) and the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.

Introduction

This report has been produced to determine the need for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in accordance with the European Directive 2001/42/EC and associated Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 for the Strensall with Towthorpe Village Design Statement (VDS) / Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

Planning Context

The purpose of a Village Design Statement is to capture the essence of a village's character, environment and history – so it may be taken fully into account when any new development is planned.

Through the process of recording and highlighting the natural and built features of the historic village of Strensall with Towthorpe, the VDS seeks to identify and promote standards of design which are both appropriate and sympathetic to the locality. These standards have been set out in design guidelines which should be used for guidance by local residents, as well as developers, architects and planners who may be considering development in and around the village.

This document has been produced by the local community, through liaison with City of York Council. It is anticipated that in the future the VDS will be an adopted Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) alongside the City's Local Plan, subject to the requirements of the new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Screening

The requirement for a Strategic Environmental Assessment is set out in the "Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004". There is also a practical guidance on applying European Directive 2001/42/EC produced by the ODPM (now DCLG)¹. These documents have been used as a basis for this screening report.

Previously all development plan documents (DPDs) and SPDs were subject to Sustainability Appraisal (SA). Sustainability Appraisals incorporated the requirement for SEA² but when these regulations

¹ A practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive, (2005), ODPM www.doeni.gov.uk/niea/bm_sea_practicalguide.pdf

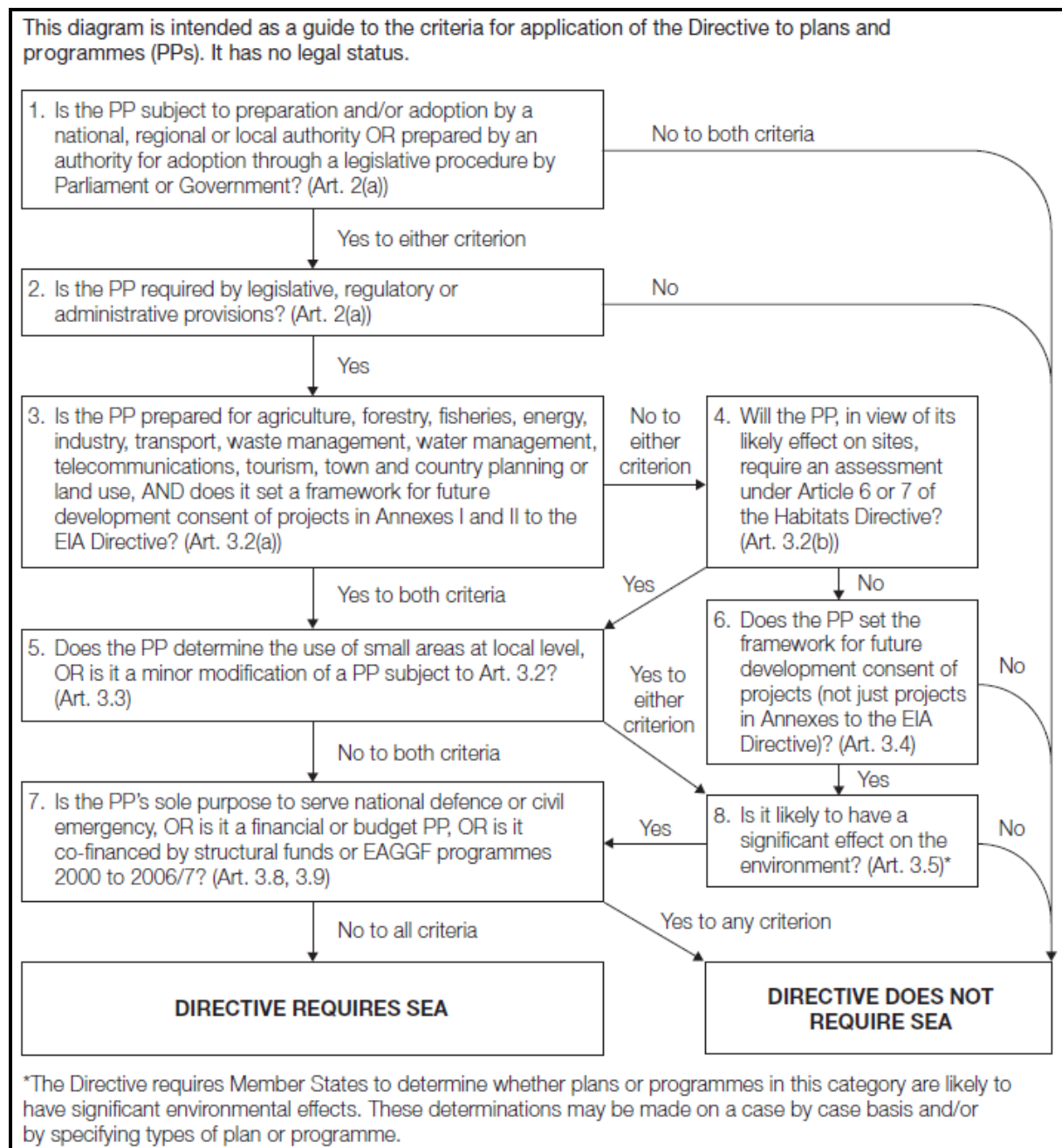
² The Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004

were amended in 2009³, the requirement for SA for SPDs was removed. However, SPDs are still subject to the requirements set out by the SEA.

Given the status and use of the VDS it is considered appropriate to screen the report as per the requirements of SEA Directive to see if further assessment would be necessary.

The ODPM practical guidance provides a checklist approach based on the SEA Regulations to help determine whether SEA is required. This screening report has been used as the basis on which assess the need for SEA as set out below.

Figure 1: Establishing the need for SEA



³ The Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2009

Screening Assessment

This section sets out screening assessment using the Practical Guidance for SEA (ODPM) and Annex II of the SEA Directive.

Table 1: Establishing the needs for SEA using the Practical Guidance (2005).

Stage	Answer	Justification
1. Is the SPD 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 of Government? (Article 2(a))	Yes	The SPD is to be adopted by City of York Council, subject to consultation.
2. Is the SPD required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions? (Article 2(a))	Yes	The VDS/SPD will add further clarity with regards to design as referenced in heritage and sustainable design policies within the forthcoming development plan.
3. Is the SPD 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))	Yes	The VDS/ SPD is for town and country planning purposes but does not set a framework for future development consent of projects in Annexes I and II to the EIA Directive.
4. Will the SPD, in view of its likely effect on sites, require an assessment under Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive? (Article 3.2(b))	No	Not relevant as this relates to design issues only and will not be the basis on which to determine location or type of development.
6. Does the SPD set the framework for future development consent of projects (not just projects in Annexes to the EIA Directive)? (Article 3.4)	Yes	The VDS/SPD will add further clarity with regards to design as referenced in heritage and sustainable design policies within the forthcoming development plan.
8. Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment? (Article 3.5)	No	See Table 2 below to understand the determination of likely significant effects.

Table 2: Determining the Likely Significant Effects using SEA Directive Annex II (referred to in Article 3(5))

The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular, to:	Is there a significant environmental impact?	Justification
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	No	The SPD forms the lowest tier of planning documents and therefore does not provide a framework for other plans and strategies. Instead it offers village specific guidance to supplement design principles set out in York's Development Plan.
1b) The degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy	No	The SPD is intended to expand upon policy and provide further detail to policies in the Development Plan for York. It does not have development plan status and forms the lowest tier of planning documents. It will therefore not influence other plans or programmes, but it will be a material planning consideration in the determination of planning applications.
1c) The relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development	No	The VDS / SPD aims to support sustainable development through further environmental considerations such as design principles and heritage issues within the specific village for which it is produced.
1d) Environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme	No	The principal aim of the VDS/SPD is to shape future development, reinforce local distinctiveness and provide a framework for future physical changes in the village. The VDS sets the context of certain environmental problems within the village and has aspirational solutions for solving these such as through various types of traffic improvements to alleviate congestion. The SPD is intended to influence all forms and scales of development, from minor changes to new developments. The probability of environmental effects occurring depends upon the level of new development. Any environmental effects would be mitigated and therefore the overall effect is likely to be positive and ongoing. There may be some negative effects associated with construction.
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	No	The VDS/SPD is not considered relevant to this criterion.

management or water protection).		
Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to:	Is there a significant environmental impact?	Justification
2a) The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects	No	The principal aim of the VDS/SPD is to shape future development, reinforce local distinctiveness and provide a framework for future physical changes in the village. The SPD is intended to be implemented through new developments and therefore the probability of effects occurring depends upon the level of new development. Any effects are likely to be positive and ongoing. There may be some negative effects associated with construction.
2b) The cumulative nature of the effects	No	The cumulative effects of the SPD are likely to be positive although only on a local scale.
2c) The trans-boundary nature of the effects	No	The SPD is not anticipated to have trans-boundary effects.
2d) The risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents)	No	There are no significant risks to human health identified.
2e) The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)	No	The VDS/SPD is village specific and therefore the effects on the population and geographical area are likely to be small and as defined by the village area.
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	No	The contribution towards environmental quality is likely to be positive given that this sets out design principles for the area. This is however not considered to have a significant effect.
2g) The effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status	No	Strensall Common is a designated Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) for the quality of its Lowland Heath in particular. The VDS recognises the value of this Common to the landscape and setting of the village with an aim to protect this and enhance this. Given the principal aim of the SPD, it is likely that effects on the Common will be positive in consideration with the VDS. Any development which may have significant effects against Strensall Common SAC would be subject to a separate Habitat Regulation Assessment. In addition, the VDS covers the designated conservation areas within Strensall Village and Towthorpe. The impact on these area is likely to be

		reinforced through the VDS and therefore have an overall positive effect. Given the pre-existence of the designations included within the VDS for both heritage and nature conservation, these effects are not considered significant.
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Conclusion and statement of reasons

The proposed Village Design Statement for Strensall with Towthorpe village will be supplementing higher level policy set out by York’s Development plan and are intended to be a material consideration for planning decisions in the local area. It is anticipated that the potential impacts arising from this document are likely to be positive at a local scale. The effects from the SPD are not anticipated to have negative environmental impacts.

Overall, it is considered that the Strensall with Towthorpe VDS will not give rise to significant environmental effects. It is therefore proposed that a **Strategic Environmental Assessment is not required** for the proposed Village Design Statements for Strensall with Towthorpe.

The Council consulted the three statutory bodies For the SEA process (English Heritage, Environment Agency, and Natural England) over the content of this Screening Report. The consultation ran for seven weeks, from 21 July to 7 September 2014, alongside consultation on the draft Strensall with Towthorpe Village Design Statement. No specific comments were received on the SEA and therefore no updates are proposed. This SEA Screening report will be published alongside the approved VDS/SPD.

Contact

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