

Southampton City Council

Houses in Multiple Occupation Supplementary Planning Document Review

Strategic Environmental Assessment:
Screening Report

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Contents

1 Introduction

2 SEA: Stage 1

3 SEA: Stage 2

4 SEA: Stage 3

5 Screening Statement

Table 1. The characteristics of plans and programmes

Table 2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected

1 Introduction

- 1.1 'The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004'¹ requires a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of any plan or programme to be prepared for 'town and country planning' or 'land use' if the plan or programme is likely to have significant environmental effects.

2 SEA: Stage 1

- 2.1 In accordance with the first stage of the SEA process, a screening opinion has been prepared to determine whether the Houses in Multiple Occupation Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) Review is likely to have significant environmental effects in accordance with the criteria (set out in Schedule 1 of the regulations).
- 2.2 The screening opinion indicates that the SPD Review is unlikely to have any significant environmental effects, see section 5 for the statement. The results have been made publicly available on the Council's website.
- 2.3 This SPD Review will be formally adopted as part of the Council's Local Development Framework. The guidance contained in this SPD Review is written to expand and provide more detail to policies in the current Development Plan Documents - namely saved 'H4 – Houses in Multiple Occupation' of the Local Plan Review and 'CS16 – Housing Mix and Type' in the Core Strategy.
- 2.4 The SPD Review is unlikely to give rise to significant effects other than those which have been formally assessed in the context of the Council's higher level planning documents. The SPD Review will not introduce new policies or proposals or modify the Council's higher level planning documents which have already been subject to the SEA Directive.

3 SEA: Stage 2

- 3.1 Second stage of the SEA process will involve the Council consulting the statutory environmental bodies listed (English Heritage; English Nature; and the Environment Agency) in the regulations for a 3 week period.
- 3.2 A copy of the screening statement will be sent to these bodies for their consideration to determine whether the Council is required to prepare an environmental report.

4 SEA: Stage 3

¹ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2004/1633/contents/made>

4.1 The Council will report the determination of the statutory bodies.

5 Screening Statement

5.1 The tables below set out the statement of the screening opinion carried out by the Council for the SPD:

Table 1. The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular, to:

Criterion	Is there effect?	Is there a significant environmental impact?	Justification
(a)the degree to which the SCC HMO SPD Review sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources;	Yes	No	The SCC HMO SPD Review sits at the lowest tier of the development plan system. In this respect it does not set a framework for other plans and strategies. Instead it offers site specific guidance to supplement Local Plan Review saved policy and the Core Strategy.
(b)the degree to which the SCC HMO SPD Review influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy;	No	No	The SCC HMO SPD Review sits at the lowest tier of the development plan system. In this respect it does not set a framework for other plans and strategies.
(c)the relevance of the SCC HMO SPD Review for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development;	Yes	No	The SCC HMO SPD Review will reduce and better manage the negative environmental impacts associated with the high concentration of HMOs which proliferates in neighbourhoods in the city. The SPD will aim to maintain mixed and balanced sustainable communities by preventing new concentrations of HMOs from establishing, and thus encouraging a more even distribution across the city. It will not however provide an environmental policy in its own right so does not have a

			significant environmental impact on environmental considerations. It will supplement Local Plan Review and Core Strategy policy.
(d) environmental problems relevant to the SCC HMO SPD review ; and	Yes	No	<p>The development of HMOs is mainly through conversion of existing housing stock and therefore will not pose a significant environmental problem. The SCC HMO SPD review will alleviate negative environmental impacts arising in neighbourhoods associated with high concentrations of HMOs such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increased population densities placing a strain on existing services, refuse disposal and street cleansing, and car parking provision; • poor refuse management; • on-street parking pressure; • neglected gardens and lack of maintenance to housing stock.
(e) the relevance of the SCC HMO SPD Review for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (for example, plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection).	No	No	The SCC HMO SPD Review is not relevant to implementation of EC legislation.

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

Criterion	Is there a significant environmental impact?	Justification
(a)the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects of SCC HMO SPD Review;	No	The SCC HMO SPD Review will not set policy. It will however provide supplementary guidance to Local Plan and Core Strategy policies for land use planning to prevent new concentrations of HMOs from establishing, and thus encouraging a more even distribution across the city and, therefore, reduce the negative impact on neighbourhoods.
(b)the cumulative nature of the effects of the SCC HMO SPD Review ;	No	The SCC HMO SPD Review will have no significant cumulative effects.
(c)the transboundary nature of the effects of SCC HMO SPD Review;	No	There are no trans-boundary issues across member states
(d)the risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents) of the SCC HMO SPD Review;	No	There are no significant risks to human health or the environment. The communities in neighbourhoods will be more sustainable, and over-intensive land use from the concentration of HMOs can be better managed through the local planning process.
(e)the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected);	No	Any effects will be confined to the application site and immediate surrounding area approximately (as defined by the area within the 40 metre radius of the threshold guidance).The citywide 10% threshold will ensure that a consistent approach is applied across the whole city given the recent trend of HMOs to relocate away from the overly saturated areas of the city. It also proposes

		preventing any residential property being 'sandwiched' between two HMOs. It also proposes amending our exceptions policy where properties are already 'sandwiched' (and can demonstrate 6 months marketing) or where the vast majority of properties are already in HMO use.
(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; or (iii)intensive land-use; and	No	The SPD Review translates established Government and local guidance on the control of HMO growth to create mixed, sustainable communities in neighbourhoods citywide. The SPD Review will supplement local policy in determining whether planning permission is acceptable for a specific site to become a HMO by defining a physical maximum threshold to maintain a balance of household types in the local area. There will be no significant effect in the city on cultural heritage; environmental quality standards or limit values; and intensive land use.
(g)the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.	No	Not relevant