

Screening Statement

On the determination of the need for a **Strategic Environmental Assessment** (SEA) in accordance with the *Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004* and *European Directive 2001/42/EC* of the:

Thames Strategy Supplementary Planning Document

June 2015



Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening for:

Thames Strategy SPD

1 Purpose of Sustainability Appraisal (SA) / Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

- 1.1 The SEA Directive identifies the purpose of SEA as “ to provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes with a view to promoting sustainable development” (Directive 2001/EC/42)
- 1.2 Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is the process by which this Directive is applied to Local Plan documents. SA aims to promote sustainable development through the integration of social, environmental and economic considerations into the preparation of plans.
- 1.3 The City’s Local Plan is subject to Sustainability Appraisal. However the 2008 Planning Act allows for Supplementary Planning Documents to be prepared without a full SA as long as they are screened to establish whether they will result in significant effects as defined by the SEA Directive.
- 1.4 The SEA Directive exempts plans and programmes from assessment “*When they determine the use of small areas at local level or are minor modifications to the above plans or programmes...*” and states that “*....they should be assessed only where Member States determine that they are likely to have significant effects on the environment.*”
- 1.5 The criteria for determining the significance of effects are taken from schedule 1 (9 (2) (a) and 10 (4) (a) of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 and are defined in appendix 1. These can be split into the criteria related to (i) the scope and influence of the document (ii) the type of impact and area likely to be affected

2 Purpose of the Thames Strategy SPD

- 2.1 The Key objectives of this SPD are:
 - To provide guidance on development within the Thames Policy Area
 - To provide guidance on public realm enhancement within the Thames Policy Area
 - To explain the impacts on development of safeguarding of sites at Blackfriars and Walbrook Wharf
 - To promote river transport and provide guidance to assist implementation of increased river transport
 - To provide guidance on the heritage assets within the Thames Policy Area
 - To provide guidance on improving opportunities for biodiversity in the Thames Policy Area

- 2.2 This strategy is a Supplementary Planning Document which provides guidance regarding the City Corporation's Local Plan policies for the Thames Policy Area.
- 2.3 The London Plan and City of London Local Plan have been evaluated through the SA and Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) screening process, which incorporates the requirements of the SEA Directive, and have been found to be sound. This document provides details of how the City Corporation will apply the London Plan and Local Plan policies associated with the Thames Riverside within the City.

3 SEA Screening Procedure

- 3.1 The Responsible Authority (the City of London Corporation) must determine whether the plan or program under assessment is likely to have significant environmental effects. This assessment must be made taking account of the criteria set out in Schedule 1 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (see appendix 1), and in consultation with the Environment Agency, English Heritage and Natural England.
- 3.2 Where the Responsible Authority determines that the plan or programme is unlikely to have significant environmental effects, and therefore does not need to be subject to full Strategic Environmental Assessment, it must prepare a statement showing the reasons for this determination.
- 3.3 Appendix 1 shows the results of this screening process for the Thames Strategy SPD

4 Screening and Consultation Outcome

- 4.1 This screening demonstrates that the Thames Strategy SPD is unlikely to have significant effects on the environment. Therefore it will not be necessary to carry out a full SA/SEA on this document.
- 4.2 Each of the statutory consultees has been consulted on this initial screening statement and their responses are summarised below:

Consultee	Response
Environment Agency	No SEA screening response received
Natural England	We agree that the Thames Strategy SPD is unlikely to have significant environmental effects and therefore that a full Sustainability Appraisal/SEA of it is not required.
Historic England	No SEA screening response received

- 5 Determination: The Thames Strategy SPD is unlikely to have significant effects on the wider environment since it provides guidance on the implementation of Local Plan policies which will have largely positive impacts. Therefore it will not be necessary to carry out a Strategic Environmental Assessment on this SPD.

Appendix 1 Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects on the environment

SEA Directive Criteria Schedule 1 Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004	Summary of significant effects
1. Characteristics of the Thames Strategy SPD having particular regard to:	
(a) The degree to which the SPD sets out a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size or operating conditions or by allocating resources	This SPD provides guidance on the application of policies which are defined in the Local Plan, regarding the City Corporation's Planning Policy aims for the area adjacent to the City's Riverside. The SPD will not set new policy or allocate resources.
(b) The degree to which the SPD influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy	This SPD sits at the lowest level in the hierarchy of planning policy documents providing guidance on policies in the London Plan and the Local Plan. It may influence planning applications for sites on the riverside in line with the City Corporation's adopted policies for this area.
(c) The relevance of the SPD for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development	This SPD provides guidance on the implementation of the City of London Local Plan. The Local Plan has been prepared in conformity with the NPPF's requirement for a presumption in favour of sustainable development and has been subject to Sustainability Appraisal.
(d) Environmental problems relevant to the SPD	Environmental problems which are relevant to the Thames Policy Area in the City: Biodiversity and water quality are potentially affected by the periodic discharge of dilute sewage into the Thames at Blackfriars during periods of heavy rain fall. The Thames Policy Area in common with the rest of Central London is an air quality management area for nitrogen dioxide and fine particulates (PM ₁₀).
(e) The relevance of the SPD for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (for example plans and programmes related to waste management or water protection)	The Air Quality Directive sets legally binding limits for concentrations of major air pollutants. The Water Framework Directive sets standards for water quality in water bodies such as the River Thames. This SPD supports London Plan and Local Plan policies which aim to improve air and water quality in line with the Air Quality Directive (2008/50/EC) and the Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EC)

SEA Directive criteria Schedule 1 Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004	Summary of significant effects
2 Characteristics of the effects and area likely to be affected having particular regard to:	
(a)The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects	This SPD provides guidance on the implementation of Local Plan policies which will have generally positive impacts on the environment over the period of the Local Plan to 2026. Implementation of Local Plan policies according to this SPD is likely to result in incremental improvements to the environment in the Thames Policy Area.
(b)The cumulative nature of the effects of the SPD	The impact of this SPD in conjunction with other plans for this area such as the Riverside Walk Enhancement Strategy and the Tower of London World Heritage Site Management Plan will be positive for the environment.
(c)The trans boundary nature of the effects of the SPD	This SPD covers a small area at local level adjacent to the River Thames. The guidance in this SPD complements Local Plan policies which have been assessed through the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Habitats Regulation Appraisal (HRA) screening. These SA and HRA assessments concluded that Local Plan policies will not significantly impact beyond the City's boundaries. This SPD provides guidance on the implementation of Local Plan policies therefore it is unlikely to have any impacts beyond the City's boundary or any trans-national cross boundary effects.
(d)The risks to human health or the environment (eg due to accident)	This SPD is unlikely to result in risks to human health.
(e)The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographic area and size of the population likely to be affected) by the SPD	This SPD covers the Thames Policy Area and sets out guidance on the implementation of Local Plan policies which have been subject to Sustainability Appraisal and Habitats Regulation Assessment screening. This SA and HRA determined that the Local plan policies would have mainly positive impacts and any uncertain impacts would be mitigated by other policies in the plan.
(f)The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected by the SPD due to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special natural characteristics or cultural heritage • Exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values • Intensive land use 	The River Thames is a Site of Metropolitan Importance for Nature Conservation (SMINC) and the Thames Policy Area which is covered by this plan includes several conservation areas, numerous listed buildings and the setting for the Tower of London World Heritage Site. The policies which this SPD supports aim to preserve and enhance these heritage assets. Water quality standards in the River Thames are breached periodically due to discharges

	<p>from the Combined Sewer Outflow at Blackfriars. The policies which this SPD supports aim to improve water quality through the implementation of the Thames Tideway Tunnel.</p> <p>Air Quality standards for nitrogen dioxide and fine particulates (PM10) are periodically exceeded in the Thames Policy Area. The policies which this SPD supports aim to reduce air pollution through the promotion of river transport.</p> <p>The Thames Policy Area in the City is an area of intensive land use with extreme pressure for development. The policies which this SPD supports aim to implement positive environmental effects associated with development.</p>
(g)The effects of the SPD on areas or landscapes which have recognised national Community or international protected status	<p>This area includes viewing corridors for the protected views of St Pauls Cathedral and the Tower of London. The policies which this SPD supports aim to safeguard these protected views.</p>