



Waverley Climate Change and Sustainability SPD

SEA Screening Opinion

Waverley Borough Council

Final report

Prepared by LUC

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Waverley Climate Change and Sustainability SPD

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Waverley Borough Council is in the process of preparing a Climate Change and Sustainability Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). Waverley Borough is situated in the south west of Surrey in south east England. LUC has been appointed by Waverley Borough Council to consider whether there is a need for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) to be undertaken for the SPD. SEA may be required for an SPD if it is likely to have significant environmental effects. Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is similar to SEA but includes assessment of the likely significant effects of a plan or programme on economic and social factors, as well as environmental factors. Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) **[See reference 1]** clarifies that there is no legal requirement for an SPD to be subject to SA, but that SEA may be required in exceptional circumstances.

1.2 Waverley Borough Council has commissioned LUC to carry out SEA Screening of the Climate Change and Sustainability SPD in order to determine whether an assessment is required under European Directive 2001/42/EC (the SEA Directive), transposed into UK law through the SEA Regulations **[See reference 2]**.

Chapter 2

SEA Screening

Scope of the Climate Change Sustainability SPD

1.3 Waverley Borough Council is in the process of preparing a Climate Change and Sustainability SPD, which relates to the entire Borough of Waverley. The Draft SPD (February 2022) includes the following aims:

- Implement Waverley's Carbon Neutrality Action Plan 2020-2030.
- Promote reduction and re-use as well as recycling to achieve Borough's targets on household waste and recycling.
- Promote pedestrian-friendly and cycle-friendly transport network.
- Take action on air quality issues, especially those caused by vehicle emissions, and encourage zero-carbon buses and taxis.
- Work with partners to ensure the environmental stewardship of open spaces are of the highest quality including the promotion of biodiversity, rewilding, and the phasing out of pesticide use other than in exceptional and defined circumstances.
- Making WBC a zero-carbon organisation, including the offices and other assets, by working with staff and partners to implement carbon reduction schemes and other projects.

1.4 The SPD is part of the Council's response to the climate emergency. It supports the adopted Waverley Borough Local Plan Part 1, which sets out strategic policies relating to land use and development proposals for strategic allocated sites.

1.5 The SPD is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. However, it also provides useful guidance for development

permitted under a General Permitted Development Order, such as residential extensions.

1.6 The SPD provides guidance on the implementation of policies ST1, CC1, CC2, CC3, CC4, NE1 and NE2 from the adopted Local Plan Part 1. It is structured around six key topics which are as follows:

- Minimising energy use in new developments
- Sustainable site layout, landscaping, layout, and orientation of buildings
- Climate change resilience and adaptation
- Use of sustainable resources and materials and sustainable management of waste
- Water efficiency
- Design to encourage use of sustainable forms of transport

1.7 The purposes of the Climate Change and Sustainability SPD are to:

- Provide guidance on how to apply policies and what the applicants are required to deliver.
- Clarify what information should be provided with planning applications.
- Demonstrate what is possible and appropriate for developments in Waverley.
- Provide best practice/exemplar developments.
- Provide links to latest guidance and codes of practice.

Baseline Information

1.8 This section summarises the baseline information for Waverley Borough, drawing from the information set out in the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) reports for the Waverley Borough Local Plan: Parts 1 **[See reference 3]** and 2 **[See reference 4]**.

Context

1.9 Waverley Borough is situated in the south west of Surrey.

1.10 The Borough contains four principal urban settlements of varying size, with about 72% of the population living in one of these centres, plus a large number of villages of varying size and character. Altogether, there are 21 separate town or parish councils.

Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna

1.11 Waverley Borough contains all or part of 15 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and there are three Special Protected Areas (SPAs) designated under the European Birds Directive as being of importance for their populations of the woodlark, nightjar, and Dartford warbler. These include Thursley, Hankley and Frensham Commons (also known as Phase I of the Wealden Heaths SPA), the Hindhead Commons (which form part of Phase II of the Wealden Heaths SPA) and a small part of the Thames Basin Heaths SPA. Other designated sites include 171 Local Nature Reserves, Ancient Woodland and eight Biodiversity Opportunity Areas. There is also one Ramsar site and one Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Thursley, Ash, Pirbright and Chobham.

1.12 Waverley Borough has a distinctive wooded character, representing 31% of its total area. 11.5% of this woodland is classified as Ancient Woodland. Canals and river corridors are also of particular biodiversity value in Waverley.

Population

1.13 Waverley Borough has a population of 121,272. In 2011, 19.5% of Waverley's population was over 65. In-line with national forecasts, a significant percentage increase is forecast in the number of people aged over 65 and over

85. This could mean that potentially by 2032, 27% of Waverley's population will be over 65, and 6% over 85.

Human Health

1.14 Health is favourable in Waverley Borough when compared with Surrey as a whole. However, life expectancy is 8.2 years lower for men and 10.6 years lower for women for those living in the most deprived areas of Waverley when compared to those living in the least deprived areas. Waverley is generally a healthy borough, with 86% of the population reporting their health was 'very good or good' in the 2011 Census.

Soil

1.15 Much of Waverley's agricultural land is shown by the 'Agricultural Land Classification - Provisional' dataset to be Grade 3, with smaller areas of lower quality Grade 4 land and just three small patches of higher quality Grade 2 land. It is not known if the Grade 3 land is Grade 3a (considered to be high quality) or Grade 3b.

Water

1.16 Rivers flowing through the borough include the River Wey and Cranleigh Water. Lying within the River Wey catchment, although parts of the borough are within Flood Zone 1 and therefore have a lower probability of flooding, most of the borough is within Flood Zones 2, 3a and 3b.

Air

1.17 There are two Air Quality Management Areas in Waverley – one in Farnham and one in Godalming. A further AQMA declared in Hindhead in 2004, has since been rescinded (2015) after the opening of the Hindhead Tunnel.

Climatic Factors

1.18 The total CO₂ emissions from Waverley have decreased from 753 kt in 2005 to 502.5 kt in 2019. Climate change has the potential to increase the occurrence of extreme weather events, including in Waverley borough, with increases in mean summer and winter temperatures and mean precipitation in winter and decreases in mean precipitation in summer. As highlighted by UKCP09 research, the effects of climate change for the South East by 2050 for a medium emissions scenario are likely to include a winter mean temperature increase of 2.2oC and a summer mean temperature of +2.8oC.

Material Assets

1.19 Waverley's towns tend to compete with those outside the borough rather than with each other, due to the dispersed geography of the borough. Waverley Borough has a buoyant economy, with low unemployment. Its business base is dominated by small and medium enterprises.

1.20 Waverley has some 41 primary schools and each of the four main settlements has at least one secondary school.

1.21 Recreation facilities include the Council's own sports centres in each of the four main settlements. The countryside has an extensive network of public rights of way.

1.22 In terms of transport, there are no motorways within the borough and the only national trunk road is the section of the A3 between Grayshott and Milford. In terms of rail links, Farnham is on the London to Alton line; with Farncombe, Godalming, Milford, Witley and Haslemere all on the London to Portsmouth line. Bus services are relatively frequent within the main urban areas.

1.23 The Index of Multiple Deprivation (2019) shows that Waverley is one of the least deprived in relation to Income; Education, skills & training; living environment; IDACI (income deprivation affecting children index) and IDAOPI (income deprivation affecting older people index). This is reflected in the national rankings, in which it is 313 out of 317 local authorities nationally.

Landscape

1.24 The distinctive natural environment in Waverley is generally of a very high quality. Approximately 61% of the borough lies within the Metropolitan Green Belt and 31% is designated as Rural Areas Beyond the Green Belt. 78% of the borough's countryside is designated as the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and/or Surrey Hills Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV).

Cultural Heritage

1.25 Waverley has a rich historic heritage, with 43 Conservation Areas, some 1,800 listed buildings and 590 Buildings of Local Merit. In addition, there are 23 Scheduled Ancient Monuments, together with 11 County defined Sites of Archaeological Importance. There are also eight Historic Gardens, including Farnham Park.

SEA Screening

1.26 An assessment has been undertaken to determine whether the Climate Change and Sustainability SPD requires SEA in accordance with the SEA Regulations.

1.27 Figure 2.1 overleaf presents the flow diagram entitled ‘Application of the SEA Directive to plans and programmes’ which is taken from the Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive, published in September 2005. This is a useful guide when considering whether a plan should be subject to SEA (The Practical Guide has been superseded by the National Planning Practice Guidance; however, it still provides a useful and relevant guide to the process to use in making SEA screening decisions).

Figure 2.1: Application of the SEA Directive to plans and programmes

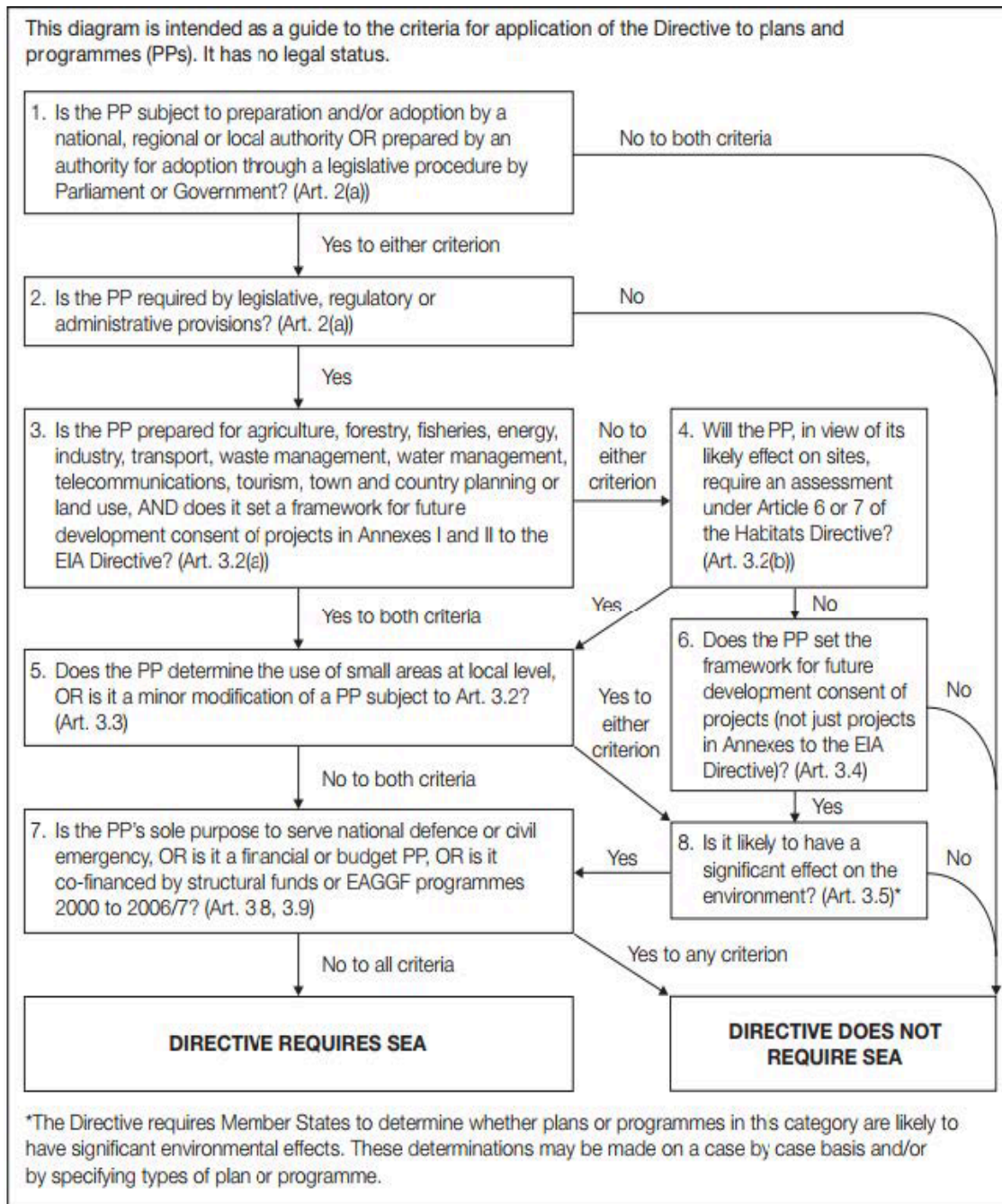


Table 2.1: Application of SEA Directive to the Climate Change and Sustainability SPD

Stage	Yes/No	Reason
1. Is the PP (plan or programme) 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 or Government? (Art. 2(a))	Yes	The SPD is being prepared by Waverley Borough Council to support the adopted Local Plan Part 1 under the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. Move to Q2.
2. Is the PP required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions? (Art. 2(a))	No	The SPD is being prepared to support the Waverley Borough Local Plan Part 1. However, there is no requirement to produce Climate Change and Sustainability SPD; it is an optional plan. Once made it will become a material consideration when determining planning applications. Therefore, it should continue to be screened Move to Q3.
3. Is the PP 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 and No	The SPD is being prepared for town and country planning and land use, but it does not set a framework for future development consent of projects in Annexes I and II to the EIA Directive. Move to Q4.
4. Will the PP, in view of its likely effect on sites, require an assessment for future development under Article 6 or	No	HRA screening (March 2022) of the SPD has been undertaken separately on behalf of WBC by LUC and has concluded that no likely significant effects are

Stage	Yes/No	Reason
7 of the Habitats Directive? (Art. 3.2 (b))		expected on any European site, either alone or in combination with any other plans or programmes. Move to Q6.
6.Does the PP set the framework for future development consent of projects (not just projects in Annexes to the EIA Directive)? (Art 3.4)	Yes	The SPD does not allocate any sites for development although it sets out planning guidance that will be a material consideration for relevant planning applications. Move to Q8.
8.Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment? (Art. 3.5)	No	See Table 2.2 SEA IS NOT REQUIRED

1.28 Schedule 1 of the SEA Regulations sets out the criteria for determining the likely significance of effects. These are listed in **Table 2.2** below along with comments on the extent to which the Climate Change and Sustainability SPD meets these criteria.

Table 2.2: Likely Significant Effects

SEA Requirement	Comments
The characteristics of the plans and programmes, having regard, in particular, to:	
1. 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.	Once made, the Climate Change and Sustainability SPD will support the Waverley Borough Local Plan Part 1, which sets out the strategic policies relating to land use and development proposals for strategic allocated sites. The SPD will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. It also provides useful guidance for development permitted under a General Permitted Development order, such as

SEA Requirement	Comments
	<p>residential extensions. The SPD will provide guidance on the implementation of policies ST1 (Sustainable Transport), CC1 (Climate Change), CC2 (Sustainable Construction and Design) CC3 (Renewable Energy Development), CC4 (Flood Risk Management), NE1 (Biodiversity and Geological Conservation) and NE2 (Green and Blue Infrastructure) which are most relevant to climate change and sustainability.</p> <p>The SPD introduces a requirement for policy ST1, CC1, CC2, CC3,CC4, NE1 and NE2 and the SPD itself to be considered at the earliest stage of the development process.</p> <p>The SPD does not allocate sites for built development.</p>
<p>2. The degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy</p>	<p>The SPD has to be in conformity with Waverley Borough Local Plan Part 1. The SPD must also have regard to the National Planning Policy Framework. The SPD does not have influence over other plans. Once made, the SPD will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.</p>
<p>3. 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 overall purpose of the SPD is to promote more sustainable development within Waverley Borough. The SPD supports Local Plan Part 1 Policies ST1, CC1, CC2 CC3, CC4, NE1 and NE2 to move to a low carbon future, encourages climate change resilience and adaptation and the use of sustainable resources. In line with the SPD, development should contribute to sustainable development.</p>
<p>4. Environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme.</p>	<p>Baseline information relating to Waverley Borough was described earlier in this chapter. A high proportion of the Borough’s countryside falls within an AONB. Waverley Borough contains three Special Protected Areas (SPAs), a Ramsar Site, a Special Area of Conservation (SAC), Sites</p>

SEA Requirement	Comments
	of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), Local Nature Reserves, Ancient Woodland and Biodiversity Opportunity Areas. There are also designated heritage features and areas of high quality agricultural land within the Borough.
5. 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).	The SPD sets out requirements for a Site Waste Management Plan to design waste out from the lifecycle of the building or minimise it. The SPD promotes the use of renewable energy such as hydropower and the sustainable use of water resources.
Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to:	
6. The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects.	The Climate Change and Sustainability SPD does not allocate sites for built development. The SPD covers the period up to 2032. Effects of the Climate Change and Sustainability SPD are expected to be indirect (due to not allocating sites) but long-term and permanent.
7. The cumulative nature of the effects.	N/A
8. The transboundary nature of the effects	The SPD focuses on Waverley Borough only. Transboundary effects under the SEA Regulations refers to transboundary effects on other EU Member States; therefore they are not relevant to the SPD.
9. The risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents).	There are no anticipated risks to human health or the environment from the SPD.
10. The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected).	The SPD covers all of Waverley Borough Council. Waverley Borough has a population of 121,272.

SEA Requirement	Comments
<p>11. The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Special natural characteristics or cultural heritage; ■ Exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values; and ■ Intensive land-use. 	<p>The majority of the borough’s countryside is designated as the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and/or Surrey Hills Area of Great Landscape Value (AGLV). Waverley Borough contains all or part of 15 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs); three Special Protected Areas; 171 Local Nature Reserves, Ancient Woodland; eight Biodiversity Opportunity Areas; one Ramsar site and one Special Area of Conservation (SAC). The Borough contains mainly Grade 3 agricultural land with some small areas of Grade 2. Waverley has 43 Conservation Areas, 1,800 listed buildings, 590 Buildings of Local Merit, 23 Scheduled Ancient Monuments, 11 County defined Sites of Archaeological Importance and eight Historic Gardens.</p>
<p>12. The effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.</p>	<p>The majority of the borough’s countryside is designated as Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)</p>

SEA Screening Conclusion

1.29 A screening assessment has been undertaken by applying the criteria from the SEA Directive and Schedule 1 of the SEA Regulations to determine whether or not the Climate Change and Sustainability SPD is likely to have significant environmental effects when assessed against the topics listed in the SEA Regulations.

1.30 The Climate Change and Sustainability SPD supports the adopted Waverley Borough Local Plan Part 1, which sets out strategic policies relating to land use and development proposals for strategic allocated sites. The SPD will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications and it

also provides useful guidance for development permitted under a General Permitted Development Order, such as residential extensions.

1.31 The SPD does not directly impact on land use through the allocation of sites for built development. In addition, the separate March 2022 HRA Screening Report prepared on behalf of Waverly Borough Council by LUC has concluded that no likely significant effects are expected on any European site, either alone or in combination with any other plans or programmes. **On this basis, it is considered that the Climate Change and Sustainability SPD is unlikely to have significant environmental effects and that full SEA is therefore not required.**

Next Steps

1.32 This SEA screening report will be sent to the three statutory consultees (Natural England, Historic England and the Environment Agency) and will be reviewed as appropriate in light of any comments received.

LUC

March 2022

References

- 1 <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance>
- 2 The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (SI 2004/1633) as amended by The Environmental Assessments and Miscellaneous Planning (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2018 (SI 2018/1232) and The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes (Amendment) Regulations 2020 (SI 2020/1531). It should be noted that the purpose of the amendments to the SEA Regulations is to ensure that the law functions correctly after the UK has left the European Union. No substantive changes are made to the way the SEA regime operates.
- 3 https://www.waverley.gov.uk/Portals/0/Documents/services/planning-and-building/planning-strategies-and-policies/local-plan/Waverley_Local_Plan___SA_Report_160819.pdf?ver=FlEcb8EPMggLvbNGSktVw%3d%3d
- 4 <https://www.waverley.gov.uk/Portals/0/Documents/services/planning-and-building/planning-strategies-and-policies/local-plan/Local%20Plan%20Part%202%20Examination/LPP2%20CD1%2006%20Sustainability%20Appraisal%20of%20Waverley%20Borough%20Local%20Plan%20Part%202.pdf?ver=jF-x--7SSQOeWNnQL6ywbA%3d%3d>

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