



**Strategic Environmental
Assessment and Habitat
Regulations Assessment
Screening Report for draft
Parking Supplementary Planning
Document**

May 2025

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead (RBWM) is preparing a Parking Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). This screening report will determine the need for a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) or Habitat Regulations Assessment¹ on the SPD in accordance with the European Directive 2001/42/EC and associated Environmental Assessments of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.

2. Parking SPD purpose and content

- 2.1. The NPPF states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Chapter 12, Achieving well-designed places, recognises good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities.
- 2.2. The Borough Local Plan (2013-2033) was adopted on 8th February 2022. The Parking SPD is being prepared to support adopted Borough Local Plan policy IF2, by setting out a framework to guide parking in new developments in the Borough.

The SPD will include guidance on:

- Parking standards for residential and non-residential new development based on location and accessibility;
- Provision of cycle parking at new developments; and
- Parking space dimensions and design requirements as per paragraph 14.6.3 of the BLP.

- 2.3. **The Parking SPD does not set the level of development or allocate any sites.**

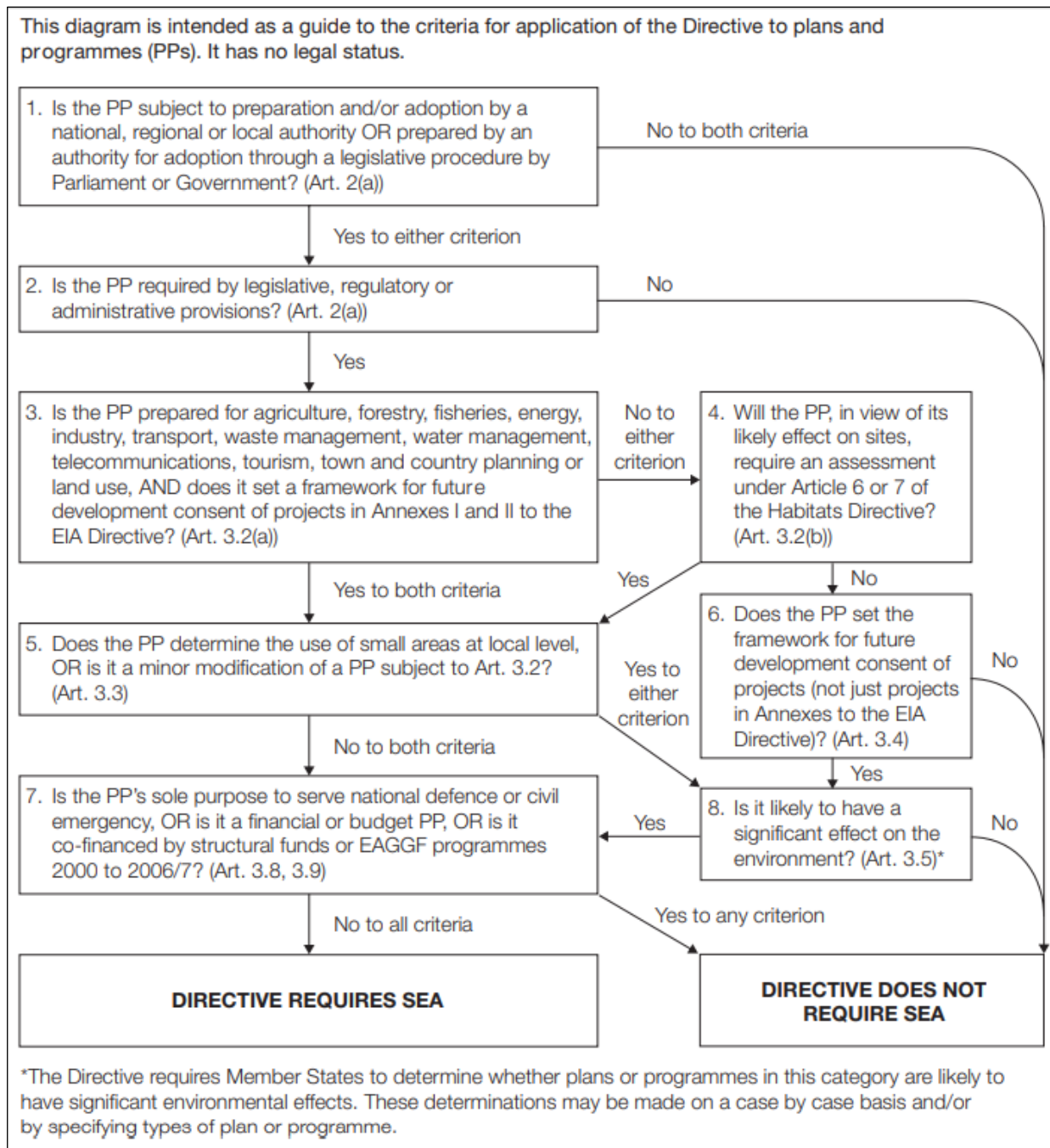
3. SEA Purpose and Screening

- 3.1. The basis for Strategic Environmental Assessment legislation is the European Directive 2001/42/EC (SEA Directive). This was transposed into English law by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (SEA Regulations). Detailed guidance of these regulations can be obtained via in the Government publication, 'A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive' (ODPM, 2005).

¹ The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (known as the Habitats Regulations) transposes the requirements of the Habitats Directive (Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of wild fauna and flora) into UK Law.

- 3.2. The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) discusses SEA requirements in relation to supplementary planning documents in paragraph 11-008. The PPG states that:
- ‘Supplementary planning documents do not require a Sustainability appraisal but may in exceptional circumstances require a strategic environmental assessment if they are likely to have significant environmental effects that have not already been assessed during the preparation of the relevant strategic policies’ and later in the same section: “Before deciding whether significant environment effects are likely, the local planning authority will need to take into account the criteria specified in schedule 1 to the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 and consult the consultation bodies.”*
- 3.3. Under the requirements of the European Union Directive 2001/42/EC and Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations (2004), certain types of plans that set the framework for the consent of future development projects must be subject to an environmental assessment.
- 3.4. As of 1st January 2021, to reflect the fact that the UK’s departure from the EU was finalised from that date, EU directives have been amended in the UK so that they continue to operate effectively. For example, in terms of habitat regulations assessment, the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) and the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended) have both been altered. The changes ensure that the strict protections afforded to sites, habitats and species, as derived from the EU Habitats and Wild Birds directives, continue in the UK. There is more information available on these legislation changes at: www.legislation.gov.uk/eu-legislation-and-uk-law.
- 3.5. Screening is the process for determining whether an SEA is required. The screening process is undertaken in two parts: the first assesses whether the SPD requires SEA, and the second part of the assessment considers whether the SPD is likely to have a significant effect on the environment. To make a full determination three statutory bodies must be consulted: Historic England, Environment Agency, and Natural England.
- 3.6. The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 came into force on 20th July 2004. The ODPM publication, ‘A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive’ (2005), sets out the approach to be taken in order to determine whether SEA is required (figure 1).

Figure 1 - Application of the SEA Directive to plans and programmes



3.7. Table 1 below establishes the need for an SEA based on Figure 1.

Table 1 – Establishing the need for an SEA

Environment Regulations	Assessment of SPD potential effects
<p><i>Question 1</i> 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))</p>	<p>Yes.</p> <p>The Parking SPD is subject to preparation and adoption by the local authority.</p> <p>PROCEED TO QUESTION 2</p>
<p><i>Question 2</i> Is the PP required by legislative, regulatory, or administrative provisions? (Art. 2(a))</p>	<p>Yes.</p> <p>When the SPD is adopted, it will supplement the BLP and become a material consideration in the assessment of planning applications.</p> <p>PROCEED TO QUESTION 3</p>
<p><i>Question 3</i> 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))</p>	<p>Yes</p> <p>The Parking SPD is prepared for town and country planning and land use. It supplements policies in the adopted BLP by providing detailed guidance in relation to parking provision for cycles and vehicles for new residential and non-residential development.</p> <p>The draft Parking SPD does not create new policy or identify specific sites for development.</p> <p>PROCEED TO QUESTION 4</p>
<p><i>Question 4</i> Will the PP, in view of its likely effect on sites, require an assessment for future development under Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive (Art. 3.2(b))</p>	<p>No.</p> <p>The Parking SPD does not set the level of development or allocate any sites.</p> <p>The Appropriate Assessment of the HRA undertaken to support the Borough Local Plan concluded that with the mitigation the Plan provides (as modified), it will not give rise to an adverse effect upon the integrity of any relevant sites, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.</p> <p>As the purpose of the Parking SPD is to provide guidance to expand</p>

	upon policy IF2 of the Borough Local Plan, the Council has determined that the SA/SEA produced to support the adopted Borough Local Plan is sufficient, and a HRA is not required. PROCEED TO QUESTION 6
<i>Question 5</i> Does the PP determine the use of small areas at local level, OR is it a minor modification of a PP subject to Art. 3.2? (Art. 3.3)	Not applicable. The Parking SPD does not propose any site allocations; therefore it does not determine at what specific locations certain land uses will take place.
<i>Question 6</i> 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 Parking SPD will be a material consideration when determining relevant future planning applications. PROCEED TO QUESTION 8
<i>Question 7</i> Is the PP's sole purpose to serve the national defence or civil emergency, OR is it a financial or budget PP, OR is it co-financed by structural funds or EAGGF programmes 2000 to 2006/7? (Art 3.8, 3.9)	Not applicable
<i>Question 8</i> Is it likely to have a significant impact on the environment? (Art 3.5)	No. See Table 2 below.

3.4. This screening report follows the criteria found in Table 2 below, which is based on the criteria found in the European Directive 2001/42/EC Annex II.

Table 2 - Criteria assessment of SPD potential effects

SEA Directive Criteria	Assessment of SPD potential effects	Likely significant impact?
1. The characteristics of the 'plans and programmes' having regard to:		
(a) 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;	The Parking SPD will provide further guidance to support existing BLP policy IF2. It will therefore contribute to the framework for future development in the Borough. The SPD will form a material consideration in planning application decisions. The SPD will not allocate sites for development and as such, the SA/SEA carried out by the Royal Borough as part of the Borough Local Plan is considered sufficient.	No

(b) the degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy;	The Parking SPD will not create new policies, but rather will provide further guidance to support policy IF2 of the Borough Local Plan.	No
(c) the relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development;	The purpose of the Parking SPD is to provide guidance to support policy IF2 of the Borough Local Plan, which has been SA/SEA assessed. The SPD will support policy IF2, helping to deliver sustainable development.	No
(d) environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme; and	There are no negative environmental issues associated with this SPD. The Parking SPD will support BLP policy IF2 measures to support modal shift, through EV guidance, convenience and security of Cycle parking, car clubs and accessibility zones. These measures are considered to be positive in contributing to sustainable development and take account of environmental considerations.	No
(e) 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 Parking SPD supports policy IF2 of the Borough Local Plan. The adopted Borough Local Plan has had regard to the European Community legislation on the environment, and therefore, this legislation will not have any direct relevance to the Parking SPD.	No
2. Characteristics of the likely effects having regard (in particular) to:		
(a) the probability, duration, frequency, and reversibility of the effects;	The Parking SPD does not allocate sites for development, but rather provides guidance to support policy IF2 of the Borough Local Plan. Any environmental impacts that may occur because of development within the Borough have been assessed accordingly in the evidence base produced to support the adopted Borough Local Plan.	No
(b) the cumulative nature of the effects;	The Parking SPD is not considered to have any significant cumulative effects as the document will provide further guidance to the adopted Borough Local Plan policy, which was subject to a comprehensive SA, incorporating an SEA.	No

	The Appropriate Assessment of the HRA undertaken to support the Borough Local Plan concluded that with the mitigation the Plan provides (as modified), it will not give rise to an adverse effect upon the integrity of any relevant sites, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.	
(c) the transboundary nature of the effects;	Any potential significant transboundary environmental effects have already been assessed as part of the Borough Local Plan Sustainability Appraisal, the Habitats Regulation Assessment and the Borough Local Plan examination process.	No
(d) the risks to human health or the environment (e.g., due to accidents);	The Parking SPD poses no risk to human health or the environment.	No
(e) the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected);	The magnitude and spatial extent of any effects is not expected to be significant because of the localised nature. The effects of the Parking SPD will be at the borough wide scale and lower.	No
(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	<p>The SPD will not promote greater residential development than is already set out in the adopted Borough Local Plan, which also includes policies to mitigate the impacts of recreational pressures on the Thames Basin Heaths SPA, in particular Policy NR4.</p> <p>Given that the Parking SPD will not allocate sites for future development and is intended to provide detailed guidance to expand upon policy IF2 of the Borough Local Plan, it will not lead to significant intensification of local land use.</p>	No
(g) the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, community or international protection status.	The Parking SPD is not expected to adversely impact on landscapes which have national, community or international protection.	No

4. Other Considerations

Habitats Regulations Assessment

- 4.1. In addition to SEA and SA, the Council is required to consider the requirement for a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA). HRA is the process used to determine whether a plan or project would have significant adverse effects on the integrity of internationally designated site of nature conservation importance, known as European sites. The need for a HRA is set out within the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010, which transposed EC Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC into UK law.
- 4.2. As with the SA, the Borough Local Plan was also subject to a comprehensive HRA. The Appropriate Assessment of the HRA concluded that with the mitigation the Plan provides (as modified), it will not give rise to an adverse effect upon the integrity of any relevant sites, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects. As the purpose of this SPD is to expand upon relevant policies within the BLP, the Council has determined that a HRA is not required.
- 4.3. The Habitats Regulations Assessment of the BLP can be viewed on the Council's website: [Evidence base | Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead \(rbwm.gov.uk\)](https://www.rbwm.gov.uk/evidence-base)

5. Response from Statutory Consultees

- 5.1. As part of preparing this screening report, the Council consulted the relevant statutory bodies, namely Natural England, Historic England and the Environment Agency. Responses were received from Natural England and Historic England, however, no response was received from the Environment Agency.
- 5.2. Historic England and Natural England both agreed with the conclusion that the draft Parking SPD will not require an SEA or HRA (see Appendix 1 and 2).

6. Conclusion

- 6.1 The Council considers that the Parking SPD is unlikely to have significant environmental effects. The SPD is intended to support relevant Borough Local Plan policies that have themselves already been subject to Sustainability Appraisal and Habitat Regulation Assessment. Therefore, the Parking SPD does not itself need to be subject to a SEA or HRA. This opinion has been supported by the relevant agencies who responded to this consultation on this assessment.



FAO: Garry Thornton
Principal Planning Policy Officer
Planning Policy, Place Directorate
Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead

Our ref: PL00798845

Garry.Thornton@RBWM.gov.uk

By email only

09 June 2025

Dear Planning Policy team

Screening Report for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of the draft Parking Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

Thank you for consulting Historic England on your draft screening report for SEA of the Borough's Parking SPD.

In terms of our area of interest, given the nature of the SPD, we concur with your assessment that the document is unlikely to result in any significant environmental effects and will simply provide additional guidance on existing Policies contained within an adopted Development Plan Document which has already been subject to a Sustainability Appraisal/SEA. As a result, we endorse the Authority's conclusions that it is not necessary to undertake SEA of this SPD.

If you have any queries or would like to discuss anything further, please let me

know. Yours sincerely

Guy Robinson, BSc, RTPI

Historic Environment Planning Adviser

Development Advice – London and the South East Region

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Telephone 020 7973 3700
HistoricEngland.org.uk

*Historic England is subject to both the Freedom of Information Act (2000) and Environmental Information Regulations (2004).
Any*

Information held by the organisation can be requested for release under this legislation.

Appendix 2

From: SM-NE-Consultations (NE) <consultations@naturalengland.org.uk>

Sent: 10 June 2025 07:13

To: Garry Thornton <Garry.Thornton@RBWM.gov.uk>

Subject: FAO Mr Garry Thornton REF: draft Parking SPD - SEA/HRA Screening Report Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead

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Our Ref: 512312

Your Ref: draft Parking SPD – SEA HRA Screening

Dear Mr Thornton

Thank you for your consultation request, dated and received by Natural England on 7th May 2025.

Natural England is a non-departmental public body. Our statutory purpose is to ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced, and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development.

Natural England has no significant comments to make on the SEA HRA Screening document, however we do agree with your conclusion, that the draft Parking SPD will not require an SEA or a HRA.

The lack of comment from Natural England should not be interpreted as a statement that there are no impacts on the natural environment. Other bodies and individuals may wish to make comments

that might help the Local Planning Authority (LPA) to fully take account of any environmental risks and opportunities relating to this document.

If you disagree with our assessment of this proposal as low risk, or should the proposal be amended in a way which significantly affects its impact on the natural environment, then in accordance with Section 4 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, please consult Natural England again.

Yours sincerely

Sharon Jenkins

Assistant Officer

Natural England

Consultation Service

Email: consultations@naturalengland.org.uk

www.gov.uk/natural-england



Natural England offers two chargeable services - the Discretionary Advice Service, which provides pre-application and post-consent advice on planning/licensing proposals to developers and consultants, and the Pre-submission Screening Service for European Protected Species mitigation licence applications. These services help applicants take appropriate account of environmental considerations at an early stage of project development, reduce uncertainty, the risk of delay and added cost at a later stage, whilst securing good results for the natural environment.

For further information on the Discretionary Advice Service see [here](#)

For further information on the Pre-submission Screening Service see [here](#)

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