

**Draft Screening Statement on the determination of the need for Strategic Environmental Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal for the Railway Arches Supplementary Planning Document.**

## **Introduction**

It has not been necessary to prepare a sustainability appraisal for the SPD as there is no requirement to do so under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (Section 19(5) of the planning Act 2008 removed the requirement for a sustainability appraisal report to be prepared for all SPDs). However, local planning authorities are still required to screen their SPDs to ensure that legal requirements for Sustainability Appraisal (SA) are met if:

- impacts from their implementation are likely and have not been addressed in the appraisal of the parent Development Plan Document (DPD); or
- an assessment is required by the SEA Directive and associated UK regulations.

Under Regulation 5 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (the regulations), councils must assess the effects on the environment, of plans and programmes prepared for planning or land use, that set the framework for future development consent for projects, including urban development projects.

Regulation 9 of the regulations requires councils to:

- take into account certain criteria listed in Schedule 1 of the regulations; and
- consult with specific agencies,

in making a determination whether or not a plan or programme referred to above is likely to have significant environmental effects. The results of this process must be summarised in an SEA screening statement, which must be publicly available.

Under Regulation 9(3), if the council determines that a plan or programme is unlikely to have significant environmental effects, an SEA will not be required. The council will however need to prepare a statement of its reasons for the determination.

The purpose of this statement is to screen the Railway Arches Supplementary Planning Document ('the SPD') in order to establish whether an SEA or SA will be required. In accordance with Regulations 9 and 11 of the regulations, the council will also consult with the specified environmental organisations (Natural England, Historic England and the Environment Agency) before making a determination as to whether an SEA or SA will be needed for the SPD.

In accordance with Regulation 9(3), if the screening statement concludes that the implementation of the SPD will be unlikely to have significant environmental effects and therefore not require a SEA, the statement will include the reasons for such a determination.

## **The Railway Arches SPD**

The overall objectives of the SPD are to:

- establish more detailed guidance on the application of planning and land use policies within the council's Local Plan that are concerned with managing development proposals for the railway arches;
- provide guidance for applicants, planners and other stakeholders on the railway arches;
- provide information on the location of the arches, the uses taking place, vacancies and the character of the immediate and surrounding area.

## CRITERIA FOR DETERMINING THE LIKELY SIGNIFICANCE OF EFFECTS ON THE ENVIRONMENT

### Characteristics of the Planning Guidance SPD

1	Criterion	Is there an effect?	Is there a significant environmental effect?	Justification
(a)	The degree to which the SPD 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 SPD is a low level planning policy document among the suite of council planning policy documents. Its primary purpose is to provide supplementary guidance to policies contained within the council's Local Plan, which has had a Sustainability Appraisal (including SEA assessment) prepared. The Local Plan provides the development plan policies and the SPD provides supplementary guidance to this document in terms of the railway arches in Hammersmith and Fulham and will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. However, as it occupies the lowest tier in the planning policy hierarchy, the degree to which the SPD sets the framework for projects and other activities is minimal, with the broad framework for future development being set out in the council's Local Plan and the London Plan.
(b)	The degree to which the SPD influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy	No	No	The SPD is a low level policy document in the overall suite of planning policy. It establishes more detailed guidance on the application of the Local Plan, in terms of the railway arches. It exerts no influence on other plans and programmes.
(c)	The relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development	No	No	The purpose of the SPD is to provide additional guidance on the policies contained in the council's Local Plan in terms of the railway arches. Policies aimed at the requirement for integrating environmental considerations are set in the Local Plan.

(d)	Environmental problems relevant to the SPD	No	No	The SPD itself only supplements adopted policy and does not introduce new policy. Environmental problems relevant to the borough are identified in the Local Plan and there are no environmental problems that are specifically relevant to the SPD only.
(e)	The relevance of the SPD for the implementation of the Community legislation on the environment (for example, plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection).	No	No	The SPD supplements the policies in the council's Local Plan which themselves take into account environmental legislation established by the EU, but it does not introduce any new policy initiatives.

### Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected

2	Criterion	Is there an effect?	Is there a significant environmental effect?	Justification
(a)	The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects of the SPD	<b>Yes</b>	No	The SPD supplements the policies in the council's development plan, namely the council's Local Plan, which has had a Sustainability Appraisal prepared. The SPD does not introduce any new policies itself. As such, its implementation will help promote the objectives of the Local Plan in terms of applications for the railway arches in the borough.
(b)	The cumulative nature of the effects of the SPD	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	The SPD provides supplementary guidance on policies in the council's development plan. Its implementation may assist in achieving environmental benefits for the whole borough that are sought in the overarching Local Plan policies.
(c)	The trans-boundary nature of the effects of the SPD	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	The SPD policies are concerned with guiding development proposals in the borough and unlikely to have any impact on neighbouring boroughs.
(d)	risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents) of the SPD	<b>No</b>	<b>No</b>	The SPD contains policies aimed at minimising harm caused by noise and other environmental pollution. It does not contain policies that would pose a risk to human health or to the environment.

(e)	The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected) by the SPD	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	Together with the Local Plan and the London Plan, the SPD provides the policy framework guiding development for the railway arches across the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham. Because the SPD supplements planning policy and does not introduce any new policy, the magnitude of the effects of the SPD itself will be limited, although as part of a raft of policies it will have a significant beneficial environmental effect for the whole borough and its population, including visitors.
(f)	The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected by the SPD due to: (i) special natural characteristics or cultural heritage (ii) exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values or (iii) intensive land use	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	The SPD supplements planning policies that have been subjected to Sustainability Appraisal. The SPD will be implemented in and across the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham which is characterised by its heavily built up nature. The implementation of the policies in the SPD is likely to result in better management of the borough's railway arches. It is not expected that there will be any significant effects in terms of natural areas and open spaces including its nature conservation areas, green and blue corridors and public open spaces as a result of implementing the SPD.
(g)	The effects of the SPD on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, community or international protection status.	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	The SPD only supplements and provides additional guidance on the policies contained in the council's development plan for the borough's railway arches. The Local Plan have been subjected to Sustainability Appraisal. The implementation of the SPD policies are not expected to have significant effects on protected or locally important natural areas or landscapes.

**Conclusion:** Based on the findings of the draft screening statement provided above, and subject to the views of relevant statutory consultation bodies, the Council has come to the preliminary view that neither a Strategic Environmental Assessment nor a Sustainability Appraisal is necessary for the Railway Arches SPD.