

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) final screening report and statement of determination

Meridian Water Western Bank –
Supplementary Planning Document

April 2023

Contents

1. Background.....	3
2. Consultation.....	3
3. Final screening assessment.....	3
4. SEA screening outcome and statement of determination	7
Appendix A: Draft SEA screening report	8

1. Background

- 1.1 The London Borough of Enfield have prepared a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) to guide the next phases of development at the western bank of Meridian Water. As part of this work, it is necessary to consider whether the Meridian Water Western Bank (MWWB) SPD should be subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in accordance with the relevant legislation and regulations.
- 1.2 A draft screening report was prepared in August 2021 to determine whether significant environmental effects are likely. This document is set out at Appendix A.

2. Consultation

- 2.1 Regulation 9 (2) (b) of Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 Part 2 requires consultation to be undertaken with the Environment Agency, Natural England and Historic England before making a determination.
- 2.2 The above consultation bodies were consulted in August 2021 on the draft screening report. Historic England and Natural England agreed that the MWWB SPD does not require a SEA, and the Environment Agency stated they have no comments to make.
- 2.3 Under Regulation 11 (1) the Council will send to each of the three consultation bodies a copy of the determination within 28 days of making a determination and under Regulation 11 (2).

3. Final screening assessment

- 3.1 To assess whether a SEA is required, the London Borough of Enfield has undertaken a screening process to determine whether the MWWB SPD is likely to have significant environmental effects.
- 3.2 The criteria for assessing the likely significance of effects in Annex II of the SEA Directive and Schedule 1 of the SEA Regulations are set out in the table below, along with consideration of the potential impact of the SPD against each criterion.
- 3.3 This screening assessment has also taken into account the Sustainability Appraisal (incorporating SEA) that has taken place on the adopted Local Plan.
- 3.4 Given the SPD does not introduce new planning policy, the SPD, alone or in combination with other plans and programmes, is not likely to have a significant effect on any European site. Therefore, it is considered that a full Appropriate Assessment under the Habitats Regulations is not required.

SEA Directive Criteria Schedule 1 to the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004	Comment	Is the SPD likely to have a significant environmental effect?
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SEA Directive Criteria Schedule 1 to the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004	Comment	Is the SPD likely to have a significant environmental effect?
1. Characteristics of the Meridian Water Western Bank SPD, having particular regard to:		
1(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.	<p>The draft SPD, if adopted, would contribute to a framework of policies and guidance for future projects and activities in the area.</p> <p>The SPD would be in conformity with national policy and the strategic policies of the Borough. The SPD will not create new policies or allocate sites for particular development or uses or address issues outside of those already assessed in the Council's Local Plan and as such is not considered to have significant effects in this regard.</p> <p>The SPD will not allocate resources.</p>	No
1(b) The degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy.	Whilst a material consideration in decision-making, SPDs sit at a lower level in the hierarchy of planning documents and are weighted accordingly. Providing supplementary guidance to support policies in the Development Plan (which includes the London Plan), the SPD acts to provide more detail to the priorities and principles established in higher level plans which have been subject to SEA.	No
1(c) The relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development.	<p>The Local Plan and other higher-level policies set the context for achieving sustainable development for which the SPD will provide further guidance as to how this should be achieved. These options will not revisit or change the higher-level policy requirements and in the case of the Core Strategy, Development Management Document and Area Action Plan, these have been subject of SA/SEA.</p> <p>The SPD will promote sustainable development in accordance with the NPPF and development plan policies.</p>	No
1(d) Environmental problems relevant to the plan or	The SPD will not introduce or exacerbate any environmental problems. Together with the development plan and other	No

SEA Directive Criteria Schedule 1 to the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004	Comment	Is the SPD likely to have a significant environmental effect?
programme.	adopted plans and guidance this SPD will add to a policy context and framework within which acceptable development proposals and associated environmental improvements can be prepared.	
1(e) The relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (for example, plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection).	The SPD through its objectives and the encouragement of high quality and sustainable design will be indirectly relevant to the implementation of Community legislation on the environment, but not to any significant extent in the scope and nature of the localised positive outcomes envisaged, e.g. supporting improved air quality through promotion of walking/cycling, improved health and well-being through provision of green spaces/tree planting as part of redevelopment proposals.	No
2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having particular regard to:		
2(a) The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects.	The SPD guidance, objectives and principles are not considered to extend significantly beyond the Council's policies which have already been subject to SEA.	No
2(b) The cumulative nature of the effects.	Cumulative effects occur where the outcome of one or more policies, when put together, have a significant combined effect. The draft SPD does not allocate sites for development nor does the guidance extend significantly beyond the Council's policies which have already been subject to SEA.	No
2(c) The transboundary nature of the effects.	There are not considered to be any significant transboundary effects arising from the SPD given the highly localised nature of the area included and the types of development defined within the development plan.	No
2(d) The risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents).	The SPD will not create significant risks to human health or the environment. On the contrary, there are expected to be positive outcomes, for example through the promotion of green infrastructure, well-	No

SEA Directive Criteria Schedule 1 to the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004	Comment	Is the SPD likely to have a significant environmental effect?
	being and improved public transport.	
2(e) The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected).	The spatial extent of the SPD will not be larger than the area already covered in the development plan. The SPD guidance applies to a local area and the magnitude and spatial extent of potential effects will be limited.	No
<p>2(f) The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:</p> <p>(i) Special natural characteristics or cultural heritage.</p> <p>(ii) Exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values.</p> <p>(iii) Intensive land-use.</p>	<p>Development plan policies relating to environmental protection and design will apply alongside the SPD. The SPD will highlight the character and assets in the area and the need for appropriate and contextual design responses.</p> <p>The extent of effects are not considered sufficient to warrant SEA.</p>	No
2(g) The effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.	<p>The far east (the Lee Navigation Channel) and south-east corner of the SPD area are designated as part of the Lee Valley Regional Park, which is a Site of Metropolitan Importance for Nature Conservation.</p> <p>Approximately 1 kilometre to the north-west of the SPD area, within the Lee Valley Regional Park, is designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). This SSSI is known as the Chingford Reservoirs, which is designated because of their importance for wintering wildfowl and wetland birds. They are of national importance for conservation. They are of the highest priority for protection and development that would have an adverse impact on the reservoirs will not be permitted unless the needs for the development substantially outweigh the adverse impact on the site and the SSSI network as a whole.</p> <p>There are areas of international, European and national ecological importance in proximity to Edmonton Leeside, including the William Girling</p>	No

SEA Directive Criteria Schedule 1 to the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004	Comment	Is the SPD likely to have a significant environmental effect?
	<p>Reservoir which is part of the nearby Chingford Reservoirs SSSI and the Lee Valley Special Protection Area/ Ramsar site at Walthamstow Reservoirs. Epping Forest Special Area of Conservation is approximately 3 kilometres to the north-east of Meridian Water.</p> <p>The SPD supplements and provides additional guidance on the policies contained in the council's development plan which have been subjected to SA. As such, the implementation of the SPD is not expected to have significant effects the protected and important natural areas or landscapes mentioned above. Instead, it is likely that the additional guidance provided in the SPD will lead to sustainable outcomes for the Lee Valley Regional Park.</p>	

4. SEA screening outcome and statement of determination

4.1 The Council has considered the scope and content of the draft SPD for the purposes of determining whether the guidance is likely to give rise to any significant environmental effects.

4.2 In making its assessment, the Council has had regard to the respective SA and SEA screening opinions that have been previously undertaken on higher level development plan documents. Particular regard has been taken to the SA for Edmonton Leaside Area Action Plan, which was produced in March 2017. The higher-level assessments note that development at Meridian Water will be taking place in an area already at serious risk of flooding. However, balanced against this is the policy requirement for flood alleviation works to mitigate risk to flood risk zones, (some of which have secured Government Funding as part of a wider package of committed Strategic Infrastructure Works) and the careful planning of major new developments at Meridian Water, which will see flood prevention measures built into the plans for new housing.

4.3 Based on the findings of the draft screening statement provided in Appendix A, and the outcome of consultation with relevant statutory consultation bodies, the Council has come to the view that the draft Meridian Water Western Bank SPD is unlikely to give rise to significant environmental effects. A Strategic Environmental Assessment is therefore not considered necessary.

4.4 The determination date is 6th April 2023.

Appendix A: Draft SEA screening report

Enfield

Meridian Water SPD - draft SEA screening report

August 2021

www.enfield.gov.uk/



1. Introduction

The London Borough of Enfield are preparing a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) to guide the next phases of development at Meridian Water. As part of this work, it is necessary to consider whether the Meridian Water SPD should be subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in accordance with the relevant national legislation and regulations.

A draft screening report has been prepared in order to determine whether significant environmental effects are likely. This document is set out below.

As “the responsible authority”, the London Borough of Enfield will consult the relevant bodies – the Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England. Following this, we are required to issue a formal statement of determination and issue a final screening report.

2. Draft SEA screening report for Meridian Water SPD

2.1 Introduction

This screening report has been prepared to consider whether the Meridian Water Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) should be subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in accordance with the relevant national legislation and regulations.

This report outlines the legislative and policy framework for the screening, before considering whether significant environmental effects are likely to arise through the draft SPD that would require more detailed assessment.

The draft SPD is intended to establish the key objectives and principles to guide future development in the area covered. The nature and level of guidance is intended to support and complement other adopted and emerging development plan documents and policies, which have undergone equivalent and more detailed assessments in accordance with the SEA requirements of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations (2004). These development plan documents include:

- Core Strategy (2010)
- Development Management Document (2014)
- Edmonton Leaside Area Action Plan (ELAAP) (2020)

In accordance with the SEA Regulations this screening report and its conclusions will be subject to consultation with the relevant statutory bodies; the Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England. Following this consultation, a formal statement of determination and final screening report will be published.

2.2 Legal Framework

SEA is a procedure that evolved in accordance with European Directive 2001/42/EC (the SEA Directive) “on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment”. The SEA Directive aims to ensure a high level of protection for the environment and to integrate environmental considerations into the preparation of plans.

This has been transposed into legislation by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations (2004) (the SEA Regulations), which requires the formal environmental assessment of certain plans and programmes if they are determined to be likely to have significant effects on the environment.

Under the UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement (2020), the UK has effectively taken a ‘snapshot’ of EU law, regulations and case law in relation to SEA. This has the effect of retaining the existing EU framework post-Brexit.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) defines an SPD as a document which adds further detail to the policies in a development plan and can be used to provide further guidance for development on specific sites, or on particular issues, such as design. SPDs are capable of being a material consideration in planning decisions but are not part of the development plan. Also, they should not add unnecessarily to the financial burdens on development.

National Planning Practice Guidance states that whilst SPDs do not require Sustainability Appraisal (SA), they may in exceptional circumstances require a SEA if they are assessed to

be likely to have significant environmental effects, that have not already have been assessed during the preparation of the relevant strategic policies. The guidance goes on to state SEA is unlikely to be required where an SPD deals only with a small area at a local level, unless it is considered that there are likely to be significant environmental effects.

In order to determine whether significant environment effects are likely, the local planning authority (London Borough of Enfield) as “the responsible authority” need to take the criteria specified in Schedule 1 to the SEA Regulations into account (reflecting Annex II of the SEA Directive) and consult the relevant bodies – the Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England.

The preliminary outcome of Enfield’s SEA screening process is detailed further in this report.

2.3 Purpose of the Meridian Water SPD

Meridian Water is the Borough’s largest residential led mixed-use development and lies within the Edmonton Leaside Strategic Growth Area, offering major opportunities for regeneration and improvement.

The area that will be covered by the SPD is set out below in Figure 1



Figure 1: Red line boundary for SPD

The SPD will build upon and provide more detailed guidance on policies in the development plan, including ELAAP and the Local Plan. It will provide clear planning guidance for the sustainable regeneration of Meridian Water and provide guidance on how policy will be implemented spatially. This will help ensure that emerging developments are planned and

designed in a coherent and integrated manner and can deliver identified priorities, such as a high-quality mixed-use environment, a more connected and accessible place, and sufficient infrastructure.

The SPD will set out the guiding principles and parameters for the area to ensure the vision for a sustainable high-quality development is achieved. It will provide guidance on public realm, streets and connectivity, urban grain, land use, and sustainable design, by setting out the Council's application of planning policy. The SPD will also set out the infrastructure required to support the delivery of good growth at Meridian Water.

The guidance will not introduce new planning policies into the development plan; however, it will become a material consideration in decision-making. In doing so, it will comply with the development plan.

2.4 Determining the likely significance of effects on the environment

To assess whether a SEA is required, the London Borough of Enfield must undertake a screening process to determine whether the Meridian Water SPD is likely to have significant environmental effects.

The criteria for assessing the likely significance of effects in Annex II of the SEA Directive and Schedule 1 of the SEA Regulations are set out in the table below, along with consideration of the potential impact of the SPD against each criterion.

This screening assessment has also taken into account the Sustainability Appraisal (incorporating SEA) that has taken place on the adopted Local Plan.

Given the SPD does not introduce new planning policy, the SPD, alone or in combination with other plans and programmes, is not likely to have a significant effect on any European site. Therefore, it is considered that a full Appropriate Assessment under the Habitats Regulations is not required.

SEA Directive Criteria Schedule 1 to the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004	Comment	Is the SPD likely to have a significant environmental effect?
1. Characteristics of the Meridian Water SPD, having particular regard to:		
1(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.	<p>The draft SPD, if adopted, would contribute to a framework of policies and guidance for future projects and activities in the area.</p> <p>The SPD would be in conformity with national policy and the strategic policies of the Borough. The SPD will not create new policies or allocate sites for particular development or uses or address issues outside of those already assessed in the Council's Local Plan and as such is not considered to have</p>	No

SEA Directive Criteria Schedule 1 to the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004	Comment	Is the SPD likely to have a significant environmental effect?
	<p>significant effects in this regard.</p> <p>The SPD will not allocate resources.</p>	
1(b) The degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy.	<p>Whilst a material consideration in decision-making, SPDs sit at a lower level in the hierarchy of planning documents and are weighted accordingly. Providing supplementary guidance to support policies in the Development Plan (which includes the London Plan), the SPD acts to provide more detail to the priorities and principles established in higher level plans which have been subject to SEA.</p>	No
1(c) The relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development.	<p>The Local Plan and other higher-level policies set the context for achieving sustainable development for which the SPD will provide further guidance as to how this should be achieved. These options will not revisit or change the higher-level policy requirements and in the case of the Core Strategy, Development Management Document and Area Action Plan, these have been subject of SA/SEA.</p> <p>The SPD will promote sustainable development in accordance with the NPPF and development plan policies.</p>	No
1(d) Environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme.	<p>The SPD will not introduce or exacerbate any environmental problems. Together with the development plan and other adopted plans and guidance this SPD will add to a policy context and framework within which acceptable development proposals and associated environmental improvements can be prepared.</p>	No
1(e) The relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (for example, plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection).	<p>The SPD through its objectives and the encouragement of high quality and sustainable design will be indirectly relevant to the implementation of Community legislation on the environment, but not to any significant extent in the scope and nature of the localised positive outcomes envisaged, e.g. supporting improved air quality through promotion of walking/cycling, improved health and well-being through provision of</p>	No

SEA Directive Criteria Schedule 1 to the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004	Comment	Is the SPD likely to have a significant environmental effect?
	green spaces/tree planting as part of redevelopment proposals.	
2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having particular regard to:		
2(a) The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects.	The SPD guidance, objectives and principles are not considered to extend significantly beyond the Council's policies which have already been subject to SEA.	No
2(b) The cumulative nature of the effects.	Cumulative effects occur where the outcome of one or more policies, when put together, have a significant combined effect. The draft SPD does not allocate sites for development nor does the guidance extend significantly beyond the Council's policies which have already been subject to SEA.	No
2(c) The transboundary nature of the effects.	There are not considered to be any significant transboundary effects arising from the SPD given the highly localised nature of the area included and the types of development defined within the development plan.	No
2(d) The risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents).	The SPD will not create significant risks to human health or the environment. On the contrary, there are expected to be positive outcomes, for example through the promotion of green infrastructure, well-being and improved public transport.	No
2(e) The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected).	The spatial extent of the SPD will not be larger than the area already covered in the development plan. The SPD guidance applies to a local area and the magnitude and spatial extent of potential effects will be limited.	No
2(f) The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to: (i) Special natural characteristics or	Development plan policies relating to environmental protection and design will apply alongside the SPD. The SPD will highlight the character and assets in the area and the need for appropriate and contextual	No

SEA Directive Criteria Schedule 1 to the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004	Comment	Is the SPD likely to have a significant environmental effect?
<p>cultural heritage.</p> <p>(ii) Exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values.</p> <p>(iii) Intensive land-use.</p>	<p>design responses.</p> <p>The extent of effects are not considered sufficient to warrant SEA.</p>	
<p>2(g) The effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.</p>	<p>The far east (the Lee Navigation Channel) and south-east corner of the SPD area are designated as part of the Lee Valley Regional Park, which is a Site of Metropolitan Importance for Nature Conservation.</p> <p>Approximately 1 kilometre to the north-west of the SPD area, within the Lee Valley Regional Park, is designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). This SSSI is known as the Chingford Reservoirs, which is designated because of their importance for wintering wildfowl and wetland birds. They are of national importance for conservation. They are of the highest priority for protection and development that would have an adverse impact on the reservoirs will not be permitted unless the needs for the development substantially outweigh the adverse impact on the site and the SSSI network as a whole.</p> <p>There are areas of international, European and national ecological importance in proximity to Edmonton Leaside, including the William Girling Reservoir which is part of the nearby Chingford Reservoirs SSSI and the Lee Valley Special Protection Area/ Ramsar site at Walthamstow Reservoirs. Epping Forest Special Area of Conservation is approximately 3 kilometres to the north-east of Meridian Water.</p> <p>The SPD supplements and provides additional guidance on the policies contained in the council's development plan which have been subjected to SA. As such, the implementation of the SPD is not expected to have significant effects the protected and important natural areas or landscapes mentioned above. Instead, it is likely that the additional guidance provided in the SPD will lead to sustainable outcomes for the Lee Valley</p>	<p>No</p>

SEA Directive Criteria Schedule 1 to the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004	Comment	Is the SPD likely to have a significant environmental effect?
	Regional Park.	

2.5 Preliminary SEA Screening Outcome

The Council has considered the scope and content of the draft SPD for the purposes of determining whether the guidance is likely to give rise to any significant environmental effects.

In making its assessment, the Council has had regard to the respective SA and SEA screening opinions that have been previously undertaken on higher level development plan documents. Particular regard has been taken to the SA for Edmonton Leaside Area Action Plan, which was produced recently in March 2017. The higher-level assessments note that development at Meridian Water will be taking place in an area already at serious risk of flooding. However, balanced against this is the policy requirement for flood alleviation works to mitigate risk to flood risk zones, (some of which have secured Government Funding as part of a wider package of committed Strategic Infrastructure Works) and the careful planning of major new developments at Meridian Water, which will see flood prevention measures built into the plans for new housing.

Based on the findings of the draft screening statement provided above, and subject to the views of the relevant statutory consultation bodies, the Council has come to the preliminary view that the draft Meridian Water SPD is unlikely to give rise to significant environmental effects. A Strategic Environmental Assessment is therefore not considered necessary at this stage.

3. Next steps

The Council will consult with the relevant bodies (Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England) on the preliminary screening assessment outcome, as per the SEA Regulations.

Consultation responses will be considered, and the screening determination updated as appropriate. If, as a result of this consultation, a SEA is found to be required, the preparation can be integrated into the process of revising the draft Meridian Water SPD and in producing the final SPD to be adopted following further assessment and necessary changes.

If the outcome of this screening confirms that SEA is not necessary, in accordance with Regulations, a formal statement of determination and final screening report will be published to demonstrate that SEA issues have been taken into account and considered during the preparation of the SPD.