

Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Statement

Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Guidance

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**CYNGOR SIR
YNYS MÔN
ISLE OF ANGLESEY
COUNTY COUNCIL**

1. Introduction

- 1.1 In accordance with European Directive 2001/42/EC which is implemented in the UK via the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, this document is the Screening Determination of the need to undertake a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) for the 'Affordable Housing' Supplementary Planning Guidance.

2. Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 2.1 The objective of Strategic Environmental Assessment is to provide 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.
- 2.2 The SEA Regulations 2004 place an obligation on local authorities to undertake a SEA on plans or projects:
- That are required for town and country planning or land use; and
 - Set the framework for future development consent of projects listed in Annex I or II to European Council Directive 85/337/EEC
- 2.3 The SPG sets the framework for development in the future, which means it could be considered a 'plan' or 'programme' within the meaning of the SEA Directive and could therefore require an 'environmental assessment'. The regulations advise that a specified set of criteria (set out in Schedule 1 of the regulations) should be used to demonstrate whether a plan should be subject of an SEA. These criteria have been considered in determining whether the SPG should be the subject of a SEA.

3. Background to the Affordable Housing SPG

- 3.1 The 'Affordable Housing' SPG applies to the Isle of Anglesey and Gwynedd Local Planning Authority areas, and supports and supplements the relevant policies contained within the adopted Anglesey and Gwynedd Joint Local Development Plan (JLDP), 31 July 2017.
- 3.2 The SPG provides guidance relating to the development of affordable housing through the planning process. There are a number of different ways in which affordable housing can be provided for local people. This includes dwellings provided through all forms of development opportunities i.e. on allocated, windfall and rural exception sites, including both new build and adaptation and change of use of existing buildings. The Gwynedd Council Draft Housing Strategy (2013-2017) and the Anglesey Council Local Housing Strategy (2014-2019) elaborate on the various tools applied in the area to provide affordable housing.

4. The Screening Process

- 4.1 Though not part of the statutory Development Plan, Supplementary Planning Guidance cover a range of issues, which generally interpret policies in the Development Plan. If an SPG is considered unlikely to have significant environmental effects through the screening process, then the conclusion will be that the SEA is not necessary.

- 4.2 To assess whether an SEA was required, the Responsible Authority (Anglesey County Council and Gwynedd Council) undertook a screening process based on a standard set of criteria as set out in Annex II of the SEA Directive. These criteria are set out in the table in Appendix 1 of this report, alongside the Council's response in relation to the SPG.
- 4.3 The SEA Regulations require that the consultation bodies (namely Natural Resources Wales and CADW) be consulted upon the screening assessment undertaken. No responses were received from CADW whilst Natural Resources Wales were satisfied that a SEA of the Guidance was not required.
- 4.4 The Affordable Housing SPG was subject to public consultation between 13 December 2018 and 31 January 2019. Due consideration was given to all of the representations received and amendments to the Guidance were made accordingly. These amendments essentially provided further interpretation of the policy to ensure it would be applied consistently, and did not lead to significant changes in the SPG. Consequently, it was deemed that they did not affect the conclusions of the Screening Assessment.

5. Habitats Regulations Assessment

- 5.1 In addition to SEA, the council is also required to consider undertaking a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA). HRA is the process used to determine whether a plan or project would have significant adverse effects upon the integrity of internationally designated sites of nature conservation importance, known as European sites or European offshore marine 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).
- 5.2 A HRA screening of the SPG was undertaken in accordance with the Habitats Regulations with the following conclusions made:
- The SPG is primarily a guidance document and is not considered to alter the strategic policy framework;
 - It does not present new policies or proposals and serves only to expand on the existing policies in the JLDP relating to the provision of affordable housing in sustainable locations in the Plan Area.
 - The relevant policies of the JLDP in the SPG have already been subject to HRA;
 - The SPG is not a rigid land use allocation but sets the broad planning context and development principles associated with providing affordable housing;
 - The SPG does not introduce new proposals of a type and/or scale outside the parameters of the JLDP, or amend any of the proposed mitigation measures agreed;
 - the primary effect or impact of the SPG will be facilitating sustainable development throughout the Plan Area. The SPG itself will not have any adverse impacts on the environment. Rather it will help to address environmental problems by ensuring affordable housing is designed to a high standard, is compliant with relevant Building regulations requirements and is appropriately located to promote sustainable living for occupants.
- 5.3 The Council concluded that there will be no significant adverse impact on the integrity of Natura 2000 sites as a direct result of the SPG, and therefore,

considers that the Affordable Housing SPG will not require full appropriate assessment under the Habitats Regulations.

6. Statement of Reasons for Determination

- 6.1 It is considered that the Affordable Housing SPG is unlikely to have significant effects on the environment. The SPG is not setting any new policies or allocations or amending policies in the adopted JLDP. Rather it is providing further guidance on existing policies contained within the Anglesey and Gwynedd JLDP, which has been subject to SEA.
- 6.2 It is determined that as a result of the screening undertaken by the Councils, along with the responses received from the statutory consultation bodies, a Strategic Environmental Assessment is not required for the Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Guidance.

APPENDIX 1

The table below uses criteria taken from Schedule 1 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and programmes Regulations 2004 to determine if the SPG is likely to have a significant effect on the environment

SA Directive Criteria	Potential Effects of SPG	Is there a likely significant effect?
1. The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular to:		
1.1 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 allocation resources.	The SPG is primarily a guidance document and is not considered to alter the strategic policy framework. It does not present new policies or proposals or amend existing policies in the JLDP and serves only to expand on the existing policies in the JLDP relating to affordable housing. The framework has already been set by the adopted JLDP policies which have already been subject to SEA. The SPG is not a rigid land use allocation but sets the broad planning context and development principles associated with affordable housing within the context set out in Policy TAI15 and TAI16.	No
1.2 The degree with which the plan or programme influences other plans and programme including those in a hierarchy.	The Affordable Housing SPG will provide additional guidance on the implementation of policy and will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. As such it will not influence other plans and programmes. It will only provide further additional details and will not introduce new policies or amend existing adopted policies.	No

SA Directive Criteria	Potential Effects of SPG	Is there a likely significant effect?
1.3 The relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental consideration in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development.	<p>The Affordable Housing SPG provides additional detail on the implementation of Policies TAI 15 and TAI16 which was subject to SEA. The SPG contains advice relating to the standards required of the range of residential sites in order to deliver the affordable housing necessary to meet local needs. Therefore it has no relevance to the integration of environmental considerations.</p> <p>It does however have social and economic considerations in relation to sustainable development. The SPG will help promote the aim for sustainable development by providing clear and consistent guidance on the provision of affordable housing.</p>	No
1.4 Environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme.	The SPG itself will not have any adverse impacts on the environment. Rather it will help to address environmental problems by ensuring affordable housing is designed to a high standard, is compliant with relevant Building regulations requirements and is appropriately located to promote sustainable living for occupants.	No
1.5 The relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (e.g. waste management or water protection.)	Not relevant. The SPG supplements adopted planning policies and is not relevant to the implementation of community legislation on the environment. The principle of development is considered through the JLDP which has been subject to SEA.	No
2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to:		

SA Directive Criteria	Potential Effects of SPG	Is there a likely significant effect?
2.1 The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects.	The overall impact of the SPG will be positive by securing increased provision of affordable housing and the benefits that this brings (e.g. reduced overcrowding and improve health and wellbeing), as set out in the JLDP.	No
2.2 The cumulative nature of the effects.	The cumulative impact of the effects of the Guidance should be positive with regard to the principles of sustainable development.	No
2.3 The trans-boundary nature of the effects.	The SPG will be limited for use within the Anglesey and Gwynedd Local Planning Authority Areas.	No
2.4 The risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents).	It is not considered that the SPG would present a risk to human health or the environment. It is considered that there are likely to be improvements to human health due to affordable housing being developed to meet needs, including being of the appropriate size, location and quality. There will be a positive contribution to well-being.	No
2.5 The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected).	Since the SPG supports policies in the adopted JLDP, the SPG covers the Anglesey and Gwynedd Local Planning Authority areas and will primarily assist the LPAs to have a positive effect on the resident population in these areas.	No
2.6 The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to: i) the special natural characteristics or cultural heritage; ii) Exceeded environmental quality standards or limit value; iii) Intensive land use	It is considered that the SPG will not have any effect on areas which have values / are vulnerable. Any planning application will be assessed against the relevant policies before planning permission is granted.	No

SA Directive Criteria	Potential Effects of SPG	Is there a likely significant effect?
2.7 The effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.	The Affordable Housing SPG has no effect on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or protection status. Impacts on such areas will be considered through the application of relevant JLDP policies which have been subject to SEA. It is also noted that the SPG does not directly allocate land for particular development.	No