



**Supplementary Planning Document
on Meeting Housing Needs**

**Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening
Report**

January 2023

Contents

Title	Page
1.0 Introduction to SPD on Meeting Housing Needs	1
2.0 SEA and SEA Screening	2
3.0 Conclusion	10
4.0 Next steps	10

1.0 Meeting Housing Needs Supplementary Planning Document

Purpose, scope and content

- 1.1 Mid Devon District Council has prepared a new Meeting Housing Needs SPD for Mid Devon District. This is currently in a Draft form, intended for public consultation.
- 1.2 The purpose of the Meeting Housing Needs SPD is to provide detailed guidance on the type and tenure of housing being provided across the district to ensure the timely delivery of open market, affordable, gypsy and traveller accommodation, community led housing and custom and self-build. The SPD can be used to help assist consideration of proposals submitted to the Council for determination and inform the decisions made on these.
- 1.4 The Meeting Housing Needs SPD comprises a number of key sections including affordable housing, homes for older people and people with disabilities, homes for gypsies and travellers, homes for travelling showpeople, custom and self-build, community-led housing and Modern Methods of Construction.

Relationship with the National Planning Policy Framework

- 1.6 The National Planning Policy Framework (2019) paragraph 60 makes clear that ‘to support the government’s objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes, it is important that a sufficient amount and variety of land can come forward where it is needed, that the needs of groups with specific housing requirements are addressed and that land with permission is developed without unnecessary delay. Paragraph 62 adds that ‘within this context, the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community should be assessed and reflected in planning policies (including, but not limited to, those who require affordable housing, families with children, older people, students, people with disabilities, service families, travellers, people who rent their homes and people wishing to commission or build their own homes.

Relationship with the Mid Devon Local Plan

- 1.8 The Mid Devon Local Plan 2013 2033 contains a number of planning policies related to housing, all contributing to the delivery of a vision that ‘Mid Devon will be a prosperous and sustainable rural district, where individuals, families and communities can flourish as a result of access to good quality local employment, housing and services and a clean, green safe environment.’
- 1.9 The Local Plan Review Policy S3 ‘Meeting housing needs’ provides the principal policy baseline for the more detailed guidance included in the Meeting Housing Needs Supplementary Planning Document:

Policy S3 Meeting housing needs

- a) *The diverse housing needs of Mid Devon will be met through the provision of a minimum of 7,860 dwellings between 1st April 2013 and 31st March 2033. In line with the predicted continuing need for new housing the expected annual rate of new housing development will be 393 dwellings per annum;*
- b) *Unless otherwise stated in a site allocation policy, on open market housing sites (i.e. excluding exception sites provided under Rural Exceptions Sites under Policy DM6) of 11 dwellings or more in Tiverton, Cullompton and Crediton a target of*

28% affordable dwellings, and on sites elsewhere of 6 dwellings or more a target of 30% affordable dwellings will be applied to the total number of dwellings, depending on viability and providing a mix of dwelling sizes and types appropriate to the evolving needs of Mid Devon's population. Sites of between 6 – 10 dwellings outside Tiverton, Cullompton and Crediton will be permitted to make a financial contribution sufficient to provide the affordable dwellings in another location;

- c) To support self-build and custom dwellings meeting the needs of local communities, such dwellings will be permitted as affordable housing in locations outside settlement limits in accordance with Policy DM6;*
- d) To support self-build and custom housing on sites of 20 dwellings or more developers will supply at least 5% of serviced dwelling plots for sale to self-builders for a period of 12 months per plot and any plots subsequently developed for self-build must be completed within 3 years of purchase by a self-builder; and*
- e) A five year supply of gypsy and traveller pitches will be allocated on deliverable sites within Mid Devon to ensure that the predicted need for traveller sites will be met. A further supply of developable sites or broad locations for growth will be identified equivalent to a further ten years of predicted growth. The Housing Authority will seek to provide a public site for gypsy and traveller pitches within Mid Devon, subject to the availability of funding.*

Status of the Mid Devon Design Guide SPD

- 1.12 The Meeting Housing Needs SPD will be adopted by the Council as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). The SPD will not be part of the development plan and does not introduce new planning policies into the development plan. However, it will be capable of being a material consideration in determining planning applications.

2.0 SEA and SEA Screening

Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 2.1. The requirement for a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) arises from the European Directive 2001/42/EC “on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment” (hereafter referred to as the SEA Directive). This has been transposed into English law by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (referred to as the ‘SEA Regulations’). This legislation places an obligation on local authorities to undertake SEA on any plan or programme prepared for town and country planning or land use purposes and which sets the framework for future development consent of certain projects.

Screening

- 2.2. The 2008 Planning Act has removed the requirement to undertake a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) for an SPD. However, this has not replaced the requirement to establish whether an SPD requires Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). SEA is required in some limited situations where a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) could have significant environmental effects.
- 2.3. In order to establish whether SEA is required the fundamental consideration is whether the document is likely to have ‘significant environmental effects’. This is undertaken through a

screening assessment. If the screening assessment indicates that there could be significant effects, an SEA is needed.

- 2.4. A Practical Guide to the SEA Directive was published by the Department of the Environment, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (2005). This sets out practical guidance on applying the SEA Directive on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment. The practical guidance includes a flow chart (figure 2) which illustrates the process for screening a planning document to establish whether a full SEA is needed.

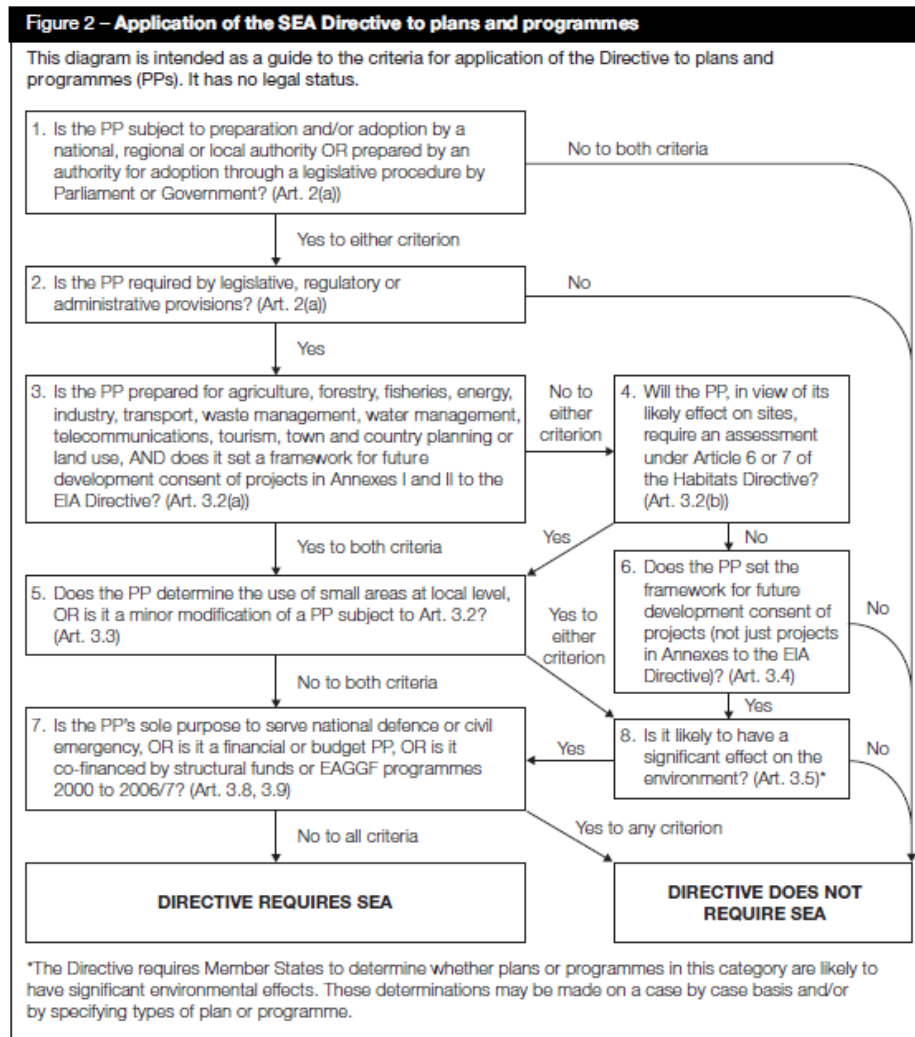


Diagram 1: Application of the SEA Directive to plans and programmes (Figure 2 extracted from 'A practical guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive')

- 2.5 Table 1 below sets out the Council's response to the above questions in order to clearly assess the whether there is a requirement for the SPD on Meeting Housing Needs to be subject a full SEA.
- 2.6 Table 2 provides the Council's assessment of likely significant effects of the SPD on Meeting Housing Needs on the environment, in accordance with the screening report process in Table 1.

Table 1: Screening of the Mid Devon SPD on Meeting Housing Needs

Stage	Y/N	Reason
1. Is the SPD 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))	Y	<p>The preparation and adoption of the SPD is allowed under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. The process in preparing the SPD is in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) Regulations 2012.</p> <p>Go to STAGE 2</p>
2. Is the SPD required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions? (Art.2(a))	Y	<p>Although the SPD is not a requirement under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, if adopted it will add further detail to the policies in the Local Plan and will be a material consideration in planning decisions. It is therefore important that the screening process is precautionary and considers whether it is likely to have significant environment effects and hence whether SEA is required under the Directive.</p> <p>Go to STAGE 3.</p>
3. Is the SPD 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))	Y	<p>The SPD has been prepared for the purposes of town and country planning. It supplements policies in the Mid Devon Local Plan (2013-2033) by providing detailed guidance as to how these policies are interpreted in relation to meeting housing needs</p> <p>As this SPD would relate to all development within Mid Devon District it will in some cases set a framework for future development consent of projects in Annex I and II to the EIA Directive.</p> <p>Go to STAGE 5</p>
4. Will the SPD, in view of this likely effect on sites require an assessment under Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive? (Art.3.2(b))		<p>Not Applicable</p> <p>The SPD has been subject to a separate Habitat Regulations Assessment screening which has concluded the SPD is not likely to have significant adverse effects on the integrity of Habitats sites, either alone or in-combination with other plans or projects.</p>

Stage	Y/N	Reason
5. Does the SPD determine the use of small areas at local level, OR is it a minor modification of a plan or programme subject to Art 3.2? (Art.3.3)	Y	The SPD will be material consideration in planning applications for new developments. It provides detailed guidance to adopted Local Plan policy (minor modification).' Go to STAGE 8
6. Does the SPD set the framework for future development consent of projects (not just projects in Annexes to the EIA Directive)? (Art. 3.4)	Not applicable	
7. Is the SPD's sole purpose to serve national defence or civil emergency, OR is it a financial or budget plan or programme, OR is it co-financed by structural funds or EAGGF programmes 2000 to 2006/7? (Art. 3.8, 3.9)	Not applicable	
8. Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment? (Art. 3.4)	N	See Table 2, assessment of the likely significant effects on the environment. This concludes that the SPD is unlikely to have a significant effect on the Environment. DIRECTIVE DOES NOT REQUIRE SEA of the SPD

Table 2: Determining the likely significance of effects of the Mid Devon

Criteria specified schedule 1 SEA Regulations	Likely significant negative environmental effect (Y/N)	Reason
1. The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular, to -		
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;	N	The SPD, if adopted will help implement the relevant policies of the Local Plan and therefore contribute to the framework for future development consent. It does not however introduce a new framework or policies. The Local Plan has been subject to Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and therefore SEA in which likely significant negative environmental effects are not anticipated.

Criteria specified schedule 1 SEA Regulations	Likely significant negative environmental effect (Y/N)	Reason
b) The degree to which the SPD influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy;	N	The SPD is in conformity with the National Planning Policy Framework and Mid Devon Local Plan 2013-2033 policies. The SPD will not significantly influence other plans and programmes, it supplements the Local Plan which has been subject to SA and therefore SEA in which likely significant negative environmental effects are not anticipated.
c) The relevance of the SPD for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development;	N	The SPD will help the integration of environmental considerations with a view to promoting sustainable development as part of the development proposals. This includes ensuring appropriate consideration of housing needs and delivering an appropriate mix of types and tenures of affordable housing. The impact of the SPD will be positive on this criterion.
d) Environmental problems relevant to the SPD; and	N	Planning policy in relation to housing needs is principally established through the National Planning Policy Framework and the Mid Devon Local Plan Review. The SPD provides specific guidance to ensure an appropriate mix of types and tenures of affordable housing are provided, and to secure local plan policy requirements with regards to gypsies and travellers and custom and self-build. Adverse impacts are not anticipated.
e) The relevance of the SPD for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (for example, plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection)	N	The SPD is not directly relevant to the implementation of community legislation on the environment including legislation relating to waste management or water protection.
2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to -		

Criteria specified schedule 1 SEA Regulations	Likely significant negative environmental effect (Y/N)	Reason
a) The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects;	N	The SPD provides specific guidance to ensure an appropriate mix of types and tenures of affordable housing are provided, and to secure local plan policy requirements with regards to gypsies and travellers and custom and self-build. Long-term significant adverse effects are not anticipated.
b) The cumulative nature of the effects;	N	The SPD is in conformity with the strategic policies in Local Plan 2013-2033 and it is intended that the effects will have a positive cumulative effect in the area.
c) The transboundary nature of the effects	N	There are not expected to be any significant trans-boundary effects. The SPD provides specific guidance to ensure an appropriate mix of types and tenures of affordable housing are provided within Mid Devon District.
d) The risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents);	N	The SPD is likely to have a positive impact on human health by encouraging high quality and affordable accommodation and development. There are no significant risks to human health
e) The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected);	N	The SPD is relevant for the Mid Devon District area. Adverse effects are not anticipated.
f) The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to – (i) Special nature characteristics or cultural heritage; (ii) Exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values; or (iii) Intensive land-use	N	The SPD is relevant for the Mid Devon District area. The SPD provides specific guidance to ensure an appropriate mix of types and tenures of affordable housing are provided, and to secure local plan policy requirements with regards to gypsies and travellers and custom and self-build. Adverse effects are not anticipated.

Criteria specified schedule 1 SEA Regulations	Likely significant negative environmental effect (Y/N)	Reason
g) The effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised natural, Community or international protection status.	N	The SPD is relevant for the Mid Devon District area in which there are landscapes of recognised natural, community or international protection. The SPD provides specific guidance to ensure an appropriate mix of types and tenures of affordable housing are provided, and to secure local plan policy requirements with regards to gypsies and travellers and custom and self-build. Adverse effects are not anticipated for these landscapes.

3.0 Conclusion

3.1 This SEA screening has identified that the SPD Meeting Housing Needs is unlikely to have significant negative effects on the environment.

3.2 The SEA screening has found that there is no requirement for the SPD Meeting Housing Needs to be subject to a full SEA.

4.0 Next steps

4.1 This screening opinion will be subject to consultation with the three designated consultation bodies – Historic England, Natural England, and the Environment Agency.

4.2 The screening opinion will be published alongside the SPD on Meeting Housing Needs, and will also be subject to public consultation.