

**House Extensions  
Supplementary Planning  
Document**

**Strategic Environmental  
Assessment / Habitats  
Regulations Assessment  
Final Screening Statement**

**September 2015**

## 1. Introduction

1.1 This report has been produced to determine the need for a:

- I. **Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)** in accordance with the European Directive 2001/42/EC and associated Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.
- II. **Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)** in accordance with article 6 of the EC Habitats directive 1992, as interpreted by Regulation 61(1) of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 as amended (the habitats regulations).

For the proposed House Extensions Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

## 2. Policy context

2.1 Government policies and the National Planning Policy Framework (The Framework) encourage Household Extensions provided that extensions do not have a significant effect on neighbouring properties or the character of the local area. This is reflected in the fact that many smaller House Extensions are now permitted development and do not require planning permission.

2.2 House Extensions can allow occupants of houses to alter homes to better suit their lifestyle aspirations or space requirements, however house extensions have the potential if not properly designed to negatively impact on neighbouring properties and the character of the local area potentially resulting in poorer living conditions for neighbours.

2.3 The emerging Sefton Local Plan (2015) [www.sefton.gov.uk/localplan](http://www.sefton.gov.uk/localplan) includes a policy relating to house extensions; Policy HC4- House Extensions, Alterations and Conversions to Houses in Multiple Occupation.

2.4 The Sefton House Extensions Supplementary Guidance (SPG) (2003) is the current main policy document relating to House Extensions in the Borough, it expands upon policy MD1- House Extensions of The Sefton Unitary Development Plan (UDP) (2006).

The proposed House Extensions SPD will replace the existing SPG and expand upon policy HC4 (House Extensions, Alterations and Conversions to Houses in Multiple Occupation) of the emerging Sefton Local Plan. (The policy is shown in Appendix B). It deals only with the part of Policy HC4 relating to house extensions, and alterations. It does not deal with the part of Policy HC4 which relates to conversions to Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs), as this is the subject of a separate, adopted SPD which was 'screened out' for HRA purposes and for SEA. The Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) and Flats Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) was adopted for decision making on planning applications and enforcement in 2013.

See <http://www.sefton.gov.uk/planning-building-control/planning-policy/supplementary-guidance.aspx>)

More detail on the scope of the House Extensions SPD is set out below.

### ***Introduction and Context***

2.5 House extensions and related household development, such as garages and walls/fences, whilst generally small scale in nature, can have a negative impact on the residential amenity of neighbouring properties if poorly designed or sited. This Supplementary Planning Document is intended to provide householders with clear guidance on what improvements are likely to be acceptable to their home, whilst ensuring this doesn't negatively harm their neighbours.

2.6 The Supplementary Planning Document will support draft Local Plan policies: HC4 - House extensions, alterations and conversions to houses in Multiple Occupation. MN7 –Sefton's Green Belt.

2.7 The Supplementary Planning Document will replace the 2003 House Extensions SPG (available on the webpage below) <http://www.sefton.gov.uk/planning-building-control/planning-policy/supplementary-guidance.aspx>

### ***Purpose and aims***

2.8 The aim of the Supplementary Planning Document is to provide clear guidance to local residents and others on how the Council will deal with planning applications for House Extensions.

2.9 The document will set out principles and standards that extensions are required to meet to prevent harm to neighbours and the character of the local area.

## Part 1- SEA Screening

---

### 3. SEA Screening

3.1 The requirement for a Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA) is set out in the “Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004”. There is also practical guidance on applying European Directive 2001/42/EC produced by the ODPM (now DCLG)<sup>1</sup>. These documents have been used as the basis for this screening report.

3.2 Previously all Development Plan Documents (DPDs) and Supplementary Planning Documents required Sustainability Appraisal. Sustainability Appraisal incorporated the requirements for SEA<sup>2</sup>. However, the regulations were amended in 2009<sup>3</sup>. These amendments removed the requirement for the sustainability appraisal of supplementary planning documents. These changes were confirmed in the 2012 regulations<sup>4</sup>

3.3 Despite no longer requiring sustainability appraisal, SPDs may still require SEA. The ODPM practical guidance provides a checklist approach based on the SEA regulations to help determine whether SEA is required. This guide has been used as the basis on which to assess the need for SEA as set out below.

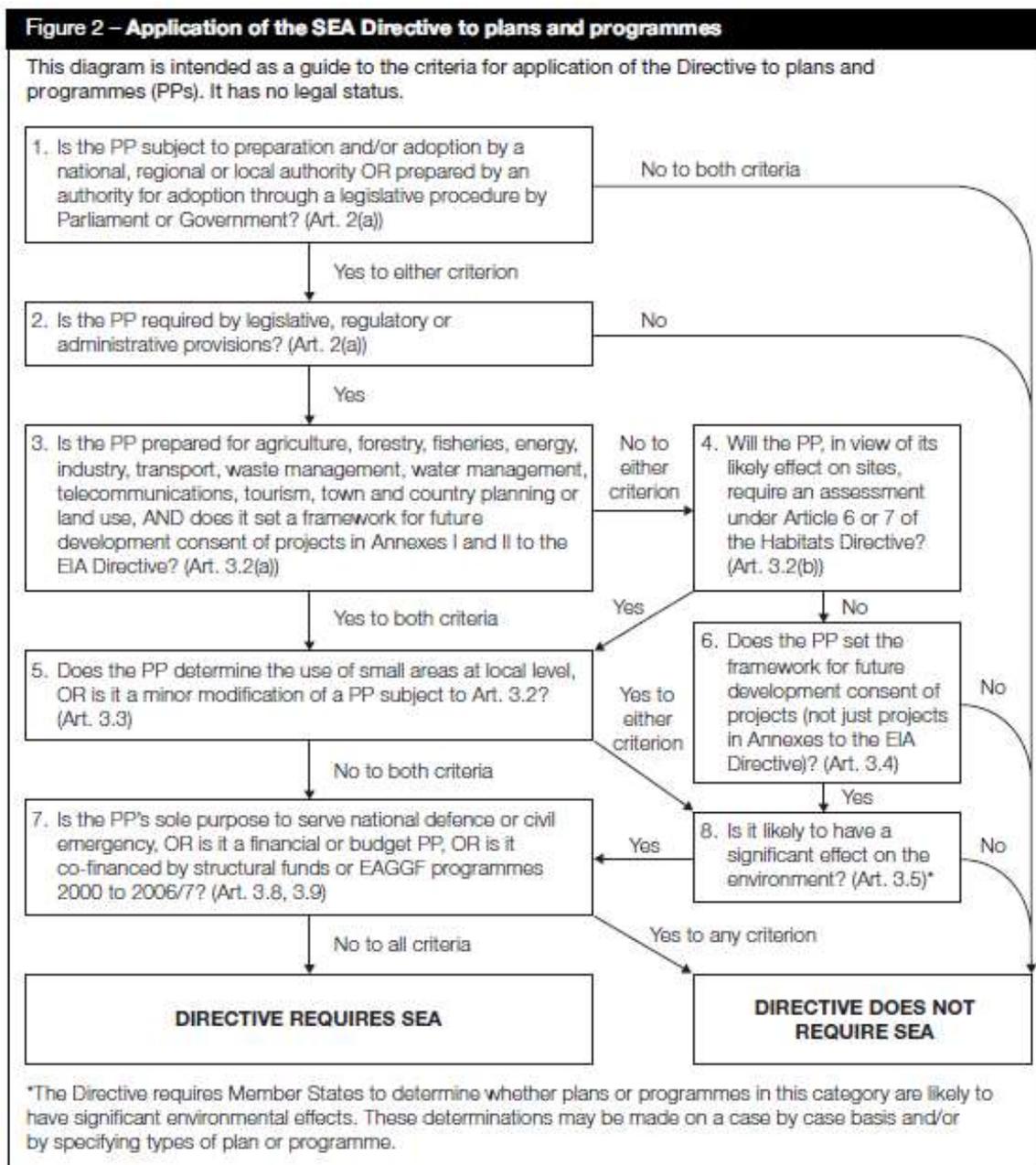
---

<sup>1</sup> A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (2005) (ODPM)

<sup>2</sup> The Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004

<sup>3</sup> The Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) (Amendment) Regulations

<sup>4</sup> The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012



**Table 1: Establishing the need for SEA**

Stage [from the flowchart above]	Answer	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 of	Yes	SPD to be adopted by Sefton Council

Stage [from the flowchart above]	Answer	Reason
Government? (Article 2(a))		
2. Is the SPD required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions? (Article 2(a))	Yes	The detail that the Council wish to provide to the emerging local plan policy can only be given due weight if it is contained in a Supplementary Planning Document.
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))	No	The SPD is for town and country planning purposes but does not set a framework for future development consent of projects in Annexes I and II to the EIA Directive
4. Will the SPD, in view of its likely effect on sites, require an assessment under Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive? (Article 3.2(b))	No	The draft screening statement concludes that an assessment under the Habitats Directive is not required. ( <i>*see part 2</i> )
6. Does the SPD set the framework for future development consent of projects (not just projects in Annexes to the EIA Directive)? (Article 3.4)	Yes	Although the emerging local plan policies will set the overall framework, the SPD will provide additional guidance on the interpretation of these policies.
8. Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment? (Article 3.5)	No	See ' <b>Table 2</b> ' below 'Determining the likely significance of effects'

**Table 2: Determining the likely significance of effects on the environment**

SEA Directive Annex II: Criteria for determining likely significance of effects referred to in Article 3(5)	Sefton Comment
<b><i>The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular, to:</i></b>	
1a) 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	The SPD will be providing additional guidance on existing policies that set the broad framework.

<b>SEA Directive Annex II: Criteria for determining likely significance of effects referred to in Article 3(5)</b>	<b>Sefton Comment</b>
conditions or by allocating resources	
1b) The degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy	The SPD can only expand on existing policies and should not introduce new policies not contained in higher order plans.
1c) The relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development	The SPD will promote sustainable development through encouraging appropriate house extensions whilst seeking to minimize any potential negative effects such as on the amenity of neighbouring properties or the local environment.
1d) Environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme	The SPD will seek to mitigate potential environmental issues from extensions such as loss of privacy/light/amenity and harm to the character of the local area. However the impact isn't likely to be significant given the local nature of the issues.
1e) 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 SPD is unlikely to be directly relevant in regard to this criterion.
<b><i>Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to:</i></b>	
2a) The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects	The anticipated effects on the sustainability of the areas covered by the SPD are expected to be positive by limiting possible negative impacts associated with poorly designed House Extensions. The duration of impacts is difficult to define as although once a house extension has occurred this has a permanent permission, many smaller scale house extensions are permitted development and can occur at any time.
2b) The cumulative nature of the effects	The cumulative nature of effects on the environment is likely to be positive although relatively minor other than at a local level.
2c) The trans-boundary nature of the	None identified.

SEA Directive Annex II: Criteria for determining likely significance of effects referred to in Article 3(5)	Sefton Comment
effects	
2d) The risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents)	The SPD will seek to address issues of amenity and living conditions and the impact it may have on the health and wellbeing of neighbours.
2e) The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)	The SPD will cover the borough of Sefton although the SPD is likely to be relevant to small sites in the existing urban area only, therefore the impact of the SPD will be at a limited local level.
2f) 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 III. Intensive land-use	The SPD will only apply to small scale household developments which are not likely to cause significant environmental effects. Other guidance and policies related to environmental issues are covered in the emerging local plan and emerging SPD guidance.
2g) The effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognized national, Community or international protection status	None identified. Any extensions in for example in a conservations area, will need to satisfy the relevant planning policies for protecting the character of the area before permission is granted.

## 4. Consultation

4.1 The Council consulted with the three statutory environmental bodies [see below] on this screening report and the determination. The table below provides their responses.

Statutory Body	Comments
Environment Agency	There is a small possibility that some inappropriately designed and implemented extensions could lead to a slight increase in flood risk or other environmental harm. This could be controlled through existing planning controls. As such we concur with the conclusions of the report and have no other comments to make at this time.
Historic England	In terms of our area of interest, we would concur with your assessment that the document is unlikely to result in any significant environmental effects on the historic environment and will simply provide additional guidance on existing policies

Statutory Body	Comments
	which have already been subject to a Sustainability Appraisal. As a result, we would endorse the conclusions that it is not necessary to undertake a Strategic Environmental Assessment of the document.
Natural England	Natural England has no comment to make

## 5. Conclusion and statement of reasons

5.1 The SPD is supplementing and will provide further guidance on Policy HC4 of the emerging Local Plan. The SPD merely expands upon the policy HC4 (House Extensions, Alterations and Conversions to Houses in Multiple Occupation.) to set out guidance how the council will assess applications for house extensions. Any impacts on the environment are likely to be local and small scale and positive in nature.

5.2 The views of the statutory consultees are set out above.

5.3 It is considered that the House extensions SPD will not give rise to any significant environmental effects. Therefore, it is considered that a Strategic Environmental Assessment **is not required** for the proposed House extensions Supplementary Planning Document.

## Part 2- HRA Screening

---

### 6. HRA Screening

6.1 The requirement for a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) in accordance with article 6 of the EC Habitats directive 1992, as interpreted by Regulation 61(1) of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (as amended) (the habitats regulations). An assessment of the “likely significant effects” of a plan or project on sites of international nature conservation importance (Natura 2000 sites) is required. This part of the document sets out Sefton Council’s screening of the draft House Extensions Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) in accordance with the habitats regulations

6.2 The Sefton Local Plan Publication version (2015) had was subject to HRA assessment produced by AECOM (formerly URS) (January 2015) that assessed in combination effects taking into account other plans and projects, Local Plan site allocations and policies. The HRA Report (January 2015) was produced by AECOM (formerly URS) included an assessment of in combination effects taking into account other plans and projects as well as Local Plan site allocations, policies and objectives and the impact of the plan as a whole. See <http://www.sefton.gov.uk/planning-building-control/planning-policy/evidence-and-studies/environmental.aspx>

6.3 In terms of the House Extensions SPD the “parent policy” is policy HC4 (House Extensions, Alterations and Conversions to Houses in Multiple Occupation) of the Local Plan. This policy was assessed as part of the HRA of the Local Plan. The policy was “screened out” meaning that there would not need to be an additional HRA assessment. The HRA comments on policy HC4 (House Extensions, Alterations and Conversions to Houses in Multiple Occupation) are shown below.

- *“HRA implications but screened out.*
- *This policy outlines development guidance for extension and alterations of houses, and conversions to multiple occupation and flats\*.*
- *This policy could result in increases in population within the area of conversions to multiple occupancy. It is considered that this will be a small increase.*
- *However, Policy NH2 (Protection and enhancement of natural sites, priority habitats and species) includes for the protection of European designated sites via the need for HRA if required.”*

*\* It is important to note that guidance on HMOs and Flats is provided in an adopted SPD (2013) which was “screened out” for HRA purposes.*

6.4 The House Extensions SPD will not lead to any development additional to that permitted by Policy HC4 as it merely expands upon and provides more detailed guidance on house extensions, and alterations in relation to policy HC4 of the Sefton

local plan. It merely seeks to provide guidance on what house extensions and other householder development is acceptable without having a negative effect on neighbouring properties or the character of the local area. As above, guidance relating to conversion to HMOs is set out in a separate, adopted Multiple Occupation (HMO) and Flats Supplementary Planning Document SPD (2013) which was ‘screened out’.

6.5 The SPD will cover the borough of Sefton although the SPD is likely to be relevant to small sites in the existing urban area only, therefore the impact of the SPD will be at a limited local level. Any impacts on the environment are likely to be very localised and small scale.

6.6 In any case, more generally, policy NH2 ‘Protection of nature sites, priority habitats and species’, which has also been subject to HRA, sets out more detailed requirements in relation to Nature 2000 sites and supporting habitats and to planning application stage site-specific HRA where relevant.

6.7 The following Natura 2000 sites are located within Sefton:

- Sefton Coast SAC
- Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA and Ramsar site
- Mersey Narrows & North Wirral Foreshore SPA and Ramsar site (small part of site is at Seaforth Nature Reserve, the rest is approx. 1km+ away on Wirral).

6.8 In addition the following Natura 2000 sites are located outside of Sefton but were “screened in” to the HRA of the Local Plan publication draft.

- Liverpool Bay SPA
- Manchester Mosses SAC -  
However, Sefton’s Local Plan HRA Report concluded that Sefton is not adjacent to the M62; that the Local Plan includes proportionate measures to minimise its contribution to M62 vehicle movements; and that Sefton’s effect on atmospheric nitrogen deposition on Manchester Mosses SAC is effectively inconsequential. Thus this site is not considered further in this HRA screening document.

6.9 Below is an assessment of potential pathways for impacts to the Natura 2000 site taking into account the HRA of the Publication version of the local plan.

**Table 3: Assessment of likely significant effects** (taking into account HRA Report for Publication Draft Local Plan (2015))

Potential pathway and Natura 2000 sites affected	HRA assessment regarding likely significant effects	Further comments
Recreational pressure / disturbance	No significant impacts.	SPD has no influence on location or number of new

Potential pathway and Natura 2000 sites affected	HRA assessment regarding likely significant effects	Further comments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sefton Coast SAC</li> <li>• Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA &amp; Ramsar site</li> <li>• Mersey Narrows &amp; North Wirral Foreshore SPA and Ramsar site</li> <li>• Liverpool Bay SPA (in-combination disturbance of birds through increase in ship movements and recreational pressure)</li> </ul>		homes proposed (and hence on recreational pressure); only on extensions or alterations to existing housing. SPD has no influence on ship movements. SPD will have no additional impacts compared to its parent policy HC4 (House Extensions, Alterations and Conversions to Houses in Multiple Occupation) which has been screened out.
<p>Disturbance to qualifying species</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sefton Coast SAC</li> <li>• Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA and Ramsar site</li> <li>• Mersey Narrows &amp; North Wirral Foreshore SPA and Ramsar site</li> </ul>	No significant impacts.	SPD will have no additional impacts compared to its parent policy HC4 (House Extensions, Alterations and Conversions to Houses in Multiple Occupation) which has been screened out.
<p>Coastal squeeze</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sefton Coast SAC</li> <li>• Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA and Ramsar site</li> <li>• Mersey Narrows &amp; North Wirral Foreshore SPA and Ramsar site</li> </ul>	No significant impacts.	SPD has no influence on location or number of new homes proposed (and hence on recreational pressure); only on extensions or alterations to existing housing. SPD will have no additional impacts compared to its parent policy HC4 (House Extensions, Alterations and Conversions to Houses in Multiple Occupation) which has been screened out.
<p>Direct habitat loss through expansion of the Port at Seaforth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mersey Narrows &amp; North Wirral Foreshore SPA and Ramsar site</li> </ul>	No significant impacts	SPD has no influence on Port expansion.

Potential pathway and Natura 2000 sites affected	HRA assessment regarding likely significant effects	Further comments
Direct habitat loss through mineral extraction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA and Ramsar site.</li> </ul>	No significant impacts	SPD has no influence on minerals expansion.
Loss of habitat / supporting habitat outside the <i>Natura 2000</i> site boundary <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sefton Coast SAC</li> <li>• Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA and Ramsar site</li> </ul>	No significant impacts	SPD will have no additional impacts compared to its parent policy HC4 (House Extensions, Alterations and Conversions to Houses in Multiple Occupation) which has been screened out.
Reduction in water quality <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sefton Coast SAC</li> <li>• Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA and Ramsar site</li> <li>• Mersey Narrows &amp; North Wirral Foreshore SPA and Ramsar site</li> <li>• Liverpool Bay SPA - potential for 'in combination' effects with other plans and projects (through sewage effluent discharges).</li> </ul>	No significant impacts	SPD has no influence on location or number of new homes proposed (and hence on recreational pressure); only on extensions or alterations to exiting housing. SPD has no influence on ship movements. SPD will have no additional impacts compared to its parent policy HC4 (House Extensions, Alterations and Conversions to Houses in Multiple Occupation) which has been screened out.
Reduction in air quality <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sefton Coast SAC</li> <li>• Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA and Ramsar site</li> <li>• Mersey Narrows &amp; North Wirral Foreshore SPA and Ramsar site</li> </ul>	No significant impacts	SPD has no influence on location or number of new homes proposed (and hence on recreational pressure); only on extensions or alterations to exiting housing. SPD has no influence on ship movements. SPD will have no additional impacts compared to its parent policy HC4 (House Extensions, Alterations and Conversions to Houses in Multiple Occupation) which has been screened out.

Potential pathway and Natura 2000 sites affected	HRA assessment regarding likely significant effects	Further comments
Mineral extraction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mersey Narrows &amp; North Wirral Foreshore SPA and Ramsar site</li> </ul>	No significant impacts	SPD has no influence on minerals expansion.
Dredging and disturbance of sediments/benthic habitats <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mersey Narrows &amp; North Wirral Foreshore SPA and Ramsar site</li> <li>Liverpool Bay SPA (following Port expansion)</li> </ul>	No significant impacts	SPD has no influence on dredging or disturbance of benthic habitats, or on Port expansion.

6.10 The SPD is unlikely to have any significant effects on any SAC, SPA or Ramsar site (Natura 2000 sites) above and beyond any significant effects that the Local Plan is likely to have, either individually or in combination with other plans and projects. The “parent policy “in the Local Plan was screened out meaning no further assessment is needed. The SPD is unlikely to give rise to impacts/significant effects on Natura 2000 sites

## 7. Consultation

8.1 The Council consulted Natural England, the statutory body for the purposes of HRA. The table below provides their response.

Statutory Body	Comments
Natural England	Natural England has no comment to make

## 8. Conclusion and statement of reasons

8.1 The SPD is supplementing and will provide further guidance on Policy HC4 (House Extensions, Alterations and Conversions to Houses in Multiple Occupation) of the emerging Local Plan. The SPD merely expands upon the policy HC4 to set out guidance how the council will assess applications for house extensions. There are no significant effects on Natura 2000 sites in Sefton.

8.2 The comments of Natural England are set out above.

8.3 On the basis of the above information, Sefton Council is of the opinion and concludes that the proposed plan to which this screening opinion relates – the House Extensions Supplementary Planning Document - :

a) is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site,

b) is not likely to have a significant effect on each of the following sites:

- Ribble and Alt Estuaries Ramsar site
- Ribble and Alt Estuaries Special Protection Area (SPA)
- Sefton Coast Special Area of Conservation (SAC)
- Mersey Narrows and North Wirral Foreshore Ramsar site
- Mersey Narrows and North Wirral Foreshore Special Protection Area (SPA).
- Liverpool Bay SPA.
- Manchester Mosses SPA.

either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.

And accordingly, **no “appropriate assessment” is required** to be made under Regulations 61, 62 and 63 of the Conservation (Natural Habitats &c) Regulations (as amended) before the Council decides to undertake, or give any consent, permission or other authorisation for this plan.

## Part 3- Appendices

---

### Appendix A- Contact details

Further information can be obtained from:

**Andrew Hunt**  
**Planning Officer**  
**Local Plan Team**  
**Sefton Council**  
**Magdalen House**  
**Trinity Road**  
**Bootle L20 3NJ**

**[Andrew.hunt@sefton.gov.uk](mailto:Andrew.hunt@sefton.gov.uk)**  
**(0151) 934 3827**

## Appendix B- Extract from Sefton Publication Draft Local Plan (2015): Parent Policy text

### HOUSE EXTENSIONS AND ALTERATIONS

- 8.40 The facility to extend homes is important for homeowners because it allows properties to be altered to meet changing lifestyles, growing families and adapting to changing physical mobility. The purpose of this policy is to allow extensions and alterations to homes whilst being sensitive towards the physical character of the area and protecting the living standards of neighbouring properties. Householders have considerable rights to extend and alter homes without requiring formal planning permission, either through Permitted Development rights or the Prior Notification procedure. This policy only applies where planning permission is required.
- 8.41 This policy also covers conversions to Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) and Flats whether from a dwelling house or another use. HMO and flats are an essential part of Sefton's housing stock for local residents. However poor quality developments can harm the character and amenity of neighbourhoods.

<p><b>HC4 HOUSE EXTENSIONS, ALTERATIONS AND CONVERSIONS TO HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION AND FLATS</b></p> <p><b>1. Extensions and alterations to dwelling houses will be approved where:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>a. They are of a high quality of design that matches or complements the style of the dwelling and the surrounding area</b></li><li><b>b. The size, scale and materials of development are in keeping with the original dwelling and the surrounding area</b></li><li><b>c. The extensions and alterations are designed so that there shall be no significant reduction in the living conditions of the occupiers of neighbouring properties. In particular, extensions must not result in:</b><ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>• Loss of outlook, from the main windows of neighbouring habitable rooms</b></li><li><b>• A significant loss of light/overshadowing for neighbours</b></li><li><b>• An overbearing or over-dominant effect on the habitable rooms of neighbouring properties</b></li><li><b>• A significant loss of privacy for neighbouring residents.</b></li></ul></li></ul> <p><b>2. Development involving the conversion of buildings to Houses in Multiple Occupation or flats will be permitted where it will not cause significant harm to:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>• The character of the area or</b></li><li><b>• The living conditions for either the occupiers of the property or for neighbouring properties.</b></li></ul>
---

**Key Policy Links:**

- EQ2 Design

**Explanation**

## House Extensions SPD-SEA/HRA Screening statement

- 8.42 Section 1 of the policy will include outbuildings (within the curtilage of dwelling houses or flats), garden structures and decking, etc. Habitable rooms include bedrooms, kitchens, living rooms, conservatories and dining rooms.
- 8.43 All proposals for extensions, alterations and conversions will need to consider other relevant policies in the Local Plan, especially where the site is a heritage asset such as a Listed Building and/or in or adjacent to a Conservation Area or is in the Green Belt.
- 8.44 Further detailed guidance is set out in various Supplementary Planning Documents.
- 8.45 The character of an area can be changed by a large number of properties being converted to flats and Houses in Multiple Occupation in a small area. Physical alterations to a number of buildings and the increase in the number of people living in those buildings have the potential, cumulatively, to harm the character of the area. This would be of particular concern in a Conservation Area e.g. knocking down the front boundary wall of a property in a Conservation Area to allow cars to park within the site is not likely to be acceptable. In deciding whether proposals are likely to harm the character of the area, regard will be paid to the impact caused by:
- External staircases
  - The availability of off-street parking
  - The design of car parking areas, especially to the front of the building
  - Alterations to walls and fences
  - Bin stores
  - The impact on Sefton's heritage assets.
- 8.46 The increase in the intensity of use of several buildings in a street has the potential to cause a significant increase in comings and goings. This disturbance may lead to decline in living standards. It can also have an impact on non-residential uses, for example it may cause harm to some business uses.
- 8.47 The 2013 'Houses in Multiple Occupation and Flats' Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) provides more guidance on how this policy will be implemented.

## Appendix C – Natura 2000 sites in Sefton

