

**Affordable, special needs and
older people's housing
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 Affordable, special needs and older people's housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

2. Policy context

2.1 Government policies and the National Planning Policy Framework (The Framework) promote and recognise that having a choice of housing is important for balanced communities. The NPPF has as one of its key objectives delivering a wide choice of high quality homes (chapter 6).

2.2 New housing development is essential to facilitate vibrant and healthy communities, by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations. In addition a variety of new housing is essential to create vibrant, mixed communities and meet a diverse range of needs.

2.3 The emerging Sefton Local Plan (2015) www.sefton.gov.uk/localplan includes policies HC1-Affordable and special needs housing and HC2- Housing Type, mix and choice, that relate to the mix of housing types.

2.4 The proposed Affordable, special needs and older people's housing SPD will expand upon policies HC1-Affordable and special needs housing and HC2- Housing Type, mix and choice, of the emerging Sefton Local Plan. (These policies are shown in Appendix B.) More detail on the scope of the SPD is set out below.

Introduction and Context

2.5 Affordable Housing is defined as either social rented, affordable rented or intermediate housing [e.g. shared ownership] provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. It does not include low cost market housing. A recent study¹ has identified that Sefton has a large total affordable housing need, equivalent to about 400 homes per year. The areas with the greatest need for affordable homes are Southport and Maghull/Aintree.

2.6 Special needs housing is intended for people with a physical disability, frail elderly people, young vulnerable people, people with learning disability, a mental health problem or severe sensory disability.

2.7 An older person for this policy is defined as aged 55 years or over. Whilst people aged 55 might not be considered 'old', many housing developments specifically cater for this age group. Specialist older persons' housing can be broadly split into three categories - sheltered accommodation; extra care/assisted living; or residential care accommodation. Whilst many older people will not require specialist accommodation at any point in their lives, inevitably as the number and proportion of older residents' increases, there will be an increase in the need for this type of accommodation. Meeting the needs for this group can also often free up larger homes for families.

2.8 Lifetime Homes is a design standard that allows homes to be adapted to support the future needs of residents as they get older or need assistance. It allows people to remain in their own homes for longer without having to move into specialist accommodation. The use of the Lifetime Homes standard helps reduce the demand for other specialist accommodation.

2.9 The SPD will support draft Local Plan policies HC1 'Affordable and Special Needs Housing' and HC2 'Housing Type, Mix and Choice'.

Purpose and aims

2.10 The aim of the SPD is to give clear guidance to developers on the requirements for providing affordable homes as part of wider housing schemes [for 15 homes or more]. The SPD will set out how affordable homes will be provided as part of the overall layout of the development, the financial arrangements for providing them, how any exemptions will be applied and guidance on making sure they remain as affordable homes in the long term.

2.11 The Supplementary Planning Document will also set out the different types of special needs and older persons' housing and how these will be provided. It will also set out the requirements for Lifetime Homes should be met.

Part 1- SEA Screening

3. 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)². 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 SEA³. However, the regulations were amended in 2009⁴. These amendments removed the requirement for the sustainability appraisal of supplementary planning documents. These changes were confirmed in the 2012 regulations⁵

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.

² A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive (2005) (ODPM)

³ The Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004

⁴ The Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) (Amendment) Regulations

⁵ The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012

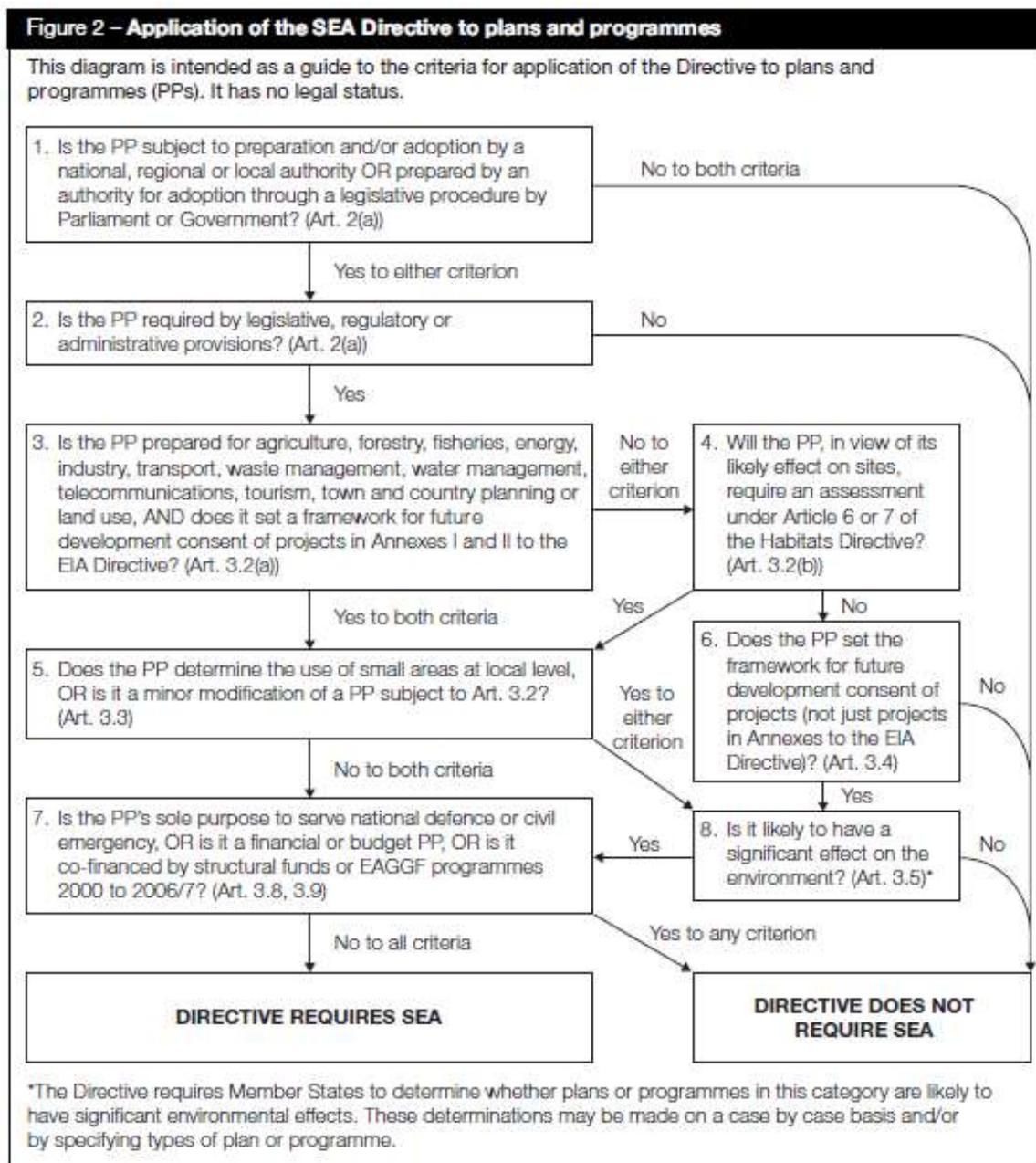


Table 1: Establishing the need for SEA

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 Government? (Article 2(a))	Yes	SPD to be adopted by Sefton Council

Stage [from the flowchart above]	Answer	Reason
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 ' Table 2 ' 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
<i>The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular, to:</i>	
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 conditions or by allocating resources	The SPD will be providing additional guidance on existing policies that set the broad framework.
1b) The degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and	The SPD can only expand on existing policies and should not introduce new

SEA Directive Annex II: Criteria for determining likely significance of effects referred to in Article 3(5)	Sefton Comment
programmes including those in a hierarchy	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 facilitating a mix of housing to meet the needs of communities.
1d) Environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme	The SPD is unlikely to be directly relevant in regard to this criterion.
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.
<i>Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to:</i>	
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 creating a mix of houses and therefore a more inclusive and sustainable community. The duration of impacts is likely to be long term as once a house has been built this has a permanent permission; however houses can be converted to other types of housing.
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 effects	None identified.
2d) The risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents)	The SPD will seek to address the provision of housing for a variety of people including potentially more vulnerable groups, the SPD will have a positive effect on human health and the local environment.
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 a proportion of homes on new housing developments only,

SEA Directive Annex II: Criteria for determining likely significance of effects referred to in Article 3(5)	Sefton Comment
	therefore the impact of the SPD will be on a moderately 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 Housing Development. However the principle of development of these areas is determined in the Local Plan or through the planning application process, the SPD will simply set out guidelines to ensure mixed housing. 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 new housing development will need to satisfy the relevant planning policies for protecting these areas before permission is granted.

4. Consultation

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

Statutory Body	Comments
Environment Agency	We have no objections 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 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 Policies HC1- Affordable and special needs housing and HC2- Housing Type, mix and choice of the emerging Local Plan. The SPD merely expands upon the policies to set out guidance on the mix of housing types the council expects new housing development to contain. The principle of housing development on sites will be determined through the local plan (for larger sites) or through the planning application process (for smaller sites not identified in the local plan). Any impacts on the environment are likely to be local and small scale and positive in nature. The SPD will not allocate any housing sites.

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

5.3 It is considered that the Affordable, special needs and older people's housing 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 Affordable, special needs and older people's housing 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 Affordable, special needs and older people's housing SPD SPD in accordance with the Habitats Regulations.

6.2 The Sefton Local Plan Publication version (2015) 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 Affordable, special needs and older people's housing SPD the "parent policies" are Policies HC1-(Affordable and special needs housing) and HC2-(Housing Type, mix and choice) of the Local Plan. These policies were assessed as part of the HRA of the Local Plan. The policies were both "screened out" meaning that there would not need to be an additional HRA assessment. The HRA comments on the two policies are shown below.

HC1- Affordable and special needs housing

- *"No implications.*
- *This policy outlines provision for affordable and special needs housing and does not outline provision for new residential development.*
- *There are no impact pathways."*

HC2- Housing Type, mix and choice

- *"No implications.*
- *This policy outlines provision housing type, mix and choice and does not outline provision for new residential development.*
- *There are no impact pathways."*

6.4 The SPD is supplementing and will provide further guidance on Policies HC1 'Affordable and special housing needs' and HC2 'Housing type, mix and choice' of

the emerging Local Plan. The SPD merely expands upon the policies to set out guidance on the mix of housing types the council expects new housing development to contain. It does not in itself affect the location or number of new homes proposed. So while the SPD covers the whole of Sefton, it is relevant to only a small proportion of homes as it relates to new housing developments only or redevelopments. Therefore the impact of the SPD will be on localised in and around new housing developments.

6.5 The principle of housing development on sites will be determined through the local plan and through the planning application process (for smaller sites not identified in the local plan). There are approximately 125,300 existing homes in Sefton. Of the 11,070 new homes proposed in the Plan period, 7309 of them are due to be built on the 46 allocated housing sites. Site allocation policies have been subject to HRA, as part of the HRA of the Local Plan. 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.

6.6 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).

6.7 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.

6.8 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
--	---	------------------

Potential pathway and Natura 2000 sites affected	HRA assessment regarding likely significant effects	Further comments
<p>Recreational pressure / disturbance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sefton Coast SAC • Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA & Ramsar site • Mersey Narrows & North Wirral Foreshore SPA and Ramsar site • Liverpool Bay SPA (in-combination disturbance of birds through increase in ship movements and recreational pressure) 	<p>No significant impacts.</p>	<p>SPD has no influence on location or number of new homes proposed (and hence on recreational pressure); only on mix of housing types. SPD has no influence on ship movements. SPD will have no additional impacts compared to its parent policies HC1 (Affordable and special needs housing) and HC2 (Housing Type, mix and choice), which have been screened out.</p>
<p>Disturbance to qualifying species</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sefton Coast SAC • Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA and Ramsar site • Mersey Narrows & North Wirral Foreshore SPA and Ramsar site 	<p>No significant impacts.</p>	<p>SPD has no influence on location or number of new homes proposed (and hence on recreational pressure); only on mix of housing types. SPD has no influence on ship movements. SPD will have no additional impacts compared to its parent policies HC1 (Affordable and special needs housing) and HC2 (Housing Type, mix and choice), which have been screened out.</p>
<p>Coastal squeeze</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sefton Coast SAC • Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA and Ramsar site • Mersey Narrows & North Wirral Foreshore SPA and Ramsar site 	<p>No significant impacts.</p>	<p>SPD has no influence on location or number of new homes proposed (and hence on recreational pressure); only on mix of housing types. SPD will have no additional impacts compared to its parent policies HC1 (Affordable and special needs housing) and HC2 (Housing Type, mix and choice), which have been screened out.</p>

Potential pathway and Natura 2000 sites affected	HRA assessment regarding likely significant effects	Further comments
<p>Direct habitat loss through expansion of the Port at Seaforth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mersey Narrows & North Wirral Foreshore SPA and Ramsar site 	<p>No significant impacts</p>	<p>SPD has no influence on Port expansion.</p>
<p>Direct habitat loss through mineral extraction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA and Ramsar site. 	<p>No significant impacts</p>	<p>SPD has no influence on minerals expansion.</p>
<p>Loss of habitat / supporting habitat outside the <i>Natura 2000</i> site boundary</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sefton Coast SAC Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA and Ramsar site 	<p>No significant impacts</p>	<p>SPD has no influence on location or number of new homes proposed (and hence on recreational pressure); only on mix of housing types. SPD will have no additional impacts compared to its parent policies HC1 (Affordable and special needs housing) and HC2 (Housing Type, mix and choice), which have been screened out.</p>
<p>Reduction in water quality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sefton Coast SAC Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA and Ramsar site Mersey Narrows & North Wirral Foreshore SPA and Ramsar site Liverpool Bay SPA - potential for 'in combination' effects with other plans and projects (through sewage effluent discharges). 	<p>No significant impacts</p>	<p>SPD will have no additional impacts compared to its parent policies HC1 (Affordable and special needs housing) and HC2 (Housing Type, mix and choice), which have been screened out.</p>
<p>Reduction in air quality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sefton Coast SAC Ribble and Alt Estuaries SPA and Ramsar site Mersey Narrows & North Wirral Foreshore SPA and 	<p>No significant impacts</p>	<p>SPD will have no additional impacts compared to its parent policies HC1 (Affordable and special needs housing) and HC2 (Housing Type, mix and</p>

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

6.9 The SPD is unlikely to have any significant effects on a SAC or SPA (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 policies” in the Local Plan were 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

7.1 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 policies HC1(Affordable and special needs housing) and HC2 (Housing Type, mix and choice), of the emerging Local Plan. The SPD merely expands upon the policies to set out guidance on the mix of housing types the council expects new housing development to contain. 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 Affordable, special needs and older people's housing 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
(0151) 934 3827

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

[Note: The adopted Local Plan (2017) can be seen at www.sefton.gov.uk/localplan]

AFFORDABLE AND SPECIAL NEEDS HOUSING

- 8.8 The Government is committed to boosting housing supply and delivering a wide choice of homes to meet market, affordable and special needs housing and create mixed communities. This Local Plan responds to that agenda by planning to deliver 11,070 homes over the plan period. Whilst the largest contribution to provision will be made by market housing, it will also be important to meet the needs of people requiring affordable, older persons' or special needs' housing where these needs are identified.
- 8.9 Affordable housing comprises social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the housing market. Social rented housing is owned by local authorities and private registered providers for which guideline target rents are determined through national rent regimes. Affordable rented housing is let by local authorities or private registered providers of social rented housing to households who are eligible for social rented housing and is set at a rent of no more than 80% of local market rent (including service charges where applicable). In Sefton to ensure that local people are able to afford social rented housing, affordable rents must be set below Local Housing Allowance caps. Intermediate housing is housing for sale and rent at a cost above social rent but below market rent, including shared equity (shared ownership and equity loans), other low cost homes for sale and intermediate rent.

HC1 AFFORDABLE AND SPECIAL NEEDS HOUSING

All of Sefton outside Bootle and Netherton

1. For new developments of 15 dwellings or more (or for residential and other conversions involving 15 or more additional dwellings net) 30% of the total scheme (measured by bedspaces) will be provided as affordable housing.
2. 80% of the affordable housing should be provided as social rented/affordable rented and the remaining 20% provided as intermediate housing.

Bootle and Netherton

3. Affordable housing will be required as part of proposals for new developments of 15 dwellings or more (or for residential and other conversions involving 15 or more additional dwellings net) on the basis of 15% of the total scheme (measured by bedspaces).
4. Affordable housing should be 50% social/affordable rented and 50% intermediate housing.

All Areas

5. Special needs housing can be substituted for up to 50% of the site affordable housing contribution on a bedspace for bedspace basis. The residual affordable housing requirement should meet the relevant tenure requirement.
6. Where extra care or sheltered housing is proposed to be substituted for affordable housing, 80% of this should be provided as social rented/affordable rented and the remaining 20% provided as intermediate housing for all parts of the Borough apart from Bootle and Netherton, where it should be provided as 50% social/affordable rented housing and 50% intermediate housing.

7. Affordable and/or special needs dwellings shall be:
- 'tenure blind' i.e. there shall be no external visual difference between the affordable/special needs housing and market housing, and
 - 'pepper-potted' i.e. there shall be a reasonable dispersal of affordable housing or special needs units within residential developments (i.e. groupings of no more than six units) to promote mixed communities and minimise social exclusion. The only exception to this will be where it can be demonstrated that the special needs housing has to be grouped together for functional or management purposes.
8. Affordable and/or special needs housing will be provided in accordance with this policy unless a robust assessment of a scheme's economic viability confirms that this cannot be achieved.

Key Policy Links:

- HC2 Housing Type, Mix, and Choice

Explanation

- 8.10 A Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) was published in 2014. This identified that Sefton had a total affordable housing required of approximately 7,815 homes over the period 2012-2030 which is equivalent to about 434 affordable homes a year. The need for affordable homes was more prevalent in different areas within Sefton. The table below sets out the estimated annual need for new affordable housing in each of Sefton's key settlements.

	Net affordable annual housing need	Net need per 1,000 households
Southport	203	5.06
Formby	64	6.31
Maghull/Aintree	118	7.58
Crosby	91	4.28
Bootle	-32	-1.98
Netherton	-9	-0.57
Total	434	3.65

Figure 8.1 Affordable Housing Need in Sefton

- 8.11 The analysis shows a need for additional affordable housing in most areas of the Borough with Southport showing the highest numeric need (203 units per annum) with the highest need by proportion of existing households in Maghull/Aintree (7.58 per thousand households), Formby (6.31 per thousand households) and Southport (5.06 per thousand households). This supports Policy MN2 which identifies the largest housing allocations in the Southport, Formby and Maghull areas.
- 8.12 Both Bootle and Netherton show small surpluses of affordable housing, which is consistent with the relatively large stock of affordable housing along with some of the cheapest housing costs in the Borough. Nonetheless the 2014 SHMA suggests that a target for 15% affordable housing in Bootle and Netherton should be considered to (i) improve the mismatch between the size of social rented accommodation required (particularly 1 and 2 bedroomed dwellings) and anticipated supply and (ii) to provide opportunities for younger (lower income) households to access owner-occupied housing.
- 8.13 The affordable housing requirement is measured by bedspaces. The number of bedspaces in a dwelling is dependent on the number of single and double bedrooms it has. A single bedroom is one bedspace and a double bedroom is two bedspaces. Therefore, for example, a dwelling

with two single bedrooms comprises two bedspaces (i.e. 1+1 =2), a dwelling with a double bedroom and two single bedrooms comprises four bedspaces (i.e. 2+1+1= 4) and a dwelling with two double bedrooms and two single bedrooms comprises six bedspaces (i.e. 2+2+1+1 = 6).

- 8.14 Special needs housing is intended for people with a physical disability, frail elderly people, young vulnerable people, people with a learning disability, a mental health problem or severe sensory disability. It does not include the provision of care homes or housing for elderly people. This is covered in Policy HC2, Housing Type Mix and Choice. However, if special needs housing is provided specifically for older people this can help contribute to the requirements of Policy HC2. These may include other special needs which are identified over time. However, special needs housing will only be acceptable as an alternative to affordable housing where (i) it provides self-contained accommodation; and (ii) it meets a demonstrable local need; and (iii) it provides an element of personal care/support to residents in their homes.
- 8.15 Where special needs housing is accepted as an alternative to affordable housing, the bedspaces provided may offset or replace up to 50% of the affordable housing required. The balance of affordable housing required must be provided on the basis of a split between 80% social rented/affordable rented and 20% intermediate housing, by bedspaces in all parts of the Borough except Bootle and Netherton, where all affordable housing will be intermediate housing. Where extra care or sheltered housing is proposed to be substituted for affordable housing, 80% of this should be provided as social rented/affordable rented and the remaining 20% provided as intermediate housing for all parts of the Borough, except Bootle and Netherton, where it should be provided as 50% social/affordable rented and 50% as intermediate. Other forms of special needs housing can help meet Sefton's overall housing needs even if they cannot be a substitute for affordable homes.
- 8.16 Although the current policy stance is based upon the recently published 2014 SHMA, the Council is committed to reviewing the need for affordable and special needs housing regularly, recognising that such needs can change over time. This policy applies to affordable housing provided as part of mixed tenure housing and will be secured by legal agreement. It will not seek to restrict the provision of affordable housing, by registered providers and others, in excess of what this policy requires, in any part of Sefton where a need is identified.
- 8.17 The policy position is subject to economic viability. Where an applicant seeks to depart from the policy position based upon economic viability, the Council will require a full financial assessment to be submitted by the applicants. This will be appraised by independent economic viability consultants. The applicant will be required to meet the full cost of this work.
- 8.18 The affordable housing requirement applies differently in parts of Sefton. Parts 3 and 4 of the policy (applying to Bootle and Netherton) comprise the wards of Derby, Ford, Linacre, Litherland, Netherton & Orrell and St Oswald. This area is shown on the Policy Map. Parts 1 and 2 of this policy apply to all other parts of Sefton.
- 8.19 All affordable or special needs housing will be secured through legal agreement.
- 8.20 A Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) will be prepared to provide more detailed guidance to aid the delivery of affordable and special needs housing. This will be subject to review dependent on any changes in the Borough's requirements for affordable and special housing needs.

HOUSING TYPE, MIX AND CHOICE

- 8.21 Sustainable, inclusive, and mixed communities benefit from a wide choice of housing to meet both current and future demographic requirements, market trends and the needs of different groups in the community. In Sefton this particularly includes providing for the needs of older people, encouraging working age families to live in the borough to restrict the decline in the

labour force and providing smaller homes to help meet demand for such provision due to recent welfare reforms.

- 8.22 Compared with the North West Region and England as a whole, Sefton has a higher proportion of older persons. It is estimated that in 2011, 34.2% of the population in Sefton were aged 55 or over, compared with 28.7% in the North West and 28% for the whole of England. Within the borough there are some notable differences with the Bootle and Netherton area having a relatively young population and the rest of the borough being generally older, especially in Formby and Southport.
- 8.23 Trends from demographic projections suggest that Sefton will see a notable increase in the number of older people with the total number of people aged 55 and over expected to increase by 14% over just 10 years [2011 to 2021]. The number of people aged 85 or over is expected to increase by 40% in the same period. A consequence of an ageing population is that the number of people in Sefton living with long-term illnesses or disabilities is expected to increase significantly in the future. In particular there is projected to be a large rise in the number of people with dementia (up 51%) along with a 42% increase in the number with mobility problems over the period to 2030.
- 8.24 The Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) 2014 suggests that a key area of change in the housing market in Sefton over the plan period is likely to be the significant growth in the population of older people. Housing for older people is defined in this policy as for people aged 55 or over. In reality, people aged 55 might not be considered to be "old" but many housing developments specifically cater for this age group and these people will all become elderly (i.e. aged 65 or over) over the plan period. In particular, the 2014 SHMA notes that the number of people in Sefton aged 65 or over is expected to increase by about 21,100 (36%) from 2012 to 2030. It concludes that demographic change is likely to see a requirement for additional levels of care/support along with the provision of some specialist accommodation, both in the market and affordable housing sectors. Specifically it estimates that around of 15% of new housing provided over the plan period equivalent to about 1,674 dwellings should be extra care provision for older people. Furthermore, around 15% of this total need (i.e. 250 dwellings) is identified as being needed in the affordable sector (i.e. specifically as social/affordable rented housing).
- 8.25 The number of new homes to be provided is set out in Policy MN1 Housing and Employment Requirements. Alongside delivering the right quantity of new homes, it is equally important that the right type of housing is provided to meet the needs of Sefton's existing and future population, address imbalances in the existing housing stock and ensure the homes provided can adapt to changing demographics, particularly for an ageing population. Housing developers should therefore have regard to locally arising needs for dwellings of differing size and type. This policy should be read in conjunction with Policy HC1 Affordable and Special Needs Housing.

HC2 HOUSING TYPE, MIX AND CHOICE

1. In developments of 15 or more dwellings, the mix of new properties provided must be as follows unless precluded by site specific constraints, economic viability or prevailing neighbourhood characteristics:

- **A minimum of 25% of market dwellings must be 1 or 2 bedroom properties**
- **A minimum of 40% of market dwellings must be 3 bedroom properties**

These requirements do not apply to wholly apartment/flatted, extra care, and sheltered housing developments. Any new affordable dwellings are also exempt.

2. In addition, at least 20% of all new homes, in developments of 15 homes or more, should be designed to meet the Lifetime Homes Standards.

3. Where housing for older people is provided as part of a larger scheme, this should, where appropriate, be located within the scheme in the most accessible location for local services and facilities.

4. Proposals for residential care accommodation that would result in or exacerbate an existing oversupply will be refused.

Key Policy Links:

- HC1 Affordable and Special Needs Housing

Explanation

8.26 The 2014 SHMA indicates that there is a continuing decrease in the size of households and an increase in the elderly population. The assessment also anticipates that demand is likely to be more focused towards suitable smaller properties. It acknowledges that the demand for these may be somewhat suppressed in the short-term because of current constraints on finance for first time buyers. However, this has to be balanced against the need to ensure a choice of homes to retain or attract families of working age to counteract a projected decrease in Sefton's labour market supply over the plan period.

8.27 Taking account of the above factors, the 2014 SHMA considers that the provision of market housing should be more explicitly focused on the delivery of family housing for younger households. On this basis, the 2014 SHMA recommended the following broad mix of **market housing** across the borough:

- 1-bed properties: 5% - 10%
- 2-bed properties: 30% to 35%
- 3-bed properties: 50% to 55%
- 4-bed properties: 5% to 10%

8.28 In order to provide some flexibility to the above broad mix, the policy requires a minimum of 25% 1 and 2 bedroom properties, and a minimum of 40% 3 bedroom properties for new market dwellings. This is based on a 10% reduction to the minimum SHMA recommendation for these property sizes, in recognition that these minimum requirements will likely be exceeded by rounding up. It also provided some additional flexibility as patterns of demand change over time. These requirements do not apply to new affordable dwellings, or wholly apartment/flatted , extra care, and sheltered housing developments.

8.29 Whilst both of the above dwelling size splits are to be regarded as targets, departures from the proposed mixes may be acceptable where the local circumstances of the particular site, the viability of the development, or robust information on local housing need/demand indicates an alternative dwellings mix would better meet local need/demand. To assist with this process, before a planning application is submitted [pre-application stage] a developer should consult the Council about the mix of homes required. Applications that seek to depart from these targets must be accompanied by a detailed justification.

8.30 Given that the number older people in Sefton will increase significantly over the plan period it is reasonable to expect that there will be an increasing demand for various forms of older persons' accommodation. However, it is not the case that all older people will require dedicated specialist homes or provision for their needs. The majority of the anticipated increased number of older people will prefer to stay in the same home that they have lived in for many years. In addition, many older people will not need, or necessarily seek, accommodation specifically for older people at any time in their lives. These factors will have the effect of significantly tempering the demand for older persons' accommodation. That

noted, some older people, albeit not requiring specialist housing, may choose or need to move home as they age. The most frequent reasons are: to move to a smaller home in order to reduce the costs associated with a larger family home; to move to a more accessible location; to move closer to shops or services; to move to a house that is on one level or capable of a degree of adaption for mobility or health reasons; or simply to move to be closer to family members. Where older people move for these reasons but don't require specialist housing, they will generally seek to remain in the tenure from which they are moving. This implies the need for a tenure mix of suitable housing to cater for different types of demand arising from older people.

- 8.31 In this context, the construction of 20% of new housing to Lifetime Homes standards will help to provide more flexible accommodation. Lifetime Homes are ordinary homes designed to incorporate 16 design criteria that can be universally applied to new homes at minimal cost. Each design feature adds to the comfort and convenience of the home and supports the changing needs of individuals and families at different stages of life. Lifetime Homes are designed to be both flexible and adaptable; they are not 'special', but are designed to create and encourage better living environments for everyone and help people who are coping with illness or dealing with reduced mobility in later life to remain in their homes.
- 8.32 Whilst the majority of older people will not require specialist accommodation, inevitably as the number and proportion of older residents increases, there will be an increase in need for this type of accommodation. This will be required across the tenure mix, i.e. both market and affordable, and for this reason and to encourage mixed communities, mixed tenure private and affordable special needs housing schemes will be positively encouraged in preference to single tenure schemes. Specialist older persons housing can be broadly split into three categories; sheltered accommodation, extra-care/ assisted living accommodation and residential care accommodation. In Sefton, data from the Housing Learning and Improvement Network (Housing LIN) indicates that there is currently a significant oversupply supply of sheltered housing (particularly in the affordable sector) and also of Registered Care (Residential and Nursing Homes). Given this, a key element of older persons' provision is likely to be extra care housing. This matter is being considered further in the emerging Sefton Older Persons' Housing Strategy research.
- 8.33 It is often the case that older people need a wider range of essential services and facilities that are accessible by public transport or walking. There may be instances where housing developments at the edge of an urban area may not be particularly accessible and therefore may not be suitable locations for all types of older person's housing. It will be up to the applicant to demonstrate the location of development is not suitable for particular types of older persons' housing. In doing so the applicant should refer to the Council's 'Ensuring Choice of Travel' Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).
- 8.34 A Supplementary Planning Document will be prepared to provide more detailed guidance to aid the provision of Older Persons Housing. This will, among other matters, be informed by the findings of the Sefton Older Persons' Housing Strategy research.

Appendix C – Natura 2000 sites in Sefton

