

# **Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening**

**March 2024**

## **University of Warwick Campus Development Framework Supplementary Planning Document**

### **Introduction**

1. This screening report has been produced to consider whether the University of Warwick Campus Development Framework Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) prepared by the University of Warwick on behalf of Coventry City Council and Warwick District Council, should be subject to a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in accordance with the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, as amended by The Environmental Assessments and Miscellaneous Planning (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations.
2. Paragraph: 008 of the Planning Guidance states that supplementary planning documents may in exceptional circumstances require SEA if they are likely to have significant environmental effects that have not already been assessed during the preparation of the relevant strategic policies. This screening statement considers whether there are any impacts which have not already been assessed within the Coventry Local Plan which was adopted on 6th December 2017 and the Warwick Local Plan which was adopted in September 2017 and determines whether or not SEA is needed for this SPD.

### **The University of Warwick Campus Development Framework Masterplan SPD: Context**

3. The draft University of Warwick Campus Development Framework Masterplan SPD sets out further detail to support the existing policies in the Coventry Local Plan, in particular Policy JE1 'Overall Economy and Employment Strategy' which confirms that the council will work in partnership with the City's universities to promote and support innovation. The policy objective being to maximise the economic development and community benefits associated with the continued growth of the universities.

For the Warwick Local Plan, in particular the elaborates Policy MS1 University of Warwick, which states that development at the University will be permitted in line with

an approved Masterplan or Development Brief as agreed with the relevant LPAs. Furthermore, the policy sets out the objectives which any Masterplan should incorporate. These include:

- Identifying the physical and economic context for development;
- Identifying the development principles that will underpin future development proposals;
- Identifying the location of developments, and demonstrating the mitigation of any potential adverse impacts; and

- Identifying how the proposals support the vitality of the local and/ or sub-regional economy.

4. The Local Plan is each Council's statutory planning framework which sets out how and where new homes, jobs, services and infrastructure will be delivered and the type of places and environments that will be created, enhanced and preserved.
5. The additional guidance provided within the SPD sets out the guiding principles for how development on the campus will be considered providing a development framework for how the campus will be developed up to 2033, within the University's longer term vision to 2050. The SPD incorporates several campus wide strategies, including a new Transport and Movement Strategy, which provides an agreed methodology for assessing the impact of new development and a Framework Section 106 Agreement with potential mitigations which can be drawn down should the monitor and manage approach require them as projects come forward.

### The Screening Process

6. The screening assessment is undertaken in two parts: the first will assess whether the SPD requires screening for SEA and the second part of the assessment will consider whether the SPD is likely to have a significant effect on the environment, using criteria drawn from Schedule 1 of the SEA Regulations.

**Table 1: Is SEA screening required?**

Environmental Regulations Paragraph detail	Comments
<p><b>2.(1) In these Regulations- [...] "plans and programmes" means plans and programmes, including those co-financed by the European Community, as well as any modifications to them, which— (a) are subject to preparation and adoption by an authority at national, regional or local level; (b) are prepared by an authority for adoption, through a legislative procedure by Parliament or Government; and, in either case, (c) are required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions</b></p>	<p>Yes, this applies.</p> <p>The SPD is subject to preparation and adoption at a local level. Whilst the SPD is not a requirement and is optional under the provisions of the Town and Country Planning Act it will, if adopted, supplement the development plan and be a material consideration in the assessment of planning applications.</p>

<p><b><u>Environmental assessment for plans and programmes; first formal preparatory act on or after 21st July 2004</u></b></p> <p><b>5.(2) The description is a plan or programme which—</b>  <b>(a)is prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism, town and country planning or land use, and</b>  <b>(b)sets the framework for future development consent of projects listed in Annex I or II Directive 2011/92/EU(4) of the European Parliament and of the Council on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment.</b></p>	<p>Yes this applies.</p> <p>The SPD is prepared for Town and Country planning purposes. It supplements the planning policy framework of the Coventry Local Plan/Warwick Local Plan, by providing detailed guidance as to how these policies are interpreted for future consent of projects listed in Schedule of the Town and Country Planning (EIA) Regulations 2017 (as amended).</p> <p>The SPD does not permit EIA development or set a framework for future consent under it, rather it provides guidance on how to interpret existing policy as set out above.</p>
<p><b>The description is a plan or programme which, in view of the likely effect on sites, has been determined to require an assessment pursuant to Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive.</b></p>	<p>No this does not apply.</p> <p>The SPD is not likely to affect sites and has been determined not to require an assessment pursuant to any law that implemented Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive.</p> <p>The Habitat Regulation Assessment undertaken in for the adopted Coventry City Local Plan and for the adopted Warwick Local Plan concluded that the plan would not cause a negative effect alone or in combination with other plans. The SPD does not provide any guidance which alters the impact of the policy on designated sites. Further Habitat Regulations Assessment is not required.</p>
<p><b>6) An environmental assessment need not be carried out—</b>  <b>(a)for a plan or programme of the description set out in paragraph (2) or (3) which determines the use of a small area at local level, or</b>  <b>(b)for a minor modification to a plan or programme of the description set out in either of those paragraphs,</b></p>	<p>Yes, this applies.</p> <p>The SPD provides further detail and guidance on the implementation of policies related to the University of Warwick within the applicable adopted Local Plan.</p>

<p><b><u>Determinations of the responsible authority</u><sup>1</sup></b></p> <p><b>9.—(1) The responsible authority shall determine whether or not a plan, programme or modification of a description referred to in—</b></p> <p><b>(a) paragraph (4)(a) and (b) of regulation 5;</b></p> <p><b>(b) paragraph (6)(a) of that regulation; or</b></p> <p><b>(c) paragraph (6)(b) of that regulation,</b></p> <p><b>is likely to have significant environmental effects.</b></p> <p><b>(2) Before making a determination under paragraph (1) the responsible authority shall—</b></p> <p><b>(a) take into account the criteria specified in Schedule 1 to these Regulations; and</b></p> <p><b>(b) consult the consultation bodies.</b></p>	<p>This screening opinion has been prepared using the criteria specified in Schedule 1 as presented in Table 2.</p> <p>The statutory bodies (Natural England, Historic England and the Environment Agency) are to be consulted as required.</p>
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**Table 2: Will the SPD have a significant effect on the environment?** <sup>2</sup>

SEA requirement	Comments
<p>1: The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular, to</p> <p>(a) the degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources;</p>	<p>The SPD sets the framework for future development within the University of Warwick campus. The campus is an existing development, identified within the adopted Local Plan, which has been subject to SA / SEA. The SPD sets guiding principles for future development but does not allocate land nor resources. The SPD will therefore reinforce the sustainability outcomes in the SA / SEA.</p>

<sup>1</sup> “Responsible authority”, in relation to a plan or programme, means the authority by which or on whose behalf it is prepared (Regulation 2(1)(a))

<sup>2</sup> As set out in Schedule 1 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004

<p>(b) the degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy;</p>	<p>The SPD does not create new policies but will support the policies in the adopted Local Plan which have been subject to SA / SEA. The SPD will therefore reinforce the sustainability outcomes in the SA / SEA. Other plans and programmes may outlive the SPD and during their preparation will be steered by national legislation and policy.</p>
<p>(c) the relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development;</p>	<p>The purpose of the SPD is only to provide additional guidance to guide future development at the University of Warwick campus in line with policies in the adopted Local Plan which have been assessed through the SA Objectives in the SA, as required by SEA. Therefore, as stated above, the SPD will reinforce the sustainability outcomes in the SA / SEA.</p> <p>An Equalities Impact Assessment (EQIA) report has also been compiled in relation to this SPD. In terms of Health inequalities, the EQIA notes that the Local Plan was subject to a Health Impact Assessment. As this SPD supplements the policies in the Local Plan it is considered that this SPD accords with the assessments undertaken for the Local plan in regards to EQIA and HIA.</p>
<p>(d) environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme; and</p>	<p>The existing environmental problems and the likely significant environmental effects have been considered at the Local Plan level, which has been subject to SA / SEA. As set out above, this SPD builds on the policies in the Local Plan and therefore reinforces the sustainability outcomes in the SA / SEA.</p>

(e) the relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of retained EU law on the environment (for example, plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection).	The SPD has no relevance to the implementation of retained EU law.
<b>2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to—</b>	
(a) the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects;	The SPD is not allocating sites for development. The SPD is to provide guidance for the application and implementation of the policies in the adopted Local Plan (thereby inherently enforcing the SA Objectives of the SEA) and will therefore help ensure that the duration and frequency of adverse environmental effects are minimised or mitigated. The SPD in itself is not expected to give rise to any significant environmental effects.
(b) the cumulative nature of the effects;	The SPD provides further guidance to adopted Local Plan policies and does not set policies itself. It will therefore not contribute to cumulative effects in combination with the Local Plan which has been subject to SA / SEA (which in accordance with the SEA Regulations is required to consider cumulative effects).
(c) the transboundary nature of the effects;	There are no transboundary effects as this SPD relates to the Coventry City Council/Warwick District Council area only. Any potential significant transboundary environmental effects have already been assessed as part of the local plan's sustainability appraisal, the Habitat Regulations Assessment and the plan's examination process.
d) the risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents);	The SPD poses no risk to human health. The SPD supplements policies in the adopted Local Plan

	which was subject to a Health Impact Assessment.
(e)the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected);	The University of Warwick Campus straddles the boundary of Coventry City Council and Warwick District Council, with part of the campus and SPD boundary falling within each local authority area. The Campus is a small area within those administrative areas. Therefore the SPD does not affect the whole of the administrative areas of either authority.
(f)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; or (iii)intensive land-use;	The SPD builds on existing policy, providing additional guidance to guide development within the University of Warwick campus. It provides strategies for matters including Transport, built heritage, Ecology and drainage. Any planning applications for future development within the SPD boundary will need to be accompanied by site specific assessments relevant to the proposal.
(g)the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.	The land contained within the SPD boundary contains various elements of differing characteristics, including designated heritage assets. The SPD provides additional guidance for future development, building on existing local plan policy which have been subject to SEA. Any site-specific matters would be addressed through a planning application specific to an individual proposal.

### Conclusion and Screening Opinion

7. This screening assessment identifies that the SPD will provide additional guidance to guide future development within the University of Warwick campus to support existing policies in the adopted Coventry Local Plan/Warwick Local Plan, which has been subject to SA / SEA. The SPD therefore reinforces the sustainability outcomes in the SA / SEA. It is concluded that the SPD is unlikely to have significant environmental effects

beyond that of those identified in the Local Plan and therefore considers Strategic Environmental Assessment is not required.