

**London Borough of Waltham Forest
Supplementary Planning Documents**

**Sustainability Appraisal Report –
Residential Alterations and Retrofit SPD**



January 2026

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1 Non-Technical Summary

The purpose of this sustainability appraisal is to assess the likely impacts of one of the Borough's Supplementary Planning Document's (SPD's) on the environment, economy and the community. Given that the sustainability appraisal process is iterative it presents the opportunity to minimise any negative impacts and enhance positive effects where these arise. The document also features the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening report.

This sustainability appraisal process appraises the sustainability of an SPD produced to support the Borough's Local Plan. The SPDs being assessed is the **Residential Alterations and Retrofit SPD**.

The process of undertaking this appraisal involved firstly developing an SA framework, which comprised of a number of Sustainability Objectives. In light of the fact that the SPD supplements policies in the Local Plan, and that this had previously itself been the subject of a sustainability appraisal, the SA objectives were taken from this earlier appraisal. These SA objectives effectively perform a measure of sustainability. In addition, an SA was undertaken for our wider suite of SPDs in Summer 2023, as part of a previous, informal consultation exercise.

Objectives for the SPD were developed at the start of the drafting process, which informed its content. These SPD objectives were appraised against the SA objectives, and where conflicts/compatibility problems were identified, changes could be recommended as necessary. In practice however no changes were recommended to the SPD objectives, although such conflicts were noted and considered during the actual drafting of the SPD. Following the appraisal of the SPD objectives, a requirement of the SA process is to test against 'alternative' options. As the purpose of the SPD is to support policies in the Local Plan, the only options that were considered suitable for appraisal were the 'with an SPD' option and the 'no SPD' option. Both options were appraised for the SPD against the SA objectives. The 'with an SPD' option was considered to be the most sustainable of the two. This preferred option was to form the basis for the drafting of the SPD's.

The key findings from this appraisal were that as the SPD provides additional guidance on existing policies within the Local Plan, they were not found to have a negative impact on the SA objectives as this would have been picked up at the policy stage. Therefore, in terms of its remit, the SPD was considered to be broadly sustainable..

2 Introduction

2.1 Background

This Sustainability Appraisal (SA) relates to the **Residential Alterations and Retrofit Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)**.

The SA assesses the significant environmental, social and economic effects of policies or plans, the “reasonable” alternatives to a plan’s strategy, policies and proposals; and the reasons for discounting alternatives. SA of Local Plans is required under Section 19 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021) also requires SA of Local Plans. It is no longer required for Supplementary Planning Document, but has been completed for this suite of documents to ensure a rigorous process of assessment is applied, in line with that which has taken place for the Borough’s Local Plan. The findings of the Local Plan SA and the objectives set for this were used to inform and assist in the assessment of the SPD.

3 Appraisal Methodology

3.1 SA process and requirements

The SA process is shown in Figure 1. Stage A, Scoping, was completed in 2017 for the draft Local Plan by ClearLead and was updated between January and August 2020. As the SPD to be assessed is providing additional guidance to support the policies in the Local Plan, a further scoping stage has not been incorporated as part of this assessment. The previous scoping for the Local Plan will also apply to the SPD.

This SA report encompasses Stages B and C of the SA process (evaluation of the SPD against the SA Framework and SA report preparation).

Figure 1: The SA Process

Stage 1: Pre-production - Evidence Gathering	SA Stages and Tasks
	Stage A: Setting the context and objectives, establishing the baseline and deciding on the scope <i>A1: Identifying other relevant policies, plans and programmes, and sustainability objectives</i> <i>A2: Collecting baseline information</i> <i>A3: Identifying sustainability issues and problems</i> <i>A4: Developing the SA Assessment framework</i> <i>A5: Consulting on the scope of the SA</i>
Stage 2: Production	SA Stages and Tasks
	Stage B: Developing and refining options and assessing effects <i>B1: Testing the SPD objectives against the SA assessment framework</i> <i>B2: Developing the SPD options</i> <i>B3: Test SPD options against the SPD framework</i> <i>B4: Review and refine options where necessary</i>
	Stage C: Preparing the formal SA Report <i>C1: Preparing the formal SA Report</i>
	Stage D: Consulting on the draft SPDs and SA Report <i>D1: Public participation on the draft SPDs and the SA Report</i> <i>D2(i): Appraising significant changes</i>
Local Plan Stage 3: Examination	SA Stages and Tasks
	D2 (ii): Appraising significant changes resulting from representations – NA for SPDs
Local Plan Stage 4:	SA Stages and Tasks
	D3: Making decisions and providing information

Adoption and monitoring	Stage E: Monitoring the significant effects of implementing the Local Plan <i>E1: Finalising aims and methods for monitoring</i> <i>E2: Responding to adverse effects</i>
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3.2 Stage A: Scoping

The first stage (Stage A) of the SA process involved consultation on a SA Scoping Report which was completed as part of the Local Plan process. In the SA Scoping Report, the topics set out within the SEA Regulations were expanded into a number of sustainability topics as presented within Table 1 to include socio-economic topics as well as environmental.

Table 1: SA Topics Compared with SEA topics

SA Topics	SEA Directive Topics
Population	Population
Human Health	Human Health
Economy	(not required by SEA Regulations)
Employment and Skills	(not required by SEA Regulations)
Transport	Material assets
Crime and Safety	Human Health
Housing	Material assets
Townscape and Heritage	Cultural heritage, including architectural and archaeological heritage. Material assets
Climate	Climatic factors
Air Quality	Air
Soil and Geology	Soil
Water	Water
Biodiversity	Biodiversity, fauna, flora
Landscape	Landscape
Waste	(not required by SEA Regulations)

The Scoping Report for the Local Plan, prepared by ClearLead, was consulted on with the statutory consultees² between 24th July to 29th August 2017 (a period of 5 weeks). The Scoping Report presented baseline information on the environmental, social and economic characteristics of the Local Plan area, including the likely evolution of the baseline within the Local Plan period. The Scoping Report set out a framework (called the 'SA Framework') for the assessment of the Local Plan and its alternatives, identifying the significant effects that any assessment would need to focus on. The Scoping Report was amended following consultation and published in September 2017 as a post-consultation version. The final version of the SA Framework is shown in [Table 2](#).

A review of the baseline data and other programmes and plans also took place, which can be viewed in the Local Plan SA document .

² Natural England, Historic England, and the Environment Agency

Table 2: SA Framework Objectives

SA Objective	Description	Key Sustainability Issues
SA1	Meet local housing needs through the provision of a range of tenures and sizes of new dwellings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As the population continues to increase so does the demand for housing, infrastructure and facilities • The population density within the Borough exceeds both the London and the national averages • There is a need to create high quality places to live, work and recreate that are mixed and well-balanced in terms of tenure and income • Promote high quality housing with a range of tenures to reduce health issues which arise from poor quality accommodation • There is a disparity between the cost of housing and the amount that people are able to borrow to purchase a home, which means that many people are unable to access the property market • There is a shortfall in the provision of affordable housing to meet the requirements of those in housing need • There is a potential shortfall in the provision of family accommodation and there is overcrowding, primarily in the private rental sector • Homelessness is expected to increase • Need to offer greater quality, flexibility and choice to those who rent. • There is a need to increase the supply of well-designed housing of all tenures • Need to introduce more flexible approaches for affordable housing contributions to encourage open market and mixed tenure specialist older people's housing.
SA2	Reduce crime and the fear of crime	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increases in racist and religious hate crimes • The percentage of residents that are worried about crime in the Borough remains higher than the London average • Need to provide safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine quality of life • Need to develop an approach to tackling crime, improving liveability and reducing anti-social behaviour.
SA3	Improve standard of health and wellbeing of those who live and work in the Borough	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Currently a large proportion of the population are aged over 50 and this is projected to rise over the next 20 years (+26% rise by 2021) • Improve life expectancies through promoting healthy lifestyles for all ages • Need to ensure adequate access to green spaces and recreational facilities to promote active and healthy lifestyles • Need to increase recognition of the growing evidence of a relationship between physical and mental health • Need to ensure that hospitals have fit for purpose facilities (i.e. less converted houses) that meet the needs of patients • Need to increase levels of active travel throughout the Borough in order to increase physical activity levels and tackle poor air quality. • Childhood obesity rates are higher within Waltham Forest than both regionally and nationally • TB remains a disease which is of high prevalence within the Borough • There is a need to protect open space of varying types, which is used heavily by residents of the Borough. For example, allotment space.
SA4	Improve community cohesion and reduce inequalities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are inequalities in health and life expectancy between ethnic groups • Disparities between wards, particularly between the north and south of the Borough

SA Objective	Description	Key Sustainability Issues
	<p>through the provision of community facilities to meet local cultural, educational, recreational and social needs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to provide inclusive services; promote equal opportunities; oppose discrimination, intolerance and disadvantage through reducing inequalities and promoting community cohesion • Help to support development of successful neighbourhoods • There is a need to create high quality places to live, work and recreate that are mixed and well-balanced in terms of tenure and income • Adequate support and facilities for older residents, including independent living, has been noted in particular to be needed • Need to build on Borough's arts, culture and sport strengths across the Borough's diverse and changing population. • Need to reduce the number of older people who feel socially isolated, by getting them actively participating in community life • Currently a large proportion of the population are aged over 50 and this is projected to rise over the next 20 years (+26% rise by 2021) • Need to ensure that growth supports the delivery of vital infrastructure and new facilities across the Borough • Help to support development of successful neighbourhoods • Need to ensure that all residents have access to training and skills development to enable them to access and progress into high quality employment.
<p>SA5</p>	<p>Improve opportunities for access to local services, facilities and employment through an integrated sustainable transport system, reducing car use for all journey lengths</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continual growth in car ownership will contribute to further air pollution, and associated impacts on climate, human health and biodiversity • Need to work towards improving air quality and reducing noise impacts from transport • There is a need to make public transport more accessible in some areas of the Borough • There is a need to promote walking and cycling (building on Enjoy Waltham Forest ("Mini Holland") programmes) for local journeys in place of travel by private car. There should also be a focus on promoting public transport use instead of cars for medium and longer journeys • There is a need to reduce car parking spaces in order to discourage private car use and improve air quality • One in five journeys each weekday morning and afternoon involves trips to school, even though most journeys to schools are under a mile. There is a need to reduce school journeys by reducing Drop Off/Pick Up arrangements for new school developments, and encouraging sustainable, active travel amongst school pupils • As the population grows, so does the need to change current infrastructure to meet the demands of all residents whilst making it future proof • Need to ensure that growth supports the delivery of vital infrastructure and new facilities across the Borough • Need to provide public transport capacity and safeguard land for transport • Help to enhance London's transport connectivity • Improvements to road safety are needed to reduce casualties • Need to make cycle parking safe and easy to use • There is a need to provide electric vehicle infrastructure, such as charging points.
<p>SA6</p>	<p>Prevent production of</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of waste produced is reducing but still exceeds both the London and national average

SA Objective	Description	Key Sustainability Issues
	waste, improve resource efficiency and increase recycling and recovery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The London Plan encourages greater self-sufficiency for waste management in London and sustainable transportation of waste. • Recycling is increasing but still falls short of government targets • Need to ensure that growth supports the delivery of vital infrastructure and new facilities across the Borough • Need to minimise the impact of municipal waste management on the Borough's environment • Need to reduce the carbon footprint of municipal waste • Need to ensure that all waste is managed in the most environmentally friendly way.
SA7	Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote low carbon growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greenhouse gas emissions need to be stabilised and reduced over time • Help promote low carbon heat network • Need to identify opportunities for growth of the low carbon economy in the Upper Lee Valley • There is a need to provide electric vehicle infrastructure, such as charging points.
SA8	Conserve energy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a need to continue to promote the construction of energy efficient buildings, and to support the installation of renewable and low or zero carbon technology.
SA9	Improve air quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continual growth in car ownership will contribute further air pollution • Reliance on the petrol or diesel-fuelled private car as the main mode of transport • Air pollution from the strategic road network is an issue across the Borough and NO₂ emissions are remaining constant, not decreasing as predicted • Increasing use of biofuels (biodiesel and biomass) for heating schemes will cause further air quality issues • Need to help reduce pollution from road vehicles, buildings, industry and construction • Need to improve efficacy of measures within the AQMA • There is a need to provide electric vehicle infrastructure, such as charging points.
SA10	Improve water quality in rivers and groundwater and ensure the efficient use of water resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diffuse urban water pollution exists in local rivers and water bodies • There should be no deterioration in the health and quality of existing water bodies and development should improve the status of water bodies to achieve 'Good Overall Status in accordance with the Water Framework Directive', such as through installing rain planters and reed beds • Increasing population will put strain on water resources • Potential impacts of the Local Plan policies and site allocations on groundwater need to be identified and addressed.
SA11	Reduce the risk of flooding and improve resilience to climate change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High number of properties risk of flooding and there is a need to promote flood resistance and resilience measures for existing and future properties to ensure they are resilient to the future effect of climate change and protected against future flood risk. In response to this risk proposals have been developed for Critical Drainage Areas . • Natural flood management techniques should be promoted • New development will need to incorporate SUDS to sustainably reduce flood risk • Need to promote the use of new technologies and innovation in flood mitigation measures • There will be an increasing need to plan for and implement/facilitate climate change adaptation, in respect of rising temperatures, water

SA Objective	Description	Key Sustainability Issues
		<p>scarcity and extreme weather events, particularly heavy rainfall/flooding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is a need to plan and prepare for the expected impacts of unavoidable climate change by developing adaptation responses and building resilience • New developments need to minimise vulnerability and provide resilience to climate change • There is a need to work with communities to help tackle climate change.
SA12	Ensure the efficient use of land and buildings and protect soil quality and geological resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is finite availability of previously developed land for development; this may result in the use of greenfield land in the future • There is a need to protect soils and the important ecosystem services they provide – particularly during construction and development • Need to protect designated geological sites.
SA13	Conserve and enhance biodiversity and the natural environment, improving resilience to climate change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support is needed to achieve local BAP targets • Need to promote effective land-management to support, protect and enhance biodiversity • Increases in population will cause a demand for more development, where there is a potential for loss of valuable habitats which have yet to be designated for nature conservation as a direct result • Consider and plan for the impacts of climate change on species and habitats • There is a need to help encourage people to engage with the ownership, design, management, maintenance and use of their environment as part of their own vision for their neighbourhood • Need to recognise the wider benefits of ecosystem services and manage impacts on biodiversity • Increase awareness that green infrastructure and resilient ecological networks play an important role in aiding climate change adaptation and resilience • Seek to enhance green infrastructure networks within the Borough • Ensure current ecological networks are not compromised, and future improvements in habitat connectivity are not prejudiced • In line with NPPF paragraph 174, new development should achieve biodiversity net-gain in a hierarchical approach with on-site net-gain being preferred and off-site compensation as a last resort • Need to work to conserve and enhance the local environment.
SA14	Protect the ecological integrity of SSSI and Natura 2000 sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large areas of the SSSI sites are considered to be in either unfavourable with no change or to be in an unfavourable and declining condition • SSSIs and European sites within the Borough are under threat from poor air quality, recreational pressure and urban effects (including issues with litter) • Need to protect and enhance the wildlife and habitats in Waltham Forest, in particular those of international, national and regional importance.
SA15	Maintain and enhance the quality of the green belt and open space areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large areas of open space are Metropolitan Green Belt. There is a need to protect these areas of open space from development pressure. • There is a need to protect open space of varying types, which is used heavily by residents of the Borough. For example, allotment space.

SA Objective	Description	Key Sustainability Issues
SA16	Maintain and improve local distinctiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to establish a strong sense of place, using streetscapes and buildings to create attractive and comfortable places to live, work and visit • Need to work towards conserving local character and history, by reflecting the identity of local surroundings and materials. This should not prevent or discourage appropriate innovation.
SA17	Conserve and enhance the historic built environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A number of listed buildings are identified as being in poor condition and are have been included on Historic England's Heritage at Risk Register. Opportunities exist to improve the condition of some listed buildings through development • The Borough contains 20 Archaeological Priority Areas where there is significant known archaeological interest or potential for new discoveries • Ensure that the Conservation Areas, Heritage Assets and features are preserved or enhanced • New developments should respect the urban and historic context, improve townscape and leave a positive architectural legacy • Impacts of future development on the local historic environment need to be considered • Heritage assets should be managed to sustain their significance • Ensure that everyone is able to participate in understanding and sustaining their local historic environment • Development could encroach on Conservation Areas and subsequently negatively affect townscape and heritage assets.
SA18	Maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of the Borough's town centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further action is needed in order to support and promote retail, business, cultural, leisure and residential investment in town centres. • Support is required for the creation of the Creative Enterprise Zone around Blackhorse Lane.
SA19	Improve the local economy by enabling employment developments in appropriate places	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lower than average salaries could affect the Borough's ability to attract inward investment • Continue to support the Upper Lee Valley Development Opportunity Area and celebrate its industrial heritage • There are likely to be ongoing pressures on industrial sites, need to maintain industrial uses and promote strong local base of small businesses • Need to provide additional workspaces and promote denser, mixed use development with no net loss of business floor space.
SA20	Maintain stable levels of employment in the Borough	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills development in growth areas is also needed both for those who are currently unemployed or underemployed • Encourage and promote flexible working arrangements for residents to support people when gaining skills and moving into employment • Investment is needed so that local people have the skills and ability to seize local growth opportunities and they are able to access and progress into high-quality, better paid employment in the Borough • There are large inequalities in employment and skill levels. between wards within the Borough. Need to ensure that regeneration is inclusive • Ensure that ongoing business growth becomes a driver of productivity and fairer wages (e.g. encouraging the London Living Wage), in order to create an increase in the overall prosperity of the Waltham Forest Borough • There is a need to create fair employment and good work for all

SA Objective	Description	Key Sustainability Issues
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In work support is needed to ensure sustainment of jobs, professional development and progression into better paid, secure higher quality jobs • Need to promote employment, training programmes and sector-based initiatives in the growth of skills to support creative and digital industries, construction and facilities management, retail and hospitality, and finance and business services.

3.3 Stage B: SPD Objectives Appraisal (see Appendix B)

The objectives of each SPD were tested against the SA objectives, as shown in the matrices in appendix B.

Stage B: Options assessment (Appendix B)

One of the key requirements of an SA is to consider reasonable alternatives as part of the assessment process. Identifying alternative options, which do not stray from the overriding policy, which the SPD supplements, can be difficult. Effectively, decisions made at a higher level have closed off and constrained the identification of options at the lower level. As a minimum however, the options of either ‘do nothing’ or ‘business as usual’ should be tested against the SA framework. Accordingly, the SPD was appraised against the two options ‘with an SPD’ and ‘without an SPD’ (i.e. ‘the do nothing approach’). The appraisal of these individual options has allowed us to identify which of the options are most sustainable.

Given that the SPD’s supplement and are therefore consistent with policy, in most instances their value will be in providing further clarity and amplification in the interpretation and implementation of policy. The SPD was also found to be generally useful in bringing together various issues under the heading of a single document where a policy may appear somewhat vague or open to interpretation.

The results of the options appraisal for the individual SPD indicated that the ‘with an SPD’ option would always perform better against the SA objectives, because of the added value noted above which the SPD provides. The results of the options appraisal would normally allow preferred options to be identified for the SPD, which would form the basis for drafting the SPD. In this instance however given the nature of the options appraised, i.e. ‘with’ or ‘without SPD’, the preferred options would effectively be the ‘with’ an SPD option.

³ Accessible here: <https://walthamforest.gov.uk/content/local-plan>

3.4 Stage C: SPD Assessment and Producing the SA Report (appendix 2)

Up to this point only the objectives and potential options for the SPD had been appraised. Having completed this iterative process, a draft of the individual SPD was prepared. Similarly, as with the earlier appraisals of the SPD objectives and options, the draft SPD was appraised against the SA objectives. This appraisal sets out to predict the effects of the draft SPD against these objectives and assess the significance of these effects.

Mitigation is also an important element of the appraisal process. As part of the appraisal of the draft SPD where significant adverse effects have been predicted, appropriate mitigation have been identified. Moreover, in these instances where the influence of an SPD is positive or neutral, consideration has been given to how positive effects can be enhanced/maximised. The key recommendations for the SPD is outlined in the proposed recommendations/conclusions section.

Table 3: Significance definitions for SA

Symbol	Definitions of Significance of Effects Against the SA Objectives	Assumptions on the nature of effects
++	<p>Significant Positive Effect: the policy supports the achievement of this objective; it addresses all relevant sub-objectives and could result in a potentially significant beneficial effect e.g. improved access by walking and cycling modes to a local or town centre</p>	<p>Permanent Continual</p> <p>Magnitude: High 80%+ receptor or environmental capacity affected; or Medium 40-80% of receptor or environmental capacity of affected</p> <p>The effect could be to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enhance and redefine the location in a positive manner, making a contribution at a national or international scale; • enhance and redefine the location in a positive manner; • repair or restore receptors badly damaged or degraded through previous uses; and/or • improve one or more key elements/features/ characteristics of a receptor with recognised quality such as a specific regional or national designation.
+	<p>Minor Positive Effect: the policy supports the achievement of this objective; it addresses some relevant sub-objectives, although it may have only a minor beneficial effect</p>	<p>Reversible Infrequent or intermittent</p> <p>Magnitude: Low 20-40% of receptor or capacity affected.</p> <p>The size, nature and location of a proposed scheme would:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • improve undesignated yet recognised receptor qualities at the neighbourhood scale; • fit into or with the existing location and existing receptor qualities; and/or • enable the restoration of valued characteristic features partially lost through other land uses.
0	<p>Neutral Effect: the policy has no impact or effect and is neutral insofar as the benefits and drawbacks appear equal and neither is considered significant</p>	<p>N/A</p>

Symbol	Definitions of Significance of Effects Against the SA Objectives	Assumptions on the nature of effects
?	Uncertain Effect: Uncertain or insufficient information on which to determine the assessment at this stage	N/A
-	Minor Negative Effect: the policy appears to conflict with the achievement of this objective; it does not address relevant sub-objectives and may result in minor adverse effects	Reversible Infrequent or intermittent Magnitude: Low 20-40% of receptor or capacity affected. The size, nature and location of a proposed scheme would: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be out of scale with the location; or • leave an adverse impact on a receptor of recognised quality such as a specific district or county designation.
--	Significant Negative Effect: the policy works against the achievement of this objective; it could exacerbate relevant sub-objectives and may result in a potentially significant adverse effect e.g. loss of all or part of a designated ecological site of national importance.	Permanent Irreversible Continual Magnitude: High 80%+ receptor or environmental capacity affected; or Medium 40-80% of receptor or environmental capacity of affected The effect could be to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • permanently degrade, diminish or destroy the integrity of the receptor; • cause a very high-quality receptor to be permanently changed and its quality diminished; • cannot be fully mitigated and may cumulatively amount to a severe adverse effect; • be at a considerable variance to the location, degrading the integrity of the receptor; and/or • will be substantially damaging to a high-quality receptor such as a specific regional or national designation.

4 The content of the Residential Alterations and Retrofit Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

4.1 Introduction

The SPD covers a borough wide policy theme. The SPD will provide guidance for the implementation of Local Plan (LP1) policies and have therefore been derived from the policy approach and objectives detailed in LP1. A description of the SPD is set out in section 4.2 below. Objectives for the Residential Alterations and Retrofit SPD are also identified; however these have been contained to the overarching objectives of the SPD. Some SPD objectives bear no relevance to the SA objectives, however officers have considered all SA objectives and where no applicability was found the assessment has been marked 'n/a'.

The SPD objectives frame the content of the SPD and have thus been tested against the SA objectives to identify inconsistencies/compatibility issues. Where compatibility problems have been identified, consideration has been given to the need to refine these SPD objectives to minimise such conflicts and to bring them in line with the SA objectives.

4.2 Description of the SPD

The following sets out the purpose of the SPD and its scope.

Residential Alterations and Retrofit SPD:

The Residential Alterations and Retrofit SPD is intended to form a similar function as the existing Residential Extensions and Alterations Supplementary Planning Document February 2010 with further focus on sustainability and retrofit.

The purpose of this document is to provide clear guidance on the design of residential extensions and alterations. It is intended to help those submitting applications to make design choices that are more likely to be granted planning permission and to encourage retrofit to their properties and will support planning officers when making those decisions, and to make the planning process clearer and smoother for all involved.

The document will be a visionary document which will include case studies of best practice and illustrative design principles.

The target audience is primarily homeowners who wish to extend and retrofit their homes, architects, officers and stakeholders.

Objectives:

- To deliver exemplar design to dwelling alterations and extensions in the Borough;
- To encourage energy efficiency measures when extending or altering homes;
- To achieve sustainable development that responds to the climate emergency.

5 Assessment of the SPD

5.1 Introduction

A detailed assessment of the draft SPD was carried out in Spring 2023 and subsequently in Autumn 2025. The objectives of the SPD were subject to assessment against the SA Framework of objectives (see Appendix A). Summaries of the significant effects (including uncertain effects) are provided in this section with reference to the SA objectives in [Table 2](#). Mitigation measures put forward to address residual uncertain effects can be found in the detailed assessments in Appendix B.

5.2 Potential Significant Effects of the SPD

Table 12 draws out the potential significant effects for the SPD, providing a commentary on why significant effects were identified and the focus of the scoring across environmental, social and economic SA objectives.

Table 12: Summary of Potential Significant and Uncertain Effects for the SPD

Local Plan Policy	Potential Effect	Potential Significant Effects Description
Residential Alterations and Retrofit SPD:		There were no significant positive or negative effects identified. Where minor positive effects were identified, these are predicted to see improvements that are evident immediately as this SPD replaces the outdated Residential Extensions SPD 2010. Minor positive effects were identified for all SPD objectives against SA objectives SA1; SA3; SA4; SA5; SA6; SA7; SA8; SA9.

6 Mitigation Measures

Mitigation is also an important element of the appraisal process. As part of the appraisal of the draft SPD where significant adverse effects have been predicted, appropriate mitigation has been identified. Moreover, in these instances where the influence of an SPD is positive or neutral consideration has been given to how positive effects can be enhanced/maximised. Given the specific sustainable focus of the SPD they have had no impact against a number of the SA objectives. Where an effect has been noted these have generally been positive for the most part. Accordingly, no recommendations have been made in terms of mitigation measures. The key recommendation for the SPD is outlined in the proposed recommendations/conclusions section below.

Mitigation measures put forward for residual uncertain effects are listed within Table 31.

Table 31: Proposed mitigation/recommendation measures for the SPD

SPD	Explanation and Mitigation Measures to Minimise or Avoid Effects
Residential Alterations and Retrofit SPD:	No potential significantly adverse or uncertain effects have been predicted for this policy. Therefore, no mitigation measures have been identified as necessary.

7 Conclusion

The findings of the SA process has reaffirmed that the impacts of the Residential Alterations and Retrofit SPD is to be positive. The SPD is part of a wider suite of SPDs that will help support the aims of the adopted Local Plan.

Appendix 1 - SPD Objectives Appraisal

Residential Alterations and Retrofit SPD

	Objective 1	Objective 2	Objective 3
	To deliver exemplar design to house alterations and extensions in the Borough	To encourage energy efficiency measures when extending or altering homes	To achieve sustainable development that responds to the climate emergency
SA Objectives			
SA1. Meet local housing needs through the provision of a range of tenures and sizes of new dwellings	+	+	+
SA2. Reduce crime and the fear of crime	+	0	0
SA3. Improve standard of health and wellbeing of those who live and work in the Borough	+	+	+

SA4. Improve community cohesion and reduce inequalities through the provision of community facilities to meet local cultural, educational, recreational and social needs	+	+	+
SA5. Improve opportunities for access to local services, facilities and employment through an integrated sustainable transport system, reducing car use for all journey lengths	+	+	+
SA6. Prevent production of waste, improve resource efficiency and increase recycling and recovery	+	+	+
SA7. Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote low carbon growth	+	+	+
SA8. Conserve energy	+	+	+
SA9. Improve air quality	+	+	+

SA10. Improve water quality in rivers and groundwater and ensure the efficient use of water resources	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA11. Reduce the risk of flooding and improve resilience to climate change	+	+	+
SA12. Ensure the efficient use of land and buildings and protect soil quality and geological resources	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA13. Conserve and enhance biodiversity and the natural environment, improving resilience to climate change	+	+	+
SA14. Protect the ecological integrity of SSSI and Natura 2000 sites	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA15. Maintain and enhance the quality of the green belt and open space areas	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA16. Maintain and improve local distinctiveness	+	+	0
SA17. Conserve and enhance the historic built environment	+	0	+

SA18. Maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of the Borough's town centres	+	N/A	N/A
SA19. Improve the local economy by enabling employment developments in appropriate places	N/A	N/A	N/A
SA20. Maintain stable levels of employment in the Borough	N/A	N/A	N/A

Appendix 2 - Options Assessment

Residential Alterations and Retrofit SPD

	Summary of impact WITHOUT SPD
SA Objectives	
SA1. Meet local housing needs through the provision of a range of tenures and sizes of new dwellings	No SPD would reduce the effectiveness of Local Plan implementation related to this.

SA2. Reduce crime and the fear of crime	No SPD would reduce the effectiveness of Local Plan implementation related to this.
SA3. Improve standard of health and wellbeing of those who live and work in the Borough	No SPD would reduce the effectiveness of Local Plan implementation related to this.
SA4. Improve community cohesion and reduce inequalities through the provision of community facilities to meet local cultural, educational, recreational and social needs	No SPD would reduce the effectiveness of Local Plan implementation related to this.
SA5. Improve opportunities for access to local services, facilities and employment through an integrated sustainable transport system, reducing car use for all journey lengths	No SPD would reduce the effectiveness of Local Plan implementation related to this.
SA6. Prevent production of waste, improve resource efficiency and increase recycling and recovery	No SPD would reduce the effectiveness of Local Plan implementation related to this.

SA7. Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote low carbon growth	No SPD would reduce the effectiveness of Local Plan implementation related to this.
SA8. Conserve energy	No SPD would reduce the effectiveness of Local Plan implementation related to this.
SA9. Improve air quality	No SPD would reduce the effectiveness of Local Plan implementation related to this.
SA10. Improve water quality in rivers and groundwater and ensure the efficient use of water resources	no impact
SA11. Reduce the risk of flooding and improve resilience to climate change	no impact
SA12. Ensure the efficient use of land and buildings and protect soil quality and geological resources	no impact
SA13. Conserve and enhance biodiversity and the natural environment, improving resilience to climate change	No SPD would reduce the effectiveness of Local Plan implementation related to this.
SA14. Protect the ecological integrity of SSSI and Natura 2000 sites	no impact

SA15. Maintain and enhance the quality of the green belt and open space areas	No SPD would reduce the effectiveness of Local Plan implementation related to this.
SA16. Maintain and improve local distinctiveness	No SPD would reduce the effectiveness of Local Plan implementation related to this.
SA17. Conserve and enhance the historic built environment	No SPD would reduce the effectiveness of Local Plan implementation related to this.
SA18. Maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of the Borough's town centres	no impact
SA19. Improve the local economy by enabling employment developments in appropriate places	no impact
SA20. Maintain stable levels of employment in the Borough	no impact

Residential Alterations and Retrofit SPD

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)
Screening Report

January 2026

1 Purpose of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening Report

- 1.1 This screening report is designed to determine whether the draft Residential Alterations and Retrofit Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) contents require a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) following the European Directive 2001/42/EC and associated Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.
- 1.2 This report concludes that a Strategic Environmental Assessment is not required, for the reasons outlined below.

2 Legislative Background

- 2.1 A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is a way of ensuring the environmental implications of a plan or programme for 'town or country planning or 'land use' are taken into account. The need for environmental assessments is set out in the EU Directive 2001/42/EC (hereafter referred to as the SEA Directive). This has subsequently been transposed into English law through the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (the SEA Regulations).
- 2.2 The Government's Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) states in some limited circumstances, where a Supplementary Planning Document could have significant environmental effects, it may fall within the scope of the SEA Regulations and so require an SEA. To determine whether the Residential Alterations and Retrofit SPD might have significant environmental effects, its scope has been assessed against the criteria set out in Schedule 1 to the SEA Regulations. As noted in the PPG note, an SEA is unlikely to be required where an SPD deals only with a small area at a local level (see Regulation 5(6) of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004) unless it is considered that there are likely to be significant environmental effects.

3 Summary of the SPD

- 3.1 The Residential Alterations and Retrofit SPD, relates to the existing building stock within the borough of Waltham Forest.
- 3.2 The purpose of the SPD is to provide residents with clear design and planning guidance on what measures they can undertake to extend, alter and improve the sustainability credentials of their homes. This also includes urban greening improvements.
- 3.3 The SPD includes detailed design codes and planning guidance to ensure clarity to residents on what is permissible and feasible in planning terms, to ensure high-quality design.

4 Screening Process

- 4.1 The screening opinion assessment is undertaken in two parts: the first part will assess whether the SPD requires SEA (as per Appendix A); 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 Directive and the SEA Regulations.

Assessment One: Screening for SEA Requirement

- 4.2 Appendix A presents a flow diagram entitled ‘Application of the SEA Directive to plans and programmes’, which is taken from A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive [See reference 20]. This is a useful guide when considering whether a plan should be subject to SEA (The Practical Guide has been superseded by the National Planning Practice Guidance; however it still provides a useful and relevant guide to the process to use in making SEA screening decisions).

Stage	Y/N	Reason
1. Is the SPD subject to preparation and/or adoption by a national, regional or local authority, OR prepared by an authority for adoption through a legislative procedure by Parliament or Government? (Art. 2(a))	Y	Yes. The SPD will be prepared and adopted by London Borough of Waltham Forest in its role as Local Planning Authority, which is allowed under the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.
2. Is the SPD required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions? (Art. 2(a))	N	No. The preparation of this SPD is not a requirement of legislation, regulatory or administrative provisions.
3. Is the SPD prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, telecommunications, tourism, town and country planning or land use, AND does it set a framework for future development consent of projects in Annexes I and II to the EIA Directive? (Art. 3.2(a))	Y	Yes. This SPD is intended to provide further guidance to the Local Plan which is the land-use planning policy framework for its area. The Local Plan has been subject to full Sustainability Appraisal (including SEA). This SPD will not create new policy or land-use designations.
4. Will the SPD, in view of its likely effect on sites, require an assessment for future development under Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive? (Art. 3.2(b))	N	No. The Local Plan was subject to screening under the requirements of the Habitats Directive. This SPD will not change or add to policy, proposals or designations within the Local Plan, therefore it is not

		considered that further screening for such assessment is necessary.
5. Does the SPD determine the use of small areas at local level OR is it a minor modification of a plan or programme subject to Art. 3.2? (Art. 3.3)	N	No. The policies, proposals and allocations that determine uses at a borough-wide level have already been set within the adopted Local Plan. There will be no aspect of this SPD which would modify the Local Plan.
6. Does the SPD set the framework for future development consent of projects (not just projects in annexes to the EIA Directive)? (Art. 3.4)	N	No. This framework is already set within the Local Plan. This SPD will provide further guidance on the relevant policies, proposals or allocations within the Local Plan
7. Is the SPD's sole purpose to serve the national defence or civil emergency, OR is it a financial or budget plan or programme, OR is it co-financed by structural funds or EAGGF programmes 2000 to 2006/7? (Art. 3.8, 3.9)	N	None of these are the sole purpose of this SPD.
Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment? (Art 3.5)	N	No. It is not likely that this SPD will have any significant effect that has not already been identified and assessed through the Sustainability Appraisal of the Local Plan.

Assessment Two: Likely Significant Effects on the Environment

SEA Directive Criteria and Schedule 1 of Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004	London Borough of Waltham Forest Response	Likely significant environmental effect?
1. Characteristics of the Residential Alterations and Retrofit SPD, having particular regard to:		
The degree to which the SPD sets out 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 provide guidance on the design of residential alterations and sustainable measures to residential building stock in the borough. This guidance is supplementary to the Local Plan, which provides the overarching framework for development in Waltham Forest. No resources are allocated.	None

The degree to which the SPD influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy	The guidance in the SPD is supplementary and will be in line the policies in the adopted Local Plan, which has been subject to full Sustainability Appraisal.	None
The relevance of the SPD for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development	The SPD will promote sustainable development by providing guidance on the implementation and compliance with policies contained within the Local Plan, which have been subject to full Sustainability Appraisal.	None
Environmental problems relevant to the SPD	The SPD will not introduce or exacerbate any environmental problems.	None
The relevance of the SPD for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (for example plans and programmes related to waste management or water protection)	The SPD will not impact on the implementation of community legislation on the environment.	None
2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having particular regard to:		
The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects	The anticipated effects on the sustainability of future development are expected to be minor positive for the duration (lifetime) of the development. The SPD will provide updated guidance to encourage residential alterations and extensions to be built sustainably, whilst promoting the integration of retrofit measures, in line with the Local Plan.	None
The cumulative nature of the effects of the SPD	The likely effects of the SPD will be minor positive therefore any cumulative impacts will be minor.	None
The transboundary nature of the effects of the SPD	The effects are limited to developments in the London Borough of Waltham Forest.	None
The risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accident)	No significant risks to human health have been identified.	None
The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected) of the SPD	The SPD is applicable to developments within the whole borough.	None

<p>The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected by the SPD due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Special natural characteristics or cultural heritage ▪ Exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values ▪ Intensive land use <p>And</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status 	<p>The SPD is applicable to developments within the whole of the borough, which includes some conservation areas and listed buildings. Policy impacts on heritage have been assessed through the Sustainability Appraisal of the Local Plan with Detailed Policies. The SPD will be consistent with the Local Plan approach that seeks to preserve and enhance heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance.</p> <p>The overall likely effect of the SPD will be positive by maximising the positive environmental effects of development and minimising or avoiding negative impacts.</p>	<p>None</p>
<p>Assessment 2 conclusion:</p>	<p>The draft Residential Alterations and Retrofit SPD is not likely to have a significant detrimental impact upon the environment. A number of potentially significant positive impacts have been identified.</p>	

5 Conclusion of Findings

- 5.1 LB Waltham Forest considers that the impact of the SPD, through responses to the SEA Directive Criteria, will have beneficial environmental effects on Waltham Forest. In addition, the SPD is not setting new policy. It is supplementing and providing further guidance on existing policies.
- 5.2 Therefore, it is currently considered that an SEA is not required for the Residential Alterations and Retrofit SPD.
- 5.3 The SPD accords with the London Borough of Waltham Forest’s Local Plan, which has undergone a full Sustainability Appraisal incorporating SEA, as well as national and regional policies. The SPD provides guidance on these policies and is required to be in line with them (it does not create new policies). As such, we have determined that this draft SPD does not require an SEA to be undertaken.

Appendix A: Application of the SEA Directive to plans and programmes

