

**Holcroft Moss Planning Obligations
Supplementary Planning Document
SEA Screening Determination
Statement**

September 2024

1. Strategic Environmental Assessment Introduction

- 1.1. The nine Places for Everyone (PfE) Plan local authorities (Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan) are jointly preparing a Holcroft Moss Planning Obligations Joint Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). The nine PfE Plan authorities are the “responsible body” for the purposes of this SEA screening determination statement.
- 1.2. This statement sets out the determination of the need for a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in accordance with Regulation 9 (3) of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 and European Directive 2001/42/EC for the Draft Holcroft Moss Planning Obligations Joint Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

2. Strategic Environmental Assessment Context

- 2.1. The requirement for a SEA is set out in the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (the Regulations), which implements the requirements of the European Directive 2001/42/EC.
- 2.2. The SEA Directive (2001/42/EC) identifies the purpose of SEA is “to provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes with a view to promoting sustainable development”. It requires the determination as to whether the plan or programme under assessment is likely to have significant environmental effects, taking account of the criteria set out in Schedule 1 of the Regulations. The Regulations require that the results of this process are set out in a Screening Determination Statement (this document), which must be publicly available.
- 2.3. Before making a formal determination in relation to SEA, there is a requirement to consult the three statutory consultation bodies designated in the Regulations (the Environment Agency, Historic England, and Natural

England) on whether environmental assessment is required. This was undertaken and their responses to the consultation are at Appendix 2 of this statement.

2.4. The Planning Practice Guidance (Paragraph: 008 Reference ID: 11-008-20140306) states that: “Supplementary Planning Documents do not require a Sustainability Appraisal but may in exceptional circumstances require a Strategic Environmental Assessment if they are likely to have significant environmental effects that have not already been assessed during the preparation of the relevant strategic policies”.

3. Draft Holcroft Moss Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

3.1. Annex 2 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) defines SPDs as documents which add further detail to the policies in the Development Plan. As SPDs do not have the same status as policies contained within the Development Plan, they are not subject to independent examination.

3.2. The Places for Everyone (PfE) Plan was adopted by, Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan (the nine PfE Plan authorities) and took effect on 21 March 2024. The SPD sets out how the nine PfE Plan authorities will seek to secure contributions from developers to mitigate the impacts of development proposals on Holcroft Moss, which emerged through the PfE Plan making process (and also Warrington’s Local Plan) and through detailed discussions with Natural England.

3.3. The aims of the Holcroft Moss Planning Obligations SPD are to:

- Ensure that advice is consistent with the latest Government regulations and associated Planning Practice Guidance;
- Ensure that new development is consistent with the provisions of the recently adopted PfE Plan;

- Provide a robust basis upon which the nine PfE Plan authorities can secure contributions from developers to ensure that the impacts of schemes on Holcroft Moss are appropriately mitigated; and
- Provide clear advice to developers as to what is expected in applications to ensure an efficient process for consultation and determination.

3.4. The PfE Plan is the “parent DPD”, which has already been subject to Sustainability Appraisal incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment, prior to being adopted and coming into effect on 21 March 2024.

3.5. The Draft Holcroft Moss Planning Obligations SPD will supplement PfE Plan Policy: Policy JP-C8: Transport Requirements of New Development.

3.6. The SPD will provide guidance on the application of S106 agreements that form the basis of developer contributions in respect of matters relating to the mitigation of impact from development on Holcroft Moss. It will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications for the whole of the PfE Plan area upon adoption.

3.7. The information and guidance in the SPD will be of particular use to those looking to submit planning applications to one or more of the PfE Plan authorities. It will provide practical advice to help applicants comply with PfE Plan policy requirements. It also sets out the procedure for determining planning applications, what information will be required and when it will be required.

4. Screening Determination

4.1. The Draft Holcroft Moss Planning Obligations SPD is not setting new policy; it will supplement an existing policy (JP-C8) in the PfE Plan (which came into effect on 21 March 2024). JP-C8 has already been subject to SA/SEA and HRA, through the PfE Plan making process. The screening of the Draft Holcroft Moss Planning Obligations SPD is set out in Appendix 1 of this document.

4.2. The PfE Plan authorities consider that after having regard to the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 the Holcroft Moss SPD does not require a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA).

4.3. They have come to this view as:

- The SPD sits beneath the PfE Plan, which provides a policy framework for the location, nature and scale of growth and link to retained EU law. As with the Warrington Local Plan, the PfE Plan has been through the SEA process and any required mitigation is already identified;
- The SPD's purpose is to ensure new development mitigates adverse impacts on the protected habitats and species at Holcroft Moss.
- The SPD provides guidance on PfE Plan Policy JP-C8 Transport Requirements of New Development, which has been informed by the outcome and recommendations of the associated Habitats Regulations Assessment.

5. Consultation with the statutory bodies

5.1. Having prepared an initial screening determination statement, the competent authorities consulted the Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England, in accordance with the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004. On behalf of the nine PfE authorities, the documents were, at the same time, also made available on the GMCA's website. The purpose of this consultation was to establish whether organisations/interested parties agreed with the outcome of the initial screening.

5.2. Each of the statutory bodies have confirmed that they agree with the competent authorities' conclusion that the proposed Holcroft Moss Planning Obligations SPD would not require a full Strategic Environmental Assessment or a Habitats Regulations Assessment.

5.3. The relevant correspondence is attached at Appendix 2.

6. Conclusion

6.1. Given the outcome of this assessment and the response of the statutory consultees, provided at Appendix 2, the competent authorities have concluded that a full Habitats Regulations Assessment is not required for the Holcroft Moss Planning Obligations SPD.

Appendix 1

Table 1: Schedule 1 – Consideration against the criteria for determining the likely significant effects on the environment.

SEA Directive Criteria	Summary of Environments effects	Likely Significant Effects?
1. Characteristics of the Holcroft Moss Planning Obligations SPD having particular regard to:	-	-
a) The degree to which the plan or programme sets out a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size or operating conditions or by allocating resources.	The SPD will provide supplementary guidance to the adopted Places for Everyone Plan (PfE) Plan policies, which provide an overarching framework for development in the PfE Plan area. The PfE Plan policies have been scrutinised through the Sustainability Appraisal / SEA processes. The Holcroft Moss Planning Obligations SPD will not set a new framework for projects or other activities and does not introduce new policies. The SPD will not itself allocate resources, although it will help secure resources for the delivery of the PfE Plan.	No

<p>b) The degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy.</p>	<p>The SPD is at the lower tier of the Development Plan hierarchy. The purpose of the SPD is to support the delivery of the adopted PfE Plan and to guide the preparation and determination of planning applications. Therefore, the SPD will not influence other plans or programmes as it forms a lower tier of the existing planning hierarchy, and consequently will not cause any significant environmental effects</p>	<p>No</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 aim of the SPD is to assist mitigating the impacts from development, through developer contributions. As such, it aligns with the promotion of sustainable development, but it is the individual PfE Plan authorities'¹ Local Plans, including the PfE Plan, which provide the policy basis for promoting sustainable development.</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>(d) Environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme; and</p>	<p>The PfE Plan SEA and HRA both identified environmental constraints within the Plan area and assessed the polices of the Plan in this regard and where appropriate considered the combined effect(s)</p>	<p>No</p>

¹ The nine PfE Plan authorities are: Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan

	of the PfE Plan and the Warrington Local Plan. The SPD will not introduce or exacerbate any environmental problems but is a mechanism for ensuring that relevant environmental impacts that may arise from the PfE Plan (in combination with those from the Warrington Local Plan) can be mitigated.	
e) The relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of community legislation on the environment (e.g. plans and programmes related to waste management or water).	The SPD will help support the implementation of other plans and programmes related to legislation on the environment through supporting the delivery of the PfE Plan. It is the individual PfE Plan authorities' Local Plans, including the PfE Plan, however that provide the policy framework in this regard.	No
-	-	-
2. Characteristics of the effects and area likely to be affected having particular regard to:	-	Likely Significant Effect?
a) The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects	The SEA and HRA of the PfE Plan (and Warrington's Local Plan) identified potential effects and the basis for required mitigation. The SPD is a mechanism to ensure that mitigation is delivered.	No

b) The cumulative nature of the effects	The SEA and HRA of the PfE Plan (and Warrington's Local Plan) identified potential cumulative impacts and their effects, together with the basis for required mitigation. The SPD is a mechanism to ensure that mitigation is delivered.	No
c) The trans-boundary nature of the effects	<p>The application of the SPD will be limited to providing additional detail regarding the scale of developer contributions/planning obligations required by the adopted PfE Plan, which has already been through the SA/SEA process.</p> <p>The SPD does not, in itself, influence the location of development. Therefore, the effects of the SPD will not result in any significant environmental effects of a trans-boundary nature.</p>	No
d) The risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accident)	The purpose of the SPD is to assist in mitigating adverse impacts on the Manchester Mosses SAC, specifically Holcroft Moss. It is not envisaged that there will be any risks to human health or the environment arising from the implementation of this SPD. It is only adding detail to the adopted PfE Plan, which has already been through the SEA process.	No

<p>e) The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographic area and size of the population likely to be affected)</p>	<p>The SPD is applicable across all nine PfE Plan authorities, but does not allocate land, prescribe land uses, or identify sites for development. The SPD does not, in itself, influence the scale and location of development, but instead seeks to assist in mitigating adverse impacts of development on the Manchester Mosses SAC, specifically Holcroft Moss.</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>f) The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Special natural characteristics or cultural heritage ii) Exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values iii) Intensive land use 	<p>There are policies in the individual PfE Plan authorities' Local Plan, including the PfE Plan, already assessed through the SA/SEA process, that seek to protect these areas / address these impacts. The SPD, in itself, does not influence the location of development and hence will not lead to significant effects on the value or vulnerability of the area. Any planning applications for development will be required to satisfy the relevant policies for protection of the character of the area, as set out in individual PfE Plan authorities' Local Plans, including the PfE Plan, before permission is granted.</p>	<p>No</p>

	<p>The draft SPD supplements PfE Plan Policy JP-C8 which requires planning applications accompanied by a Transport Assessment to consider air quality impacts on Holcroft Moss.</p>	
<p>g) The effects on areas or landscapes which have recognised national, Community or international protected status</p>	<p>The SPD does not influence the location of development, so will not cause effects on protected landscape sites. The effects on areas or landscapes which have recognised national, community or international protected status have already been assessed and addressed through SEA as part of the individual PfE Plan authorities' Local Plans, including the PfE Plan making process. Any planning applications for development will be required to satisfy the relevant policies for protection of the character of the area, as set out in individual PfE Plan authorities' Local Plans, including the PfE Plan, before permission is granted. The purpose of the SPD is to assist in mitigating adverse impacts on the Manchester Mosses SAC, specifically Holcroft Moss, which has international protected status.</p>	

Appendix 1

Responses from statutory consultees in relation to the initial screening





Historic England

Email: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Our ref: PL00796575
Your ref: PL00796577

Date: 7 August 2024

Dear Clare

Consultation: Places for Everyone SEA Screening for Holcroft Moss SPD and South Pennines Moors SPD

Thank you for your email dated 29 July 2024 regarding the proposed SPDs.

Historic England is the Government's statutory adviser on all matters relating to the historic environment in England. We are a non-departmental public body established under the National Heritage Act 1983 and sponsored by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). We champion and protect England's historic places, providing expert advice to local planning authorities, developers, owners and communities to help ensure our historic environment is properly understood, enjoyed and cared for.

Historic England has produced a document, which you might find helpful in providing guidance on the effective assessment of the historic environment in Strategic Environmental Assessments. This can be found at <https://www.historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/sustainability-appraisal-and-strategic-environmental-assessment-advice-note-8/>.

In terms of our area of interest, we would concur with your assessment that the documents are unlikely to result in any significant environmental effects 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 two documents.

If you have any queries about this matter or would like to discuss anything further, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Emily Hrycan
Historic Environment Planning Adviser (North West)
Historic England
E-mail: [REDACTED]



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Please note that Historic England operates an access to information policy.

Correspondence or information which you send us may therefore become publicly available.



Date: 02 September 2024
Our ref: 483664
Your ref: Clare Taylor



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[REDACTED]
BY EMAIL ONLY

Dear Clare Taylor,

Holcroft Moss and South Pennine Moors SPD – Initial Environmental Screening Assessments (SEA, HRA Screening)

Thank you for your consultation on the following documents dated and received by Natural England on 03 July 2024:

- South Pennine Moors Special Area of Conservation (SAC) / Special Protection Areas (SPA) Supplementary Planning Document - Initial SEA Determination Statement
- South Pennine Moors Special Area of Conservation (SAC) / Special Protection Areas (SPA) Supplementary Planning Document – Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening Statement
- Holcroft Moss Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document Initial SEA Determination Statement
- Holcroft Moss Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document – Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening Statement

Natural England is a non-departmental public body. Our statutory purpose is to ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced, and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development.

It is our advice, on the basis of the material supplied with the consultation, that, in so far as our environmental interests are concerned (including but not limited to statutory designated sites, landscapes and protected species, geology and soils), that there are unlikely to be significant environmental effects from the proposed SPDs that were not covered in the Integrated Assessment and the Habitats Regulations Assessment of the adopted Places for Everyone Strategy. Therefore, the proposed SPDs would not require a full Strategic Environmental Assessment or a Habitats Regulations Assessment.

Yours sincerely

Janet Baguley
Senior Officer Strategic Planning
Cheshire to Lancashire Team