



Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulation Assessment Screening Report

QMUL Mile End Campus Supplementary Planning
Document

Statement of Reasons

May 2021



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1. Introduction

- 1.1. This screening exercise outlines the Council's consideration of whether the proposed Queen Mary University London ("QMUL") Mile End Campus Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (Regulation 18 consultation version, dated February 2021) should be subject to a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) or Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA).

- 1.2. This document constitutes the Council's Statement of Reasons for whether the QMUL Mile End Campus SPD requires a Strategic Environmental Assessment, as set out under Regulation 9 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (as amended). It is accompanied by a Determination Letter.

2. QMUL Mile End Campus SPD

- 2.1 QMUL have outlined to the Council their ambitions for future growth, focusing this growth primarily on the Mile End Campus, both in terms of university floorspace and student accommodation. QMUL projects a 60% increase in taught student numbers on the Mile End campus to over 24,000 by 2030¹. In line with the university's growth vision, sites on the campus have recently come forward for large-scale development. This includes the proposals for a new School of Business Management on the Hatton House site in 2019 which was subsequently refused at Strategic Development Committee.
- 2.2 The Council, in partnership with masterplanning consultants Haworth Tompkins, are preparing a Masterplan SPD for the QMUL Mile End Campus to respond to the various challenges presented within this particular location. The SPD seeks to inform future development on the campus and provide guidance on the implementation of policies in the Tower Hamlets Local Plan 2031 in relation to future growth.
- 2.3 The SPD includes a series of site-specific development principles, borne out of a campus-wide masterplanning exercise, for five key development areas on the campus. The development principles embody Local Plan objectives relating to, for example, urban design, heritage, movement and connectivity, open space and biodiversity. The SPD also takes into consideration the area surrounding the campus, including the campus' relationship to the Mile End Hospital, the Regent's Canal and Mile End Park.
- 2.4 Once adopted, the document will have weight as a material planning consideration setting out the Council's expectations for planning submissions. In this respect, the document will be a key reference point for developments within the aforementioned five development areas. Overall, it is intended for the Mile End Campus to accommodate new growth whilst considering this growth on a campus-wide level; ensuring good urban design (including consideration of tall buildings); response to heritage; movement and connectivity; community benefits; and environmental sustainability. The

¹ Figures from the Queen Mary University London Development Framework Document (2019)

SPD will thus provide more certainty within the development management process as individual sites come forward.

2.5 Illustrative sketches and perspective drawings for each development site are set out within the SPD to give an indication of how development might look, however, principally, future development should be guided by the aforementioned development principles, and this is made clear within the document. Further to the above, the SPD does not contain any detail of future development heights or floorspace amounts.

2.6 The SPD supports the vision, objective and policies of the Tower Hamlets Local Plan 2031. This includes the vision for the 'Central Area', as set out in the Local Plan. Specifically, in relation to QMUL, the Central Area Vision states:

Queen Mary University of London's role as a knowledge hub will be strengthened, with stronger connections to Mile End Neighbourhood Centre and its public transport interchange. The area will be home to a more diverse range of residential and student communities, with a particular focus on family housing which will benefit from access to varied open spaces.

Furthermore, an objective to achieve this vision includes: *Support the expansion of Queen Mary University of London and associated uses, while ensuring good integration with surrounding areas.*

2.1 The SPD will support priority 1 - People are aspirational, independent and have equal access to opportunities -and 2 - A borough that our residents are proud of and love to live in- of the Mayor's Strategic Plan.

2.2 There are three parts to the draft document:

Section A: Context and Analysis

2.3 This section introduces the aims and purposes of SPD; and sets out the context with regards to the character of the Mile End neighbourhood; and the potential opportunities and constraints associated with the campus.

Section B: Area-wide Priorities

- 2.4 This section sets out the masterplan objectives and vision, as well as area-wide priorities relating the community infrastructure; built heritage and townscape; building heights; accessibility and integration; campus places and spaces; biodiversity and ecology; wayfinding and interpretation; transport and access; and environment and sustainability.

Section C: Site Design Guide

- 2.5 This section sets out the core development opportunities and the key design principles that should be considered in developing proposals for five individual sites.

Section D: Obligations

- 2.6 This section takes consideration of summarises and sets out the obligations and mitigation.

3. Legislative and Policy Context

Sustainability Appraisal (SA)

- 3.1 A Sustainability Appraisal (SA) considers the potential impacts of a planning policy document on the environmental, economic, and social aspects of sustainability. It does this by assessing the extent to which the planning document will help achieve a set of sustainability objectives that cover a range of issues, including air quality, landscape, water, health and the population.
- 3.2 There is a statutory requirement for SAs to be produced for Development Plan Documents, but not for other kinds of planning documents. There is no legal requirement for an SA to be produced for a supplementary planning document (PPG on Strategic Environmental Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal, paragraph 026).
- 3.3 An SA was undertaken in 2017 as part of the Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) of the Tower Hamlets Local Plan 2031, with an addendum added in March 2019 to cover modifications to the plan. The plan (and its SA) underwent an examination in public and was adopted in January 2020.

3.4 The sustainability objectives for the Local Plan SA were developed through a comparison of existing sustainability objectives in the borough, the objectives of the Local Plan, and the identification of sustainability issues through the scoping process for the IIA. The SA was publicly consulted on as part of the consultation process for the Local Plan. The sustainability objectives from that SA are set out in table 1 below.

- 1. Equality:** reduce poverty and social exclusion and promote equality for all communities.
- 2. Liveability:** promote liveable, safe, high quality neighbourhoods with good quality public services.
- 3. Health and wellbeing:** improve the health and wellbeing of the population and reduce health inequalities.
- 4. Housing:** ensure that all residents have access to good quality, well-located, affordable housing that meets a range of needs and promotes liveability.
- 5. Transport and mobility:** create accessible, safe and sustainable connections and networks by road, public transport, cycling and walking.
- 6. Education:** increase and improve the provision of and access to childcare, education and training facilities and opportunities for all age groups and sectors of the local population.
- 7. Employment:** reduce worklessness and increase employment opportunities for all residents.
- 8. Economic growth:** create and sustain local economic growth across a range of sectors and business sizes.
- 9. Town centres:** promote diverse and economically thriving town centres.
- 10. Design and heritage:** enhance and conserve heritage and cultural assets; distinctive character and an attractive built environment.
- 11. Open space:** enhance and increase open spaces that are high quality, networked, and multi-functional.
- 12. Climate change:** ensure the Local Plan incorporates mitigation and adaption measures to reduce and respond to the impacts of climate change.
- 13. Biodiversity:** protect and enhance biodiversity, natural habitats, water bodies and landscapes of importance.
- 14. Natural resources:** ensure sustainable use and protection of natural resources, including water, land and air, and reduce waste.
- 15. Flood risk reduction and management:** to minimise and manage the risk of flooding.
- 16. Contaminated land:** improve land quality and ensure mitigation of adverse effects of contaminated land on human health.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

- 3.5 A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is an assessment of the likely effects of a plan or programme on the environment. The requirement for an SEA is set out in the SEA Directive (2001/42/EC), transposed into UK law through the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (as amended) (known as the SEA Regulations). This particularly relates to plans which designate sites for development.
- 3.6 The purpose of an SEA is to ensure a high level of protection of the environment and to integrate consideration of the environment into the preparation and adoption of plans with a view to promoting sustainable development. SEAs must take account of the likely significant effects on the environment, including on issues such as biodiversity, population and human health, fauna, flora, soil, water, air quality, climate, material assets, cultural heritage, landscape, and the interrelationship between these factors. The SEA process sets out criteria for assessing the significance of the impact of a plan on the environment. If a significant effect is possible the assessment requires the consideration of alternative options.
- 3.7 SEA considers only the environmental effects of a plan, whereas SA considers the plan's wider economic and social effects in addition to its potential environmental impacts. The requirements of the SEA are subsumed within the requirements of the SA – that is, an SA requires all the detail expected of an SEA, and then more. Therefore, the objectives developed as part of the SA of the Local Plan can be extracted to cover the required considerations for an SEA. The correspondence between the SA objectives and the likely significant effects for an SEA to consider are set out in Appendix C of the Integrated Impact Assessment, and summarised in table 2 below. These are the SA objectives that will be used when considering the effects of the Spitalfields Neighbourhood Plan for the purpose of the SEA screening.

SEA Dimension	Relevant SA Objective
Biodiversity, Flora and Fauna	13. Biodiversity
Population and Human Health	2. Liveability

	3. Health and Wellbeing
Soil	14. Natural Resources 16. Contaminated Land
Water	14. Natural Resources 15. Flood Risk Reduction and Management
Air Quality	14. Natural Resources
Climate	12. Climate Change
Material Assets	14. Natural Resources 15. Flood Risk Reduction and Management 16. Contaminated Land
Cultural Heritage	10. Design and Heritage
Landscape	10. Design and Heritage 11. Open Space

Table 2: Correspondence between SEA dimensions and SA objectives

3.8 A **supplementary planning document** is considered to be a plan or programme as defined by the SEA Regulations. Under Regulation 5(6) of the SEA Regulations, plans or programmes which “determine the use of small areas at a local level” or constitute “minor modifications to a plan and programme” only require an SEA if there are likely to be significant environmental effects that have not already have been assessed during the preparation of the Local Plan. Regulation 9 of the SEA Regulations requires the responsible authority (Tower Hamlets Council in this case) to undertake a screening exercise to determine whether or not a plan or programme is likely to have significant environmental effects and would therefore be subject to an SEA. This is also set out in the PPG on Strategic Environmental Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal, paragraph 008.

3.9 The screening exercise looks at the proposals in the SPD to see if a significant effect is likely. The criteria for the screening exercise are set out in the relevant legislation and explained in the next section of this report.

Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA)

- 3.10 Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) is a process which looks at the potential impact of proposals within a plan (either individually or in combination with others) on European protected wildlife sites – consisting of Special Protection Areas (SPAs), Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Ramsar wetland sites. This assessment is required by the European Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC), transposed into UK law as the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (as amended).
- 3.11 The initial stage of the HRA process involves consideration of the reasons for designation and the conservation objectives of each designated wildlife site within a reasonable distance of the neighbourhood plan area, and the potential impact of proposals within the plan on these sites.

4 Screening Exercise

4.1 The process of screening a plan or programme to determine whether an SEA is required is set out in figure 2 below. This figure is taken from A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive, issued by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister in 2005. This approach is commonly used in SEA screening exercises at the current time.

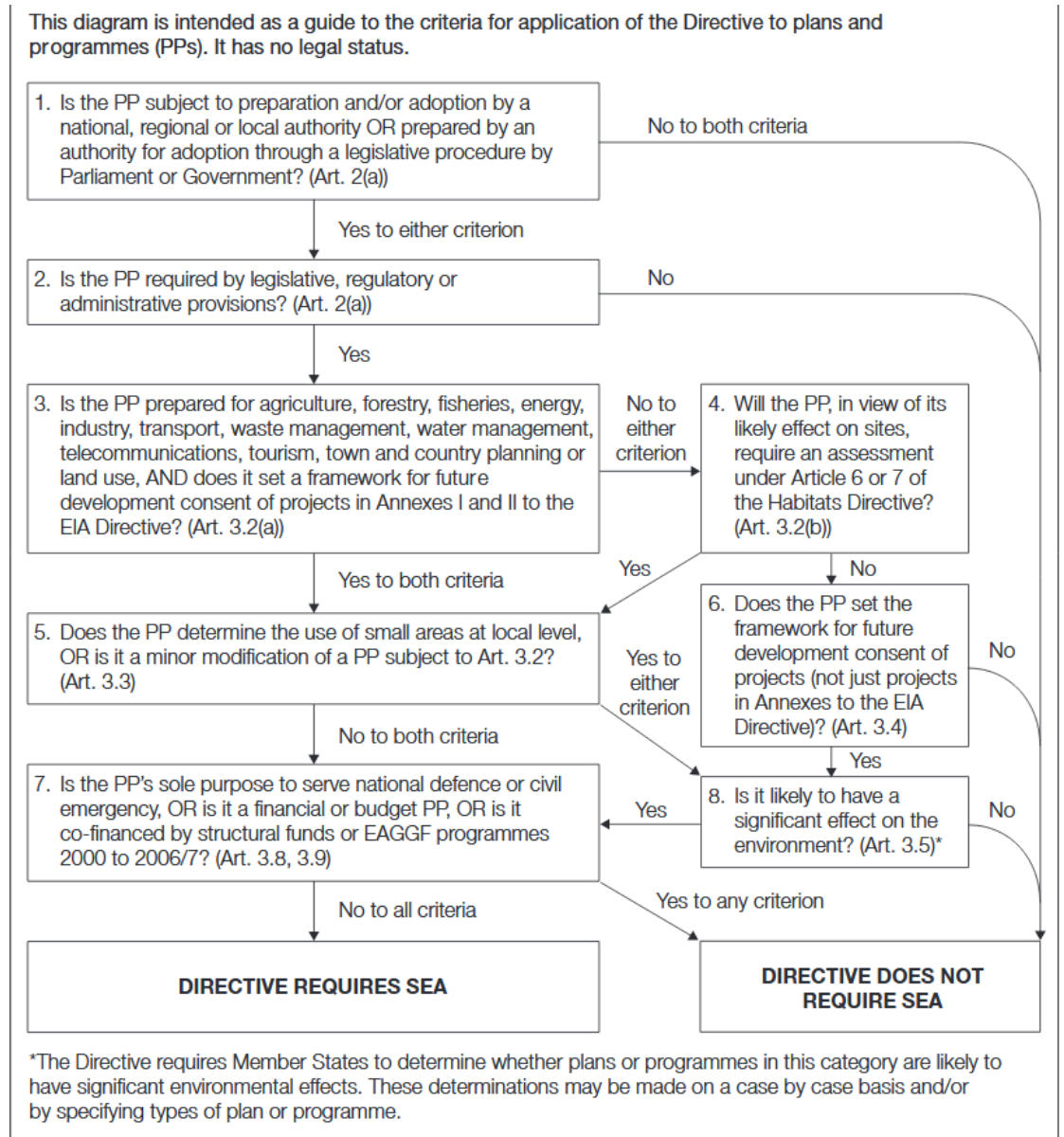


Figure 2: Application of the SEA Directive to plans and Programmes

4.2 Table 3 below assesses the QMUL Mile End Campus SPD against the criteria in figure 2.

Stage	Y/N	Reason
1. Is the plan 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? (Article 2(a))	Y	The SPD will be prepared and adopted by Tower Hamlets Council in its role as Local Planning Authority.
2. Is the plan required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions? (Article 2(a))	N	The preparation of a supplementary planning document is optional. However, once adopted it will be a material consideration when determining planning applications. It is therefore considered important that the screening process considers whether the QMUL Mile End Campus SPD is likely to have significant environmental effects invoking the need for a full SEA, and the assessment should proceed to step 3.
3. Is the plan 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? (Article 3.2(a))	Y	<p>The SPD is intended to provide further guidance to Tower Hamlets Local Plan 2031 on an area-specific basis (i.e. the Mile End campus). The Local Plan has been subject to full Sustainability Appraisal (including SEA).</p> <p>Whilst the Local Plan is the principle planning policy framework for the Borough, including policy for land-use and town and country planning, it is considered that the SPD nevertheless sets a framework for the development consent of projects listed in Annexes I and II of the EIA Directive through application of guiding principles to support the future growth of the campus. This includes, for example, development sites, building set backs and general form, consideration of heritage, new routes, public spaces and biodiversity.</p>
4. Will the PP, in view of its likely effect on sites, require an	N	The Tower Hamlets Local Plan 2031 (January 2020) rules out any

assessment under Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive?		adverse effects on Natura 2000 sites. As the SPD will not change or add to policy, proposals or designations within the Local Plan, it is not considered that further screening for such assessment is necessary as there would be no likely effects on European Sites.
5. Does the plan determine the use of small areas at local level, OR is it a minor modification of a plan or programme subject to Article 3.2? (Article 3.3)	N	The SPD sets out principles to support the growth of an existing university campus in accordance with the adopted Local Plan. No additional uses are proposed in the SPD, and thus, there will be no aspect of the SPD which would modify the Local Plan. Furthermore, as an SPD, and not a site allocation, the document is intended to recommend guidance on the application of Local Plan policy; and will be flexibility applied in the future determination of development proposals, including that of land use. In this regard, it is not intended to determine the use of the campus in a 'fixed' fashion.
6. Does the plan set the framework for future development consent of projects (not just projects in Annexes to the EIA Directive)? (Article 3.4)	Y	As noted above, the SPD sets the framework for future development consent of projects.
7. Is the plan's sole purpose to serve national defence or civil emergency, OR is it a financial or budget PP, OR is it co-financed by structural funds or EAGGF programmes 2000 to 2006/7? (Articles 3.7, 3.8)	N	The SPD does not address these issues.
8. Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment? (Article 3.5)	N	See Section 5 below for the detailed reasoning.

Table 3: SEA Screening of the QMUL Mile End Campus SPD

- 4.3 The conclusion of the assessment is that an SEA is only required if the Supplementary Planning Document is likely to have significant effects on the environment. Section 5 of this report provides a detailed assessment of the likely significance of effects to determine whether this is the case.

4.4 Section 5 of this report will then screen the QMUL Mile End Campus SPD to determine whether a full HRA is required.

5. Assessment of Likely Significant Effects

5.1 The criteria for assessing the likely significance of effects stemming from a plan or programme are set out in Annex II of the SEA Directive (Schedule 1 of the SEA Regulations), and are quoted below in box 3.

1. The characteristics of plans, having regard, in particular, to:
 - The degree to which the plan sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources
 - The degree to which the plan influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy
 - The relevance of the plan for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development
 - Environmental problems relevant to the plan
 - The relevance of the plan for the implementation of Community [i.e. European Community] legislation on the environment (e.g. plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection)
2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to:
 - The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects
 - The cumulative nature of the effects
 - The transboundary nature of the effects
 - The risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents)
 - The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population to be affected)
 - The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:
 - Special natural characteristics or cultural heritage
 - Exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values
 - Intensive land-use
 - The effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, [European] Community or international protection status

	SEA Directive Annex II: Criteria for determining likely significance of effects referred to in Article 3(5)	Comment
The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular, to:		
1a)	<p>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 a framework for the development of the Mile End Campus. It sets out site-specific principles for five development sites which are underpinned by the comprehensive campus-wide masterplan exercise and the adopted policy framework, the Tower Hamlets Local Plan. The SPD principles relate to issues such as building set backs and general form; heritage assets; local connections and movement; open space; and biodiversity.</p> <p>The SPD will sit underneath, and provide guidance, to the policies, proposals and objectives contained within the primary policy framework being the adopted Tower Hamlets Local Plan 2031. The Local Plan as a whole, including those policies relevant to tall buildings, heritage and design, have been fully assessed for the purposes of SA/SEA.</p> <p>In order to supplement the policies in the Local Plan, the SPD must reflect and be based on its policies. In particular, the Local Plan's Central Area vision seeks to strengthen QMUL's role and supports the expansion of the university; whilst ensuring integration with surrounding areas.</p> <p>In accordance with the above Local Plan objection, the overarching aim of the SPD is to enable sustainable expansion of the university on the Mile End Campus, whilst ensuring integration with the local community and providing further guidance on</p>

		<p>implementation and interpretation of Local Plan policy, including: tall buildings; design; heritage; community facilities; movement and transport; open space; biodiversity; and energy and sustainability.</p> <p>Note that, although indicative perspective drawings are provided, the document does not contain any specific detail on future building heights or floorspace amounts.</p>
1b)	<p>The degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy</p>	<p>Supplementary Planning Documents are capable of being a material consideration in planning decisions but are not part of the development plan. As noted above, the objective of the SPD is to enable the sustainable expansion of QMUL on the Mile End Campus in accordance with Local Plan objectives, with the aim of ensuring a higher quality of development, enhanced integration with surroundings; and maximising benefits to all.</p> <p>This QMUL Mile End Campus SPD once adopted will sit at the lowest level in the hierarchy of planning policy documents providing supplementary guidance to policies in the Mayor's London Plan and the Tower Hamlets Local Plan.</p> <p>As such, the SPD does not affect other specific public sector plans or programmes but rather is influenced by the Local Plan, London Plan and NPPF.</p>
1c)	<p>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 Tower Hamlets Local Plan and other higher level policies, such as the NPPF, set the context for achieving sustainable development. The SPD will provide further guidance as to how this can be achieved in the context of developments within the defined study area, i.e. the campus.</p>

		<p>This includes ensuring that development is of a high quality; enhancing permeability through the campus; encouraging active travel; enhancing biodiversity opportunities and energy efficiency.</p> <p>The SPD will not revisit or change the higher-level policy requirements which have been subject to SA/SEA.</p>
1d)	Environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme	There are no specific environmental problems relevant to the SPD that have not been identified and assessed through the higher level Local Plan and its accompanying SA/SEA Reports. The SA/SEA Report concluded that there would no significant environmental effects.
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 not relevant as a plan for implementing community legislation.
Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to:		
2a)	The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects	The SPD timeframe is unspecified but is drafted to cover the same period as the Tower Hamlets Local Plan 2031. A Sustainability Appraisal was undertaken for the Local Plan which included an assessment of the policies relevant to design, tall buildings, student accommodation and community facilities that will be supplemented by the SPD. The evidence to support the SA for the Local Plan continues to be updated and the assessment looked at the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of effects. Whilst the SPD will provide further guidance and supplement the existing policies in the Local Plan (and have largely positive effect), the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility

	<p>of the effects from the implementation of the SPD will remain the same.</p> <p>The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations breaks down the environment into a series of constituent parts. These are as follows: biodiversity; population; human health; fauna; flora; soil; water; air; climatic factors; material assets; cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage; landscape; and the inter-relationship between these issues.</p> <p>The impacts of the SPD in all the categories required for this assessment are likely to be neutral or positive. An assessment is set out below:</p> <p>Biodiversity, Flora, Fauna: There are no internationally designated biodiversity sites within or adjacent to the campus. Therefore, development is not considered likely to have a significant effect on any designated biodiversity. It is of note that Mile End Park to the east is identified in the Local Plan as a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation, however, the development is not considered likely to have a significant effect on this designation.</p> <p>The Local Plan SA did not find any significant effects on biodiversity. Biodiversity mitigation is provided through Local Plan Policy D.ES3 (Urban Greening and Biodiversity) which expects there to be a net gain for biodiversity. Therefore, it is not considered likely that there will be an effect on biodiversity, flora or fauna as a result of development at the site. There is potential for positive effects.</p> <p>Human Health: Development at the</p>
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	<p>site has the potential for positive effects on human health. The site will provide a new public realm network, green space opportunities, and possibly new sports facilities which will have positive health benefits by promoting healthier lifestyles. There will be opportunities for new cycle paths and footpaths, including new links to nearby parks, with additional health benefits. The Local Plan SA did not find any significant effects on human health. Local Plan Policy D.SG3 requires all major development to be supported by a Health Impact Assessment to ensure development contributes towards a healthy built environment. There is potential for positive effects.</p> <p>Cultural Heritage: There are designated heritage assets, including statutory listed buildings, locally-listed buildings and conservations areas, located in and around the campus. The Mile End Road Archaeological Priority area also runs along the south boundary of the campus.</p> <p>Whilst there is likely to be some large scale developments in close proximity to heritage assets, the redevelopment of the area provides the opportunity to promote good design practises and ensure new development respects the nearby heritage assets. The SPD also sets out opportunities to improve the setting of heritage assets through significant public realm improvement; re-use and enhancement of heritage buildings; and promoting the site's history through a new heritage trail. Heritage trail, for example.</p> <p>The Local Plan SA not find any significant effects on heritage. Mitigation is provided in Policy S.DH3 of the Local Plan which seeks to protect and enhance the Borough's historic environment. This mitigation</p>
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	<p>will ensure that there will be no negative effects from the proposed development in the SPD.</p> <p>Note also that, although indicative perspective drawings are provided, the document does not contain any specific detail on future building heights or floorspace amounts.</p> <p>Natural resources (soil, water, air): The site is previously developed land. The Local Plan SA did not find any likely significant negative effects on natural resources or pollution. Mitigation on land contamination is provided in Local Plan Policy D.ES8.</p> <p>The site is entirely within Flood Zone 1 (low probability of flooding). The Regents Canal runs along the east boundary of the campus from north the south. The Local Plan SA did not find any significant effects related to flooding or the water environment.</p> <p>The southern boundary of the campus along the Mile End Road is located within an area of sub-standard air quality, however given the future direction of QMUL (in terms of consolidated servicing and deliveries, and significant reduction of car parking etc), and transport evidence supporting the SPD, it is not likely to result in a long-term increase in traffic within the AQMA. Furthermore, the indicative proposals suggest that improvements to sustainable transport will be provided, such as new footpaths/cycle paths. Mitigation is provided through Policy D.ES2 of the Local Plan which requires an air quality assessment to be submitted in such areas of substandard air quality, where mitigation will be requires. Similarly,</p>
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		<p>Local Plan transport policies seek to ensure modal shift away from car-use. It is therefore not considered that there will be significant negative effects on air quality.</p> <p>Material Assets: The site option does not contain any natural assets. The Local Plan SA did not find any significant effects on material assets.</p> <p>Landscape: The site is not within or adjacent to an AONB, and is not within or adjacent to a Special Landscape Area. The site is within an urban environment, with a sensitive heritage context (as set out above within 'cultural heritage'), and therefore the new development will need to be in keeping with the local character. There is the potential for positive effects.</p>
2b)	The cumulative nature of the effects	There are no likely cumulative effects that would result from the production of the QMUL Mile End Campus SPD.
2c)	The trans-boundary nature of the effects	There will be no national trans boundary effects resulting from the QMUL Mile End Campus SPD given that it will only apply on an area specific basis. Local administrative trans boundary effects were considered as part of the SA/SEA of the Local Plan.
2d)	The risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents)	<p>Human health effects were assessed in the SA for the Local Plan (SA Objective 3. Improve the health of and wellbeing of the population and reduce health inequalities). No risks to human health or the environment were identified in relation to the policies relative to design, tall buildings, student housing, community facilities. Similarly, largely positive effects for human health were found for all environmental policies relating to air quality, flood risk, noise, urban greening, contamination etc.</p> <p>Further specific guidance on development in the Mile End Campus</p>

		<p>will provide more certainty that the probable positive effects already assessed in the SA for the Local Plan will arise.</p> <p>Risks to human health will be controlled through other legislation and policy regulation with appropriate standards/licences the relevant authorities.</p> <p>See 2A for further detail on 'human health'.</p>
2e)	<p>The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)</p>	<p>The campus is approximately 9 hectares in size which is relatively small in size in the context of the wider sub-area or the borough.</p> <p>While the indicative perspective drawings and vision diagrams are based on a site-wide masterplan, they are clearly intended to provide urban design guidance only, and SPD does not contain any detail in relation to future building heights or floorspace amounts, so as to ensure there is a correct level of prescription.</p> <p>No additional uses are proposed in the SPD, and thus, there will be no aspect of the SPD which would modify the Local Plan. Furthermore, as an SPD, and not a site allocation, the document is intended to recommend guidance on the application of Local Plan policy; and will be flexibility applied in the future determination of development proposals.</p> <p>Given all the above, it is considered that the campus overall is small in nature and will primarily have effects on a more local level, in accordance with see regulation 5(6) of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.</p> <p>Furthermore, it is noted that a Local Plan (central area) objective sets out support for the expansion of QMUL and associated uses, while ensuring good integration with surrounding areas.</p>

2f)	<p>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</p>	<p>There are no designated features within the site, although there are listed buildings and a listed cemetery within the campus. There is also the Regents Canal Conservation Area which runs along the eastern boundary of the campus, including part of the canal-site development area. Two other conservation areas are located the east and west of the campus.</p> <p>The southern boundary of the campus along the Mile End Road is located within an area of sub-standard air quality. However, no significant effects were highlighted through the Local Plan SA/SEA, and there is mitigation through Local Plan Policies to prevent significant negative effects.</p> <p>Further information is set out in 2a.</p>
2g)	<p>The effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status</p>	<p>As set out in more detail in 2a, the only designations which are within or in close proximity to the campus, includes listed buildings; conservation areas; and open space and local nature designations at Regents Canal and Mile End Park. However, Local Plan policy and mitigation is available, and therefore, the SPD is unlikely to result in significant effects on landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.</p>

6. Habitats Regulation and Assessment Screening

- 6.1 A Habitats Regulation Assessment (HRA) examines the potential impacts of a plan or programme, whether alone or cumulatively, on European protected sites. These sites are Special Protection Areas (SPAs) designated under the Bird Directive 79/409/EEC and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) designated under the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC. It is government policy that HRAs should also consider sites designated under the Ramsar Convention of 1971 (known as 'Ramsar sites') in the same way as the European protected sites.

- 6.2 The first stage of the HRA process is a screening exercise where the details of nearby designated sites are assessed to see if there is the potential for the plan or programme to have an impact on the sites. For the purposes of the screening exercise, the potential impact of the QMUL Mile End Campus SPD on designated sites within 15km of the neighbourhood area will be considered.
- 6.3 There are five European protected sites or Ramsar sites within 15km of the Spitalfields Neighbourhood Area. These sites are:
- Epping Forest SAC
 - Richmond Park SAC
 - Wimbledon Common SAC
 - Lee Valley SPA
 - Lee Valley Ramsar
- 6.4 None of these sites is closer than 3km to the neighbourhood area, so the plan cannot influence development in the direct vicinity of any of the sites.
- 6.5 The HRA of the Tower Hamlets Local Plan 2031 identified that the main reasons for 'unfavourable' ratings of the condition of the designated sites were due to public access, air pollution, and inappropriate management. The QMUL Mile End Campus SPD cannot affect the management of these sites, and therefore the only potential for adverse impacts on these sites from development in this form would be through increased visitor pressure from a large population increase, or an increase in negative air quality impacts.
- 6.6 The QMUL Mile End Campus SPD provides design recommendations that aims to increase the level of greenery and biodiversity across the Borough, partially with the intention of improving air quality, although it is considered that the impact of this design recommendation will be no more significant than existing Tower Hamlets planning policies on this topic and is unlikely to have an effect on the designated sites.
- 6.7 The QMUL Mile End Campus SPD does not set any additional growth targets or site allocations, and therefore does not propose any more development than that planned for in the Tower Hamlets Local Plan 2031. The Local Plan was subject to an HRA screening as part of the Integrated

Impact Assessment. This screening concluded that the Local Plan would have no significant effects (alone or in combination) on any of the sites due to an absence of impact pathways, policy controls within the plan which can ensure significant effects are avoided, and some suggested changes to the plan which were accepted by the Council and included in the adopted Local Plan. As part of the examination process, a technical note was appended to the HRA justifying how the Local Plan HRA was in line with the outcome of the 'People Over Wind' decision, and had not considered mitigation measures as part of the HRA screening process. This position was accepted by Natural England, and the Integrated Impact Assessment (including the HRA screening) was successfully examined as part of the Local Plan examination process.

- 6.8 As the scale of development proposed by the QMUL Mile End Campus SPD does not exceed that proposed by the Local Plan, it is considered that the SPD cannot have any additional significant impact (either by itself or cumulatively with other plans and programmes) than the Local Plan itself. The findings of the HRA screening of the Local Plan are therefore considered to apply in this situation, and no further HRA screening of the QMUL Mile End Campus SPD is required.

7. Conclusion

7.1 On the basis of the SEA screening assessment carried out in this document, it is concluded that the QMUL Mile End Campus SPD will not have any significant effects in relation to the criteria set out in Schedule 1 of the SEA Regulations Hamlets that have not already been assessed through Sustainability Appraisal (including SEA) of the Tower Hamlets Local Plan 2031, and therefore does not need to be subject to a full SEA, as the SPD will not change or introduce new planning policy over and above the Tower Hamlets Local Plan 2031.

7.2 Therefore, it is considered that the SPD does not need to be subject to further SEA. The key areas where the SPD adds to the Local Plan policy is in terms of guidance for tall buildings outside of tall building zones; heritage; design; walking/cycling networks, transport, urban drainage, green infrastructure, biodiversity, environment and energy.

7.3 To conclude, it is not considered that SEA is a formal requirement given that the principles within the SPD have already been covered in the Local Plan SA.

8. Consultation

8.1 The draft report will now be sent for consultation to the three statutory consultees – the Environment Agency, Natural England, and Historic England – as required under Regulation 11(1) of the SEA Regulations. After their comments have been received, they will be added to the report, and the report will be published as the Council's Statement of Reasons, accompanying a Determination Letter on the need for an SEA or HRA.

Appendix 1: Sustainability Appraisal of Local Plan Policies

Policy S.DH1: Delivering high quality design

Policy D.DH2: Attractive streets, spaces and public realm

Policy S.DH3: Heritage and the historic environment

Policy D.DH6: Tall buildings

Policy D.DH8: Amenity

Policy D.H6: Student housing

Policy S.CF1: Supporting community facilities

Policy D.CF3: New and enhanced community facilities

Policy S.OWS1: Creating a network of open spaces

Policy D.OWS3: Open space and green grid networks

Policy S.ES1: Protecting and enhancing our environment

Policy D.ES2: Air quality

Policy D.ES3: Urban greening and Biodiversity

Policy D.ES5: Sustainable drainage

Policy D.ES6: Sustainable water use and infrastructure and wastewater management

Policy D.ES7: A zero carbon borough

Policy D.ES9: Noise and vibration

Policy D.ES10: Overheating

Policy D.MW3: Waste collection facilities in new development

Policy S.TR1: Sustainable travel

Policy D.TR2: Impacts on the transport network

Policy D.TR3: Parking and permit-free

Policy D.TR4: Sustainable delivery and servicing