

Public Document Pack



Executive Board

Thursday, 21 December 2006 12.00 p.m.
Marketing Suite, Municipal Building

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David W R'.

Chief Executive

ITEMS TO BE DEALT WITH IN THE PRESENCE OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

PART 1

Item	Page No
1. MINUTES	
2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	
Members are reminded of their responsibility to declare any personal or personal and prejudicial interest which they have in any item of business on the agenda no later than when that item is reached and (subject to certain exceptions in the Code of Conduct for Members) to leave the meeting prior to discussion and voting on the item.	
3. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE PORTFOLIO	
(A) BUILDING SCHOOLS FOR THE FUTURE	1 - 7
4. LEADER'S PORTFOLIO	

*Please contact Lynn Cairns on 0151 471 7529 or e-mail lynn.cairns@halton.gov.uk for further information.
The next meeting of the Committee is on Thursday, 11 January 2007*

Item	Page No
(A) THE MERSEY PARTNERSHIP: A SINGLE INWARD INVESTMENT AGENCY FOR THE LIVERPOOL CITY REGION	8 - 15
(B) LOCAL GOVERNMENT WHITE PAPER/BILL	16 - 31
5. PLANNING, TRANSPORTATION, REGENERATION AND RENEWAL PORTFOLIO	
(A) APPROVAL OF THE FORMAL ADOPTION OF THE HOUSE EXTENSIONS SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT	32 - 169
(B) HIGHWAY SKIDDING RESISTANCE POLICY	170 - 183

In accordance with the Health and Safety at Work Act the Council is required to notify those attending meetings of the fire evacuation procedures. A copy has previously been circulated to Members and instructions are located in all rooms within the Civic block.

REPORT:	Executive Board
DATE:	21 December 2006
REPORTING OFFICER	Strategic Director – Children & Young People
SUBJECT:	Building Schools for the Future
WARDS:	Boroughwide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

BSF aims through substantial capital investment to transform secondary educational standards by providing 21st century learning environments. Halton Borough Council has submitted an application for entry into Wave 5 of the Building Schools for the Future Programme. If the Council's bid for Wave 5 is successful, it must complete a re-organisation of its secondary provision by September 2007, the start date for Wave 5 Projects.

- 1.2 The aim of any proposal will be to reform and redesign the pattern of secondary education, its curricula and schools' infrastructure to best serve the Borough's communities for decades to come.
- 1.3 Any proposed secondary school re-organisation will be a matter of considerable public interest, concern and debate (see Appendix 1 for an outline of the school organisation process and timescale). It will also have an impact on the wider community, transport and opportunities for extended use of school premises.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That:

- 1a **The Chief Executive be given delegated powers, in consultation with the Leader and Portfolio Holder for Children and Young People, to produce a draft organisation plan for secondary provision.**
- 1b **The draft organisation plan be published for consultation with schools and other stakeholders.**
- 1c **A further report be submitted to Executive Board outlining the results of the consultation.**

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 Building Schools for the Future is a national programme through which funding is available for investment to transform all schools or units that teach secondary age pupils. Funding is either in the source of conventional capital (capital grant and borrowing) and/or PFI credits. The BSF programme will not only renew Halton secondary provision but will make a major contribution to the regeneration of the borough attracting an estimated level of capital investment of between £90 and £100 million.
- 3.2 In order to attract this major source of capital investment all the revenue costs of the project must be met locally. It is estimated that between £800,000 and £1 million per

year revenue funding is required. Therefore, as part of 2007/2008 budget process a bid for growth has been submitted for BSF revenue costs. In addition, those secondary and special schools within the BSF Programme will be asked to make a contribution towards the project totalling £300,000 to cover costs up to March 2008.

3.3 In October 2006 the Council submitted its Strategy for Change Part 1 in which it was required to demonstrate its readiness to delivery BSF. A key element of the submission was Halton's vision for secondary provision, its appreciation and understanding of its main educational challenges and objectives and the contribution BSF could make. As part of the preparation for entry into BSF the authority has had to consider whether the children and young people of Halton are best served by the current arrangement of schools, or whether an alternative arrangement would offer additional benefits.

3.4 In determining the most appropriate secondary school provision a range of factors require consideration. These include:-

- The demographic changes in Halton such as declining pupil numbers overall. There has been a general trend nationally in recent years for the number of births to decrease. Without taking any action there would be more unfilled secondary places in Halton. Maintaining surplus secondary provision does not represent the most effective use of limited resources and can cause serious educational problems.
- The impact of declining pupil numbers is uneven across the borough with some schools continuing to remain full, as they are both popular and successful. Parents, therefore, actively seek places for their children at such schools. This results in a greater loss of pupils at schools perceived to be less successful.
- With declining pupil numbers and funding, less popular schools tend to face increasing challenges in providing and sustaining a consistently high quality of education for their pupils. Inequalities in provision tend to increase which can impact on both standards and the quality of opportunities that children in less popular schools can experience.
- In Halton further action is required to improve pupil performance at all key stages but in particular in Key Stage 4 and post-16.
- Data on current and future housing developments has had to be factored into forward planning
- Half of the Halton schools were built in the 1950s and 1960s and have significant issues in terms of their condition and their suitability.
- Consideration is needed of schools as a catalyst for regeneration, a community resource offering extended services and inclusive learning.

3.5 In order to plan numbers and types of secondary school provision within the borough the authority has had to provide a ten-year pupil forecast. By allowing for a 10% school surplus, estimates for 2016 are in the region of 7,500 11-16 pupils. The data analysis has then been configured on the basis that there are two distinct learning communities within the Borough, Runcorn and Widnes with roughly 3750 pupils in each community.

Following meetings between the CYPD Senior Management Team, external specialist organisation consultants and Halton secondary Head teachers agreement was reached that the schools should be designed for no less than 900 11-16 mainstream pupils and no more than 1500.

- 3.6 Academy provision must be considered by authorities bidding for entry into the BSF.
- 3.7 The outcome of any consultation will be reported back to Executive Board. Consideration will then need to be given as to whether to continue with the initial proposals or whether these need alteration following consultation to ensure that Halton secondary provision is:-
- Viable and successful;
 - Able to play a full part in the regeneration of Halton;
 - Act as a community resource;
 - Provide extended school facilities; and
 - Are inclusive.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There is no revenue funding for the project. In some authorities the set up costs have been between £800,000 and £1million per year. Contributions are being sought from the two key partners, schools and the Council, towards the revenue costs.
- 4.2 In addition, to providing revenue funding for BSF, many authorities have made a contribution towards the capital costs of BSF schemes, as funding has not fully met requirements. A minimum of 50% of the capital receipts from the sale of land as a result of the programme must be re-invested.
- 4.3 To make most effective use of school premises joint funding with other partners is seen as essential. However, time to secure outline permission for this funding is short.
- 4.4 There are likely to be significant costs which will need to be met associated with the reduction of staffing such as voluntary retirement and severance, re-deployment and safeguarding.
- 4.5 There will be revenue implications to the establishment of an Academy within Halton as the running costs will be determined through top slicing the current DSG.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Support will need to be provided for those schools most directly affected by any re-organisation proposals, as they will be faced with a period of uncertainty and turbulence. This support will need to be available to schools to ensure that during the consultation and re-organisation process there is a continued focus on improving standards.
- 5.2 There will be significant staffing implications associated with any proposals. Support and guidance will need to be offered to those staff likely to be affected. It is proposed that a staffing protocol be developed with all parties taking collective ownership of the changes in schools. The protocol will identify the current workforce and future workforce requirements and seek to maintain valuable skills and provide safeguards to staff through the management of staffing reductions through natural wastage, re-deployment and voluntary measures where possible.

5.3 The impact of any proposals on the local community will need careful management to ensure the rationale and benefits of the re-organisation are clearly understood.

6.0 RISK ANALYSIS

6.1 Any proposal will deliver significant benefits for Children & Young People in Halton including:

6.1.1 A quality-learning environment in all the Boroughs schools.

6.1.2 Modern state of the art school buildings across the Borough.

6.1.3 Improved academic and vocational outcomes.

6.1.4 An investment of circa £100 million in new investment in education.

6.1.5 Create improved life chances throughout the Borough.

6.2 There is likely to be considerable concern within the local community and the press based on any proposed re-organisation proposals. The impact on the development of the CYPAN would need to be considered.

6.3 There may be a decline in standards at those schools most directly affected by any proposals.

6.4 Despite the any proposals secondary schools may seek Trust or Foundation Status.

6.5 Staff morale is likely to be adversely affected in any schools facing closure, retaining good staff and maintaining staff motivation may then become an issue.

6.6 BSF and School Re-organisation require significant capital and revenue funding without the appropriate level of resources the project will not be approved.

6.7 The consultation process will require a major investment in CYPD senior management time this may have an impact on key areas of work within the directorate.

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

7.1 The school re-organisation proposals and BSF proposals will be aimed at providing learning environments where young people will want to learn and provide a major impetus to improving the learning outcomes for all children and young people. Any proposals will be aimed at securing diverse provision, choice and access, and promoting inclusion and integration of all Halton secondary provision.

8.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

Documents

Readiness to Deliver
Guidance for Local
Authorities in BSF Waves
4-6 (Dfes a& PfS) June
2006

Place of Inspection

Grosvenor House

Contact

Ann McIntyre – Operational
Director
Business Planning &
Resources

Building Schools for the Future- Halton- Strategy for Change (12th October 2006)
Strategy for Change – Grosvenor House School Re-Organisation

Building Schools for the Future – a guide for school governors and head teachers
Grosvenor House

Ann McIntyre – Operational Director - Business Planning & Resources

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Business Planning & Resources

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Business Planning & Resources

Appendix 1

School Organisation Process

There are six stages to the school re-organisation process.

Pre-Statutory Stage

This informal stage provides the opportunity for the authority to share its principles and strategic plans and for those consulted to express their views. A number of meetings have been held with headteachers of secondary and special schools commencing in August through to November 2006 as part of the informal consultation process. As a result of these meetings a number of options have emerged. A meeting has also been held with Chester and Shrewsbury Diocese. Executive Board approval is now required at the meeting on 21st December 2006 before formal consultation can be commenced.

Stage 1

This stage takes place prior to the publication of the statutory notice and must be undertaken in line with guidance or it could impact on whether the statutory notice is considered valid. Consultation documents need to identify the issues to be addressed and invite comments on either one or more than one possible solutions. Meetings with all stakeholders particularly schools are an essential part of this process.

Consultation on the proposals would need to take place between January and March 2007 and review of the outcome of this consultation would need to be complete by 3rd April 2007 as Executive Board approval will be needed at the meeting on 19th April 2006.

Stage 2

The formal notices would then need to be prepared in the last week in April and published on 11th May 2006.

Stage 3

There is then a six week period for mainstream schools in which comments and objections can be made on the statutory proposals. This takes the process up to 28th June 2006.

Stage 4

A meeting of the School Organisation Committee is generally held within a month of the end of the six weeks consultation period. This would take the process up to 19th July 2007. If the SOC cannot agree the decision may be referred to the Schools Adjudicator. This will inevitably delay the process and there is no agreed timetable for a

decision. *(Although the SOC will be replaced during 2007 the arrangements for its replacement have yet to be confirmed by the DfES)*

Stage 5

This is stage is the implementation of the agreed changes as part of the Building Schools for the Future Programme.

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 21st December 2006

REPORTING OFFICER: Chief Executive and the Strategic Director,
Environment.

SUBJECT: The Mersey Partnership: A Single Inward
Investment Agency for the Liverpool City Region

WARD Borough-wide

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 This report outlines the proposals by The Mersey Partnership to develop a single inward investment agency for the Liverpool City Region.

2.0 RECOMMENDED: That Executive Board

- (1) Approves in principle the development of an inward investment agency for the Liverpool City Region.**
- (2) Authorises the Strategic Director, Environment to enter discussions with The Mersey Partnership to secure the implementation of the Single Inward Investment Agency.**

3.0 INTRODUCTION

3.1 Much progress has been made over recent years in attracting inward investment to Greater Merseyside. It is clear the area has benefited from Objective One and Objective Two status that makes it more attractive than other locations, but when this expires this 'pull' factor will be lost.

3.2 In order to improve performance, The Mersey Partnership (TMP) has recently set out proposals to establish a single inward investment agency for the Liverpool City Region, a summary of which is contained in appendix one. The proposal sets out two options, intermediate and ultimate, though it only unpacks the detail of the former.

3.3 In essence, TMP is proposing moving from what is predominately a reactive model (some proactive campaigns), to a much more proactive sales approach whereby dedicated sales managers hunt out opportunities and target would be investors and growth sectors.

4.0 HALTON OBSERVATIONS

4.1 . It is undeniable that continuation of the existing operating model is not an option – there is a need to generate more quality leads and improve the conversion rate.

- 4.2 As such, the concept of proactively targeting growth sectors and would be investors linked to the Merseyside sector development programme is both logical and worthy of support.
- 4.3 . However, there are a number of issues with the proposed model that need to be investigated before Halton can formally sign up.
- The initiative is heavily dependent on Objective One money. What will happen when this runs out? Is it likely that the new transitional programme post 2008 will be able to support it?
 - How can this initiative work in Halton when it is not Objective One funded?
 - Will it really be impartial in deciding which locations go forward to a potential investor?
 - Sales and marketing are important, but can only work if the product is there to sell i.e. accessible land and buildings, skilled workforce. So is there the product in place to justify the concept?
 - TMP itself is going through a period of change at a time when it has just lost its chief executive. Where does this fit into the future plans of TMP shaping up to be the Sub Regional Partnership for regeneration?

5.0 FINANCIAL ISSUES

- 5.1 . There is also the issue of the extra money that TMP is looking for from each local authority. Since 1999 when the marketing budget was £120,000, reductions over a number of years mean that next year it is expected to be £52,000 (airport based marketing activity will cease) that is an absolute minimum to keep the basic programme operating. As such, there is not enough money in the base budget to buy into the concept at this time.
- 5.2 TMP is still developing the financial arrangement but is currently proposing either a flat rate contribution of £140,000 per annum per authority for each of the next three years or a weighted contribution based on population, in which case Halton's contribution would be £67,160. In either case up to 50% can be an "in kind" allocation of staff engaged locally in inward investment. Giving this in kind support would reduce Halton's cash contribution to £33,580 per annum.

6.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 . Whilst there has already been discussion with TMP over the proposal, there are clearly issues and questions still outstanding that need to be resolved before the Council could consider fully signing up to the proposal. However, given that maintaining the status quo is not seen as viable and that there is much logic to what has been laid out, it does make sense to sign up in principle, subject to further discussions.

7.0 POLICY ISSUES

- 7.1 The attraction of investment and the jobs it creates is a central part of both the Economic Development and Tourism Strategy and the Corporate Plan. Within the latter, Key Objective A within Urban Renewal identifies the need for 'high levels

of investment and economic growth' and there is a target to increase the number of jobs in the borough by 10% by 2011.

8.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

8.1 None

9.0 RISK ANALYSIS

9.1 There are risks associated with TMP proposal, most notably around the use of Objective One monies to underpin the model. For that reason signing up to the principle of the model (proactive sector focused operations) is seen as appropriate until further discussions have taken place with regards to the detail.

10.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

10.1 This is one of the areas that will need further discussion with TMP. For example, It is well documented (TMP Gender Agenda Report) that women are under represented in terms of economic activity and business ownership in Greater Merseyside and the proposal needs to be expanded to cover this issue and also how it will help other groups such as the disabled become investors.

11.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT

11.1 N/A

A Single Inward Investment Agency for the Liverpool City Region - Summary

Background

There is a growing ambition amongst civic leaders across the sub region to accelerate the quantity and quality of business investment in order to sustain the economic and physical renaissance that has been carefully nurtured over the past decade. There is a considerable consensus, both within Merseyside and beyond, that, to achieve this, the City Region requires a more coherent, resourced and empowered single agency approach to the promotion and delivery of investment than is currently in place.

Competition is fierce, and in many cases competitor locations are well organized and resourced with the more sophisticated agencies seek to deliver value through developing links between inward investors and the local economy, particularly in supply chains, universities, research and technical activities, which need to be levered into the investment effort.

Current Position

There is a matrix of organizations involved in promotion, investment and business support activity in Merseyside either as a primary function or as a by product of other functions. These are set out in Appendix A:-

Whilst there are a wealth of individuals and bodies that engage in business interaction and support the investment effort, they are principally inwardly focused, working with the regional business community to their own particular agendas. They are not coordinated to support and deliver a coherent and focused inward investment generation service.

This presents an opportunity, and a significant challenge, to harness these resources to the investment effort required for the region, and this discussion document proposes ways in which this can be tackled.

What are the Components of a Successful Investment Function

The functions required to effectively promote the region, identify investment opportunities, engage with target markets and companies, and successfully support and embed them into the region include the following:-

- Location Promotion
- Lead Generation
- Investor Support

How do we do this now?

The majority of the activities outlined above are currently undertaken by The Mersey Partnership, in conjunction with the region's 6 Local Authorities, together with the range of organizations described in Appendix 1. Whilst there is a good degree of collaboration and consultation, this falls short of a coherent and focused single entity to maximize our market potential.

TMP produces an annual investment plan, in consultation with partners, based on the resources it has at its disposal. However, this does not include the activity of partners, and thus a much greater resource that could be leveraged to the investment effort is dissipated. The challenge facing Merseyside is to corral the disparate resources within the region to create a coherent outward facing body that maximizes the region's investment potential.

Integral to this should be the development of a sales team, organized on a sectoral basis, to research and identify investment opportunities and develop these as leads and enquiries for the investment team to deliver on. Presently TMP are not sufficiently resourced to do this.

Proposed Framework for a Single City Region Investment Agency

The status quo is incompatible with the aspirations of stakeholders. It is proposed that an appropriate framework for this development of an Agency is agreed at an early stage.

Entity

A new entity would be created (working title "invest liverpool and merseyside" – the current web address titles) as a subsidiary of TMP, with a Stakeholder Investment Board responsible for developing and implementing the investment strategy for the sub region. This Board would be chaired by a TMP Board Member, report its actions and decisions into Sub-regional Partnership Main Board and ultimately be accountable to it. In essence this would be the investment equivalent of the Merseyside Tourist Board.

Governance

Investment Board

The Investment Board would comprise the key stakeholders (funders) in investment activity represented at a senior level. It would also include those partners vital to the delivery of an effective, forward-looking investment strategy. It would therefore include:-

- 6 Local Authorities, NWDA, Liverpool Vision, Liverpool Land Development Company, Universities, Learning and Skills Council, Sector Chairs

This group would be responsible for setting the strategy and priorities for the Agency. This Board would meet in synchronization with the TMP main board meetings, i.e. 5 times per year.

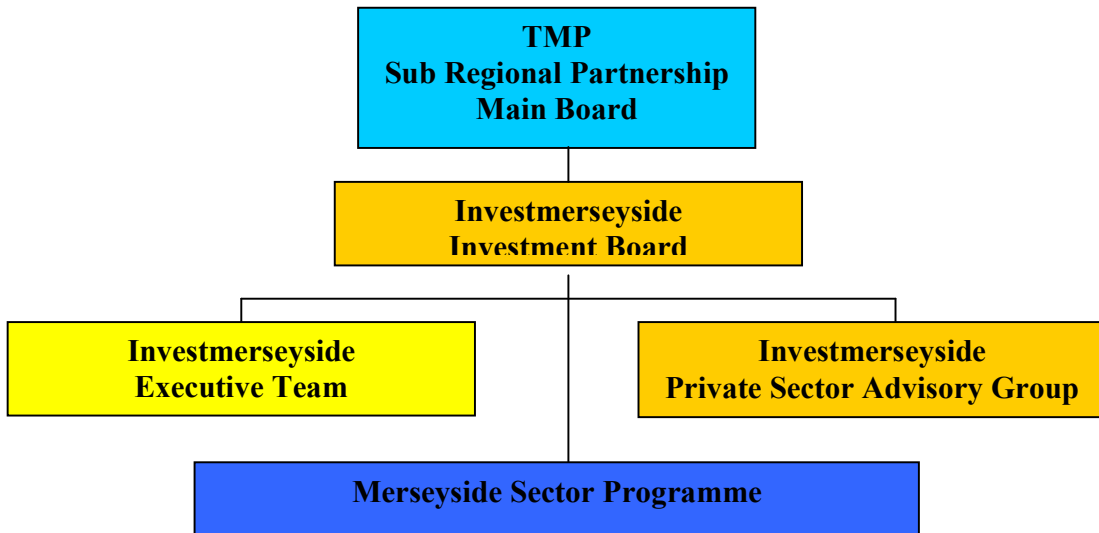
Private Sector Investment Forum

This governance structure would be supported by a Private Sector Investment Forum, comprising business members and other invited businesses from around the City Region willing to support this activity including the following key areas:-

- Target sectors, Port/Airport, Professional Services, Chambers of Commerce, Developers

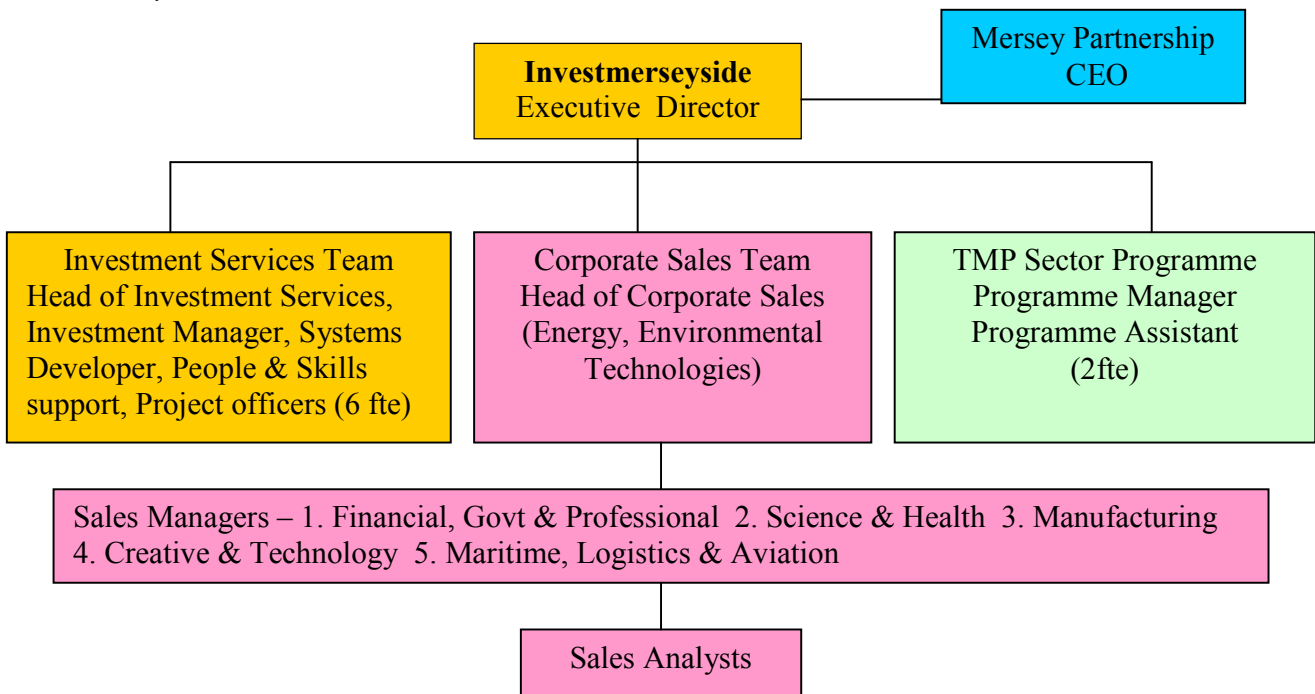
This group would meet 3-4 times a year focusing on the practical aspects of the investment plan, identifying market opportunity and intelligence rather than structure and

governance. It could have a wide membership that chose to dip in and out as their time and interest allows.



Structure

The number of people involved in the activity will be determined by the level of resources secured. The *Staff Structure & Roles chart* below sets out the executive structure based on an intermediate level of support. A more radical, well funded model would see this expanded further.



Analysis of Costs, Activities and Outputs (Indicative)

Issue	Current Model	Intermediate Model	Ultimate Model
<i>Income/Expenditure</i>			
<i>Annual Budget</i>	£1 m	£1.6m	£2.2m
<i>LA Cash Contribution</i>	c.£55k each pa	c.£75k each pa	£140k each pa
<i>Target Outputs (annual)</i>			
<i>Jobs Created</i>	660	1000	1500
<i>Jobs Safeguarded</i>	540	750	1000
<i>Capital Invested</i>	£24m	£50m	£100m

The Use of Location Brands

All location brands have value and relevance in their appropriate markets.

- Local Authority Brands are highly relevant to regional activity, where they are actively recognized for their attributes. These should be built upon their strengths and their use encouraged and supported.
- Liverpool City Region Brand has powerful resonance in London/SE and internationally, much more so than Merseyside.
- Sector specific brands also have their place, e.g. Daresbury, where this science research location is recognized internationally for its excellence. Where such products/brands exist, they should be made full use of.
- The concepts successfully applied to the tourism market of attack and slipstream brands, and well planned dispersal activities would be actively considered

Local Authority Issues

The principal focus will be to deliver a coherent and focused Investment plan for the City Region as a whole with all parties bought into that. As part of that each Local Authority will, in the Intermediate Model, have a clear view of how the plan relates to its own objectives. Each economic development unit will support the initiative by inputting local business intelligence and helping to field enquiries for sites and premises within their own areas as they do now. There will be no secondment of staff to TMP.

Leadership

The Investment Agency will need an executive director. Whilst there would be several strong candidates from amongst partners, it should be agreed at the outset that this position be advertised and appointed by a panel of the Stakeholders.

Appendix – Organisations involved with Inward Investment in Merseyside

Organisation	Locality	Target Sectors	Market Focus
NWDA	NW	RES Targets	International and National
BioNow	NW	Life Sciences	Regional, National International
NW Food Alliance	NW & Mersey	Food	Regional
Envirolink NW	NW & Mersey	Environmental Technologies	Regional, National International
NWAutomotive All	NW & Mersey	Automotive	Regional, National
NW Aerospace All	NW	Aerospace	Regional, National, International
TMP	Merseyside	Corporate, Financial & Prof Services Life/Health Sciences Software/Digital Maritime Services, Food Government	Regional, National and International
Halton	Halton	Chemicals Science, Technology and ICT	Regional, International (China)
Knowsley EDU	Knowsley	Various	Regional
Business Liverpool	Liverpool	Financial & Prof Services Government Development (MIPIM)	Regional, National, International
Invest Sefton	Sefton	Various	Regional
Invest St Helens	St Helens	Various	Regional
Wirral Direct	Wirral	Corporate & Financial Services, Food, Government	Regional
MICT	Merseyside	ICT	Regional, National, International
Merseybio	Merseyside	Life Sciences	Regional, National, International
Mersey Maritime	Merseyside	Maritime	Regional, National
ACME	Merseyside	Creative Industries	Regional, National
Construction	Merseyside	Construction	Regional
TMP – Tourism	Merseyside	Tourism	Regional, National, International
Liverpool Vision	Liverpool	Development	Regional, National and International
Liverpool Land Development Co.	Liverpool	Development	Regional, National and International

REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 21 December 2006

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director – Corporate and Policy

SUBJECT: Local Government White Paper/Bill

WARD (S): Borough-wide

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

The new White Paper on local government, *Strong and prosperous communities*, was recently published. The Paper is in two volumes, with the main proposals for change in volume one, and volume two containing thematic chapters on: Community safety, Health and well-being, Vulnerable people, Children, young people and families, Economic development, housing and planning, Climate change, and the Third Sector. These sections discuss the applicability of the proposals from Volume One to different sectors and crosscutting issues.

The purpose of this report is to summarise the main proposals, which will now be incorporated in a new Local Government Bill. This was included in the Queen's Speech on 15 November outlining the government legislative agenda for the forthcoming Parliament. A draft bill is expected before Christmas 2006, and is expected to come into law in 2008.

2 RECOMMENDATION

That the report be noted.

3 BACKGROUND

The White Paper's introduction sets a context for the proposals, which follow. It emphasises that public services have improved since 1997, and that to continue, councils, their partners, and local communities, need to be given more power to shape services and communities. It states that: *'Since 1997 local government has made huge progress in terms of its performance and reputation.'* Community involvement, partnership and leadership are important themes in the White Paper. The Paper focuses on Local Government emphasising important themes that cut across the whole of the Council's agenda. The next section summarises the main themes of the paper as set out in Volume One. At Appendix 1 is a summary table of all of the main proposals from the paper and the area of Council activity it most affects.

4. SUPPORTING INFORMATION

The following sections look at the main themes of the White paper in turn:

Responsive services and empowered communities

Service improvement needs to be driven by individual choice and community involvement in decision-making. Specific proposals are:

- Choice in local services should be extended where possible, and illustrations are given from existing developments in care of under-fives, choice-based letting for tenants, and individual budgets for social care.
- There will be reform of Best Value requirements on the existing duty to consult, extended to include promotion of wider public information, consultation, involvement in decision-making, and devolution of service delivery. Flexible, local approaches will be encouraged and examples of good practice are given. There will be new statutory guidance on this.
- There will be more emphasis on reporting performance and other service information locally.
- All councils are encouraged to introduce a systematic approach to how they deal with public petitions.
- Community Call for Action arrangements will be introduced to formalise the right of local people to raise local concerns with their ward councillor on local government matters and issues covered by partnerships within which the council is engaged. This approach is already included in the current Police and Justice Bill, on community safety issues. Councillors will act as gatekeepers, and will be able to reject vexatious complaints. If the matter cannot be dealt with in other ways, it could be referred to the council's overview and scrutiny committee(s), which can require a response from relevant public bodies.
- There will be some improvements to the processes of the Local Government Ombudsman.
- Neighbourhood management, and neighbourhood charters that set out service standards and priorities are encouraged.
- The government is also interested in community management and ownership of assets, and has set up a review of how this can be promoted. In the meantime there will be a fund to support refurbishment of buildings where the council will transfer these to community management.
- Steps will be taken to promote tenant management.
- The process to create new town and parish councils will be simplified, devolving this to local government, rather than requiring government involvement. They may be called neighbourhood or community councils. Councils will be able to consider other forms of community governance as part of this process.
- The government will seek to rationalise arrangements to support community groups.

Effective, accountable and responsive local government

This section emphasises the importance of local government leadership and proposes a range of changes to council constitutions:

- Legislation will change the available executive options to three: a directly elected mayor; a leader elected by the council but who must have a four-year term of office; a new model of a directly elected executive (i.e. each member of the cabinet directly elected by the public).
- The mayor or leader will hold the entire executive powers, will be able to decide whether or how to delegate them, will appoint cabinet members and allocate portfolios.
- Councils will be able to move to a mayoral constitution without a referendum, although there will still be powers for the public to petition for a referendum.
- Overview and scrutiny powers will be extended over key partner organisations also covered by the duty to co-operate with Local Area Agreements, and will be engaged with the Community Calls to Action.
- Councils will be enabled, but not required, to move to a system of all-out elections. This will include metropolitan councils, which are currently required to elect by thirds.
- Single member wards will be an option, but not a requirement.
- The government will set up a review of the incentives and barriers to serving on councils and seek ways to promote greater diversity and more candidates to put themselves forward. Capacity building for councillors will be supported.
- Councils will gain powers to enact byelaws, without Secretary of State confirmation, and enforce them through fixed penalty notices.
- There will be legislation to simplify the Standards framework, to create a more locally based regime, and amend the rules on personal and prejudicial interests.

Strong cities, strategic regions

This section discusses the government's approach to economic development, particularly city regions. However, decisions are deferred, pending a report feeding into the Comprehensive Spending Review. Evidence such as the government's *State of the Cities* research is reviewed, which has emphasised the need to devolve powers to enhance economic development. Specific proposals are:

- Continuing review of the need to improve sub-national working, particularly on regeneration and economic growth.
- Reform of Passenger Transport Authorities and Executives, with more council representation, to enable a more coherent approach to transport in the major cities.
- Encourage development of Multi-Area Agreements (akin to a LAA between several authorities) between authorities and partners, to

support cross-boundary collaboration, and other local partnership arrangements such as boards of council leaders.

- Where there is local support, to encourage stronger leadership models such as elected mayors.

Local government as a strategic leader and place-shaper

This section reviews the council's community leadership and place-shaping role and puts forward proposals to develop Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) and Local Area Agreements (LAAs). Specific proposals are:

- There will be a duty on councils to prepare a Local Area Agreement in consultation with others, alongside the Sustainable Community Strategy, and a duty of named partners to co-operate in agreeing targets in the LAA.
- Named partners are listed on page 100 of the White Paper, and include: police, probation, Youth Offending Teams, NHS bodies, Learning and Skills Councils, Jobcentre Plus, Health and Safety Executive, Fire and rescue authorities, Passenger Transport Authorities, Highways Agency, Environment Agency, Natural England, Regional Development Agencies, National Park Authorities, the Broads Authority and waste disposal authorities.
- There will be an expectation that council leaders and portfolio holders play a strong role in LSPs and relevant thematic partnerships.
- There will be streamlining of requirements to help integrate the development of community planning and spatial development plans, including consultation requirements.
- The government will aim to develop more financial flexibility within LAAs, and between the four current blocks of LAAs.

A new performance framework

The Paper sets out a new performance framework, which aims to reduce the number of nationally required targets, providing new opportunities for local accountability. Specific proposals are:

- Elements of Best Value will be changed, sharpening the focus on citizen engagement, and competition, and removing requirements for a Best Value Performance Plan and Best Value reviews.
- The government will set out a single set of about two hundred national indicators for all local partners. Local improvement targets will then be agreed through LAAs, with around 35 improvement targets, plus Department for Education and Skills targets in LAAs. There will then be flexibility to include additional local targets.
- Councils will report annually on LAAs. This information will be fed to the Audit Commission and other inspectorates, and inform an annual review of the area's performance co-ordinated by the Government Office for the Region.
- Changes to inspection will include, from 2009, development of a Comprehensive Area Assessment (building on CPA), based on a

combination of risk assessment, largely risk-triggered inspection, and audit. The Audit Commission will continue to publish an annual Direction of Travel judgement for each council, scored for comparability between councils. There will also be a Use of Resources judgement. From April 2009 there will be no scoring or star rating for individual services such as Children and Young People or Environment, no Annual Performance Assessments and no Children's Services' Joint Area Reviews.

- The government will agree with the LGA a national improvement strategy to tackle poor performance. National intervention powers will be retained.

Efficiency - transforming local services

This section emphasises the need to drive efficiency in use of resources, including new technology. Proposals include:

- Ambitious efficiency gains to be required as part of the 2007 Comprehensive Spending Review.
- Ensuring administrative boundaries do not act as a barrier to service improvement and efficiency.
- Promoting business improvement techniques and greater contestability in services.
- Government will publish three-year council tax projections, and provide expert support to councils and their partners to meet efficiency challenges.

Community cohesion

This section emphasises the need to provide more specific support to councils and their partners in addressing community cohesion issues. Work, which has already been done to strengthen legislation against discrimination, is emphasised. Proposals include:

- Providing support for councils which wish to include cohesion issues in community strategies and LAAs.
- Providing new guidance on how overview and scrutiny can support community cohesion.
- Government will encourage the Commission on Integration and Cohesion to provide detailed plans on promotion of cohesion.

5. CONSIDERATIONS

There is much in this White Paper that Halton will welcome. It is far from the radical root and branch review of local government that at one time seemed likely. In many ways it is a partial document. The full impact of the subsequent Bill will have to be seen in the context of the Lyons review of local government function and finance (delayed now to the spring of 2007) and the Comprehensive Spending Review planned by Treasury next summer.

The White Paper largely codifies existing good practice and encourages all Councils to aspire to the standards of the best. The approach is largely permissive and proposes a minimum in the way of new legislation. This can be especially seen in the proposals on neighbourhood and community engagement. The arrangements to require involvement of a wide range of external service providers in Sustainable Community Strategies, LAAs and council scrutiny will strengthen the council's role in leading community-wide improvements. In truth, the relationship with partners locally is already very robust and it is doubtful that the statutory duty on partners to cooperate would add much in the Halton context. The extension of scrutiny powers is positive, and the evidence from health scrutiny is that external scrutiny can be a tool to build better partnership working. Councils will have a period of preparation for these roles, which will require legislation, to identify how best the council scrutiny role can benefit communities and improve services.

There is recognition of the role of ward councillors, through the Community Call for Action, and attention to the need to revitalise the democratic process. Some commentators have been unhappy with the proposals for the Community Call for Action, feeling that they ignore what good councillors do already, and that scrutiny may be swamped with small issues raised by vocal individuals. However, there is likely to be scope to make judgements about which issues to take forward, and the definition of a legal framework is likely to encourage councils to support the ward councillor's role in local problem-solving more effectively.

The revisions to the performance framework are as expected, and provide a greater role for self-assessment and peer review. For a four-star authority like Halton this chimes with current practice and direction of travel. The rationalisation into one system of performance targets is progress, although the detail of the system still has to emerge.

However, the most contentious proposals relate to executive structures. All available evidence shows that the Local Government Act 2000 has been implemented effectively.

Despite the White Paper's ambition to concentrate executive power on one person, to ensure "strong leadership", there is a growing tendency for government departments and legislation to ascribe particular roles to cabinet members. For example, councils are required to designate a lead member for children's services. A lead member for adult social services is likely to be required soon. Developments around the Police and Justice Bill require a lead member for crime and disorder issues. The proposals for a new statutory health partnership are likely to define a portfolio holder's role. It does not appear clearly thought out how these various roles and legal responsibilities are to be combined with the executive powers being vested in one individual. No doubt a more considered view will be available when the proposals are set out in the forthcoming Bill.

In the consultations preceding the paper there was much talk of a radical implementation of the principle of subsidiarity. It was mooted that powers

would be transferred from “Whitehall to the Town Hall”, with an understanding that wherever practicable local government would itself seek to delegate powers to a more local level. The phrase 'Double Devolution' has disappeared, and there is no real new devolution of powers from London proposed, beyond limited rationalisation of performance measurement, and processes to create byelaws and parish councils. The possibility of devolution to city regions has been deferred, but is still described positively. It is very likely that there will yet be developments here. Given the current debate on the City Region Action Plan and the future governance of Greater Merseyside this will be of especial interest to Halton.

6. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

As with any Local Government Bill, there will be major implications for policy. These especially relate to executive governance models, community leadership, the role of overview and scrutiny, securing business efficiency and being more outward facing in relation to partnerships and communities. These issues are at the very heart of a Council's role and function.

7. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

In verbal statements at various local government events, Ministers have claimed that the White Paper proposals will be cost neutral. However, with its emphasis on widening and potentially changing democratic participation and greater involvement of partnerships and engagement there is every danger that this will not prove to be the case. There will greater clarity following publication of the Bill and consultation through the LGA.

8. RISK ANALYSIS

At this stage the White paper is merely setting out the landscape for the future legislation. When the Bill actually enters the parliamentary process the proposals can be used to inform the Council's Corporate Risk register process.

9. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

The White Paper takes at it core the need for local government policy and practice to actively promote equality and diversity and act to enhance community cohesion. The Commission on Cohesion and Integration is already operational and Halton will be providing written evidence on equalities and cohesion in the borough by the January deadline.

WHITE PAPER PROPOSALS

Appendix 1

A: LEGISLATION

AIM	PROPOSAL	DIRECTORATE	LEAD	COMMENT
To create more responsive services and empowered communities we will:	Revise the duty on best value authorities to require them to secure the participation of local people.	Corporate and Policy	Policy & Performance	
	Deregulate and simplify best value by removing the requirements to prepare an annual Best Value Performance Plan and conduct Best Value Reviews.	Corporate and Policy	Policy & Performance	
	Delete provisions which enable the Secretary of State to specify, by order, best value performance standards, so that they no longer apply to England.	Corporate and Policy	Policy & Performance	
	Enable councillors acting as advocates for their communities to initiate a Community Call for Action to resolve local issues of concern.	Corporate and Policy	Legal & Members Services	
	Devolve the power to create new	Corporate and Policy	Legal &	

	parishes from the Secretary of State and the Electoral Commission to district and unitary authorities and allow parishes to adopt alternative names.		Members Services	
	Improve the responsiveness of the Local Government Ombudsman and clarify the Ombudsman's role.	Corporate and Policy	Legal & Members Services	
	Amend the Right to Manage regulations.	Health & Community	Housing	
To secure effective, accountable and responsive local government, and help all councils develop their capacity and effectiveness:	End the Secretary of State's role in confirming byelaws, and make it possible for councils to enforce byelaws through fixed penalty notices.	Corporate and Policy	Legal & Members Services	
	Give local authorities the choice of one of three executive models – a directly elected mayor with a four year term, a directly elected executive with a four year term, or an indirectly elected leader with a four year term.	Corporate and Policy	Legal & Members Services	

	Allow authorities to adopt a mayoral model without the need for a referendum.	Corporate and Policy	Legal & Members Services	
	Strengthen Overview and Scrutiny committees.	Corporate and Policy	Scrutiny Advisor	
	Allow all local authorities to opt for whole council elections and enable those holding such elections to move to single member wards.	Corporate and Policy	Legal & Members Services	
To strengthen local partnership working:	Prepare Local Area Agreements (LAAs) in consultation with named local partners. This means we will co-operate with those named partners in agreeing relevant targets within the LAA, and to have regard to those targets.	Corporate and Policy	Policy & Performance	
	Issue guidance saying that the Sustainable Community Strategy and other local and regional statutory plans must have regard to each other. To promote maximum flexibility in joint working, we will place more area-based funding streams in the LAA funding pot.	Corporate and Policy	Policy & Performance	
	Streamline procedures for consulting	Corporate and Policy	Policy &	

	communities.		Performance	
To introduce more targeted, risk based and proportionate external challenge:	Amend Audit Commission powers, functions and governance arrangements to reflect a new inspection agenda.	Corporate and Policy	Legal & Members Services	
	Require the Audit Commission, who will act as a 'gatekeeper' for proposed inspections relating to local authority services.	Corporate and Policy	Legal & Members Services	

B: REVIEWS

AIM	PROPOSAL	<i>DIRECTORATE</i>	<i>LEAD</i>	<i>COMMENT</i>
To conduct reviews of:	Community management and ownership of assets.	Corporate and Policy	Financial Services	
	The incentives and barriers to serving on councils – to support the efforts of the political parties to recruit more diverse and representative councillors.	Corporate and Policy	Legal & Members Services	

C: CONSULTATION AND GUIDANCE

To consult on consolidated and light-touch guidance (statutory, where appropriate) including:	A revised best value duty, including community participation, commissioning and competition, and third sector funding.	Corporate and Policy	Policy & Performance	
	The Community Call for Action, Overview and Scrutiny and governance Reforms.	Corporate and Policy	Legal & Members Services	
	Halton Strategic Partnership, Halton's Sustainable Community Strategy and the Local Area Agreement.	Corporate and Policy	Policy & Performance	
	City development companies, to drive regional and national economic growth.	Environment	Economic Regeneration	

D: OTHER PUBLICATIONS, INITIATIVES & DEVELOPMENTS

AIM	PROPOSAL	DIRECTORATE	LEAD	COMMENT
To create a	Establish an agreed set of national	Corporate and Policy	Policy &	

performance framework that supports citizen involvement and secures better outcomes:	priority outcomes measured through a single set of national indicators as part of the Comprehensive Spending Review 2007.		Performance	
	Develop proposals for a new small set of citizen satisfaction and possible indicators and a wider voluntary set.	Corporate and Policy	Policy & Performance	
	Explore with and other stakeholders how to improve information management including streamlining national reporting systems, ensuring data quality and supporting the development of local information systems, like the Halton Observatory.	Corporate and Policy	Policy & Performance	
	Negotiate and implement burden reduction packages via the Lifting Burdens Task Force.	Corporate and Policy	Policy & Performance	
	Work with the Local Government Association in developing sectoral improvement support and challenge.	Corporate and Policy	Policy & Performance	
	Work with the Audit Commission to ensure that audit and inspection	Corporate and Policy	Policy & Performance	

	have a greater focus on citizen experience and perspectives and to make the results of audit, assessment and inspection more publicly accessible.			
	Agree with the Local Government Association a national improvement strategy to get best value for money and impact from investment in improvement support and capacity building.	Corporate and Policy	Policy & Performance	
	Work to align and coordinate existing frameworks for improvement and intervention focused on distinct service areas, local partners or partnerships.	Corporate and Policy	Policy & Performance	
AIM	PROPOSAL	<i>DIRECTORATE</i>	<i>LEAD</i>	<i>COMMENT</i>
To support our towns, cities and other places to drive regional and national economic growth:	Continue to work sub-regionally, and nationally on developing businesses cases, and on Multi-Area Agreements to promote further economic development.	Environment	Economic Regeneration	

	Report for the Comprehensive Spending Review 2007 on how the Government can best devolve powers and resources to regions and local authorities in cities and elsewhere to ensure there is clear accountability for decisions, stronger leadership, incentives to enable and support growth, reduce inequalities and effective governance arrangements.	Corporate and Policy	Policy & Performance	
To achieve greater efficiency through the transformation of local services:	Work with partners to support and spread best practice on business process improvement techniques; co-ordination and joining-up of services; responsiveness to citizens; citizen authentication; e-procurement and e-auctions; fair and open competition.	Corporate and Policy	Financial Services	
To increase take-up of community empowerment opportunities:	Help the third sector to access the Government's fund which will give capital support in refurbishing buildings to facilitate their transfer to community management and ownership.	Corporate and Policy	Financial Services	

	Work with local partners and other stakeholders to improve take-up of community empowerment.	Corporate and Policy	Policy & Performance	
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REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 21st December 2006

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Environment

SUBJECT: Approval of the formal adoption of the House Extensions Supplementary Planning Document

WARDS: Borough wide

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the formal adoption of Supplementary Planning Document (SPD): House Extensions as part of the Halton Local Development Framework.
- 1.2 A copy of the House Extensions SPD can be found in **Appendix 1**.

2 RECOMMENDED: That

- 1) The Supplementary Planning Document (SPD): House Extensions be formally adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document and part of the Halton Local Development Framework;**
- 2) The responses to the representations received at the public participation stage, as set out in the statement of consultation, be agreed; and**
- 3) Further editorial and technical changes that do not affect the content or intended purpose of the SPD be agreed by the Operational Director – Environmental and Regulatory Services in consultation with the Executive Board Member for Planning, Transportation, Regeneration and Renewal, if necessary, before the document is published.**

(It should be noted that the format of this document will change slightly before printing to incorporate the Halton formatting i.e. the Halton 'swoosh'.)

3 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 At the 21st September 2006 Executive Board it was resolved that the third Local Development Scheme (LDS) for Halton be approved by the Council for submission to the Government Office for the North West (GONW). This document sets out the spatial planning policy priorities for

the Council for the next three years. The GONW has informed the Council that they do not intend to amend the content of the LDS.

- 3.2 Included within the LDS programme of works is the production of a House Extensions SPD. The purpose of the House Extensions SPD is to complement the Halton Unitary Development Plan (UDP), by providing additional guidance for anyone intending to extend or alter their house or erect a garage or other outbuilding to ensure that all developments:
- a are of exemplary design quality and that any extensions do not spoil the character of the original dwelling, but relate closely to it and harmonise with the existing house in its scale, proportions, materials and appearance;
 - b protect residential amenity of neighbouring properties;
 - c protect and enhance the built and natural environment;
 - d preserve the essential character of the street and surrounding area;
 - e avoid the creation of dangerous highway conditions; and
 - f safeguard the provision of a reasonable private garden space.
- 3.3 The planning system requires that a record be kept of any consultees, their comments and how they have been taken into account, throughout the production of an SPD. An informal draft of the House Extensions SPD was circulated between 13th June 2006 and 27th June 2006 to a number of key stakeholders for comment. This consultation stage was essentially concerned with seeking technical observations from individuals within organisations that would either use or potentially endorse the document once it becomes an adopted SPD. This consultation was not looking for ratification of the document by those organisations. A list of those consulted, comments received and how these were taken into account is contained in **Appendix 2** of this report.
- 3.4 As part of the formal public participation period (between Thursday 14th September and Thursday 26th October 2006), the draft SPD was made available at various deposit locations throughout the borough. The locations included the Council's main libraries and Halton Direct Link facilities. The SPD was accompanied with a copy of the public notice of SPD matters and public participation that was printed in the local Newspapers, representations forms, the Sustainability Appraisal Report and a explanatory letter. The public notice of SPD matters and public participation sets out the purpose of producing the SPD, when and where copies of the SPD can be viewed and the period for making representations. Each of the aforementioned documents was also made available on the Council website and in various formats upon request.
- 3.5 Statutory consultees such as neighbouring authorities and the government agencies (as outlined in Planning Policy Statement 12 - Local Development Frameworks, Appendix E) were consulted specifically via letter with an individual copy of the draft SPD attached. Additionally, those individuals on the Council's Local Development Framework consultation database that had requested to be informed of

the publication of the draft SPD were also sent a covering explanatory letter, a copy of the public notice of SPD matters and public participation, and a representation form. A list of comments received and how these were taken into account is contained in **Appendix 2** of this report.

- 3.6 Another requirement is that a scoping exercise must be undertaken to see if a Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA) is required to assess the environmental effects of the SPD. Between 6th April 2006 and 11th May 2006 a Scoping Report was consulted upon in line with the relevant regulations, the conclusion was that a SEA was not required in relation to this SPD. An additional requirement in relation to producing a SPD is that a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is produced. The purpose of the SA is to independently assess the contribution that the House Extensions SPD will make to achieve the social, economic and environmental objectives of sustainable development. The SA Report was consulted upon alongside the draft SPD and a final Sustainability Appraisal (**Appendix 3**) will be published alongside the adopted SPD. The conclusions of the Sustainability Appraisal were not challenged during the consultation process and therefore no additional changes will need to be made to the SPD.
- 3.7 The House Extensions SPD has also been subject to an Appropriate Assessment (AA) screening assessment this is set out in the Screening Report (**Appendix 4**). An AA is undertaken to assess the potential effect of the SPD on sites of European importance, such as the Ramsar, Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) that are within or close to Halton. The Screening Report concludes that in the opinion of Halton Borough Council the House Extensions SPD will not require an 'Appropriate Assessment'.

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The SPD has been produced to ensure that through its function as a Local Planning Authority, the Council: -
- a) Is in accordance with national and regional planning policy and advice.
 - b) Wherever possible meets the priorities of the community it serves, as set out in the Halton Community Strategy and Corporate Plan.
- 4.2 This SPD directly relates to a number of policies within the Halton Unitary Development Plan. It is particularly intended to provide further detail of what the Council expects in relation to H6, which provides the criteria for new house extensions.

5 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 No other known implications.

6 RISK ANALYSIS

- 6.1 No legal or financial risks to the Council can be identified so long as the statutory procedures for the preparation of SPDs are met.
- 6.2 No other significant risk would result from the adoption of the draft SPD as the document is supplementary policy and therefore any 'risk' issues, such as highway safety, would be tempered, for example via the Council's functions as the Local Highway Authority.

7 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

- 7.1 The adoption of the draft SPD does will not have any identifiable equality and diversity implications.

8 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

- 8.1 The alternative options considered with regard to the preparation of this document are set out in the SA Report.

9 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

<u>Document</u>	<u>Place of Inspection</u>	<u>Contact Officer</u>
Halton Unitary Development Plan, April 2005	Planning & Policy Division, Environmental & Regulatory Services, Rutland House.	Neil Macfarlane
Halton Local Development Scheme 2006/7	Planning & Policy Division, Environmental & Regulatory Services, Rutland House.	Neil Macfarlane



House Extensions

Supplementary Planning Document

December 2006



Halton Borough Council

House Extensions

Supplementary Planning
Document

December 2006

Operational Director
Environmental & Regulatory Services
Environment Directorate
Halton Borough Council
Rutland House
Halton Lea
Runcorn
WA7 2GW

Contents

Section	Contents
1	Purpose
2	Guiding Principles
3	General Principles for all Extensions
4	Front Extensions & Porches
5	Side Extensions
6	Rear Extensions
7	Dormer Extensions
8	Parking & Garage Space
9	Garden Space
10	Other Considerations & Information
11	The Planning Application
12	Policy Background
Appendix I	Contacts and Useful Information

Operational Director
Environmental & Regulatory Services
Environment Directorate
Halton Borough Council
Rutland House
Halton Lea
Runcorn
WA7 2GW

This guidance note should be read in conjunction with the relevant policies of the Development Plan.

I Purpose

1.1 The purpose of the House Extensions SPD is to complement the Halton Unitary Development Plan (UDP), by providing additional guidance for anyone intending to extend or alter their house or erect a garage or other outbuilding to ensure that all developments:

- a are of exemplary design quality and that any extensions do not spoil the character of the original dwelling, but relate closely to it and harmonise with the existing house in its scale, proportions, materials and appearance;
- b protect residential amenity of neighbouring properties;
- c protect and enhance the built and natural environment;
- d preserve the essential character of the street and surrounding area;
- e avoid the creation of dangerous highway conditions; and
- f safeguard the provision of a reasonable private garden space.

1.2 By stating this purpose, the Council will seek to improve through its function as the Local Planning Authority any development proposal that does not provide for, or meet the principles encouraged and required within this SPD and the Halton UDP

1.3 These guidelines are intended to illustrate the criteria that will be applied by the council in assessing proposals for house extensions. They also provide advice for planning and designing domestic extensions in a way that will enhance the appearance of the dwelling whilst maintaining the character and amenity of the neighbourhood.

1.4 This SPD is also intended to encourage residents to follow the practical guidance it contains wherever opportunities arise whether or not formal consent is required.

1.5 **It is important that each section is not read in isolation, as guidance provided in the whole of the document will be applied, as required.**

Application of the Policy

The definition of “house” in the policy includes bungalows, but excludes apartments or maisonettes.

“Extension” means all additions to the house whether attached or not, and includes garages.

This House Extensions SPD also applies to:

- Houses that are listed buildings and buildings in Conservation Areas.
- Houses in the Green Belt.

However, due to the special characteristics of these areas, more stringent controls may need to be applied.

Exceptions may be considered for an extension to provide basic amenities or facilities at ground floor level for a disabled person. However, where possible, the extension should be designed to comply with the guidance. In circumstances where the guidance cannot be adhered to, acceptable proof of disability and a written statement justifying why an exception should be made shall be submitted with any application.

Please note that the diagrams used within this document are illustrative and are not drawn to scale.

2 Guiding Principles

2.1 This section sets out some of the documents that contain guiding principles that have been used to inform the general principles set out in this document.

By Design

2.2 By Design, Urban Design in the Planning System: Towards Better Practice, is a companion guide to National planning policy guidance. It does not provide policy, but encourages better design. By Design summarises the objectives of urban design as:

- **Character** - A place with its own identity
- **Continuity and enclosure** - A place where public and private spaces are clearly distinguished
- **Quality of the public realm** - A place with attractive and successful outdoor areas
- **Ease of movement** - A place that is easy to get to and move through
- **Legibility** - A place that has a clear image and is easy to understand
- **Adaptability** - A place that can change easily
- **Diversity** - A place with variety and choice

Securing the Future

2.3 Securing the Future: Delivering UK Sustainable Development Strategy, sets out the Government's sustainable development agenda. It sets the following guiding principles for sustainable development:

- Living within environmental limits
- Ensuring a strong, healthy and just society
- Achieving a sustainable economy
- Promoting good governance
- Using sound science responsibly

Building in Context

2.4 The belief underlying 'Building in context' is that the right approach is to be found in examining the context for any proposed development in great detail and relating the new building to its surroundings through an informed character appraisal. It suggests that a successful project will:

- relate well to the geography and history of the place and the lie of the land;
- sit happily in the pattern of existing development and routes through and around it;
- respect important views;
- respect the scale of neighbouring buildings;
- use materials and building methods which are as high in quality as those used in existing buildings; and
- create new views and juxtapositions which add to the variety and texture of the setting.

3 General Principles for all Extensions

3.1 These principles apply to all extensions:

Design in relation to existing dwellings

3.2 An extension should relate closely to, and harmonise with the existing building in its scale, proportions, materials and appearance. In particular:

- The size of the extension should be subordinate to the size of the dwelling as first built.
- The external materials used shall closely match those of the existing dwelling in their design (see diagram 1).



Diagram 1: Poor choice of external materials for the extension

- On prominent elevations, problems of bonding old with new brickwork on the same plane should be overcome by setting the extension back from the main wall of the dwelling.
- The roof of an extension should be pitched to match that of the existing dwelling. Flat roofs are not normally acceptable, except where they are a feature of the original dwelling house. (see diagram 2)
- The windows of any extensions should be in line with existing windows and should match their proportions, size and design. (see diagram 2)



Diagram 2: Examples of side extensions – one with an appropriate pitched roof and well matched windows and one with an inappropriate flat roof and poorly matched windows.

How and where to extend?

3.3 The choice of how and where to extend will depend upon a variety of factors. However, the Council's policies as set out in this booklet will be an indicator as to whether or not a particular proposal will be acceptable.

3.4 The position of the dwelling within its plot will be one of the most important considerations. Is there more space at the side or at the rear? How will the extension relate to the internal arrangement of the house?

3.5 For dwellings in substantial plots, there may be several options where an extension can be accommodated with little affect on neighbouring properties.

3.6 However, a basic principle to follow is that extensions should respect the style and character of the original house and not overwhelm it.

Effect on the street scene and the character of the area

3.7 Apart from its relationship to the existing house, an extension should not be visually detrimental to the existing

character or appearance of the street scene or the surrounding area. In particular:

- Where a house is one of a group, similar in appearance and significant in the street scene, the effect of an extension to that house on the appearance of the group, as well as the individual house should be carefully considered.
- An extension should respect any regularity and width of spaces between existing houses and the visual effect of these spaces when significant in the street scene.
- An extension should respect any regularity in the distance between the road and the frontage walls of existing houses when this distance is a significant factor in the street scene.
- An extension at the rear of a dwelling should not be so extensive in relation to the size of the rear garden or yard that the enlarged house would constitute overdevelopment of the site that would be out of character with the area.

Amenity of neighbours

3.8 An extension should respect the existing standard of daylight and privacy experienced by neighbours, in particular:

- Where principal windows will allow views to other principal windows of a neighbouring property, a minimum distance of 21 metres must be maintained. (see diagram 3)

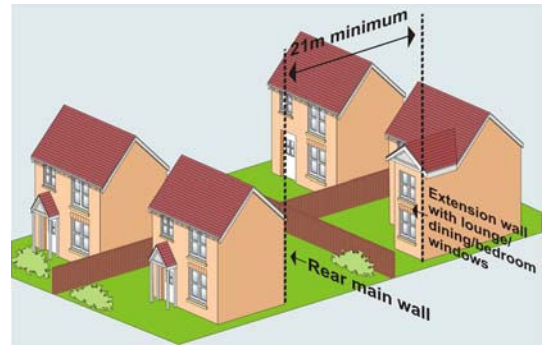


Diagram 3: 21 metres between facing principal windows

- Where principal windows directly face a blank elevation, a minimum distance of 13 metres must be maintained. (see diagram 4)

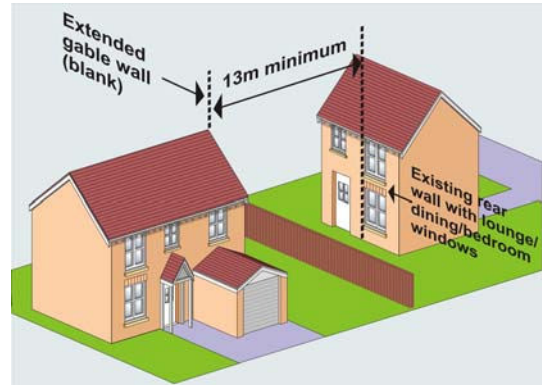


Diagram 4: 13 metres between principal windows and blank wall

- Where the house concerned is more than two storeys, the Council will normally apply a further 3 metres for each additional floor in addition to the distances stated above. For example, a three-storey house will normally require 16 metres (13m + the additional 3m) between a principal window and a blank elevation or 24 metres (21m+3m) between facing principal windows.
- Any new patio area or balcony at first floor levels should not have the potential for an unacceptable degree of overlooking from any main window of a principal room in an adjacent house; nor for the direct sideways overlooking of

neighbouring private garden or yard.

- The Council uses the '45-degree rule' to help assess impact upon the amenities of the neighbouring properties and to protect from overshadowing or obstruction, caused by large extensions on or close to the boundary. The code is principally applied to single storey rear extensions and side extensions where building lines are staggered. (see diagrams 5, 6 & 7)



Diagram 5: The '45-degree Rule' applied to a semi detached or terraced property

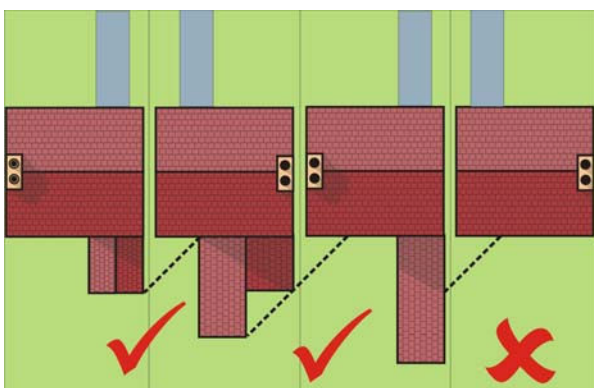


Diagram 6: The '45-degree Rule' applied to a detached property

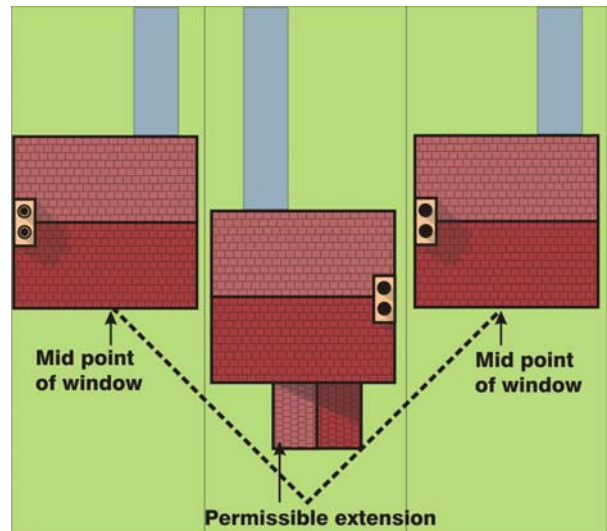


Diagram 7: The '45-degree Rule' applied to staggered properties

Note: a principal window is a main window of a living room, dining room, conservatory or a bedroom.

Building Control

3.9 Building regulation requirements should be taken during the design of any alteration or extension. More advice on the building regulations may be obtained from the Council's Building Control Division, contact details can be found in the Appendix.

4 Front Extensions & Porches

4.1 These principles apply to front extensions and porches:

- Front extensions should respect the existing property, and neighbouring properties, regarding design, size and siting.
- Any extension to the front elevation must be designed to harmonise with the existing property.
- Proposals should not result in the loss of existing parking provision.
- If the buildings on the street follow an established pattern or clear building line, front extensions are more likely to be considered to adversely affect the appearance of the street scene.
- Where planning permission is required, conversions of integrated or attached garages will not normally be allowed if two off road parking spaces cannot be provided.
- Porch extensions should also match the original design of the property.
- The height of the porch should not exceed the sill height of the first floor windows.



Diagram 8: Inappropriate porch extension.

5 Side Extensions

5.1 To avoid terracing and / or an unbalanced effect, two storey and first floor side extensions to a semi detached, linked detached or end terrace property, should incorporate the following principles:

- The extension should not exceed more than 50% of the width of the frontage of the original dwelling.
- A minimum of 800mm shall be retained between the sidewall of the extension and the inside of the plot boundary to allow for access to the rear for bin and cycle storage. (see diagram 9)
- A minimum gap of 800mm shall be retained between the sidewall of the first floor and the plot boundary. (see diagram 9)



Diagram 9: Good side extension with 800mm retained between the sidewall of an extension and the plot boundary

- The extension shall be set back a minimum of 1 metre from the main front elevation of the existing dwelling. (see diagram 10)
- The roof of the extension shall have a lower ridge height, than the existing house. (see diagram 10)



Diagram 10: Good side extension - set back 1m and with lower ridge height

- A minimum of two off road car parking spaces shall be provided.

Other considerations

5.2 This policy is designed to prevent extensions at the side of detached or semi detached houses from joining up with neighbouring houses to create a continuous terrace effect. Whilst there is nothing wrong with terraced housing as such, the aim of the policy is to protect street scene and the amenities of areas that were originally designed and laid out as detached or semi detached developments. Such areas can provide attractive views between houses to trees and the scene beyond, and they permit the penetration of sunlight and daylight into the street and into gardens and rooms opposite the gaps. Closure of these important gaps between dwellings can alter the character of a residential street leading to a reduction in the amenity enjoyed by residents and passers by. (see diagram 11)



Diagram 11: Inappropriate side extensions which have lead to a 'terracing effect'

- 5.3 For detached properties the lower ridge height and first floor front elevation set back may not be required but this is based on a case-by-case assessment.
- 5.4 This policy also ensures that the extension is subordinate to the existing dwelling and harmonises with it.

Corner plots

5.5 Even though a corner plot may seem to have more garden space to the front and side, they should remain open, with clear views to be seen when travelling around the corner. The Council will normally expect all extensions on corner plots (single and two storeys) to meet all the following criteria:

- Corner extensions should not project beyond the front elevations

of those properties on adjacent roads. (see diagram 12)

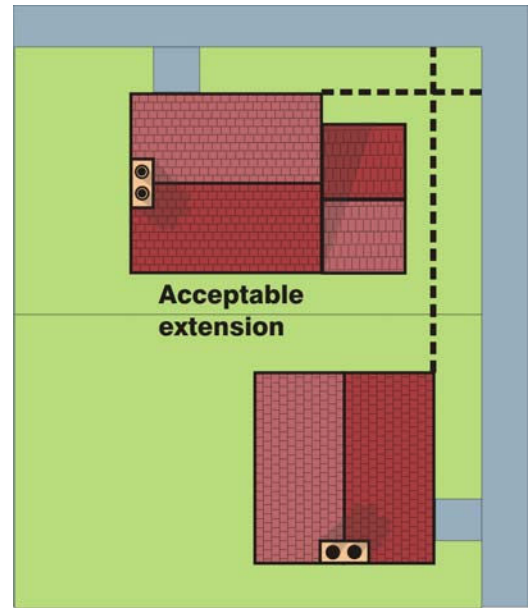


Diagram 12: Appropriate corner extension not projecting beyond either properties front elevation

- The width of the extension should not be more than half the width of the original frontage of the property.
- The width of the extension should not be more than half the width of the garden / plot between the property and adjacent highway.
- The extension should have a pitched roof to match the design of the main roof.

6 Rear Extensions

6.1 When considering rear extensions the Council will use the 45-degree rule. This will help to assess the impact of any rear extension upon the amenities of the neighbouring properties and to protect them from overshadowing or obstruction, caused by extensions on or close to the boundary.

Single storey rear extensions

6.2 These principles apply to single storey rear extensions:

- An extension will not normally be allowed if it projects more than a 45 degree line from the middle of the nearest affected neighbouring window or exceeds a maximum of 4 metres.
 - To comply with the 45-degree code, extensions should be designed so as not to cross the 45-degree line from the neighbours nearest habitable room (living, dining, conservatory or bedroom) window. The 45-degree line shall be drawn in the horizontal plane, and taken from the middle of the neighbour's window. The line will show the maximum width and / or depth that a proposed extension can build up to avoiding obstruction from light or views. (see diagram 13)
 - The council when assessing single storey rear extension will consider the impact on the neighbouring property and take into account differences in land levels.
 - The council will also take into consideration the height of a proposed extension when assessing an application.

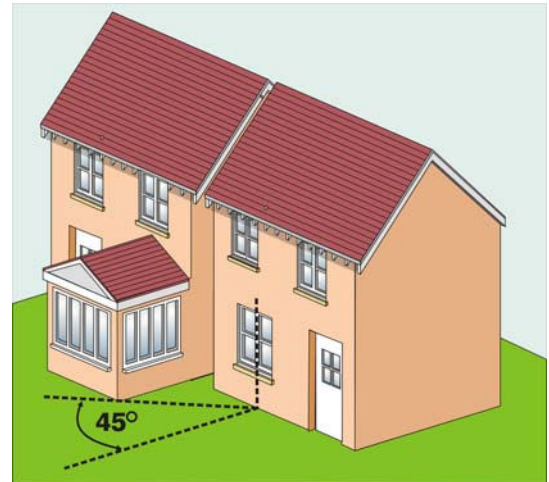


Diagram 13: 45-degree rule

Two storey rear extensions

6.3 The following principles apply to two storey rear extensions:

- Two storey extensions along shared boundaries shall not project at first floor level by more than 2 metres.
- In any other case, the following sizes shall be applied:

Distance between extension and adjoining property	Maximum projection at first floor level
1m	2.5m
2m	3m
3m or more	4m

- Where properties have a staggered building line and a neighbouring property is set forward in the plot, the maximum projection will be measured from the rear building line of that neighbour's property.

7 Dormer Extensions

- 7.1 Wherever possible dormer windows should be restricted to the rear of the dwelling in order to preserve the character of the street scene. This may not be so important where front dormers are already a common feature of other buildings in the street.
- 7.2 Side dormers will not normally be permitted where they allow overlooking or adversely affect the streetscene.
- 7.3 Where dormers are on the front or rear elevation of the dwelling or readily visible from public space, their scale and design are particularly important and the following criteria will apply:

- They should not normally exceed more than one third of the width of the roof.
- They should not project above the ridge of the roof (see diagram 14).
- Dormers which wrap around the side ridges of a hipped roof are not acceptable.
- The face of a dormer should be set back by a minimum of 1 metre behind the main wall.
- A dormer should not extend to the full width of the roof, but should be set in from the side/ party walls. Two smaller dormers may be better than one large one (see diagram 15).
- Dormer windows should vertically line up with existing windows and match their style and proportions.
- Flat dormer roofs are not acceptable unless considered appropriate to the particular building or the street scene.
- Dormer cheeks should normally be clad in materials to match the existing roof.



Diagram 14: Examples of dormer window extensions



Diagram 15: Examples of dormer window extensions

8 Parking & Garage Space

- 8.1 Extensions will not normally be allowed if they have the potential to reduce off-road parking. In most circumstances a minimum of two off-road parking spaces should be provided. The size of a parking space should be a minimum of 2.4 metres x 5 metres.
- 8.2 It is preferable that at least one parking/garage space is provided behind the building line, and that the driveway can accommodate at least one vehicle length of 5 metres. This should not include any service verge or footpath. Where a garage has been provided adequate space shall be given to allow for a parked car and for a garage door to be opened (see diagram 16). Where space is restricted the use of roller or sectional garage doors which require less space may be more appropriate than 'up and over' doors.
- 8.3 Where the extension or alteration will create a 5-bedroom property three off road parking spaces will be required unless there are other material considerations.
- 8.4 Consideration of parking arrangements is particularly important if you are thinking of either converting an integrated or attached garage to living accommodation or building on or over an existing garage or driveway. Extensions which prevent the parking
- of cars within the curtilage of the dwelling will not be acceptable.
- 8.5 An extension should not be constructed in a position where it would interfere with an adequate standard of visibility for road users to the detriment of highway safety.
- 8.6 Property boundaries, including extensions should be 300mm clear of the highway boundary (including footpath and service verge) so that foundations do not interfere with service apparatus.

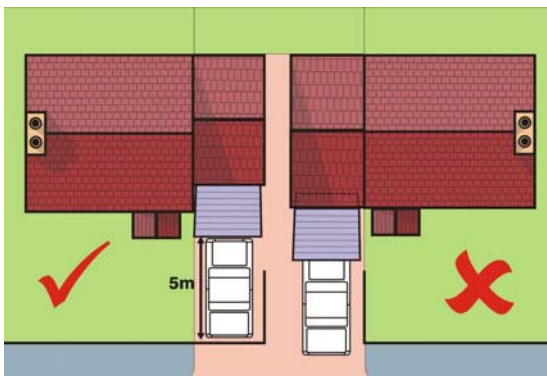


Diagram 16: Examples of parking spaces

- 8.4 Consideration of parking arrangements is particularly important if you are thinking of either converting an integrated or attached garage to living accommodation or building on or over an existing garage or driveway. Extensions which prevent the parking

9 Garden Space

9.1 Enough private garden space should be left after any extensions have been built to accommodate various leisure pursuits, to ensure that enough space is kept between neighbouring houses to avoid a cramped overcrowded feel and to prevent overlooking between windows.

9.2 The minimum garden area acceptable to the Council is 50 Sq.m of usable garden space, and this should be private enclosed space e.g. rear garden. In most cases it will be necessary to keep a larger area to avoid cramped appearance and to maintain the character of the area. Large trees within gardens may restrict options to extend especially if the trees are protected by a Tree Preservation Order.

9.3 Generally rear extensions will encroach onto garden space to a greater extent than side extensions. If the garden is already quite small (approximately 50m²), a rearwards extension may not be advisable.

the canopy of such trees or in close proximity must be accurately shown on the submitted plans, and include the crown spread.

Trees

9.4 Proposals that would require the felling of protected trees, trees in conservation areas or other trees that contribute significantly to the character of an area or that could endanger its health (for example by severing its roots), are very rarely considered to be acceptable. Instead, alternative methods of providing additional accommodation should be explored.

9.5 Extensions will not normally be allowed where the extension will be overshadowed by surrounding tree, as this could lead to pressure to remove these trees.

9.6 Proposals that would result in the felling of trees or would extend within

10 Other Considerations & Information

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

Green Belt

- 10.1 Extensions should not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building. The interpretation of this policy will vary according to the character of the property, but as a general guide, extensions, which increase the volume of the original house by more than about one third, are unlikely to be acceptable.
- 10.2 Special regard should be given to matters of siting, height, scale, design and use of materials in order to maintain the openness and visual integrity of the Green Belt.
- 10.3 Planning applications for extensions should be accompanied by drawings that demonstrate the size/ volume of the original building. Very special circumstances will have to exist to justify any exception to the strict control of development in the Green belt. It is the responsibility of the applicant to provide this justification.

Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas

- 10.4 Extensions to listed buildings and/ or within Conservation Areas are likely to be particularly sensitive. In particular, the design standards applied may be stricter than those previously outlined in this policy document. Most works to listed buildings will require Listed Building consent, even if they do not require planning permission.

Protected Species

- 10.5 Species such as bats, which use roof spaces as roost or hibernation sites, and birds which nest under the eaves of buildings are protected from harm by law. Applications for development that

involve alterations to existing roof spaces, listed buildings, pre-1939 houses, barns or other traditional buildings and, any work involving disturbance to trees or hedges may have an impact upon protected species.

- 10.6 If the presence of bats or birds is suspected then an application may need to include a survey report, together with details of mitigation measures to safeguard the protected a species from the adverse effects of the development.
- 10.7 The Council may impose planning conditions or obligations on planning permissions to ensure that these measures are implemented. Such measures may include, for example, avoiding carrying out any work during the bird breeding season, or the inclusion of artificial nest boxes as part of the development.
- 10.8 The Council may refuse permission for developments where inadequate survey and mitigation details are included with an application.
- 10.9 For further information please visit the Natural England website: www.naturalengland.org.uk

Flood Risk

- 10.10 The Environment Agency recommends that in areas at risk of flooding, consideration be given to the incorporation into the design and construction of the development of flood proofing measures. Additional guidance can be found on the Environment Agency website: www.environment-agency.gov.uk
- 10.11 It should also be noted under the terms of the Water Resources Act 1991 and the Land Drainage Byelaws, the prior written consent of the Agency is required for any proposed works or

structures either affecting or within the 8 metres of the tidal or fluvial flood defences.

OTHER INFORMATION

Building Regulations

10.12 In addition to the need for planning permission, house extensions may also require approval under the Building Regulations. These regulations are designed to ensure appropriate standards of design and construction are employed. Approval under these regulations is a separate issue and for further advice, please contact the Council's Building Control Division on 0151 471 7360.

The Party Wall Act

10.13 The Act provides a framework for preventing and resolving disputes in relation to party walls, boundary walls and excavations near neighbouring buildings. It does not resolve boundary disputes but is intended to manage the process of work to or up to the party boundary and includes reference to the right of access to neighbouring properties to carry out works. An explanatory booklet is available should further details be required.

Neighbours

10.14 The council always recommends that you consult neighbours affected by the proposals before submitting the plans to the council. This may facilitate minor amendments and resolve any unknown issues. In any event, the council will formerly notify neighbouring properties inviting comments, and a period of 21 days is allowed for such comments to be made in writing to the council.

Utilities Infrastructure

10.15 The Council would recommend that any applicant check with United Utilities for the presence of underground utility services, which may restrict where extensions may be built.

11 The Planning Application

Do you need to apply for planning permission?

- 11.1 If you live in a house, you can make certain types of minor changes to your home without needing to apply for planning permission. These rights, are called "permitted development rights". However, Permitted Development Rights will not apply if your property is Listed or in the grounds of a Listed building; in a Conservation Area; and/or has had the Permitted Development Rights removed.
- 11.2 If you are in any doubt as to whether you require planning permission please write in with details of your proposal including sketches and sizes to: Planning & Policy Division, Environmental and Regulatory Services, Rutland house, Halton, Lea, Runcorn, Cheshire, WA7 2GW.
- 11.3 Further information in relation to planning permissions and Permitted Development Rights can be found in the Department for Local Government and Communities (DCLG) document 'Planning – A Guide for Householders – What you need to know about the planning system' or on the Planning Portal website at www.planningportal.gov.uk or on the Council's website at www.halton.gov.uk
- 11.4 It should also be noted that house extensions may require building regulations approval regardless of whether or not they need planning permission. More advice on the building regulations may be obtained from the Council's Building Control Division, contact details can be found in the Appendix.

If you build something, which needs planning permission, without obtaining it first, you may be forced to put things

right at a later date. This may prove troublesome and costly. You might even need to remove an unauthorised building!

What to submit with your application

- 11.5 When you are preparing your application, you should include the following information:
- 3 copies of the completed planning application forms. Blank copies are available online or from Halton Direct Link receptions. You can also apply on line at www.planningportal.gov.uk
 - 3 copies of the location plan, (OS based) showing your property in relation to neighbouring properties and its position in the street, with numbers of nearby houses clearly indicated, to scale of not less than 1:1250. You should outline the boundaries of your property (including land to the front, rear and sides) in red with any other adjoining land in your ownership outlined in blue.
 - 3 copies of the plans and elevations of the house as existing
 - 3 copies of the plans and elevations showing the extension proposal, to a scale of 1:100 or 1:50.
 - A block plan to a scale of not less than 1:500 showing the distances from the extension to your plot boundaries and showing any other features such as trees, outbuildings. The block plan should show the relationship of the extensions to neighbouring windows. It should also show the means of access and parking arrangements. Note the block plan should be based upon accurate survey measurements. On sloping sites, plans showing proposed levels may be required.

(Diagram 15 provides an example of a block plan)

Please note all plans and elevation drawings should be produced in a metric scale.

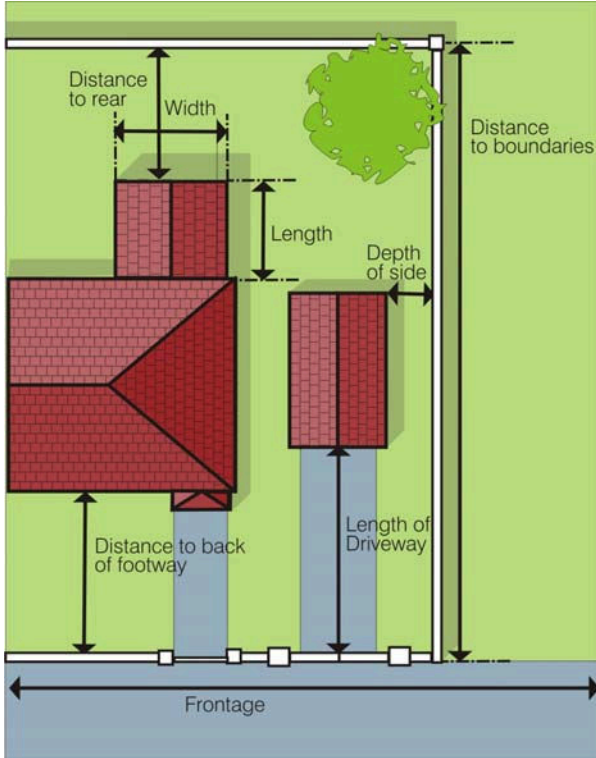


Diagram 15: A typical block plan for a rear extension and garage is shown on the following page.

- A covering letter with any other relevant information in support of you application.
- I copy of the correct Certificate of Ownership, signed and dated.
If you are not the sole owner of all the land to which the application relates the owner/s must be told about your application, this is done by serving Notice No. 1 on each owner.

NOTE: All applications requiring planning permission must be accompanied with the appropriate fee, which must be submitted with the application forms and plans. Unless the fee is correct, and the forms and certificate are correctly filled in, including accurate plans, the application

cannot be registered and will be returned.

- 11.6 Please note that the advice contained in this document is not binding in every case, so there may be occasions where special site characteristics warrant a relaxation. Officers will always be pleased to advise.

12 Policy Background

12.1 This SPD has been produced to ensure that through its function as a Local Planning Authority, the Council complies with national and regional guidance and advice and contributes, wherever possible, to meeting the priorities of the community it serves.

National Policy

12.2 *Planning Policy Statement 1 (PPS1): Creating Sustainable Communities*, states that 'good design ensures attractive, usable, durable and adaptable places and is a key element in achieving sustainable development. Good design is indivisible from good planning.'

12.3 *Planning Policy Statement 3 (PPS3): Housing*, promotes the creation of high quality housing that is well designed and built to a high standard. It highlights the need for places, streets and spaces which meet the needs of people, which are attractive, have their own distinctive identity, and positively improve local character. It also promotes the use of designs and layouts that are inclusive, safe, take account of public health, crime prevention and community safety, ensure adequate natural surveillance and make space for water where there is flood risk.

12.4 '*Better Places to Live: A Companion Guide to PPG3: By Design*' published by the DETR in 2000 provides specific urban design advice to help deliver the objectives of PPG3. This companion guide considers the principles of urban design and the features of urban form, together with advice on the design and layout of successful residential housing developments, such as understanding character, privacy, orientation and safety.

12.5 Additional good practice guidelines include the *Department for Local Government and Communities (DCLG)*

document 'Planning – A Guide for Householders – What you need to know about the planning system' (2006). Advice contained in this document states that a well-designed building or extension is likely to be much more attractive to you and to your neighbours and it is also likely to add value to your house when you sell it. The guidance for householders specifically suggests that extensions often look better if they use the same materials and are in a similar style to the existing buildings and in some instances the Council's design guides or advisory leaflets may help you or you may wish to consider using a suitably qualified, skilled and experienced designer.

Regional Policy

12.6 One of the core principles of Regional Planning for the North West (RPG13), which is now by virtue of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS), is good design. Policy DP3 states that 'new development must demonstrate good design quality and respect for its setting'. It goes on to state that local authorities should set out guidance that ensures more innovative design to create a high-quality living and working environment, especially in housing terms, which incorporates: more efficient use of energy and materials; more eco-friendly and adaptable buildings; sustainable drainage systems; community safety and 'designing out' of crime; and appropriate parking provision and best practice in the application of highway standards.

12.7 Policy DPI of the Draft RSS (2006) states that all proposals and schemes must demonstrate excellent design quality, sustainable construction, efficiency in resource use and respect for their physical and natural setting.

Local Policy

- 12.8 The Halton Unitary Development Plan (UDP), which was adopted in April 2005, contains a number of strategic aims and objectives. These are set out in Part I of the UDP. In relation to environmental quality, these include creating a safe and healthy Halton, and ensuring that future development is of a quality of design that enhances the built environment and encourages the use of energy efficient design. At the centre of these strategic aims and objectives is the desire of the Council to create sustainable places that all people will want to live and work within.
- 12.9 Part 2 of the UDP contains policies that seek to implement the broad aims and objectives contained within Part I of the UDP. The proposed SPD is intended to support Policy H6, which states that proposals for house extensions will be permitted where:
- a the proposal would not unacceptably alter the appearance or character of the original dwelling but relate closely to it and harmonise with it in terms of their scale, proportions, materials and appearance;
 - b the proposal would not create dangerous highway conditions by obstructing visibility for pedestrians or drivers of motor vehicles; and
 - c Reasonable private garden space is provided for use by the residents of the extended property
- 12.10 However, other policies within the UDP may also be relevant to some developments so this SPD. Therefore, this SPD should be read in conjunction with all the relevant policies of the Development Plan.
- 12.11 The intended SPD will be produced to contribute to the priorities, principles, objectives and targets of the Halton Community Strategy (2006). This strategy coordinates the resources of the local public, private and voluntary organisations towards common purposes.
- 12.12 Two of the main priorities set out in this strategy cover issues that are expected to be raised in the proposed SPD, within the priority to *Halton's urban renewal* one of the objectives to support and sustain thriving neighbourhoods and open spaces that meet people's expectations and add to their enjoyment of life. Within the priority to *a Safer Halton* one of the objectives is to create and sustain better neighbourhoods that are well designed, well built, well maintained and valued by the people who live in them, reflecting the priorities of residents to improve public perceptions and attractiveness.
- 12.13 Halton Borough Council is signed up and committed to contributing to achieving the priorities of the Community Strategy. The Council's priorities are set out in the Corporate Plan. This plan also has five priorities, including 'safe and attractive neighbourhoods' and 'promoting urban renewal'.
- 12.14 The intended SPD is being produced to help meet this target and others set out within the Council's Corporate Plan. The priorities in the Community Strategy and the Corporate Plan are based on the priorities set by the people of Halton. These were identified through community involvement via area panels, focus groups, and a telephone questionnaire. The Corporate Plan was based on the same community involvement and statistical information compiled for the State Of Borough Report, 2005.

Appendix I: Contacts and Useful Information

General information

To access a downloadable copy of the Planning Policy Guidance notes or Planning Policy Statements detailed in Section 2, or for further general planning information visit the Department of Communities and Local Government website at www.communities.gov.uk or for a hard copy contact the Department of Communities and Local Government by phone on 0870 1226 236.

To access a downloadable copy of 'By Design, Urban Design in the planning system: Towards Better Practice' and 'Safer Places', documents relating to urban renewal, urban design and creating sustainable communities, and general planning information visit The Department of Communities and Local Government website at www.communities.gov.uk.

For information relating to urban design there are several documents available. Design at a Glance: A quick reference to national design policy, Design Review and The Value of Good Design can be downloaded free of charge from the CABE website at <http://www.cabe.org.uk/publications/> and The Urban Design Compendium produced by English Partnership and the Housing Corporation can be ordered online free of

charge from English Partnerships at www.englishpartnerships.co.uk Urban Design Guidance: urban design frameworks, development briefs and masterplans, produced by the Urban Design Group, and From Design Policy to Design Quality, produced by the RTPi, can be purchased from Thomas Telford Ltd.

Further information on the Secured By Design initiative, including details relating to the standards required for a development to receive Secured By Design accreditation may be found at www.securedbydesign.com

For information regarding any development affecting a historic building or conservation area 'Building In Context' will be able to provide advice. It is available from English Heritage and the CABE and can be downloaded free of charge from <http://www.cabe.org.uk> or for a hard copy contact English Heritage at: Customer Services Department, PO Box 569, Swindon, Wiltshire, SN2 2YP, Tel: 0870 333 1181, Fax: 01793 414 926

You can find out about the planning system and how it works at www.planningportal.gov.uk

Local information

For advice relating to submitting a planning application, for pre-application discussion or to purchase a copy of this SPD or any other SPD contact:

Planning & Policy Division
Environmental & Regulatory Services
Halton Borough Council
Rutland House
Halton Lea
Runcorn
WA7 2GW

Tel: 0151 424 2061

Fax: 0151 471 7314

Email: dev.control@halton.gov.uk or
forward.planning@halton.gov.uk

Website:

www.halton.gov.uk/developmentcontrol or
www.halton.gov.uk/forwardplanning

If further highways or transport information is required, please contact the:

Highways Division
Environmental & Regulatory Services
Halton Borough Council
Rutland House
Halton Lea
Runcorn
WA7 2GW

Tel: 0151 424 2061

Fax: 0151 471 7521

If further information is required relating to accessibility or building control please contact:

Building Control Division
Environmental & Regulatory Services
Halton Borough Council
Rutland House
Halton Lea
Runcorn
WA7 2GW

Tel: 0151 424 2061

Fax: 0151 471 7314

Website: www.halton.gov.uk/buildingcontrol

If further information is required in relation to trees in development, please contact:

John White (Trees & Woodlands Officer)
Landscape Division
Environmental & Regulatory Services
Landscape Services Department
Picow Farm Depot
Picow Farm Road
Runcorn
WA7 4UB

Tel: 0151 424 2061

Website: www.halton.gov.uk



House Extensions

Supplementary Planning Document
Statement of Consultation
December 2006



Halton Borough Council

House Extensions

Supplementary Planning Document

Statement of Consultation

Environmental & Regulatory Services
Environment Directorate
Halton Borough Council
Rutland House
Halton Lea
Runcorn
WA7 2GW

Introduction

Under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 it is a requirement to prepare and publish a Statement of Consultation for a range of planning policy documents, including Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs). This is a reflection of Government's desire to "strengthen community and stakeholder involvement in the development of local communities". The Council has an adopted Statement of Community Involvement (SCI), this sets out how the public will be consulted on new planning policy and significant planning applications. This Statement of Consultation has been prepared to meet the requirements of the SCI, and also aims to reflect the intentions of Government planning guidance for reporting on community involvement in the plan making process.

This Statement of Consultation sets out the comments and representations made, and the response to them, in respect of Partnership Consultation Stage and the formal Public Participation Stage conducted by Halton Borough Council, in relation to the House Extensions SPD. This Statement of Consultation has been produced in accordance with Regulation 17 (1) and 18 (4) of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004.

The Partnership Consultation Stage took place between 13th June and 27th June 2006 and involved participation of key stakeholders with an interest in this particular document. The period of formal public participation on the draft House Extensions SPD was conducted between 14th September and 26th October 2006. The document was made available at various deposit locations throughout the Borough, along with a copy of the public notice of 'SPD Matters and Public Participation', Representations Forms, the Sustainability Appraisal Report and an explanatory letter. Each of the aforementioned documents was also made available on the Council website and in various formats upon request.

Statutory consultees (as outlined in Planning Policy Statement 12 - Local Development Frameworks, Appendix E) were consulted specifically via letter with an individual copy of the draft SPD attached. In addition, those individuals on the Council's Local Development Framework consultation database that had requested to be informed of the publication of the draft SPD were also sent a covering explanatory letter, a copy of the public notice of SPD Matters and Public Participation, and a Representation Form.

Partnership Consultation

Partnership consultation period: 13th June – 27th June 2006

Date of consideration of representations: 28th June 2005 - 30th June 2005

Note – All paragraph and page references relate to the numbers as set out in the partnership consultation draft

Consultee	Date comments received and how responded	Comments	Response
Alasdair Cross Planning & Policy Division Environmental & Regulatory Services	19/06/06 Written comments	Para. 1.5 - Change the second 'guidance' to 'document'.	This text has been amended.
		Application of the Policy – Change 'for the disabled' to 'for a disabled person'.	This text has been amended.
		Should there be an introduction to the Guiding Principles section?	Text has now been inserted to explain the Guiding Principles section.
		Para 2.1 – Change 'is aimed at promoting' to 'promotes'.	This text has been amended.
		Para.2.1 provide further information in relation to 'PPGs'.	This text has been amended.
		Para 2.2 is this section in relation to 'Securing the Future' relevant?	It is felt that this document still provides one of the overarching principles for all development (ie sustainable development).
		Diagram 2 – this doesn't do justice to how bad the 2 nd extension is. Consider altering the point of view.	Diagram has been amended.
		Diagram 4 – insert the word 'blank' to 'extended gable wall'.	Diagram has been amended.
		Diagram 9 – the diagram should be made clearer so that it shows 800mm on each side of the boundary.	Diagram has been amended.

Consultee	Date comments received and how responded	Comments	Response
Alasdair Cross Planning & Policy Division Environmental & Regulatory Services <i>Continued . . .</i>		Diagram 9 – as this text refers to semi-detached and terraced properties should the diagrams not also show a terrace or semi-detached property.	Diagram has been amended.
		Diagram 10 – this diagram should show room for 2 off road parking spaces.	Diagram has been amended.
		Section 5 –Should a policy to consider linked detached or the creation of linked detached properties be included?	The text in this section has been amended to include linked detached properties.
		Para. 7.3 bullet 1 – does this apply individually or cumulatively?	It is felt that the text contained in this bullet point is sufficient and a change has not been made.
		Para. 7.3 bullet 2 – could a diagram be included to show this?	Diagram to be included.
		Para 7.3 bullet 5 – insert ‘to’ between ‘extend’ and ‘the’.	This text has been amended.
		Para 7.3 bullet 5 – insert reference to diagram 14.	This text has been amended.
		Para. 8.3 – would it be appropriate to say that ‘where space is tight the use of roller or sectional garage doors that require less room may be more appropriate than ‘up and over’ doors.	This text has been amended.
		Diagram 15 – should be amended to show the distance from the garage rather than the porch.	Diagram has been amended.
		Para. 11.3 – this paragraph should be rephrased for clarity.	This text has been amended.

Consultee	Date comments received and how responded	Comments	Response
Alasdair Cross Planning & Policy Division Environmental & Regulatory Services <i>Continued . . .</i>		Para. 11.4 – The old SPG had a useful example of a block plan highlighting key information required should this also be included.	Diagram to be included.
Neil Macfarlane Planning & Policy Division Environmental & Regulatory Services	14/06/06 Written comments	Para. 8.5 – is the term ‘property boundary’ correct as this suggests a garden wall or fence should be 300mm clear of the highway boundary.	This is the correct terminology.
		Para. 9.2 – how will this principle work for areas where a covenant states that gardens can not be enclosed?	It is felt that many such covenant would relate to front gardens and in this case would not be included within this principle.
		Para. 10.5 – Contact details should be referred to or included here.	Contact details have now been included.
		Para. 11.3 – Amend address.	Address amended
		Section 11 blue box – should this also refer to building control as there are likely to be extensions that do not require planning but may need building control.	Further text inserted in relation to building control.
		Para 11.4 bullet 1 – Provide further detail as to what a ‘set’ is.	Further detail has been included.
		Para 11.4 bullet 2 – Should this be changed from ‘A’ to ‘4’ location plans.	This text has been amended.
		Para 11.4 bullet 2 – Should this also make clear that the plan must be OS based and include at least 2 street names?	This text has been amended to include OS based however, it not felt necessary to require 2 street names.

Consultee	Date comments received and how responded	Comments	Response
Neil Macfarlane Planning & Policy Division Environmental & Regulatory Services <i>Continued . . .</i>		Para 11.4 bullet 3 & 4 – should further information be given as to how many plans should be included?	This text has been amended.
		Para 11.4 bullet final bullet – should this state ‘a signed and dated copy’ of the correct certificate and should it also make reference to the possible need to notify the owners?	This text has been amended.
		Local Information Section – refer to development control website before forward planning.	This text has been amended.
Dave Tierney Building Control Division Environmental & Regulatory Services	14/06/06 by email	The SPD needs to give further consideration to window design in relation to extensions & loft conversions.	Further text has been added to both section 2 and 11 in relation to the need to consider building regulation requirements.
Phil Watts Environmental & Regulatory Services	14/06/06 by email	There should be an agreed format for the Local Information Section i.e. Joanne Dutton - Senior Planning Officer, Planning And Policy Division, Environmental And Regulatory Services John White - Tree and Woodlands Officer, Landscape Division, Environmental And Regulatory Services	This text has been amended.
Steve Williams Housing Strategy Policy & Support Department	22/06/06 by phone	Generally happy with this document.	Acknowledged no change needed.

Consultee	Date comments received and how responded	Comments	Response
Steve Williams Housing Strategy Policy & Support Department <i>Continued . . .</i>		Some concern over the 45-degree rule, which may restrict some of the house extensions that are required for those who are less able.	The 45-degree rule is felt to be important in terms of general amenity for neighbouring properties. However, exceptions may be made for those who are less able as set out in section I of the SPD.

Public Consultation

Public Consultation period: 14th September – 26th October 2006

Date of consideration of representations: 30th October – 3rd November 2005

Note – All paragraph and page references relate to the numbers as set out in the partnership consultation draft

Consultee	Date comments received and how responded	Comments	Response
Diane Kisiel The Highways Agency	22/09/06 by email	The Highways Agency has no specific comments to make on these SPDs.	Acknowledged.
Rex Merry Consultant Building Surveyor	13/10/06 Representation Form	Page 6 – No reference is made regarding minimum distance to pavement or highway.	Although no reference is made on page 6 there is a section in relation to the streetscene on pages 3 & 4 and within paragraph 8.6.
		Page 7 – Should the setting back of 1 metre from the front main dwelling not refer to the first floor only?	No, the text on page 7 is felt to be correct.
		Page 7 – If you insist on 800mm distance to side boundary then this will rule out 99% of all first floor side extensions to semi detached dwellings: is this what you want to achieve?	The text in relation to the 800mm distance is felt to be appropriate and is intended to prevent terracing. This remains appropriate with regard to semi-detached properties.
		Page 7 – if there is an existing ground floor garage to the side elevation, will a first floor over have to be set back 800 from side boundary. If so this will cause a very difficult construction problem. Page 10 – Under 7.3 you state that the face of the dormer should be set back 1 metre from the main wall, but diagram 14 shows it level. Which is correct and	The text in relation to the 800mm distance is felt to be appropriate and is intended to prevent terracing. This remains appropriate with regard to properties with ground floor garages. Both diagrams 14 & 15 will be amended to better reflect the text in para 7.3. As stated within para. 7.3 the text in the bullet points relate to dormers on either

Consultee	Date comments received and how responded	Comments	Response
Rex Merry Consultant Building Surveyor <i>Continued . . .</i>		do you intend the same to both front and rear elevations. Page 11 – Diagram 16: up and over garage doors do not stick out as far as shown.	the front or rear elevation. It should be noted that the diagrams are illustrative. Text will be added to ensure that this is made clear within the document.
		General comment – permitted development rights which do not require planning permission should be clearly shown at beginning of document to avoid confusion to any member of the public.	It is felt that including information in relation to permitted development rights would be too confusing to public and it would be more appropriate to encourage the public to speak to a planning officer to find out whether they require permission, as set out in Section 11 of the SPD. However, reference will be added to the DCLG document ‘Planning – A guide for Householders – What you need to know about the Planning System’, as this provides more information about permitted development.
Helen Barrett Environment Agency	19/10/06 by letter	We support the proposed SPD and would like to make the following comments on the document.	Acknowledged.
		The Environment Agency would only have concerns with this type of development when it lies within an area at risk of flooding or where it falls within main river bye law distance.	Acknowledged.

Consultee	Date comments received and how responded	Comments	Response
Helen Barrett Environment Agency <i>Continued . . .</i>		<p>The Environment Agency recommends that in areas at risk of flooding, consideration be given to the incorporation into the design and construction of the development of flood proofing measures. Additional guidance can be found on the environment Agency website: www.environment-agency.gov.uk</p> <p>We would also recommend that floor levels are set no lower.</p>	<p>Further text in relation to this issue will be added to Section 10 of the SPD.</p>
		<p>Under the terms of the Water Resources Act 1991 and the Land Drainage Byelaws, the prior written consent of the Agency is required for any proposed works or structures either affecting or within the 8 metres of the tidal or fluvial flood defences.</p>	<p>Further text in relation to this issue will be added to Section 10 of the SPD.</p>
Paul Entwistle NWRA	19/10/06 by letter & email	<p>The NWRA are responsible for the production of the Regional Spatial Strategy for the North West of England. I note that the draft SPD as identified both the relevant Adopted RSS (RPG13) policy and its Submitted Draft RSS counterpart. I am therefore satisfied that the RSS has been given due consideration on preparation of the SPD. I also note that the Adopted RSS and the Submitted Draft</p>	<p>Acknowledged.</p>

Consultee	Date comments received and how responded	Comments	Response
		RSS have also been given recognition in the accompanying Sustainability Appraisal.	
		I would like to take the opportunity to draw your attention to the NWRA North West Best Practice Design Guide, which while offering broad guidance on design issues, also has specific chapters on considering the needs of disabled people, integrating development with the historical environment and retaining and integrating development into the character of an area, all of which maybe of some relevance to the Draft House Extensions SPD.	Acknowledged.
Dianne Wheatley GONW	23/10/06 by email	It [House Extensions SPD] was well set out with a good comprehensive structure and helpful use of illustrations to aid understanding by the reader.	Acknowledged.
		Consider the need for Appropriate Assessment as well as SA: recent draft guidance from DCLG should assist.	An Appropriate Assessment has been completed alongside the House Extension SPD.
David Hardman United Utilities	24/10/06 by fax	Section 11: The Planning Application United Utilities receive many enquiries from members of the public who have obtained planning permission for a house	Further text in relation to this issue will be added to Section 10 of the SPD.

Consultee	Date comments received and how responded	Comments	Response
		<p>extension and then under building regulations the building control officer stops them working as they are building near a public sewer.</p> <p>It is the applicants responsibility to check for the presence of underground utility services and it would be helpful if they were reminded of this at the planning application stage.</p> <p>Perhaps on page 15, para 11.5, the bullet point 'a covering letter with any other relevant information in support of your application' could be extended to 'confirming that you have checked for the presence of underground utility services.'</p>	
Janet Belfield Natural England	25/10/06 by letter	<p>The subject matter of this SPD does not directly affect our environmental interests, but we have the following comments to make. We would appreciate a paragraph within section 10 of the draft SPD in relation to protected species. This would be a valuable opportunity to draw attention to the fact that extensions where roof alterations are included can have an impact on protected species, such as bats, where they may occupy roof</p>	Further text in relation to this issue will be added to Section 10 of the SPD.

Consultee	Date comments received and how responded	Comments	Response
Janet Belfield Natural England Continued . . .		<p>spaces.</p> <p>We ask if you would include the paragraph as follows: <i>Species such as bats, which use roof spaces as roost or hibernation sites, and birds which nest under the eaves of buildings are protected from harm by law. Applications for development that involve alterations to existing roof spaces, listed buildings, pre-1939 houses, barns or other traditional buildings and, any work involving disturbance to trees or hedges may have an impact upon protected species. If the presence of bats or birds is suspected then an application may need to include a survey report, together with details of mitigation measures to safeguard the protected a species from the adverse effects of the development. The Council may impose planning conditions or obligations on planning permissions to ensure that these measures are implemented. Such measures may include, for example, avoiding carrying out any work during the bird breeding season, or the inclusion of artificial nest boxes as part of the development. The Council may refuse permission for developments where inadequate survey and mitigation details are included</i></p>	

Consultee	Date comments received and how responded	Comments	Response
		<p><i>with an application.</i> <i>For further information please visit the Natural England website:</i> www.naturalengland.org.uk</p>	
<p>Roy Stopford Walton Parish Clerk</p>	<p>03/11/06 by email</p>	<p>Walton Parish Council would thank you for extending the opportunity to comment but have no comment to make in respect of this matter.</p>	<p>Acknowledged.</p>





House Extensions

Supplementary Planning Document

Sustainability Appraisal
December 2006



Halton Borough Council

House Extensions

Sustainability Appraisal Report

December 2006

Environmental & Regulatory Services
Environment Directorate
Halton Borough Council
Rutland House
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Contents

1 Summary and outcomes

- Non-technical summary
- Statement on the difference the process has made

2 Sustainability appraisal rationale

- Approach adopted to the SA
- When the SA was carried out?
- Who carried out the SA?
- Who was consulted, when and how?

3 Background

- Purpose of the SA process and the SA Report
- Purpose of the House Extensions Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)
- Compliance with the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive/Regulations

4 Sustainability objectives, baseline and context

- Links to other strategies, plans and programmes and sustainability objectives
- Description of the social, environmental and economic baseline characteristics and the predicted future baseline
- Difficulties in collecting data and limitations of the data
- The SA framework, including objectives, targets and indicators
- Main social, environmental and economic issues and problems identified

5 Plan issues and options

- Main strategic options considered and how they were identified
- How social, environmental and economic issues were considered in comparing the options and choosing the preferred option.
- Other options considered, and why these were rejected

- Proposed mitigation measures

6 Assessment of the social, environmental and economic effects of the House Extensions SPD.

- Significant social, environmental and economic effects of the SPD
- Consideration of social, environmental and economic problems in developing the SPD
- Proposed mitigation measures
- Uncertainties and risks

7 Implementation

- Links to other tiers of plans and programmes and the project level
- Proposals for monitoring

Appendices

- A Sustainability Appraisal Framework (SAF)
- B Statement of Consultation: Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Sustainability Assessment (SA) process
- C SA of the House Extensions SPD - Determination Statement
- D Testing the purpose of the SPD against the SAF
- E Options considered for delivering the purpose of proposed SPD
- F Further Information

I Summary and outcomes

Non-technical summary

- 1.1 This document contains the information relating to the appraisal of the House Extensions Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) in relation to how it contributes to meeting environmental, social and economic objectives. Put simpler, this document assesses how the SPD contributes towards achieving development that ensures a better quality of life for everyone, now and for future generations. The technical name for this document is a Sustainability Appraisal or SA for short. The SA is required to be produced because of new government guidance and legislation relating to the planning system.
- 1.2 The objectives that are used to test whether the House Extensions SPD contributes towards achieving sustainability have been taken from the information gathered during the production of the Core Strategy SA and from other documents that identify the sustainability priorities of the local community. The main source of these objectives is the Community Strategy, produced by the Halton Strategic Partnership in consultation with the people of Halton, which was based on a new State of the Borough Report and a telephone survey of residents.
- 1.3 The objectives that are used to test the sustainability of the SPD are set out in a table (Appendix A), this table is called the Sustainability Appraisal Framework (SAF). This table sets out how the Council will measure each of the objectives to see if quality of life in Halton is improving. Earlier this year, in advance of producing the full SA, the Council asked a number of bodies if they agreed with the objectives that we included in the SAF. These bodies agreed with us, all their comments and how the Council responded is set out in Appendix B.
- 1.4 At the same time as asking these bodies about the SAF, we also asked if they agreed with us if we needed to produce a Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA) of the SPD. The SEA is like an SA but looks in more detail at the effects that the SPD could have on the environment. SEA is required by a European Directive on plans and programs that could have a significant effect on the environment. The Council made an initial screening of whether a full SEA was needed to be produced, and decided it was not. The bodies agreed with us. This decision has been set out in the House Extensions SPD – Statement of Determination, which can be found in Appendix C.
- 1.5 The Council then tested the SPD against the objectives in SAF, to appraise if the SPD contributes to achieving sustainability. This is set out in a table (Appendix D). The appraisal recognises that the SPD is supplementary policy and will not make dramatic changes to the way that we live, but will make small changes to the way buildings and places are designed. Therefore, the SPD will not significantly affect any of the environmental, social or economic objectives set out in the SAF.
- 1.6 The SA of the draft SPD was published to accompany the six week period of public participation on the document that it related to and comments were sought on its content. This presented an opportunity for individuals and organisations (including the statutory agencies) to identify if the appraisal had missed something out, or hadn't properly realised the effect that the draft SPD could have on a particular objective. Although comments were received in relation to the SPD, there were no comments made in direct

relation to the SA of the draft document.

sustainability. The SA process has made a real difference to help ensure a quality end product.

- 1.7 Overall, the appraisal shows that the SPD will have a positive effect upon contributing towards achieving sustainability, but there are several objectives that are difficult to test the SPD against because the Council is unsure how the SPD will affect those objectives. The appraisal also tells us that the positive effects will mainly only be seen in the longer term because the SPD will make gradual changes to places over many years as new development happens. Sources of further information about the process and purpose of Sustainability Appraisals can be found in appendix F.

Statement on the difference the process has made

- 1.8 Although the scope of the SPD is not significant, it is supplementary policy, providing practical guidance in relation to policies contained within Halton Unitary Development Plan (UDP), the SA process has made a valuable contribution to the process of producing the SPD. Firstly, it focused attention at the pre-production scoping stage to identify the key areas that the SPD needed to address. This was achieved through the analysis of baseline information. This process has helped to shape the purpose of the SPD, which has provided a strong foundation upon which the rest of the SPD has been constructed.
- 1.9 By testing the SPD against the SAF it has helped to recognise the limitations of the SPD and how these might be overcome through additional planning policies or by other means (such as the need for better training within the planning section to understand 'design' better). The 'testing' process has also helped create a sharper more responsive SPD focused upon its purpose and contributing to achieving

2 Sustainability Appraisal Rationale

Approach taken

- 2.1 The methodology selected to be applied within this Sustainability Appraisal (SA) has been chosen to ensure that the SPD, and the Local Development Framework (LDF) as a whole, is tested against the most appropriate sustainability criteria.
- 2.2 SA is fundamentally based on an objectives-led approach whereby the potential impacts of a plan are gauged in relation to a series of objectives for sustainable development. In other words, the objectives provide a methodological yardstick against which to assess the effects of the SPD. The Sustainability Appraisal Framework (SAF) – as the Guidance refers to it – consists of objectives and associated targets and indicators, the SAF is set out Appendix A.
- 2.3 The methodology of the SA has therefore been drawn from the information collected during the production of the LDF and the priorities, objectives and targets of other documents such as the Community Strategy, the sub-regionally agreed Merseyside objectives and the regional sustainability framework – ‘Action for Sustainability’. This approach has been agreed by both the Council and the Statutory Environmental Bodies and has been used for earlier SAs, which have assessed earlier SPDs. However, the SAF used in these earlier documents has now been updated using the information collected as part of the production of the Core Strategy.
- 2.4 It is our intention that the objectives, targets and indicators that form the SAF within this document will be broadly consistent throughout all future SAs that the Council undertakes. However, as the SAF evolves there may be situations that require the framework to be reviewed. These situations could

include:

- a new baseline information emerging that better reflects the current objectives in the sustainability framework,
- b changes to the objectives in the sustainability framework, and
- c direction from a consultation body that information within the framework needs amending, such as through consultation on this SA Report.

When the SA was carried out?

- 2.5 The SA process began in January 2006 with the production of the SA Scoping Report; this document was consulted upon between Thursday 6th April 2006 and Thursday 11th May 2006. The responses to the Scoping Report were considered and have informed and lead to the production of the SA to accompany the draft SPD. The draft SPD and the accompanying SA were consulted upon for a period of six weeks between 14th September and 26th October 2006. This has now lead to the production of this final SA Report to accompany the publication of the adopted House Extensions SPD.

Who carried out the SA?

- 2.6 Halton Borough Council has conducted the entire process of the production of the SA, with consultation at the appropriate stages with statutory consultation bodies (for the SA and SEA process) and other stakeholders as necessary. This approach was felt to be commensurate to the intended purpose of the SPD. Responses to the Scoping Report, particularly those from the statutory consultation bodies, acknowledged the scope of the SPD and did not raise any significant issues that would deem it necessary for the SA to

be produced externally / more independently.

Who was consulted, when and how?

2.7 The scope of the SA was formally consulted upon between Thursday 6th April 2006 and Thursday 11th May 2006. The consultation was targeted at those who the Council felt were best placed to further shape the SA process and the purpose of the SPD. A consultation of SA, which accompanied the draft SPD was carried out during the six week public participation period between 14th September and 26th October 2006. A list of those consulted, their comments and the how these have been addressed in the SA is contained in Appendix B.

3 Background

Purpose of the SA process and the SA Report

3.1 The House Extensions SPD will form part of the Halton Local Development Framework (LDF). This document will not form part of the Statutory Development Plan for Halton. To be able to be formally adopted as part of the Halton LDF, the process of forming the SPD must comply with Part Five of The Town and Country (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004. Part five requires the production of a SA for SPDs. The purpose of preparing a SA is to encourage sustainable development, through improved integration of sustainability considerations throughout the preparation and adoption of land use plans and policies.

Purpose of House Extensions SPD

3.2 The purpose of the House Extensions SPD is to complement the Halton Unitary Development Plan (UDP), by providing additional guidance for anyone intending to extend or alter their house or erect a garage or other outbuilding to ensure that all developments:

- a are of exemplary design quality and that any extensions do not spoil the character of the original dwelling, but relate closely to it and harmonise with the existing house in its scale, proportions, materials and appearance;
- b protect residential amenity of neighbouring properties;
- c protect and enhance the built and natural environment;
- d preserve the essential character of the street and surrounding area;
- e avoid the creation of dangerous highway conditions; and
- f safeguard the provision of a reasonable private garden space.

3.3 The geographical coverage of the SPD is therefore borough wide.

Compliance with the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Regulations

3.4 In accordance with the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulation 2004, the SA Scoping Report included a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) screening statement. The Council's intermediate determination of the statement was that the SPD was unlikely to have a significant environmental effect and accordingly does not require a SEA to be produced. The four statutory agencies (English Nature, Environment Agency, English Heritage and Countryside Agency) were consulted as part of the pre-production scoping stage and they agreed with the Council's determination, their comments are set out in Appendix B.

3.5 Therefore a formal determination can be made that the House Extensions Supplementary Planning Document is unlikely to have significant environment effects and accordingly does not require a Strategic Environmental Assessment. This decision has been set out in the House Extensions SPD – Statement of Determination, which can be found in Appendix C.

4 Sustainability objectives, baseline and context

Relationship to other relevant plans and programmes

4.1 In producing the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) Scoping Report for the Core Strategy the Council considered a large number of relevant plans, policies and programmes. However, in relation to the SPD a smaller number of documents with a specific relationship to housing and house extensions have been identified.

National Planning Statements

4.2 Government guidance in **Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 1: Creating Sustainable Communities**, states "Planning authorities should plan positively for high quality design." Good design should contribute positively to making places better for people. Design which is inappropriate in its context should not be accepted.

4.3 **PPS3: Housing**, promotes the creation of high quality housing that is well designed and built to a high standard. It highlights the need for places, streets and spaces which meet the needs of people, which are attractive, have their own distinctive identity, and positively improve local character. It also promotes the use of designs and layouts that are inclusive, safe, take account of public health, crime prevention and community safety, ensure adequate natural surveillance and make space for water where there is flood risk.

4.4 **'Better Places to Live: A Companion Guide to PPG3: By Design'** published by the DETR in 2000 provides specific urban design advice to help deliver the objectives of PPG3. This companion guide considers the principles of urban design and the features of urban form, together with

advice on the design and layout of successful residential housing developments, such as understanding character, privacy, orientation and safety.

4.5 Additional good practice guidelines include the Department for Local Government and Communities (DCLG) document **'Planning – A Guide for Householders – What you need to know about the planning system'** (2006). Advice contained in this document state that a well-designed building or extension is likely to be much more attractive to you and to your neighbours and it is also likely to add value to your house when you sell it. The guidance for householders specifically suggests that extensions often look better if they use the same materials and are in a similar style to the existing buildings and in some instances the Council's design guides or advisory leaflets may help you or you may wish to consider using a suitably qualified, skilled and experienced designer.

Regional Spatial Strategy & Sustainability Framework

4.6 One of the core principles of Regional Planning for the North West (RPG13), which is now by virtue of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS), is good design. Policy DP3 states that 'new development must demonstrate good design quality and respect for its setting'. It goes on to state that local authorities should set out guidance that ensures more innovative design to create a high-quality living and working environment, especially in housing terms, which incorporates: more efficient use of energy and materials; more eco-friendly and adaptable buildings; sustainable drainage systems; community safety and

'designing out' of crime; and appropriate parking provision and best practice in the application of highway standards.

- 4.7 Policy DPI of the Draft RSS (2006) states that all proposals and schemes must demonstrate excellent design quality, sustainable construction, efficiency in resource use and respect for their physical and natural setting.
- 4.8 Action for Sustainability is the North West Regional Sustainability Framework, produced by the North West Regional Assembly (NWRA), the main goal of the framework is to improve the quality of life within the region.

Unitary Development Plan

- 4.9 The Halton Unitary Development Plan (UDP), which was adopted in April 2005, contains a number of strategic aims and objectives. These are set out in Part I of the UDP. In relation to environmental quality, these include creating a safe and healthy Halton, and ensuring that future development is of a quality of design that enhances the built environment and encourages the use of energy efficient design. At the centre of these strategic aims and objectives is the desire of the Council to create sustainable places that all people will want to live and work within.
- 4.10 Part 2 of the UDP contains policies that seek to implement the broad aims and objectives contained within Part I of the UDP Plan. The SPD is intended to support Policy H6, which states that proposals for house extensions will be permitted where:
 - a the proposal would not unacceptably alter the appearance or character of the original dwelling but relate closely to it and harmonise with it in terms of their scale, proportions, materials and appearance;
 - b the proposal would not create dangerous highway conditions by

obstructing visibility for pedestrians or drivers of motor vehicles; and

- c Reasonable private garden space is provided for use by the residents of the extended property

- 4.11 The UDP was subject to a SA at two key stages in its production. These were the UDP First Deposit and Second (Revised) Deposit stages. This process has helped to ensure that the policies that this SPD is based upon contribute towards achieving sustainable development.

Community Strategy & Corporate Plan

- 4.12 The SPD has been produced to contribute to the priorities, principles, objectives and targets of the Halton Community Strategy (2006). This strategy co-ordinates the resources of the local public, private and voluntary organisations towards common purposes.
- 4.13 Two of the main priorities set out in this strategy cover issues that have been raised in the SPD, within the priority to *Halton's urban renewal* one of the objectives to support and sustain thriving neighbourhoods and open spaces that meet peoples expectations and add to their enjoyment of life. Within the priority to *a Safer Halton* one of the objectives is to create and sustain better neighbourhoods that are well designed, well built, well maintained and valued by the people who live in them, reflecting the priorities of residents to improve public perceptions and attractiveness.
- 4.14 Halton Borough Council is signed up and committed to contributing to achieving the priorities of the Community Strategy. The Council's priorities are set out in the Corporate Plan. This plan also has five priorities, including 'safe and attractive neighbourhoods' and 'promoting urban renewal'.

4.15 The SPD has been produced to help meet this target and others set out within the Council's Corporate Plan. The priorities in the Community Strategy and the Corporate Plan are based on the priorities set by the people of Halton. These were identified through community involvement via area panels, focus groups, and a telephone questionnaire. The Corporate Plan was based on the same community involvement and statistical information compiled for the State Of Borough Report, 2005.

Baseline Information

4.16 The baseline information for this SPD can be put into two categories. Firstly, information relating to specific housing and house extension issues that will be covered by the SPD; and secondly, other generic sustainability baseline information that is consistently applied as a baseline to all appraisals within Halton and that was collected as part of the production of the SA of the Core Strategy.

Residential Issues

4.17 The composition of the population in Halton in terms of age and household size is also changing, with the following points being particularly relevant for housing taken from the 2001 census:

- The number of households has increased by 3,000 from 45,857 in 1991 (although the Council's own council tax records suggest an increase of nearly 6,000 to 51,000);
- The over 75-year-old group has increased by 17%;
- The average household size has fallen from 2.8 in 1991 to 2.44 in 2001; and
- The proportion of single person households has increased from 22.7% to 27% over the same period.

4.18 Additional Population and housing baseline information taken from the

2001 census is set out below:

Household Composition 2001

- One person households 27.3%
- Couples with no children 16.5%
- One parent families with children 13.6%
- Families with children 30.5%

Housing Tenure

- Total dwellings 2004 51,855
- Private 71.9%
- Council 12.9%
- Housing Association 15.2%

Housing Type 2001

- Detached 19.2%
- Semi detached 33.0%
- Terraced 37.5%
- Other (flats etc.) 10.3%

Generic sustainability baseline information

4.19 The Council has identified a range of generic sustainability baseline information that it feels needs to be considered by all SA applied to land use plans and policies. This baseline information can be found in Appendix 2 of the Core Strategy SA Scoping Report. The key elements of this baseline information have been included within the Sustainability Appraisal Framework (SAF), which can be found in Appendix A.

Predicted future baseline information

4.20 The current generic baseline information will continue to be used until such a time as it is felt a review of the baseline is required. Situations that may require the baseline information to be reviewed could include

- a new baseline information emerging that better reflects the current objectives in the sustainability framework,
- b changes to the objectives in the sustainability framework, and
- c direction from a consultation body that baseline information needs

amending.

- 4.21 It is felt that the current generic baseline information represents a competent rational for assessing the sustainability issues that are relevant to Halton and the wider area, specific baseline information to assess the effect of the SPD.

Difficulties in collecting data and limitations of the data

- 4.22 Ideally the baseline information, found in Appendix 2 of the Core Strategy SA Scoping Report and in the SAF (Appendix A of this document), should relate to 2006, unfortunately due to the time it takes to collate data this has not been possible in many cases. As far as possible the most up date information has been used for each set of data provided.

- 4.23 The information tables also contain some omissions because, in some cases, it has not been possible to establish the most appropriate targets, figures or sources. Some difficulties in collecting data have also been associated with the reliance on external bodies to collect the data. For example, where external bodies have collected data for their own purposes, in the future the data may not be available, or not available in the same format, in order to make reliable comparisons. Where possible the Council will look to overcome these problems by including information that is known to be collected by the Council or will be collected by the Council in the future. This may require further monitoring and data collection to be undertaken in the future.

- 4.24 It should be noted that the baseline information, found in Appendix 2 of the Core Strategy SA Scoping Report, represents a 'work in progress' in the sense that it will be added to / amended as new indicators / sources of baseline information come to the attention of the Council.

Sustainability Issues

- 4.25 In determining an appropriate SA approach to apply to this SPD, it is important to draw upon sources that identify those sustainability issues that are relevant to Halton and the wider area. This can be achieved by identifying issues that are based upon sound quantitative analysis; and / or involved extensive community participation.

- 4.26 The key sustainability issues for Halton and the wider area include:

- **Unemployment** - 'Halton: Gateway to Prosperity' 2005-2008
- **Disparity in employment** - 'Halton: Gateway to Prosperity' 2005-2008
- **Access to Employment** - State of the North West Economy (Sub-regional Report) (Oct 2004)
- **The need to raise the levels of education & skills** - The State of the Borough (Jan 2005)
- **The need to foster enterprise and entrepreneurship** - The State of the Borough (Jan 2005)
- **Reliance on a narrow economic base and low wage economy** - 'Halton: Gateway to Prosperity' 2005-2008
- **The need to improve the Economy** - The State of the Borough (Jan 2005)
- **The need to revitalise the Town Centres** - Community Strategy (2006)
- **The image of the Borough** - 'Halton: Gateway to Prosperity' 2005-2008
- **The need to improve health & life expectancy** - North West Public Health Observatory & Community Strategy (2006)
- **Long-term ill** - 2001 Census & Community Strategy (2006)
- **Ageing residents & the need to grow the health-care sector** - Department of Health

- **Perception of crime levels and fear of crime** - 'Quality of Life Survey' of 1999
- **Increased demand for affordable housing** - Land Registry and Housing Needs Study
- **Providing an appropriate and balanced housing supply** – Draft Housing Strategy 2005/06 to 2007/08
- **Providing appropriate sites to meet the needs of Gypsies and Travellers** - Circular 01-2006 'Planning for Gypsy and Traveller Caravan Sites'
- **Improve access to Services from the East of Runcorn** – Local Transport Plan 2
- **Improve access to Services in Widnes** – Local Transport Plan 2
- **Improve access to Services to those who do not own cars**
- **Community facilities**
- **Amount, location and access to Recreational Space** - PMP Open Space study
- **Population** - Nomis
- **Deprivation** - 2004 Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)
- **Water quality** - Environment Agency
- **Conserving biodiversity, habitats and species**- Securing The Future - Delivering UK Sustainable Development Strategy
- **SSSI** - English Nature, April 2005
- **Waste Management** - Halton's Waste Management Strategy 2004
- **Transport congestion & pollution** – Local Transport Plan 2
- **Air Quality** – Local Transport Plan 2
- **Design quality in development** - Housing Audit (CABE, 2005)
- **Protecting cultural & built heritage** – English Heritage (2005)
- **Obtaining energy from renewable sources** - Securing The Future - Delivering UK Sustainable Development Strategy
- **Requiring energy efficiency improvements** - Securing The Future - Delivering UK Sustainable Development Strategy
- **Ensuring the most effective use of land** – Draft RSS (2006)
- **Water resources** - Securing The Future - Delivering UK Sustainable Development Strategy
- **Climate change** - Securing The Future - Delivering UK Sustainable Development Strategy
- **Industrial legacy** - Community Strategy (2006)

4.27 The issues highlighted blue are those issues which are considered to be of particular importance with regard to the House Extensions SPD

5 Plan issues and options

Main strategic options considered and how they were identified

5.1 Three strategic options for delivering the purpose of the SPD were considered. These were identified and considered as part of the Housing Extensions SA Scoping Report. This approach was taken as it was felt important that before the Council resources were committed to progressing the policy response selected to deliver the intended purpose of the SPD, the option selected was:

- a based on which would address the issues identified in the scoping report;
- b most likely to contribute to achieving sustainable development, and
- c supported by the statutory consultation bodies and other stakeholders.

5.2 In summary, the options considered during the pre-production scoping stage were identified based on the preliminary purpose and geographical coverage of the intended SPD. Significantly the coverage of the SPD is borough wide and does not directly relate to an identified geographical area. The preliminary purpose and coverage were consulted upon, and neither has been amended as a result of responses to the SA Scoping Report consultation exercise, however, the purpose of the SPD has been slightly amended to reflect changes made during the drafting of the SPD. The comments received in relation to the Pre-Production Scoping Report consultation and the Council's responses are contained in Appendix B.

5.3 The preferred option identified and selected in the Scoping Report is the option appraised within this SA. For comprehensiveness the options

considered at that stage in the process are contained in Appendix E.

How social, environmental and economic issues were considered in comparing the options and choosing the preferred option.

5.4 As stated in 5.1 the purpose and coverage of the intended SPD were tested as part of the Scoping Report, with only minor amendments to the purpose through this consultation exercise. The report included the formal screening exercise required by Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) regulations. This exercise made an initial assessment of the characteristics of the proposed SPD, and its (environmental) effects, and of the area likely to be affected by it. This assessment demonstrated that the purpose and coverage of SPD would not have a significant environmental effect.

5.5 This process also contributed to identifying the limited scope of the SPD, that it will only provide additional practical guidance to policies that have already been scrutinised and consulted upon through the plan making process, which are adopted in the Unitary Development Plan (UDP). This recognised that the UDP itself had been through the Sustainability Appraisal process. The screening process identified that the purpose of the SPD is to promote sustainable development by creating a more pleasant, healthier and safer environment. The statutory SEA bodies and other stakeholders have agreed with the Council's conclusions during the screening process.

5.6 The preferred option for delivering the purpose of the intended SPD has been established and tested through the Scoping Report, it is recognised as contributing to achieving sustainability

and that its scope is only to provide additional practical guidance. This is felt to represent a sufficient scrutiny of comparison of the options identified. It also establishes that the preferred option that has been selected is commensurate to the scope of the intended SPD.

Other options considered, and why these were rejected

5.7 This was established and consulted upon as part of the Scoping Report. The relevant extract is contained in Appendix E.

Proposed mitigation measures

5.8 No proposed mitigation measures were considered necessary at this stage in the process, because of the scope of the SPD and its purpose of providing supplementary practical guidance to the adopted UDP.

6 Assessment of the social, environmental and economic effects of the House Extensions SPD

Significant sustainability effects of the SPD

- 6.1 The Scoping Report, which incorporated the formal SEA screening statement, established that the intended SPD was unlikely to have a significant environmental effect. Additionally, the screening statement established that the intended scope of the SPD will be to provide additional practical guidance to policies within the adopted UDP. Within the context of this, an assessment of the likely social, environmental and economic effects can be made to accompany the House Extensions SPD, this is set out in Appendix D.
- 6.2 The assessment tests the likely effects that the SPD will have on the social, environmental and economic objectives, indicators and targets set out within the Sustainability Appraisal Framework (SAF). These objectives, indicators and targets have been derived from the Community Strategy, the sub-regionally agreed Merseyside objectives and the regional sustainability framework – ‘Action for Sustainability’. This will ensure that the SPD is tested against local, sub-regional and regional priorities. The SAF was established in the Scoping Report and is contained in Appendix A.

Consideration of sustainability issues in developing the SPD

- 6.3 The pre-production stage enabled the identification of the social, environmental and economic issues relevant to Halton and to the purpose of the SPD, this was mostly through the collection and analysis of baseline information. This process influenced the preliminary purpose of the SPD (which

has now been slightly amended during the drafting of the SPD) and the preferred option to achieve its delivery. Additionally, the approach taken in relation to the SA, was also identified. These issues were ‘tested’ and consulted upon through the Scoping Report consultation. The outcome of this consultation led to the production of the SPD which has continued to take into account the relevant social, environmental and economic problems that can be addressed through the purpose of the SPD.

Proposed mitigation measures

- 6.4 No proposed mitigation measures were considered necessary after the testing of the SPD against the objectives contained within the SAF because the assessment did not identify any issues that could be suitably mitigated for. Additionally, the scope of the SPD and its purpose of providing supplementary practical guidance to the adopted UDP means that necessary policy checks are in place that afford greater protection to areas such as protected wildlife habitat, which the SPD is supplementary to.

Uncertainties and risks

- 6.5 The assessment of the likely effects that the SPD will have on the social, environmental and economic objectives (as set out in Appendix D) identified that the effect of the SPD on a number of objectives was difficult to determine. This creates a degree of uncertainty in relation to the effects of the SPD. Additionally, the incremental cumulative nature of the changes that the SPD will make to places is difficult to test and predict against the objectives in the SAF.

7 Implementation

Links to other tiers of plans and programmes and the project level

7.1 The strategy for implementation of the SPD, once adopted as a formal SPD will include Council Officer training in relation to the guidance set out in the SPD. This is to ensure that its purpose is achieved more consistently across the Borough. The SPD will also be actively signposted by relevant Officers to ensure that the general public and the development industry is fully aware of the content of the SPD, and take it into account within their proposals.

Proposals for monitoring

7.2 The objectives, targets and indicators contained within the SAF will be monitored as part of the Council's Annual Monitoring Report. This will bring together the monitored data from their source, such as the Regional Sustainable Development Framework for the North West monitoring report, and collect data deficits where appropriate.

Appendix A: Sustainability Appraisal Framework

	Objective	SEA Directive	Detailed Criteria	Indicator	Target	Baseline Data
Economic	1. To continue reducing the unemployment rate in Halton and increase the economic activity rate	Social inclusiveness Economic development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will it encourage new employment that is consistent with local needs? 	Population employment in and unemployment	To bring Halton's employment and unemployment rates in line with England and Wales rate by 2021.	40% of people aged 16-74 in Halton are economically active and in full time employment, whilst 4.5% are economically active and unemployed. Compared to 40.6% of people aged 16-74 in England & Wales who are economically active and in full time employment with 3.4% economically active and unemployed. (Source: Office of National Statistics, April 2001)
				Job Density	To bring Halton's job density in line with England and Wales densities by 2016.	The 2003 job density, the ratio between total jobs to working age people, in Halton (0.76) is lower than the regional (0.81) and national average (0.83). (Source: Nomis)
	2. To improve educational attainment and opportunities for life long learning and employment	Social inclusiveness Economic development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will it provide improved access to vocational training, education and skills for young people? Will it provide improved skills and knowledge in the workplace? 	% of 15 yr olds achieving five or more GCSE's at grades A-C or equivalent	Increase proportions achieving five or more GCSE's at Grades A*-C to 60% by 2010. (Community Strategy)	49.1% (2005) (Source: Department for Education and Skills)
				% of adults educated to NVQ level 2, 3 or 4	Increase the % of adults qualified to Level 3 to 70% by 2010. Reduce the number of adults with no qualifications to 10% by 2010. (Community Strategy)	NVQ2 and above: Halton – 54.3%, GB – 61.5% NVQ3 and above: Halton – 33.1%, GB – 43.1% NVQ4 and above: Halton – 15.7%, GB – 25.2% (Source: Local Area Labour Force Survey, Nomis, Mar 2003-Feb 2004)
	3. To encourage sustainable economic growth and business	Economic development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will it encourage the growth of indigenous businesses? 	Total number of VAT registered businesses	To increase the number of VAT registered businesses by 15% by 2010. (Community Strategy)	2,185 (2004) (Source: Nomis)

	Objective	SEA Directive	Detailed Criteria	Indicator	Target	Baseline Data
Economic	business development		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will it improve the number of new, competitive businesses that last? Will it provide or contribute to the availability of a balanced portfolio of employment sites? 	Percentage of business registrations and de-registrations	To increase the % of VAT registrations whilst decreasing the % of de-registrations	10.8 % VAT registrations and 9.8% de-registrations (Source: InterDepartmental Business Register (IDBR), Nomis, 2004)
	4. To improve the competitiveness and productivity of business	Economic development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will it improve business development and enhance competitiveness? 	Gross Value Added (GVA) per head	Sustain levels of GVA at above the regional norm. (Community Strategy)	GVA per head for Halton and Warrington was £17,190 (Source: Merseyside Economic Review, 2005)
	5. To enhance the vitality and viability of the three town centres (Runcorn Old Town, Halton Lea and Widnes)	Economic development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will it provide an improvement to one or more of the town centres? 	Footfall within the town centre	Increase footfall through each town centre by 25% by 2010. (Community Strategy)	Average weekly footfall within Halton Lea of 292,605 Average monthly footfall for Widnes 595,747 (July – Nov 2005) Average monthly footfall for Runcorn Old Town 187,207 (July – Nov 2005) (Source: Halton Lea – Brandspace, Runcorn and Widnes – Halton Borough Council Footfall Counters)
				Vacancy rates within the town centre	Decrease vacancy levels year on year.	Number of vacant units in 2005 Halton Lea – 35 Widnes – 4 Runcorn Old Town – 41 (Source: Town Centre Survey 2005, Halton Borough Council)
	6. To improve the overall image of the Borough in order to attract investment.	Economic development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will it encourage inward investment? 	Number of investment enquiries and the number of conversions (enquiries that are translated into actual, completed investment or expansion projects).	To increase the number of investment enquiries and the number of conversions.	317 enquiries 42 conversions (2004/5) (Source: Economic Development, Halton Borough Council)

	Objective	SEA Directive	Detailed Criteria	Indicator	Target	Baseline Data
Social	7. To improve health and reduce health inequalities	Population and human health, Social inclusiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will it improve the standard of healthcare, particularly for the elderly? Will it support healthy lifestyles? 	Years of healthy life expectancy	Narrow the gap between life expectancy, at birth, in Halton and the national average by at least 10% by 2010. (Community Strategy)	Halton: Males – 73.90 years Females – 78.21 England: Males – 76.0 years Females – 80.6 (2000-2002) (Source: North West Public Health Observatory)
				Number of people who have a long-term illness	To reduce the % of residents in Halton with a long-term illness to within 1.5% of the England & Wales % by the 2011 Census.	21.5% of residents in Halton considered themselves to have a limiting long-term illness, compared to 18.2% for England and Wales as a whole. (Source: 2001 Census)
	8. To improve safety and reduce crime, disorder and fear of crime	Social inclusiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will it encourage crime-sensitive design? Will it target, reduce and sustain a reduction in crime? Will it reduce the likelihood of violence and antisocial behaviour? 	Recorded crimes per 1,000 population	To reduce number of offences per 1,000 pop.	Halton offences per 1,000 population: Violence against the person 04/05 – 23 Sexual offences 04/05 – 1 Robbery 04/05 – 1 Burglary dwelling 04/05 – 4 Theft of a motor vehicle – 7 Theft from a vehicle – 11 (Source: Basic Command Unit - Recorded Crime for Six Key Offences 2004/05, Crime in England & Wales 2004/5, Home Office)
				Number of people reporting fear of crime	Reduce levels of expressed fear of crime and anti-social behaviour by 25% by 2010. (Community Strategy)	16.4% of people in Halton thought reducing crime would improve their local area. Just under three tenths (29.2%) of residents stated that they feel 'fairly unsafe' (17.3%) or 'very unsafe' (11.9%) when they are outside in their local area after dark.(Source: Halton Strategic Partnership Consulting the Communities of Halton 2005, March 2005)

	Objective	SEA Directive	Detailed Criteria	Indicator	Target	Baseline Data
Social	9. To provide well designed, good quality, affordable and resource efficient housing	Social inclusiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will it provide for affordable housing for local people? Will it ensure that new housing is of a high standard of design and layout? Will it provide safe, secure and decent housing? 	Proportion of different housing types and tenures	To meet the requirements set out in the most up-to-date Housing Needs Survey.	<p>Housing Type 2001: Detached 19.2% Semi detached 33.0% Terraced 37.5% Other (flats etc.) 10.3%</p> <p>Housing Tenure 2004: Private 71.9% Council 12.9% Housing Association 15.2% (Source: Annual Monitoring Report, Halton Borough Council, 2005)</p>
				Average household income	To increase average household income in Halton to 90%+ of the national average by 2010. (Community Strategy)	The average household income in Halton is £27,898 which is 89.4% of the UK average (UK average salary is £31,200). (Source: Merseyside Economic Review, 2006)
	10. To improve access to basic goods, services and amenities	Social inclusiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will it improve transport provision and accessibility? Will it provide for local retail needs? Will it improve public access to services and amenities? 	Percentage of new residential development within 30 minutes public transport time of a GP, hospital, primary and secondary school, employment and a major retail centre.	To ensure that all new housing development is within 30 minutes public transport time of a GP, hospital, primary and secondary school, employment and a town centre.	<p>% of housing completions 2004/5 within 30 minutes public transport time of key services:</p> <p>GP – 100% Hospital (Halton) – 48% Primary School – 100% Secondary School – 100% Employment – 100% Town centre – 100% (Source: Annual Monitoring Report, Halton Borough Council, 2005)</p>
11. To ensure access to high quality public open space and natural	Social inclusiveness Biodiversity, fauna and flora. Cultural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will it ensure that all people have access to public open space within a reasonable 	Number and area of Local Nature Reserves (LNRs)	Ensure no loss of LNR (number or area).	10 LNRs covering an area of 142.02ha (Source: Halton Borough Council, 2004)	

	Objective	SEA Directive	Detailed Criteria	Indicator	Target	Baseline Data
Social	natural greenspace	flora, Cultural heritage and landscape	a reasonable distance from where they live? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will it improve access to natural greenspace? 	Number of Green Flag Parks	To maintain and if possible increase the number of Green Flag Parks.	5 parks in Halton have Green Flag Awards. (Source: the Civic Trust – Green Flag Awards, 2005)
	12. To reduce social exclusion, deprivation and social inequalities	Social inclusiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will it reduce poverty and social exclusion in those areas most affected? 	Index of Deprivation	For Halton to become less deprived and to move outside the 40 most deprived districts in England by 2010. (Community Strategy)	Halton is ranked 21 st , out of 354, in the average of ward scores where rank 1 is the most deprived. (Source: Indices of Deprivation 2004, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister)
Environmental	13. To protect, improve and where necessary, restore the quality of inland, estuarine and coastal waters	Water and soil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will it improve the quality of controlled waters? 	Water quality (chemical & biological) classification of rivers, canals, estuaries and coastal waters and percentage lengths in different classes	To increase the % of rivers, canals, estuaries and coastal waters that classified as either good or fair year on year.	Halton: Biology 2004 Good – 0% Fair – 13.18% Poor – 79.39% Bad – 7.4% Chemistry 2004 Good – 11.0% Fair – 60.43% Poor – 20.55% Bad – 8.02% (Source: Environment Agency)
	14. To protect, enhance and manage biodiversity	Biodiversity, Fauna & Flora	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will it protect sites and habitats of nature conservation value from inappropriate development? Will it improve the number and diversity of sites and 	Number and total area of internationally and nationally designated nature conservation sites	To maintain the number and total area of internationally and nationally designated nature conservation sites	1 RAMSAR – 918.7ha 3 SSSI – 923.99ha 61 SINC – 742.65ha The RAMSAR site is also designated as a SSSI site therefore 918.7ha of the SSSI sites is also contributed as a RAMSAR. (Source: Annual Monitoring Report, Halton Borough Council, 2005)

	Objective	SEA Directive	Detailed Criteria	Indicator	Target	Baseline Data
Environmental			diversity of sites and habitats of nature conservation value in the Borough?	Condition of SSSIs	95% of SSSI land should be in favourable or recovering condition by 2010. (Public Service Agreement (PSA) target)	Flood Brook Clough SSSI - 100% unfavourable recovering (01/04/05) Mersey Estuary SSSI - 99.95% favourable, 0.05% unfavourable recovering (Various 08/02- 03/04) Red Brow Cutting SSSI - 100% favourable (06/01) (Source: English Nature)
	15. To minimise the production of waste and increase reuse, recycling and recovery rates.	Water and soil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will it result in a reduction in the amount of waste requiring treatment and disposal? 	Level and % of household waste recycled	Waste Strategy 2000 set national recycling targets To recycle or compost at least 30% of household waste by 2010, and 33% of household waste by 2015.	During 2004/05, 8885.57 tonnes (13.65%) of household waste arising was sent for recycling. (Source: Annual Monitoring Report, Halton Borough Council, 2005)
				Total annual amount of municipal waste generated and % recycle or composted.	Ensure 30% of waste is recycled or composted by 2010. (Community Strategy)	Total municipal waste(04/05) – 65,083 tonnes Total municipal waste recovered – 8885 (14%) Total municipal waste composted – 5957 (9%) Total municipal waste landfilled – 50240 (77%) (Source: Annual Monitoring Report, Halton Borough Council, 2005)
	16. To reduce the need to travel and improve choice and use of sustainable	Air, Human Health, Climatic factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will it minimise the need to travel? Will it reduce car use and encourage the use of integrated 	Number and total area of Air Quality Management Areas and population living in AQMAs	To maintain 0 AQMAs	0 AQMAs (2005) (Source: Local Air Quality Management website)

	Objective	SEA Directive	Detailed Criteria	Indicator	Target	Baseline Data
Environmental	transport modes, whilst protecting, and where necessary, improving local air quality		and public transport? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will it improve air quality? 	Travel to work by mode	To reduce the number of people travelling to work by car or van by 10% by 2011 and by 20% by 2021.	Percentage of people in Halton aged 16 - 74 in employment who usually: Work at or from home – 6.16% Travel to work by: Underground, metro, light rail, Tram or Train – 1.31% Bus, mini bus or coach – 7.12% Motorcycle, scooter or moped – 1.07% Driving a car or a van – 62.42% Passenger in a car or van – 9.06% Taxi – 0.65% Bicycle – 2.03% On foot – 9.78% Other – 0.41% (Source: 2001 Census)
	17. To protect, enhance and manage the rich diversity of cultural and built environment and archaeological assets	Cultural heritage and landscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Will it safeguard sites of archaeological importance? Will it preserve and enhance buildings which contribute to Halton's heritage? 	Number of Listed Buildings and Number and Area of Conservation Areas	To maintain the number of Listed Buildings and Number and Area of Conservation Areas	Halton has 122 Listed Buildings 2 of which are Grade I listed, 17 are Grade II* listed and the remaining are Grade II listed. Halton has 10 Conservation Areas and the total area is 92. 78ha. (Source: English Heritage and Halton Borough Council)
				Number of Conservation Areas covered by an up-to-date Conservation Area Appraisal	To increase the number of Conservation Areas covered by an up-to-date Conservation Area Appraisal	Currently there are 0 Conservation Areas covered by an up-to-date Conservation Area Appraisal (Source: Halton Borough Council)
				Number of buildings and Scheduled Ancient Monuments 'at risk'.	To reduce the number of buildings 'at risk' to 0 by 2016.	There are 2 buildings 'at risk' in Halton these are Daresbury Hall which is Grade II* Listed and the Undercroft of West Range at Norton Priory which is a scheduled monument. (Source: English Heritage, Buildings 'at risk' Register, 2005)

	Objective	SEA Directive	Detailed Criteria	Indicator	Target	Baseline Data
Environmental	18. To use land, energy, and water resources prudently and efficiently, and increase energy generated from renewable sources	Water and soil, Climatic factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will it enable development to re-use brownfield land and convert existing buildings? • Will it encourage prudent and efficient use of energy? • Will it use water efficiently and with care? • Will it encourage the development of appropriate types of renewable energy resources? 	Proportion of housing built on previously developed land per year	PPG3 set a target of 60% of dwellings on PDL by 2008.	61% of new and converted dwellings on PDL in 2004/05 42% in 2004 49% in 2003 28% in 2002 (Source: Annual Monitoring Report, Halton Borough Council, 2005)
				Proportion of energy generated from sustainable and renewable sources	Energy White 2003 set a national target that 10% of the UK's electricity supply comes from renewable sources by 2010, 15% by 2015 and 20% by 2020.	Halton has capacity for the generation of 6.5MW from renewable sources. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biomass: PDM (2 10MW) • Co-firing of Biomass: Shell Green Generation Plant (4.20MW) • Sewage Gas: Runcorn CHP (0.26MW) (Source: renewables northwest)

Appendix B: Statement of Consultation: Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Sustainability Assessment (SA) process

Supplementary Planning Document (SPD): House Extensions
Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Sustainability Appraisal (SA) -
Statement of Consultation

SA Pre-production Scoping Report (incorporating SEA screening statement): Thursday 6th April 2006 to Thursday 11th May 2006

Date of consideration of representations: 1st June 2006

Consultee	Date comments received and how responded	Comments	Response
English Heritage	04/05/06 by post	For the purposes of the SEA consultation, English Heritage will confine its advice to the question, 'Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment?' in respect to our concern, cultural heritage. Our comments are based on the information supplied in the Scoping Report. The Screening Statement indicates that the Council considers the SPD 'is unlikely to have a significant environmental effect.' On the basis of the information supplied, and in the context of the criteria set out in Schedule 1 of the Environmental Assessment Regulations [Annex II of SEA Directive], English Heritage concurs with the Council that the preparation of a Strategic Environmental Assessment is not required.	No changes required.
English Nature	No comment made		
The Countryside Agency	10/04/06 by post	The topic covered by the SPD would be unlikely to affect the Agency's environmental interests. The Agency does not wish to comment on the document. We should explain that the absence of comment is simply an expression of our remit and priorities, and should not be taken as implying a lack of interest or indicating either support for, or objection to, the plan.	No changes required.
The Environment Agency	11/05/06 by email	We agree with the Council (pg15) that the document is unlikely to have a significant environmental effect and therefore is unlikely to require a Strategic Environmental Assessment.	No changes required.

Date comments received and how responded	Comments	Response	
The Environment Agency continued . .		In developing the Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) the Environment Agency would urge the Council to consider the issue of flood risk. Where an extension is located in flood zone 2/3 we would refer the applicant/Council to the national flood risk standing advice. This can be found at www.pipernetworking.com and recommends that floor levels are set no lower and provides guidance on flood proofing measures.	To be considered during the preparation of the

No comments were made in relation to the Sustainability Appraisal Report which accompanied the draft House Extensions SPD.

Appendix C: SA of House Extensions SPD - Statement of Determination

CI Requirements of the SEA Regulations

The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulation 2004 (from now on referred to as 'the regulations'), places an obligation on the Council to undertake a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) on land use and spatial plans. Part of this process includes a screening exercise to determine the need for a SEA to be undertaken, by assessing if the proposed plan is likely to have any significant environmental effects. This screening process stage is particularly relevant where the plan being proposed can be considered to be small scale. The House Extensions Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) can be considered to be a small-scale land use plan.

C2 Screening Process Methodology

The regulations provide a set of criteria for determining the likely significant effects on the environment of land use and spatial plans. These criteria are derived from Annex 2 of SEA Directive (2001/42/EC) and are set out in Schedule 1 of the regulations and can be summarised as:

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

These criteria will form the framework of the screening process

C3 Screening Process for Supplementary Planning Document: House Extensions

The purpose of the House Extensions SPD is to complement the Halton Unitary Development Plan (UDP), by providing additional guidance for anyone intending to extend or alter their house or erect a garage or other outbuilding to ensure that all developments:

- a are of exemplary design quality and that any extensions do not spoil the character of the original dwelling, but relate closely to it and harmonise with the existing house in its scale, proportions, materials and appearance;
- b protect residential amenity of neighbouring properties;
- c protect and enhance the built and natural environment;
- d preserve the essential character of the street and surrounding area;
- e avoid the creation of dangerous highway conditions; and
- f safeguard the provision of a reasonable private garden space.

The intended geographical coverage of the SPD is Borough wide. Using the criteria in Schedule I of the regulations as a framework, the requirement for a need to carry out an SEA on the intended House Extensions SPD can be determined.

C4 House Extensions SPD - Statement of Determination

(as required by Regulation 11 of The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004)

Halton Borough Council in consultation with the statutory environmental consultation bodies (the Countryside Agency, English Heritage, English Nature and the Environment Agency) has determined that the House Extensions SPD is not likely to have significant environmental effects and, accordingly, an environmental assessment will not be carried out as part of the Sustainability Appraisal process.

The SA Scoping Report, (Incorporating the Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Statement), for the House Extensions SPD was available for consultation between Thursday 6th April 2006 and Thursday 11th May 2006.

Reasons for this Determination

Using the criteria, detailed in Schedule I of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, for determining the likely significance of effects on the environment the following assessments have been made.

I. The characteristics of House Extensions SPD	
Criteria	Assessment
(a) The degree to which the SPD sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources.	The SPD is intended to be supplementary and complementary to the adopted planning policy contained in the UDP.
(b) The degree to which the SPD influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy	It is intended that the scope of the SPD will be to provide additional practical guidance to policies that have already been scrutinised and consulted upon through the plan making process.

1. The characteristics of House Extensions SPD	
Criteria	Assessment
(c) The relevance of the SPD for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development	By seeking to improve the design and quality of all new house extensions and alterations this SPD will help promote the image of the Borough, promote the use of more sustainable materials and hopefully improve the well being of residents.
(d) Environmental problems relevant to the SPD	The intended SPD is primarily concerned with improving the quality of the design of the built and local environment. However, promoting the use of more sustainable materials and construction methods is likely to improve the environmental quality of the development.
(e) The relevance of the SPD for the implementation of [European] Community legislation on the environment (for example, plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection)	There are no direct linkages with the implementation of European Community legislation.

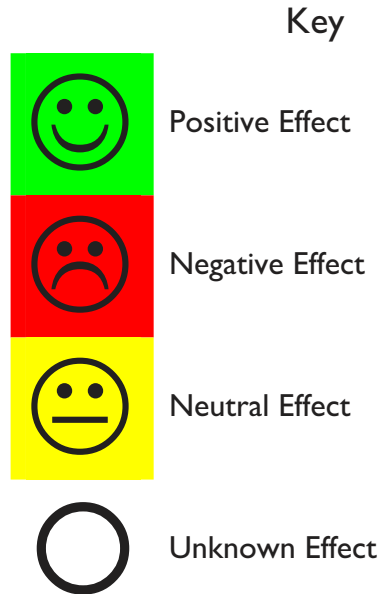
2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected by the House Extensions SPD	
Criteria	Assessment
(a) The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects	<p>The probable effect of the intended SPD will be to improve the design of the built environment within the Borough.</p> <p>Once adopted as part of the Halton Local Development Framework (LDF), the short to medium term effects of the intended SPD will be incremental. It is intended that in the longer term the guidance will become incorporated into the mainstream design thinking of planning and design professionals operating within the Borough.</p> <p>As part of the LDF the intended SPD will be subject to annual review and its relevance and effectiveness will be monitored. The LDF system allows for the SPD to be amended, replaced or deleted relatively easily if required.</p>
(b) The cumulative nature of the effects	The likely cumulative nature of the effects from the intended SPD is improving the quality of the built environment within the Borough to create a safe, secure and pleasant environment for people to live within.
(c) The transboundary nature of the effects	There are no transboundary effects from the SPD due to the intended scope of its purpose and the geographical coverage it will have.
(d) The risks to human health or the environment (for example, due to accidents)	There are no significant or likely risks to human health or the environment from the intended SPD.
(e) The magnitude and spatial	The intended SPD is not site specific or time constrained.

2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected by the House Extensions SPD	
Criteria	Assessment
extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)	Effects from the SPD will therefore be incremental and Borough wide, although the impact of this guidance will be concentrated in existing and new residential areas.
<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; or iii. Intensive land-use. 	<p>The intended SPD is not site specific. It will not impact upon areas of value or vulnerability as identified in i - iii.</p> <p>The SPD will provide guidance to existing planning policies and be seen with the context of part of the LDF and not part of the Development Plan, which contains policies relating to safeguarding and enhancing the built and natural environment.</p>
(g) The effects on areas or landscapes, which have a recognised national, [European] Community or international protection status.	The intended SPD is not site specific and would be supplementary to adopted planning policy. The practical guidance it will contain will be considered in the context of planning policies relating to safeguarding and enhancing areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, community or international protection status. Therefore the SPD is not likely to have a negative effect on such areas, but will seek to provide additional guidance on enhancing such areas, i.e. through acknowledging local distinctiveness in the design of new development.










In accordance with Part 2(9) of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, the Council, as the responsible authority consider that the intended Supplementary Planning Document: House Extensions is unlikely to have a significant environmental effect and accordingly does not require a Strategic Environmental Assessment.



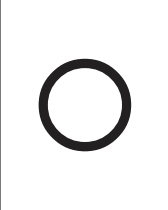
This determination has now been subject to consultation with the statutory environmental consultation bodies, none of the bodies have disagreed with the Council's determination.

Appendix D: Testing the Purpose of the House Extensions SPD against the Sustainability Appraisal Framework



	Objective	Nature of Effect	Additional Comments
Economic	1. To continue towards reducing the unemployment rate in Halton and increasing the economic activity rate		This SPD is not expected to have any effect on the unemployment or economic activity rate in Halton.
	2. To improve educational attainment and opportunities for life long learning and employment		This SPD is not expected to have any effect on the educational attainment and opportunities for life long learning in Halton.
	3. To encourage sustainable economic growth and business development		This SPD is not expected to have any effect on sustainable economic growth and business development in Halton.
	4. To improve the competitiveness and productivity of business		This SPD is expected to have a neutral impact on the competitiveness and productivity of business within Halton.
	5. To enhance the vitality and viability of the three town centres (Runcorn Old Town, Halton Lea and Widnes)		This SPD is expected to have a neutral impact on the vitality and viability of the three town centres.
	6. To improve and promote the overall image of the Borough in order to attract investment.		The improved design and quality of house extensions should improve the perception of the residential areas of the Borough and should help to improve the overall

	Objective	Nature of Effect	Additional Comments
			image of the Borough.
Social	7. To improve health and reduce health inequalities		The improved design, layout, and quality of house extensions will improve the perception of residential areas, improve residents living environments and will help to increase feelings of well-being.
	8. To improve safety and reduce crime, disorder and fear of crime		The improved design, surveillance and security of new house extensions will help to provide places that will contribute to reassuring communities and reducing the fear of crime.
	9. To provide good quality, affordable and resource efficient housing		The improved quality and design, and the greater consideration of residential amenity will help to provide good quality housing.
	10. To improve access to basic goods, services and amenities		This SPD is expected to have a neutral impact on access to basic goods, services and amenities.
	11. To ensure access to high quality public open space and natural greenspace		This SPD is not expected to have any effect on access to high quality public open space and natural greenspace in Halton.
	12. To reduce social exclusion, deprivation and social inequalities		This SPD is not expected to have any effect on social exclusion, deprivation and social inequalities in Halton.
Environmental	13. To protect, improve and where necessary, restore the quality of inland, estuarine and coastal waters		This SPD is not expected to have any effect on the quality of inland, estuarine and coastal waters.
	14. To protect, enhance and manage biodiversity		The direct / indirect of this SPD on biodiversity is difficult to quantify. However, it is likely that any negative impacts on biodiversity would be mitigated by the use of other policies from within the UDP.
	15. To minimise the production of waste and increase reuse, recycling and recovery rates.		The direct / indirect of this SPD on the production of waste and the increase reuse, recycling and recovery of waste is difficult to quantify. However, it is likely that this will managed through the use of other policies from within the UDP.

	Objective	Nature of Effect	Additional Comments
Environmental	16. To improve air quality by reducing the need to travel and improving choice and use of sustainable transport modes and reducing air pollution from other sources		This SPD is not expected to have any effect on air quality or the need to travel.
	17. To protect, enhance and manage the rich diversity of the cultural and built environment and archaeological assets, whilst maintaining and strengthening a local distinctiveness through the enhancement of the character and appearance of the local landscape, townscape and coast		The improved quality, layout and design and the greater consideration of residential amenity and local characteristics will help to improve the built environment and maintain local distinctiveness.
	18. To use land, energy, and water resources prudently and efficiently, and increase energy generated from renewable sources		The direct / indirect of this SPD on land, energy, and water resources is difficult to quantify. However, it is likely that this will be managed through the use of national guidance and other policies from within the UDP.

Appendix E: Options Considered

Extract of Pre-Production Scoping Report

As a Local Planning Authority, it is important to consider the options available for meeting the purpose of the intended SPD. The options considered are:

Option 1: Do nothing

This approach relies on existing policy within the UDP and government advice, such as that contained within 'Better Places to Live: A companion guide to PPG3: By Design' or the 'Urban Design Compendium', produced by English Partnerships and the Housing Corporation, to help inform planning decisions and applications. Alternatively another agency or function of the Council could produce guidance we can subsequently adopt.

In seeking to achieve sustainable forms of development, it is important that practical guidance is produced that will have sufficient weight to promote better design within Halton. This can only really be achieved if a SPD is adopted. It would be difficult for another agency or function of the Council to lead on the production of what is essentially a planning document. Therefore although this option is rejected, it is necessary to ensure that all relevant agencies and functions of the Council are closely consulted throughout the production of the SPD, as their knowledge relating to housing and house extension in particular will assist in creating an effective SPD.

Option 2: Adopt government documents as SPD

Another option is to seek adoption of Government documents as SPD. There are four documents which each (in part) contributes to meeting the purpose of the intended SPD. These are: Planning – A Guide to Householders; Better Places to Live, By Design: a Companion Guide to PPG3; the Urban Design Compendium, and; Places, Streets and Movement: a companion guide to Design Bulletin 32.

It is possible to adopt these documents as SPD for Halton, but firstly it would be difficult to amend them after a consultation exercise; secondly, the combined length of the documents would be difficult to digest by those involved in the planning and design of development, and; thirdly, the documents would not have the flexibility to respond to local circumstances. Therefore, it would not be the most effective means to deliver more sustainable places. It is clearly important that these four documents are used as a basis for developing a specific tailored document for Halton.

Option 3: Produce a House Extensions SPD

This option is to produce a House Extensions SPD. This would be produced to meet the specific purpose and objectives of the need for its production.

This is the most likely option to create more sustainable places, although the SPD must take into account national documents that relate to housing and house extensions.

The intended SPD must be shaped throughout by those who are involved in seeking to meet the same objectives as those set out in the intended purpose of the proposed SPD. It is therefore proposed to progress with option 3.

Appendix F: Further Information

Further information relating to the purpose of the intended SPD:

To access a downloadable copy of the Planning Policy Guidance notes or Planning Policy Statements detailed in Section 2, or for further general planning information visit the Department of Communities and Local Government website at <http://www.communities.gov.uk/> or for a hard copy contact the Department of Communities and Local Government by phone on 0870 1226 236.

To access a downloadable copy of 'Better Places to Live, By Design: a Companion Guide to PPG3' and 'Safer Places', documents relating to urban renewal, urban design and creating sustainable communities, and general planning information visit the Department of Communities and Local Government website at <http://www.communities.gov.uk/>.

For information relating to urban design there are several documents available. Design at a Glance: A quick reference to national design policy, Design Review and The Value of Good Design can be downloaded free of charge from the CABE website at <http://www.cabe.org.uk/publications/> and The Urban Design Compendium produced by English Partnership and the Housing Corporation can be ordered online free of charge from English Partnerships at www.englishpartnerships.co.uk Urban Design Guidance: urban design frameworks, development briefs and masterplans, produced by the Urban Design Group, and From Design Policy to Design Quality, produced by the RTPI, can be purchased from Thomas Telford Ltd.

Further information on the Secured By Design initiative, including details relating to the standards required for a development to receive Secured By Design accreditation may be found at www.securedbydesign.com

For information regarding any development affecting a historic building or conservation area 'Building In Context' will be able to provide advice. It is available from English Heritage and the CABE and can be downloaded free of charge from <http://www.cabe.org.uk> or for a hard copy contact English Heritage at: Customer Services Department, PO Box 569, Swindon, Wiltshire, SN2 2YP, Tel: 0870 333 1181, Fax: 01793 414 926

You can find out about the planning system and how it works at www.planningportal.gov.uk

Further information regarding Sustainability Appraisals and the Strategic Environmental Assessment can be found in the following documents:

- The Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive: Guidance for Planning Authorities (for land use and spatial plans), October 2003
- A Practical Guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive, September 2005
- Sustainability Appraisal of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Documents, November 2005

Are available via the Department of Communities and Local Government website at <http://www.communities.gov.uk/>. This website also contains a general introduction to SEA and SA. The Department of Communities and Local Government can be contacted on 020 7944 4400.

- Strategic Environmental Assessment and Biodiversity: Guidance for Practitioners, June 2004; and
- Strategic Environmental Assessment and Climate Change: Guidance for Practitioners, May 2004

Are available via the Environment Agency website at www.environment-agency.gov.uk or telephone 08708 506 506





House Extensions

Supplementary Planning Document

Appropriate Assessment
November 2006



Halton Borough Council

House Extensions

Supplementary Planning Document

Appropriate Assessment – Screening Report

November 2006

Operational Director
Environmental & Regulatory Services
Halton Borough Council
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Contents

1	Summary
2	Introduction
3	Methodology
Stage I Screening	
4	Plan Analysis (Steps 1 & 2)
5	Site Analysis (Step 3)
6	Assessment (Step 4)
	Screening Assessment
	Screening Matrix
	No Significant Effects Matrix
	Conclusion

Appendix I

- Mersey Estuary SPA
- Mersey Estuary Ramsar
- Manchester Mosses SAC
- Rixton Clay Pits SAC
- Midland Meres and Mosses Ramsar
- West Midlands Mosses SAC

I Summary

- I.1 As part of the development of the House Extensions Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) it has been necessary for the Council to carry out a Screening process to determine whether an 'Appropriate Assessment' is required. An appropriate assessment is used to assess the potential effect of plans and projects on sites of European importance, such as the Ramsar, Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) that are within or close to Halton.
- I.2 The Screening Report contains 4 steps, the first step provided the conclusion that the House Extensions SPD is not directly connected to or necessary for the management of any sites of European Importance.
- I.3 The second step, Plan Analysis, gave further consideration to the purpose and policies contained within the House Extensions SPD and for other plans or projects that may have an impact in combination with the SPD on the sites of European importance.
- I.4 The third step, Site Analysis, took a closer look at each of the sites of European importance that could be affected by the SPD including the Mersey Estuary SPA, Mersey Estuary Ramsar, Manchester Mosses SAC, Rixton Clay Pits SAC, Midland Meres and Mosses Phase 1 and Phase 2 and West Midlands Mosses SAC.
- I.5 Step 4, Assessment, includes the screening assessment of the SPD on each of the identified sites of European Importance. This assessment indicates that the House Extensions SPD, alone or in combination, will not have impact on any of the sites of European Importance that were identified in Step 3.
- I.6 The Screening Report concludes that in the opinion of Halton Borough Council the House Extensions SPD will not require an 'Appropriate Assessment'.

2 Introduction

- 2.1 Appropriate Assessment (AA) is an assessment of the potential effects of a proposed plan on one or more European sites.
- 2.2 Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and Wild Flora and Fauna – the ‘Habitats Directive’ - provides legal protection for habitats and species of European importance. It provides the legislative means to protect habitats and species through the establishment and conservation of a network of sites of nature conservation importance known as **Natura 2000**.
- 2.3 The Natura 2000 network provides ecological infrastructure for the protection of sites which are of exceptional importance in respect of rare, endangered or vulnerable natural habitats and species within the European Community. These sites which are also referred to as European sites, and consist of Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs) and Offshore Marine Site (OMS) (there are no OMS designated at present). Planning Policy Statement 9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation (PPS9) notes that Ramsar sites are to be afforded the same level of consideration as SPAs and SACs. Therefore throughout this document ‘Natura 2000’ will be used to refer to SPAs, SACs and Ramsar sites.
- 2.4 The requirement for AA of plans or projects is outlined in Article 6(3) and (4) of the European Communities (1992) Council Directive 92/43/EEC on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora (“Habitats Directive”).

Article 6(3)

‘Any plan or project not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site but likely to have a significant effect thereon, either individually or in combination with other plans and projects, shall be subject to appropriate assessment of its implications for the site in view of the site’s conservation objectives. In light of the conclusions of the assessment of the implications for the site and subject to the provisions of paragraph 4, the competent national authorities shall agree to the plan or project only after ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned and, if appropriate, after having obtained the opinion of the general public.’

Article 6(4)

‘If in spite of a negative assessment of the implications for the site and in the absence of alternative solutions, a plan or project must nevertheless be carried out for imperative reasons of overriding public interest, including those of a social or economic nature, the member states shall take all compensatory measures necessary to ensure that overall coherence of Natura 2000 is protected. It shall inform the Commission of the compensatory measures adopted.

Where the site concerned hosts a priority natural habitat type and/or priority species, the only considerations which may be raised are those relating to human health or public safety, of beneficial consequences of primary importance for the environment or, further to an opinion from the Commission, to other imperative reasons of overriding public interest.’

- 2.5 The Habitats Directive applies the precautionary principle to protected areas; plans and projects can only be permitted having ascertained that there will be no adverse effect on the integrity of the site(s) in question. In cases where information is not available or where there is doubt, and further research is needed, rather than attempting to create a case of 'no significant effects' the Council will proceed with the AA process.
- 2.6 This AA Report covers the first stage (Screening), and will be used for consultation purposes in order to assess whether the House Extensions Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is likely to have a significant of effect on Natura 2000 sites. It is hoped that consultation at this stage will help to ensure that the decision on the requirement for AA will be robust and will support the progression of the House Extensions SPD. In England, Natural England is the nature conservation body under the Habitats Regulations and a key point of contact.

3 Methodology

3.1 It is possible to summarise the AA process prescribed in Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive into four stages:

- Stage One: Screening
- Stage Two: Appropriate assessment
- Stage Three: Assessment of alternative solutions
- Stage Four: Assessment where no alternative solutions exist and where adverse impacts remain

Stage One: Screening

3.2 The process which identifies the likely impacts upon a Natura 2000 site of a project or plan, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans, and considers whether these impacts are likely to be significant.

Stage Two: Appropriate Assessment

3.3 The consideration of the impact on the integrity of the Natura 2000 site of the project or plan, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans, with respect to the site's structure and function and its conservation objectives. Additionally, where there are adverse impacts, an assessment of the potential mitigation of those impacts.

Stage Three: Assessment of alternative solutions

3.4 The process which examines alternative ways of achieving the objectives of the project or plan that avoid adverse impacts on the integrity of the Natura 2000 site.

Stage Four: Assessment where no alternative solutions exist and where adverse impacts remain

3.5 An assessment of compensatory measures where, in the light of an assessment of imperative reasons of overriding public interest (IROPI), it is deemed that the project or plan should proceed (it is important to note that this guidance does not deal with the assessment of imperative reasons of overriding public interest).

3.6 Each stage determines whether a further stage in the process is required. If, for example, the conclusions at the end of Stage One are that there will be no significant impacts on the Natura 2000 site, there is no requirement to proceed further. This is shown in diagram I below.

3.7 This report covers Stage I of the AA process and will determine whether the further stages of the AA will need to be completed.

Flow chart of the Article 6 (3) and (4) procedure (from MN2000) in relation to the stages of the guidance
 Consideration of a plan or project (PP) affecting a Natura 2000 site

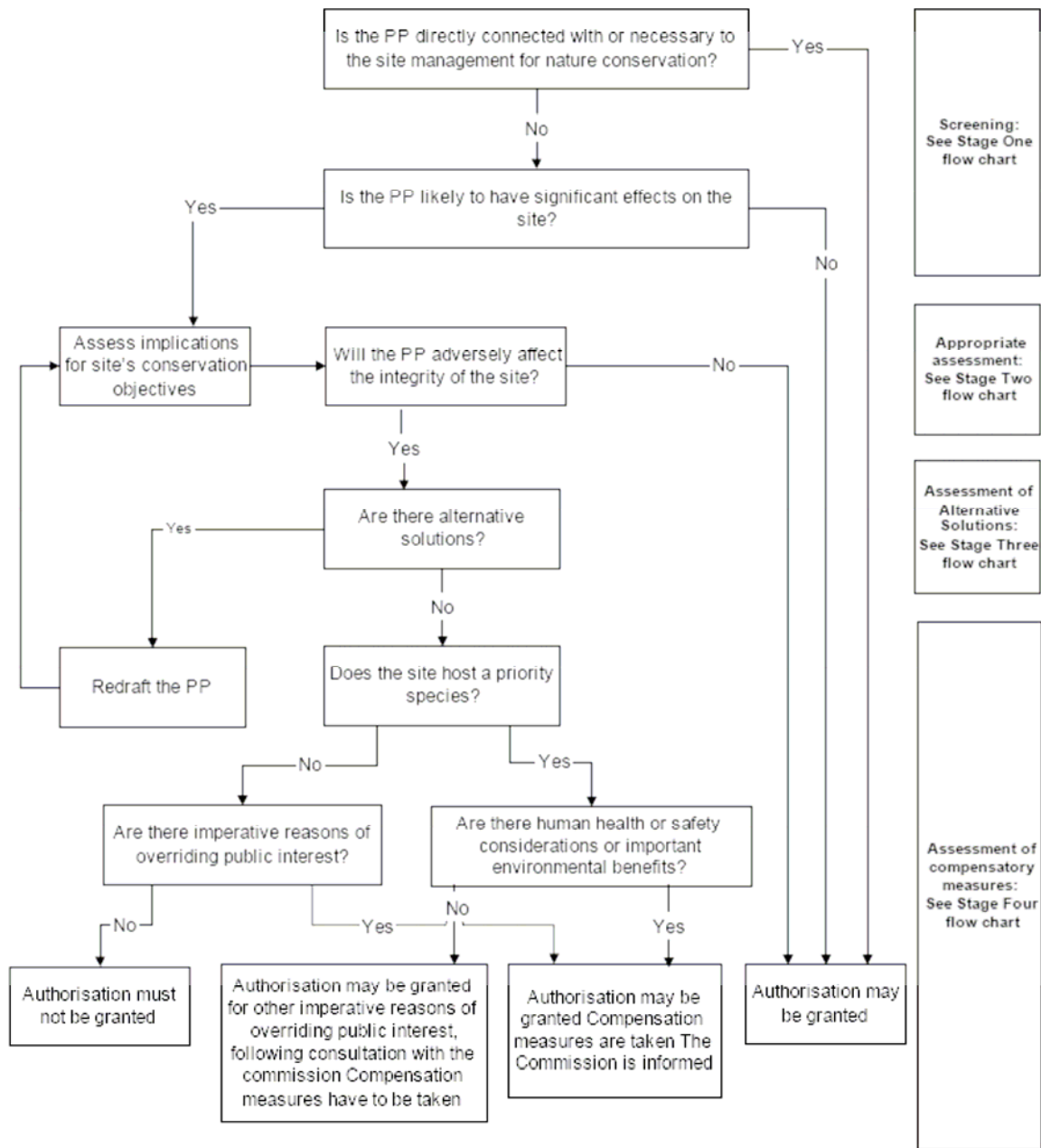


Diagram I: Flow diagram, which sets out the stages of Appropriate Assessment that will be required.

Stage I – Screening

This stage examines the likely effects of a project or plan, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans, upon a Natura 2000 site and considers whether it can be objectively concluded that these effects will not be significant. This assessment involves four steps they are described below and are documented over the next three sections of this report.

- 1** Determining whether the plan or project is directly connected with or necessary for the management of the site. This requires only that the Council identifies whether the plan contains management that are for conservation purposes or that it is solely conceived for the conservation management of the site.
- 2** Describing the project or plan and any others that in combination have the potential to significantly affect the Natura 2000 site. In order to describe the plan it will be necessary to identify all elements that either alone or in combination have the potential for a significant effect on the site.
- 3** Characteristics of the site and identification of possible effects. Characterisation of the site as a whole or where impacts are most likely to fall in order to identify possible effects.
- 4** Assessing the significance of any effects. Effects identified above are tested for significance.

4 Plan Analysis (Steps 1 & 2)

- 4.1 The House Extensions SPD is not directly connected to or necessary for the management of any of the identified Natura 2000 sites and has not been solely conceived for the conservation management of the site.
- 4.2 As set out above step 2 of this stage requires the examination of the likely effects of a Plan, either alone or in combination with other plans, upon a Natura 2000 site and considers whether it can be objectively concluded that these effects will not be significant.
- 4.3 It should be noted that even where a plan on its own may not have a significant impact on a European site, it may have a significant 'in combination' impact with other existing trends, plans and projects. The proposed plan may have only a small impact on a European site but, alongside other trends, plans and projects, this impact may be 'the straw that breaks the camel's back' as it were. It is therefore essential to consider all the various other pressures to which the site is exposed during the plan's lifetime.

House Extension SPD

- 4.4 The purpose of the House Extensions SPD is to complement the Halton Unitary Development Plan (UDP), by providing additional guidance for anyone intending to extend or alter their house or erect a garage or other outbuilding to ensure that all developments:
- a are of exemplary design quality and that any extensions do not spoil the character of the original dwelling, but relate closely to it and harmonise with the existing house in its scale, proportions, materials and appearance;
 - b protect residential amenity of neighbouring properties;
 - c protect and enhance the built and natural environment;
 - d preserve the essential character of the street and surrounding area;
 - e avoid the creation of dangerous highway conditions; and
 - f safeguard the provision of a reasonable private garden space.
- 4.5 The intended geographical coverage of the SPD is therefore Borough wide.

Other Halton Borough Council Documents

- 4.6 **Halton UDP** (adopted April 2005) includes site allocations for housing and employment sites alongside policies (particularly GE17) to protect sites of International Importance such as the Mersey Estuary SPA and Ramsar. The Halton UDP covers the whole Borough and includes policies and guidance to control development up to and beyond 2016.
- 4.7 The **Halton Core Strategy** will set out the vision, objectives and strategy for the development of the area, it will not however allocate individual sites for development this will instead be done through the Allocation & Policy DPDs. The Core Strategy is intended to cover the period to 2021 and is expected to be adopted in 2009.

- 4.8 **Draft Halebank Regeneration Action Area SPD** covers the industrial estates in Ditton Ward, which borders Riverside Ward along a stretch of Ditton Brook and is in close proximity to the Mersey Estuary SPA and Ramsar sites. The Draft Halebank Regeneration Action Area Draft SPD sets out planning policy to:
- Bring new housing, residents and jobs into the area to sustain local community facilities.
 - Ensure that heavy goods vehicles are diverted away from housing areas by new routes that are better connected to the main road network.
 - Remove dereliction and introduce more landscaping and tree planting.
 - Encourage existing industry to expand and prosper so long as any harmful environmental impacts are reduced.
- 4.9 **Draft Ditton Strategic Rail Freight Park (DSRFP) SPD** is approximately 200 metres from the Mersey Estuary. Both Ditton Brook and Stewards Brook run through the DSRFP area, and in to the River Mersey. The Draft DSRFP SPD sets out the planning policy to:
- Guide the development of the proposed rail freight park according to the Unitary Development Plan Policy
 - Minimise the effects that new warehouses for rail freight will have on new and existing housing development.
 - Ensure that heavy goods vehicles are diverted away from housing areas by new routes that are better connected to the main road network.
 - Remove dereliction and introduce more landscaping and tree planting.
 - Encourage existing industry to expand and prosper so long as any harmful environmental impacts are reduced.
- 4.10 The **Second Local Transport Plan (LTP2)** sets out Halton Borough Council's objectives, strategies and policies for transport for the period April 2006 to March 2011 and beyond. The overarching objective of the LTP2 is: *the delivery of a smart sustainable, inclusive and accessible transport system and infrastructure that seeks to improve the quality of life for people living in Halton by encouraging economic growth and regeneration, and the protection and enhancement of the historic, natural and human environment.* The LTP2 does not expect the Mersey Gateway to have been completed before 2014 and therefore outside of the period it covers.

Other Authorities Documents

- 4.11 The **Vale Royal Local Plan** (adopted June 2006) sets the policies for development and the use of land in this Borough between the period 2006 to 2016. It includes objectives to 'protect sites/areas of significant ecological, . . . value', 'to resist development that may cause . . . water, . . . pollution' and 'to enhance biodiversity'.
- 4.12 Production of the **Vale Royal Core Strategy DPD** is not expected to commence until November 2007.
- 4.13 The **Warrington UDP** (adopted January 2006), through its policies and proposals and the measures through which they will be implemented, seeks to play a key role in promoting and bringing about the development of 'sustainable communities through

regeneration'. Policy GNI5 provides specific protection for Rixton Clay Pits SAC and Risley Moss and Holcroft Moss, which form part of the Manchester Mosses SAC.

- 4.14 Work has already started on the **Warrington LDF** and they expect their Core Strategy to reach Preferred Options Stage in November / December 2006.
- 4.15 **Ellesmere Port and Neston Local Plan** (adopted 2002) intends to nurture development and land use which will improve the quality of life in Ellesmere Port and Neston Borough without causing long term social, economic or environmental harm to existing or future generations. Policy ENVI contains specific criteria to protect International Sites of Nature Conservation Importance particularly The Dee and Mersey Special Protection Areas/Ramsar sites.
- 4.16 The **St.Helens UDP** (adopted July 1998) provides a framework for directing and controlling development as well as conserving and protecting the environment. The principal underlying strategy of the UDP is urban regeneration. The UDP does not contain a policy to specifically protect European site, however, it does contain a policy which requires the developer to include measures to include measures to mitigate their effects upon features of nature conservation value.
- 4.17 **St Helens MBC** are preparing the **Core Strategy / Allocations Development Plan Document / Criteria Policies Development Plan Documents** together. They were consulted upon during August / September 2005, St Helens intend to prepare a the Preferred Options for consultation in January 2007.
- 4.18 The **Knowsley UDP** (adopted June 2006) sets out the Council's strategy for the physical development and regeneration of the Borough until 2016. A key purpose of the UDP is to promote the creation and maintenance of sustainable communities in Knowsley. Policy ENV9 may provide protection for the Natura 2000 sites as it states that development proposals will not be permitted if they would destroy or have a significant adverse effect on nature conservation interests within any sites which are designated nationally or internationally.
- 4.19 **Liverpool UDP** (adopted November 2002) the UDP's overriding objective of urban regeneration is refined into the following themes: Economic Regeneration, Environmental Improvement and Reduction of Inequality. Policy OE6 aims to protect the Natura 200 sites it states 'The City Council will seek to protect the nature conservation interest of open land and the water environment in the City by not permitting development which would destroy, fragment or adversely affect directly or indirectly a designated or proposed Special Protection Area (SPA), Ramsar site, or Site of Specific Scientific Interest (SSSI), unless the City Council is satisfied that there is no alternative solution and there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest.'
- 4.20 **Liverpool City Council** is working on a **Core Strategy**: a vision of the future in terms of the city's spatial structure and development. It will set the ground rules for future planning policies and neighbourhood plans, and reflect the principles contained within the city's Community Strategy. Consultation on the Issues and Options Paper took place in February/March 2006, the Preferred Options Report will be consulted upon in 2007.

- 4.21 **Wirral UDP** (adopted February 2000) includes a policy to protect Natura 200 sites this states that development proposals, either individually or when combined with others, which seem likely to significantly affect a European Site, a proposed European site or a Ramsar site, and which are not directly connected with or necessary to site management for nature conservation, will be assessed in terms of the nature conservation objectives for the site.
- 4.22 **Wirral MBC** have started work on their **Core Strategy** DPD but they do not expect to publish their Preferred Options document until March 2007. Wirral have undertaken an AA as part of the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report for their Core Strategy DPD and have concluded that an AA is not required at this stage, however they will undertake a further screening exercise at the Preferred Options stage.

5 Site Analysis (Step 3)

- 5.1 The identification of impacts upon the Natura 2000 sites will require a characterisation of the sites which will be potentially affected. The following section describes the Natura 2000 sites that will potentially be affected by the House Extensions SPD, along with their qualifying interests and the conservation objectives.
- 5.2 Part of the Mersey Estuary Special Protection Area and the Mersey Estuary Ramsar site are within the Borough boundary. The extent of both these sites can be seen in diagram 2.
- 5.3 Diagram 2 also shows the European sites outside of the Borough which could potentially be affected by the House Extensions SPD these include Manchester Mosses SAC, Rixton Clay Pits SAC, Midland Meres and Mosses Phase 1 & parts of Phase 2 Ramsar Site and West Midlands Mosses SAC. These sites vary in distance from the Borough with Rixton Clay Pits SAC being approximately 7 miles from the edge of the Borough and parts of the Midland Meres Ramsar being approximately 4 miles from the Borough boundary.

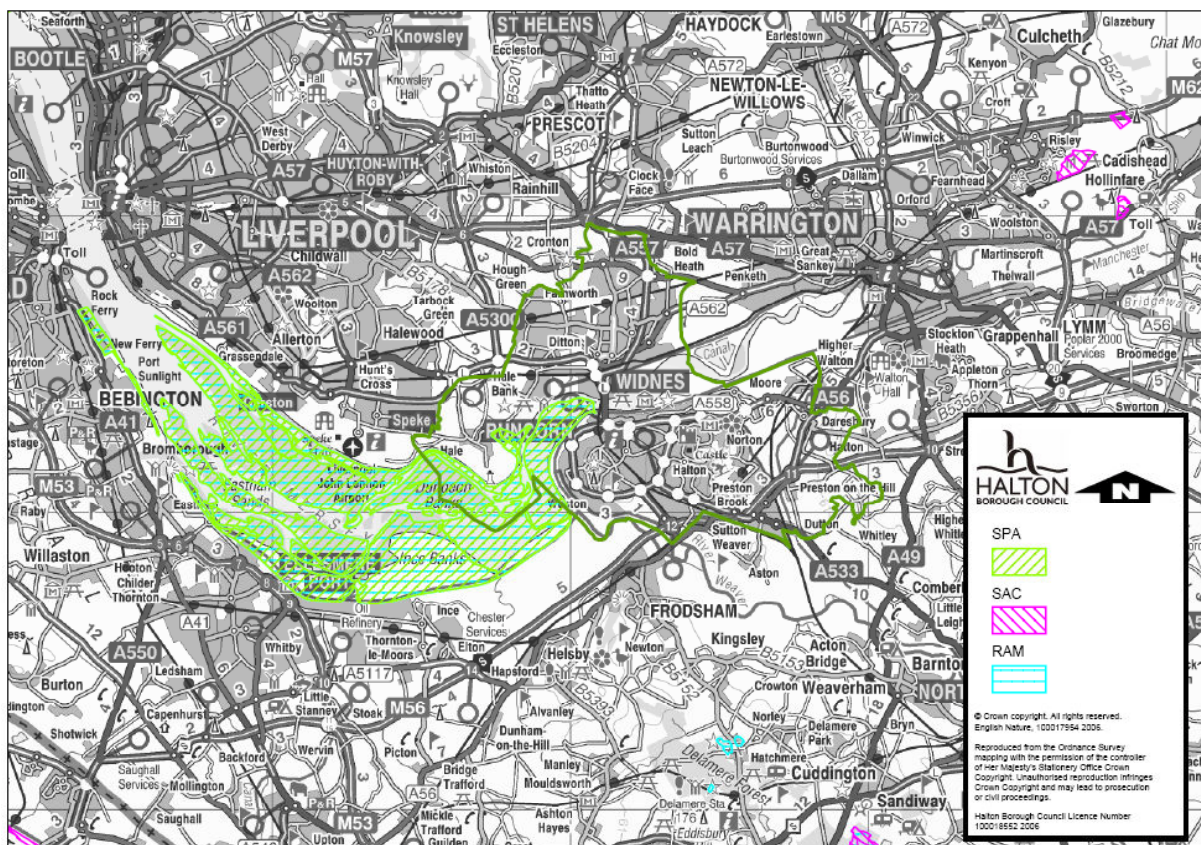


Diagram 2: Halton Borough and potentially affected SPAs, SACs and Ramsar sites

The characteristics and the conservation objectives of these European sites are set out below with more detail on each of the sites being provided within Appendix I.

Mersey Estuary Special Protection Area

Brief description

The Mersey Estuary has been designated as a SPA for its internationally important numbers of migratory species and waterfowl. The Mersey Estuary includes both marine areas (subtidal and intertidal) and land which is not subject to tidal influence.

Qualifying Interests & Conservation Objectives

Internationally important populations of regularly occurring migratory species:

Calidris alpina alpina (Dunlin), *Tringa tetanus* (Common Redshank), *Anas acuta* (Pintail), *Charadrius hiaticula* (Ringed Plover) and *Tadorna tadorna* (Shelduck), *Anas crecca* (Teal).

Conservation objectives focus on maintaining habitats for these species in favourable condition subject to natural change. In particular:

- Intertidal sediments
- Rocky shores
- Saltmarsh

Internationally important assemblage of waterfowl:

The Mersey Estuary supports large populations of wintering waterfowl. 78,015 individual birds (47,714 waders and 30,301 wildfowl). The Mersey also supports nationally important populations of *Anas Penelope* (Wigeon), *Pluvialis squatarola* (Grey Plover), *Limosa limosa islandica* (Black-tailed Godwit), *Numenius arquata* (Curlew), *Tringa tetanus* (Common Redshank) and *Calidris alpina alpina* (Dunlin).

Conservation objectives focus on maintaining habitats for these species in favourable condition subject to natural change. In particular:

- Intertidal sediments
- Rocky shores
- Saltmarsh

* maintenance implies restoration if the feature is not currently in favourable condition.

(Taken from Site Characterisation of European Marine Sites – The Mersey Estuary SPA, Marine Biological Association, 2006)

Mersey Estuary Ramsar

Brief description

The Mersey is a large, sheltered estuary which comprises large areas of saltmarsh and extensive intertidal sand and mudflats, with limited areas of brackish marsh, rocky shoreline and boulder clay cliffs, within a rural and industrial environment. The intertidal flats and saltmarshes provide feeding and roosting sites for large and internationally important populations of waterfowl. During the winter, the site is of major importance for duck and waders. The site is also important during spring and autumn migration periods, particularly for wader populations moving along the west coast of Britain.

Qualifying Interests & Conservation Objectives

- Common shelduck, *Tadorna tadorna*

- Black-tailed godwit , *Limosa limosa islandica*
- Common redshank , *Tringa totanus totanus*
- Eurasian teal , *Anas crecca*
- Northern pintail , *Anas acuta*
- Dunlin , *Calidris alpina alpina*

Manchester Mosses SAC

Brief description

Manchester Mosses SAC consists of three sites (Risley Moss, Holcroft Moss and Astley and Bedford Mosses). This site has been identified because it is considered to be one of the best areas in the UK of degraded lowland raised bog, which is still capable of natural regeneration. Such a habitat requires specific conditions for its survival and restoration, two of the most important of which are the retention/provision, both of an acidic water supply, and of a high water table throughout the year.

Qualifying Interests & Conservation Objectives

- Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration

The conservation objective is to maintain, in favourable condition, the degraded raised bogs

Rixton Clay Pits SAC

Brief description

Rixton Clay Pits is designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) in recognition of its national importance for Great Crested Newts. In addition to the newts, its ponds also support large numbers of other amphibians, particularly toads, and 18 species of damselfly and dragonfly species, including the Ruddy Darter and the large Emperor Dragonfly.

Qualifying Interests & Conservation Objectives

- *Triturus cristatus* (Great crested newt)

The conservation objective is to maintain, in favourable condition, the habitats for the population of *Triturus cristatus* (Great crested newt)

Midland Meres and Mosses Phase 1 & parts of Phase 2 Ramsar

Brief description

The Meres & Mosses form a geographically discrete series of lowland open water and peatland sites in the north-west Midlands of England. These have developed in natural depressions in the glacial drift left by receding ice sheets which formerly covered the Cheshire/Shropshire Plain. The 16 component sites include open water bodies (meres), the majority of which are nutrient-rich with associated fringing habitats; reed swamps, fen, carr & damp pasture. Peat accumulation has resulted in nutrient poor peat bogs (mosses) forming in some sites in the fringes of meres or completely infilling basins. In a few cases the result is a floating quaking bog or schwingmoor. The wide range of resulting habitats support nationally important flora & fauna.

Qualifying Interests & Conservation Objectives

To be confirmed

West Midlands Mosses SAC

Brief description

West Midlands Mosses contains three pools, two at Abbots Moss (area of West Midlands SAC that could potentially be affected the Core Strategy), that are examples of dystrophic lakes and ponds in the lowlands of England and Wales, where this habitat type is rare. The dystrophic lakes and ponds at this site are associated with Schwingmoor development, a characteristic of this habitat type in the West Midlands. Schwingmoor is an advancing floating raft of bog-moss *Sphagnum*, often containing NVC type M3 *Eriophorum angustifolium* bog pool community, which grows from the edge of the pool and can completely cover over the pool.

Qualifying Interests & Conservation Objectives

Transition mires and quaking bogs (very wet mires often identified by an unstable 'quaking' surface)

Natural dystrophic lakes and ponds (acid peat-stained lakes and ponds)

Bog woodland

The conservation objectives are:

- to maintain, in favourable condition, very wet basin mire identified by an unstable 'quaking' surface with particular reference to the M2 *Sphagnum cuspidatum/recurvum* bog pool community and M18 *Erica tetralix - Sphagnum papillosum* mire.
- to maintain*, in favourable condition, acid, peat-stained lakes (dystrophic pools)

6 Assessment (Step 4)

- 6.1 This step of the Screening Report involves the assessment of the significance of the House Extensions SPD on the characteristics and conservation objectives of the Natura 2000 sites, as set out in section 5 of this report.
- 6.2 Tables 1-5 of this section set out the assessment of the House Extensions SPD on each of the Natura 2000 sites which could potentially be affected by the SPD.

Glossary of terms used in the favourable condition table

Operational Feature & Criteria Feature	Features of the site which are key to its characteristic and its European designation.
Attribute	Selected characteristic of an operational feature / criteria feature, which provides an indication of the condition of the feature to which it applies.
Measure	What will be measured in terms of the units of measurement, arithmetic nature and frequency at which the measurement is taken. This measure will be attained using a range of methods from broad scale to more specific across the site.

Table 1: Assessment of Impacts of the House Extensions SPD on the Mersey Estuary SPA & Ramsar

Mersey Estuary SPA & Ramsar					
Operational Feature	Criteria feature	Attribute	Measure	Possible impacts from the plan	Conclusions
Intertidal sediments, rocky shores and saltmarsh	Populations of European and National importance	Disturbance in feeding and roosting areas	Reduction or displacement of birds measured using 5 year peak mean information on populations)	The House Extensions SPD does not include policies that will increase human activity, as it will only consider extensions to current dwellings as opposed to new development, within the Mersey Estuary SPA / Ramsar (human activities can result in reduced food intake and/or increased energy expenditure of the bird population). Therefore the House Extensions SPD is unlikely to lead to a significant reduction in numbers or displacement of birds.	The House Extensions SPD, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects, will not have a significant effect on the Mersey Estuary SPA. Therefore an Appropriate Assessment is not required.

Mersey Estuary SPA & Ramsar					
Operational Feature	Criteria feature	Attribute	Measure	Possible impacts from the plan	Conclusions
		Extent and distribution of habitat	Area (ha) of habitat, measured once per reporting cycle	The House Extensions SPD will not lead to a decrease in extent and distribution of habitat. The SPD does not allocate land and as such will not lead to a decrease in the extent and distribution in habitats.	The House Extensions SPD, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects, will not have a significant effect on the Mersey Estuary SPA. Therefore an Appropriate Assessment is not required.
		Absence of obstruction to viewlines	Openness of terrain, unrestricted by obstructions (feeding, anti-predator, roosting). Measured periodically (frequency to be determined)	The House Extensions SPD will not lead to an increase in obstructions to existing bird viewlines.	The House Extensions SPD, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects, will not have a significant effect on the Mersey Estuary SPA. Therefore an Appropriate Assessment is not required.
Intertidal sediments	Migratory Species/ Waterfowl Assemblage	Food availability	Presence and abundance of intertidal invertebrates. Measured periodically (frequency to be determined)	The House Extensions SPD will not have an impact on the presence and abundance of prey species, such as molluscs, marine worms and crustaceans including: <i>Nereis</i> , <i>Macoma</i> , <i>Hydrobia</i> , <i>Crangon</i> and <i>Carcinus</i> for dunlin, <i>Hydrobia</i> , <i>Macoma</i> , <i>Corophium</i> and <i>Nereis</i> for redshank, <i>Nereis</i> , <i>Hydrobia</i> and <i>Corophium</i> for shelduck, <i>Hydrobia</i> for teal and pintail, <i>Macoma</i> , <i>Cardium</i> and <i>Nereis</i> for black-tailed godwit, <i>Nereis</i> , <i>Hydrobia</i> and <i>Corophium</i> for curlew, <i>Nereis</i> , <i>Arenicola</i> and <i>Notomastus</i> for grey plover, <i>Gammarus</i> and <i>Pisidium</i> for ringed plover	The House Extensions SPD, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects, will not have a significant effect on the Mersey Estuary SPA. Therefore an Appropriate Assessment is not required.
		Food availability	Presence and abundance of mud-surface plants and green algae. Measured periodically (frequency to be determined)	The House Extensions SPD will not have an impact on the presence or abundance of Enteromorpha (which is important for Wigeon) or the presence and abundance of prey species.	The House Extensions SPD, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects, will not have a significant effect on the Mersey Estuary SPA.

Mersey Estuary SPA & Ramsar					
Operational Feature	Criteria feature	Attribute	Measure	Possible impacts from the plan	Conclusions
					Therefore an Appropriate Assessment is not required.
Rocky shores	Migratory species/ Waterfowl Assemblage	Food Availability	Presence and abundance of intertidal invertebrates. Measured periodically (frequency to be determined)	The House Extensions SPD will not have an impact on the presence and abundance of intertidal invertebrates (Waterfowl, including ringed plover, redshank and curlew) or the presence and abundance of prey species.	The House Extensions SPD, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects, will not have a significant effect on the Mersey Estuary SPA. Therefore an Appropriate Assessment is not required.
Saltmarsh	Migratory species/ Waterfowl Assemblage	Food availability	Presence and abundance of soft leaved and seed bearing plants. Measured periodically (frequency to be determined)	The House Extensions SPD will not have an impact on the presence and abundance of food species (<i>Salicornia</i> and <i>Atriplex</i> are important for teal <i>Agrostis stolonifera</i> , <i>Puccinellia maritima</i> and <i>Salicornia spp.</i> are important for wigeon).	The House Extensions SPD, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects, will not have a significant effect on the Mersey Estuary SPA. Therefore an Appropriate Assessment is not required.
Saltmarsh	Migratory species/ Waterfowl Assemblage	Vegetation characteristics	Open, short vegetation or bare ground predominating (roosting and feeding)	The House Extensions SPD is unlikely to have an impact on the height of vegetation within the areas used for feeding and roosting. There is policy contained within the UDP which this document is supplementary to, to protect the sites of European Importance including the Mersey Estuary Ramsar and SPA. The SPD also contains text which highlights that the Council will have regard to the biodiversity considerations given to any open space that is provided.	The House Extensions SPD, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects, will not have a significant effect on the Mersey Estuary SPA. Therefore an Appropriate Assessment is not required.

Table 2: Assessment of Impacts of the House Extensions SPD on the Manchester Mosses SAC

Manchester Mosses SAC					
Operational feature	Criteria feature	Attributes	Measures	Possible impacts from the plan	Conclusions
Degraded Bog capable of natural regeneration as a precursor of active raised bog.	Active peat formation	<p>Vegetation composed predominantly of species capable of peat formation.</p> <p>The net accumulation of peat.</p>	<p>Ombrotrophic Sphagna to cover not less than 30%, with cotton grasses (<i>Eriophorum angustifolium</i>, <i>E vaginatum</i>) accounting for the greater proportion of the remainder (excluding the rand).</p> <p>Every six years survey permanent belt transects through compartments covering observed surface variation to determine the cover of the above species (Dargie, Dargie & Tantram, 2000).</p> <p>Read a diametric transect of dipwells monthly or use continuous recorders. The mean free groundwater level should not fall more than 25 cm below surface level, taken as an average over the mire expanse (excluding the rand), in more than one year in five.</p> <p>Approximately 80% of the mire expanse should be active to achieve favourable condition.</p>	The House Extensions SPD will not have an impact on the re-establishment of vegetation with peat-forming capabilities or on the activity of the bog.	<p>The House Extensions SPD, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects, will not have a significant effect on the Manchester Mosses SAC.</p> <p>Therefore an Appropriate Assessment is not required.</p>
Degraded Bog capable of natural regeneration as a precursor of active raised bog.	Mesotope	<p>Rand and mire expanse</p> <p>NVC communities likely to be present:</p> <p>M25 <i>Molinia caerulea-Potentilla erecta</i> mire. M25a <i>Molinia caerulea-Potentilla erecta</i> mire.: <i>Erica</i></p>	<p>Bog communities M1, M2, M3, M20 and predominantly M18 should extend close to the edge of the bog and occupy 80% of the mire expanse, excluding rand. The edge slope (rand) may support dwarf shrub such as heather or bilberry, not birch or bracken. A tree component may be expected on the rand of continental bogs, together with <i>Molinia</i>.</p>	<p>The House Extensions SPD will not have an impact on the extent and health of the mire expanse and rand.</p> <p>The House Extensions SPD will not have an impact on the Manchester Mosses wider macrotope, through actions such as land drainage and aquifer abstraction.</p>	<p>The House Extensions SPD, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects, will not have a significant effect on the Manchester Mosses SAC.</p> <p>Therefore an Appropriate Assessment is not required.</p>

Manchester Mosses SAC					
Operational feature	Criteria feature	Attributes	Measures	Possible impacts from the plan	Conclusions
		<p><i>tetralix</i> sub-community W4 <i>Betula pubescens-Molinia caerulea</i> woodland. Also degraded examples of communities listed for active bog.</p>	<p>A cover of more than 30% dominant <i>Molinia</i> or birch is unfavourable. Record extent by coarse estimates e.g. from aerial photographs.</p> <p>Use DAFOR for key species: <i>E.vaginatum</i>, <i>E.angustifolium</i>, <i>Calluna vulgaris</i>, <i>Erica tetralix</i>, <i>Vaccinium oxycoccos</i>, <i>Andromeda polifolia</i>, (score 4>F for fav cond)</p> <p><i>Sphagnum cuspidatum</i>, <i>S. magellanicum</i>, <i>S. subnitens</i>, <i>S. capillifolium</i>, <i>S. papillosum</i>, and <i>S. tenellum</i> (at least 4 >/= F for favourable condition.)</p>		

Table 3: Assessment of Impacts of the House Extensions SPD on the Rixton Clay Pits SAC

Rixton Clay Pits SAC					
Operational Feature	Criteria Feature	Attribute	Measure	Possible impacts from the plan	Risk of a significant effect on site integrity?
Great crested newts	Terrestrial habitat	Extent	Total area of site as notified (13.99 ha)	The House Extensions SPD will not result in a loss of area or fragmentation of the site. It will not create any barriers to newt movements between ponds.	The House Extensions SPD, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects, will not have a significant effect on the Rixton Clay Pits SAC. Therefore an Appropriate Assessment is not required.
	Ponds	Presence of ponds	Ponds (permanent & temporary)	The House Extensions SPD will not result in a reduction in number of waterbodies at site	The House Extensions SPD, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects, will not have a significant effect on the Rixton Clay Pits SAC. Therefore an Appropriate Assessment is not required.
	Ponds	Pollution	Absence of pollution	The House Extensions SPD will not to lead to a level of pollution that will create a reduction in the viability of the ponds as a breeding site.	The House Extensions SPD, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects, will not have a significant effect on the Rixton Clay Pits SAC. Therefore an Appropriate Assessment is not required.
	Ponds	Extent (depth and persistence)	Ponds should be of sufficient size and depth to avoid desiccation over the course of the breeding/tadpole development season (Feb to mid-Aug) for at least 1 in every 3 years. Ponds to be found throughout the site.	The House Extensions SPD will not have an impact on the ability of waterbodies to hold water throughout the breeding and tadpole development season (February - mid August).	The House Extensions SPD, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects, will not have a significant effect on the Rixton Clay Pits SAC. Therefore an Appropriate Assessment is not required.
	Ponds	Shading	Extent of shading by trees	The House Extensions SPD will not have an impact on the extent of shading by trees within the Rixton Clay Pits area.	The House Extensions SPD, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects, will not have a significant effect on the Rixton Clay Pits SAC.

Rixton Clay Pits SAC					
Operational Feature	Criteria Feature	Attribute	Measure	Possible impacts from the plan	Risk of a significant effect on site integrity?
					Therefore an Appropriate Assessment is not required.
	Ponds	Fish	Absence of fish in majority of ponds	The House Extensions SPD will not have an impact on the presence / absence of fish in ponds.	The House Extensions SPD, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects, will not have a significant effect on the Rixton Clay Pits SAC. Therefore an Appropriate Assessment is not required.
	Terrestrial habitats		Habitat structure and quality.	The House Extensions SPD will not have an impact on the habitat structure and quality.	The House Extensions SPD, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects, will not have a significant effect on the Rixton Clay Pits SAC. Therefore an Appropriate Assessment is not required.

Table 4: Assessment of Impacts of the House Extensions SPD on the Midland Meres and Mosses Phase 1 & parts of Phase 2 Ramsar

Midland Meres and Mosses Phase 1 & parts of Phase 2 Ramsar					
Operational feature	Criteria feature	Attribute	Measure	Possible impacts from the plan	Risk of a significant effect on site integrity?
Conservation Objectives still to be confirmed.					

Table 5: Assessment of Impacts of the House Extensions SPD on the West Midland Mosses SAC

West Midland Mosses SAC					
Operational feature	Criteria feature	Attribute	Measure	Possible impacts from the plan	Risk of a significant effect on site integrity?
Basin mire with a quaking surface (Schwingmoor)	NVC types M2 <i>Sphagnum recurvum</i> bog pool community and M18 <i>Erica tetralix-Sphagnum papillosum</i> mire.	Water level and degree of fluctuation capable of sustaining the floating raft composed of NVC type appropriate to longstanding water chemistry and fertility. Scrub or woodland limited to margins, or no more than scattered over the open NVC communities.	Presence of raft which trembles when jumped on. Check for indication of trophic change. Install dipwells and measure at least bimonthly. Map extent and position of main NVC communities, monitor every 5 yr. Within the area occupied by these communities (and sub communities of M6 and M9) the eponymous species and others of constancy V and IV should be abundant (DAFOR). Scrub not to be more than occasional (DAFOR). (All site specific). Identify special species and seek specialist guidance in defining measures.	The House Extensions SPD will not have an impact on the raft characteristics. The House Extensions SPD will not have an impact on the stability of groundwater. The House Extensions SPD will not have an impact on the type and extent of NVC communities. The House Extensions SPD will not have an impact on the populations of special or rare plant (and animal) species.	The House Extensions SPD, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects, will not have a significant effect on the West Midlands Mosses SAC. Therefore an Appropriate Assessment is not required.
Schwingmoor	Dystrophic Pools	Extent of community	Check extent of beds in July/August every 4 years.	The House Extensions SPD will not have an impact on the present distribution of species representative of community.	The House Extensions SPD, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects, will not have a significant effect on the West Midlands Mosses SAC. Therefore an Appropriate Assessment is not required.
	Dystrophic Pools	Water quality	pH less than 4.5 rarely to 5.0. Measure quarterly to establish pH range over a 3 year period; thereafter annually (preferably October) when photosynthetic	The House Extensions SPD will not have an impact on the present pH range.	The House Extensions SPD, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects, will not have a significant effect on the West Midlands Mosses SAC.

West Midland Mosses SAC					
Operational feature	Criteria feature	Attribute	Measure	Possible impacts from the plan	Risk of a significant effect on site integrity?
			activity is low.		Therefore an Appropriate Assessment is not required.
	Dystrophic Pools	Water quantity	Check levels annually during July/August.	The House Extensions SPD will not have an impact on the water quantity levels, either through an affect at the drainage outfall or through the creation of a new outfall.	The House Extensions SPD, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects, will not have a significant effect on the West Midlands Mosses SAC. Therefore an Appropriate Assessment is not required.
	Dystrophic Pools	Sediment	Check for excessive growths of individual species or algal growth.	The House Extensions SPD will not have an impact on the sediment quality and quantity.	The House Extensions SPD, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects, will not have a significant effect on the West Midlands Mosses SAC. Therefore an Appropriate Assessment is not required.
	Dystrophic Pools	Algae	Check for algal growth July/August.	The House Extensions SPD will not have an impact t on the growth of algae.	The House Extensions SPD, either alone or in combination with other plans and projects, will not have a significant effect on the West Midlands Mosses SAC. Therefore an Appropriate Assessment is not required.

6.3 Following the assessment of the impact of the House Extensions SPD on each of the Natura 2000 sites set out in Tables 1-5 above. It is possible to complete the Screening Matrix. The Screening Matrix is a summary of all the information contained within this report so far and is used to decide if there is likely to be significant effects on any Natura 200 sites.

Screening Matrix

<p>Brief description of the project or plan</p>	<p>The purpose of the House Extensions Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is to complement the Halton Unitary Development Plan (UDP), by providing additional guidance for anyone intending to extend or alter their house or erect a garage or other outbuilding to ensure that all developments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a are of exemplary design quality and that any extensions do not spoil the character of the original dwelling, but relate closely to it and harmonise with the existing house in its scale, proportions, materials and appearance; b protect residential amenity of neighbouring properties; c protect and enhance the built and natural environment; d preserve the essential character of the street and surrounding area; e avoid the creation of dangerous highway conditions; and f safeguard the provision of a reasonable private garden space. <p>The intended geographical coverage of the SPD is therefore Borough wide.</p>
<p>Brief description of the Natura 2000 site</p>	<p>Mersey Estuary SPA The Mersey Estuary has been designated as a SPA for its internationally important numbers of migratory species and waterfowl. The Mersey Estuary includes both marine areas (subtidal and intertidal) and land which is not subject to tidal influence.</p> <p>Mersey Estuary Ramsar The Mersey is a large, sheltered estuary which comprises large areas of saltmarsh and extensive intertidal sand and mudflats, with limited areas of brackish marsh, rocky shoreline and boulder clay cliffs, within a rural and industrial environment. The intertidal flats and saltmarshes provide feeding and roosting sites for large and internationally important populations of waterfowl. During the winter, the site is of major importance for duck and waders. The site is also important during spring and autumn migration periods, particularly for wader populations moving along the west coast of Britain.</p> <p>Manchester Mosses SAC Manchester Mosses SAC consists of three sites (Risley</p>

Screening Matrix

	<p>Moss, Holcroft Moss and Astley and Bedford Mosses). This site has been identified because it is considered to be one of the best areas in the UK of degraded lowland raised bog, which is still capable of natural regeneration. Such a habitat requires specific conditions for its survival and restoration, two of the most important of which are the retention/provision, both of an acidic water supply, and of a high water table throughout the year.</p> <p>Rixton Clay Pits SAC Rixton Clay Pits is designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) in recognition of its national importance for Great Crested Newts. In addition to the newts, its ponds also support large numbers of other amphibians, particularly toads, and 18 species of damselfly and dragonfly species, including the Ruddy Darter and the large Emperor Dragonfly.</p> <p>Midland Meres and Mosses Phase 1 & parts of Phase 2 Ramsar The Meres & Mosses form a geographically discrete series of lowland open water and peatland sites in the north-west Midlands of England. These have developed in natural depressions in the glacial drift left by receding ice sheets which formerly covered the Cheshire/Shropshire Plain. The 16 component sites include open water bodies (meres), the majority of which are nutrient-rich with associated fringing habitats; reed swamps, fen, carr & damp pasture. Peat accumulation has resulted in nutrient poor peat bogs (mosses) forming in some sites in the fringes of meres or completely infilling basins. In a few cases the result is a floating quaking bog or schwingmoor. The wide range of resulting habitats support nationally important flora & fauna.</p> <p>West Midlands Mosses SAC West Midlands Mosses contains three pools, two at Abbots Moss (area of West Midlands SAC that could potentially be affected the Core Strategy), that are examples of dystrophic lakes and ponds in the lowlands of England and Wales, where this habitat type is rare. The dystrophic lakes and ponds at this site are associated with Schwingmoor development, a characteristic of this habitat type in the West Midlands. Schwingmoor is an advancing floating raft of bog-moss <i>Sphagnum</i>, often containing NVC type M3 <i>Eriophorum angustifolium</i> bog pool community, which grows from the edge of the pool and can completely cover over the pool.</p>
Describe the individual elements of the project (either alone or in combination with	None The SPD supplements policies S25 Planning Obligations, GE5 Outdoor Sport and Recreation Facilities in the Urban

Screening Matrix

<p>other plans or projects) likely to give rise to impacts on the Natura 2000 site</p>	<p>Fringe and Open Countryside, GE6 Protection of Designated Greenspace, GE11 Protection of Incidental Greenspace, GE12 Protection of Outdoor Playing Space for Formal Sport and Recreation, H3 Provision of Recreational Greenspace and TP9 The Greenway Network of the adopted Halton UDP.</p> <p>The SPD does not allocate sites or propose development that would result in either direct or indirect impacts to any of any of the sites listed above instead it provides guidance to ensure that the highest quality of development is provided.</p>
<p>Describe any likely direct , indirect or secondary impacts of the project (either alone or in combination with other plans or projects) on the Natura 2000 site by virtue of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Size and scale; • Land-take; • Distance from the designated site and key features of the site; • Resource requirements (water abstraction etc); • Emissions (disposal to land, water or air); • Excavation requirements; • Duration of construction, operation, decommissioning, etc.; • Other 	<p>None As above.</p>
<p>Describe any likely changes to the site arising as a result of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction of habitat area; • Disturbance to key species; • Habitat or species fragmentation; • Reduction in species density; • Changes in key indicators of conservation value (water quality etc.); • Climate change. 	<p>No changes have been identified. See Tables I-5 above</p>
<p>Describe any likely impact on the designated site as a whole in terms of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interference with the key relationships that define the structure of the site; 	<p>No impacts have been identified. See Tables I-5 above</p>

Screening Matrix

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interference with key relationships that define the function of the site. 	
<p>Provide indicators of significance as a result of the identification of effects set out above in terms of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss; • Fragmentation; • Disruption; • Disturbance; • Change to key elements of the site (e.g. water quality etc.). 	N/A
<p>Describe from the above those elements of the project or plan, or combination of elements, where the above impacts are likely to be significant or where the scale or magnitude of impacts is not known.</p>	There are no likely significant impacts identified.

6.4 Following the completion of the Screening Matrix it is possible to conclude that the House Extensions SPD is unlikely to have significant effects on a Natura 2000 site. Therefore the No Significant Effects Matrix has been completed to this concludes the Screening Report Process and identifies that no further stages of Appropriate Assessment are to required to be undertaken.

No Significant Effects Matrix

Name of Plan	House Extensions Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)
Name and location of Natura 2000 site	Mersey Estuary SPA Mersey Estuary Ramsar Manchester Mosses SAC Rixton Clay Pits SAC Midland Meres and Mosses Phase 1 & parts of Phase 2 Ramsar West Midland Mosses SAC
Description of Plan	<p>The purpose of the House Extensions Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is to complement the Halton Unitary Development Plan (UDP), by providing additional guidance for anyone intending to extend or alter their house or erect a garage or other outbuilding to ensure that all developments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a are of exemplary design quality and that any extensions do not spoil the character of the original dwelling, but relate closely to it and harmonise with the existing house in its scale, proportions, materials and appearance; b protect residential amenity of neighbouring properties; c protect and enhance the built and natural environment; d preserve the essential character of the street and surrounding area; e avoid the creation of dangerous highway conditions; and f safeguard the provision of a reasonable private garden space. <p>The intended geographical coverage of the SPD is therefore Borough wide.</p>
Is the project directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site?	No
Are there other projects or plans that together with the Plan being assessed could affect the site?	No
Assessment of Significance of effects	
Describe how the Plan (alone or in combination) is likely to affect the Natura 2000 site	No likely effects
Explain why these effects are not considered significant	N/A

No Significant Effects Matrix

List of agencies consulted	<p>Natural England Liam Fisher Natural England Pier House Wallgate Wigan Lancashire WN3 4AL</p> <p>& Natural England North West Region Regional Advocacy and Partnership Team Planning & Advocacy 3rd Floor, Bridgewater House Whitworth Street Manchester M1 6LT</p> <p>Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service Dr Alan Jemmett Environmental Advisory Service Bryant House, Liverpool Rd North Maghull, Merseyside L31 2PA</p> <p>Environment Agency Mark Chadwick Environment Agency Appleton House 430 Birchwood Boulevard Birchwood Warrington WA3 7WD</p> <p>Government Office for the North West Dianne Wheatley Government Office for the North West Cunard Building Pier Head Water Street Liverpool L3 1QB</p>
Response to consultation	To be completed following consultation with the above bodies.
Data collected to carry out the assessment	
Who carried out the assessment	Halton Borough Council

No Significant Effects Matrix

Sources of data	Joint Nature Conservation Committee Natural England Halton Borough Council Site Characterisation of European Marine Sites – The Mersey Estuary SPA, Marine Biological Association, 2006 Magic UK SPA data form UK SAC data form Information Sheet on Ramsar Wetlands
Level of assessment completed	Desktop study is sufficient to support the conclusions of this screening opinion.
Where can the full results of the assessment be accessed and viewed?	The assessment will be available for inspection at Runcorn Halton Direct Link at Halton Lea and Widnes Halton Direct Link on Brook Street, normal opening times of these locations and a downloadable version of this document can be found at the Council's website: www.halton.gov.uk/forwardplanning

Conclusion

On the basis of the information contained in Sections 4 to 6 of this Report (covering steps 1-4) it is the Borough Council's opinion that the proposed plan to which this screening opinion relates:

- a) is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of the site, and
 b) is not likely to have a significant effect on

- Mersey Estuary SPA
- Mersey Estuary Ramsar
- Manchester Mosses SAC
- Rixton Clay Pits SAC
- Midland Meres and Mosses Phase 1 & parts of Phase 2 Ramsar
- West Midland Mosses SAC

either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.

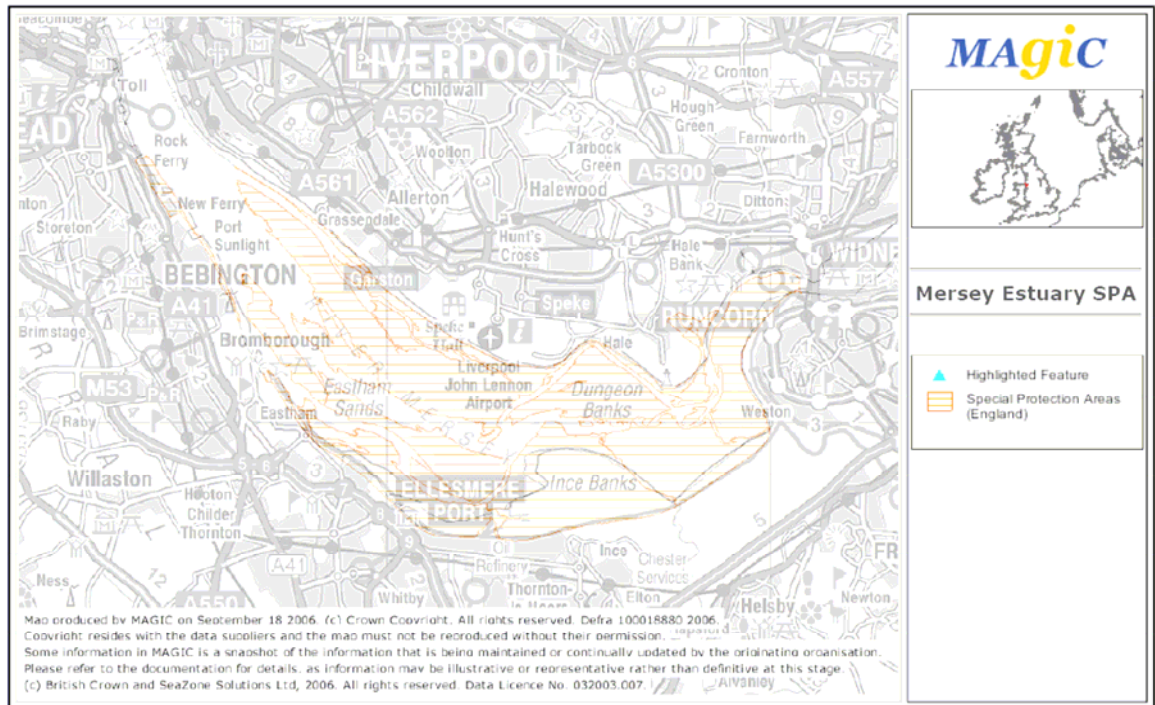
Accordingly, an "appropriate assessment" will not be required of those effects under Regulation 48, 49 and 54 of the Conservation (Natural Habitats, &c.) Regulations 1994, before the Council decides to undertake, or give any consent, permission or other authorisation for this plan.

Appendix I

Mersey Estuary SPA

Date site designated as a SPA: 12 / 1995

Location:



Site location:

Longitude: 02 49 25 W

Latitude: 53 18 51 N

(This is the approximate central point of the SAC. In the case of large, linear or composite sites, this may not represent the location where a feature occurs within the SAC)

Site area (ha): 5023.35

General Site Character:

Tidal rivers. Estuaries. Mud flats. Sand flats. Lagoons (including saltwork basins) 89.0

Salt marshes. Salt pastures. Salt steppes 11.0

Other site characteristics

Soil & geology:

Mud, Sand, Sandstone/mudstone

Geomorphology & landscape:

Coastal, Estuary, Intertidal sediments (including sandflat/mudflat)

Annex I birds and regularly occurring migratory birds not listed in Annex I:

Code	Species name	Population			Site assessment				
		Resident	Migratory			Population	Conservation	Isolation	Global
			Breed	Winter	Stage				
A054	<i>Anas acuta</i>			1169 I		B		C	
A052	<i>Anas crecca</i>			11723 I		B		C	
A050	<i>Anas penelope</i>			11886 I		B		C	
A149	<i>Calidris alpina alpina</i>			48789 I		B		C	
A137	<i>Charadrius hiaticula</i>				505 I	C		C	
A156	<i>Limosa limosa islandica</i>			976 I		B		C	
A160	<i>Numenius arquata</i>			1300 I		C		C	
A140	<i>Pluvialis apricaria</i>			3040 I		C		C	
A141	<i>Pluvialis squatarola</i>			1010 I		B		C	
A005	<i>Podiceps cristatus</i>			136 I		C		C	
A048	<i>Tadorna tadorna</i>			6746 I		B		C	
A162	<i>Tringa totanus</i>				4513 I	B		C	
A162	<i>Tringa totanus</i>			4993 I		B		C	
A142	<i>Vanellus vanellus</i>			10544 I		C		C	

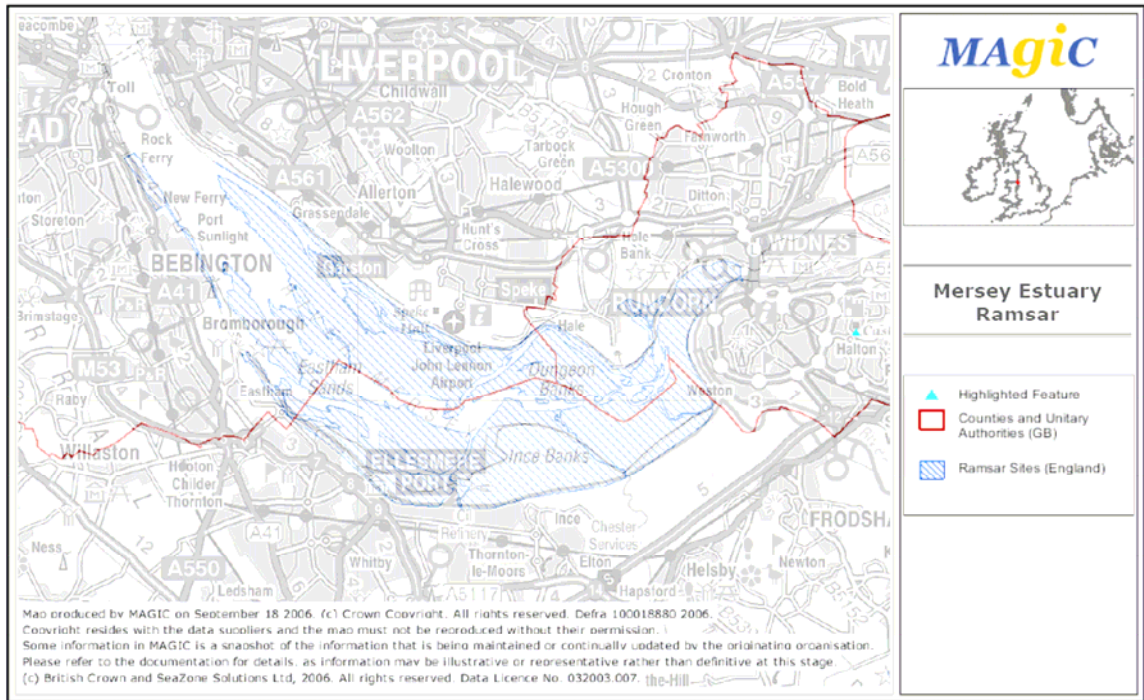
Vulnerability:

Wintering bird numbers and associated intertidal flats are robust to day-to-day change. Nevertheless, the estuary is subject to multiple uses; it is heavily industrialised, a substantial urban conurbation, has multiple transport requirements and increasing recreational activities. The site is vulnerable to physical loss through land-claim and development, physical damage caused by navigation capital and maintenance dredging, agricultural requirements, non-physical loss, toxic and non-toxic contamination and biological disturbance by wildfowling. The Special Protection Area status, requirements for Environmental Impact Assessment and the estuary management plan should, however, safeguard the site.

Mersey Estuary Ramsar

Date site designated as a SPA: 20 / 12 / 1995

Location:



Site location:

Longitude: 02 49 25 W

Latitude: 53 18 51 N

(This is the approximate central point of the SAC. In the case of large, linear or composite sites, this may not represent the location where a feature occurs within the SAC)

Site area (ha): 5023.35

Overview:

The Mersey is a large, sheltered estuary which comprises large areas of saltmarsh and extensive intertidal sand and mudflats, with limited areas of brackish marsh, rocky shoreline and boulder clay cliffs, within a rural and industrial environment. The intertidal flats and saltmarshes provide feeding and roosting sites for large and internationally important populations of waterfowl. During the winter, the site is of major importance for duck and waders. The site is also important during spring and autumn migration periods, particularly for wader populations moving along the west coast of Britain.

Justification

Ramsar criterion 5

Assemblages of international importance:

Species with peak counts in winter:

89576 waterfowl (5 year peak mean 1998/99-2002/2003)

Ramsar criterion 6 – species/populations occurring at levels of international importance.

Qualifying Species/populations (as identified at designation):

Species with peak counts in spring/autumn:	
Common shelduck , <i>Tadorna tadorna</i> , NW Europe	12676 individuals, representing an average of 4.2% of the population (5 year peak mean 1998/9-2002/3)
Black-tailed godwit , <i>Limosa limosa islandica</i> , Iceland/W Europe	2011 individuals, representing an average of 5.7% of the population (5 year peak mean 1998/9-2002/3)
Common redshank , <i>Tringa totanus totanus</i> ,	6651 individuals, representing an average of 2.6% of the population (5 year peak mean 1998/9-2002/3)
Species with peak counts in winter:	
Eurasian teal , <i>Anas crecca</i> , NW Europe	10613 individuals, representing an average of 2.6% of the population (5 year peak mean 1998/9-2002/3)
Northern pintail , <i>Anas acuta</i> , NW Europe	565 individuals, representing an average of 2% of the GB population (5 year peak mean 1998/9-2002/3)
Dunlin , <i>Calidris alpina alpina</i> , W Siberia/W Europe	48364 individuals, representing an average of 3.6% of the population (5 year peak mean 1998/9-2002/3)

General Site Character:

Tidal rivers. Estuaries. Mud flats. Sand flats. Lagoons (including saltwork basins)	89.0
Salt marshes. Salt pastures. Salt steppes	11.0

Other site characteristics

Soil & geology:	clay, mud, sand, sandstone/mudstone
Geomorphology & landscape:	cliffs, coastal, estuary, intertidal sediments (including sandflat/mudflat), lowland, subtidal sediments (including sandbank/mudbank)
Nutrient status:	eutrophic, mesotrophic
pH:	no information
Salinity:	brackish / mixosaline, saline / euhaline
Soil:	no information
Water permanence:	usually permanent

Physical Features:

The Mersey catchment covers an area of approximately 535 km² and includes the River Mersey and the River Bollin and their tributaries. Several canals and a large number of water bodies, including the Cheshire Meres, large reservoirs and ponds lie within the catchment. The area is heavily urbanised around Greater Manchester, contrasting with the more rural areas of Cheshire to the south and east. Water is abstracted throughout the catchments from both surface waters and groundwater for a number of uses including agricultural, industrial and public water supply. A number of public water supply reservoirs are present within the upper reaches of the catchments including Lamaload, Trentabank and Ridgigate reservoirs. The Mersey Estuary is located on the Irish Sea coast of north-west England. It is a

large, sheltered estuary which comprises large areas of saltmarsh and extensive intertidal sand- and mud-flats, with limited areas of brackish marsh, rocky shoreline and boulder clay cliffs, within a rural and industrial environment.

General ecological features:

Within this site the main habitat types are: Mudflats, Sandflats, Saltmarsh, Soft cliffs and Brackish marsh.

The main plant communities consists of: *Spartina anglica* saltmarsh (SM6), *Puccinellia maritima* saltmarsh (SM13), Transitional low-marsh vegetation with *Puccinellia maritima*, *Salicornia* species and *Suaeda maritima* (SM10), *Honkenya peploides*–*Cakile maritima* strandline community (SD2), *Typha latifolia* swamp (S12), *Phragmites australis*–*Urtica dioica* tall-herb fen (S26).

The estuary consists of large areas of intertidal sand and mudflats and saltmarsh. These provide feeding and roosting sites for large populations of waterfowl. Grazing of the saltmarsh by sheep and cattle adds diversity. Some parts of the northern shoreline are formed of boulder clay cliffs below which there are, in some parts, transitional areas with *Phragmites australis*.

Nationally important species occurring on the site.

Flora:

None reported

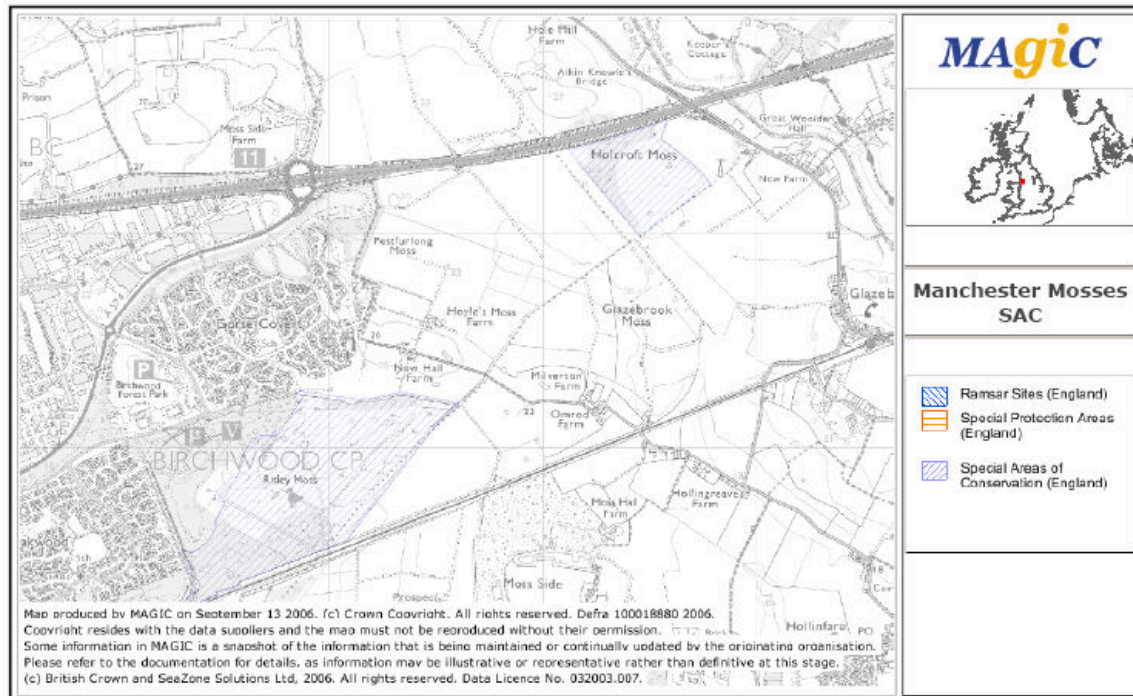
Fauna:

Species with peak counts in spring/autumn:	
Ringed plover , <i>Charadrius hiaticula</i> , Europe/Northwest Africa	429 individuals, representing an average of 1.3% of the GB population (5 year peak mean 1998/9-2002/3)
Eurasian curlew , <i>Numenius arquata arquata</i> , N.a. <i>arquata</i> Europe (breeding)	2010 individuals, representing an average of 1.3% of the GB population (5 year peak mean 1998/9-2002/3)
Spotted redshank , <i>Tringa erythropus</i> , Europe/W Africa	3 individuals, representing an average of 2.2% of the GB population (5 year peak mean 1998/9-2002/3)
Common greenshank , <i>Tringa nebularia</i> , Europe/W Africa	6 individuals, representing an average of 1% of the GB population (5 year peak mean 1998/9-2002/3)
Species with peak counts in winter:	
Eurasian wigeon , <i>Anas penelope</i> , NW Europe	8268 individuals, representing an average of 2% of the GB population (5 year peak mean 1998/9- 2002/3)

Manchester Mosses SAC

Date site designated as a SAC: 04 2005

Location:



Site location:

Latitude: 53 28 16 N

Longitude: 02 27 56 W

(This is the approximate central point of the SAC. In the case of large, linear or composite sites, this may not represent the location where a feature occurs within the SAC)

Site area (ha): 172.81

General Site Character:

Bogs. Marshes. Water fringed vegetation. Fens	(89%)
Broad-leaved deciduous woodland	(11%)

Other site characteristics

Soil & geology:

Acidic, Peat

Geomorphology & landscape:

Floodplain, Lowland

Annex I Habitats that are a primary reason for selection of this site:

Degraded raised bogs still capable of natural regeneration (7120)

- for which this is considered to be one of the best areas in the United Kingdom.

Mossland formerly covered a very large part of low-lying Greater Manchester, Merseyside and southern Lancashire, and provided a severe obstacle to industrial and agricultural expansion. While most has been converted to agriculture or lost to development, several examples have survived as **degraded raised bog**, such as Risle Moss, Astley & Bedford Mosses and Holcroft Moss on the Mersey floodplain. Their surfaces are now elevated above surrounding land due to shrinkage of the surrounding tilled land, and all except Holcroft Moss have been cut for peat at some time in the past. While past drainage has produced

dominant purple moor grass *Molinia caerulea*, bracken *Pteridium aquilinum* and birch *Betula* spp. scrub or woodland, wetter pockets have enabled the peat-forming species to survive. Recent rehabilitation management on all three sites has caused these to spread.

Vulnerability:

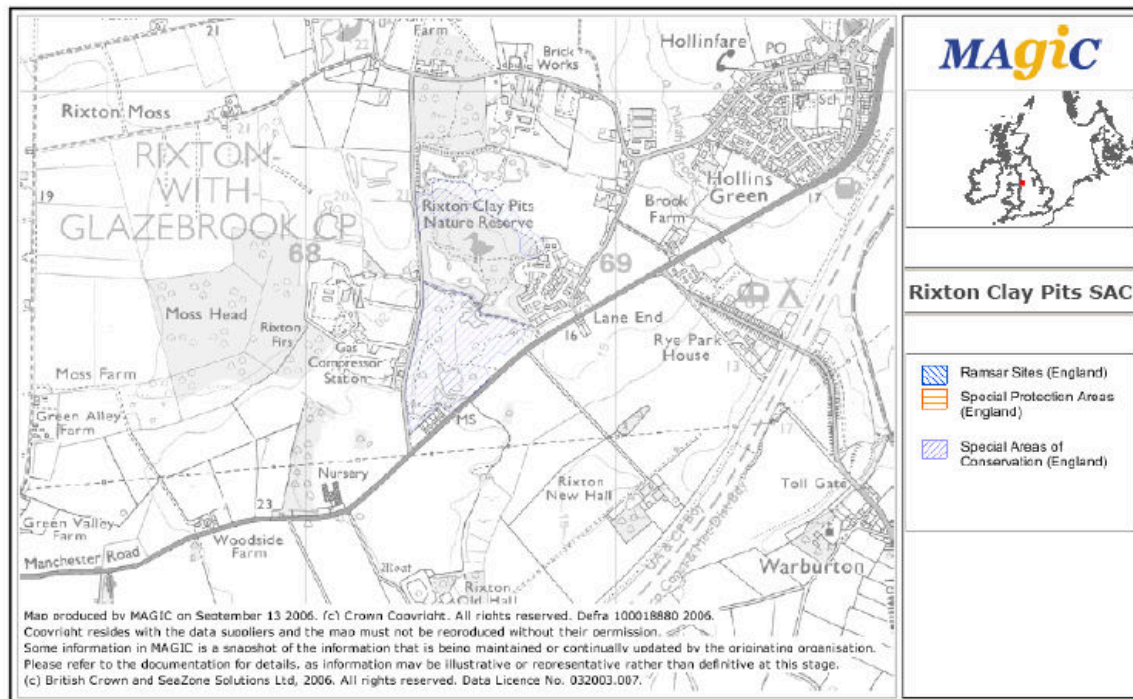
Manchester Mosses SAC consists of three sites (Risley Moss, Holcroft Moss and Astley and Bedford Mosses). Risley Moss is owned and managed by Warrington Borough Council, while Holcroft Moss is owned and managed by Cheshire Wildlife Trust. Both of these sites are undergoing restoration. Part of Astley and Bedford Mosses is owned and managed by Lancashire Wildlife Trust and is undergoing restoration, but the remainder (approximately 50%) is in private ownership. Management agreements or purchase of the land will be necessary for restoration on these areas.

All three sites have suffered from drainage in the past and are affected by continued, if reduced, drainage, particularly from boundary ditches. Agricultural land forms a significant part of the adjacent land on all three sites, which will have implications for restoration, particularly as re-wetting is one of the key requirements. Adjacent land will need to be taken into consideration and possibly placed under suitable management. All three sites are affected by scrub invasion, which is being controlled in some areas but will need further attention. Impacts on groundwater will need to be investigated, such as water abstraction, mineral extraction and waste management (landfill). The sites are located close to heavy industry (Greater Manchester, Merseyside). Air quality may therefore have an impact on *Sphagnum* regeneration and will need investigating.

Rixton Clay Pits SAC

Date site designated as a SAC: 04 2005

Location:



Site location:

Latitude: 53 24 23 N

Longitude: 02 28 31 W

(This is the approximate central point of the SAC. In the case of large, linear or composite sites, this may not represent the location where a feature occurs within the SAC)

Site area (ha): 13.99

General Site Character:

Inland water bodies (standing water, running water)	(20%)
Heath. Scrub. Maquis and garrigue. Phygrana	(25%)
Humid grassland. Mesophile grassland	(55%)

Other site characteristics

Soil & geology:
Basic, Clay, Shingle

Geomorphology & landscape:
Lowland

Annex II species that are a primary reason for selection of this site:

Triturus cristatus Great crested newt (I166)

- for which this is considered to be one of the best areas in the United Kingdom.

Situated east of Warrington, this site comprises parts of an extensive disused brickworks excavated in glacial boulder clay. The excavation has left a series of hollows, which have filled with water since workings ceased in the 1960s, leading to a variety of pond sizes. New ponds have also been created more recently for wildlife and amenity purposes. **Great**

crested newt *Triturus cristatus* are known to occur in at least 20 ponds across the site. The site also supports species-rich grassland, scrub and mature secondary woodland.

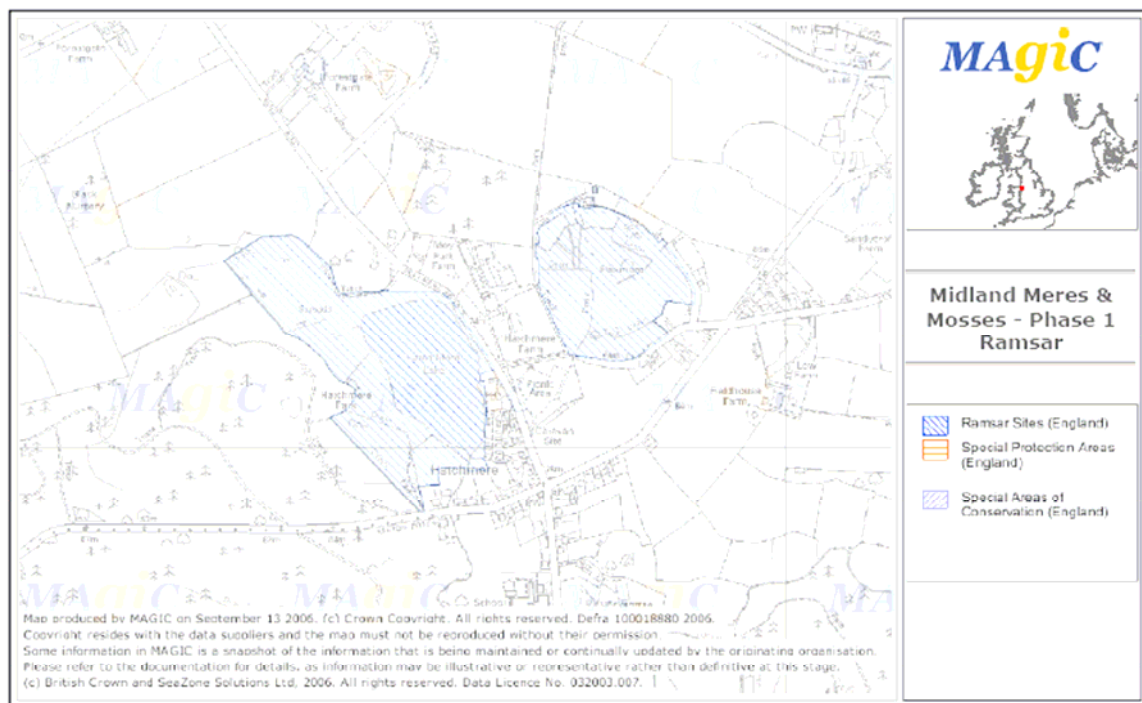
Vulnerability:

The site comprises parts of an extensive disused brickworks quarry excavated in glacial boulder-clay deposits east of Warrington. It is of importance for its calcareous grassland communities and because the site supports a large breeding population of great crested newts. Extraction of clay at different periods up to 1965 has left a mosaic of water-filled hollows and clay banks which now support a diversity of habitats of varying maturity. Warrington Borough Council owns and manages the site, and has a ranger based on-site. A possible conflict between grassland management and great crested newts has been identified; this is being addressed through contract research on the site. However, the great crested newt population is increasing at the site.

Midland Meres and Mosses – Phase I Ramsar

Date site designated as a Ramsar: 09 May 1994

Location:



Site location:

Latitude: 52 54 11 N

Longitude: 02 50 25 W

(This is the approximate central point of the SAC. In the case of large, linear or composite sites, this may not represent the location where a feature occurs within the SAC)

Site area (ha): 510.88

Overview:

The Meres & Mosses form a geographically discrete series of lowland open water and peatland sites in the north-west Midlands of England. These have developed in natural depressions in the glacial drift left by receding ice sheets which formerly covered the Cheshire/Shropshire Plain. The 16 component sites include open water bodies (meres), the majority of which are nutrient-rich with associated fringing habitats; reed swamps, fen, carr & damp pasture. Peat accumulation has resulted in nutrient poor peat bogs (mosses) forming in some sites in the fringes of meres or completely infilling basins. In a few cases the result is a floating quaking bog or schwingmoor. The wide range of resulting habitats support nationally important flora & fauna.

Justification

Ramsar criterion 1

The site comprises a diverse range of habitats from open water to raised bog.

Ramsar criterion 2

Supports a number of rare species of plants associated with wetlands including five nationally scarce species together with an assemblage of rare wetland invertebrates (three endangered insects and five other British Red Data Book species of invertebrates).

General Site Character (Wetland Types):

Freshwater lakes: permanent	35%
Freshwater marshes / pools: permanent	7.7%
Freshwater marshes / pools: seasonal / intermittent	2%
Peatlands (including peat bogs swamps, fens)	36.2%
Shrub-dominated wetlands	6.1%
Other	13%

Other site characteristics

Soil & geology:	acidic, basic, sand, clay, alluvium, peat, nutrient-rich, nutrient-poor, sandstone, sandstone/mudstone, gravel
Geomorphology & landscape:	lowland, hilly, floodplain, escarpment
Nutrient status:	eutrophic, mesotrophic, oligotrophic
pH:	acidic, circumneutral, strongly acidic
Salinity:	fresh
Soil:	mainly mineral, mainly organic
Water permanence:	usually permanent

Physical Features:

The Meres and Mosses of the north-west Midlands comprise a series of open water and peatland sites, most of which developed in natural depressions left by the retreating ice sheets at the end of the last Ice Age. There are over 60 open water sites, or 'meres', as well as a smaller number of peatland sites, known as 'mosses'.

Nationally important species occurring on the site.

Flora: Higher Plants.

Elatine hexandra, *Eleocharis acicularis*, *Cicuta virosa*, *Thelypteris palustris*, *Carex elongata*

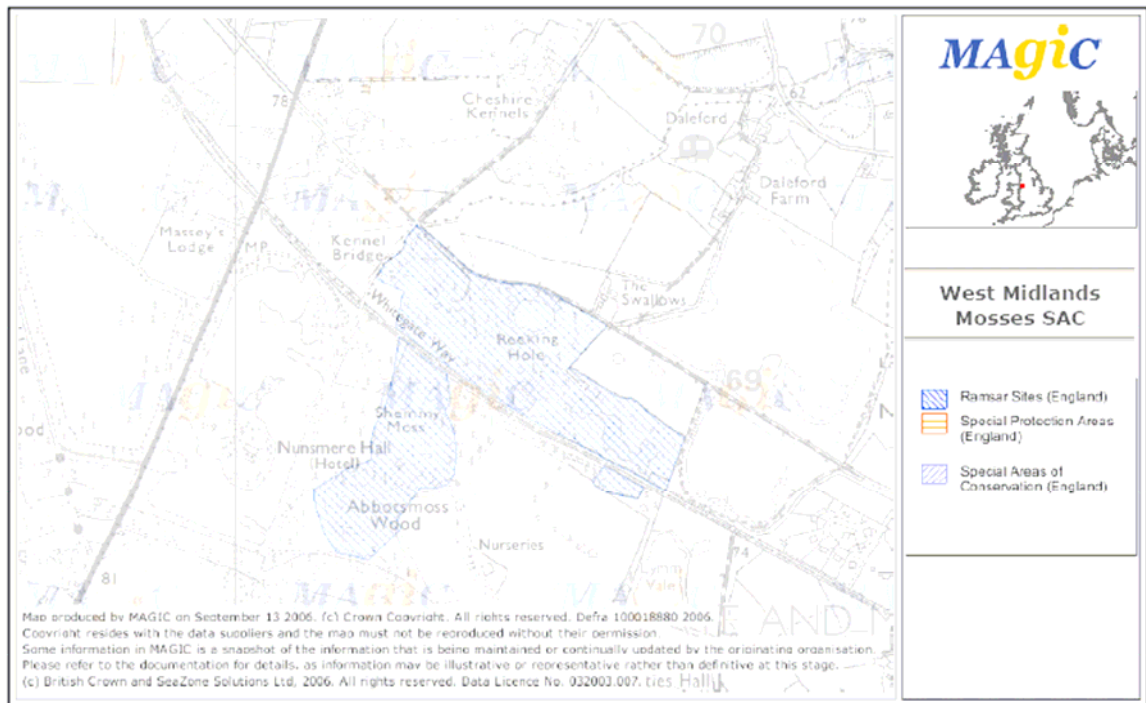
Fauna: Invertebrates.

Hagenella clathrata, *Limnophila fasciata*, *Cararita limnaea*, *Lathrobium rufipenne*, *Donacia aquatica*, *Prionocera pubescens*, *Gonomyia abbreviata*, *Sitticus floricola*

West Midlands Mosses SAC

Date site designated as a SAC: 04 2005

Location:



Site location:

Latitude: 52 51 04 N

Longitude: 01 57 40 W

(This is the approximate central point of the SAC. In the case of large, linear or composite sites, this may not represent the location where a feature occurs within the SAC)

Site area (ha): 184.18

General Site Character:

Inland water bodies (standing water, running water)	2.3%
Bogs. Marshes. Water fringed vegetation. Fens	35.5%
Heath. Scrub. Maquis and garrigue. Phygrana	5.5%
Humid grassland. Mesophile grassland	3.3%
Improved grassland	20.5%
Broad-leaved deciduous woodland	22.5%
Coniferous woodland	4.9%
Mixed woodland	3.3%
Other land (including towns, villages, roads, waste places, mines, industrial sites)	2.2%

Other site characteristics

Soil & geology:

Acidic, Nutrient-poor, Peat, Sand

Geomorphology & landscape:

Lowland

Annex I Habitats that are a primary reason for selection of this site:

Natural dystrophic lakes and ponds (Annex I – 3160)

- for which this is considered to be one of the best areas in the United Kingdom.

West Midlands Mosses contains three pools, one at Clarepool Moss and two at Abbots Moss, that are examples of **dystrophic lakes and ponds** in the lowlands of England and Wales, where this habitat type is rare. The lake at Clarepool Moss is unusual as a dystrophic type on account of its relatively base-rich character, which is reflected in the presence of a diverse fauna and flora. The two at Abbots Moss are more typical, base-poor examples. The dystrophic lakes and ponds at this site are associated with Schwingmoor development, a characteristic of this habitat type in the West Midlands. Schwingmoor is an advancing floating raft of bog-moss *Sphagnum*, often containing NVC type M3 *Eriophorum angustifolium* bog pool community, which grows from the edge of the pool and can completely cover over the pool; the site has also been selected for this

Transition mires and quaking bogs (Annex I – 7140)

- for which this is considered to be one of the best areas in the United Kingdom.

West Midlands Mosses represents Schwingmoor vegetation. Floating rafts of *Sphagnum*-dominated vegetation have developed over semi-liquid substrates within basins. In the UK this type of *Sphagnum*-dominated vegetation with a scatter of sedges *Carex* species and cranberry *Vaccinium oxycoccos* is confined to this part of England and mid-Wales.

Vulnerability:

Colonisation of open schwingmoors or *Sphagnum* lawns and rafts in the West Midland Mosses by birch and pine is controlled by works under Management Agreement or by National Nature Reserve management, and in liaison with the local wildlife trust at Abbots Moss. Several sources of nutrient enrichment, including atmospheric deposition of nutrients, pose a potential threat at these sites. A Management Agreement controls agricultural run-off at Chartley Moss. Trees at this site trap airborne nutrients and provide roost areas for birds, but the enrichment effect of both is only localised. At Abbots Moss the threat of enrichment from atmospheric sources has been reduced by clear-felling of basin slopes adjacent to the mires. All parts of that site are vulnerable to recreational disturbance, particularly the northern portion which is a scout camp.



REPORT TO: Executive Board

DATE: 21st December 2006

REPORTING OFFICER: Strategic Director, Environment

SUBJECT: Highway Skidding Resistance Policy

WARDS: All

1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 This report reviews the current position regarding the measurement and treatment of highway skidding resistance and proposes the introduction of a policy for analysing skid resistance data to produce programmes of treatment.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That the Skidding Resistance Policy submitted as an appendix to this report be adopted.

3.0 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 3.1 In 1998 the Council approved an overall policy document in relation to Highway Maintenance Strategy. Part of the strategy covered the method by which the measurement of skidding resistance of highway surfacing was to be carried out.
- 3.2 National guidance on skidding resistance has changed significantly since the Strategy was approved and a specific policy for analysing skid resistant data to produce programmes of treatment is now required.
- 3.3 The 2005/6 Local Transport Plan included the requirement for the preparation of a Highways Asset Management Plan. This will identify the extent of highway assets and their condition together with recommendations for maintenance to keep the asset in a suitable condition. The Plan requires that policies be established or reviewed to ensure that the correct processes are used in the maintenance of the Highway. This Skidding Policy will form part of a series of new policies that will evolve out of the development of the Asset Management Plan
- 3.4 The current skid resistant processes outlined in the present Strategy have been superseded by changes in national guidance and maintenance systems and is no longer wholly applicable to the Highway Network in Halton. New investigation levels have been identified and new surfacing materials and systems developed. The introduction of abrasive and cleaning systems can help restore surfaces to their original condition or road surfaces can be treated with several high performance

surfacing systems to provide a new layer of aggregate. These processes are now available as alternatives to resurfacing. The systems are however expensive to carry out and need to be correctly targeted to provide best value.

- 3.5 The new policy has been prepared take account of these developments. This document will meet current requirements and more importantly recognise the contribution of accident analysis to the assessment process. It was presented to the Urban Renewal Policy and Performance Board on 15th November 2006 where it was agreed that the Skidding Resistance Policy be recommended to the Executive Board for adoption.
- 3.6 Under the proposed policy sites identified as having low skidding resistance will now be correlated against road geometry, surface characteristics and also accident statistics. This will provide a mechanism by which the Highway Engineer can make a reasoned risk assessment to determine what treatment, if any, needs to be carried out at any particular location and at any point in time.

4.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Council is required to have in place a suitable policy. Failure to do so would leave the authority open to litigation and also breach its duty as Highway Authority.
- 4.2 This policy will enable clear identification of the priority sites for treatment but will be dependant upon the availability of resources. No direct financial implications will take place as a result of the Policy adoption.
- 4.3 There are no direct Social Inclusion or Crime and Disorder implications.
- 4.4 In targeting resources more precisely to the treatment of the Highway better use will be made of scarce aggregates and so deliver improvements to both Sustainability and Best Value in Highway Maintenance.

5.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The introduction of this policy is a major factor in the Asset Management process. The Skidding Resistance Policy is essential to the preparation of the LTP and will contribute to its assessment under the CPA process.

6.0 RISK ANALYSIS

- 6.1 The introduction of a contemporary policy that meets current practice is fundamental to the Council's duty to maintain the Highway Network. If the current methods were retained there would be significant risk of litigation in the event of road traffic accidents.

6.2 The Council has an obligation to carry out its duties to nationally agreed standards. This cannot be met under the current policy framework.

7.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES

7.1 There are no Equality and Diversity implications arising as a result of the proposed action.

8.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

Document	Place of Inspection	Contact Officer
Highway Maintenance Strategy Document (1998)	Rutland House	C Dutton Section Leader (Network)
Skidding Resistance Policy (2006)	Rutland House	C Dutton Section Leader (Network)
Highways Act 1980	Rutland House	C Dutton Section Leader (Network)
Well Maintained Highways, Code of Practice for Highways Maintenance Management, 2005 Edition, July 2005	Rutland House	C Dutton Section Leader (Network)
Design Manual for Roads and Bridges, Volume 7 Pavement Design and Maintenance, Section 3, Pavement Maintenance Assessment, Part 1, HD28/04 Skid Resistance.	Rutland House	C Dutton Section Leader (Network)
Design Manual for Roads and Bridges, Volume 7 Pavement Design and Maintenance, Section 5, Surfacing and Surfacing Materials, Interim Advice Note IAN 49/03 Use of Warning Signs for New Asphalt Road Surfaces.	Rutland House	C Dutton Section Leader (Network)
CSS Guidance Note, Skidding Resistance, May 2005	Rutland House	C Dutton Section Leader (Network)
'The Implementation Of A Skid Policy To Provide The Required Friction Demand On The Main Road Network In The United Kingdom' Ramesh Sinhal	Rutland House	C Dutton Section Leader (Network)
Road Death Investigation Manual 2001	Rutland House	C Dutton Section Leader (Network)
Highways Economics Note No.1 2004 Valuation of the Benefits of Prevention of road Accidents and Casualties Dec 2005	Rutland House	C Dutton Section Leader (Network)



Halton Borough Council
Environment Department
Highways Division

**SKIDDING
RESISTANCE
POLICY**

CONTENTS

	Page
Introduction	2
Aims and Objectives	3
Low Skid Resistance as a Factor in Crashes	4
Relationship Between Skid Resistance and Crashes	4
Economic Benefits	5
Definition of Deficient Site	5
Texture and PSV	6
Road Markings and Coloured Overlays	6
Skidding Policy Action Plan	11

INTRODUCTION

As the Highway Authority Halton has a duty under the Highways Act 1980 to maintain the highway in a condition that is safe and fit for purpose¹. Between 1994 and 2004 5414 personal injury crashes took place in on Halton's roads². These incidents resulted in 1301 people killed or seriously injured and 6894 slightly injured incurring a cost to the community of more than £34,000,000 every year. Many of these accidents took place in wet conditions or where skidding was regarded as a contributory factor.

An important aspect of maintaining the safe condition of the road is to provide an adequate wet road skid resistance. Studies have shown that improving skid resistance at targeted wet road crash locations can substantially reduce crash rates.

The Highway Authority is required to have in place a Policy governing the use of skidding resistance tests and the actions that arise from the survey data produced. This requirement is contained in The Code of Practice for Highway Maintenance³, which also recommends that a Policy be adopted as part of the Highways Asset Management Plan.

Levels of skidding resistance are best based on actual speeds rather than speed limits and this information can in some cases be derived from data collected from site. Data is not available for all locations however and the appropriate level of skidding resistance will need to be determined by the speed limit operating on each section of road wherever actual data has not been collected.

Guidelines for the minimum levels of skidding resistance at certain features already exist. New national investigatory levels have been published in HD 28/04 to supersede the earlier HD28/94. They are reproduced below in Table 1⁴. These investigatory levels are primarily set for use on trunk roads most of which are subject to the national 60-70mph speed limits. They can generally be applied to all local roads although the relevance to roads with 30-40 mph limits means that some modification could be applied in certain circumstances.

Achieving the required skid resistance assumes the use of high Polished Stone Value (PSV) aggregates that are both scarce and expensive. The aggregate generally used in highway surfacing cannot achieve the levels required to meet this high standard at all points on the Network. The implication of this is that all new controlled pedestrian crossings, together with new traffic signals and roundabouts in rural locations, will probably require anti-skid surfacing to be provided as part of its design. All other locations require checking to ensure they are above the recommended investigatory levels.

Note that the new guidance specifically excluded the issue of early skid resistance and that the guidance contained in Interim Advice Note IAN49/03 is applicable in these cases⁵. This policy recognises this requirement and its adoption will be incorporated into all future highway schemes.

The purpose of this document is to set down the Council's policy on skid resistance monitoring on adopted roads and the resultant action to be taken⁶. It is in line with the current legal requirements, procedures and technology⁷.

HD 28/04 requires that routine monitoring of skid resistance be carried out on Halton's 'A' and 'B' roads. The most appropriate method for this survey is by use of SCRIM. Where required by this policy testing may be extended to selected 'C' roads and unclassified road sites if considered appropriate and resources are available. This would be in addition to investigation of any specific locations where problems have already been identified, in line with good practice for the road safety policy and analysis of road accident statistics. Alternative testing methods using Pendulum and Griptester equipment may be used at specific locations if circumstances dictate.

Table 1
Site Categories and Investigatory Levels

Site category and definition		Investigatory Level at 50km/h							
		0.30	0.35	0.40	0.45	0.50	0.55	0.60	0.65
A	Motorway								
B	Dual carriageway non-event								
C	Single carriageway non-event								
Q	Approaches to and across minor and major junctions, approaches to roundabouts								
K	Approaches to pedestrian crossings and other high risk situations								
R	Roundabout								
G1	Gradient 5-10% longer than 50m								
G2	Gradient >10% longer than 50m								
S1	Bend radius <500m – dual carriageway								
S2	Bend radius <500m – single carriageway								

Notes:

1. Investigatory Levels are for the mean skidding resistance within the appropriate averaging length
2. Investigatory Levels for site categories A, B, and C are based on 100m averaging lengths (50m lengths for some Overseeing Organisations) or the length of the feature if it is shorter.
3. Investigatory Levels and averaging lengths for site categories Q, K, G and S are based on the 50m approach to the feature but this shall be extended when justified by local site characteristics.
4. Investigatory Levels for site category R are based on 10m lengths.
5. Residual lengths less than 50% of a complete averaging length may be attached to the penultimate full averaging length, providing the site category is the same.
6. As part of site investigation, individual values within each averaging length should be examined and the significance of any values which are substantially lower than the mean value assessed.

In addition to the predominantly reactive processes laid down later in this policy the Council also undertakes a proactive annual programme of surface treatments.

The surface-dressing element of the maintenance programme has several specific benefits:

- Increase in texture depth.
- Improvement of skidding resistance.
- Preservation of the fabric of the highway by sealing of the surface to prevent ingress of surface water.
- Improvement of visual appearance.

A limited area of highway is also treated each year by the replacement of part or all of its structural elements with new bituminous material. This process is mainly aimed at preservation of the structural integrity of the highway. These processes noticeably improve skidding resistance. In 2006/7 the cost of these elements of highway maintenance was £831,530.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The overall objectives of this policy are: -

- To ensure the Council meets its duty of care under the Highways Act (1980).
- To adopt a set of skid resistance investigatory levels comparable to those specified by the Highways Agency for Trunk Roads, Design Manual for Roads and Bridges, Volume 7, HD 28/04, and Well-maintained Highways, Code of Practice for Highway Maintenance Management.
- To adopt and specify appropriate standards for new and maintenance works to minimise potential skidding situations.
- To identify potential skidding crash sites and to take appropriate measures to minimise the risk of such crashes.
- To investigate reported crash sites, establish whether inadequate skid resistance could be a factor and recommend appropriate measures to remedy the situation.
- To analyse skid resistance survey measurements to identify deficient sites, and to erect warning signs where necessary.
- To investigate crash history at deficient sites to establish whether remedial treatment is necessary.
- To make the most cost effective improvement in wet skid resistance, and to prioritise sites for remedial treatment within the resources available.

LOW SKID RESISTANCE AS A FACTOR IN CRASHES

Police reports are the main source of crash data and are reliant on the officer at the scene recording all the important factors⁸. As a result low or differential skidding resistance does not often appear in reports as a primary cause of crashes even though skidding was deemed to have taken place. It may, however, be a secondary factor, which is important but often unrecognised. Most roads in the Halton have a skid resistance which is adequate for normal driving and the majority of drivers are aware that roads are more slippery when wet, but tend to expect a certain level of friction provision, and drive accordingly.

In emergency situations frictional demand is much greater, even so the primary cause of skidding crashes is attributed to driver error, excessive speed, poor signing etc and not the skid resistance of the surface.

A higher skid resistance will not prevent the emergency situation from arising nor will it improve driver behaviour, judgement or capability. It can, however, very often mitigate the effects of driver error and reduce the risk of the crash occurring or at least reduce the severity of a collision.

It is important to note that the range of treatments for deficient road surfaces is limited. The use of high friction dressings and specialist treatments is recognised as one of the most effective. Other treatments involving mechanical, chemical or high pressure scarifying or cleansing of the road surface can in some cases restore the SFC of the existing aggregate. Also of use is the provision of additional signing and traffic calming features that can reduce overall traffic speeds. In some cases this can prove to be more effective than merely creating an environment to allow for and in some cases encourage poor or irresponsible driving attitudes.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SKID RESISTANCE AND CRASHES

The relationship between skid resistance and potential crash sites is not precise because of the nature of skid resistance as a factor in crashes.

There is no simple dividing line between a 'safe' and 'unsafe' skid resistance condition for a particular section of road but research has been carried out to establish some broad outlines. In the mid 1980s a study by the DoT showed that for some site categories there was a sharp increase in crash

risk below certain levels of Mean Summer Scrim Coefficient (MSSC). The results of this study were used to define the Investigatory MSSC in originally in HD28/94 and Delivering Best Value in Highway Maintenance - Code of Practice for Maintenance Management and subsequently HD 28/04, and Well-maintained Highways, Code of Practice for Highway Maintenance Management. The levels were based on a risk analysis.

ECONOMIC BENEFITS

Skid resistance improvements can be implemented at relatively low cost by use of Surface dressing, retexturing and other means and can produce very substantial benefits to the community in terms of savings in crash costs, and in the reduction of crashes resulting in personal injury.

The monetary value of road crashes has been estimated by the Department of Transport and is updated annually. This is shown in table 2 below. The values take into account medical costs, police and administration costs, damage costs and lost output; they also include a value for the human costs (pain, grief and suffering)⁹.

Table 2

Crash Costs by Severity (2000 prices)

Severity	Cost per crash £ (2000)	Cost per crash £ (2004)
Fatal	1,323,880	1,384,463
Serious	154,110	155,563
Slight	15,380	11,991
Average for any injury crash	52,070	43,649

It can be seen from table 2 that the cost varies considerably depending on the severity of a crash.

Various studies have shown that expenditure on compliance with skid resistance standards has been cost effective. This is particularly noticeable at high stress sites such as those at approaches to traffic signals and pedestrian crossings since crash densities are high at these locations. Achieving the appropriate skid resistance requirement has produced a high benefit/cost ratio particularly in urban areas.

Taking this idea even further, research carried out at TRL has calculated that an increase in MSSC of 0.10 on the road network in Great Britain would reduce the wet road skidding rate from 35.4% to 22.2%. Taken over the 1994 to 2004 period this could have reduced the cost to the community from £375,543,260 to £235,510,180, a saving of £140,033,080 in Halton. This equates to between £12,000,000 and £13,000,000 per annum.

The increase in MSSC of .10 would require the use of higher cost anti-skid treatments, which would lead to prohibitively high initial expenditure and future long-term maintenance costs. Thus it is recommended that these treatments should be restricted to high-risk sites to give the best cost/benefit ratio. To treat the approach to a pedestrian crossing for example costs initially in the region of between £5,000 and £10,000 dependant upon the road type and category with subsequent long-term maintenance costs if anti skid surfacing was applied. Most treatments of this type have a limited life of between 5 and 10 years before replacement is required to maintain the MSSC.

DEFINITION OF DEFICIENT SITES

In order to consider any appropriate course of action where a site is considered to be deficient it is important to define what is meant by the term ‘ Deficient Site’. A site that is simply below the Investigatory Level may not be deficient because as its title implies this is a level below which further examination of a site is necessary.

To determine if a site requires treatment a risk analysis should be carried out taking account of all relevant factors involving a degree of subjective judgement, which may vary.

A site is deemed to be Deficient when: -

- The mean MSSC over the assessment length (usually 50 or 100 metres depending on location and site category) is at or below the Investigatory Level AND two or more wet road injury crashes have occurred in the preceding three years AND the proportion of wet road crashes is greater than 30% of all road crashes.
- The mean MSSC over the assessment length is more than 0.10 below the investigatory level AND one wet road injury crash has occurred at the location in the preceding three years.
- The mean MSSC is more than 0.20 below the Investigatory Level over the assessment length or over any continuous portion, 30 metres or more in length, within the assessment length, regardless of the past crash record.

A site is deemed to be Under Investigation when: -

- The mean MSSC over the assessment length or over any continuous portion, 30 metres or more in length, is between 0.00 and 0.20 below the Investigatory Level.
- If there are a high proportion of wet crashes, even though the SCRIM is above Investigatory Level.
- If any single value is 0.20 below the Investigatory Level.

TEXTURE AND PSV

Both the texture depth and the polishing characteristics of the stone used in the surfacing material have an effect on the skidding resistance of the road. It is important therefore that the correct standards are achieved when any surfacing material is laid and maintained thereafter. In view of this Table 3 shows the requirements for texture depth and Table 4 shows the polished stone values.

Table 3
Standards for Minimum Texture Depth of Bituminous Surfacing

Site Category	Speed mph	Minimum Texture Depth (Sand Patch) mm	
		New Works	Investigatory Level
High Texture	>60	1.5	0.95
Medium Texture	30 - 59	1.2	0.8
Low Texture	<30	0.9	0.65

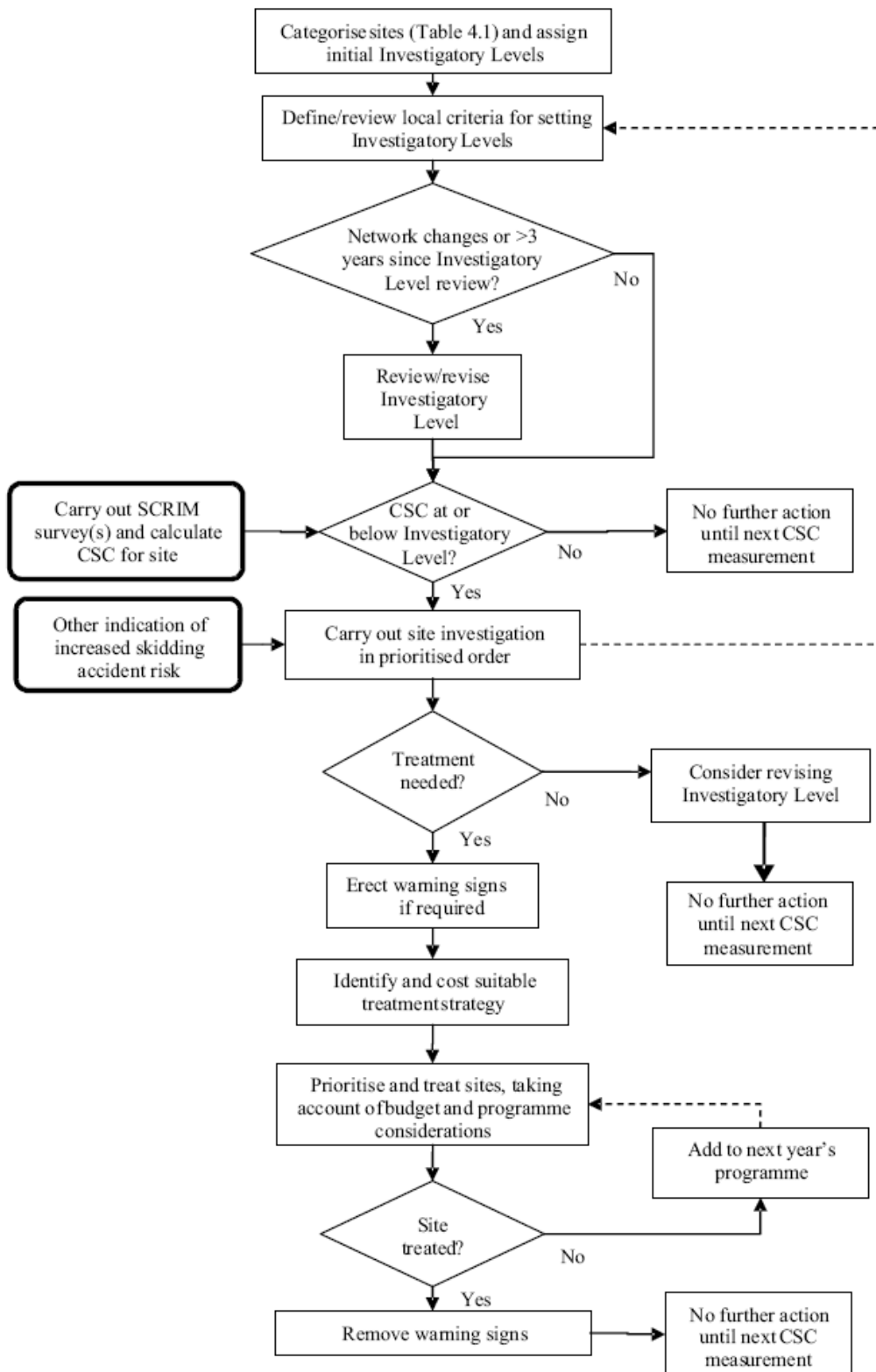
ROADMARKINGS AND COLOURED OVERLAYS

It is important when considering road markings and coloured overlays that account is taken of the skid resistance requirements of each location and that appropriate specifications are used to minimise differentials. Under normal circumstances, however, grey or yellow bauxite should be used so as not to detract from the required visual effect of coloured surfacing at specific sites.

Table 4**Minimum PSV Required for New Wearing Course**

IL Band	Default IL	Site Categories	Site Definitions	Traffic (cv/lane/day) at design life									
				0 - 250	251 - 500	501 - 750	751 - 1000	1001 - 2000	2001 - 3000	3001 - 4000	4001 - 5000	5001 - 6000	over 6000
I	0.35	A,B	Motorway (mainline), Dual carriageway (non-event)	50	50	50	50	50	55	60	60	65	65
Ia	0.35	A1	Motorway mainline, 300m approaches to slip roads	50	50	50	55	55	60	60	65	65	65
II	0.40	C,D	Single carriageways (non-event), dual carriageway approaches to minor junctions	50	50	50	55	60	65	65	65	65	68+
III	0.45	E,F,G1, H1	Single carriageway minor Junctions, approaches to and across major junctions, gradients 5-10% >50m (dual, downhill only; single, uphill and downhill), bends <250m radius >40mph.	55	60	60	65	65	68+	68+	68+	68+	70+
IV	0.50	G2	Gradients >50m long >10%	60	68+	68+	70+	70+	70+	70+	70+	70+	70+
V	0.55	J,K	Approaches to roundabouts, traffic signals, pedestrian crossings, railway level crossings and similar.	68+	68+	68+	70+	70+	70+	70+	70+	70+	70+
VI	0.55(20kph)	L	Roundabouts	50 - 70+	55 - 70+	60 - 70+	60 - 70+	60 - 70+	65 - 70+	65 - 70+			
VII	0.60(20kph)	H2	Bends < 100m radius	55 - 70+	60 - 70+	60 - 70+	65 - 70+	65 - 70+	65 - 70+	65 - 70+			
Where 68+ material is listed in this table, none of the three most recent results from consecutive tests relating to the aggregate to be supplied shall fall below 68.													
Throughout this table 70+ means that specialised high-skidding resistance surfacings complying with MCHW 1 Clause 924 will be required.													
For site categories L and H2, a range is given and the PSV should be chosen on the basis of local experience of material performance. In the absence of other information, the highest values should be used.													

Flow Diagram to Identify and Treat Sites with Skidding Resistance Problems



SKIDDING POLICY ACTION PLAN

- SCRIM surveys should be carried out annually on the ‘A’ and ‘B’ road network to establish SCRIM levels and therefore analyse ‘Deficient Sites’ and ‘Sites Under Investigation’.
- Crash records should be monitored to establish areas with a high proportion of wet crashes.
- Investigations into SCRIM warning/investigatory levels and site layout may need to be carried out/updated, if crashes are found to concentrate in certain areas.
- The crash record of high stress sites with low SCRIM levels will be analysed and assessed by Highways and Traffic Engineers.
- Other sites will be considered in the routine programme for skid resistance improvement to make the most cost effective improvement in wet skid resistance, and to prioritise sites for remedial treatment within the resources available.
- Sites that meet the criteria set out in this policy will be placed in a priority listing and included in the maintenance programme with the appropriate treatment.
- Additional SCRIM surveys of ‘C’ roads shall be undertaken if the level of accidents indicates a significant need.
- A risk assessment will be undertaken of those sites at or below Investigation Level where treatment is not deemed necessary under the policy.
- A proactive policy of surface dressing and highway surfacing will take place annually to improve the overall level of skidding resistance of the highway network. The programme will take specific note of the geometry of the highway layout and the current accident data in its formulation.

References:

1. Highways Act 1980 (TSO)
2. Cheshire County Constabulary Accident Statistics
3. Well Maintained Highways, Code of Practice for Highways Maintenance Management, 2005 Edition, July 2005 (The Stationery Office)
4. Design Manual for Roads and Bridges, Volume 7 Pavement Design and Maintenance, Section 3, Pavement Maintenance Assessment, Part 1, HD28/04 Skid Resistance. (Highways Agency)
5. Design Manual for Roads and Bridges, Volume 7 Pavement Design and Maintenance, Section 5, Surfacing and Surfacing Materials, Interim Advice Note IAN 49/03 Use of Warning Signs for New Asphalt Road Surfaces. (Highways Agency)
6. CSS Guidance Note, Skidding Resistance, May 2005 (County Surveyors Society)
7. ‘The Implementation Of A Skid Policy To Provide The Required Friction Demand On The Main Road Network In The United Kingdom’ Ramesh Sinhal (Highways Agency)
8. Road Death Investigation Manual 2001 (Association of Chief Police Officers – National Operations Faculty)
9. Highways Economics Note No.1 2004 Valuation of the Benefits of Prevention of road Accidents and Casualties Dec 2005 (Department for Transport)