



# **Stoneygate Regeneration Framework Supplementary Planning Document**

## **Screening Report**

**for Sustainability Appraisal (SA)  
and  
Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)  
and  
Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)**

**May 2020**

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## A. INTRODUCTION

1. Preston City Council is seeking to adopt the Stoneygate Regeneration Framework as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) to supplement the following adopted parent plan policies:
  - a) Preston [City Centre Plan](#) (ACCP) (an area action plan to 2026), adopted June 2016:
    - EV1: Main Shopping and Other Main Town Centre Uses,
    - SP2: Public Realm Improvements,
    - SP4: Housing Allocations,
    - OP3: City Centre North,
    - OP4: Stoneygate, and
    - OP5: Horrocks Quarter
  - b) [Preston Local Plan](#) 2012-26 (Site Allocations and Development Management Policies), adopted July 2015 (PLP):
    - AD1(a): Development within (or in close proximity to) the Existing Residential Area, and
    - EN2: Protection and Enhancement of Green Infrastructure
  - c) Central Lancashire [Core Strategy](#), adopted July 2012:
    - Policy 1: Locating Growth
2. Whilst the Planning Act 2008 and the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2012 removed the mandatory requirement for preparing a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) for SPDs, local authorities are still required to screen SPDs to ensure that the legal requirements for SA are met where there are impacts that have not been covered in the SA of the parent plan or where a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is required under the SEA Directive<sup>1</sup>.
3. The Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive, 2001/42/EC, is a European Union requirement that seeks to provide a high level of protection of the environment by integrating environmental considerations into the process of preparing certain plans and programmes. This involves ensuring that, in accordance with the Directive, an environmental assessment is carried out of certain plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment.
4. Before deciding whether significant environment effects are likely, the local planning authority should take into account the criteria specified in schedule 1 to the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, which, in turn, are based on Article 3(5) and Annex

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<sup>1</sup> European Directive 2001/42/EC transposed into UK law by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.

II of the SEA Directive and consult the consultation bodies (Natural England, Historic England, and the Environment Agency) during the screening process.

5. The criteria relate to (i) the scope and influence of the document, and (ii) the type of impact and area likely to be affected.
6. This screening report has been prepared in support of the SPD to establish whether there are impacts arising from the SPD that have not been covered in the higher level SA of the parent plans, and whether there are likely to be any significant environmental effects that would require a full SA/SEA for the SPD.

## **B. OVERVIEW OF THE SPD**

7. The purpose of the SPD is to assist developers in the preparation and submission of planning applications in the Central Preston strategic location. Whilst Policy 1 of the adopted Central Lancashire Core Strategy (CS) identified the area as a strategic location for growth and investment, the key policy hooks which have prompted the Council to seek adoption of the Regeneration Framework as an SPD are Policies SP2, SP4, OP3, OP4 and OP5 of the ACCP which was adopted in June 2016 and which sets out the specific criteria to be considered in the assessment of development proposals in the area. Policy SP2 identifies via the ACCP Policies Map, the locations where public realm and pedestrian priority improvements are supported, including areas within the Regeneration Framework area. Policy SP4 sets out the housing allocations in the city centre. The City Centre Policies Map identifies the city centre boundary, the Primary Shopping Area and the extension to the Primary Shopping Area. It also defines designations in the area including the city centre Opportunity Areas and defines the sites of the city centre housing allocations.
8. Housing as part of mixed-use developments is appropriate in principle in the Stoneygate Opportunity Area, where improved and enhanced inter-connectivity is sought. Four of the City Centre's six housing allocations are located in the Stoneygate Opportunity Area of the City Centre, as identified on the [City Centre Plan Policies Map](#). An additional housing allocation (SP4.6) is located in the Stoneygate Regeneration Framework area, within the Horrocks Quarter Opportunity Area of the City Centre.
9. Policies OP3, OP4 and OP5 of the City Centre Plan, set out the types of uses that are appropriate in principle in these City Centre Opportunity Areas.
10. Policy OP3 seeks that development proposals across the City Centre North Opportunity Area seek to enhance public realm, environmental quality and pedestrian connectivity through the site, ensuring linkage from the bus station into the core of the city centre. In all cases, development must protect, conserve and enhance heritage assets and their settings in accordance with Local Plan Policy EN8.
11. The SPD supplements the above policies identified in paragraph 1 above, by providing additional indicative guidance setting out how the Council would like to see its vision for the area, as set out in these policies, implemented. Given the scale of development and the lengthy timescales involved, the SPD is a fluid document which provides indicative guidance for development and general design principles. The SPD will therefore assist in the delivery of the co-ordinated and comprehensive development of the Stoneygate Regeneration Framework area including for

infrastructure as indicated in Policy SP2: Public Realm Improvements. It will not in itself introduce any new policies or allocate land and it will not form part of the statutory development plan. However once consulted upon and subsequently adopted, the SPD will be afforded significant weight as a material consideration in the determination of planning applications in the area.

### C. SCREENING OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR A SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL (SA)

1. Whilst there is no statutory reason to undertake an SA for SPDs, the Council has still considered whether a full SA/SEA is required.
2. The impacts of the above policies are set out in the Central Lancashire Core Strategy Sustainability Appraisal (March 2011), and in the reports for the Preston Local Plan, adopted July 2015 and the City Centre Plan (SA dated October 2014), adopted June 2016. These documents were subject to Sustainability Appraisal at a number of stages during their production and each theme / individual policy has been assessed against a number of social, environmental and economic sustainability objectives. In addition there was a Central Lancashire Core Strategy Evidence Gathering Sustainability Appraisal (March 2011), and a Central Lancashire Core Strategy Health Impact Assessment (November 2010). Equality impact assessment (EqIA) was completed on the parent policy documents of the City Centre Plan (EqIA dated October 2014, adopted June 2016), the Preston Local Plan (adopted 2 July 2015) and the Central Lancashire Core Strategy (EqIA dated November 2010, Core Strategy adopted July 2012).
3. The associated documents to this SPD identify whether adoption of the SPD will result in any additional impacts on the sustainability objectives. Although it will provide indicative guidance on the use of part of the city centre and part of its surrounding area and on small project areas within the Regeneration Framework area (i.e. the Stoneygate Regeneration Framework provides indicative guidance on what type and amount of uses could be achieved at different sites), this SPD and the Regeneration Framework are not the driving policy documents.
4. The principle of the creation of an Urban Village in the Stoneygate area by encouraging housing proposals to explore opportunities for improved and enhanced inter-connectivity, adopting effective place-making principles, is set out in Policy OP4 (Stoneygate) of the City Centre Plan. The SPD only adds clarity to the policies of the City Centre Plan, the Preston Local Plan and the Core Strategy, as pertain to the Regeneration Framework area and the types of development and public realm that could be provided.
5. **Table 1** identifies the relevant policies of the parent plans and identifies whether the adoption of the Stoneygate SPD is likely to result in any additional impacts on sustainability objectives.

**Table 1: Summary of assessment of effects of the Stoneygate Regeneration Framework SPD**

Parent policies	Summary of assessment of effects of the Stoneygate Regeneration Framework SPD	Will the SPD further impact on SA objectives?
<p>Central Lancashire Core Strategy, adopted July 2012; Policy 1: Locating Growth</p> <p>Preston Local Plan 2012-26 (Site Allocations and Development Management Policies), adopted July 2015:</p> <p>AD1(a) EN2</p> <p>Preston City Centre Plan, adopted June 2016:</p> <p>EV1 SP2 SP4 OP3 OP4 OP5</p>	<p><u>Social</u></p> <p>The SPD guidance will have a <b>major positive social effect in the long term</b>. Development of the strategic site will deliver infrastructure that will benefit the whole city and will provide much needed high quality housing, including affordable housing. Development of the site will deliver the necessary housing development and infrastructure, including public realm and improvements to pedestrian and cycling infrastructure, which would help to in part offset any additional traffic generated in the area as a result of development in the area.</p> <p><u>Environmental</u></p> <p>The SPD guidance will have a <b>neutral effect</b>. The appropriateness of the city centre as a strategic location for growth and investment is established in Policy 1 of the adopted Central Lancashire Core Strategy. AQMA 1 is located at Lychgate, just off Church Street, which is entirely within the Stoneygate Regeneration Framework area. Most of the western half of AQMA 5, at London Road, is located in the Stoneygate Regeneration Framework area. The city centre is the most accessible location in the city by sustainable transport modes and is also the most sustainable location in the city for development. Development of the site will deliver the necessary infrastructure, including public realm and improvements to pedestrian and cycling infrastructure. Suds principles will be applied where appropriate and viable. The content of the SPD is entirely in accordance with the parent plans and there will therefore be no further significant social, environmental or economic effects arising from the SPD that have not already been appraised and mitigated through the Core Strategy SA.</p> <p><u>Economic</u></p> <p>The SPD guidance will have a <b>minor positive effect</b>. Development of the site for housing, public realm improvements and improved infrastructure may lead to an increase in economic activity in the area and in the rest of the city centre, increasing the attractiveness of the city centre as a place to invest, thereby improving city centre employment opportunities.</p>	<p><b>No.</b></p> <p>The SPD will not have any significant environmental, social or economic effects beyond those of the parent policies it supplements. The SPD will not create new policies or allocate land and will provide additional guidance to the adopted policies contained within the parent DPDs.</p>

Conclusion of screening for SA

- 6. As demonstrated in Table 1 above, the Council has determined that the adoption of the SPD is unlikely to have any significant environmental, social, or economic effects beyond those of the parent policies it supplements. Therefore it will not have any additional impacts on sustainability objectives that will require a further SA being carried out as a result of the SPD.
- 7. In coming to this conclusion the Council is mindful that the SPD will not create new policies or allocate land and serves only to expand on existing policy within its parent documents [the Core Strategy (Policy 1), the PLP and the ACCP] which were subject to an SA and were found sound. It is considered that the Stoneygate Regeneration Framework does not introduce any new issues that have not previously been assessed in the SA of the parent documents.

**D. SCREENING OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR A STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (SEA)**

- 8. Whilst SPDs do not statutorily require an SA, they may in exceptional circumstances still require an SEA if they are likely to have significant environmental effects. The EAPPR 2004 advises that an SEA is unlikely to be required where a SPD deals only with a small area at local level. Although the SA of the October 2014 ACCP included a detailed assessment of the environmental effects of the themes of the City Centre Plan, in order to meet the requirements of the EAPPR 2004 and the SEA Directive the City Council must still screen the SPD to determine whether there are likely to be any significant environmental effects arising from the SPD which would require an SEA in their own right.
- 9. The likelihood of significant environmental effects should be determined by a specified set of criteria as set out in Schedule 1 of the EAPPR 2004, in consultation with the Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England. Running alongside the statutory consultation period for the SPD, each of the aforementioned statutory consultees was consulted directly in relation to this screening report.
- 10. The responses received are summarised in **Table 2**, below.

**Table 2: Statutory consultation: responses**

<b>Consultee</b>	<b>Response</b>
Environment Agency	No response received.
Natural England	No response received.
Historic England	No comments made on screening report. Comments on SPD - Summary of positive support: Overall aims and language of the draft SPD, clear overall vision. Draft SPD seeks to both preserve heritage assets and seeks to encourage a proactive and progressive approach to heritage, and to harness the positive benefit that it can provide.

	Suggestions summary: The SPD therefore represents a holistic plan for the regeneration of the Stoneygate area, but it could offer greater detail as to how this will be successfully achieved. Support the sentiment of what is proposed, we would consider that the framework could be improved by more in depth consideration of the individual elements of the overall vision.
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11. The draft Screening Report was updated to reflect that no comments were made by the statutory bodies (above) on the Screening Report. The City Council's updated screening assessment of the likely significant effects of the SPD against the relevant criteria in Schedule 1 of the EAPPR 2004 is shown in **Table 3**, below.

**Table 3: Screening for Significant Environmental Effects in accordance with the SEA Directive**

Criteria	Assessment of SPD against the criteria in Schedule 1 of the EAPPR 2004	Will the SPD have a significant environmental impact?
<b>1. The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular to:</b>		
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.	This SPD provides guidance on the application of policies which are defined in the ACCP. The SPD will not set new policy or allocate new resources. It will provide a finer grain of guidance to the ACCP but will not extend or broaden the application or purpose of the parent policies. The ACCP has already been subject to a SA, incorporating the requirements of SEA.	No.
b) The degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in the hierarchy.	This SPD sits at the lowest level in the hierarchy of planning policy documents and will provide supplementary guidance to assist in the delivery of the aspirations of the ACCP. It will be a material consideration in the decision making process but will not form part of the Development Plan for Preston. It will influence planning applications for sites within the Stoneygate Regeneration Framework Area in line with the ACCP and other relevant policies, but it will not influence other plans and programmes.	No.
c) The relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development.	This SPD provides guidance on the implementation of the ACCP, which was prepared in conformity with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)'s requirement for a presumption in favour of sustainable development and was subject to a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) incorporating the requirements of SEA. The SPD will contribute positively to the integration of environmental considerations and promoting sustainable development. It will provide a indicative guidance for development in the area as envisaged in the ACCP.	No.



Criteria	Assessment of SPD against the criteria in Schedule 1 of the EAPPR 2004	Will the SPD have a significant environmental impact?
d) Environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme.	There are no specific environmental problems that are relevant to adoption of the Regeneration Framework as a SPD. SUDs principles will be applied across the site where suitable, viable and appropriate.	No.
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).	The SPD seeks to provide further details to implementation of the ACCP. Both the ACCP and the SPD comply with the regulations.	No.
<b>2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to:</b>		
a) The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects.	The proposed developments which will be influenced by the guidance in the SPD are likely to be in place for a number of decades. However the SPD only provides guidance on the implementation of the ACCP and does not itself lead to development. Policy 1 of the adopted Central Lancashire Core Strategy identifies the area as a Strategic Location for growth and investment, and the ACCP sets the principles and criteria for development in the area. The SPD is unlikely to give rise to any significant effects on the environment beyond those identified in the SA of the ACCP.	No.
b) The cumulative nature of the effects.	The SPD only provides guidance on the implementation of the ACCP and does not itself lead to development. The SPD is unlikely to result in significant effects beyond those identified in the SAs of the adopted Core Strategy and the ACCP.	No.
c) The transboundary nature of the effects.	The SPD is unlikely to result in significant effects beyond those identified in the SAs of the adopted Core Strategy and the ACCP.	No.
d) The risks to human health or the environment (for example due to accidents).	There are no perceived risks to human health arising from the SPD. The SPD would encourage city centre housing development and the provision of improved cycling, pedestrian and public realm infrastructure, thereby potentially positively impacting on mental health through encouraging human interaction, the provision and enhancement of green infrastructure and potentially improving the physical safety of pedestrians and cyclists.	No

Criteria	Assessment of SPD against the criteria in Schedule 1 of the EAPPR 2004	Will the SPD have a significant environmental impact?
e) The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected).	The geographical area (Central Preston Strategic location and the City Centre) and the size and scale of development (the number of houses and the required infrastructure) were established in the higher level SA's of the adopted Core Strategy and the ACCP, and which were subject to SA's.	No.
f) The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to: i) Special nature characteristics or cultural heritage; ii) Exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values; or iii) Intensive land use.	The SPD applies to development primarily within the City Centre area of the Central Preston strategic location, which has already been considered appropriate for development in the adopted Core Strategy and ACCP. The SPD will not give rise to any significant impacts other than those fully considered in the parent documents.  Heritage assets, including Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas and the Stoneygate area of historic importance within the City Centre, are identified in the ACCP. For clarity, and to help to guide development, the Listed Buildings in the area are identified in the Stoneygate Regeneration Framework.	No.
g) The effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.	There are no landscapes of national or international recognition that will be affected by the SPD. The majority of the Stoneygate Regeneration Framework area is brownfield land. Whilst the Cardinal Newman College land contains Green Infrastructure and there is adjoining Green Infrastructure at Smith's recreation ground, the SPD will not give rise to any significant impacts other than those fully considered in the parent documents, which were subject to SA's.	No.

### Conclusion of SEA screening

12. As demonstrated in the screening assessment in Table 3 (above) the Council has determined that the adoption of the Stoneygate Regeneration Framework SPD is unlikely to have significant effects on the environment since it only provides supplementary indicative guidance to how the Council would like to see the Policies of the parent documents, particularly the ACCP, implemented. It does not introduce any new policies or allocate land, and will not form part of the statutory development plan.
  
13. The SA for the ACCP<sup>2</sup> (October 2014), the Preston Local Plan and the Central Lancashire Core Strategy<sup>3</sup> (March 2011) has already met the requirements of SEA in terms of procedure and scope. The SA of the ACCP included the effects of the creation of an Urban Village at Stoneygate, the Opportunity Areas at Stoneygate, City Centre North and the Horrocks Quarter and of the city centre housing allocations. The supporting indicative content of the SPD does not conflict with any of the parent policies and it will not have any significant impacts that have not already been covered in the higher level SA of the parent plans. It is therefore not considered necessary to carry out a further SEA for this SPD.

<sup>2</sup> Preston City Centre Plan SA Screening Assessment Update, October 2014

<sup>3</sup> Central Lancashire Core Strategy Sustainability Appraisal (March 2011)

## E. HABITATS REGULATIONS ASSESSMENT

14. In accordance with The Conservation of Natural Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (SI No. 2010/490), the Council is required to undertake a screening exercise of the 'likely significant effects' of relevant plans or projects on European (Natura 2000) designated habitats. Plans or projects can only be approved where it has been satisfied that there will be no adverse effect on the integrity of European nature conservation sites.
15. The regulations state that the Council must assess, through production of a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) the potential effects of its land use plans against the conservation objectives of any sites designated for their nature conservation importance.
16. The purpose of this Screening Assessment is not to conclude that the Stoneygate Regeneration Framework SPD does not need to be subject to HRA, rather to determine whether the statutory planning framework that already exists in Preston has sufficiently considered these matters to the extent that a separate HRA for the SPD would not be justified.
17. Although there are no designated Ramsar / Natura 2000 sites located within the city of Preston, it is important to ensure that the SPD does not detrimentally affect such designated areas further afield. The appropriateness of the city centre as a strategic location for growth and investment is established in Policy 1 of the adopted Central Lancashire Core Strategy. The HRA concluded that the Core Strategy is unlikely to have a significant impact on any European designated habitat, namely the Ribble and Alt Estuaries Special Protection Area (SPA).
18. Throughout their preparation the Core Strategy, the Preston Local Plan and the City Centre Plan have been subject to HRA. HRA screening<sup>4</sup>, concluded that neither of the documents (the CS or the ACCP) nor the Preston Local Plan<sup>5</sup> would have a significant impact on any European site and that no further assessment was needed. As such all the policies could be "screened out" and it was not necessary to move to the Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment.
19. The content of the SPD is entirely in accordance with the parent plans and there will therefore be no further significant social, environmental or economic effects arising from the SPD that have not already been appraised and mitigated through the Core Strategy SA. Given the SPD does not lead to any development itself, and serves only to provide indicative guidance to achieve the aims of the parent policies, the SPD is unlikely to have any significant effects above or beyond those considered in the assessment of the parent plans. The SPD will not therefore trigger the need for an Appropriate Assessment.
20. On this basis, it is the Council's opinion that the Stoneygate Regeneration Framework SPD does not need to be subject to further HRA. This is not because the Council believe the SPD should not be subject to HRA, rather that the statutory planning framework that already exists in Preston has sufficiently considered these matters to the extent that a separate HRA for the SPD would not be justified.

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<sup>4</sup> Preston City Centre Plan SA Screening Assessment Update, October 2014

<sup>5</sup> PLP Habitats Regulations Appropriate Assessment Screening Report, June 2013; addendum report, June 2014; further screening report for the Main Modifications.

## **F. CONCLUSION AND SCREENING OUTCOME**

21. As a result of the above assessments it is considered that the Stoneygate Regeneration Framework SPD will not be likely to have any significant environmental, social or economic effects that have not already been covered in the SA of the parent documents. As such the SPD will not trigger the need for an SA.
22. Notwithstanding the above assessment, the SPD has also been screened for significant environmental effects in accordance with the requirements of the SEA Directive and the EAPPR 2004. The required statutory consultation bodies have also been consulted in accordance with the regulations and this screening report has been updated (May 2020) to reflect that no comments were received on the screening report.
23. The SPD only provides supplementary indicative guidance to assist in the delivery of the principles of adopted Core Strategy Policy 1 and of the principles and the policies that have already been established in the ACCP and the Preston Local Plan (PLP). It is considered that the SPD will not itself have any significant environmental effects and will not trigger the need for an SEA.
24. It is concluded therefore that neither an SA nor an SEA is required for adoption of the Stoneygate Regeneration Framework SPD.