

Ipswich Borough Council

Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening Report for the Ipswich Borough Council Draft Local List (Buildings of Townscape Interest) Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

Introduction

Ipswich Borough Council is preparing a Draft Local List (Buildings of Townscape Interest) Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), to support the implement Policy DM9 Buildings of Townscape Interest, set out in the Ipswich Local Plan (2017).

Policy DM9 Buildings and Structures of Townscape Interest state that:

“There is a presumption in favour of retaining and repairing buildings and structures of local townscape interest. Proposals involving the loss of such buildings or structures will only be permitted if it can be demonstrated by thorough analysis in the Design and Access Statement that the replacement building(s) or structure(s) is of an equal or higher standard of design and incorporates sustainability features.

The Council acknowledges the townscape importance of buildings and structures of local interest which have no other statutory protection, and encourages their retention and upkeep. In situations where the benefits of a replacement development outweigh the retention of an existing building or structure on the local list, the Council will expect a high standard of design.

The Local List (Buildings of Townscape Interest) supplementary planning document was published in September 2013 (and revised in July 2016) updating the previous list and identifying buildings and structures of particular local interest.”

The key objectives of the Draft SPD are to:

- Raise awareness of the many unlisted but interesting and locally notable historic assets which make up the towns environment,
- Reinforce a sense of local character and distinctiveness in the historic environment,
- Identify local heritage assets to support the delivery of Local Plan objectives, and
- Strengthen the role of local heritage assets as a material consideration in the planning process.

What is the purpose of this statement?

The purpose of this statement is to assess the need for appropriate assessment in relation to the Ipswich Borough Council Draft Local List (Buildings of Townscape Interest) Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

The Draft Local List SPD does not create new policy but provides detail in respect of the implementation of policy DM9 (Buildings of Townscape Interest) and CS4 (Protecting our Assets). The Draft SPD will be used to identify significant local heritage assets to support the development of Local Plan.

What is the legislative background?

The Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) requires that an ‘appropriate assessment’ is carried out in relation to any plan or project which is likely to have a significant effect, either alone or in

combination with other plans or projects, on European Sites. Where an appropriate assessment is carried out a plan may only be adopted after having ascertained that it will not adversely affect the integrity of the site concerned.

European Sites are Special Protection Areas and Special Areas of Conservation. Ramsar sites should also be given the same level of protection, as stated within the National Planning Policy Framework. The Stour and Orwell Estuaries Special Protection Area and Ramsar site lies partly within Ipswich Borough. The Habitats Regulations Assessments¹ (Appropriate Assessments) for the Ipswich Borough Council Local Plan 2011 – 2031 (adopted in February 2017), identified a list of European sites outside the Borough which may also be potentially affected by development in Ipswich.

What were the conclusions of the appropriate assessment?

The Local Plan was subject to ‘appropriate assessment’ under the Habitats Regulations as part of its production. The appropriate assessment concluded that there would be no adverse effect on the integrity of European sites through the delivery of the Ipswich Local Plan provided that a suite of mitigation measures were put in place to address the identified impacts.

The plan level appropriate assessment noted the key elements of mitigation, but highlighted the need for further consideration and information gathering relating to mitigation, particularly in relation to measures on the European sites to manage access. Key mitigation measures included for Ipswich Borough include the provision of a new Country Park, provision of green spaces as part of new development, visitor management measures for key European Sites and monitoring the impact of recreational pressure on birds in protected sites. To make mitigation delivery more co-ordinated, efficient and effective, a joint and strategic approach, known as the Recreational Disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy (RAMS) was established by Ipswich Borough, in partnership with Suffolk Coastal District (now East Suffolk) and Babergh District. On the advice of Natural England, the partnership was expanded to include Mid Suffolk and Waveney (now East Suffolk).

Does this SPD need an additional appropriate assessment?

The adopted Local Plan has been subject to an Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and HRA, therefore an additional Appropriate Assessment of the Local List (Buildings of Townscape Interest) Supplementary Planning Document is not considered necessary.

Natural England, the Environment Agency and Historic England has been consulted on this Screening Assessment.

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- ¹ Habitats Regulations Assessment (Appropriate Assessment) for Ipswich Borough Council Proposed Submission Core Strategy and Policies DPD Review (The Landscape Partnership, November 2014)
 - Habitats Regulations Assessment Addendum for Pre-Submission Modifications to the Ipswich Borough Council Core Strategy and Policies DPD Review (Proposed Submission stage) (The Landscape Partnership, September 2015)
 - Habitats Regulations Assessment for Ipswich Borough Council Proposed Submission Site Allocations and Policies (Incorporating IP-One Area Action Plan) Development Plan Document (The Landscape Partnership, November 2014)
 - Habitats Regulations Assessment Addendum for Pre-Submission Modifications to the Ipswich Borough Council Site Allocations and Policies (Incorporating IP-One Area Action Plan) DPD (Proposed Submission stage) (The Landscape Partnership, September 2015)