



**Basingstoke  
and Deane**

## **Upper Cufaude Farm Development Brief Supplementary Planning Document**

**Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening and Habitats Regulations  
Assessment – Final (following consultation with consultation bodies)**

**5 November 2018**

## Executive Summary

This report details the consideration as to whether a Strategic Environmental Assessment and/or a full Habitats Regulations Assessment needs to be produced to accompany the Upper Cufaude Farm Development Brief Supplementary Planning Document.

Following consultation with the three statutory consultees (the Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England), it concludes that an SEA is not required, and that the SPD does not need to be subject to full Appropriate Assessment under the Habitats Regulations.

## 1. Introduction

1.1 This report is designed to establish whether the Upper Cufuade Farm Development Brief Supplementary Planning Document (the SPD) requires:

- A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in accordance with the European Directive 2001/42/EC and associated Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004; and
- An assessment against the Habitats Regulations to establish whether there would be any significant effects on a European site(s).

## 2. Purpose and content of the Upper Cufaude Farm Development Brief SPD

2.1 Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council, in its role as Local Planning Authority, is producing a Development Brief for the allocated housing site at Upper Cufaude Farm, with the intention that it will be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). The public consultation on a draft document will take place in late 2018.

2.2 The purpose of the Upper Cufaude Farm Development Brief SPD is to provide more detailed guidance regarding the implementation of Policy SS3.8 (Upper Cufaude Farm) in the adopted Basingstoke and Deane Local Plan (2011-2029) (the policy is set out in full in Appendix 1) (ALP), which is the site specific policy pertaining to allocation of the site for housing.

2.3 The SPD does not seek to prescribe the detailed design of the allocated site, but sets out a series of development principles that add greater detail to the Local Plan policies, most notably the detailed criteria of Policy SS3.8, and provides guidance on how that, and other relevant policies should be interpreted and implemented in relation to this site. The geographic area covered by the SPD is the same as that allocated for development by policy SS3.8 in the ALP, as defined on the Local Plan policies map. Appendix 2 includes the Inset Map for site, which is included within the adopted Local Plan. This Inset Map defines the boundaries of the site allocation.

2.4 It is proposed that the SPD will be structured around five key objectives that expand upon criteria in the Local Plan policy. These cover:

1. *Mix of homes and provision of social and community infrastructure to create a sustainable new community* - To deliver approximately 390 new homes with a mix of different dwelling tenures, types and sizes, including affordable housing, to meet a broad range of needs and deliver a mixed and sustainable community. To support the development of a healthy, thriving new community through the timely provision of the necessary social and physical infrastructure.
2. *Transport and access* - To deliver a sustainable development by making provision for public transport services and safe, well designed, accessible and convenient walking and cycling routes with provision for car based movement. To maintain and, if possible, enhance National Cycle Network Route 23. To prevent any significant detrimental impacts on Cufaude Lane (in terms of highway safety).
3. *Environmental quality* - To deliver development that takes advantage of, and responds to, the site and its surrounding environmental characteristics, including its green infrastructure, and uses these to create a high quality development with a strong sense of identity and high levels of well-being.
4. *Heritage* - Ensure that the development of the site does not result in unacceptable harm to the significance of designated and undesignated heritage assets and/or their settings, and responds positively to the opportunities and constraints presented by the heritage assets to create a high quality development with a strong and locally- distinctive sense of place which is informed by context.
5. *Design quality* - To create a high quality development, with a locally distinctive character, which responds positively and creatively to the context.

### **3. SEA screening**

- 3.1 The adopted Local Plan was underpinned by a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) (incorporating SEA). This included a specific assessment of the principle of development of the Upper Cufaude Farm site, the detailed criteria of site allocation policy, as well as assessments of all other policies within the Local Plan. The Local Plan can be found on the council website at:

<http://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/planningpolicy>

and the SA can be viewed here:

<http://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/content/doclib/952.pdf>

- 3.2 With regard to the need for SA (inc. SEA) for SPDs, the National Planning Policy Guidance (Reference ID: 11-008-20140306) states that:

Supplementary planning documents do not require a sustainability appraisal but may in exceptional circumstances require a strategic environmental assessment if they are likely to have significant environmental effects that have not already been assessed during the preparation of the Local Plan.

A strategic environmental assessment is unlikely to be required where a supplementary planning document deals only with a small area at a local level (see regulation 5(6) of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004), unless it is considered that there are likely to be significant environmental effects.

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 and consult the consultation bodies.

3.3 The following table therefore assesses the proposed SPD in relation to Schedule 1 of the EIA Regulations to determine whether it would be likely to have environmental effects:

| Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects of the environment  | Potential effects of the SPD  | Is there a likely significant effect? |
|---|---|---------------------------------------|
| The characteristics of the plan having regard 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; | <p>The SPD will provide guidance on how to apply policies contained within the existing adopted Local Plan (most notably Policy SS3.8 (Upper Cufaude Farm). It does not establish new policy.</p> <p>The adopted Local Plan was prepared with continuous, iterative input from the SA (inc. SEA). The Local Plan was considered sound following an Examination in Public, which included specific consideration of the SA and the site allocation policy.</p> | No                                    |
| (b) the degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy;   | The SPD sits within a hierarchy of documents. It does not directly affect any other plans or programmes but is derived from the adopted Local Plan and would need to be interpreted in light of other higher tier planning policy documents including the revised   | No                                    |

|   |   |    |
|---|---|----|
|   | National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).  |    |
| (c) the relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development;                            | <p>The adopted Local Plan and other higher level policies set the context for achieving sustainable development in the borough. The SPD will provide further guidance as to how this should be achieved in relation to this site. Options considered through the production of the SPD will not change the higher level policy requirements which have, in themselves, been subject to SA (inc. SEA).</p> <p>The SPD sets out measures designed to help ensure that the protection of the environment and achievement of sustainable development is delivered through the consideration of relevant planning applications and when the site is developed.</p> | No |
| (d) environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme; and   | The Local Plan SA (inc. SEA) identified the allocation policy as having mainly positive impacts. However, it did note some partially negative impacts against a limited number of SA objectives. These are environment affects flowing from the original allocation of the site as opposed to the SPD itself, and the Development Brief will help ensure that any such potential negative environmental effects flowing from the site allocation in the Local Plan are mitigated as much as possible.   | No |
| (e) the relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (e.g. plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection). | It is unlikely that there would be any significant environmental effects resulting from the further guidance for this site allocation area.   | No |
| Characteristics of the effects likely having regard, in particular, to:   |   |    |
| (a) the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects;  | The SPD will mainly be of relevance during the process of planning applications being submitted and   | No |

|   |   |    |
|---|---|----|
|   | <p>determined for the development of the site, which is likely to be within in the period up to 2029.</p> <p>An SA (inc. SEA) was undertaken for the adopted Local Plan which allocates the Upper Cufaude Farm site. The area that will be addressed by the SPD is the same as that which has already been allocated (and defined on the Local Plan Policies Map).</p> <p>The evidence to support the SA (inc. SEA) for the Local Plan continues to be up-to-date and considered the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of effects.</p> |    |
| (b) the cumulative nature of the effects;   | <p>The site is next to another housing development (for 420 units) which has been allocated in the adopted Local Plan – Razors Farm (policy SS3.3), which is currently under construction. The cumulative effects of the Upper Cufaude Farm and Razors Farm site allocations have been assessed within the SA (inc. SEA) of the Local Plan. There are no likely cumulative effects that would result from the production of the SPD.</p>  | No |
| (c) the transboundary nature of the effects;  | <p>There will be no transboundary effects (in relation to other EU member states).</p>  | No |
| (d) the risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents);   | <p>There are no likely risks to human health or the environment flowing from the production of the SPD.</p> <p>The SPD seeks to help ensure any such risks flowing from the allocation of the site are reduced.</p>   | No |
| (e) the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected); | <p>The spatial extent of the SPD will be confined to the site area as defined in the allocation set out in the adopted Local Plan.</p>  | No |

|  |  |    |
|--|--|----|
|  | The allocation of the site will have some limited effects beyond the site area in terms of issues such as visual impact and highways, but these flow from the allocation of the site as opposed to the SPD itself, which mainly seeks to mitigate those impacts.   |    |
| (f) the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to – .<br>(i) special natural characteristics or cultural heritage;<br>(ii) exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values; or.<br>(iii) intensive land-use; and | The value and vulnerability of the area covered by the Upper Cufaude Farm site allocation has been considered as part of the SA (inc. SEA) of the Local Plan. The SPD will provide further guidance and reinforce relevant policies to ensure that any potential negative environmental effects are mitigated where possible.                | No |
| (g) the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.   | The site is not within nor visible from the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) or any other national or international protected landscape.<br><br>Site-specific guidance will be provided by the SPD regarding appropriate design and mitigation measures. This is likely to have a positive environmental impact. | No |

#### 4. SEA conclusion

- 4.1 The land at Upper Cufaude Farm, to which the SPD relates, was allocated through the Local Plan (2011-2029) process and, as such, has been subject to detailed and iterative SA (inc. SEA) as part of the Local Plan process, both in terms of the principle of development on the site and the specific site policy and its detailed criteria. The conclusion of the screening process is that as the draft Upper Cufaude Farm Development Brief SPD does not make any changes to this allocation in terms of either land area or uses, or quantum of development nor does it introduce new planning policy, it will not give rise to significant environmental effects. A Strategic Environmental Assessment is therefore not required.

## 5. Habitats Regulation Assessment Screening

- 5.1 A Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA)<sup>1</sup> screening report was undertaken for the adopted Local Plan (2011-2029). In relation to Policy SS3.8, it concluded that 'this policy may be screened out as there is no likely significant effect arising on European sites'. Given the SPD does not make any changes to the allocations or introduce new planning policy, the SPD, alone or in combination with other plans and programmes, is not likely to have a significant effect on any European site. Therefore a full Appropriate Assessment under the Habitats Regulations is not required.

## 6. Conclusion

- 6.1 Taking into account the views of the three statutory consultees (the Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England), it is concluded that an SEA is not required for the Upper Cufaude Farm Development Brief SPD. Similarly, it would not need to be subject to full Appropriate Assessment under the Habitats Regulations.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.basingstoke.gov.uk/content/doclib/384.pdf>

## Appendix 1: Extract from the Basingstoke and Deane Borough Local Plan 2011-2029:

### Upper Cufaude Farm

4.53 Approximately 390 new homes will be brought forward on Upper Cufaude Farm as part of a high quality, comprehensively planned development, providing supporting infrastructure that is necessary to serve the site. The site will respond to its landscape context and green infrastructure opportunities, as well as its close relationship to planned housing areas to the south. An inset map has been developed for this site and Razor's Farm (Policy SS3.3) together, and is set out alongside Policy SS3.3.

#### **Policy SS3.8 – Upper Cufaude Farm**

This 26.3 hectare site lies immediately to the north of the Razor's Farm allocation (Policy SS3.3) and will only be released for development after, or in conjunction with, the development of the Razor's Farm site. The site will deliver a high quality development that will:

- a) Make provision for approximately 390 dwellings;
- b) Include the provision of social and physical infrastructure including a community centre and a two form entry primary school if required by the Local Education Authority<sup>2</sup>;
- c) Conserve and enhance the architectural and historic significance of heritage assets in the area including Razor's Farm, Upper Cufaude Farm, Cufaude Farm and the Vyne, and their rural settings, and ensure sufficient mitigation measures are put in place when required;
- d) Comprise a layout and design of development that retains the existing landscape and vegetation structure in and round the site, including enhancement and buffering of the hedgerow along the southern boundary and provision of a well-designed and robust buffer, which reflects the existing landscape character on the western and northern sides of the site from the outset;
- e) Keep the area hatched green on the inset map free of development and roads, providing only additional landscape and appropriate open space measures to ensure sufficient mitigation of the development on the surrounding area;
- f) Provide appropriate green space/green infrastructure to meet local needs in line with the council's adopted standards, providing links to the green network including that provided at Razor's Farm and maintaining the hedgerow/ditch that runs through the site as a green pedestrian route and the rural character and accessibility of footpaths to the south and west of the site;
- g) Avoid or mitigate direct and indirect adverse impacts on key species and habitats, including mature hedgerows and water courses, through adequate

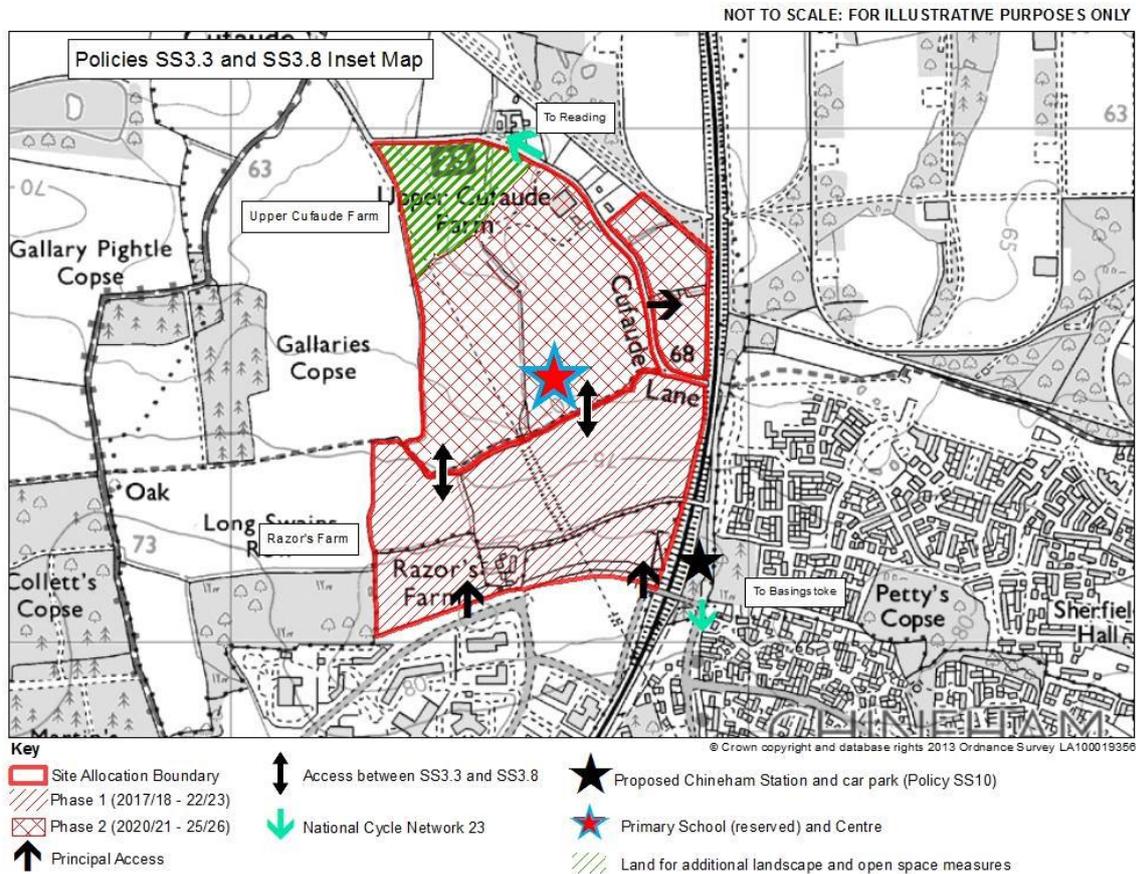
<sup>2</sup> The Local Education Authority (LEA) has identified a need for additional primary school places to serve new and existing communities in the eastern areas of Basingstoke and has requested that provision is made to meet this requirement on both SS3.8 and SS3.9. The LEA expect to require only one of these additional schools and will be able to confirm their exact requirements, based on pupil forecasting once other development in the vicinity is delivered, when future masterplanning is carried out.

- buffering and on-site mitigation and off-site compensation measures to ensure a net gain in biodiversity;
- h) Include measures to mitigate the impact of development on the local road network and in particular, Cufaude Lane and the A33 Corridor
  - i) Include measures to improve accessibility by non-car transport modes, including the provision of internal walking and cycling routes, linked to existing external routes, the Public Rights of Way Network and the Strategic Cycle Network, with direct cycle access to the Town Centre, and the ability to service the site by public transport. It will also be necessary to provide access to the potential Chineham Railway Station and Cufaude Lane, in conjunction with the development at Razors Farm;
  - j) Ensure acceptable noise standards can be met within homes and amenity areas through suitable noise mitigation measures, where possible, in light of the adjacent railway line and MOD land;
  - k) Ensure adequate infrastructure is provided for sewerage (on and off site) and surface water drainage and produce a drainage strategy;
  - l) Incorporate and/or promote renewable and low carbon energy technologies;
  - m) Ensure that it provides for a comprehensive development with the Razors Farm allocation (Policy SS3.3) through the development of a joint masterplan for the two sites.

Development on this site will deliver homes in the period 2020/21 to 2025/26, in accordance with the requirement to maintain a five year supply of deliverable housing sites.

## Appendix 2: Inset Map

The Inset map defines the area of land covered by the Upper Cufaude Farm Development Brief SPD (development land within red line addressed in SPD)



## Appendix 3: Consultation body responses

Application ref: SEA Screening - Upper Cutaude Farm Development Brief SPD  
Our ref: 254259

Natural England has no comments to make on this draft Brief Development Brief SPD.

Natural England has not assessed this application for impacts on protected species. Natural England has published [Standing Advice](#) which you can use to assess impacts on protected species or you may wish to consult your own ecology services for advice.

Natural England and the Forestry Commission have also published standing advice on [ancient woodland and veteran trees](#) which you can use to assess any impacts on ancient woodland.

The lack of comment from Natural England does not imply that there are no impacts on the natural environment, but only that the application is not likely to result in significant impacts on statutory designated nature conservation sites or landscapes. It is for the local planning authority to determine whether or not this application is consistent with national and local policies on the natural environment. Other bodies and individuals may be able to provide information and advice on the environmental value of this site and the impacts of the proposal to assist the decision making process. We advise LPAs to obtain specialist ecological or other environmental advice when determining the environmental impacts of development.

We recommend referring to our SSSI Impact Risk Zones (available on [Magic](#) and as a downloadable [dataset](#)) prior to consultation with Natural England. Further guidance on when to consult Natural England on planning and development proposals is available on [gov.uk](#) at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/local-planning-authorities-get-environmental-advice>

Yours faithfully

Rachael Clemson  
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Dorset, Hampshire and Isle of Wight Area Team

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**Please note my non-working day is Friday**

[www.naturalengland.org.uk](http://www.naturalengland.org.uk)

Dear Andrew,

Thank you for your e-mail of 1<sup>st</sup> August seeking the opinion of Historic England on the Council's draft Opinion on whether or not the Upper Cufaude Farm Development Brief SPD should be subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment.

We are aware that the land at Upper Cufaude Farm, to which the SPD relates, was allocated through the Local Plan (2011-2029) process and, as such, has been subject to detailed and iterative Sustainability Appraisal (incorporating SEA) as part of the Local Plan process, both in terms of the principle of development on the site and the specific site policy and its detailed criteria.

We therefore agree with the Council's draft conclusion that, as the draft Upper Cufaude Farm Development Brief SPD does not make any changes to this allocation in terms of either land area or uses, or introduce new planning policy, it will not itself give rise to significant environmental effects, nor will there be any significant environmental effects that have not already been assessed as part of the Local Plan process.

Historic England therefore concurs with the Council's Draft Opinion that a Strategic Environmental Assessment is therefore not required for the Upper Cufaude Farm Development Brief SPD.

We hope these comments are helpful.

Thank you again for consulting Historic England.

Kind regards,

Martin

**Martin Small BA(Hons) BPI DipCM MRTPI**  
Principal Adviser, Historic Environment Planning | South East  
Planning Group

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Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council  
Planning Policy  
Civic Offices London Road  
Basingstoke  
Hampshire  
RG21 4AH

**Our ref:** WA/2011/109908/SE-  
09/SC1-L01

**Your ref:**

**Date:** 06 September 2018

Dear Sir/Madam

**Upper Cufaude Farm Development Brief Supplementary Planning Document  
SEA Screening and Habitats Regulations Assessment**

Thank you for contacting us regarding the above SPD and the associated SEA/HRA screening opinion.

The site in question at Upper Cufaude Farm does not have any constraints within our remit, and as such we have no comments to make.

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully

**Mr Alex Swann  
Planning Advisor**

Direct dial 020 771 40593  
e-mail [Planning\\_THM@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:Planning_THM@environment-agency.gov.uk)

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