

## **APPENDIX 3**

### **SEA Screening for**

#### **Assessment of Solar Photovoltaic (PV) Developments in the Landscape – Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)**

The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 require that environmental assessment is undertaken for a plan or programme that is (a) “required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions”, and (b) “sets the framework for future development consent”. Teignbridge District Council considers that, firstly, this SPD on Solar Photovoltaic (PV) Developments in the Landscape is not required by any of the provisions mentioned above; and secondly, that the framework for decisions on planning applications is provided by the Local Plan Policies (S6 Resilience, S7 Carbon Emission Targets, EN2A Landscape Protection and Enhancement, S2 Quality Development, S22 Countryside, and EN2 Undeveloped Coast) which have been subject to environmental assessment, with the SPD providing guidance on the implementation of that Policy. It is therefore considered that environmental assessment under the provisions of the 2004 Regulations is not required.

However, it is seen as prudent to prepare a screening statement, see annex 1 below and invite Natural England, Historic England and the Environment Agency to comment.

While section 19(5) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires sustainability appraisal to be undertaken for development plan documents, there is no such requirement for a SPD.

Anyone disagreeing with Teignbridge District Council’s screening opinions given above is entitled to state this in their consultation response and provide the reasons for their view.

#### **What Happens Next?**

Following the end of the consultation period, Teignbridge District Council will consider all submitted representations and, having made any necessary amendments to reflect consultation responses, proceed to adoption of the Supplementary Planning Document. The adopted Supplementary Planning Document will be published on Teignbridge District Council’s website together with an Adoption Statement.

## **ANNEX 1 SCREENING AND SCOPING STATEMENT**

### **PLAN/ POLICY/ PROGRAMME**

Solar photovoltaic (PV) developments in the landscape supplementary planning document (SPD)

## SCREENING

*The determination of whether implementation of a plan, policy or programme is likely to have significant environmental effects.*

### Task

Is SEA required?

### Output

The answer is open to the following interpretation:

- Yes, the assessment is intended to contribute to the Planning Policy in the form of a SPD. The findings give strong guidance as to the parts of the landscape most suitable to PV development of differing scales. The outcome will be that it is very unlikely that PV development of larger sizes will be permitted along the coast, the higher more open areas and the more undulating landscapes of Teignbridge.
- No, the SPD does not dictate where solar PV development is to be permitted or restricted, it simply provides evidence that suggests the relative sensitivity of the landscape to solar PV development, providing guidance upon the locations which are the least or most sensitive to PV development.

Should it be decided that scoping is necessary, the issues set out below should be considered.

## SCOPE

*The process of deciding the content and level of detail of a SEA, including the key environmental issues, likely significant environmental effects and alternatives which need to be considered, the assessment methods to be employed, and the structure and contents of the Environmental Report*

### Task

*Outline key environmental issues, likely significant environmental effects and alternatives which need to be considered, the assessment methods to be employed, and the structure and contents of the Environmental Report.*

### Output

- **Impact on Landscape.**  
The SPD is likely to score positive for landscape as it is intended to ensure that the Teignbridge District's landscape is not compromised by the potential visual and landscape impacts of solar PV development.  
  
The landscape sensitivity assessment that forms part of the SPD identifies the parts of the landscape that are least sensitive to PV development and therefore the areas where it is most

suitable to develop. Conversely it identifies areas of high landscape sensitivity where development would have an adverse effect.

The SPD does not dictate where development will be permitted and therefore there is no guarantee that landscape will be protected, however it provides evidence and guidance that means that it is unlikely that large PV development will be permitted in sensitive areas.

The setting of the nationally protected landscape of Dartmoor National Park has contributed to the sensitivity score, however the presence of local landscape designations such as Areas of Great Landscape Value (AGLV) and Undeveloped Coast have not been considered.

- **Impact on Air Quality and Water Resources, Biodiversity and Green Infrastructure.**

The SPD is likely to score positively for air quality and water resources, biodiversity and green infrastructure. Renewable energy from solar arrays will reduce emissions of greenhouse gases, and the SPD seeks to enable small to medium scale solar arrays in acceptable areas. However the assessment of sensitivity does specifically consider air quality, water resources, biodiversity and green infrastructure in its criteria for judging sensitivity.

- **Impact on Historic Environment.**

The SPD is likely to result in a mixed score in relation to historic environment. Historic landscapes are one of the criteria used in assessing landscape sensitivity, however the whole of the historic environment, such as the significance and setting of listed buildings or other heritage assets, or archaeological interests has not been considered.

- **Impact on Housing.**

The SPD is likely to score positively for housing as the promotion of renewable energy technologies will provide alternative sources of electricity for individual households.

- **Impact on Coast.**

The SPD is likely to score positively for the coast as the coast is judged to be of high sensitivity to all sizes of PV development.

- **Impact on Climate Change Mitigation and Energy.**

The SPD is likely to result in a mixed score in relation to Climate Change Mitigation and Energy with both positive and negative implications. The SPD should clarify policy and help encourage renewable energy development in the most appropriate locations. However, the SPD identifies large areas where the

landscape is highly sensitive to even very small scale PV development and is likely to lead to PV development being restricted from some areas. This will significantly reduce the opportunities for the generation of renewable energy, and therefore reduce potential carbon savings.

- **Impact on Community, Wellbeing, Economy and Employment**

There are likely to be positive and negative implications in relation to community, wellbeing, economy and employment. The SPD relates to freestanding solar arrays serving individual properties which could be residential, commercial or employment properties. This could include community buildings such as village halls. However, likely restrictions on size and scale could limit potential community schemes and affect their viability as well as constraining economic opportunities.

- **Impact on Land**

The SPD is likely to score neutral in relation to land. PV development requires land take, however the likely implications of the SPD will be to restrict large and very large schemes. In some circumstances it may be possible to still use the land for agricultural use, for example grazing for sheep.

- **Impact on Transport**

There are unlikely to be any implications relating to transport

- **Impact on Climate Change and Adaptation to Flood Risk.**

The SPD is primarily about climate change mitigation.

## **IMPLEMENTATION**

Consult with Natural England, Historic England and the Environment Agency. Respond to consultee comments and, should it be considered necessary, amend scope and the recommendations of the SPD.