

# **Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Statement**

**Managing the use of dwellings  
as holiday homes (second  
homes and short term holiday  
lets)**

**Supplementary Planning  
Guidance**

**February 2025**



## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 In accordance with European Directive 2001/42/EC which is implemented in the UK via the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004, this document is the Screening Determination of the need to undertake a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) for the 'Managing the use of dwellings as holiday homes' Supplementary Planning Guidance.

## **2. Strategic Environmental Assessment**

- 2.1 The objective of Strategic Environmental Assessment is to provide a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes with a view to promoting sustainable development.
- 2.2 The SEA Regulations 2004 place an obligation on local authorities to undertake a SEA on plans or projects:
- That are required for town and country planning or land use; and
  - Set the framework for future development consent of projects listed in Annex I or II to European Council Directive 85/337/EEC
- 2.3 The SPG sets the framework for development in the future, which means it could be considered a 'plan' or 'programme' within the meaning of the SEA Directive and could therefore require an 'environmental assessment'. The regulations advise that a specified set of criteria (set out in Schedule 1 of the regulations) should be used to demonstrate whether a plan should be subject of an SEA. These criteria have been considered in determining whether the SPG should be the subject of a SEA.

## **3. Background to the Managing the use of dwellings as holiday homes SPG**

- 3.1 The 'Managing the use of dwellings' SPG applies to the Gwynedd Local Planning Authority area only, and supports and supplements the relevant policies contained within the adopted Anglesey and Gwynedd Joint Local Development Plan (JLDP), 31 July 2017.
- 3.2 The SPG provides further guidance which specifically related to the planning considerations following the amendments to the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) and the implementation of the Article 4 Direction to manage the use of dwellings as holiday homes (short term let and second homes) in the Gwynedd Local Planning Authority Area.

## **4. The Screening Process**

- 4.1 Though not part of the statutory Development Plan, Supplementary Planning Guidance cover a range of issues, which generally interpret policies in the Development Plan. If an SPG is considered unlikely to have significant environmental effects through the screening process, then the conclusion will be that the SEA is not necessary.
- 4.2 To assess whether an SEA was required, the Responsible Authority (Cyngor Gwynedd) undertook a screening process based on a standard set of criteria as set out in Annex II of the SEA Directive. These criteria are set out in the

table in Appendix 1 of this report, alongside the Council's response in relation to the SPG.

- 4.3 The SEA Regulations require that the consultation bodies (namely Natural Resources Wales and CADW) be consulted upon the screening assessment undertaken. The consultation will be undertaken alongside the SPG consultation period.

## **5. Habitats Regulations Assessment**

- 5.1 In addition to SEA, the council is also required to consider undertaking a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA). HRA is the process used to determine whether a plan or project would have significant adverse effects upon the integrity of internationally designated sites of nature conservation importance, known as European sites or European offshore marine sites. The need for a HRA is set out within the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (which transposed EC Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC).

- 5.2 A HRA screening of the SPG was undertaken in accordance with the Habitats Regulations with the following conclusions made:

- The SPG is primarily a guidance document and is not considered to alter the strategic policy framework;
- It does not present new policies or proposals and serves only to expand on the existing policies in the JLDP relating to the short term holiday lets and second homes in specific locations within the Plan Area;
- The relevant policies of the JLDP in the SPG have already been subject to HRA;
- The SPG is not a rigid land use allocation but sets the broad planning context and development principles associated with second homes and short term holiday lets.
- The SPG does not introduce new proposals of a type and/or scale outside the parameters of the JLDP, or amend any of the proposed mitigation measures agreed;
- The primary effect or impact of the SPG will be facilitating sustainable development and balanced communities throughout the Plan Area. The CCA itself will have no adverse impact on the environment. Instead, it will help to address environmental problems by ensuring that development proposals are designed to a high standard, in line with the requirements of relevant building regulations, and are located in suitable places to promote sustainable development.

- 5.3 The Council concluded that there will be no significant adverse impact on the integrity of Natura 2000 sites as a direct result of the SPG, and therefore, considers that the Managing the use of dwellings SPG will not require full appropriate assessment under the Habitats Regulations.

## **6. Statement of Reasons for Determination**

- 6.1 It is considered that the managing the use of dwellings SPG is unlikely to have significant effects on the environment. The SPG is not setting any new policies or allocations or amending policies in the adopted JLDP. Rather it is providing further guidance on existing policies contained within the Anglesey and Gwynedd JLDP, which has been subject to SEA.

## APPENDIX 1

The table below uses criteria taken from Schedule 1 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans and programmes Regulations 2004 to determine if the SPG is likely to have a significant effect on the environment.

SA Directive Criteria	Potential Effects of SPG	Is there a likely significant effect?
<b>1. The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular to:</b>		
1.1 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 allocation resources.	The SPG is primarily a guidance document and is not considered to alter the strategic policy framework. It does not present new policies or proposals or amend existing policies in the JLDP. The framework has already been set by the adopted JLDP policies which have already been subject to SEA. The SPG is not a rigid land use allocation but sets the broad planning context and development principles.	No
1.2 The degree with which the plan or programme influences other plans and programme including those in a hierarchy.	The purpose of this SPG is to provide guidance on adopted JLDP policies and will be material consideration on planning applications. As such it will not influence other plans and programmes. It will only provide further additional details and will not introduce new policies or amend existing adopted policies.	No
1.3 The relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental consideration in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development.	<p>The SPG provides additional detail on the implementation of relevant policies which was subject to SEA. The SPG contains detailed advice relating to how different developments contribute towards sustainable development and creating balanced communities in the Plan area. Therefore it has no relevance to the integration of environmental considerations.</p> <p>It does however have social and economic considerations in relation to sustainable development. The SPG will help promote the aim for</p>	No

	sustainable development by providing clear and consistent guidance on managing the use of dwellings as holiday homes.	
1.4 Environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme.	The SPG itself will not have any adverse impacts on the environment. Rather, it will help to address environmental problems by ensuring that dwelling houses are protected for a specific use, contribute towards satisfying the need for housing and managing the need for new developments.	No
1.5 The relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (e.g. waste management or water protection)	Not relevant. The SPG supplements adopted planning policies and is not relevant to the implementation of community legislation on the environment. The principle of development is considered through the JLDP which has been subject to SEA.	No
<b>2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to:</b>		
2.1 The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects.	The overall impact of the SPG will be positive by ensuring that residential dwellings are protected as a main place of residence. Hopefully, this will decrease the need for new dwellings as the housing stock will be protected to satisfy local need.	No
2.2 The cumulative nature of the effects.	The cumulative impact of the effects of the Guidance should be positive with regard to the principles of sustainable development.	No
2.3 The trans-boundary nature of the effects.	The SPG will be limited for use within the Gwynedd Local Planning Authority Area.	No
2.4 The risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents).	It is not considered that the SPG would present a risk to human health or the environment. It is considered that there are likely to be improvements to human health by creating more balanced communities and protecting the current housing stock for local need. There will be a positive contribution to well-being.	No

<p>2.5 The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected).</p>	<p>The SPG covers the Gwynedd Local Planning Authority area. It will have a positive effect on the resident population in the area.</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>2.6 The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:  i) the special natural characteristics or cultural heritage;  ii) Exceeded environmental quality standards or limit value;  iii) Intensive land use</p>	<p>It is considered that the SPG will not have any effect on areas which have value/are vulnerable. Any planning application will be assessed against the relevant policies before planning permission is granted.</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>2.7 The effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.</p>	<p>The SPG has no effect on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or protection status. Impacts on such areas will be considered through the application of JLDP policies which have been subject to SEA. It is also noted that the SPG does not directly allocate land for particular development.</p>	<p>No</p>