



Walsall Council

**Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA):
SEA Screening Statement
(Statement of Reasons)**

for the proposed

**Shop Front Supplementary Planning
Document**

In accordance with:

**The Environmental Assessment of Plans and
Programmes Regulations 2004 (SEA Regulations) and
European Directive 2001/42/EC (The SEA Directive)**

September 2014

Contents

Section	Pages
1. Introduction and Background	1
2. Requirement for Strategic Environmental Assessment	4
3. Requirement for Sustainability Appraisal	8
4. SEA Screening – Stage One Assessment	9
5. SEA Screening – Stage Two Assessment	13
6. The Council's Determination	18

Appendices	Pages
Appendix A:	20
Appendix B:	22
Appendix C:	27
Appendix D:	28

1. Introduction and Background

Title of Plan: Shop Front Supplementary Planning Document

Type of Plan: Supplementary Planning Document

Area Covered by the Plan: Walsall Metropolitan Borough

Background

- 1.1 The document provides a comprehensive policy overview of development that affects shop fronts. It will be used in conjunction with negotiation and determining planning applications, listed building consents and advertisement consents on premises within use classes A1–A5 and any similar or associated premises within the borough's shopping centres. The document contains a series of policies conserving shop front design and use.
- 1.2 Walsall Council has decided to prepare a Shop Front Supplementary Planning Document which will be consulted on at Planning Committee on 21 August 2014 and recommended for adoption at Cabinet on 22 October 2014.
- 1.3 The main aims and objectives of the plan will be:
 - Explain the character and historic development of shop fronts in Walsall;
 - Explain the components and construction of shop fronts;
 - Raise the profile of the shopping centres;
 - To attract better quality retailers and improve the retail experience of Walsall;

- Improve the design of new shop fronts and alterations to existing shop fronts;
 - Encourage better quality signage and reduce visual clutter in the centres; and
 - Promote greater use of and better managed pavement cafes.
- 1.4 The document will contain a number of policies which will be used by the Council to make decisions on planning applications, listed building consents and advertisement consents.
- 1.5 A copy of all consultation responses as well as the decision by the Planning Committee will be provided in the Cabinet report.

Policy Context

- 1.6 The Shop Front SPD supports the following policies in the adopted local plan for Walsall:

Primarily:

Black Country Core Strategy – Policy **ENV2** (Historic Character and Local Distinctiveness); Walsall Unitary Development Plan – “saved” Policy **ENV32** (Design and Development Proposals); and Walsall Unitary Development Plan – “saved” Policy **ENV35** (Appearance of Commercial Buildings)

But also:

Walsall Unitary Development Plan – “saved” Policy **ENV27** (Buildings of Historic or Architectural Interest; Walsall Unitary Development Plan – “saved” Policy **ENV28** (The ‘Local List’ of Buildings of Historic

or Archaeological Interest); and Walsall Unitary Development Plan – “saved” Policy ENV29 (Conservation Areas).

- 1.7 The guidance in the Shop Front SPD will also add to the general design guidance in the adopted Designing Walsall SPD, which also supports the above policies.
- 1.8 The Shop Front Supplementary Planning Document will support the following national and regional plans and programmes:

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) contains a chapter on ‘Requiring good design’. Paragraph 56 states that ‘The Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people.’

Paragraph 59 goes on to advocate local authorities preparing design codes, whilst Paragraph 67 seeks to ensure advertisements should be subject to control only in the interests of amenity and public safety, taking account of cumulative impacts.

The document would therefore help achieve these requirements of the NPPF.

- 1.9 It will be a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) which, once adopted, will be used in conjunction with the Local Plan policies to make decisions on shop front applications. The LDF is a portfolio of spatial plans which guides decisions on the use and development of land in Walsall.

2. Requirement for Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 2.1 The requirements for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) are set out in Directive 2001/42/EC (SEA Directive). This has been transposed into UK legislation through the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (SEA Regulations).
- 2.2 The process for deciding whether or not a plan or programme requires a SEA is called “screening.” This statement sets out the results of the Council’s screening assessment of the Shop Front Supplementary Planning Document.

Types of Plans and Programmes Affected

- 2.3 Not all plans require a SEA. For example, it is not required for a financial or budgetary plan or programme, or for a plan or programme relating to a civil emergency. It is not necessary to carry out any assessment or screening for these types of plans or programmes.
- 2.4 However, plans and programmes prepared for the following purposes may require a SEA:
- ❖ Agriculture
 - ❖ Forestry
 - ❖ Fisheries
 - ❖ Energy
 - ❖ Industry
 - ❖ Transport
 - ❖ Waste Management

- ❖ Water Management
- ❖ Telecommunications
- ❖ Tourism
- ❖ Town and Country Planning/ Land Use

(SEA Directive, Article 3 (2))

2.5 A SEA is required for the above types of plans and programmes where they:

- a) Set the framework for future development consent of projects listed in the EIA Directive (85/337/EEC as amended), and/ or
- b) Require an “appropriate assessment” of European Sites in accordance with the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC).

2.6 The following types of plan or programme also require a SEA, if the Council determines that they will have significant environmental effects:

- ❖ A plan that determines the use of a small area at local level;
- ❖ A minor modification to an existing plan;
- ❖ Any plan or programme which sets the framework for future development consent of projects (whether or not they require EIA).

(SEA Directive, Articles 3 (3) and (4))

SEA Screening Procedure

- 2.7 The first stage of the screening assessment involves considering whether the plan or programme falls within the scope of Article 3, paragraph 2. For example, is it one of the types referred to in paragraph 2, and does it set a framework for future development consent of EIA projects or require “appropriate assessment”? If it does, no further screening is necessary.
- 2.8 However, if it does not, the Council must then consider whether the plan or programme is caught by Article 3, paragraphs 3 or 4. If it is one of these, the Council must carry out a screening assessment, to determine whether or not the plan or programme would have significant environmental effects.
- 2.9 In coming to a view on whether the plan or programme is likely to have significant environmental effects, the Council must assess them against the criteria in Annex II of the SEA Directive. These relate to the characteristics of the plan or programme, the characteristics of the effects it is likely to have on the environment and the area likely to be affected.
- 2.10 Before it decides whether or not a SEA is required for plans and programmes referred to in Article 3 (3) and (4), the Council must also consult the following bodies:
- ❖ English Heritage;
 - ❖ Environment Agency; and
 - ❖ Natural England.

(SEA Regulations, Regulations 4 and 9, SEA Directive, Article 3 (6))

- 2.11 Once the Council has made its determination, this must be publicised. If the Council determines that a SEA is not required for

a particular plan or programme, it must also prepare a statement of its reasons. Within 28 days of the determination being made, the Council must publish the SEA determination (and statement of reasons if required), and send copies to the statutory SEA bodies (SEA Regulations, Regulation 11, SEA Directive, Article 3 (7)).

3. Requirement for Sustainability Appraisal

- 3.1 For clarity it is noted that the 2008 Planning Act and 2012 Regulations removed the UK legislative requirement for the undertaking of Sustainability Appraisals from the production of SPD's.

4. SEA Screening – Stage One Assessment

- 4.1 The first part of the screening involves considering whether the plan or programme falls within the scope of Article 3 (2) of the SEA Directive. A SEA is automatically required for any plan or programme of the types referred to in this paragraph.

Type of Plan or Programme

- 4.2 The Council has carried out a preliminary screening assessment of the Shop Front Supplementary Planning Document. Although a SEA is not automatically required for this document, it is one of the types of plans and programmes referred to in Article 3 (2), and therefore falls within the scope of Article 3 (3). The Council must therefore determine whether or not the strategy is likely to have significant environmental effects.
- 4.3 We have therefore prepared this Screening Statement, summarising the results of the assessment carried out. The statement was circulated to the three statutory SEA consultation bodies (English Heritage, the Environment Agency and Natural England) for comment. A period of four weeks was allowed for response.
- 4.4 Now the consultation period has ended, the Council is issuing its formal determination on the need for a SEA in accordance with Regulations 9 and 11 of the SEA Regulations and Article 3 of the SEA Directive.
- 4.5 Within 28 days of the determination being made, a copy of the Council's determination will be sent to each consultation body.

- 4.6 Copies of this documents will also be made available to the public for inspection at the First Stop Shop at the Civic Centre in Darwall Street in Walsall Town Centre, and will be published on the Council's website.

Is it an Article 3 (2) (a) Plan or Programme?

- 4.7 A SEA is required for plans and programmes referred to in paragraph 2 (a) which “set the framework for future development consent” of infrastructure and development projects listed in Annexes I and II to Directive 85/337/EEC (as amended).¹ These are projects likely to require an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) when they reach the detailed planning stage – often referred to as EIA developments.
- 4.8 This means that a SEA is required if the plan or programme provides a justification for EIA development projects, or if it will be used as the basis for making decisions on the locations of such projects and whether or not they should proceed, such as the determination of planning applications by the Council.
- 4.9 The Council has considered whether the Shop Front Supplementary Planning Document will set the framework for decision-making on EIA developments, and has concluded that it would not, for the following reasons.
- 4.10 The Shop Front Supplementary Planning Document is being prepared for the purpose of guiding better quality of design in the

¹ Transposed into UK legislation through the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) (England and Wales) Regulations 1999, SI 1999 No. 293.

boroughs town and districts centres. It therefore is a plan for Town and country planning purposes, however, it will only automatically require a SEA if one or both of the conditions (a) and (b) in Article 3.2 is met (see paragraph 2.5 above). The Council has therefore considered whether either of these conditions applies to the Shop Front Supplementary Planning Document.

- 4.11 The document will form additional policy that supports key policies within the Development Plan but does not steer land use or allocations that affect the wider planning of the borough. It does not “set the framework for future development consent” of infrastructure and development projects listed in Annexes I and II to Directive 85/337/EEC (as amended).
- 4.12 English Heritage, Natural England and the Environment Agency have all been consulted through a draft SEA screening opinion and all three of these bodies agree that a SEA is not required.

Is it an Article 3 (2) (b) Plan or Programme?

- 4.13 A SEA is required for Article 3 (2) plans and programmes which have been determined to require an assessment pursuant to Article 6 or 7 of Directive 92/43/EEC (the Habitats Directive).¹ This means that a SEA is required where the Council has decided that a plan or programme requires an “appropriate assessment” of the

¹ This has been transposed into UK legislation through the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2010 (SI 2010 No. 490) – see Regulations 61 (general requirements) and 102 (requirements for land use plans).

implications for the conservation objectives of “European Sites,”¹ under the Habitats Directive.

- 4.14 No formal decision has yet been made on the need for an “appropriate assessment” in this case (and there is no explicit requirement within the Habitats Directive for the Council to make a formal determination).
- 4.15 The scope of the plan is such that it will not require a Habitat Regulations Assessment. We therefore consider that there is no automatic requirement for SEA in this case. Furthermore, none of the three statutory consultees identified the need for a Habitat Regulations Assessment.

¹ A “European Site” (or Natura 2000 Site) is defined as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) or Special Protection Area (SPA).

5. SEA Screening – Stage Two Assessment

5.1 As is explained above, the Shop Front Supplementary Planning Document is not caught by the requirements of Article 3, paragraph 2 of the Directive. However, because it is a plan or programme in Article 3 (2)(a), a SEA will be required if the Council determines it is likely to have significant environmental effects:

- Plans and programmes referred to in paragraph 2 which determine the use of small areas at a local level (Article 3 (3));
- Minor modifications to plans or programmes referred to in paragraph 2 (Article 3 (3));
- Plans and programmes other than those referred to in paragraph 2 which set the framework for future development consent of projects (Article 3 (4)).

5.2 The Shop Front SPD is a supplementary guide that supports adopted plans for town and country planning and land use, as referred to in paragraph 2 of Article 3, so the Council must consider whether it falls within the scope of Article 3 (3)) or Article 3 (4)).

5.3 The plan falls within the scope of Article 3 (3)(ii) because being a supplementary guide, it is an elaboration of adopted local plan policies covering the design of new development, local character and the historic environment. The guide will supplement these policies by providing a benchmark for assessing the quality of proposals for new shop fronts, helping the Council to evaluate

whether or not proposals for this type of development comply with the aforementioned local plan policies.

- 5.4 The three statutory consultees (English Heritage, Natural England and the Environment Agency) have been consulted do not consider that the SPD is likely to have significant environmental effects.

Assessment of Significant Environmental Effects

- 5.4 The Council's determination must take into account the criteria in Annex II of the Directive relating to the likely significance of environmental effects, and the relevant statutory bodies must also be consulted (Article 2, paragraphs 5 and 6). The Council has therefore carried out a screening assessment. The results of this are set out in Appendix B and are summarised below.

- 5.6 The characteristics of the plan are that:

- The plan seeks best quality development and how a site will operate, rather than direct uses to particular areas;
- The plan will not be used as the basis for decision making on its own, but will be read in conjunction with the relevant design and heritage policies in the Black Country Core Strategy 2011 and "saved" policies of the adopted Walsall Unitary Development Plan 2005 and the adopted Designing Walsall Supplementary Planning Document.
- The plan will be promoting the importance of the boroughs town centres and ensuring they are environments that are attractive;

- The plan responds to the aspirations of EU legislation on architectural quality in urban design (COUNCIL RESOLUTION of 12 February 2001 (2001/C 73/04)).

5.7 The characteristics of the effect and the characteristics of the area likely affected are:

- The guidance is expected to have a positive influence over physical alterations to existing shops, including shops that are designated as heritage assets, where irreversible alterations to the fabric of the building are to be avoided where possible. New shop fronts and alterations to existing shop fronts could remain in place for a long-term period once they have been implemented, although some changes, for example, the installation of new roller shutters, may be wholly or partly reversible.
- The impact would only be within Walsall Metropolitan Borough.
- There is negligible risk to human health.
- The plan has the potential to impact on the majority of properties in a town or district centre; however, as it is only concerned with the ground floor elevation and immediate interface between the commercial function of a building and the wider public realm overall, the magnitude of effect is expected to be low;
- Many of the main shopping areas have conservation areas status and comprise some of the boroughs listed buildings and therefore contain significant cultural heritage to which the document is directly responding to.
- Mainly affecting Walsall Town Centre and three of the five District Centres (Bloxwich, Darlaston and Willenhall) which are considered to be of significant value to the wider regeneration of the borough.

- 5.8 The statutory environmental bodies have not suggested any changes to the screening assessment, but it has been edited following the screening consultation to improve clarity.

SEA Screening Consultation

- 5.9 The Council prepared a draft version of this SEA Screening Statement in August 2014, setting out its provisional views on the type of plan being prepared, the results of the preliminary screening assessment, and the Council's conclusions on the likely significance of the effects of the plan on the environment.
- 5.10 The draft statement was circulated to the three statutory SEA consultation bodies (English Heritage, the Environment Agency and Natural England) for comment, between 11 August 2014 and ending on 5 September 2014. This fulfilled the requirement under Article 3 (6) and Regulation 9 to consult the three statutory consultation bodies. A period of four weeks was allowed for response.
- 5.11 The results of the consultation were that the statutory environmental bodies only suggested additions or changes to the guidance and information presented in the draft SPD itself. All three of them agreed fully with the preliminary SEA screening assessment attached at Appendix B and D

Conclusions

- 5.12 The Council considers that the **Shop Front Supplementary Planning Document is not likely to have significant environmental effects,**

and therefore does not require a SEA. A summary of the Council's Determination is set out in Section 5 below.

6. The Council's Determination

6.1 Following the screening consultation, the Council issued its formal determination on 16 September 2014. **The Council has determined that the Shop Front Supplementary Planning Document would not have significant effects on the environment, and therefore, that a SEA is not required.**

6.2 In summary, the reasons for the Council's Determination are that:

- The SPD will supports existing planning policy on the design of new development, local character and the historic environment, rather than introduce new policy;
- The SPD will provide a benchmark for assessing the quality of the design of a specific type of development (i.e. shop fronts), as a supplement to existing planning policy;
- The Council has carried out a screening assessment which shows that the SPD is not likely to have significant environmental effects either on its own, or in combination with the plans it supports; and
- The three statutory environmental bodies have been consulted on the Council's screening assessment and have agreed with the Council's view that the SPD is not likely to have significant environmental effects.

6.3 In accordance with Regulation 11, a copy of the SEA Determination is being sent to each consultation body, together with a copy of this final SEA Screening Statement. This statement represents the Council's "statement of reasons," which must be circulated to the consultation bodies and published if the Council determines that the plan will not have significant environmental effects.

- 6.1 Copies of the Council's Determination and this Screening Statement are also available for public inspection at the First Stop Shop at the Civic Centre in Darwall Street in Walsall Town Centre, and on the Council's website. Here is a link to the relevant web page:

http://cms.walsall.gov.uk/index/environment/planning/planning_policy/local_development_framework/ldf_supplementary_planning_documents.htm

APPENDIX A

Shop Front Supplementary Planning Document:

Shop fronts play a significant role in the character of the boroughs town and district centres. These centres are where some of Walsall's most historic and well preserved townscapes survive and are often the destination for many of our commercial and leisure based trips.

The nature of retail and other associated commercial premises vary greatly, and the appearance of the shop front reflects the different uses, sizes of premises, styles of architecture and periods of construction.

Commerce is fickle, and the nature of retail and business has changed significantly over the past 50 years. Individual operators have diversified and whilst new operators have appeared others are disappearing or locating out of town. These changes have not suddenly happened, but have constituted a significant shift in retail patterns since the Second World War.

The advent of the shopping mall created a new flexible and modern face to shopping and this style of shopping found its way into the traditional high street, with older premises being refitted to reflect this new image. The town and district centres of Walsall are no different to any others in Britain and inherit this legacy of altered shop fronts that have largely harmed the character of these areas to varying degrees.

Today the struggle to sustain vibrant town centres is greater than ever and retailers are competing with the greatest threat to date, that of online retail. This has resulted in a greater percentage of our centres comprising leisure based operators including food and drink premises and as a result changing further their character.

These changes to the economy of the town centres in conjunction with the modern turnover rate of operators and the pressures to market more aggressively has had a significantly negative impact on the character of these areas. There is now a need to reinforce planning policy to ensure that improvements can be made in controlling the design of new shop fronts whilst catering for the modern needs of retail practice.

Walsall has invested heavily in its town centres, in conjunction with the Heritage Lottery Fund, and has delivered new shop fronts in Walsall, Willenhall and Bloxwich town centres through a series of Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) programmes and Heritage Economic Regeneration Schemes (HERS). The legacy of these initiatives must not be lost and therefore there is a very real need to introduce a further planning policy document to ensure this work continues with real effect.

This document celebrates the various THI projects, particularly the achievements of the most recent, that in Willenhall. It also sets out design principles for future shop fronts as proposals for new shop fronts come forwards.

It is important that future replacement shop fronts are not markedly different to those delivered through the THI as the value of this work must be seen as comprehensive improvements to the townscape, not projects in isolation.

The document is chiefly a visual guide and is aimed directly at the local community, developers and as a negotiation tool during the planning process.

Shop Front Supplementary Planning Document: Draft SEA Screening Statement – September 2014

Its focus is the composition of shop fronts, the needs of users, security, signage, materials and structural constraints. It provides illustrations and examples of how shop fronts work and how a good shop front can effectively promote business.

Role of the Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

A Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is a planning document that forms part of the Development Plan. In Walsall this is Local Development Framework (LDF) only and comprises the Unitary Development Plan (UDP) and the Core Strategy (CS).

Specifically, an SPD sits under and supports specific policies in the LDF and these are set out in Section 2.0.

This SPD provides detailed guidance that will assist owners, developers and investors to understand the design requirements of proposed new or adapted shop fronts.

The SPD will be a material consideration in the planning process and will carry weight in the decision making of planning application, advertisement consents and listed building consents.

This document supersedes the Design Guidance for Security Shutters adopted by the Council in 1998.

APPENDIX B

Shop Front Supplementary Planning document: Likely Significance of Environmental Effects – Consideration of SEA Regulations Schedule 1 Criteria

Schedule 1 Criteria	Council's Assessment
1. Characteristics of the Plan	
(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 supports other policies which themselves provide the framework for decision-making.</p> <p>The plan will provide a benchmark for assessing the quality of the design of a specific type of development (i.e. shop fronts) as a supplement to existing planning policy on the design of new development, local character and the historic environment. This will encourage high quality design of such development and ensure that existing policy is more effective in improving the quality of the environment in shopping areas.</p>
(b) The degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy.	The SPD sits below the following adopted 'higher-tier' plans which form part of the statutory development plan (local plan) for

	<p>Walsall Borough:</p> <p>Black Country Core Strategy 2011 Walsall Unitary Development Plan 2005 – “saved” policies</p> <p>The SPD will not be used as the basis for decision-making on its own, but will be read in conjunction with the design and heritage policies in the above plans, and with the general design guidance in the Designing Walsall SPD (adopted in 2008, with modifications adopted in 2013), which also supports the above plans.</p>
(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 SPD will encourage positive improvements to the borough’s shopping centres (i.e. Walsall Town Centre, the five District Centres, and the Local Centres identified on the “saved” UDP Proposals Map), ensuring they are environments that are attractive and pleasant and thereby are sustainable centres of business and growth.</p>
(d) Environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme.	<p>The SPD will aid conservation area management and encourage improvements to the condition of the borough’s conservation areas, some of which are at risk (identified by English Heritage).</p>
(e) The relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation	<p>The SPD will support:</p>

of Community (EU) legislation on the environment (for example, plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection.	<p>EUROPEAN COUNCIL RESOLUTION of 12 February 2001 on architectural quality in urban and rural environments (2001 /C 73/04)</p> <p>Desirous of improving the quality of the day-to-day environment in the life of European citizens...</p> <p>Its aims include:</p> <p>Architecture is a fundamental feature of the history, culture and fabric of life of each of our countries; that it represents an essential means of artistic expression in the daily life of citizens and that it constitutes the heritage of tomorrow.</p>
2. Characteristics of the Effects and the Area Likely to be Affected	
(a) The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects.	<p>The guidance is expected to have a positive influence over physical alterations to existing shops, including shops that are designated as heritage assets, where irreversible alterations to the fabric of the building are to be avoided where possible. New shop fronts and alterations to existing shop fronts could remain in place for a long-term period once they have been</p>

	implemented, although some changes, for example, the installation of new roller shutters, may be wholly or partly reversible.
(b) The cumulative nature of the effects.	Has the potential to have a cumulative impact on all retail premises in Walsall Town Centre, the five District Centres and the Local Centres identified on the “saved” UDP Proposals Map.
(c) The trans-boundary nature of the effects.	None – would only apply to Walsall Metropolitan Borough.
(d) The risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents).	The risk to human health is very low as it does not address hazardous substances, major construction or pollution. There is a possible improvement to human health by assisting in the regeneration of vacant premises that may be in poor condition.
(e) The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected).	Has the potential to impact on the majority of retail properties in Walsall Town Centre, the five District Centres and the Local Centres identified on the “saved” UDP Proposals Map. However, as it is only concerned with the ground floor elevation and immediate interface between the commercial function of a building and the wider public realm, overall, the magnitude of effect is expected to be low.
(f) The value and vulnerability of the	Some of Walsall’s older, traditional

<p>area likely to be affected due to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Special natural characteristics or cultural heritage (ii) Exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values (iii) Intensive land-use. 	<p>shopping centres (including parts of Walsall Town Centre and three out of the five District Centres – Bloxwich, Darlaston and Willenhall) have conservation areas status or include statutorily listed and “locally listed” buildings and therefore contain significant cultural heritage to which the document is directly responding to.</p> <p>The borough’s shopping centres are also considered to be of significant value to the wider regeneration of the borough.</p>
<p>(g) The effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or International protection status.</p>	<p>There will be the potential for a positive impact on the townscape of the Borough.</p>

APPENDIX C
Shop Front Supplementary Planning Document SEA
Screening:
Bibliography

Document	Web Link
A Practical Guide to Strategic Environmental Assessment (September 2005), ODPM	http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/practicalguides/a
Assessment of Plans and Projects Significantly Affecting Natura 2000 Sites (November 2001), Oxford Brookes University for European Commission	http://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/management/guidance_en.htm
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (March 2012)	https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf
Walsall Unitary Development Plan (UDP) (2005)	http://cms.walsall.gov.uk/unitary_development_plan.htm
Black Country Core Strategy (2011)	http://cms.walsall.gov.uk/ldf_core_strategy

APPENDIX D

Shop Front Supplementary Planning Document: SEA Screening Consultation – Summary of Comments Received

Consultation period – 11 August 2014 to 5 September 2014.

Consultee Details		Date of Response	Summary of Comments
Name	Organisation		
	English Heritage	3 September 2014	For completeness, it may be worth including a reference to the adopted Black Country Core Strategy and any relevant policies, within the Screening Assessment.
	Environment Agency	5 September 2014	<p>We note that the proposed SPD will apply to any premises within the retail use class of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Amendment) (England) Order 2005:A1: Shops, A2: Financial and professional services; A3: Restaurants and cafes; and A5: Hot food takeaways.</p> <p>Legislation and planning policy framework: We note that the document states that any changes to a commercial shop front will require planning permission</p>

			<p>as it materially alters the appearance of the building.</p> <p>Where these applications lie within an area of flood risk, the National Planning Policy Framework advises that a Flood Risk Assessment should be submitted in support of the planning application, and we understand that your Council requires such information to be provided in order to validate the planning application.</p> <p>We note that a number of shopping areas lie within areas of flood risk, including Walsall Town Centre.</p> <p>There is the opportunity to encourage applicants who submit a planning application to change their shop frontage to design their frontage to reduce the risk of internal flooding to their premises.</p> <p>The Environment Agency has produced a series of comments for lower risk</p>
--	--	--	---

			<p>planning applications that are located within flood risk. It recommends that the planning application include one of the following mitigation measures:</p> <p>Either;</p> <p>Floor levels within the proposed development will be set no lower than existing levels and flood proofing of the proposed development has been incorporated where appropriate.</p> <p>Or;</p> <p>(where there is an extension or new building) floor levels will be set 300mm above the known or modeled 1 in 100 annual probability river flood (1%) in any year. The flood level is the extent of the flood zones.</p> <p>In line with this guidance, changes to shop frontages that require planning permission within areas of flood risk should consider incorporating features (such as flood boards etc...) and</p>
--	--	--	---

			<p>sign up to a flood warning service (if available) as part of their application.</p> <p>It would seem pragmatic to consider improving flood resilience of businesses when redesigning the frontage to a building to ensure that the features are sympathetic to any historical or architectural character, or conservation issues within the shopping area.</p> <p>Draft SEA Screening Statement We have carefully reviewed the information and we agree with your statement on Page 13. We would not expect that this SPD would have a significant environmental effect.</p>
	Natural England	12 August 2014	<p>Whilst we welcome this opportunity to give our views, the topic of the Supplementary Planning Document does not relate to our remit to any significant extent. We do not therefore wish to comment.</p>