

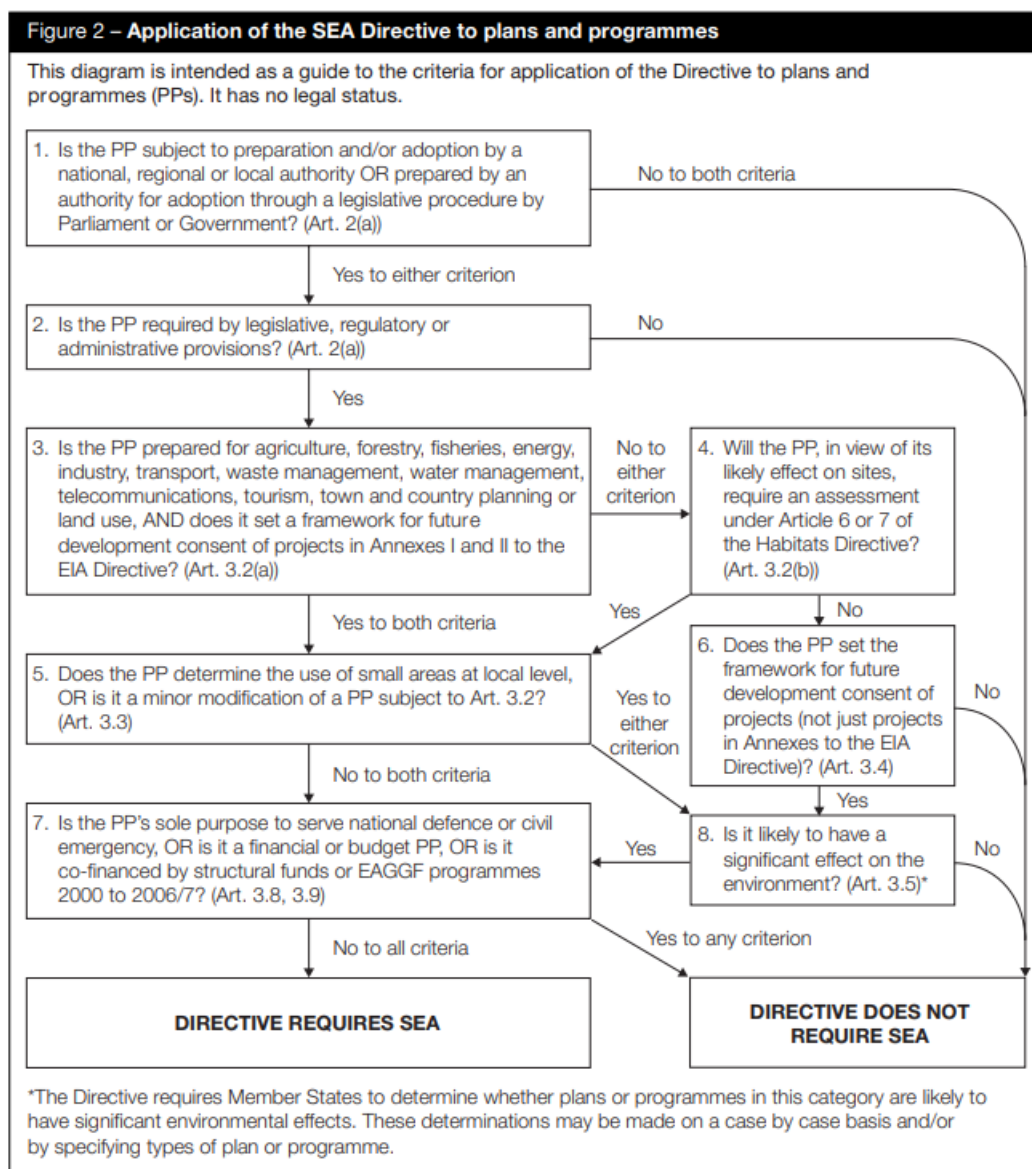
Appendix D: Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening Opinion

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1. Introduction

This appendix presents the SEA screening opinion assessment which follows the flowchart on the application of the SEA Directive to plans and programmes presented in [A practical guide to the Strategic Environmental Assessment](#) and shown below.



2. Screening Assessment

The outcomes of the assessment are presented in the following table:

Table D1: Establishing the need for SEA

Stage	Answer	Reason
1. Is the PP subject to preparation and/or adoption by a national, regional or local authority OR prepared by an authority for adoption through a legislative procedure by Parliament or Government? (Art. 2 (a))	Yes	The County Durham Plan is subject to preparation and adoption by Durham County Council (the local authority).
2. Is the PP required by legislative, regulatory or administrative provisions? (Art. 2 (a))	Yes	Local authorities in the UK are required by law to have a Local Plan. Mandated by the National Planning Policy Framework and Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, these plans are essential for guiding spatial development and determining planning applications.
3. Is the PP required for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism, town and country planning or land use, AND does it set a framework for future development consent of projects in Annexes I and II to the EIA Directive? (Art.3.2(a))	Yes	The County Durham Plan is required for town and country planning and will help set the framework for future development consent of projects in Annexes I and II to the EIA Directive (e.g. certain minerals and waste developments) and those not listed in the Directive.
4. Will the PP, in view of its likely effect on sites, require an assessment under Article 6 or 7 of the Habitats Directive? (Art.3.2(b))	N/A	As the answer to question 3 is 'Yes' the next applicable question following the flowchart is question 5.
5. Does the PP determine the use of small areas at local level, OR is it a minor modification of a PP subject to Art. 3.2? (Art. 3.3)	No	The County Durham Plan will help to determine the use of land in the entirety of County Durham which covers an area of approximately 223,260 hectares in North East England. Due to changes to the National Planning Policy Framework and to significantly increased Local Housing Need (LHN) figures (an increase from 1,308 per annum to 2,011 per annum) since the previous County Durham Plan was adopted, it is expected that major modifications will be required.

Stage	Answer	Reason
6. Does the PP set the framework for future development consent of projects (not just projects in Annexes to the EIA Directive)? (Art. 3.4)	N/A	As the answer to question 5 is 'No' the next applicable question following the flowchart is question 7.
7. Is the PP's sole purpose to serve national defence or civil emergency, OR is it a financial or budget PP, OR is it co-financed by structural funds or EAGGF programmes 2000 to 2006/7 (Art. 3.8, 3.9)	No	The County Durham Plan's purpose is to guide spatial development in the area and set the framework by which planning applications will be determined
8. Is it likely to have a significant effect on the environment? (Art 3.5)	N/A	As the answer to question 7 is 'No' it is not necessary to answer this question and it can be concluded that SEA of the County Durham Plan is required. However, please note that the County Durham Plan has the potential to have significant effects on the environment due to the special environmental values and characteristics of the county.

3. Conclusion

Durham County Council is of the opinion that SEA of the County Durham Plan is required. The opinion of the statutory consultees (Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England) will also be sought as part of the consultation on the County Durham Plan Scoping to determine this.