

REPORT OF THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR HERITAGE AND GROWTH**DESIGN SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT****EXEMPT INFORMATION**

None

PURPOSE

To seek approval to undertake consultation on the Draft Design Supplementary Planning Document included within Appendix 1.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That Cabinet resolves that the attached Draft Design Supplementary Planning Document be taken forward into a 4 week consultation period.
2. That Cabinet authorises the Assistant Director Growth and Regeneration to make minor changes to the Draft Design Supplementary Planning Document prior to consultation.
3. That Cabinet receives a further report on the outcome of the consultation and a final version of the Design Supplementary Planning Document for approval.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Chapter 12 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Achieving well-designed places, sets out government's expectations of design policies to deliver sustainable development.

Paragraph 126 specifically sets out the role of detailed guidance which the Tamworth Draft Design SPD is seeking to do:

To provide maximum clarity about design expectations at an early stage, plans or supplementary planning documents should use visual tools such as design guides and codes. These provide a framework for creating distinctive places, with a consistent and high quality standard of design. However their level of detail and degree of prescription should be tailored to the circumstances in each place, and should allow a suitable degree of variety where this would be justified.

In adopting a Design SPD the Council will be strengthening a key policy within the adopted Local Plan that can be applied and enforced to a greater degree. This approach would satisfy paragraph 126 of the NPPF.

Supplementary Planning Documents add further detail to policies within a local plan. They can be used to provide further guidance for development on specific sites or on particular issues, such as design. The adopted Tamworth Borough Council Local Plan 2006-2031 makes reference within Policy EN5 Design of New Development, that further detailed guidance on this policy will be set out within the Design Supplementary Planning Document. This document will illustrate how Policy EN5 will be applied and implemented.

Detailed design guidance has been identified as a priority for the Council for a number of

years in view of the ambitions leading up to the Local Plan. The delivery of housing is well underway and whilst the Design SPD will have little influence on these its impact will be more effective in guiding development of difficult sites that are in prominent or sensitive locations, such as regeneration areas, which need to respond to local character and identity.

The purpose of the Design SPD is to:

- Promote good design
- Provide information on planning application requirements
- Provide basis for determining application on design matters
- Provide framework for refusing application on design matters
- Improve understanding of what constitutes good design
- Promote sustainable development
- Guidance on consideration of Tamworth's diverse heritage
- Design Guidance for Tamworth town centre
- Design Guidance for residential and commercial development
- Guidance on infill and backland development, plot subdivision and intensification
- Guidance on materials
- Sustainable development & climate change
- The planning and design process
- Implementation of the guide

The foreword section of the SPD contains holding text. This will be replaced following consultation. There are also other areas which will be added relating to open space, industrial and commercial areas and further guidance relating to the town centre. These changes are currently being revised to inform the consultation version of the SPD.

OPTIONS CONSIDERED

The Council does not have detailed design guidance for developers but general aspirations are contained within policies EN5 Design of New Development and EN6 Protecting the Historic Environment. This approach could continue but in doing so the Council will be at odds with the National Planning Policy Framework that strongly advocates the promotion of sustainable development through detailed design policies. The stated intention within Policy EN5 is that further detailed design guidance will be set out within the Design Supplementary Planning Document.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The main resource implications going forward are in the production of printed materials for the consultation, advertisement fees and staff resources in answering any questions from the public regarding the consultation. There are also regulatory requirements to produce assessments of the potential impacts of an SPD that will require staff time.

The Draft SPD will be revised where necessary following consultation. Comments will be compiled with a view to refining the document and adding further illustration where required to enable the production of a final document. All expenditure can be accommodated within current department budgets.

LEGAL/RISK IMPLICATIONS BACKGROUND

The Council provides guidance to developers and agents based on policies within the adopted local plan. In some areas, as is the case with design matters, the guidance is provided in a general policy with detailed guidance being delegated to a further document. In the absence of detailed guidance, these policies are open to interpretation and as a result extensive dialogue may take place with a view to amend elements of an application where officers come to a different view to the applicant. There are also implications for decision making on planning applications where reasons for approving or refusing applications must be clearly set out, Where there is an absence of clear guidance to reach a decision, it opens the Council up to challenge. The Design SPD will allow for greater transparency in decision

making but also potentially lead to reduced design discussions saving staff time. Potentially, the pre-application discussions will be more focussed and allow for applications to be better informed and potentially submitted earlier.

SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS

The basis of the NPPF is to promote sustainable development that is to be achieved through detailed guidance at a local level through Supplementary Planning Documents. Through adopting the Design SPD, the Council will be setting out its requirements for sustainable development and use this as a basis for refusing schemes that do not meet guidance within the SPD.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The adopted Tamworth Local Plan 2006-2031 contains policy EN5 Design of New Development that provides some general guidance to be considered as part of the design process for new development:

High quality buildings and places will be achieved across Tamworth with particular attention paid to the enhancement of the town centre, conservation areas, the Sustainable Urban Extensions and Regeneration Priority Areas. Poor design or design that fails to take the opportunities available to improve the character and quality of an area and the way it functions will be refused.

New developments will be expected to:

- a) Respect and where appropriate reflect existing local architectural and historic characteristics but without ruling out innovative or contemporary design which is still sympathetic to the valued characteristics of an area.*
- b) Take into account the impact of the proposal on the significance of heritage assets.*
- c) Be of a scale, layout, form and massing which conserves or enhances the setting of the development.*
- d) Utilise materials and overall detailed design which conserves or enhances the context of the development.*
- e) Be outward facing with active frontages which incorporate landscaping and boundary treatments appropriate to the local context.*
- f) Be legible and allow users to navigate the area with ease by providing landmark buildings at key locations and a choice of routes to walk, cycle or drive along.*
- g) Minimise or mitigate environmental impacts for the benefit of existing and prospective occupants of neighbouring land. Such impacts may include loss of light, privacy or security or unacceptable noise, pollution, flooding or sense of enclosure.*
- h) Pay particular regard to highway safety and servicing requirements, the capacity of the local road network and the adopted parking standards set out in Appendix C.*
- i) Incorporate landscaping appropriate to the site, using native species wherever possible.*
- j) Maximise health benefits through the incorporation of usable open space and footpaths and links to the wider green infrastructure network, in accordance with Policy EN3.*

Where appropriate, proposals will be referred to local and sub-regional design review panels to provide objective design advice.

Further detailed design guidance will be set out within the Design Supplementary Planning Document.

REPORT AUTHOR

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LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

APPENDICES

