

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Planning and New Communities Joint Portfolio Holders meeting October 6, 2008
AUTHOR/S: Suzanne McBride, New Communities Corporate Manager/Glen Richardson, Head of Joint Urban Design Team

CAMBRIDGESHIRE DESIGN GUIDE FOR STREETS AND THE PUBLIC REALM

Purpose

1. This report is a request to endorse the Cambridgeshire Design Guide. The purpose of the guide is to set out the key principles and aspirations that should underpin the design of streets and public spaces to be developed in Cambridgeshire. The guide was produced by the County Council jointly with the local authorities and will help guide the County Council and partner authorities in the use of their powers in reviewing and making decisions on proposals that deal with streets and public spaces.
2. This is not a key decision because the Cambridgeshire Design Guide is strictly speaking not a District Council document however the District Council is partner to it. It is the County Council's document in exercising their authority as Highway Authority. The report is brought forward for the endorsement of the joint portfolio holders to ensure the guide has the backing of the District Council in its engagement with developers and the County Council as highway authority.

Background

3. The Cambridgeshire Design Guide was approved by the County Council in October 2007 and has been in use in the appraisal of development applications since that date. The guide was prepared by Alan Baxter Associates with the support of the County Council and Cambridgeshire Horizons. The guide provides illustrations and specifications which deal with the following principle topics:
 - Facilities for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport
 - Accommodating vehicles
 - Car parking
 - Drainage
 - Landscape and trees
 - Services
 - Street lights and signs
 - Materials
 - Adoption and stewardship
4. The Councils involved in the preparation of the guide all recognize the importance of streets and public spaces in the creation of new communities. They are pivotal to the success of a whole range of activities including accessibility, public health, public transport, play, and walking/driving/cycling. One underlying objective of the design guide is to ensure sustainable modes of transport e.g. cycling, walking and public transport, are at the top of the "modal hierarchy". The guide has been structured to ensure priority is given to such modes over the private car. The guide compliments

national guidance such as “Manual for Streets” prepared by the Department for Transport.

Implications

5.	Financial	None
	Legal	None
	Staffing	No additional staffing required – the Council’s Joint Urban Design Team and Planning teams are already engaged in using the design guide in delivering new communities
	Risk Management	None
	Equal Opportunities	None

Consultations

6. Various drafts of the Cambridgeshire Design Guide were consulted on widely throughout its preparation in 2006-07. Principle consultees included developers, utility organizations, all district councils, and relevant council officers (waste, landscape, drainage, conservation, etc.) who have a role to play in the design and construction of streets and the public realm. Their views were fed into the preparation of the final document.

Effect on Corporate Objectives and Service Priorities

7.	Work in partnership to manage growth to benefit everyone in South Cambridgeshire now and in the future
	The Design Guide is a key tool in reviewing and considering development proposals at all stages in the development process, particularly at the stage of reserved matters, design coding and satisfying highways-related conditions attached to a planning approval.
	Deliver high quality services that represent best value and are accessible to all our community
	While the guide is not a “service” as such, it supports the goal of delivering efficient and well maintained streets and public spaces.
	Enhance quality of life and build a sustainable South Cambridgeshire where everyone is proud to live and work
	This is in essence the goal of the design guide, most importantly as it relates to building attractive, efficient and well maintained streets and public spaces.

Conclusions/Summary

8. Approval of the Cambridgeshire Design Guide provides support to the objective of the District and County Councils in ensuring future streets and the public realm are user friendly and promote sustainable modes of transport, to the benefit of current and future residents of the District.

Recommendations

9. That the Planning and New Communities Joint Portfolio Holders endorse the Cambridgeshire Design Guide for Streets and the Public Realm (October 2007) as

guidance in the planning and construction of streets and the public realm in new development in South Cambridgeshire.

Background Papers: the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:

Cambridgeshire Design Guide for Streets and the Public Realm, Cambridgeshire County Council (October 2007), for a website version refer to:

<http://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/transport/managing/networkmanagement/Cambridgeshire+Design+Guide.htm>

Contact Officer: Glen Richardson – Head of the Joint Urban Design Team
Telephone: (01954) 713122