

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: New Communities Portfolio Holder

13 July 2010

AUTHOR/S: Executive Director (Operational Services) / Corporate Manager (Planning and New Communities)

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK - CONSULTATION ON ORCHARD PARK SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT

Purpose

1. The purpose of this report is to seek agreement for the Orchard Park Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) to be published for consultation.
2. This is not a key decision because the SPD will only affect the community living or working in one ward. Approval is sought to undertake a consultation exercise. It was first published in the May 2010 Forward Plan.

Recommendations and Reasons

3. That the Portfolio Holder:
 - (a) agrees that the Draft Orchard Park Supplementary Planning Document (Appendix 1, including Annexes) be issued for consultation.
 - (b) notes the Sustainability Appraisal Statement (Appendix 2) and Habitat Regulations Assessment Statement (Appendix 3).
 - (c) that authority be given to the Corporate Manager (Planning and New Communities) to make minor amendments to the above documents.

Background

4. The purpose of Supplementary Planning Documents is to expand on policies set out in Development Plan Documents and to provide additional detail. The Council has adopted a number of Development Plan Documents (DPD) that form part of the Local Development Framework. The SPD relates to Policy SP/1 Cambridge Northern Fringe West (Orchard Park) in the Site Specific Policies DPD and policies contained within the adopted Development Control Policies DPD.
5. In 2007 the developers produced the Arbury Camp Design Guide, which sets out clear design guidance for Orchard Park. Subsequently viability issues have arisen regarding the creation of commercial developments of up to 4 storey height, which resulted in applications for a local centre and commercial centre of only 2 to 3 storeys in height along the northern edge of Orchard Park adjacent to the A14. These lower commercial premises prevent the removal of the A14 noise barrier previously envisaged. In January 2010 the Council adopted the Site Specific Policies DPD, which in Policy SP/1 allowed for the provision of 220 additional dwellings on the vacant sites at Orchard Park.
6. The specific purpose of this SPD is to set out the design principles for the remaining land parcels at Orchard Park that the Council expects to be addressed by developers in any planning application, to ensure the creation of a high quality desirable 'place'.

The SPD will provide a clear framework that will assist the assessment of applications. The SPD provides design guidance that will apply to any development proposals that may come forward and is not land use specific.

Process for preparing the Supplementary Planning Documents

7. The draft SPD has been prepared in consultation with the relevant specialist officers within the Council. Following the enactment of the Planning Act 2008 and a change to the Regulations in 2009 there is no longer a requirement to carry out a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) of the social, environmental and economic effects of the proposals contained within the SPD. However, under the European Union Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA) Directive, the Council still needs to consider whether there will be any significant environmental effects of the SPD. Given the parent policies in the DPDs have been fully appraised, and SPD cannot create new policy, it is considered unnecessary to undertake an SA / SEA of the SPD. A statement to this effect has been prepared and will be published alongside the draft SPD (Appendix 2).
8. The Habitats Directive (Council Directive 92/43/EEC) sets out the requirement for Assessment of plans or projects affecting Natura 2000 sites¹. The first stage in carrying out an HRA is the scoping report which identifies the likely impacts upon a Natura 2000 or Ramsar site, either alone or in combination with other projects or plans, and considers whether these impacts are likely to be significant. If it is found that there is not likely to be a significant impact then a full Appropriate Assessment would not need to be carried out. Each of the DPDs containing the parent policies for the SPD has been found to have no likely significant impact. Given the parent policies in the DPDs have been fully appraised, and SPD cannot create new policy, it is considered unnecessary to undertake an assessment of the SPD. A statement to this effect has been prepared and will be published alongside the draft SPD (Appendix 3).

Considerations

9. Achieving good design and sustainable development are the core principals underlying planning. At the heart of sustainable development is the simple idea of ensuring a better quality of life for everyone, now and for future generations. The aim of this SPD is to provide additional guidance on how developments on the vacant sites at Orchard Park can ensure they achieve a high quality of design in a way that respects the local context and accords with Policy SP/1.
10. As part of the process of preparing an SPD there must be an opportunity for representations to be made on their content. If agreed by the Portfolio Holder, the SPD and their accompanying documents will be subject to six weeks of public consultation, which is anticipated will start on 6 September 2010.
11. The Council will consider the representations on the draft SPD and make any relevant changes to the SPD as a result of comments received. A report will then be made to the Portfolio holder on the representations submitted, and the Portfolio Holder will make the decision whether to adopt the document.

¹ Natura 2000 is a Europe-wide network of sites of international importance for nature conservation established under the European Council Directive 'on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora' – (92/43/EEC 'Habitats Directive').

Implications

12. Financial	Within existing budgets
Legal	None
Staffing	Staffing will be required to manage the consultation process, although this can be accommodated within existing resources.
Risk Management	No significant risks. The Consultation responses will highlight any issues for further consideration by the Council.
Equal Opportunities	The SPD has been subject to an Equality Impact Assessment (see Appendix 4) and has been shown to have a neutral and/or positive impact on Equal Opportunities.
Climate Change	The SPD supports sustainable development.

Consultations

13. The Council's Major Development Team, Urban Design Team, Planning Policy Team, Environmental Health Officers and the Landscape Design Officer have been consulted during the preparation of the Supplementary Planning Document. Additionally the Orchard Park Partners Group, which includes representatives from Cambridgeshire County Council, Cambridge City Council, Cambridgeshire Horizons, Homes and Communities Agency, Bedfordshire Pilgrims Association, Cambridge Regional College, SmartLIFE, Cambridgeshire Community Foundation, the developers Gallagher Estates, Unex Group and Places for People, and house builders Persimmon Homes, Martin Grant Homes and George Wimpey, Cambridge Building Society, Warwick Business Management Limited; the Orchard Park Community Council; and the Arbury Primary School Governors were consulted. At the request of the Orchard Park Community Council a drop-in event was held on 19th June 2010 for the residents of Orchard Park to identify their issues.

Effect on Strategic Aims

14. **Commitment to being a listening council, providing first class services accessible to all.** The consultation on the SPD will enable the Council to receive comments on the document's contents from developers, house builders, other interested parties and the general public.
15. **Commitment to ensuring that South Cambridgeshire continues to be a safe and healthy place for all.** The SPD will provide a framework for planning within Orchard Park and will assist in improving the environment there.
16. **Commitment to making South Cambridgeshire a place in which residents can feel proud to live.** The SPD will provide a framework for planning within Orchard Park and will assist in improving the environment there.
17. **Commitment to assisting provision for local jobs for all.** N/A
18. **Commitment to providing a voice for rural life.** The SPD has already been subject to consultation with local stakeholders which has influenced the production of the SPD, and the SPD will be published for wider consultation to enable the Council to receive comments on the document's contents from developers, house builders, other interested parties and the general public.

Conclusions / Summary

19. The report requests approval to undertake a public consultation on the draft SPD.

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

- Development Control Policies DPD
- Site Specific Policies DPD
- PPS1 Delivering Sustainable Development
- Planning and Climate Change – Supplement to PPS1
- South Cambridgeshire Design Guide 2010
- Arbury Camp Design Guide 2007

Appendices:

- Appendix 1 Draft Orchard Park SPD (text only)
- Appendix 1 Annex 1 Maps
- Appendix 1 Annex 2 Photos
- Appendix 1 Annex 3 Site Specific Design Principles
- Appendix 2 Strategic Environmental Assessment / Sustainability Appraisal Statement
- Appendix 3 Habitats Regulations Assessment Statement
- Appendix 4 Equality Impact Assessment Orchard Park SPD

Contact Officer:

Ian Howes Principal Urban Designer
Telephone: (01954) 713397

Caroline Hunt Principal Planning Policy Officer
Telephone: (01954) 713196