



North Devon Council & Torridge District Council

Report Date: 28th January 2022

Topic: Supplementary Planning Documents Task and Finish Group

Report by: Maria Bailey

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. This report provides Members with an update on the way forward on Supplementary Documents (SPD) as set out in the Local Development Scheme (LDS) for the currently adopted Local Plan.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1. To note the report and agree the setting up a Task and Finish Group to take the Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) through to adoption

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1. To acknowledge the work done to date on the Affordable Housing SPD and the need to adopt this document.

3.2. To agree the requirement to incorporate other suggested SPD's into the review of the Local Plan, to make efficient use of resource.

4. REPORT

4.1. Supplementary Planning Documents are a recognised way of adding further detail to planning policy following adoption of a Local Plan. In the Local Plan Local Development Scheme published in 2016 the following Supplementary Planning Documents were identified for production:

- Affordable Housing
- Rural Workers Accommodation
- Air Quality
- Design Guide
- Green Infrastructure: and
- Undesignated Heritage Assets.

4.2 The Rural Workers SPD was adopted in January 2020 and the Air Quality document in October 2020. The Affordable Housing SPD has been over a year now in production and is at the stage where the draft is being prepared for statutory consultation prior to formal adoption. Although this document cannot change policy it does add value in terms of the following:

- The Local Plan outlines the main strategic direction for affordable housing but only gives headline information such as percentage requirement, tenure and a local connection requirement with regard to geography – the important details that sit below need to be clearly set out and need interpretation.
- This interpretation helps us to balance competing demands around affordable housing actually delivered on the ground. Some may not be true planning issues but feature in the section 106 to ensure deliverability and affordability of such housing and are therefore appropriate to feature in an SPD.
 - For Housing Associations to ensure those affordable housing units delivered through Section 106s requirements via the planning system are fit for use, do not cause issues around allocations and unnecessary voids.
 - For developers that viability is considered appropriately
 - For Parish Councils that local people get adequate time to bid for such properties on sites that are often very far and few between in some rural areas
 - For households in housing need and the Local Housing Authority that policy reflects the need on the ground and the experiences that are fed back to us by individuals seeking affordable housing to meet their needs, lending criteria on mortgages for affordable housing for sale products, developers trying to build & sell, housing associations both development teams as well as allocation teams who receive the end products, Homes England funding guidance, Councillors and MPs.
 - Reflects most up-to-date information around affordability in this area (Altair).
- An absence of such detailed guidance has meant that applicants have managed to get around providing the best standard for affordable housing.

4.3 To take the Affordable Housing SPD through to adoption your officers recommend that a Task and Finish Group is set up from this Committee. The timetable will see the draft brought back to Members early in March with a six week consultation undertaken as soon after that as possible. It would then need to be taken to a Joint Committee for adoption in August. The exact structure and format for the Task and Finish Group will be discussed at the meeting.

4.4. It is intended that all other Supplementary Planning Documents identified to link to the existing local plan will not now be progressed but will be fed into the Local Plan Review. This is seen as a better use of resource in that officers concentrate on moving forward in bringing policy up to date and feed as much detail into the new Local Plan as possible.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

5.1. The work is part of the existing Local Plan Project with funds identified.



6. EQUALITIES ASSESSMENT

6.1. An Equalities Impact Assessment was undertaken on the adopted Local Plan and there is a positive impact anticipated as a result of this report in terms of meeting specific local housing needs.

7. ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

7.1. Environmental assessment was undertaken for the Adopted Local Plan and there are no environmental implications arising from these proposals.

8. CONSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

8.1. Schedule 2, paragraph 1.1.2, of the North Devon Council and Torrige District Council Joint Planning Policy Agreement.

9. STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY

This report contains no confidential information or exempt information under the provisions of Schedule 12A of 1972 Act.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

The following background papers were used in the preparation of this report:
The adopted Torrige and North Devon Local Plan
The adopted Local Development Scheme

11. CORPORATE PRIORITIES

The North Devon Council and Torrige District Council Corporate Priorities have been considered in the drafting of the report.

12. STATEMENT OF INTERNAL ADVICE

The author (below) confirms that advice has been taken from all appropriate Councillors and Officers:

- Cllr P. Watson (TDC) Lead member for Planning and Development;

Cllr M Prowse (NDC) Lead Member for Economic Development and Strategic Planning Policy;

Sarah-Jane Mackenzie Shapland (NDC) Head of Place, Property and Regeneration;

Shaun Harrington (TDC) Planning Manager.

This page is intentionally left blank