

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

STRATEGIC PLANNING BOARD – URGENT ITEM

Date of meeting: 19th April 2017

Report of: David Malcolm – Head of Planning (Regulation)

Title: Proposed amendments and recommendation for adoption of the Cheshire East Design Guide as a Supplementary Planning Document

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Ainsley Arnold, Planning and Housing

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The report requests that the Strategic Planning Board consider the proposed amendments to the Cheshire East Borough Design Guide, set out in Appendix A, and recommend to Cllr Ainsley Arnold, Housing and Planning Portfolio Holder that the Design Guide be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document at a Portfolio Holder for Planning and Housing meeting in May 2017.
- 1.2 This has been brought to Strategic Planning Board as an ‘Urgent Item’ due to the impending timescales to meet the appropriate Portfolio Holder meeting in May and to ensure that the Design Guide can progress through to formal adoption without delay.

2.0 Decision Required

- 2.1 That the Strategic Planning Board recommends to the Planning and Housing Portfolio Holder the incorporation of proposed amendments (set out in appendix A) to the Cheshire East Residential Design Guide and its adoption as a Supplementary Planning Document.

3.0 Background

- 3.1 Members of the Strategic Planning Board are stakeholders in considering Supplementary Planning Documents prior to their adoption, as required by the Council constitution.
- 3.1 Cheshire East is a unique and treasured place which is experiencing pressure for change. Securing quality of place in relation to the built and natural

environment is a key driver in the preparation of the Cheshire East Design Guide and its adoption as a Supplementary Planning Document (“SPD”).

- 3.2 The Design Guide SPD has been prepared with the assistance of e*SCAPE Urbanists and has been subject to extensive consultation resulting in a formal consultation on the draft version of the document during April – May 2016. The document has also been subject to ongoing and iterative Sustainability Appraisal and has been informed by progress relating to the emerging Local Plan Strategy.
- 3.3 Local Authorities may prepare Supplementary Planning Documents to provide greater detail on the implementation of Local Plan policies. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) supports the production of SPDs where they can guide planning applications.
- 3.4 The emerging Local Plan Strategy identifies, in policy SE1 (Design), that the Council will produce a Design Guide SPD to support its design policies. The Design Guide has also been brought forward in response to the number of development applications being proposed in advance of the Local Plan Strategy being adopted.
- 3.5 The Design Guide focuses on new housing. It has been divided into 2 volumes: volume 1 sets out the character of Cheshire East and the process for delivering design quality, whilst volume 2 provides the practical design guidance on a range of topics that impact on design quality.
- 3.6 The Design Guide includes case studies of best practice, guidance on process and the use of Design Codes / Design and Access Statements. It has been written to dovetail with Building for Life 12, the industry standard on designing better quality homes and neighbourhoods.
- 3.7 The Strategic Planning Board considered the draft Design Guide consultation draft in March 2016. Portfolio Holder approval to consult on the Design Guide was given in the same month with public consultation during April / May 2016. A total of 78 representations were received. A number of themes were noted during the consultation, these include:
 - Relationship to the Local Plan Strategy, Neighbourhood Plans and the legacy Local Plan documents;
 - Clarity and request for further editing to the document;
 - Viability including the level of prescription set out in the Design Guide;
 - Example sample settlements and character areas;
 - Use of design and access statements, design codes and building for life requirements.

4 Conclusion

- 4.1 Consideration of responses received during the public consultation and the outcomes of the Sustainability Appraisal work on the Design Guide has resulted in the proposed changes and refinements to checklists within the

Design Guide set out in Appendix A. These changes further strengthen the guide as evidenced in the updated Sustainability Appraisal (set out in Appendix B).

- 4.2 Subject to approval to adopt the SPD at the Portfolio Holder meeting at the start of May, an adoption statement will be prepared alongside notification to members of the Local Plan consultation database and appropriate advertisement.

5 Financial Implications

- 5.1 The guide has been prepared using £50,000 funding from an earmarked reserve. The funding of the consultation and amendments has been funded by the Planning and Sustainable Development budget.

6 Legal Implications

- 6.1 The Cheshire East Borough Design Guide SPD, once adopted, will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications for new housing development. The Design Guide has been consulted on in line with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

7 Risk Assessment

- 7.1 The process of engagement on the preparation of the Design Guide alongside consideration of responses received to the formal public consultation and the further Sustainability Appraisal work has reduced the overall risk in adopting the Design Guide as an SPD.

8 Reasons for Recommendation

- 8.1 The Design Guide, prepared by the Council's design team with the assistance of e*SCAPE Urbanists has been subject to extensive engagement both during its initial development and then through formal public consultation during April / May 2016.

- 8.2 A total of 78 representations have been received during the consultation on the Design Guide, these have now been considered and the outcomes documented. The following are attached to this report:

- a consultation statement including table of responses and proposed changes (set out in appendix A)
- Sustainability Appraisal (SA) report (set out in appendix B)

- 8.3 A link to the draft design guide consulted upon during April/May 2016 is also provided for reference:

<http://cheshireeast.gov.uk/planning/borough-design-guide-consultation.aspx>

For further information:

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Ainsley Arnold

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Background Documents:

9.1.1 Appendix A – Design Guide Consultation Statement and summary of issues and responses

9.1.2 Appendix B – Design Guide Final Sustainability Appraisal / Habitats Regulations Assessment

Link to the Draft Design Guide <http://cheshireeast.gov.uk/planning/borough-design-guide-consultation.aspx>