

AGENDA ITEM NO.

**COMT
CABINET**

7th JUNE 2007.

ADOPTION OF SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENTS:

HUNTINGDONSHIRE DESIGN GUIDE

HUNTINGDONSHIRE LANDSCAPE & TOWNSCAPE ASSESSMENT

(Report by Head of Planning Services)

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report recommends Cabinet to adopt two Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) following public participation.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The first Design Guide and Landscape and Townscape Assessment documents were adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance in July 2003. The Landscape and Townscape Assessment SPG drew upon a detailed assessment carried out by Landscape Design Associates in 2001.
- 2.2 These documents were updated and revised to take account of recent trends and Government guidance and approved by Cabinet in October 2006 for public participation with the aim of adopting them as Supplementary Planning Documents under the new Development Plan system of Local development Frameworks. The participation period ran from 15th December to 9th February 2007.
- 2.3 The draft SPDs were sent to a wide range of consultees; a public notice was published in local newspapers to advise the wider public and copies of the document were placed in all libraries and public access points in the District.

3 RESPONSES TO THE DRAFT SPDS

- 3.1 A total of 109 responses have been received, the great majority of which relate to the Design Guide. Generally both documents have been welcomed and objections have mostly focussed on the need to strengthen the content of the Design Guide or to seek clarification. Appendix A sets out a summary of all representations on the Design Guide, together with a response and recommendation as to whether or how the document should be amended.
- 3.2 A particular concern from a number of respondents, including the Government Office (GO-East) and the County Council has been the need to take greater

account of sustainability and climate change and a number of changes are recommended in response to this matter. These recommended changes include:

- Revising the introductory pages to explain the status of the SPD and relationship to other planning documents, including the saved policies in the Cambridge and Peterborough Structure Plan, the Local Plan Alteration 2002, and the Interim Planning Policy Statement April 2007
- Revising the ecology section and add a further Appendix to provide more detailed guidance.
- Adding a section on Sustainability and Climate Change to explain the key design concepts concerning sustainable development.
- Providing cross references to the Code for Sustainable Homes and other recent Government guidance, as well as Cambridgeshire County Council documents e.g. the Cambridgeshire Landscape Guidelines and Waste Design Guide.

3.3 Some Parish Councils have also commented on the complexity of the Design Guide which makes it difficult for non-professionals to use. Whilst sympathetic to this, it is important that the document covers the issues thoroughly in order to be effective in advising developers of the approach which should be taken if we are to improve the quality of our built environment. It also confirms the need for further work to be undertaken when specific proposals come forward in order to engage communities in the planning process; this is already highlighted in the SPD.

3.4 Very few comments have been made on the Landscape and Townscape Assessment; these are set out in Appendix B. Only minor changes are recommended as a result of considering these representations.

4 RECOMMENDATION

4.1 It is recommended that Cabinet:

1. Agrees the revisions to the Huntingdonshire Design Guide as set out in Appendix A and adopts the revised document as a Supplementary Planning Document.
2. Agrees the revisions to the Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Assessment as set out in Appendix B and adopts the revised document as a Supplementary Planning Document
3. Delegates any minor consequential amendments to the documents to the Executive Member for Planning Strategy in consultation with the Head of Planning Services.

Background Papers:

Draft Huntingdonshire Design Guide, HDC, 2006

Draft Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Assessment, HDC, 2006

HDC Cabinet Agenda and Minutes, 19th October 2006

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