

Consultation Statement: Draft SPD: Huntingdonshire Design Guide 2016

Huntingdonshire District Council prepared a draft Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) entitled "Huntingdonshire Design Guide 2016" which was published for public consultation. The consultation period ran from 31st October 2016 to 12th December 2016 (a six week period).

At the start of the consultation period email notifications were sent to all consultees on the planning policy consultation database. The database currently has over 2000 consultees.

During the consultation period a copy of the draft SPD was available at Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon, PE29 3TN during normal office hours (Mondays to Thursdays 9am to 5pm and on Fridays between 9am and 4.30pm).

Representations on the content of the draft SPD could be made in a number of ways:

- Online through the council's planning consultation portal at <http://consult.huntingdonshire.gov.uk/portal/spd/design>
- By email to local.plan@huntingdonshire.gov.uk
- In writing to Clara Kerr, Planning Services, Huntingdonshire District Council, Pathfinder House, St Mary's Street, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire, PE29 3TN

Following Consultation

Following the consultation period the draft SPD has been revised in light of the representations received. This consultation statement has also been revised with details of:

- i. the persons that have been consulted during preparation of the SPD;
- ii. a summary of the main issues raised in representations received; and
- iii. how those issues have been addressed in the final adopted version of the SPD.

Comments Received

A total of 42 comments were received from 21 consultees. The consultees that made comments are listed in Appendix 1. Full details of the comments received can be found on the Council's [Consultation Portal](#). Comments were also received from the Council's Development Management Committee and internal consultees.

Main Issues raised during the Consultation

The table below sets out the main issues raised in comments received during the consultation. The issues are arranged with general/ overarching issues first (in alphabetical order) and then chapter/ section specific issues following the order of the consultation document. For each main issue a short summary of the nature/ scope of the issue is provided, then in the 'Response' column a summary of the view taken in response to the issue is provided, finally the 'Changes' column gives a description of any amendments that have been incorporated into the final version of the SPD. Many of the consultation responses covered more than one issue, and sometimes their content does not fit neatly into a specific topic. The numbers listed for each issue refer to the ID number given in the consultation portal

Main Issue	Summary	Response	Changes
Density	<p>A range of points were raised, mostly on chapter 3. Place Making Principles, 3.2 Land Use and Density, but were raised on other sections as well. These included queries and concerns about how density is calculated, the difference between 'net' and 'gross' density, the relationship of proposed development with its surroundings, the typical density ranges identified and what is considered to be 'high', 'medium' and 'low' density development.</p> <p>DG SPD:10, 11, 18, 30, 41</p>	<p>The range and nature of comments shows that this is a subject that is worth clarifying and expanding the design guide's content for. Many different considerations mean that it is difficult to set density ranges for different locations. Stating density in terms of a number of dwellings per hectare is a crude measure on its own as different building forms can have the same density but will have markedly different characters.</p>	<p>Text on density in section 3.2 revised and added to. Additional diagrams added to help explain how different building forms can affect density and how 'net' and 'gross' density are calculated. Table 3.2.1 deleted.</p>
Navigation and usability of the document	<p>Several comments raised issues with the practicalities of using the document, noting how they found it difficult to move around and navigate through the document or could foresee problems with referencing specific content. Others were concerned about the way that it had been designed for digital use and that this may have adversely impacted on using a printed version.</p> <p>DG SPD:7, 16, 31, 34, 41</p>	<p>It is acknowledged that the extent to which the document was geared towards being used online and on touchscreen devices was ambitious. However, it was not the intention that this should be done to the exclusion or detriment of usability in printed form. Unfortunately some navigation functionality was not available in the consultation draft.</p>	<p>Several usability and navigation enhancements will be made once the content is finalised.</p>
Parking Provision	<p>A wide range of comments were raised, mostly on chapter 3. Place Making Principles, 3.5 Parking and Servicing, but were raised on other sections as well. A number of specific issues are covered below. There were concerns expressed about how appropriate provision could be provided successfully within new development, with a number of references made to existing instances with problems. There were also concerns about the compatibility of semi-basement and basement parking with flood risk.</p> <p>DG SPD:3, 31, 33, 38, 40, 41</p>	<p>This is understandably one of the most important issues for a design guide to address. It is considered that there would be benefit in providing separate detailed guidance on parking provision, both in terms of how to determine the level of provision and details such as the form location and dimensions of spaces as well as other related travel/ transport guidance. The form such guidance might take will be investigated.</p>	<p>Several amendments made to aid clarity. See below for changes arising from detailed issues.</p>
Support	<p>The majority of comments were supportive of the Design Guide, with several explicitly stating support.</p> <p>DG SPD:1, 2, 4, 5, 16, 31, 33, 36, 38, 40, 41</p>	<p>Support is noted.</p>	<p>-</p>
Various related topics	<p>Several comments raised topics relating to design, whether in detail or touched on more implicitly. These issues include the range of architectural styles and their evolution, historic environment, detailed requirements in relation to water courses, tree and woodland protection and enhancement.</p> <p>DG SPD:8, 16, 33, 37</p>	<p>While these issues are related to design most are detailed in nature and are specific to particular circumstances. Several of these issues are addressed in more detail in planning or related documents/ sources and are (or will be following amendments) referenced in the Design Guide, for example the Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Assessment SPD, the Tree Strategy for Huntingdonshire and the recently produced Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD. While there is some scope to revise and add to the content in the Design Guide it is considered that these issues are</p>	<p>Several amendments made throughout the document to aid clarity and provide reference to specific policy and guidance.</p>

Main Issue	Summary	Response	Changes
		best addressed elsewhere. In 'Parking Provision' above the potential for additional guidance has been identified and will be investigated. The potential for further, or the revision of existing, guidance will be investigated as well as content in the emerging Local Plan.	
Water management and Flood Risk	Comments were mostly on chapter 3. Place Making Principles, 3.6 Landscape and Public Realm, Water Management, but were raised on other sections as well. Concerns raised included caution about infiltration with reference to ground conditions, usability of diagrams for surface water management, space in development for sustainable drainage systems as well as their upkeep and properly addressing flood risk including boundary treatments. Reference to the recently completed Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD was requested. DG SPD:10, 13, 16, 28, 30, 33, 34, 35, 36, 40, 42,	Water management and addressing flood risk are important subjects which are addressed in numerous guidance and policy documents. Finding the right balance of content for the Design Guide has been difficult but it is considered appropriate to amend and add to the content in the draft SPD to some extent. Reference to Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD would be beneficial; however it is still to be adopted by HDC.	Several references to flood risk added. Water management section revised and added to, diagrams clarified, reference to Cambridgeshire Flood and Water SPD added.
1. Overview, 1.3 Objectives	Comments were generally supportive but expressed concerns about the points identified under 'Proposals will not be supported where the applicant:' DG SPD:17, 38, 40, 41	It is considered important to clearly state circumstances where development proposals would not be supported. Most of these points are considered to be appropriate. However, the first point should be amended with reference to characteristics and surroundings.	Change to first bullet point of second set of bullet points under 1.3 Objectives. Amendments in other sections are considered to help address the issues raised here.
1. Overview, 1.4 Status of the Guide to 1.6 Design Principles	Comments sought enhanced reference and acknowledgement of the emphasis placed on good design in national planning policy and guidance and the role of the SPD and its relationship with other planning documents. DG SPD:30, 33, 38,	The content in the document is considered to generally be appropriate – links to NPPF and NPPG are provided so it is not necessary to quote extensively from national policy or guidance, either the support for good design or how the SPD relates to other planning documents.	Several minor amendments made to aid clarity.
2. Context and Local Distinctiveness	Comments raised concerns about several detailed issues in this section including the detail about the development strategy of the emerging Local Plan, the evolution of settlements and the content on traditional architecture. DG SPD:30, 33, 41,	This content in the document is considered to generally be appropriate. Content related to the emerging Local Plan should be revised so that it remains applicable as the Local Plan is finalised, should changes be made from the current draft. Content on architecture supplements that already available in various documents including the Huntingdonshire Landscape and Townscape Assessment SPD and various conservation area character statements. It is considered appropriate that the design guide emphasises survey and analysis of the context for each development proposal.	Several minor amendments made to aid clarity and to more broadly identify the development strategy of the emerging Local Plan.

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3. Place Making Principles, 3.3 Place Making and Hierarchy of Movement	Concerns were raised about permeability in relation to land ownership and security; the hierarchy of travel modes and use of materials. DG SPD:9, 29, 31, 36	The benefits of achieving good permeability are such that it is promoted in the Design Guide. As it will be one of a number of considerations it is considered that the current content is generally appropriate.	Several minor amendments made to aid clarity.
3. Place Making Principles, 3.3 Place Making and Hierarchy of Movement, Street Types	Comments expressed concerns about the applicability of different street types to development scenarios; whether the street types described existing streets or those to be used in new development; issues with the cross-section diagrams, queries about dimensions and clarification of provision for cycling. DG SPD:9, 30, 31, 36, 38, 40, 41	There is benefit from clarifying the content on street types.	Street types, text and diagrams amended. Several minor amendments made to aid clarity.
3. Place Making Principles, 3.4 Urban Structure and the Development Block	Comments identified concerns about back to back distances, enclosure, consistency, building form, car parking provision and the use of archways DG SPD:19, 20, 21, 22, 24, 25, 26, 30, 38, 40	Distances and measurements are used where considered necessary but generally are a guide only, it is accepted that in certain circumstances it may be appropriate to deviate from stated measurements.	Several minor amendments made to aid clarity.
3. Place Making Principles, 3.5 Parking and Servicing, Garage Design	Content relating to the use of integral garages was raise. Support and some queries were raised about the garage design measurements text and diagram. DG SPD:3, 27, 30, 36, 40	Potential for clarification on this aspect of parking provision is recognised.	Garage design measurements text and diagram amended to aid clarity. See also 'Parking Provision' above.
3. Place Making Principles, 3.5 Parking and Servicing, Cycle Parking	A number of queries were raised in relation to the provision of cycle parking within developments. DG SPD:30, 31, 38, 41	In contrast with car parking provision the overall support for cycling as a sustainable travel mode means that a more supportive/ enabling approach should be taken than with car parking. Therefore this content in the document is considered to generally be appropriate, but some text revision would aid clarity.	Text amended to aid clarity.
3. Place Making Principles, 3.5 Parking and Servicing, Bin Storage and Servicing	Queries were raised concerning residential waste and recycling storage, use of alleyways and ginnels for access. There was support but also some queries about content on HDC Refuse Collection Requirements. DG SPD:27, 36, 41	This content in the document is considered to generally be appropriate. It is considered that the content included in the consultation draft on HDC Refuse Collection Requirements is too detailed and poorly presented. It also overlaps with, and potentially conflicts with, previously adopted guidance. This section should be revised with reference made to the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough RECAP Waste Management Design Guide SPD and the HDC Waste Collection Policies. The contents should be simplified and concentrate on the key points to consider in designing development proposals with regards to waste collection. Potential for further guidance/ detailed specification will be considered.	Content on Bin Storage and Servicing revised.

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3. Place Making Principles, 3.6 Landscape and Public Realm	The clarity of several detailed points in the landscape and public realm content were questioned, specifically the hierarchy diagram, space for SuDS and flood risk mitigation elements, public art, trees within development, lighting, historic environment, play space design and the role of open/ green space in providing a network for biodiversity. DG SPD:4, 8, 13, 28, 31, 33, 36, 37, 38	This content is considered to generally be appropriate.	Several minor amendments made to aid clarity. See also '3.8 Building Form' below regarding 'Ecology'.
3. Place Making Principles, 3.7 Building Form	Concerns about several key dimensions were raised as well as the examples of 'traditional' building form included. Other points included queries about privacy and defensible space, boundary treatments and building setbacks. There was support for the inclusion of content on the 45 and 25 degree rules. DG SPD:4, 23, 29, 30, 31, 33, 40	This content is considered to generally be appropriate, although some clarification would be beneficial.	Several minor amendments made to aid clarity.
3. Place Making Principles, 3.8 Building Details	A number of concerns were expressed about content on biodiversity, green infrastructure and use of hard surfacing materials, as well as viability and accessibility. DG SPD:4, 8, 12, 13, 33, 35, 38, 40	Much of the document's content is considered to generally be appropriate, although some clarification would be beneficial. Content on Ecology should be moved and revised.	Several minor amendments made to aid clarity. 'Ecology' moved to 3.6 Landscape and Public Realm between 'Play Areas and Playgrounds' and 'Trees'
4. Implementation, 4.2 The Design Process	Pre-application consultation was supported and encouraged with public bodies. Clarity on design codes and masterplanning was urged. DG SPD:14, 31, 36, 37	This content is considered to generally be appropriate. Support for pre-application consultations with other public bodies that provide such facility is beneficial. Content regards design codes and masterplanning is appropriate.	Several minor amendments made to aid clarity.
4. Implementation, 4.3 Development Scenarios	The development scenarios were generally supported, although the completeness of the 'questions to consider' was questioned with regards to heritage/ archaeology, ecology, surface water management and flood risk. Some additional examples were suggested. DG SPD:15, 36, 37, 41	Finding the right balance of completeness with highlighting key issues for the questions in this section was difficult. The questions have been reviewed, amended and add to. There is likely to be some benefit from continuing to identify examples of well designed development in the future on a periodic basis.	Amendments made to questions to be considered

Appendix 1: Consultees

The consultees that made comments are:

Hannah Albans of Persimmon Homes Ltd
Anthony Baker
Melissa Balk of Bidwells
Raymond Bowers
Rosalynne Carey-Townsend
John Chillcott
Sarah Conboy of Huntingdonshire District Council
Madelaine Crampton of Godmanchester Town Council
James Croucher of Lochailort Investments Ltd
Lois Dale of Houghton and Wyton Parish Council
Jenny Gellatly of Little Paxton Parish Council
Adam Ireland of the Environment Agency
Steven King of Historic England
Andrew Fisher of David Lock Associates for Tim Leathes of Urban and Civic
Graham Moore of Middle Level Commissioners
Stewart Patience of Anglian Water
M Pink of Earith Parish Council
Sue Reynolds of Cambridgeshire County Council
Debbie Steel of Brampton Parish Council
Natural England
Robert Lofthouse of Savills for Gallagher Estates Ltd