

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT POLICIES UPDATE

1 Purpose

- 1.1 To update Members of the Committee on discussions held between the Committee Research Group and Officers regarding future Development Management policies for VAP.

2 Recommendations

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| 2.1 The Committee is asked to note the update provided by this report. |
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3 Development Management policies update

- 3.1 As Members will recall at the Environment & Living Scrutiny Committee on 12 June, it was agreed that a Committee Research Group would act as a Member Sounding Board in the development of DM policies for the Vale of Aylesbury Plan. The group has looked at 4 policy topics -

- Impact of housing policy on the ageing population, including in rural areas.
- Where the policies might help to increase health outcomes such as healthy life expectancy and the broader determinants of health.
- Relating to sustainable construction and renewable energy.
- The historic environment.

- 3.2 The group has met on both the 1st and 15th August 2013. The above topics have been discussed at some length and example policies adopted by other Authorities have been studied as part of the information gathering exercise. Subsequently the has agreed to research further the following –

- That minimum space standards (both internal and external) are very desirable given the problems experienced on some recent developments within the District. The group considered this will help fulfil the commitment to both improving peoples health both physically and mentally.
- Strong support be given for adopting Lifetime Homes Standards in the VAP Delivery Policies document, which may help the ageing population to remain in their own homes should they develop mobility problems etc in later life.
- Need for design polices that cover issues such as car parking, materials, street lighting, bin storage, reducing street clutter, design of public buildings etc. The group considers that we should be aiming for the highest possible design standards within the District.
- We should seek to have a proactive policy for solar power generation provided that proposals do not have a detrimental impact on landscape setting and other constraints. We should consider producing design standard/guidance note for this i.e. panels should be height adjustable to enable grazing beneath.
- We need additional policies for dealing with the historic environment and not rely solely on the NPPF. We should also seek to protect non-listed heritage assets together with buildings/places that are local 'landmarks'.

- 3.3 As the Committee will see from the above much has been discussed at the research meetings. It was the view of the whole group that this has been a very useful exercise and that these joint meetings with Members and Officers should continue as the proposed DM policies develop.
- 3.4 Since the meeting of the 15 August, the Government has published a consultation document looking at housing standards nationwide. Officers will be responding to this consultation in the normal manner. This document is available on the DCLG website.
- 3.5 An initial review however suggests that this guidance may significantly constrain what we can require in future by way of planning policy.

4 Reasons for Recommendation

- 4.1 To update Committee on detailed discussions of research group.

5 Resource implications

- 5.1 The DM policies are being produced within operational budgets.

6 Response to Key Aims and Objectives

- 6.1 The preparation of the Vale of Aylesbury Plan is a key action in the Corporate Plan.

Contact Officer
Background Documents

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