

**SUSTAINABLE CONSTRUCTION AND RENEWABLE ENERGY
SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT – PUBLIC
CONSULTATION DOCUMENT**

Contact Officer: Judith Orr (01494 732268)

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1. Cabinet approve for public consultation the Draft Sustainable Construction and Renewable Energy Supplementary Planning Document in Appendix 1 and the public consultation process, as set out in paragraph 6 of this Report.**

Relationship to Council Objectives

Objective 1 - Efficient and effective customer focused services

The Draft Supplementary Planning Document offers applicants an informative tool that will assist them when preparing householder planning applications and is customer focused.

Objective 3 - Conserve the environment and promote sustainability

The Draft Supplementary Planning Document is designed to directly achieve this objective by ensuring that new developments take account of sustainability issues in their design and construction; encourages the retrofitting of existing buildings so as to improve their performance. The Draft SPD also seeks to increase the use of renewable energy within the District.

Implications

- (i) This matter is a Key Decision within the Forward Plan.*
- (ii) This matter is within the Policy and Budgetary Framework.*

Financial Implications

Costs associated with the preparation, consultation and eventual publication of the Supplementary Planning Document is within current budgets. Local residents will be encouraged to access the document, via the Council's website, and other than for Council use, the Council will recover printing costs for hard copies by imposing a reasonable charge.

Risk Management Implications

The Draft Supplementary Planning Document will help to ensure that the Council's Core Strategy can be effectively implemented as it provides advice to ensure that development is sustainable and also a policy encouraging renewable energy schemes. Without this guidance, there is a danger that best practice on sustainability will not

be incorporated into both new and existing developments.

Equalities Implications

The Council's Core Strategy was supported by an Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA). This EqIA shows that the Core Strategy does not disproportionately affect one specific group over another. The Draft Sustainable Construction and Renewable Energy Supplementary Planning Document does not include new policy or go beyond the scope of the Core Strategy for Chiltern District.

Sustainability Implications

The Draft Supplementary Planning Document is intended to directly address and improve sustainability issues within the District. The guidance is therefore directly relevant for this objective. The policies in the Core Strategy, to which the Draft SPD relates, have both been the subject of sustainability appraisals.

Report

- 1 A Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is a document which contains additional detail and guidance on how the local planning authority will interpret and apply specific policies in its Development Plan. An SPD cannot alter existing policy or include new policies that do not currently form part of a Development Plan. A SPD also does not form part of the Development Plan. It is instead, a material consideration in the determination of relevant planning applications.
- 2 The Council's Local Development Scheme (which contains details about what development plan documents the Council intends to produce and a timetable for their production) envisaged that a Sustainable Construction and Renewable Energy SPD would be adopted in mid/ late 2014. The SPD, produced for public consultation, thus progresses the Council's commitment to producing this document.
- 3 The purpose of the Sustainable Construction and Renewable Energy SPD is to assist applicants in understanding the techniques and building practices available to improve the sustainability performance of buildings through their design and subsequent use and to encourage renewable energy schemes in the District in order for development proposals to meet Core Strategy policy requirements. It therefore supplements Policy CS4 (Ensuring Development is Sustainable) and CS5 (Encouraging Renewable Energy) of the Core Strategy for Chiltern District.
- 4 The SPD is sub-divided into eleven sections, to try and make it relatively easy for applicants to find advice on the topic area of interest to them.
5. It includes a wide range of topic areas. These are summarised below:
 - Energy Consumption, including the siting and orientation of a building;

- Water Consumption and Quality, including water efficiency measures and reusing greywater and harvesting rainwater;
- Flood Risk and SuDS (Sustainable Drainage Systems);
- Air Quality;
- Noise;
- Biodiversity;
- Waste, including Recycling and Composting, and using locally produced resources and recycled materials, (where this hasn't already been covered by Waste Plans from Buckinghamshire County Council).
- Renewable and low carbon energy sources with potential to be implemented in the District. This includes schemes incorporating renewable energy in new developments as well as standalone schemes.

For each of these topic areas, the SPD provides background information, a baseline position and then goes on to set out what best practice measures can be taken to improve the situation. Any sources of further guidance are set out at the end of each topic area.

- 6 The proposed Draft SPD for consultation is set out in Appendix 1.
- 7 Normally the Council consults for a six week period on draft SPD's however, in order to meet the timetable for this SPD public consultation would need to occur over the summer holiday period. For this reason it is recommended that the consultation period is extended to eight weeks. If agreed, it is proposed to run the Draft SPD public consultation between 14th July and 8th September 2014 and carried out in accordance with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement. It is recommended that the public consultation comprises:
 - i. An advert on the Council website headline story board on the home page.
 - ii. Access to documents on the Planning pages of the Council website.
 - iii. Notification to be sent to parish council's and revitalisation groups.
 - iv. E-mails (where available) or letter notifications to be sent to all statutory consultees, local groups, organisations and individuals on the Council's Local Development Framework consultation data base.
 - v. Hard copies of the Draft SPD provided to all local libraries serving Chiltern residents.
 - vi. Hard copy documents available at the Council's Amersham Office.
 - vii. E-mail notification to all Chiltern District councillors and staff in advance of the consultation process.
 - viii. Press release at the start of the consultation period.
- 8 Following the close of consultation, the consultation responses will be considered and a report prepared for the Housing and Planning Overview Committee who will be asked to make recommendations to Cabinet. Cabinet in turn will be asked to consider the consultation responses, Overview Committee's recommendation and proposed SPD

and to recommend the SPD for adoption by Council. The timing for reports post consultation are not known at this stage as it will depend on the number of consultation responses received, nature of responses and workload of officers.

- 9 The Government's Housing Standard Review is also likely to have important implications for the contents of this SPD and may impact on the above timetable. The Government set up the review 18 months ago to address the complex, overlapping and sometimes conflicting standards for the technical performance of new homes in England.
10. Following formal consultation last August, the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) announced its conclusions on 13th March. The Government's proposal is to adopt mandatory national standards via a 'building regulation only' approach. Some of the existing standards' requirements such as Lifetime Homes, for example, will be absorbed into the building regulations.
11. Local authorities will not be able to dictate voluntary standards as a condition of planning permission. However, new 'optional building regulations' will allow councils to set standards higher than the national baseline as long as they can provide evidence of need and show that these will not make development unviable.
12. Detailed technical requirements, in the form of building regulation approved documents and standards, are scheduled to be published by the Government this summer. The new regulatory regime is due to be introduced in early 2015. Account will therefore need to be taken of these changes in the final draft of this SPD.

Background papers:

Core Strategy for Chiltern District, adopted November 2011.
Local Development Scheme (LDS) 2014-2016