

CABINET (LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK) COMMITTEE

6 DECEMBER 2010

EXTON VILLAGE DESIGN STATEMENT REVISION

REPORT OF HEAD OF STRATEGIC PLANNING

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RECENT REFERENCES:

PHD297 – [‘Revised Exton Village Design Statement’](#) Aug 2010

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

A draft Revised Village Design Statement (VDS) for Exton was published for public consultation in August 2010. The procedures for producing Supplementary Planning Documents require formal consultation on draft Village Design Statements.

In order for this document to carry weight in the planning decision-making process, it needs to be adopted by the City Council as a ‘Supplementary Planning Document’. This report summarises the comments received following public consultation on the draft Village Design Statement, and recommends adoption of the ‘Guidance’ points contained within the VDS, subject to a number of changes following the public consultation, as outlined in the schedule of comments at Appendix 1.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1 That the ‘Guidance’ points of the revised Exton Village Design Statement, as proposed to be amended, be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document.

- 2 That an offer of up to £1,000 be authorised as a contribution towards the costs of publication of the final version of the VDS.
- 3 That the Exton Village Design Statement Group be thanked for producing the Design Statement.

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DETAIL:

1 Introduction

- 1.1 The City Council encourages the production of Village Design Statements (VDS) by local communities so as to improve the quality of development in local areas and public involvement in the planning process. In order to carry weight in determining planning applications, such Statements need to be adopted by the City Council as Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs).
- 1.2 The Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2008 set out various requirements which must be followed when producing and adopting SPD, including in relation to public consultation on draft proposals. Failure to meet these requirements could either prevent the City Council from adopting the Village Design Statement as SPD or lead to its validity being challenged.
- 1.3 There is an existing VDS for Exton which was adopted in 2002 but this is now out of date and the VDS revision has been produced to replace it. The revised VDS now contains a statement of community involvement.

2 PRODUCTION OF THE REVISED VDS

- 2.1 The revised VDS was prepared by a Village Design Statement group in consultation with residents and City Council officers. The VDS has been through several drafts and has been subject to informal consultation locally, including consideration at the annual Parish Meeting. It was formally published as a draft VDS for consultation for a period of 6 weeks starting in August 2010, along with the necessary statutory notices.
- 2.2 The VDS includes a series of 'Guidance' points which generally accord with, and supplement the policies of, the statutory Winchester District Local Plan Review 2006. The revised VDS has a particular emphasis on conserving the character, distinctive features and landscape setting of the village by ensuring that changes and development are sympathetic. It meets the various requirements for Supplementary Planning Documents, for example through the involvement of the community. A Sustainability Appraisal has not been undertaken as the 2008 Regulations no longer include this as a requirement.

3 SUMMARY OF REPRESENTATIONS AND CHANGES PROPOSED TO REVISED VDS

- 3.1 The consultation period ran from 26 August – 8 October 2010 and three responses were received, all from statutory consultees (the Environment Agency, Hampshire County Council and the Crime Prevention Officer). The Village Design Statement group has considered the representations received and have agreed recommended responses to them with officers in the Strategic Planning Team.
- 3.2 As a result of the consultation and subsequent updating, several changes are proposed to the draft revised VDS. The Schedule of Representations, attached at Appendix 1, contains a summary of the representations made, together with the response and – in the final column – the mostly minor textual changes that are recommended as a result. Appendix 2 sets out proposed revisions to the text relating to the South Downs National Park and South Downs Way, reflecting the rearrangement and updating of these sections following the establishment of the National Park.
- 3.3 The main changes proposed are as follows:
- Move text on flood prevention to avoid repetition and improve the guidance;
 - Revisions to the text relating to the South Downs National Park and South Downs Way following the establishment of the National Park (see Appendix 2);
 - Improve the guidance on landscape features to further protect and enhance the Meon;
 - Add reference to aquifer protection and cross reference to the flood prevention section;
 - Minor changes to update the VDS (e.g. to reflect its status as an adopted SPD) and improve its wording.
- 3.4 The VDS Group has also produced a supplement setting out relevant Local Plan Review policies. It intends to make this available with the VDS to raise awareness of the policy requirements.
- 3.5 When approved, the VDS will be updated to include the changes proposed in the Schedule, which are limited in number. The draft VDS can be viewed on the Council's web site and the Schedule indicates clearly the changes proposed to it: <http://www.winchester.gov.uk/General.asp?id= SX9452-A7840484&cat=9129>

4 CONCLUSION

- 4.1 It is recommended that the changes outlined in the schedule attached as Appendix 1 be agreed and that the 'Guidance' points in the revised Exton

VDS be adopted by the Council as SPD, inclusive of the alterations attached in the schedule.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS:

5 SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY AND CORPORATE BUSINESS PLAN (RELEVANCE TO):

- 5.1 Although not specifically mentioned in the Community Strategy, the production of VDS/NDSs will contribute to the 'High Quality Environment' aims of the Council, particularly with regard to protecting local distinctiveness and promoting the public realm.

6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

- 6.1 It is proposed that a contribution towards printing costs of up to £1,000 for this stage of the VDS be offered. Funding exists within the Strategic Planning Division's budget for such an offer.

7 RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

- 7.1 None

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS:

None

APPENDICES:

Appendix 1: Exton Village Design Statement - Summary of Comments and Responses

Appendix 2: Replacement text on South Downs National Park and South Downs Way (page 5 of the VDS).

Appendix 1**Exton Village Design Statement - Summary of Comments and Responses**

Respondent	Respondent's comments	VDS Ref	VDS group response	Proposed change to draft VDS text
1. Environment Agency (Planning Liaison Officer)	Generally support the document.	All	Welcomed	None.
	Welcome the section and guidance on flood prevention. Any assistance from the Environment Agency will depend on resource availability.	Page 23	Noted	None.
	The links between flood risk management and development planning could be strengthened by moving the recommendation that no dwellings should be built on the floodplain from Page 5 of the document to the Guidance section on Page 23, although consideration should be given as to whether or not this would merely repeat national planning policy.	Pages 5 and 23	Agree that references to flooding on page 5 should be moved to the Flood Prevention section on page 23.	Delete 'Flood Prevention' heading and text on page 5. Add new 'Guidance' point on page 23: <i>"New dwellings should not be built on the flood plain"</i> .
	The sequential approach to locating development in relation to flood risk areas is applicable to all geographical locations - recommend that consideration is also given to removing the references to the Grynch and Manor Farm and replace them with the 'flood plain'.	Page 23	Agree, the proposed new Guidance point on page 23 reflects this comment.	None, see above.
	Reference to policies in the South East Plan should be removed and replaced with reference to	Page 23 Guidance	The Local Plan's Policy DP.8 was not 'saved' so the SE Plan Policy was	None

Respondent	Respondent's comments	VDS Ref	VDS group response	Proposed change to draft VDS text
	<p>Local Plan Policy DP8 – Flood Risk.</p> <p>Pleased the Meon and the SINC are recognised as areas of importance for nature conservation, but should be more emphasis on protection and enhancement of environmental features and biodiversity. Opportunities should be taken to protect and enhance the Meon.</p> <p>Welcome the references to open space on page 11.</p> <p>The area is situated above a Principal Aquifer and within Source Protection Zone 2 (SPZ2) for water supply abstraction. The groundwater is a very important resource and requires protection to ensure that pollution does not occur. This could be highlighted within the document.</p>	<p>Pages 6 and 7</p> <p>Page 11</p> <p>NA</p>	<p>mentioned instead. The revocation of the SE Plan has been declared unlawful by the Courts so the reference should be retained.</p> <p>It is not considered that the VDS would add to the protection already offered by national and local policies. Agreed that a reference to enhancement should be added.</p> <p>Welcomed</p> <p>Agreed.</p>	<p>Add at end of first Guidance point on page 7: <i>“and where possible enhanced”</i>.</p> <p>None.</p> <p>Add a note to the map of Exton (pages 12-13) to summarise the Environment Agency's comment about the aquifer and to refer to the Flood Prevention section on page 23.</p>
2. Hampshire County Council	The VDS is useful in referencing village setting, describing the character of the buildings and attempting to create Zones of similar character. Support the wide community engagement in	All	Welcomed	None.

Respondent	Respondent's comments	VDS Ref	VDS group response	Proposed change to draft VDS text
	<p>the VDS process. The VDS concentrates mainly on the village and its landscape setting and has strong guidance. Techniques on how to assess new development or highways improvements in relation to character and the guidance in the VDS may need to be investigated. The VDS will be useful when a Conservation Area Appraisal is undertaken.</p>			
3. Hampshire Police (Crime Prevention Officer)	<p>Can add very little to the document, but would ask that when a new building is located or an old one refurbished (particularly business premises that may contain valuable stock) the owner/developer should liaise with the Constabulary Crime Prevention Officer or Crime Prevention Design Advisor to consider what sympathetic security measures may be incorporated.</p>	All	Noted.	None.
	<p>Crime prevention liaison may assist in keeping crime levels low and may be relevant in relation to Guidance points 1 and 2 on page 8 and Guidance point 3 on page 19.</p>		Noted.	None.
VDS Group	Various updates and minor improvements.	Page 2	Update references to the status of the document and consultation	Amend page 2 to refer to adopted status of the VDS and the formal

Respondent	Respondent's comments	VDS Ref	VDS group response	Proposed change to draft VDS text
		Page 5	undertaken. Move the 'South Downs National Park' section above the 'South Downs Way' section and replace with updated text for both sections.	consultation period. See replacement text at Appendix 2.
		Pages 12 - 19	Update to reflect changes since the draft VDS.	Update Map, table on page 14 and photographs (pages 15-19) to reflect changes since the draft VDS.
		Page 22	Expand Guidance point 3 on parking in the village.	Replace Guidance point 3 on page 22 with: <i>"To avoid obstructing the village lanes for Police, Fire, Ambulance and HGVs, visitors are advised to use the unofficial car park just off the A32 at the space on Church Lane (known as the Grynch) and along the wide verge there."</i>

Appendix 2

Replacement text on South Downs National Park and South Downs Way (p5).

South Downs National Park (SDNP)

On 31st March 2010 the Secretary of State for the Environment declared that the South Downs became Britain's newest National Park (the 10th to be so designated). The South Downs National park Authority will be fully functional from 1st April 2011.

The Authority's purposes are:

- To conserve and enhance the natural beauty, wildlife and cultural heritage of the area;
- To promote opportunities for the understanding and enjoyment of the special quality of the Park by the public;
- To seek and foster the economic and social well-being of the local communities within the National Park.

This provides the parish with the highest landscape protection within UK policy and acknowledges the special qualities of the living landscape in the South Downs. (The South Downs Landscape character assessment recognises Exton Parish within two distinct types described as Downland mosaic and Chalk valley systems)

More members of the public visiting the Park could place greater pressures upon the villages lying within it.

South Downs Way (SDW)

Although there have been three Public Enquiries (held in 1993, 2004 and 2006) into a permanent route for walkers, cyclists and horse riders across the Meon Valley, there is still a missing link in this Long Distance National Trail. Following the most recent Enquiry, a new footpath has been legally established on part of the desired route and, hopefully, the remainder will be completed in the near future through negotiation. However, this route will be for walkers only.

Meanwhile walkers are directed to use an alternative path through Exton, whereas cyclists and horse riders are directed to use a new temporary route through the village. Signposts erected in Exton and Meonstoke now mark these routes.

It is uncertain whether further attempts will be made to secure an off-road route for cyclists and horse riders or it eventually become the permanent route.