

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF PLANNING, ECONOMY AND REGENERATION

CULM GARDEN VILLAGE – VISION & CONCEPT DOCUMENT

Cabinet Member Cllr Richard Chesterton
Responsible Officer Jenny Clifford, Head of Planning, Economy and Regeneration

Reason for Report:

1. To submit information on the Culm Garden Village Vision and Concept document and seek approval for Stage 1 public consultation on the material.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. That the document at Appendix 2 is approved for Stage 1 public consultation.
2. That Cabinet approves the proposed amendments to the document set out in Appendix 1.
3. That delegated authority be given to the Head of Planning, Economy and Regeneration in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Regeneration to finalise consultation material.

Relationship to Corporate Plan: The garden village project contributes to all four corporate priorities of economy, homes, community and environment and is central to the delivery of many of the aims identified within the Corporate Plan. It is a significant strategic project with a national profile.

Financial Implications: This significant project requires financial resources to continue progress towards delivery. Capacity funding from Homes England's Garden Villages and Towns Programme to advance the project has been received over the past two years. Continued financial support from capacity funding is critical to adequately resource the project. This capacity funding is conditional on progress being made with the project in line with the Council's place making aspirations and to meet the Government's requirements.

Legal Implications: None anticipated at this time.

Risk Assessment: If progress on masterplanning the garden village is delayed, the Council may become vulnerable to speculative planning applications being submitted which do not accord with the Council's aspirations for the garden village and which could lead to unsustainable and uncoordinated development which would not meet policy requirements for essential infrastructure, open space and local services. One of the Government's priorities is the delivery of housing, the achievement of which is increasingly linked to future success of funding bids. The ability to show progress against key milestones in the delivery plan for the project is of increasing importance.

Establishment of a comprehensive vision and concepts for the development are considered vital to achieving the Council's aspirations for the garden village in terms of community, place making and quality. The absence of such an approach would represent a significant risk to achieving the desired quality outcomes.

Equality Impact Assessment: No equality issues are identified for this report at this stage.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Policies CU7-CU12 of the Mid Devon Local Plan Review allocate 160 hectares of land to the east of Cullompton for up to 1,750 homes and associated development within the period up to 2033 (with at least 850 houses thereafter). This allocation is intended to form part of a larger garden village proposal. The Local Plan Review has been submitted for examination and hearings are likely to take place in February 2019, with adoption in the summer of 2019 (subject to Planning Inspectorate timetable). Policy CU7 of the Local Plan Review requires comprehensive masterplanning of the development including at least two stages of public consultation, and adoption of the masterplan as a Supplementary Planning Document before any planning application is determined.
- 1.2 Culm Garden Village was one of 14 areas awarded garden village status by the Government in January 2017 following a successful expression of interest by the Council. The background to this was summarised and included within the report considered by Cabinet on 6th July 2017.
- 1.3 With Culm Garden Village receiving garden village status, there is a clear intention and direction of travel towards a garden village of significantly greater scale and covering substantial additional land to that currently proposed to be allocated by policy CU7 of the Mid Devon Local Plan Review.
- 1.4 The draft Cullompton Neighbourhood Plan was published for consultation in March 2017 and supports the idea of the wider garden village beyond the local plan allocation conditional upon establishing a joined-up and locally led approach that ensures physical and social 'integration' of existing and new development enabling development to the east of the M5 to become an integral part of the community of Cullompton.
- 1.5 The Greater Exeter Strategic Plan (GESP) is intended as the policy vehicle to allocate the remainder of the Garden Village, subject to the requirements of that plan making process. The garden village project team has been working closely with the GESP team on initial site analysis, emerging policy making and conceptual masterplanning that could enable the delivery of the balance of homes (up to 5,000 homes in total) and associated development. Public consultation on the draft Plan is expected to take place in the summer of 2019.
- 1.6 Masterplans bridge the gap between planning policy aspiration and its implementation in order to achieve high quality design and create successful places. They also set out key principles that planning applications will need to

have regards to in order to be considered acceptable. Additionally, as masterplans often relate to large strategically important sites that are to be delivered in phases over what may be a long time period, they also need to contain flexibility in order to respond to changing circumstances.

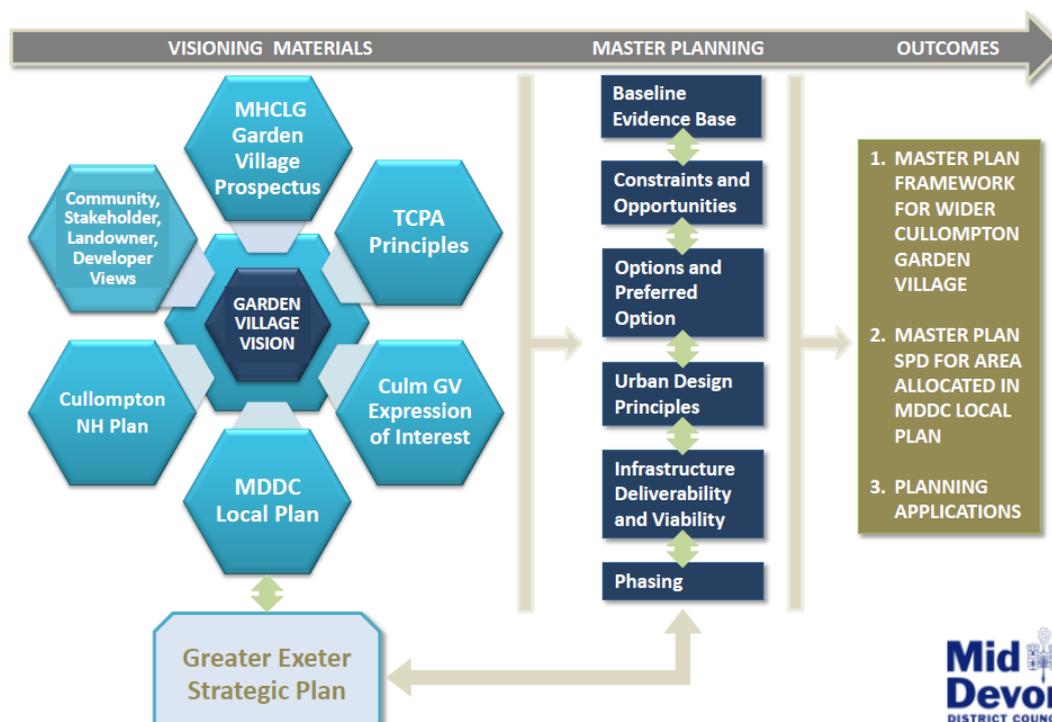
- 1.7 Supplementary Planning Documents provide more detail to planning policies and can only be developed in support of adopted planning policies. Whilst they do not form part of the Development Plan, they are a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.
- 1.8 As the garden village is to be allocated through two different plans that are at different stages of development (the GESP is at a very early stage of development), it is not possible to masterplan the whole of the garden village within one masterplan SPD document. At this stage, it is therefore proposed only to develop a detailed masterplan SPD for the part of the garden village to be allocated under the Mid Devon Local Plan Review (policies CU7-CU12).
- 1.9 However, the Council has an aspiration to masterplan the whole of the garden village as one, rather than in parts. This is difficult as only part of the garden village has an emerging allocation, and the boundaries of the whole are not yet known.
- 1.10 In looking to respond positively to this context, the opportunity is being taken now to develop and determine the key choices and decisions for the initial Masterplan SPD area at the same time as establishing a clear picture and understanding of the broader, longer term concept for the wider garden village. This approach should offer benefits to the overall outcomes and placemaking by better informing key decisions and choices in the Masterplan SPD document.
- 1.11 The process of creating this Vision and Concept document for Culm Garden Village will also provide an important source of evidence and community and stakeholder input to inform the consideration of the potential future allocation of Culm Garden Village in the Greater Exeter Strategic Plan.
- 1.12 It is therefore proposed to bring two documents to Cabinet to go out for stage 1 public consultation at the same time:
 - A) A draft Vision and Concept document for the whole garden village; and
 - B) An Issues, Opportunities and Concepts document relating to Stage 1 consultation on a Masterplan SPD for the East Cullompton allocation only.

This report is in respect of document A) a draft Vision and Concept document (**Appendix 2** to this report).

Draft document B) is subject to a separate Cabinet Report.

The diagram below shows the relationship between the two documents and the background work that has taken place in the production of the two documents.

Review of Local Vision and Ambitions



2.0 BACKGROUND WORK AND ENGAGEMENT TO DATE

- 2.1 Two workshops have been held with technical stakeholders such as landscape architects, ecologists, highways officers, urban designers, flood risk and drainage specialists, education and housing officers, and leisure and health professionals. The first of these looked at the constraints of the site based on background work carried out by the technical stakeholders, for example, green corridors, heritage assets, biodiversity assets, and flood zones. The second built on this first workshop, looking at how the development of the garden village might be informed by these constraints, for example starting with the landscape. The second workshop also considered a potential vision and started to think about key principles by which the garden village should be developed.
- 2.2 Two workshops were also held with the Culm Garden Village Community Stakeholder Forum. The Forum is attended by representatives from organisations such as Cullompton Town Council, Kentisbeare Parish Council, Cullompton Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group, sports clubs, local health providers, local schools, arts groups and faith groups. The first workshop looked at a potential vision and key principles, and the second looked at how the garden village might develop.
- 2.3 The outputs from these workshops formed the basis of the Vision and Concept document. Some of the key findings from this engagement are set out on page 10 of the document.

3.0 SCOPE AND PURPOSE OF THE DOCUMENT

3.1 New garden settlements are intended to be a modern take on traditional garden cities which were developed around a number of key principles. The Town and Country Planning Association has updated these principles to reflect modern requirements. Whilst the quote below references garden cities, it is equally applicable to planning garden communities at different scales, including this smaller garden village project.

'A Garden City is a holistically planned new settlement which enhances the natural environment and offers high-quality affordable housing and locally accessible work in beautiful, healthy and sociable communities. The Garden City Principles are an indivisible and interlocking framework for their delivery, and include:

- *Land value capture for the benefit of the community.*
- *Strong vision, leadership and community engagement.*
- *Community ownership of land and long-term stewardship of assets.*
- *Mixed-tenure homes and housing types that are genuinely affordable.*
- *A wide range of local jobs in the Garden City within easy commuting distance of homes.*
- *Beautifully and imaginatively designed homes with gardens, combining the best of town and country to create healthy communities, and including opportunities to grow food.*
- *Development that enhances the natural environment, providing a comprehensive green infrastructure network and net biodiversity gains, and that uses zero-carbon and energy-positive technology to ensure climate resilience.*
- *Strong cultural, recreational and shopping facilities in walkable, vibrant, sociable neighbourhoods.*
- *Integrated and accessible transport systems, with walking, cycling and public transport designed to be the most attractive forms of local transport.'*

3.2 The Government's aim is for all garden communities to develop their own vision and principles. These will be embedded into the project as it develops.

3.3 The key purpose of this document is to establish a Vision for the garden village and set out the key principles that will guide development and deliver the Vision. The document will also begin to add shape to the garden village in the form of an initial Concept Plan that sets out spatially how the garden village may be developed.

3.4 The document sets out:

- a proposed Vision as a statement of intent to guide development of the envisaged garden village;
- a set of 9 Key Principles which will form the basis of the delivery of the proposed Vision; and
- an emerging Concept Plan for the garden village which sets out spatially how the garden village embodies the Vision and Principles.

3.5 This document is, therefore, the first key step in a series of stages of development of a comprehensive masterplan for Culm Garden Village. Further stages with associated engagement and consultation will take place over the coming months.

4.0 **VISION AND KEY PRINCIPLES**

4.1 The draft Vision statement for Culm Garden Village has been informed by a wide range of existing material including Mid Devon Council's emerging Local Plan, the draft Cullompton Neighbourhood Plan and the original Expression of Interest to Government for a garden village at Culm. Allied to this has been engagement with community and technical stakeholder groups to ensure the masterplanning process is locally led.

4.2 A draft Vision has emerged, which is proposed to form part of the consultation material:

“Culm Garden Village will be a new settlement in the exceptional Mid Devon countryside that will become a distinctive, vibrant and inclusive place that is physically and socially integrated with the historic market town of Cullompton. Residents will feel a strong sense of shared identity, civic pride and community ownership. The garden village will carefully and imaginatively use the outstanding natural environment to create a successful and sustainable place set in a beautiful landscape setting. New infrastructure, parks and open spaces connect local people to a range of jobs, facilities, recreation and services that are accessible to all. In this green setting, Culm Garden Village will promote active, healthy, fun and safe lifestyles. It will deliver high quality, well designed and affordable homes, new work places, streets and neighbourhoods that use innovation and technology to support sustainable approaches to living, working, and travelling.”

4.3 This draft Vision is supported by 9 draft key principles which are set out and elaborated on within the document. They are:

1. Embed the countryside within the garden village
2. A well connected and integrated new place
3. Creating a healthy living environment
4. Locally distinctive with well-designed neighbourhoods and places
5. Community focused
6. Great homes
7. Ambitious employment opportunities
8. Future proofed – smart and sustainable
9. Delivery and stewardship

4.4 The public consultation will ask whether people consider the draft Vision and Principles to be the right ones for the garden village.

5.0 **CONCEPT PLAN**

5.1 Whilst the full extent of the Garden Village is not yet known and will need to be identified and consulted upon and then allocated in future plans, potentially through the emerging Greater Exeter Strategic Plan, the conceptual work

done to date has identified some natural boundaries to what might be the potential developable area. These include areas of woodland, ridgeline, flood zone, M5 motorway and railway, and the need for a green buffer between the Garden Village and Kentisbeare. Working with the constraints of the site and the opportunities that arise from these provides a framework for development.

- 5.2 The preparation of the Vision and Principles for Cullompton Garden Village and the engagement and discussions with the local community and stakeholders has informed the evolution of an initial Concept Plan and a set of proposals that are illustrated on the Concept Plan.
- 5.3 There are policy requirements for the East Cullompton allocation that might be quite different from the policy requirements for the entire garden village. For example, an urban extension of 1,750 new dwellings is unlikely to need a secondary school, whereas development at the scale of the wider garden village will. The secondary school is not required for the Local Plan Review allocation so has to be placed outside the allocation boundary, but for good placemaking reasons needs to be close to the centre of the garden village. Likewise, the neighbourhood centre should be located centrally within the garden village, but the centre of the whole garden village is likely to be different to the centre of the East Cullompton allocation. The concepts plan for the East Cullompton allocation has been developed with this longer term aspiration in mind and to ensure that a comprehensive, coordinated approach to the overall scheme is taken.
- 5.4 The document summarises the initial conceptual proposals which seek to articulate what type of place Culm Garden Village could be and which will be used to steer the development of Culm Garden Village and its masterplan in due course.

6.0 PUBLIC CONSULTATION ARRANGEMENTS

- 6.1 Stage 1 public consultation is proposed to take place over a 6 week period from 18th January 2019 to 1st March 2019.
- 6.2 Means of consultation will include staffed events in Cullompton and Kentisbeare and pop-up exhibitions in busy locations.
- 6.3 At least one permanent exhibition is proposed during the consultation period and the material will be posted on the Culm Garden Village website. Publicity arrangements are to include press release, social media posts, video on Devon Live, posters and letters to residents within and adjoining the proposed garden village area.
- 6.4 A detailed consultation plan is being drawn up including actions on how to reach all members of the community, including hard to reach groups.

7.0 SUGGESTED AMENDMENTS TO THE DOCUMENT

- 7.1 The draft Vision and Concept document has been presented to the following meetings:

- Community Stakeholder Forum on 10th December 2018
- Cullompton Town Council and Kentisbeare Parish Council on 10th December 2018
- Informal Cabinet on 13th December 2018
- Planning Policy Advisory Group on 13th December 2018.

At these meetings points were raised that have resulted in a number of suggested amendments to the document. These suggested amendments are set out in **Appendix 1** to this report. Cabinet are requested to consider these amendments and it is recommended that they are incorporated into the document before public consultation commences.

8.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 The Vision and the 9 Key Principles will be used to set the ambition for the garden village and ensure that the garden village is delivered in a way that meets local expectations. The document will also begin to add shape to the garden village in the form of an initial Concept Plan that sets out spatially how the garden village may be developed.
- 8.2 The Vision and Concept document will be subject to 6 weeks' public consultation at the same time as the Masterplan SPD Issues, Opportunities and Concepts document in respect of the East Cullompton allocation (Phase 1 of the garden village). The Masterplan SPD is the subject of a separate Cabinet report.
- 8.3 Cabinet is asked to consider the consultation material and approve it for public consultation.

Contact for any more information	Tina Maryan, Area Planning Officer 01884 234336 tmaryan@middevon.gov.uk
Background Papers	Cabinet report 9 th June 2016 DCLG prospectus locally led garden villages, towns and cities https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/508205/Locally-led_garden_villages_towns_and_cities.pdf Culm Garden village Expression of interest https://www.middevon.gov.uk/media/342814/culm-garden-village-mid-devon-eoi-submission_low-res2.pdf Cabinet report 6 th July 2017
File Reference	None

Circulation of the Report	Councillor Richard Chesterton, Cabinet Member for Planning & Regeneration