

CABINET
17 MAY 2022

NORTH WEST CULLOMPTON MASTERPLAN SPD

Cabinet Member Cllr Richard Chesterton
Responsible Officer Richard Marsh, Director of Place

Reason for Report: To seek Cabinet approval for public consultation on the draft updated NW Cullompton Masterplan SPD.

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1. That the document at Appendix 1 is approved for public consultation.**
- 2. That delegated authority be given to the Director of Place in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Regeneration to finalise the consultation material.**

Financial Implications: The consultant contract was awarded following a procurement process. The majority of the cost of the contract was funded through Homes England capacity funding. The associated consultation website was also produced with Homes England capacity funding. There will be no financial implications arising from adoption of the document as it adds detail to existing planning policies only.

Budget and Policy Framework: The budget for the production of the SPD utilises Homes England capacity funding (see Financial Implications).

The Mid Devon Local Plan 2013-2033 requires strategic allocations to have an adopted Masterplan SPD in place before planning permission can be granted. The existing adopted NW Cullompton Masterplan SPD is now considered out of date as it was prepared under a previous policy framework that was superseded by the adoption of the Mid Devon Local Plan 2013-2033. It also excludes three parcels of land that were either not allocated at the time or excluded from the masterplanned area. Once adopted, the revised and updated Masterplan would have Supplementary Planning Document status and will be a material consideration for planning decision making purposes in relation to the NW Cullompton urban extension. As the current SPD is considered to be out of date, it carries very limited weight in planning decisions.

Legal Implications: The process for preparing and adopting the draft Masterplan SPD is in compliance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 and the Council's Statement of Community Involvement.

Risk Assessment: Policy sets out that masterplanning should take place before applications are submitted. Delay in adoption of the Masterplan SPD could in turn delay the delivery of housing on the additional parts of the site as well as affect the confidence of land owners to promote their land. Adoption of the masterplan will provide greater planning certainty and assist the site coming forward for delivery.

The existing adopted Masterplan SPD is considered out of date. If a revised and updated Masterplan SPD is not adopted, the Council may become vulnerable to

planning applications being submitted which do not accord with the Council's aspirations for the NW Cullompton urban extension and could lead to uncoordinated development which would not meet the Council's quality aspirations.

Equality Impact Assessment: The masterplan reflects the policy requirement for pitch provision for the gypsy and traveller community which will result in a more positive outcome for that community. The consultation material will include an accessible PDF document on the consultation website and there will be a variety of different ways to engage: online, in person, by phone, by social media and by post.

No other equality issues are identified for this report, but it is noted that design should have regard to the needs of different groups in community including by age and disability.

Impact on Climate Change: The draft Masterplan SPD has regard to climate change within the confines of adopted planning policy. A Supplementary Planning Document cannot introduce new policies, or expand on existing adopted policy.

Relationship to Corporate Plan: The draft Masterplan SPD will provide guidance on the planning and delivery of a strategic site for Mid Devon. It will form a refresh and update to the adopted NW Cullompton Masterplan SPD.

The draft Masterplan SPD directly relates to all four Corporate Plan 2020-24 priorities including Homes, Environment, Economy and Community.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Policies CU1-CU6 of the Mid Devon Local Plan 2013-2033 allocate 100 hectares of land to the north west of Cullompton for up to 1,350 homes and associated development Policy CU1 of the Local Plan 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 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.
- 1.3 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.
- 1.4 The existing NW Cullompton Masterplan SPD was adopted in 2016 under the then adopted Mid Devon Local Plan (the 2016 Masterplan SPD). The currently adopted Mid Devon Local Plan 2013-2033 superseded the previous

Local Plan, and so the 2016 Masterplan SPD is now considered to be out of date. The new adopted Mid Devon Local Plan also allocated two additional parcels of land, and a third parcel of land was excluded from the 2016 Masterplan SPD.

- 1.5 The draft Masterplan SPD appended to this report seeks to update the 2016 Masterplan SPD with the revised policy framework, and to include the three additional parcels of land.
- 1.6 In addition, since the 2016 Masterplan SPD was adopted, three planning permissions have been granted on the NW Cullompton urban extension, totalling 600 homes plus associated infrastructure and community facilities. The draft Masterplan SPD the subject of this report, also seeks to reflect the planning permissions already granted.
- 1.7 Policy CU1 requires a Masterplan SPD to go through at least two stages of public consultation. The 2016 Masterplan SPD was subject to two stages of public consultation. It is recommended that the draft Masterplan SPD the subject of this report goes through one further round of public consultation, as it is only a revision to an existing SPD, rather than an entirely new document.
- 1.8 Cabinet are asked to consider and approve for public consultation the draft updated NW Cullompton Masterplan SPD set out in **Appendix 1**. Following public consultation, the results of the public consultation will be reported to Cabinet, and a final draft document incorporating revisions from the consultation will be brought back to Cabinet for consideration and a recommendation to full Council for adoption.

2.0 **BACKGROUND WORK AND ENGAGEMENT TO DATE**

- 2.0 A range of studies have been carried out by the land promoters on the additional parcels in order to update the constraints on the site. The results of these studies have been analysed by the masterplan consultants and officers and where appropriate incorporated into the updated draft SPD. The constraints will be tested further through consultation with stakeholders during the public consultation.
- 2.1 Interviews have been held with various technical stakeholders and with land promoters, Cullompton Town Council and Ward Members.

3.0 **SCOPE OF DRAFT MASTERPLAN SPD**

- 3.0 The scope of the draft Masterplan SPD is to bring the document up to date to reflect newly adopted planning policies and include three further parcels of land. The draft Masterplan SPD has also been amended to reflect the three planning permissions already granted. The guiding principles, scope and form of the Masterplan SPD have not been revisited.
- 3.1 The key revisions to the 2016 Masterplan for public consultation are:
 - Updates to reflect adopted Local Plan policies

- Masterplanning of three areas of land adopted in the Local Plan but not previously masterplanned
- Removal of provision for temporary construction access through St Georges View
- Update to Framework Plan to reflect adopted policy and three planning permissions already granted on the urban extension
- Updated phasing and infrastructure delivery sections
- Updated appendices

3.2 A schedule of changes to the 2016 Masterplan SPD is set out in **Appendix 2** to this report.

4.0 **CHANGES RECOMMENDED BY PLANNING POLICY ADVISORY GROUP**

4.1 The draft consultation document was taken to Planning Policy Advisory Group (PPAG) on 29 April 2022. PPAG approved the document go to Cabinet on 17 May 2022, subject to the following changes.

4.2 Page 11, Additional land parcels, point 3. Add in “of Rull Lane” so that it reads 14.2 hectares to the north of Rull Lane”.

4.3 Page 21, Design Review Panel, last sentence, change “could” to “should”.

4.4 Pages 45, 48, 57 and other relevant text and diagrammatic references as appropriate. Differentiate between the large area of retained farmland in the northwest corner and publicly accessible green infrastructure (GI). The retained farmland should be referred to as a “green buffer” rather than GI. Where the document contains figures relating to quantum of GI being delivered (e.g. table on page 48), the retained farmland should be excluded from the total GI being delivered.

4.5 Pages 48 and 49, Local connections. Add in pedestrian and cycle connections to railway station, e.g. along Millennium Way.

4.6 Page 64, policy CU6, point i. Remove the last sentence as this was included in error.

4.7 Page 65, housing trajectory. Check the housing trajectory table again with Forward Planning to ensure it is realistic, and update all other references to housing delivery, if changed, including section 5.4 (see below).

4.8 Page 70, Section 5.4, Construction of road infrastructure. Re-write the first paragraph to make it clearer as it currently reads as being contradictory. Also, there is an omission in the second sentence of the page number for the housing trajectory table.

4.9 Page 73, key infrastructure trigger table. Add in contributions to bus service enhancements. Change the trigger for delivery of Rull Hill GI from “Phase 1” to “Phase 1 – prior to the occupation of 500 dwellings”.

5.0 **PUBLIC CONSULTATION ARRANGEMENTS**

- 5.1 The public consultation is proposed to take place over a 6 week period in June and July 2022 (dates to be finalised).
- 5.2 Means of consultation will include staffed events in Cullompton, and non-staffed exhibition material displays to be left in place for the entire consultation period (venue to be confirmed).
- 5.3 In addition, a public consultation website with interactive map has been developed and is currently in draft form awaiting the outcome of the Cabinet decision to progress to public consultation. The website will include the consultation draft of the SPD, as well as an explanation of why the SPD is being updated, what the changes are, and a separate “have your say” page with a short online questionnaire and details of other ways to comment. The interactive map will be based on the updated Framework Masterplan and will allow people to drop their comments onto the map as an alternative (or as well as) answering the consultation questions. The use of a dedicated consultation website with the interactive map will make the consultation accessible to more people and encourage a higher response rate than just having the usual questionnaire.
- 5.4 Publicity arrangements are to include a press release, a link from the MDDC website, social media posts and letters to residents within and adjoining the NW Cullompton urban extension.

6.0 HRA/SEA SCREENING

- 6.1 A Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) and Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is required in accordance with Regulations and Directives on any plan or programme prepared for town and country planning or land use purposes and which sets the framework for future development consent of certain projects. HRA and SEA reports have been prepared as part of the public consultation material and are set out in **Appendix 3**. The screening reports indicate that the draft Masterplan SPD is ‘unlikely to have significant effects on the environment’.

7.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 An updated and revised NW Cullompton Masterplan SPD is required to reflect updated Local Plan policies, to include new land parcels, and to reflect planning permissions already granted.
- 7.2 An adopted Masterplan SPD is a requirement of policy CU1 of the Mid Devon Local Plan 2013-2033. The document refresh will ensure guidance on how the urban extension is delivered remains relevant and up to date.
- 7.3 Feedback from public consultation will help to shape the final version of the Masterplan SPD which, when adopted, will support the Local Plan, and guide the development of the proposed allocation.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Draft updated NW Cullompton Masterplan SPD

Appendix 2: Schedule of changes to the 2016 Masterplan SPD
Appendix 3: SEA and HRA screening reports

Contact for more information

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Background Papers

Adopted NW Cullompton Masterplan SPD
[Northwest Cullompton Urban Extension -
MIDDEVON.GOV.UK](#)

Circulation of the Report

Councillor Richard Chesterton, Cabinet
Member for Planning & Regeneration