

CABINET
7TH AUGUST 2015

**NORTH WEST CULLOMPTON URBAN EXTENSION – MASTERPLAN
SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT**

Cabinet Member Cllr Richard Chesterton
Responsible Officer Head of Planning and Regeneration

Reason for Report: To seek the submission of the draft Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for stage 2 public consultation.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. **That Cabinet submit the draft Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document for public consultation.**
2. **That delegated authority be given to the Head of Planning and Regeneration in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Regeneration to finalise consultation material.**

Relationship to Corporate Plan: To ensure delivery of key plans for Mid Devon, including a thriving economy, better homes, empowering local communities and caring for the environment.

Financial Implications: The costs of printing documents and running the consultation process are to be met by the Council with contribution by the development consortium.

Legal Implications: The consultation will comply with The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 and the Council's Statement of Community Involvement. In order for the masterplan to be adopted as Supplementary Planning Document, public consultation needs to take place in accordance with the requirements of the Council's Statement of Community Involvement. Whilst not forming part of the Development Plan, it will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications relating to the site.

Risk Assessment: If progress on a masterplan is delayed, the Council becomes vulnerable to speculative planning applications being submitted which do not accord with adopted policies and are allowed at appeal due to a lack of alternative 'shovel ready' sites of equivalent size. This could lead to unsustainable development which would not meet policy requirements for essential infrastructure such as a new primary school, highway improvements, open space and local services.

1.0 INTRODUCTION: THE ROLE OF A MASTERPLAN.

- 1.1 A masterplan is a comprehensive plan that acts as a blueprint for the development of an area: setting out principles for the way in which it will come forward, coordinating policy and infrastructure requirements. It is usually required for larger scale developments where there are multiple landowners /

developers and there is a need to ensure development takes place in a comprehensive way to deliver common infrastructure, coordinate phasing and to resolve often complex planning issues. Masterplans bridge the gap between planning policy aspiration and the implementation in order to achieve a high quality design and create a successful place. They also set out key principles that planning applications will need to have regard to in order to be considered acceptable. It is important to understand that whilst a masterplan sets out guidelines and principles for the development, it does not contain the same level of detail and supporting documentation that would be expected at a planning application stage. 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.

- 1.2 The Council wishes to adopt the masterplan as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). This is a document that sets out more a detailed framework or policies in support of those contained in the Local Plan. Whilst it does not itself form part of the Development Plan, it is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

2.0 **BACKGROUND TO THE DEVELOPMENT.**

- 2.1 The Core Strategy was adopted in 2007 and sets out a growth strategy that seeks to balance social, environmental and economic objectives and concentrates development within the main settlements of Tiverton, Cullompton and to a lesser extent Crediton and Bampton. The Core Strategy sets out an overall need for 340 dwellings per year, amounting to 6,800 dwellings over the 20 year plan period up to 2026. Important to achieving the level of development (both housing and employment) identified and adopted within the Core Strategy are two urban extensions: to Tiverton and Cullompton respectively.
- 2.2 The Allocations and Infrastructure Development Plan Document (AIDPD) was adopted in January 2010 following extensive public consultation and examination by a Planning Inspector. It allocates sites for development in order to meet the Core Strategy's growth requirements. A large proportion of this growth is to be accommodated within the urban extensions identified above. Land to the north west of Cullompton has been previously accepted as being an appropriate location to help meet the growth needs of the town within the AIDPD. The urban extension was allocated on this basis to provide housing and employment, together with infrastructure.
- 2.3 An area of 74.8 ha to the north west of Cullompton is allocated for mixed use development in the AIDPD for 1100 dwellings and 40,000 square metres of employment floorspace. A range of adopted policies within this document set out requirements for the planning of the urban extension in terms of development requirements, transport provision, environmental protection, green infrastructure, community facilities, carbon reduction and air quality, phasing and masterplanning. The latter, (policy AL/CU/7) requires that the Council carry out a major public consultation exercise into the masterplanning

of the site before planning applications are made. Furthermore the masterplan is to be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

3.0 KEY MASTERPLANNING ISSUES IDENTIFIED AT AN EARLY STAGE.

3.1 A series of key issues emerged at an earlier stage in masterplanning this site and formed part of the earlier public consultation stage. Comment and feedback on the issues was invited together with options for masterplan concepts. The key issues were:

- a. Developable area and quantum of development.
- b. Access options
- c. Location and amount of employment land
- d. Location of sports pitches
- e. Location of the primary school
- f. Location of gypsy and traveller pitches

3.2 More information on each of these issues, together with views upon them arising from the first stage public consultation together with how the emerging masterplan addresses them is in section 5.0 of this report.

4.0 MASTERPLAN PUBLIC CONSULTATION.

4.1 The Council's Statement of Community Consultation requires two stages of public consultation on site specific SPDs, firstly at the scoping stage and secondly on the draft document itself.

4.2 A 4 week long first stage public consultation took place between 12th September and 12th October 2014 and included three public exhibitions.

4.3 A range of material in respect of the allocation site was available and resulted from the site analysis that is being undertaken by the promoters. The following is a list of both background information that informed that consultation, together with consultation material itself:

ii) Evidence base summary report comprising:

- a. Planning background
- b. Allocation and land ownership
- c. Context of the site in Cullompton
- d. Visual impact
- e. Access and transport
- f. Topography and flooding
- g. Ecology
- h. Archaeology and heritage
- i. Utilities
- j. Masterplan timescale

iii) Masterplan concepts:

- a. Development within allocation site area.
- b. Development within allocation site: boundary between green infrastructure and development amended.

iv) Consultation boards / report:

A brief planning background to the allocation, collated results of surveys and studies presented as a map of constraints and opportunities, key issues and associated options, consultation questions and masterplan concept options. In addition a proposed masterplan timescale, masterplan contents list, how feedback can be made and details of the project team was given.

4.4 A total of 65 valid responses to the consultation were received, raising many matters that are discussed further in the draft Masterplan SPD. The representations and a summary are available to view at <https://new.middevon.gov.uk/planning-policy/masterplanning/northwest-cullompton/> A summary of stage 1 consultation responses is attached at **Appendix 1** together with analysis of the responses at **Appendix 2**.

4.5 Points made include the following:

Amount and distribution of development

- Only prepared to accept more development if critical infrastructure (new road and primary school) delivered very early.
- Many felt coerced into accepting higher development / redistribution of green infrastructure to achieve the infrastructure.
- Other responses did not want changes to the level and distribution of the development.
- The need for the allocation was questioned.

Highways and movement

- New road is critical and early delivery should be secured.
- Impacts of increased traffic, particular concern at congestion in town centre.
- Location and design of new roads
- Motorway junction should be upgraded in connection with this development.
- More respondents in favour of the new link road joining Willand Road south of Millennium Way roundabout.
- Pedestrian and cycle paths needed.

Environment

- Impacts on wildlife, habitats and flooding
- Visual impact and loss of countryside
- Protect Goblin Lane and roman fort on St Andrew's Hill
- Use Rull Hill as green space
- Noise and air quality

Design

- Retain character and style of existing area.
- Wide range of housing design suggestions.

School

- Primary School delivery critical and should be delivered early.
- Broadly equal support for location at top of Rull Hill (favoured by Town Council) or near the Health Centre.
- Open space and playing pitches should be located close to the school.
- Location of the school should be accessible and safe for pedestrians, cyclists and cars.

Community facilities

- As well as large sports pitches, investment should be made into current recreation facilities in Cullompton.
- Larger areas of green space favoured together to less, larger equipped play areas.
- Suggestions including post office, pub, doctors' surgery and many others.
- Most support for location of green space split between Rull Hill and land to the west.
- Suggested green space include: allotments, community garden, orchard, wildlife habitat, landscaped parkland, skateboarding park.
- Need for additional community facilities questioned.
- Contribution should be secured towards swimming pool.
- Suggested community facilities: public house, community hall / youth club, free parking, meeting place for the elderly.

Economy and regeneration

- Preference to location towards northeast of the development.
- Concern at increased large vehicles in connection with employment land.
- Need for additional employment land on this site questioned.

Housing

- Self build, housing for elderly, eco-housing suggested.
- Affordable housing is needed.
- Sufficient parking should be provided.

Gypsy and traveller pitches

- Need questioned.
- No clear location preference expressed.

5.0 THE CONSULTATION DRAFT MASTERPLAN

5.1 Since the initial consultation, officers and the promoters' design team have considered the representations and taken them into account in the formulation of the consultation draft masterplan SPD. A draft masterplan SPD, has now been produced and is attached to this report at **Appendix 3**.

5.2 The masterplan sets out the following:

- The role and purpose of the document

- The planning policy context
- Consultation responses and how the masterplan addresses them.
- The design process for the development of the site.
- Information about the site: location, constraints and opportunities, land control.
- The development vision and concept.
- Guiding principles.
- A framework plan for the development.
- Amount of development and land use.
- Densities, movement, landscaping and open space, drainage.
- Character assessment.
- Infrastructure requirements, delivery and triggers.
- Development phasing.
- Monitoring and review.
- Requirements of future applications.
- Appendix A: Factors shaping the development
- Appendix B: Consultations

5.3 The masterplan addresses the key issues identified at the first consultation stage. These are discussed in more detail below.

5.4 **Developable area and quantum of development.**

The AIDPD policies allocate 74.8 ha for mixed use development mainly comprising 1100 dwellings and 40,000 sq m employment floorspace. 28 ha are proposed for strategic green infrastructure.

5.5 Results from studies forming the evidence base for the site indicate that the developable area is less than initially thought at the policy adoption stage. Within the allocated area for development scheme, the promoters estimate approximately 700 houses can be accommodated. The scheme would also need to provide infrastructure by way of a road linking Tiverton Road and Willand Road, a new 210 primary school on a 2.1 ha site, community facilities including a new community building and public open space. Concern emerged over the ability of this number of houses to provide the required level of infrastructure.

5.6 One of the options was whether the boundaries between the developable area and green infrastructure remain as the allocation, or whether amount of green infrastructure be reduced to increase the developable area and hence the housing numbers. Alternatively green infrastructure equal to the amount in the policy could be provided across the site in redistributed locations, yet still provide in the order of 1,100 dwellings.

5.7 The draft masterplan provides GI slightly in excess of the amount set out in the policy, but with a different distribution that concentrates it particularly in the vicinity of Rull Hill. The boundaries between GI and areas for housing / employment have been redrawn in order to reflect site constraints such as topography and ecological interest. 1100 houses are proposed (in addition to the 49 provided on the Olympian Way part of the site), together with 10,000

sq m employment floorspace. Land uses and their amounts are shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Amount and land use.

	TOTAL (ha)	Land in the control of		
		PMAM	Codex	Persimmon
Gross Area (ha)	70.33	24.10	35.26	10.97
Residential (net developable area in ha)	30.56	11.33	14.22	5.00
Total houses at circa 36 dwellings per ha	1100	408	512	180
Employment incl Local Centre (ha) <i>(policy target amended from 40,000 to 10,000sq m)</i>	1.8	0.85ha (4,000 sq m)	0.95ha (6,000sq m)	0
Community centre (ha) <i>(policy target 1ha)</i>	1	0	0.6	0.4
Primary school (ha) <i>(policy target 2.1ha)</i>	2.1	0	0	2.1
Gypsy and travellers sites (ha) <i>(policy at least 5 pitches)</i>	0.46	0	0.46	0
Total Developable Net Area (ha)	35.46			
Green infrastructure (ha) <i>(policy target 28ha)</i>	31.40	10.44	18.09	2.88
Allotments (ha) <i>(policy target 0.7ha)</i>	0.7	0	0.7	0
Equipped areas of play (ha) <i>(policy target 0.7ha)</i>	0.7	0	0.7	0
Sports pitches (no) <i>(policy target 2.8ha)</i>	2	0	2	0
Link Road infrastructure	2.07	1.48	0	0.59
Total Non Developable Area (ha)	34.87			

5.8 Access options.

The site is required to provide a road through the site suitable for buses linking Tiverton Road to Willand Road. This is intended to serve the development with minimal adverse impact upon the town centre highway network, including the sensitive junction of Tiverton Road and Fore Street. Options were presented in respect of where the proposed through route links with Tiverton Road and Willand Road. In respect of Willand Road, whether the new road will link into the roundabout at the end of Millennium Way or join Willand Road further south.

5.9 The masterplan shows the required road linking Tiverton Road (new junction near the cemetery) and Willand Road. The end of the new road on Willand Road is located south of the roundabout with Millennium Way. Off-site traffic calming and enhancements between the new junction on Willand Road and the junction with Station Road are proposed and will be detailed at application stage.

5.10 The link road is proposed to be constructed simultaneously from the two ends in order to achieve completion within 2-3 years from the start of the development. This is quicker than would be the case if it were to be constructed from the north to the south only. In order to achieve this a

temporary vehicular access is proposed from St George's View. This would be closed to vehicular traffic once the new road is completed.

5.11 Location and amount of employment land.

The Allocations and Infrastructure DPD allocates the site for 40,000sq m (approx. 11.4ha) of B1 (light industrial) or other suitable employment floorspace. The Council's Employment Land Review 2013 recommended that the employment provision within the urban extension be revised to 10,000 sq m (approx. 2 ha). This was on the basis of the market being unlikely to be able to support all the proposed employment floorspace proposed within the Cullompton area and a rebalancing of allocations to increase the number of smaller sites that are not dependent upon significant additional infrastructure and more likely to be delivered in the short-to-medium term.

5.12 The location of employment land is an issue that has been considered at the masterplanning stage. Options related to land within the northern part of the allocation and / or land towards the south eastern part of the allocation. The masterplan now shows this to be located towards the north east of the site and in the local centre.

5.13 Location of sports pitches.

Policy AL/CU/3 of the AIDPD requires the provision of equipped and laid out public open space as part of the green infrastructure including 2.8 ha of sports pitches. Pitches require relatively level land. An emerging issue to be addressed through masterplanning the site is the location of these sports pitches and how they relate to the primary school and other green infrastructure areas. Several options were suggested which involve land at the west end of the allocation, on the top of Rull Hill (to south of Rull Lane) or off site to the north.

5.14 The masterplan proposes the main area of GI together with sports pitch provision in a concentrated area at the top of Rull Hill. A pitch is also proposed in connection with the new primary school, also to be located at the top of Rull Hill in order to take advantage of the broadly level area and to allow a concentration of school, open space and community facilities in this area. The masterplan also suggests that there is potential for one of the sports pitches to be provided off site to supplement existing sports provision in Cullompton. This was suggested as being suitable within responses at the first consultation stage.

5.15 Location of the primary school.

Policy AL/CU/4 requires the provision of a site 2.1ha in size for a new primary school and that the development fund a 210 place primary school within it. The school site is also to accommodate an additional 52 places for early years education. Options for the location of the primary school formed an issue for consultation and included land within the southern area of the site, adjacent to the health centre on Willand Road, on the top of Rull Hill and

within the north eastern part of the site. Space for outdoor play provision in conjunction with the school also needs to be considered.

- 5.16 No clear preference for school location emerged from the first stage consultation when sites adjacent to the Medical Centre on Willand Road and at the top of Rull Hill were compared. The Town Council favoured the top of Rull Hill. Devon County Council as Education Authority wishes to secure delivery of the school site (serviced and accessible) as soon as possible in the development. If this could be secured at Rull Hill, they had no objections to this as a location. The site to the top of Rull Hill is shown for the school in the emerging masterplan with the requirement that the site (accessible and serviced) be delivered prior to the first occupation of the first house on the site. It allows for co-location with the wider greenspace in this area together with community facilities and accessibility along the new link road.

5.17 Location of gypsy and traveller pitches.

The provision of pitches for gypsies and travellers is a government requirement. Policy AL/CU/1 requires that at least 5 such pitches are provided as part of the development's affordable housing requirement and in order to contribute towards the need in the District. The location of these pitches is also addressed through the masterplan. The suitability of surrounding roads to take touring caravan traffic movements associated with such pitches has been considered.

- 5.18 A site for at least 5 gypsy and traveller pitches is now indicated adjacent to the housing and employment area towards the NE of the site in order the benefit from easy access to the B3181 Willand Road and Millennium Way.

5.19 Infrastructure triggers.

The masterplan seeks to set out expectations for both development phasing and the delivery of infrastructure in order to deliver a coordinated and coherent approach between landowners and parcels of land. The early provision of highway infrastructure is a key requirement in order to reduce the impact of the development upon the highway network and existing local residents. Whilst the trigger for the delivery of the link road is expressed as prior to the occupation of 500 houses (estimated 5-6 years from the start of the development), the masterplan sets out a mechanism to deliver the road within 2-3 years from development start through funding secured from the sale of early land parcels. Concern over highway impact was one of the main themes of representations received from the first stage public consultation. The delivery of the primary school site has also accelerated so that it is prior to the occupation of the first house rather than before 300 houses in accordance with the policy requirement.

- 5.20 The prioritisation of the delivery of the link road and the school has implications for the viability of the development and the ability of the scheme to also deliver other infrastructure at an early stage. Triggers for the delivery of identified infrastructure are divided into types: access and transport;

education and community building; employment and local centre, green infrastructure and gypsy and traveller site. These details are in section 5.5 of the masterplan. A comparison between policy infrastructure requirements and those contained within the masterplan including respective triggers is at **Appendix 4**. With the prioritisation of the link road and primary school site, other infrastructure is principally now proposed in the second phase (after 500 houses) or phased with the development. The development must remain viable and hence start to generate value in order to deliver the necessary infrastructure. This requires some difficult decisions over the timing of some areas of infrastructure.

6.0 PROPOSED STAGE TWO CONSULTATION

6.1 Unlike initial consultation, the second stage is proposed to be for a longer 6 week period 20th August 2015 to 1st October 2015. The adoption of the masterplan SPD is targeted to take place in November 2015. This timescale allows for consideration of consultation responses and for any appropriate alterations to be made. Three public exhibitions are proposed to take place as follows:

27th August 2pm – 6pm (Thursday)
12th September 9am – 1pm (Saturday)
24th September 10am – 2pm (Thursday)

6.2 It is proposed that second stage public consultation incorporate a range of methods: letter to adjacent properties, Council website, newspaper notice, press release, public exhibitions, site notices, summary leaflets, response forms and web survey such as Survey Monkey.

7.0 RISK ASSESSMENT

7.1 The Allocations and Infrastructure Development Plan document including the allocation of this site was adopted in January 2011. Since then the Planning Service has sought to work with land owners and developers to deliver the development in accordance with Government planning policy, the Development Plan and other material planning considerations. The masterplan SPD has taken over two years of negotiation to get to a draft stage. Delivery of an adopted masterplan SPD within an appropriate, yet focussed timescale is becoming increasingly important for the following reasons:

- Delay will reduce confidence in the deliverability of the urban extension in a comprehensive and coordinated manner, thereby increasing the likelihood of planning applications being submitted for disparate areas of land without the necessary infrastructure provision or without a means of ensuring that infrastructure can be provided at the right time and in the right place. Additionally, individual applications increase the risk of proposals prejudicing the delivery of other areas of land within the allocation.

- Local Planning Authorities are required to boost the supply of housing in part through the provision of a five year supply of housing land (with an additional buffer of 5%, rising to 20% where there has been a record of undersupply). Councils need to demonstrate that this five year supply of housing sites is deliverable. Dwellings on the NW Cullompton urban extension are currently taken into account in the five year land supply and need to come forward in a timely manner. There are significant consequences for being unable to demonstrate a five year land supply in that planning applications are likely to be made on alternative, unplanned housing sites across the district in an ad hoc manner. The Government and Planning Inspectorate are currently giving high priority to housing delivery in areas without a five year land supply, to the extent that this is over-riding the local impact of development.
- The NW Cullompton urban extension is an important component of the Council's strategic policy aspirations and approach to meeting the needs of Mid Devon up to 2026. The non-delivery of this allocation will prejudice the realisation of these in terms of planned and coordinated housing supply to meet the needs of the population, the delivery of affordable housing and employment land provision detrimentally affecting the local economy. Furthermore wider benefits of the increased population of Cullompton as a result of the urban extension upon the vitality of the town centre will not be realised.

8.0 LOCAL PLAN REVIEW

- 8.1 The Local Plan Review 2013 – 2033 proposes to retain this development allocation, although increasing the development area to provide 1200 houses. This proposed allocation has been subject to recent submission draft stage consultation. We have not yet concluded the assessment of these representations and impact upon the emerging policy, especially in respect of enlarging the allocation. The masterplan recognises the potential to enlarge the allocation, demonstrates that it would work within a larger development area but does not predetermine the outcome of consideration of the extent and location of additional land or the outcome of the forthcoming examination in public of the emerging plan.

9.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 9.1 The draft masterplan seeks to deliver the established policy aspirations for the site and in many respects does so, setting out expectations for the delivery of the development together with associated infrastructure in a coordinated and comprehensive way. However it varies from the adopted allocation in two main areas: in the locational distribution of development areas and green infrastructure and in the timing of the delivery of certain infrastructure. The delivery of the linking road and site for the primary school have been prioritised, necessitating the setting back of delivery of other infrastructure and facilities whilst retaining development viability.

9.2 The masterplan has yet to go through a second stage of public consultation in August / September and accordingly is currently in draft. A 6 week consultation is proposed together with adoption in November 2015. This timescale also allows for consideration of consultation responses and for any appropriate alterations to be made.

Contact for any more information	Head of Planning and Regeneration (Mrs Jenny Clifford) 01884 234346
Background Papers	The adopted policies relating to the NW Cullompton Urban Extension may be viewed in the AIDPD at www.middevon.gov.uk/aidpd . The representations submitted during the initial masterplanning consultation in September / October 2014 together with a summary of responses are available at https://new.middevon.gov.uk/planning-policy/masterplanning/northwest-cullompton/ Cabinet papers 4 th September 2014
File Reference	None.
Circulation of the Report	Members of Cabinet