

CABINET
7th April 2016

TIVERTON EASTERN URBAN EXTENSION DESIGN GUIDE

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

Reason for Report: To consider the Draft Design Guide for the Tiverton Eastern Urban Extension.

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1. That Cabinet adopts the document for development management purposes in the determination of all planning applications received within the Tiverton Eastern Urban Extension (EUE).**

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: None.

Legal Implications: it has not been the intention to adopt the document as Supplementary Planning Guidance. However, it is intended to be used as a tool for development management purposes and be a material consideration in planning decisions. The Design Guide has not therefore been through a full consultation process as required by the Council's Statement of Community Involvement if it were to be a Supplementary Planning Document. Even so, an element of consultation has been undertaken with statutory and non-statutory consultees. It is proposed that the Design Guide is adopted by Cabinet and whilst not forming part of the Development Plan, will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications relating to the EUE.

Risk Assessment: If Committee delay adoption of the Design Guide, applications for planning consent may be delayed through protracted negotiations or alternatively there is a risk that they will be progressed by developers without full reference to the design guidance that has been produced.

1.0 INTRODUCTION: BACKGROUND.

- 1.1** An area of 153 ha to the east of Tiverton is allocated for mixed use development in the Allocations and Infrastructure Development Plan Document for 1550-2000 dwellings and 95,000-130,000 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/TIV/7) requires that the Council carry out a major public consultation exercise into the masterplanning

of the site before planning applications are made. As such, the Tiverton Eastern Urban Extension Masterplan was adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) in April 2014. A further masterplanning exercise is required in respect of the part of the site to the south east known as Area B.

- 1.2 Planning applications in outline for Area A: the first 1030 houses, most of the employment floorspace, primary school, community and neighbourhood centre have now either been granted or have a resolution to grant planning permission subject to the signing of a S106 agreement. Reserved matters applications are currently being drawn up for the north eastern part of the site following the grant of outline permission. Planning permission has also been granted for a new highway junction onto the A361.
- 1.3 A Design Guide has been commissioned by the Council for the Tiverton Eastern Urban Extension.

2.0 THE ROLE OF A DESIGN GUIDE.

- 2.1 The Design Guide is a technical document that applies to the whole of the Masterplan SPD area. It has been prepared to bring clarity to the design requirements and expectations embodied (but elaborated on) through the Masterplan SPD. It does not focus on the control of every detail of the design. Instead it identifies the key principles of the design which are believed to be critical to achieving the aims and objectives of the Masterplan SPD and outlines approaches which guide design towards achieving these. In so doing, it coordinates layout and design requirements across the multiple land ownerships to ensure development takes place in a comprehensive and seamless way.
- 2.2 As an adopted policy document, the Masterplan SPD represents the quantitative framework for the development of the Tiverton Eastern Urban Extension. The Design Guide sits within this framework providing a range of solutions which will ensure that the quality of these objectives is achieved.
- 2.3 The Design Guide aids the process to bridge the gap between planning policy aspiration and implementation in order to achieve a high quality design and create a successful place. It sets 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 the Design Guide 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 and does not outline the exact form of development at specific site locations. Additionally the Design Guide will provide continuity to the design for this strategically important site that will be delivered in phases over what may be a long time period.
- 2.4 This technical document has been prepared to be used collaboratively between the Local Authority, its partners and applicants submitting reserved matter applications. In the first instance, the Design Guide is intended as a tool for the Development Management team and will be a material consideration through the formal application process. However, it will also be a shared asset for partners and applicants and will act as the starting place for conversations regarding design. As such, it brings forward the visionary

elements of the Masterplan as a focus for each chapter, whilst clearly communicating how applicants can realise the highest quality of design for the Eastern Urban Extension.

3.0 DESIGN GUIDE PUBLIC CONSULTATION.

- 3.1 The Design Guide will not be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document. It is intended that it will be endorsed by Cabinet such that it will be an aid to the development management process and will be a material consideration in decision making. As such it does not need to conform to the Council's Statement of Community Consultation that requires two stages of public consultation on site specific SPDs. Even so, a process of consultation has been undertaken with statutory and non-statutory consultees through a number of organised workshop events. It is also noted that the Design Guide succeeds the Masterplan SPD that was informed by extensive public and stakeholder consultation.
- 3.2 The Design Guide stakeholder engagements have not been to revisit the work achieved through the Masterplan process but to acknowledge the conclusions and proposals reached and to build on these.
- 3.3 A Stakeholder Tour day was organised to view a variety of housing developments, new and old in and around Tiverton. The intention was to consider how the Masterplan SPD could be furthered through the consideration of local precedents. The day helped to inform the character areas (Chapter 2 of the document).
- 3.4 The second event in the engagement process included a Workshop Day which included three workshop meetings addressing the following key groups:
a) Stakeholders (public representatives and statutory consultees)
b) Developers; and
c) Officers and Members.
The aim was to explain the emerging structure of the Design Guide.
- 3.5 Further supplementary meetings were undertaken with individuals including a final meeting with public representatives (namely residents to Pool Anthony / Blundells Road) to conclude the stakeholder workshop held as part of the second event.
- 3.6 The result has been a robust Design Guide which having been through an early engagement process, provides meaningful and tested guidance for use in the preparation of reserved matters applications.

4.0 KEY PRINCIPLE OF THE DESIGN GUIDE.

- 4.1 The Masterplan SPD establishes a clear structure for the development as a whole; referencing the rich landscape setting of the town and EUE. It proposes that the EUE becomes a new Garden Neighbourhood for Tiverton. The Design Guide builds on this outlining that the Garden Neighbourhood goes beyond the aesthetic quality of plot and house scale; it demands a

strategic and structural approach to the layout of the EUE as a whole. As such, the Design Guide promotes a strong contrast between the centre where a mix of uses and urban character can be enjoyed, to the edge where a diverse landscape and rural character can be experienced. The Design Guide establishes a higher density and mix of uses at the centre but through the introduction of green links that extend through the development, looks out towards the rich and diverse landscape at the edge of the development whilst also drawing it in. The clear structure established through the system of green links / infrastructure (as set out in the Masterplan SPD) confirms a legible sense of 'Centre-to-Edge'. It is this centre-to-edge concept that is a founding principle of the Design Guide.

5.0 **STRUCTURE OF THE DESIGN GUIDE.**

5.1 The Design Guide is comprised of three chapters:

Chapter 1 – provides a general introduction to the Masterplan SPD and how the Design Guide conforms to the structure established by it. It summarises the process by which a variety of stakeholders were engaged in the production of the Design Guide.

Chapter 2 – outlines the built and natural context of the Urban Extension and how it has informed the development. This is set out under a number of headings – Place, Architecture, Landscape, Topography and Gradients.

Chapter 3 – sets out the proposed structure of the development under five categories which relate to the aspirations of the Masterplan SPD – Creating a Green Place; Establishing a Structure; Creating a New Residential Community, Creating a Modern Lifestyle and Design Detailing. It is under these categories that a clear structure to the development is established. The principles of centre-to-edge are defined within a number of identifiable development areas:

- a) **The Neighbourhood Centre**
The neighbourhood centre comprises a 1.9ha primary school site and 2 ha neighbourhood centre providing retail and community buildings. Located adjacent to Blundell's Road the Design Guide identifies how the activities could be accommodated in this location. The neighbourhood centre is characterised by an urban open space located along Blundell's Road. It will identify the centre and will present a high quality image at the heart of the EUE. It prioritises pedestrians and cyclists.
- b) **The NHS site**
This site serves as a key component in bridging the North Eastern part of the site and that south of Blundell's Road including the neighbourhood centre. The site will act as a landmark to Blundell's Road complimenting the neighbourhood centre in scale and density. The site layout will create a gateway aiding through movement to and from the North Eastern area. Development should enhance the street

and buildings should front on to it despite the likelihood of large format buildings. Servicing and vehicular circulation should be focused to the rear of buildings keeping the street as an attractive place.

- c) **Blundells Road Corridor**
Blundells Road has a variety of relationships with the urban extension along its length, culminating at the neighbourhood centre where vehicular movement gives way to shared space. Three cross sections are provided in the Design Guide reflecting the scale of development and its proximity with the carriageway.
- d) **Edge Relationships**
The Design Guide takes into account the different conditions at the edge of the development looking particularly at the western edge and its relationship with Blundells school and the northern edge with the A361.
- e) **Streets**
The Design Guide gives particular consideration to the form of the streets and how they contribute to the centre-to-edge structure. Streets will be legible, aiding navigation and will contribute to the sense of place. The type and scale of buildings, widths of the carriageway / pavement and thresholds to properties are considered including traffic calming. The arrangement of parking and tree planting is also included.
- f) **Green Infrastructure Hierarchy**
The Design Guide outlines a range of spaces which vary according to location and relationship across the urban extension.

5.2 Following analysis of particular development areas, the Design Guide gives consideration to particular residential character areas. Guided by the centre-to-edge principle, structured around the green infrastructure, they vary in form and density across the development. Character areas are established:

- a) **The Residential Core.** Surrounds the Neighbourhood Centre and is the densest residential development area.
- b) **The North Eastern Area.** It is one of the most important areas of development in the context of responding sensitively to existing properties and to the topography of the site. A Key Area Plan outlines the overall structure and associated development densities while three, high density, medium density and low density character areas within the north eastern area are outlined.
- c) **Parkland.** The Parkland character area runs east to west, south of Blundells Road. It bridges the Park Spine defined in the Masterplan SPD. Parkland and Parkland Edge character areas are established.

- d) Development south of West Manley Lane was removed from the outline planning application submitted by the Chettiscombe Trust. However, it remains within the policy allocation and the adopted Masterplan and as such remains vulnerable to development. Consideration of the form of development, should this area be developed, has therefore been given consideration within the Design Guide. The West Manley Lane character area is characterised with buildings arranged in small clusters similar to groups of buildings found in rural locations.
- 5.3 Under a chapter heading of Creating a Modern Lifestyle, the Design Guide gives consideration to the location and mix of uses and activities, creating an inclusive and accessible development that is both secure by design and incorporates the principles of a home for life, parking and servicing (with consideration to the MDDC Parking SPD).
- 5.4 Under a final Chapter the Design Guide gives consideration to particular elements of detailed design including built form and scale, fenestration, thresholds, materials and statutory guidance.
- 5.5 The Design Guide is further supported by a Pocket Summary. This is a single page fold out summary of the entire Design Guide contents. It is intended as a tool for the development management team whilst assisting developers during the pre-application process.
- 5.6 The guide has been considered at meetings of the Planning Policy Advisory Group and a presentation on its contents has been given to the wider Council Membership. Some concerns were expressed about the clarity of the illustrations in terms of location in the site (lack of road names etc), carriageway widths, scale of development where there is a relationship with existing dwellings and the regimented block form of example developments provided within the Design Guide. The contents of the Design Guide has been reviewed in response to Member feedback and amendments made throughout to reflect them. However, the more significant changes responding to Members concerns can be found on:
- a) Page 7. Additional text has been provided relating to Member concerns associated with the continuity of development across the development area.
 - b) Pages 21, 32, 81, 85, 87 & 93. Additional text has been provided relating to Members concerns about the regimented block forms provided through the document.
 - c) Pages 44 & 78. Additional plans have been inserted responding to Members concerns relating to the lack of context on the drawings.
 - d) Pages 53, 55, 60, 61, 63, 80, 81. Additional text &/or annotation has been provided responding to Members concerns related to the height of new development adjacent to existing properties.

e) Page 68. Additional text / guidance has been inserted relating to street trees following Members concern for it.

f) Pages 70 & 71. Amdend text has been provided relating to carriageway widths.

6.0 **CONCLUSIONS.**

6.1 The Tiverton Eastern Urban Extension Design Guide contributes to the delivery of established policy aspirations for the site, setting out the fundamental principles of layout and design, critical to achieving a coordinated design across the multiple of land ownerships in a comprehensive and seamless way.

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List of Background Papers: Cabinet 17th April 2014 (Masterplan SPD)

The adopted policies relating to the Tiverton Eastern Urban Extension may be viewed in the AIDPD at
<https://new.middevon.gov.uk/residents/planning-policy/mid-devon-local-plan/part-2-aidpd/>

Circulation of the Report: Members of Cabinet