

REPORT TO: East Lothian Council

MEETING DATE: 29 October 2019

BY: Depute Chief Executive Partnerships and Communities

SUBJECT: East Lothian Local Development Plan 2018 – Report on Supplementary Planning Guidance on Design Standards in New Housing Developments; and Countryside and Coast Supplementary Planning Guidance

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 This report deals with two Supplementary Planning Guidance documents. Both these documents have been prepared as supporting information to the Local Development Plan 2018 (LDP).
- 1.2 The Supplementary Planning Guidance on the Countryside and Coast has recently been subject to public consultation and has now been finalised.
- 1.3 The draft Supplementary Planning Guidance on the Design Standards in new housing areas is at an earlier stage in its development and has still to be subject to public consultation.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Council;

- notes the results of the public consultation on the draft Supplementary Planning Guidance: Countryside and Coast (available in the Members' Library, Ref: 128/19, October 2019 Bulletin);
- approves the draft Supplementary Planning Guidance: Countryside and Coast (available in the Members' Library, Ref: 129/19, October 2019 Bulletin); and
- approves the draft Design Standards in New Housing Areas Supplementary Planning Guidance for public consultation

(available in the Members' Library, Ref: 130/19, October 2019 Bulletin).

3 BACKGROUND

3.1 The LDP includes several references to the intention to produce additional Supplementary Planning Guidance that will provide further detail on some of the policies in the Plan. These references are included where the implementation of policies can be assisted by additional information too detailed for inclusion in the Local Development Plan. Once adopted, non-statutory Supplementary Planning Guidance will be taken into account as a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

3.2 There are no statutory provisions setting out the scope or process for preparing non-statutory Supplementary Planning Guidance, however, if it is to carry enhanced weight as a material consideration in planning decisions, it must be consulted on and adopted by the Council.

Countryside and Coast Supplementary Planning Guidance

3.3 Members will recall that as part of the LDP several countryside policies were added that provide additional protection for the setting of East Lothian settlements, the character of the landscape and protection for the characteristics of the coastal areas.

3.4 The draft guidance sets out the policy context in the ELLDP 2018 and then proceeds to identify in more detail what would be required from development proposals to meet the requirements of the LDP.

3.5 Following approval of the draft Countryside and Coast Supplementary Planning Guidance for public consultation at the meeting of East Lothian Council on 26 June 2019, a seven-week period of consultation was held in July and August 2019. Prior to the start of the consultation period, letters were sent to each Community Council in East Lothian alerting them to the consultation.

3.6 Through the consultation written submissions were received via the consultation hub or via email. Comments were received from SEPA, SNH, Scottish Water, Homes for Scotland, some individual housebuilders and numerous community groups and members of the public. The results of the public consultation includes a broad summary of the range of issues raised by the consultees (Members' Library Ref: 128/19, October 2019 Bulletin).

3.7 The hub questionnaire asked for comments on the comprehensiveness of the guidance and the extent to which it provided sufficient information to applicants.

3.8 Overall, the majority of respondents agreed with the purpose of the document and the value in having additional guidance on the key attributes of the countryside and coast and need to protect them from unnecessary

or unsympathetic development. Several points were raised around specific locations and the need to protect areas of the Countryside due to their aesthetic value and desire to prevent possible coalescence. Several developers responded suggesting the principle of housing development in countryside around town areas. A full list of the comments received and the officer responses to reach point are included in the results of the public consultation.

- 3.9 As the document is only guidance and policy is already set by the LDP there could be no changes to the policy or boundaries of the Coast or Countryside through this consultation. However, in response to the consultation comments, some small changes have been made to the original draft to provide further detail on the attributes of some of the protected areas.

Design Standards in New Housing Areas Supplementary Planning Guidance

- 3.10 The Local Development Plan includes references to both the existence of Supplementary Planning Guidance of Design Standards, the need for development to adhere to its content and the intention that design guidance will be updated in the future.
- 3.11 The intention to update this guidance was recognised by the reporter during the Examination to the Local Development Plan as a positive step that would help to ensure a high standard of design in future development in East Lothian.
- 3.12 A draft of the revised guidance was prepared and consulted on in late 2018. Several comments were received during this consultation which raised concerns about the comprehensiveness of the draft guidance. Also raised was the need for the guidance to be developed through a more collaborative process with other ELC Services. As a result the need to make further changes to the content of the Guidance emerged.
- 3.13 In addition, the guidance was being prepared in the context of an increased need for action on climate change. As the first draft was being considered, it was clear that there was a need to further address climate change through development layout and individual building design.
- 3.14 Another theme coming through planning policy is the need to simplify policy and guidance to make it easier to use by both the Council and applicants. The draft guidance originally prepared had a limited coverage of design issues and required those interested in developing land to reference a multitude of documents.
- 3.15 Due to these reasons, it was decided not to bring back the draft design guidance to Committee, but instead revisit the documents form and content to provide a single reference point for design guidance and begin to further address the issues raised by the climate emergency. This is with a view to undertaking further public consultation on the revised guidance.

- 3.16 The revised draft guidance brings together all elements of design. It highlights how design should be addressed at the different stages of the development process and at different scales of development. It includes many more examples on how good design can be delivered and specifically addresses the points raised under the previous consultation.
- 3.17 If approved by Council the draft Design Standards in New Housing Areas Supplementary Planning Guidance will be subject to public consultation for 6 weeks in late autumn/winter 2019. The results of this consultation will be reported back to Council in early 2020 alongside the finalised guidance for approval.

4 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The Supplementary Planning Guidance on Countryside and Coast and the Supplementary Planning Guidance on Design Standards in New Housing Developments will provide valuable additional direction to both the applicant and the Planning Service when considering development proposals. By producing these documents the Council is delivering on actions set out in ELLDP 2018. Neither document creates new policy but provides further guidance on policies already approved through the 2018 LDP.

5 INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 5.1 The subjects of this report have been through the Integrated Impact Assessment process through the ELLDP 2018 and no negative impacts have been identified.

6 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Financial – none
- 6.2 Personnel – none
- 6.3 Other – none

7 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 7.1 Responses to consultation on Countryside and Coast Supplementary Planning Guidance (Members' Library, Ref: 128/19, October 2019 Bulletin)
- 7.2 Final draft Supplementary Planning Guidance: Countryside and Coast Supplementary Planning Guidance (Members' Library, Ref: 129/19, October 2019 Bulletin)

7.4 Draft Design Standards in New Housing Areas Supplementary Planning Guidance East Lothian Local Development Plan 2018 Members' Library, Ref: 130/19, October 2019 Bulletin)

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