

Crawley Borough Council

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Report to Overview and Scrutiny Commission 3 October 2016

Report to Cabinet 5 October 2016

Crawley 2030: Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) Climate Change; Green Infrastructure; Town Centre; Urban Design

Report of the Head of Strategic Housing and Planning Services, SHAP/55

1. Purpose

- 1.1 This report recommends adoption of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) for:
 - Planning and Climate Change www.crawley.gov.uk/pw/web/PUB286482
 - Green Infrastructure www.crawley.gov.uk/pw/web/PUB285867
 - Town Centre www.crawley.gov.uk/pw/web/PUB288888
 - Urban Design www.crawley.gov.uk/pw/web/PUB286485
- 1.2 The report outlines a summary of each of the SPDs, together with a brief overview of the representations received through the consultation and the changes made to the documents since their publication for consultation. SPDs should be used where they can help applicants make successful planning applications or aid infrastructure delivery. A series of new SPDs have been prepared to aid the interpretation and implementation of the new adopted Crawley Borough Local Plan (Crawley 2030)¹. Each document will provide guidance on relevant policies in the Local Plan.
- 1.3 The SPDs will be provided in hard copy in the Members' Room. In addition, an electronic copy or a printed version is available from the Forward Planning team on request.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 To the Overview and Scrutiny Commission:

That the Commission consider the report and decide what comments, if any, it wishes to submit to the Cabinet.
- 2.2 To the Cabinet
 - 2.2.1 The Cabinet is recommended to:
 - a) Approve the Planning and Climate Change Supplementary Planning Document as an adopted council planning policy document to be taken into account as a material planning consideration in the determination of planning applications.
 - b) Approve the Green Infrastructure Supplementary Planning Document as an adopted council planning policy document to be taken into account as a material planning consideration in the determination of planning applications.
 - c) Approve the Town Centre Supplementary Planning Document as an adopted council planning policy document to be taken into account as a material planning consideration in the determination of planning applications.

¹ Crawley 2030: Crawley Borough Local Plan 2015 – 2030 (December 2015) CBC

- d) Approve the Urban Design Supplementary Planning Document as an adopted council planning policy document to be taken into account as a material planning consideration in the determination of planning applications.
- e) Delegate authority for approval of final minor text changes, formatting and editing of the SPDs and for any subsequent revisions required to reflect council or national policy changes to the Head of Strategic Housing and Planning Services in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning & Economic Development.

3. Reasons for the Recommendations

- 3.1 Following the adoption of the Crawley Borough Local Plan 2015-2030 in December 2015, it was recognised that a number of the new policies would benefit from expansion and explanation to ensure the council helps facilitate the delivery of development and maintains an efficient and high quality development management process. Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) assist in supporting successful planning applications, clarifying policy requirements, and also providing examples of best practice and setting out the council's aspirations which developers may be able to help deliver.
- 3.2 Four SPDs have been produced to aid the interpretation of the Crawley Borough Local Plan policies and, following public consultation, Cabinet approval is now sought to strengthen their use as a material planning consideration. The SPDs are:
 - Planning and Climate Change
 - Green Infrastructure
 - Town Centre
 - Urban Design

4. Background

- 4.1 The council's Local Development Scheme (LDS) sets out the council's commitment to producing a number of planning documents, including SPDs. This document is a key legal requirement and was submitted as part of the Local Plan's examination evidence. The updated version of this document, covering the period 2015 – 2018, received approval at Cabinet in December 2015², and provides the timetable for the four SPDs brought forward with this report.
- 4.3 Early engagement was undertaken, commencing in early October 2015, through notification of stakeholders and consultees on the intention of the council to produce a set of SPDs across a range of identified topic areas. Those contacted were invited to sign up for further updates in relation to particular topics, and directed to a dedicated page on the council's website providing further information about the function of the SPDs and their proposed scope. The webpage also invited interested parties to respond to nine broad questions about their coverage and approach.
- 4.4 The SPDs have each been subject to an informal 'early engagement' period of consultation throughout their early preparation, and have each, individually, been subject to a formal period of public consultation of 4 weeks, in accordance with national Regulations³ and the council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)⁴:
 - Formal public consultation took place for:

² Cabinet Report number: SHP/51 (2 December 2015)

³ Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012

⁴ 'Getting involved' Statement of Community Involvement and the 'Getting involved... in planning' appendix (2011) CBC

- the Climate Change and Urban Design SPDs, between 1 March and 29 March 2016;
- the Green Infrastructure SPD, between 16 May and 13 June 2016;
- the Town Centre SPD, between 27 June and 25 July 2016.

Each SPD is accompanied for its adoption by a Consultation Statement which sets out the detail of the consultation undertaken, the representations received and the council's officer response.

- 4.5 A further SPD (the Affordable Housing SPD) is identified in the adopted Local Development Scheme, to be prepared to support the Crawley Borough Local Plan. This does not form part of this report or recommendations but will come forward in a future report when clarity on national planning policy matters allows for its completion. The Development of Gatwick Airport SPD is also identified in the LDS for updating, but it is recognised that work on this will not commence until 2017, to coincide with Gatwick Airport Limited's revision of the Gatwick Masterplan. This in turn is dependent on a government decision on airport expansion.

5. Description of Issue to be resolved

- 5.1 Supplementary Planning Documents aim to amplify some of the more complex planning policies in the adopted Local Plan and provide more detailed guidance for developers, investors, landowners, and householders, as to how new development can satisfy the requirements of the policies, deliver sustainable development and enhance the character of the town. These policies have been identified through discussions with Development Management officers, developers and during the Local Plan Examination.

Planning and Climate Change

- 5.2 The Planning and Climate Change SPD has been prepared to support applicants and the council to apply the new Local Plan Policies relating to:

- Sustainable Design and Construction (Policy ENV6)
- District Energy Networks (Policy ENV7)
- Tackling Water Stress (Policy ENV9)
- Development and Flood Risk (Policy ENV8)
- Sustainable Transport (Policy IN3)

A Guidance Note has been prepared to accompany the full SPD to assist in applying the policies relating to energy and water efficiency for alterations and extensions to buildings (including for householder planning applications)

www.crawley.gov.uk/pw/web/PUB286483 .

Green Infrastructure SPD

- 5.3 The Green Infrastructure SPD sets out the guidance to support Local Plan policies relating to:

- The Green Infrastructure Network (Policies CH1; CH3; CH7; CH11; ENV1 and ENV3)
- Trees (Policies CH3 and CH6)
- Open Space (Policies ENV4 and ENV5)
- Biodiversity (Policy ENV2)
- Countryside and AONB (Policies CH9 and CH10)

The Green Infrastructure Map (<http://www.crawley.gov.uk/pw/web/PUB285868>) is provided, for information, within the SPD, as well as being a separate document in its own right.

Town Centre SPD

- 5.4 The Town Centre SPD set out the guidance to support Local Plan policies relating to:

- Economic Growth in the town centre (Policy EC2)

- Primary Shopping Area (Policy EC5)
- Development Sites within the Town Centre boundary (Policy EC6)
- Retail and leisure development outside the Primary Shopping Area (Policy EC7)

It also provides additional information in relation to skills development through the Town Centre Skills Academy.

Urban Design SPD

- 5.5 The Urban Design SPD seeks to provide additional guidance in order for applicants to meet the requirements set by the Local Plan Policies relating to:
- Good Urban Design Principles (Policies CH1; CH2; and CH9)
 - Householder Development (Policy CH3)
 - Residential Development (Policy CH3; and CH5)
 - Non-Residential Development (Policy CH3)
 - Advertisements and Signs (Policy CH3)
 - Heritage Guidance (Policies CH12 – CH17)
 - Parking Standards (Policy IN4)

6. Information & Analysis Supporting Recommendation

- 6.1 Internal officers with expertise in topic areas, e.g. Sustainability team, Amenity Services, etc. were involved from an early stage in the preparation of the SPDs. Development Management, in particular, had a significant involvement.
- 6.2 All members were notified, by email in September 2015, of the commencement of work on the SPDs. This highlighted the topic areas which, at that time, were being considered for progression. Member engagement was considered key in the early preparation of the documents, and members were asked to specify which documents they were particularly interested in, and the methods they felt would be helpful for engagement to take place. A high proportion of those members who responded expressed an interest in more than one topic area, and the favoured method of engagement was for a meeting.
- 6.3 An All Members' Seminar was carried out in January 2016, to present the SPD topic areas to all council members, and seek input into the emerging principles and scope for each. Comments made during the All Members' Seminar were taken on board during the drafting of the consultation documents. In addition, councillors were invited to contact the Forward Planning team and the Lead Officer for each of the SPD topic areas separately if there were further queries or concerns. Each document was circulated to all Members ahead of the start of the public consultations on each document.
- 6.4 Public consultations for each document ran for 4 weeks, during March, May-June and July in 2016. Documents were published on the website and available to view in hard copy in the town hall and Crawley Library. Letters and emails were sent out to all organisations and individuals on the Crawley Borough Local Plan consultation database notifying the start of the consultation, followed up with a reminder ahead of the close of consultation.

Results of Consultation

Planning and Climate Change SPD

- 6.5 Responses were received from statutory consultees, including Natural England, Gatwick Airport Limited, Environment Agency, West Sussex County Council, and Thames Water, as well as a limited number of local residents. Consultation highlighted some additional information which could be helpfully included in the SPD, primarily from other sources, already in the public domain and some factual corrections and clarifications.

- 6.6 The consultation has led to some additional minor wording to be incorporated and some factual changes and clarification of flexibility, which is set out in the Consultation Statement accompanying the SPD: <http://www.crawley.gov.uk/pw/web/PUB294024> . Further changes to the document following consultation include formatting and structure, particularly to aid the clarity of the tables.

Green Infrastructure

- 6.7 Responses were received from statutory consultees, including Natural England, Gatwick Airport Limited, Sport England, Environment Agency, Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre, Thames Water, Highways England, Mole Valley District Council and West Sussex County Council, and interested stakeholders (organisations and landowners) such as The Woodland Trust, The Wilky Group, Ifield Conservation Area Committee, Homes and Communities Agency (HCA), Thakeham Homes, as well as a limited number of local residents. Consultation provided some further clarification on best practice guidance and environmental policies. The Consultation Statement accompanying the SPD provides details of the stages of consultation undertaken, the representations received and any subsequent changes to the document: <http://www.crawley.gov.uk/pw/web/PUB294025>
- 6.8 Following consultation, more detail has been provided in relation to areas of technical expertise raised through the consultation from individuals and organisations, particularly in relation to the links between flooding and green infrastructure, aerodrome safeguarding, and tree policies. In addition, clarification has been improved in relation to the expectations for financial contributions in lieu of on-site tree provision, to ensure proportionate and reasonable costs are applied. Structural amendments have also been made to improve the legibility of the document.

Town Centre

- 6.9 Responses were received from statutory consultees, including NATs Safeguarding Office, Gatwick Airport Limited, Thames Water, Highways England, Environment Agency, Natural England, Historic England, Mole Valley District Council, Horsham District Council and West Sussex County Council, and interested stakeholders (organisations and landowners) such as Crawley Town Centre Partnership, Westrock Ltd., and Central Crawley Conservation Area Advisory Committee, as well as a limited number of local residents. Comments specifically on two site in relation to the design guidance were received from the landowners.
- 6.10 Following consultation, clarification has been added to reflect the aspirations of the council and the policy requirements. The Consultation Statement accompanying the SPD provides details of the stages of consultation undertaken, the representations received and any subsequent changes to the document: <http://www.crawley.gov.uk/pw/web/PUB294022>

Urban Design

- 6.11 Responses were received from statutory consultees, including Natural England, Gatwick Airport Limited, Sport England, Environment Agency, and West Sussex County Council, as well as a limited number of local residents. Representations received raised some further suggestions for highlighting particular approaches and matters at an early stage as part of development schemes and proposals, and increasing cross-referencing with the guidance in other SPDs (primarily the Town Centre and Green Infrastructure SPDs). The Consultation Statement accompanying the SPD provides details of the stages of consultation undertaken, the representations received and any subsequent changes to the document: <http://www.crawley.gov.uk/pw/web/PUB294026>
- 6.12 Following consultation, some formatting and structure changes have been undertaken to aid the usability of the document. Development guidance has been

more clearly emphasised throughout the document and new images have been incorporated – including photographs to more clearly illustrate good and bad practice examples and incorporates more detailed images and sketches. The Heritage Impact Assessment has been simplified. The public art section has been incorporated into an annex to the document. An additional annex has been added to incorporate the previous council guidance set out in SPG15, which is to be superseded by this SPD, in relation to Mobile Phone Masts.

7. Implications

- 7.1 The SPDs have been carefully prepared to closely relate to the policies within the adopted Crawley Borough Local Plan. The SPD's have followed the statutory process as set out in the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. They do not create new policy or increase the financial burden on developments beyond that considered as part of the Whole Plan viability assessment already robustly tested through the Local Plan Examination process and found 'sound' by the independent Planning Inspector. Furthermore, planning applications remain subject to their own detailed viability testing where this argument is progressed in relation to flexibility with the Local Plan requirements, on a case-by-case basis.
- 7.2 The preparation of the SPDs has primarily taken place in-house utilising the expertise of existing staff and the evidence base created for the Local Plan. Therefore, they have incurred little additional financial cost to the council beyond staff time. External expert advice was sought from the Borough of Islington Council in relation to the Planning and Climate Change SPD.
- 7.3 There are no additional financial implications arising from the adoption of the SPDs as they reflect the Planning Policies which would be applicable through the adoption of the Local Plan. Conversely, not adopting the SPDs may result in increased costs to the council through the additional officer time necessary to provide the information contained within them to each proposed development, on a case-by-case basis, and potentially wasted time for the council and applicants with the submission of invalid planning applications, or applications which require further information to be gathered during the planning application process – resulting in extra time needing to be agreed or risk of refusals.

8. Background Papers

Crawley 2030: Crawley Borough Local Plan 2015-2030 (December, 2015) CBC
Crawley Borough Council's Local Development Scheme 2015 – 2018 (December, 2015) CBC

www.crawley.gov.uk/crawley2030

www.crawley.gov.uk/crawley2030SPD

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