

Report to	Planning Committee
Date	10 September 2015
By	Director of Planning
Title of Report	Adoption of Worldham Village Design Statement as a Supplementary Planning Document
Purpose of Report	To recommend the adoption of the Worldham Village Design Statement as a Supplementary Planning Document

Recommendation: The Committee is recommended to approve the adoption of Worldham Village Design Statement as a Supplementary Planning Document

1. Introduction and Summary

- 1.1 The South Downs National Park Authority (SDNPA) has set out its commitment to support the development of high quality Community Led Plans in South Downs Partnership Management Plan (PMP). Policy 34 of the PMP states that the Authority will ‘support and enable communities to develop and deliver high quality community led initiatives that contribute to the understanding, conservation and enhancement of the special qualities of the National Park’.
- 1.2 There are currently over 120 parishes or towns that have produced, or are in the process of producing a Community Led Plan. Community Led Plans are prepared by local communities to provide local detail to compliment the strategic documents prepared by the South Downs National Park Authority.
- 1.3 Village Design Statements (VDSs) are eligible for adoption as Supplementary Planning Documents, which once adopted form a material consideration when assessing planning applications. Village Design Statements (if adopted as Supplementary Planning Documents) can provide more detailed information to supplement the Design policies set out in the relevant Development Plan Document, in this case, the East Hampshire Joint Core Strategy.
- 1.4 The following report presents the Worldham VDS to Planning Committee for consideration and adoption as a Supplementary Planning Document. Worldham VDS will be the second Community Led Plan to be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document by the SDNPA.

2. Background

- 2.1 Village Design Statements are a type of Community Led Plan prepared by local communities. They describe the character of the landscape and built environment of their parish and include guidelines to help ensure that this character is conserved and enhanced in any new development in the area.
- 2.2 On 15 October 2013 the SDNPA agreed a process for the consideration and adoption of Community Led Plans as Supplementary Planning Documents. The Report sets out the process for adoption and the Community Led Plans which are eligible for adoption. The report delegated authority for the adoption of Community Led Plans to the Planning Committee.
- 2.3 Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) can be prepared by the Local Planning Authority or local community to provide more detail on policies in adopted Development Plan Documents (DPDs), that is, the inherited Local Plans or Joint Core Strategies. As their name suggests, they are intended to supplement policies in DPDs. SPDs should align with

policy(ies) contained in the Development Plan. They should also be consistent with national planning policy

- 2.4 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that SPD should be used where they can help applicants make successful planning applications or aid infrastructure delivery, and should not be used to add unnecessarily to the financial burden of applicants. Design statements, once adopted will assist applicants in making successful applications, reducing the financial burden from having to submit alternative proposals as their proposals should complement local aspirations, regarding the design of development
- 2.5 SPDs are subject to Regulations, including a specific process of consultation and engagement with relevant parties, before they can be adopted as SPD. For instance, a SPD must contain the date on which the document is adopted, indicate that it is a SPD and must contain a reasoned justification of the policies contained in it. Unlike DPDs, SPDs do not go through the formal submission or examination process.
- 2.6 While a community can prepare the material required for a SPD, the administrative process must be led by the Local Planning Authority to ensure that the Regulations relating to the preparation of an SPD are met.
- 2.7 SPDs come in two main forms: area based (masterplans or development briefs for particular areas of land) or topic based (for example, green space standards, design guidelines, or parking standards for development).
- 2.8 The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (part 5) set out the requirements necessary for a Local Planning Authority (LPA) to adopt a document as SPD. Essentially the LPA is required to describe the consultation process carried out in preparing the SPD, identify the relevant policy in a development plan document which the SPD will relate to and invite representations on the proposal to adopt the SPD.

3. Worldham Village Design Statement

- 3.1 Worldham Parish Council prepared a Parish Plan which was adopted by the Parish Council in 2010. In the Parish Plan there was an aspiration to produce further community planning documents to ensure the local communities views were reflected in any decision making relating to new development in Worldham. The Parish Council subsequently set up a Village Design Statement team to lead on the preparation of the Worldham VDS.
- 3.2 The VDS, which builds on the work of the Parish Plan, records the features of the built and natural environment of the village and identifies those features which are valued by the local community. The VDS, which can be found at **Appendix I**, sets out 15 Planning Guidelines which are intended to assist planning applicants to make planning applications which reflect local characteristics and are in keeping with existing design and characteristics of Worldham. The design guidelines can be found as an appendix to the Worldham VDS.
- 3.3 The VDS has been prepared by a team of local volunteers appointed by the Parish Council. The VDS team have carried out an extensive programme of consultation to ensure that the final document reflects the views of the wider community. The VDS was launched in July 2012 at the village fete, where people were invited to identify local characteristic and features of the village which they seek to conserve and enhance. Following this initial launch event the VDS team have engaged the wider community through the Parish magazine, a questionnaire which was sent to all households, and by providing regular updates at parish Council meetings and other village events.
- 3.4 The first draft of the VDS was presented to SDNPA in September 2014, this followed input from SDNPA design officer. The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (part 5) require Local Planning Authorities to consult on proposed Supplementary Planning Documents for a minimum of 6 weeks. The South Downs National Park Authority published the Worldham VDS for a period of 6 weeks 10 October 2014 for a period of six weeks and invited written representations. There were no comments received on the VDS during the consultation period.
- 3.5 Following the formal consultation period SDNPA officers have provided extensive

comments and feedback on the VDS to address concerns relating to how the design guidelines were presented and their ability to influence future planning applications. Comments were provided by SDNPA design officer and Development Management officers.

- 3.6 The Worldham VDS team submitted the revised VDS to SDNPA on 3 June 2015. This version of the VDS reflects all the changes proposed by the SDNPA, and is therefore considered appropriate to be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document.
- 3.7 The Parish of Worldham is split by the National Park Boundary, with 52% of the parish area falling in the South Downs National Park. The VDS will need to be adopted by both planning authorities that operate in the Parish (SDNPA and East Hampshire District Council). East Hampshire District Council (EHDC) do not adopt VDS as supplementary planning documents, instead VDS are endorsed by EHDCs community forums as non-statutory guidance which is considered a material planning consideration in determining planning applications. The Worldham VDS was endorsed by EHDC at the North West Community Forum in January 2015. However, given the amendments made after the community forum EHDC have indicated that the VDS will go back to the North West Community Forum post adoption by SDNPA.
- 3.8 The Worldham VDS Draft Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is intended to add further detail to policy CP27 of the East Hampshire District Local Plan: Joint Core Strategy (JCS) 2014 and be in conformity with other policies of the JCS.

CP27 DESIGN

The District's built environment must be of an exemplary standard and highly appealing in terms of visual appearance. All new development will be required to respect the character, identity and context of the district's towns, villages and countryside and must help to create places where people want to live, work and visit.

New development will be required to meet with various criteria including Criteria h) - take account of local town and village design statements, emerging neighbourhood plans that identify local character and distinctiveness and the design elements of parish and town plans and conservation area appraisals

- 3.9 The Worldham VDS is in general conformity with National Planning Practice Guidance, and is intended to 'help applicants make successful applications or aid infrastructure delivery' as per the NPPF.

4. Resources

- 4.1 There are no direct resource implications arising from this report. If the Worldham Village Design Statement is agreed and adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document it will be published on the South Downs National Park Authority webpage. Hard copies of the Village Design Statement will be made available in the South Downs Centre library, and copy made available for the Development Management team, who will use the statement when assessing relevant planning applications. Costs associated with this will come from existing budgets.
- 4.2 Officer time and staff resources have been used in the production of the Worldham VDS; therefore the number of VDS that can come forward for adoption is limited by available staff resources.

5. Risk management

- 5.1 Risk: a risk associated with the SDNPA adopting the Worldham Village Design Statement is that the content of the statement could conflict with the National Park purposes or duty of the SDNPA.
- 5.2 Mitigation: to mitigate this risk SDNPA officers have reviewed the Worldham VDS and made appropriate recommendations to the applicant submitting the plan, these amendments have been agreed by Worldham VDS team.
- 5.3 Risk: there is a potential reputational risk for the SDNPA associated with not adopting the Worldham Village Design Statement. Communities are increasingly frustrated that their hard work and effort in producing Community Led Plans is not fully appreciated and being taken

into due consideration by local planning authorities in taking decisions on planning applications. The plans offer the SDNPA invaluable local intelligence, and adopting or endorsing these plans will demonstrate the SDNPA commitment to empowering local communities.

5.4 Mitigation: for SDNPA to adopt the Worldham VDS as a Supplementary Planning Document

6. Crime and Disorder Implication

6.1 It is considered that the proposal does not raise any crime and disorder implications.

7. Human Rights Implications

7.1 It is considered that the proposal does not raise any Human Rights implications.

8. Equality Act 2010

8.1 Due regard has been taken of the South Downs National Park Authority's equality duty as contained within the Equality Act 2010.

9. External Consultees

9.1 None

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Appendices	I. Worldham Village Design Statement
SDNPA Consultees	Director of Planning, Planning Policy Manager, Minerals and Waste Manager, Legal Services, Monitoring Officer & Chief Finance Officer.
Background Documents	SDNPA 15 October 2013 Agenda item 9 Report 34/13 Adoption and/or Endorsement of Community-Led Plans http://www.southdowns.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/npa_2013Oct15_Agenda-item-9.pdf