

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Local Development Framework Working Party

16th December 2009

Affordable Housing SPD

Responsible Portfolio Holder	Councillor Mrs J Dyer
Responsible Head of Service	Dave Hammond, Head of Planning & Environment Services
Non-Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to present members with an amended draft of Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) which is currently being consulted on.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 Members note that an 8 week formal consultation has now begun on the Draft Affordable Housing SPD.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 An earlier draft version of the Affordable Housing SPD was presented to Members of the LDF Working Party on 15th October 2009. Following feedback from the Working Party the draft was amended and authorised for consultation by the Head of Planning and Environment Services in consultation with the responsible portfolio holder. An 8 week period of consultation began on November 30th and will end on January 30th 2010.
- 3.2 The document as a whole has not changed significantly and retains a focus on increasing the levels of affordable housing across the district with the majority of changes merely improving grammar and spelling. Where a change has been more substantial it has been outlined within this report.
- 3.3 The document has been updated to reflect the outcomes in Panel's Report into the Phase 2 Revision of the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS). These changes relate primarily to the recommendation that the Council delivers 4,000 homes by 2026 and the changes proposed to Policy CF7: 'Affordable Housing' of the RSS.
- 3.4 Chapter 2: 'Planning Policy Context' has been expanded to show greater links with the Sustainable Community Strategy. The document now emphasises that the Affordable Housing SPD will help to achieve some of the issues raised with the Sustainable Community Strategy.

- 3.5 The main changes to the document are in Chapter 5: Delivering Affordable Housing. To maximise the amount of affordable housing that can be delivered the threshold has been reduced. The Council will now seek contributions to affordable housing on all housing developments where there is a net increase in the number of dwellings. It is recognised that on sites of less than 5 dwellings or under 0.2ha it will not generally be possible to deliver affordable housing on site. The Council will therefore expect a financial contribution towards affordable housing on these small schemes. The document does not set out a method for how this figure will be calculated allowing negotiation to take on each scheme to ensure that developments remain viable.
- 3.6 Chapter 5 now contains a section on the choice of Registered Social Landlord (RSL). This sets out the Council's expectation that all applicants will need to enter into an agreement with an RSL who will manage the affordable properties on completion. The text encourages applicants to work with one of the Council's Preferred Partners that are set out within appendix B of the SPD.
- 3.7 The layout of Chapter 5 has been amended with all key information now in policy boxes. This should make it clear to the reader what the key issues are in terms of affordable housing delivery. The general thrust of the document has not changed but in places the amount of text has been reduced to create a clearer and more focussed document.
- 3.8 Some changes have been made to Chapter 6: 'Rural Exception Site Policies' in relation to suitable locations for Rural Exception Sites. The policy now lists the settlements where the Rural Exceptions Policy will apply. Whilst the list of sites shown in the document is not exhaustive it provides clear guidance as to the kinds of locations where such affordable housing schemes may be appropriate.
- 3.9 In addition to the actual SPD, two further documents have also been produced. These are the Sustainability Appraisal and the Consultation Statement. The Sustainability Appraisal tests the SPD against the Council's sustainability objectives identifying where the document will have a positive or negative impact. The Consultation Statement summarises the consultation events that have taken place over the past 4 years that have helped to inform the SPD. Both of these documents and the SPD have been attached as appendices to this report.
- 3.10 After the end of the consultation period all written representations will be summarised with a response from the Council. Where appropriate the document will be amended and an adoption version will be brought before Members in Spring 2010.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The SPD is being produced by the Strategic Planning team and therefore there are no external costs associated with the production of this document.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Affordable Housing SPD is being produced in accordance with the provisions set out in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, and prepared in accordance with The Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004.

6. COUNCIL OBJECTIVES

6.1 Objective 1 Regeneration - Priority Housing

The adoption of the Affordable Housing SPD would increase the provision of affordable housing in the district in line with Council's objectives.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT INCLUDING HEALTH & SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 The main risks associated with the details included in this report are:

- Without a detailed policy on affordable housing the council would risk not meeting its corporate objective of providing more affordable housing across the district.

- 7.2 These risks are being managed as follows:

Risk Register: Planning and Environment
Key Objective Ref No: 6
Key Objective: Effective, efficient, and legally compliant Strategic planning Service

8. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 Consultation to be carried out in line with legislation and adopted standards contained in the Bromsgrove District Council Statement of Community Involvement (SCI).

9. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 None

10. VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 None

11. CLIMATE CHANGE AND CARBON IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 A Sustainability Appraisal has been completed on the SPD to measure the extent to which the Affordable Housing SPD is likely to have a positive or negative impact on sustainability and the extent to which it therefore works towards or against the achievement of sustainable development.
- 11.2 The SPD performs well against the social objectives of providing housing to meet local needs and reducing poverty and social exclusion. However the document performs less well against the objectives of reducing noise and preserving and enhancing biodiversity. The Sustainability Appraisal identifies how these risks can be managed ensuring that the document has a positive impact on the district.
- 11.3 Affordable housing must achieve level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Homes meaning that any new housing will be energy efficient and reduce the impacts of climate change. Over the upcoming years affordable housing will need to be built to increasingly high standards with the Government proposing that all new homes should be 'zero carbon' by 2016.

12. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

Procurement Issues	None
Personnel	None
Governance/Performance Management	None
Community Safety including Section 17 of Crime and Disorder Act 1998	None
Policy	Affordable Housing SPD sets clear planning policy in respect of the provision of affordable housing
Biodiversity	None

13. OTHERS CONSULTED ON THE REPORT

Portfolio Holder	Yes - informal briefing
Joint Chief Executive	No
Executive Director - Partnerships and Projects	No
Executive Director - Services	No
Assistant Chief Executive	No

Head of Service	Yes
Head of Financial Services	No
Head of Legal, Equalities & Democratic Services	No
Head of Organisational Development & HR	No
Corporate Procurement Team	No

14. WARDS AFFECTED

All Wards

15. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Affordable Housing SPD

16. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Sustainability Appraisal
Consultation Statement

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