

TO: THE EXECUTIVE
29 MARCH 2011

**STREETSCENE SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT (SPD)
AND HIGHWAY GUIDE FOR DEVELOPMENT – ADOPTION REPORT
Director of Environment, Culture and Communities**

1 PURPOSE OF DECISION

- 1.1 Bracknell Forest Council is committed to achieving high quality new development within the Borough. The Streetscene SPD and its Annex, titled Highways Guide for Development, have been produced to identify and set the standards the Council will expect within new streetscenes from developers, architects, highway consultants and designers. The SPD updates and replace the Berkshire Highway Design Guide and brings together a more holistic approach to the design of our streets across the Council's services in accordance with the latest national guidance and best practice.
- 1.2 Officers request that Members consider the Streetscene SPD (including Annex 1 - Highways Guide for Development), as attached at Appendix B of this report, for agreement and adoption, along with the accompanying Sustainability Appraisal, Appendix C of this report.

2 RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 2.1 **That the Streetscene Supplementary Planning Document (including Annex 1 Highways Guide for Development), Appendix B of this report, be approved for adoption;**
- 2.2 **That the Sustainability Appraisal, Appendix C of this report, be approved for publication; and,**
- 2.3 **That the 'statement', Appendix D of this report, be approved pursuant to regulation 18(4) (b) of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 as amended.**

3 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 3.1 The Streetscene SPD and Annex 1 Highways Guide for Development will inform and clarify issues relating to process, design and maintenance and assist all those involved in the development process, both within the Council and externally with regard to developers and applicants.

4 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 4.1 The Streetscene SPD and Annex 1 could be progressed as an informal advisory document. However, this would give the document little weight in policy terms should a refusal of planning permission on design, maintenance and safety of proposed new streetscenes be challenged in the future.

5 SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 5.1 The Streetscene SPD and its Annex forms part of the Local Development Framework (LDF) and will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. The document focuses on a holistic approach to the design of residential streets by the Council incorporating urban design, highway design, adoptions, landscape, trees, refuse management and road safety issues. Operational and maintenance issues have also informed the design considerations in the document. Annex 1 of the SPD, titled Highways Guide for Development, is a technical annex detailing how the principles within the SPD can be achieved and giving detailed specifications around construction. Both the SPD and its Annex should be read and used in the preparation of schemes.
- 5.2 The Streetscene SPD and Annex 1 incorporate the Council's response as both a planning and highway authority to the national guidance documents Manual for Streets 1 and 2. "Manual for Streets", published by the Department for Transport and Communities and Local Government and "Manual for Streets 2 – A Wider Application of the Principles" published by the Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation set out the basic principles of what should be achievable within new development in terms of streetscene. Most of the principles contained within these documents are relevant and appropriate to Bracknell Forest as a unitary authority. However, the Streetscene SPD and Annex 1 seek to identify and clarify working practices and procedures within the Council and identifies where local interpretation is needed.
- 5.3 As a unitary authority, the Borough faces increasing pressures to use land efficiently and provide a balance between creating attractive, functional, durable streets with public realm of quality, alongside providing an efficient and cost effective service as the Highway Authority. The Streetscene SPD sets out how the Council sees the balance between making a positive contribution to the quality and character of an area against the pressures of maximising efficient services and maintaining our streets for the local community.
- 5.4 The Streetscene SPD, its Annex and the accompanying Sustainability Appraisal formed part of a public consultation in the summer of last year as detailed at paragraph 7.1. Limited responses were received and the Regulation 18 (4)(b) – 'Statement' (Appendix D) is attached at the end of this report. This statement is a summary of the consultation responses and any amendments made to the documents as a result of comments received.
- 5.5 Officers are now seeking the approval and adoption of the Streetscene SPD including Annex 1 titled Highways Guide for Development by the Executive so that the documents can be applied to all new development proposals and appropriate highways schemes in the Borough.

Sustainability Appraisal

- 5.6 A Sustainability Appraisal has also been prepared which has iteratively tested the SPD throughout its process and suggested necessary amendments. The Sustainability Appraisal also incorporates the requirements of a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA).
- 5.7 The SA plays an important role in ensuring the soundness of a Local Development Document and ensures the principles of sustainability are embedded into the plan.

The Final Sustainability Appraisal Report (Appendix C) is available online or in the Executive and Opposition rooms in the Democratic Services Section.

6 ADVICE RECEIVED FROM STATUTORY AND OTHER OFFICERS

Borough Solicitor

- 6.1 The process for adopting Supplementary Planning Documents is prescribed by part 5 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004.

Borough Treasurer

- 6.2 The Streetscene SPD is a Supplementary Planning Document which forms part of the Local Development Framework (LDF) process. The preparation of the constituent documents of the LDF is a continuous process. There is revenue budget provision in 2010/2011 for the preparation of the LDF.

Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.3 Attached at Appendix A of this report.

Strategic Risk Management Issues

- 6.4 There are no known risks to the Council, as specified in the Risk Assessment Schedule

7 CONSULTATION

- 7.1 The Streetscene SPD, Annex 1 titled Highways Guide for Development and Sustainability Appraisal formed part of a public consultation between 24 May and 05 July 2010. The following groups and individuals were all consulted:

- Parish and Town Councils;
- LDF consultees (those who have asked to be consulted on all LDF issues);
- Statutory consultees;
- House builders, developers, architects and designers;
- Highway consultants; and
- Other interested groups or individuals requesting further information.

Additionally, a statement was released to the press and copies of the documents were available on the Council's website, in all the local libraries, Parish and Town Council Offices, and the Council reception areas.

Background Papers

Bracknell Forest Council Local Development Scheme
Planning Policy Statement 1
Planning Policy Statement 3
Manual for Streets 1
Manual for Streets 2 – A Wider Application of the Principles

Contact for further information

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Doc. Ref – Local Plan Team/LDF/Streetscene SPD/Exec Report/Mar 2011

Appendix A

Equalities Screening Record Form

Date of Screening:	Directorate: ECC	Section: Spatial Policy
1. Activity to be assessed	Adoption of a new Supplementary Planning Document on Streetscene issues under the Local Development Framework	
2. What is the activity?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Policy/strategy <input type="checkbox"/> Function/procedure <input type="checkbox"/> Project <input type="checkbox"/> Review <input type="checkbox"/> Service <input type="checkbox"/> Organisational change	
3. Is it a new or existing activity?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> Existing	
4. Officer responsible for the screening	Ann Groves	
5. Who are the members of the EIA team?	Max Baker - Head of Spatial Policy, Simon Cridland – Team Manager, Ann Groves – Urban Design Officer	
6. What is the purpose of the activity?	<p>The Streetscene SPD has been produced as a document to inform the design of streetscenes as part of the planning process. The document provides an holistic approach to the design of residential streets incorporating urban design, highway design, adoptions, landscape, trees, refuse management and road safety issues. Operational and maintenance issues have also informed the design considerations detailed in the document.</p> <p>The Streetscene document has an annex titled Highways Guide for Development which provides developers with guidance on the technical implementation of many of the principles relating to specific highway functions. The annex informs and clarifies the provision of a safe and useable highways, future maintenance issues and assists all those involved in the development process, both within the Council and externally in terms of developers and applicants.</p>	
7. Who is the activity designed to benefit/target?	The purpose of the SPD is to provide developers, architects and planning applicants with design guidance for the residential streetscene with a view to informing planning applications. The SPD will assist all those involved in the development process, including internal officers within the Council. Additionally the SPD will inform and clarify issues relating to process, design and maintenance.	
8. a Racial equality - Is there an impact? What kind of equality impact may there be? Is the impact positive or adverse or is there a potential for both? If the impact is neutral please give a reason.	Y X	N
8. b What evidence do you have to support this? E.g equality monitoring data, consultation results, customer satisfaction information etc.	High quality design will make a positive contribution to the character of Bracknell Forest, ensure access for everyone and promote a sense of pride in the area.	

<p>9. a Gender equality - Is there an impact? What kind of equality impact may there be? Is the impact positive or adverse or is there a potential for both? If the impact is neutral please give a reason.</p>	<p>Y X</p>	<p>N</p>	<p>The implementation of the design standards contained within the SPD will affect all residents and not target specific groups. The Streetscene SPD and its annex will not cause adverse impact or discriminate against specific groups in the Council's workforce or the community and there may be some positive impacts which affect all residents, including men, women and transgender.</p>
<p>9. b What evidence do you have to support this?</p>	<p>High quality design will make a positive contribution to the character of Bracknell Forest, ensure access for everyone and promote a sense of pride in the area.</p>		
<p>10. a Disability equality - Is there an impact? What kind of equality impact may there be? Is the impact positive or adverse or is there a potential for both? If the impact is neutral please give a reason.</p>	<p>Y X</p>	<p>N</p>	<p>The Streetscene SPD and its annex does specifically discuss some design measures to improve access for disabled people, including the use of tactile paving, colour contrasting, levels, surfaces, cambers and the design of street furniture.</p>
<p>10. b What evidence do you have to support this?</p>	<p>As part of the public consultation local disability organisations such as the Bracknell Users Group and Bracknell Action for the Physically Handicapped were consulted. No comments were received that specifically made reference to the disability issues discussed within the draft document. It is therefore considered that the guidance and technical specifications contained within the document is supported by the local community.</p>		
<p>11. a Age equality - Is there an impact? What kind of equality impact may there be? Is the impact positive or adverse or is there a potential for both? If the impact is neutral please give a reason.</p>	<p>Y X</p>	<p>N</p>	<p>The Streetscene SPD and its annex does specifically discuss some design measures to improve access for older people and children, including the use of tactile paving, colour contrasting, levels, surfaces, cambers, the design of street furniture and the possibilities of play within the street and designated play facilities.</p>
<p>11. b What evidence do you have to support this?</p>	<p>As part of the public consultation local organisations such as Age Concern and the Senior Citizen's Forum were approached for their views on the document. No comments were received that specifically made reference to issues relating to age and youth. It is therefore considered that the guidance and technical specifications contained within the document are considered to be supported by the local community.</p>		
<p>12. a Religion and belief equality - Is there an impact? What kind of equality impact may there be? Is the impact positive or adverse or is there a potential for both? If the impact is neutral please give a reason.</p>	<p>Y X</p>	<p>N</p>	<p>The implementation of the design standards contained within the SPD will affect all residents and not target specific groups. The Streetscene SPD and its annex will not cause adverse impact or discriminate against specific groups in the Council's workforce or the community and there may be some positive impacts which affect all residents, including people of specific religions or with specific beliefs.</p>
<p>12. b What evidence do you have to support this?</p>	<p>High quality design will make a positive contribution to the character of Bracknell Forest, ensure access for everyone and promote a sense of pride in the area.</p>		
<p>13. a Sexual orientation equality - Is there an impact? What kind of equality impact may there be? Is the impact positive or adverse or is there a potential for both? If the impact is neutral please give a reason.</p>	<p>Y X</p>	<p>N</p>	<p>The implementation of the design standards contained within the SPD will affect all residents and not target specific groups. The Streetscene SPD and its annex will not cause adverse impact or discriminate against specific groups in the Council's workforce or the community and there may be some positive impacts which affect all residents, regardless of sexuality.</p>
<p>13. b What evidence do you have to support this?</p>	<p>High quality design will make a positive contribution to the character of Bracknell Forest, ensure access for everyone and promote a sense of pride in the area.</p>		

14. Please give details of any other potential impacts on any other group (e.g. those on lower incomes/carers/ex-offenders) and on promoting good community relations.	None perceived – other than a general point that high quality design will make a positive contribution to the character of Bracknell Forest, ensure access for everyone and promote a sense of pride in the area.		
15. If an adverse/negative impact has been identified can it be justified on grounds of promoting equality of opportunity for one group or for any other reason?	N/A		
16. If there is any difference in the impact of the activity when considered for each of the equality groups listed in 8 – 14 above; how significant is the difference in terms of its nature and the number of people likely to be affected?	The impacts are considered to be positive on all groups in very general terms. However the document does discuss some specific design criteria in relation to improving access for all ages and disabilities.		
17. Could the impact constitute unlawful discrimination in relation to any of the Equality Duties?	Y	N X	
18. What further information or data is required to better understand the impact? Where and how can that information be obtained?	This is not needed.		
19. On the basis of sections 7 – 17 above is a full impact assessment required?	Y	N X	Not needed
20. If a full impact assessment is not required; what actions will you take to reduce or remove any potential differential/adverse impact, to further promote equality of opportunity through this activity or to obtain further information or data? Please complete the action plan in full, adding more rows as needed.			
Action	Timescale	Person Responsible	Milestone/Success Criteria
Monitoring of design standards and implementation on the ground	6 monthly	Ann Groves	Improved streets that are easy to use, navigate, are safe and accessible to all, providing a sense of pride in the local area
21. Which service, business or work plan will these actions be included in?	Environment, Culture and Communities Service Plan		
22. Have any current actions to address issues for any of the groups or examples of good practice been identified as part of the screening?	Not required.		
23. Chief Officers signature.	Signature:  Date: 17/3/11		
24. Which PMR will this screening be reported in?	Q4 ECC 2010/11		

When complete please send to abby.thomas@bracknell-forest.gov.uk for publication on the Council's website.