

# **WAVERLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

## **EXECUTIVE**

**8 FEBRUARY 2022**

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**Title:**

**Dunsfold Park Garden Village**  
**Supplementary Planning Document - Adoption**

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**Portfolio Holder:** Cllr L Townsend, Portfolio Holder for Planning and Economic Development (including Dunsfold Park)

**Head of Service:** Zac Ellwood, Planning and Economic Development

**Key decision:** Yes

**Access:** Public

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**1. Purpose and summary**

The purpose of this report is to seek the Executive's approval of the Dunsfold Park Garden Village Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) (included in Annexe 1), and that it is recommended to Full Council for formal adoption as a material planning consideration.

**2. Recommendation**

The Executive recommends to the Council that the Dunsfold Park Garden Village Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) be adopted.

**3. Reason for the recommendation**

The SPD provides further guidance about the Council's approach to the Dunsfold Park Garden Village, specifically the future masterplan and design of the new development to support the delivery of the new village based on garden community principles.

The SPD clearly defines what is required from new development on site and what the Council aspires to achieve on the site, building on the work undertaken to date. It will be instrumental when negotiating with the promoter, landowner and future developers as the site is brought forward. It is also expected that the production of this document will assist the preparation of planning submissions, manage expectations and support the earliest delivery of the village.

The Council cannot introduce new planning policy through a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), rather this SPD is intended to build on the existing adopted policies pertaining to the site, which fall within the statutory development

plan (namely SS7 and SS7A of the Waverley Local Plan Part 1 ‘Strategic Policies and Sites’ 2018).

This recommendation follows a four-week public consultation that has been undertaken in accordance with Regulation 13 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (“the Regulations”).

#### **4. Background**

Dunsfold Park has been through an extensive planning process. There is a strategic allocation, Policy SS7, for about 2,600 dwellings, within Local Plan Part 1 (LPP1) and a permitted hybrid scheme (known as the outline permission) for 1,800 dwellings. Other uses are covered by both the policy and application. Additionally, LPP1 also contains a specific planning policy (SS7A) giving a high level framework for design matters on the site.

Work on an evolving masterplan through the pre-application process had been progressing until late 2020. In 2021, Waverley was informed that the current owner (Trinity College Cambridge) was seeking to dispose of the site. The programme of disposal is ongoing with an expectation that a new owner be in place by the end of quarter one of 2022. Columbia Threadneedle Investments (CTI) have been identified as the preferred bidder.

Given the change in circumstance, it was deemed appropriate to produce an SPD. This will support the application of LPP1 policies, set out the clear expectations and vision for the site, considering its garden village status and give clear guidance around a masterplan framework. It will build on the work already undertaken within the outline planning permission and reflect the recent national design guidance set out in the National Model Design Code and the related guidance notes

Allies and Morrison LLP were commissioned to undertake the work.

#### **4.1 SPD content**

The SPD is intended to set a strategic, sustainable masterplan framework for the timely delivery of the garden village, amplifying the LPP1 policies, and agreed corporate vision for the site. It also adheres to the garden village principles. The masterplan framework is supported by a more detailed design code section that provides guidance to create an innovative, sustainable and high-quality place for future residents, visitors, employers and workers and the wider local community.

As well as working within the boundaries of existing planning policies, the SPD has considered the extensive planning history and ensures consistency with the parameter plans agreed as part of the outline planning permission. It builds upon the work undertaken on the evolving masterplan promoted (but not formally submitted) by Rutland/DAL on behalf of Trinity College Cambridge.

## **4.2 Consultation on the preparation of the SPD**

A full Consultation Statement (see Annexe 2) has been produced to support the SPD. It sets out the process from inception through to the completion of the formal public consultation.

Early stakeholder engagement was undertaken with various parties including the AONB Officer, Waverley specialists (in various services), Rutland/DAL (on behalf of Trinity College Cambridge), Dunsfold Advisory Group and SCC Highways amongst others. These discussions helped to shape the consultation document.

Waverley's Overview and Scrutiny Committee had the opportunity to comment on the draft SPD before the public consultation. Various issues were raised and have been addressed in the document put forward for adoption, these issues are documented in the Consultation Statement at Annexe 2.

## **4.3 Public consultation on the draft SPD**

In accordance with the Regulations, a four-week public consultation was undertaken. This ran from 22 November until 20 December 2021. The consultation included:

- Direct letters to adjacent residents and businesses (around 200 addresses) to inform them of the public consultation;
- A facilitated virtual workshop;
- Webinar and Q&A session;
- Four day exhibition held in Dunsfold, including summary boards, access to the documents (in print and electronically), access to the recorded presentation and ability to ask questions of officers and representatives;
- Recorded presentation and exhibition boards accessible on the Waverley website,
- Advisory Group meeting;
- Presentation and workshop at the Cranleigh Youth Council;
- Various press releases and social media updates.

In addition to the above a specific meeting with CTI was held to discuss the emerging SPD.

Whilst the consultation was targeted, anyone with an interest was welcome and able to participate.

In total, 42 responses were received. These were from a range of stakeholders including the statutory consultees (Natural England and Historic England – although the Environment Agency did not respond), key stakeholders, including local Parish Councils, representatives of the current owner, representatives of the preferred bidder (future owner) and other local organisations, and interested individuals (including local residents).

The Consultation Statement attached at Annexe 2 details the comments received and the officer's response to these. Where appropriate and deemed necessary, changes have been made to the SPD to address the comments received.

#### **4.4 Design Review**

Design South East (D:SE) has been involved in the Dunsfold Park Garden Village for some time, providing various design reviews to DAL throughout the evolution of the masterplan work. It has also delivered a number of master planning and design training events for Waverley and appointed representatives related to the Dunsfold project.

For this SPD, it was commissioned to undertake a series of design reviews at various stages. This has provided an independent review of the documentation to ensure the content will meet the vision for the site as set out in the Local Plan (as well as the garden community principles). An initial briefing session was held on 27 October 2021, with a full panel review being held during the formal public consultation period, to which the Advisory Group were invited. A final, post consultation, pre-adoption, follow-up session was held to consider the proposed changes to the SPD wording and content. The D:SE panel's comments are included within the Consultation Statement and have helped to shape the final document.

#### **4.5 Summary of key changes to SPD**

Following a review of the comments received, the following key changes have been made to the draft SPD:

- Amendments to document structure – design code and character area sections swapped and a new glossary added.
- Preparation of a simple statement of intent to summarise key assumptions in the document.
- Additional references in Part A to the broader planning policy background.
- Maintaining prominence of sustainability and clarifying which elements are aspirations which are requirements of future development.
- Inclusion of additional information on heritage and minor amendments to written guidance in Part B, in response to detailed comments.
- Use of 'must', 'should' and 'could' to reflect status of guidance in relation to policy and aspiration, particularly in the Design Code section. Additional minor amendments to illustrations and examples.
- Minor amendments to the character area guidance and provision of additional illustrative sketches.

#### **4.6 Environmental Assessment**

The Principal Environmental Assessment Officer at Surrey County Council was commissioned to undertake a report on the determination of the need for Environmental Assessment under Regulation 9 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans & Programmes Regulations 2004 (Statutory Instrument 2004 No.1633). The report sits at Annexe 3.

Following consultation on the proposed SPD no comments were received from any of the consultation bodies (Natural England, Environment Agency, Historic England) that would suggest that the SPD needs to be subject to SEA.

In addition to the above, a report on the determination of the need for assessment under the Conservation of Habitats & Species Regulation 2017 (as amended - HRA) was commissioned (see Annexe 4).

Following consultation on the proposed SPD no comments were received from Natural England that would suggest that the SPD needs to be subject to further HRA work prior to its adoption by the Borough Council. The conclusion of no likely significant effects therefore remains valid. It should, however, be noted that future planning submissions may, themselves, need to be subject to assessment against the provisions of the Habitats Regulations

## **5. Relationship to the Corporate Strategy and Service Plan**

The Dunsfold Park Garden Village SPD is directly related to the Corporate Strategy and will play an important role in supporting the successful delivery of the new settlement. It will also support the following:

- Local, open and participative governance – through the public consultation,
- A strong resilient local economy – through supporting appropriate growth at Dunsfold Park Business Park,
- Climate emergency and the environment – through embedding measures to support sustainable development and climate change mitigation within the document,
- Good quality housing for all income levels and age groups – this is a key requirement of the Section 106 agreement and tenure neutrality will be a key expectation,
- Effective strategic planning and development management to meet the needs of the community – through setting out a clear vision for the site and expectations on how that vision should be met,

The Dunsfold Park Garden Village is a major project for the Council. As such the SPD will support the timely delivery of the new settlement.

## **6. Implications of decision**

### **6.1 Resource (Finance, procurement, staffing, IT)**

Government grant of £280,000 has been receipted to date relating to Dunsfold Garden Village funding from Homes England. Currently £180,000 remains unspent on the balance sheet.

All costs relating to the Dunsfold SPD are expected to be fully funded from this grant.

## **6.2 Risk management**

Given the recent changes in ownership and uncertainty that has brought, it is deemed sensible to bring forward an SPD to support the discussions with the new developer and their partners, but to also give clarity to the community over the expectations for the development. The SPD supports the application of adopted policies within Local Plan Part 1 which are part of the statutory development plan.

## **6.3 Legal**

This supplementary planning document should build upon and provide advice and guidance on policies in the adopted Local Plan. As it will not form part of the development plan, it cannot introduce new planning policies into the development plan but will instead be treated as a material consideration in decision-making.

## **6.4 Equality, diversity and inclusion**

There are no direct equality, diversity or inclusion implications in this report.

## **6.5 Climate emergency declaration**

The ambitious expectations of Waverley Borough Council related to sustainable development and climate change mitigation are included, where relevant, within the SPD, recognising that the SPD itself cannot create new policy.

## **7. Consultation and engagement**

The SPD was presented to an Overview & Scrutiny committee in November 2021. The comments and observations have been considered and incorporated, wherever possible and appropriate to do so, in the updated final draft document.

The preparation of the SPD has been subject to public consultation. The issues raised as a result of that consultation and the officer's response are contained within the Consultation Statement attached at Annexe 2.

## **8. Other options considered**

Do nothing – in this option no SPD would be created and there would be reliance on pre-application discussions and existing planning policy to move the development forward. Whilst common on smaller sites, the very strategic nature of Dunsfold Park Garden Village is such that having a strong framework with public engagement at the outset will both accord with the garden community principles but also ensure that Waverley’s vision for the site is clearly defined.

## **9. Governance journey**

The draft SPD was presented to O&S on 3 November, followed by Executive on 9 November where it was agreed to submit the document for public consultation. If agreed by the Executive, the SPD will be recommended to Full Council for formal adoption at the meeting to be held on 22 February 2022

### **Annexes:**

**Annexe 1** – Final draft Dunsfold Park Dunsfold Park Garden Village SPD

**Annexe 2** – Consultation statement

**Annexe 3** - Report on the determination of the need for Environmental Assessment under Regulation 9 of the Environmental Assessment of Plans & Programmes Regulations 2004 (Statutory Instrument 2004 No.1633)

**Annexe 4** - Report on the determination of the need for assessment under the Conservation of Habitats & Species Regulation 2017 (as amended)

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### **Background Papers**

There are / are no background papers, as defined by Section 100D(5) of the Local Government Act 1972).

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### **CONTACT OFFICER:**

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Agreed and signed off by:

Legal Services: 27 January 2022

Head of Finance: 19 January 2022

Strategic Director: 26 January 2022

Portfolio Holder: 27 January 2022