

TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to:	Executive
Date of Meeting:	8 January 2020
Subject:	Cyber Central Garden Community – West Cheltenham Strategic Masterplan Supplementary Planning Document
Report of:	Head of Development Services
Corporate Lead:	Deputy Chief Executive
Lead Member:	Lead Member for Built Environment
Number of Appendices:	Two

Executive Summary:

This report seeks authority to consult on Cyber Central Garden Community Draft Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for a period of five weeks. It is recommended that consultation commences on the SPD on 13 January 2020.

The draft SPD has been subject to engagement with key stakeholders and the wider community of West Cheltenham through a series of face to face engagement sessions. The draft has been subject to technical review by specialist officers across Cheltenham Borough Council, Tewkesbury Borough Council and Gloucestershire County Council.

The SPD has been informed by the Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Joint Core Strategy (JCS), the emerging Local Industrial Strategy, Connecting Cheltenham Transport Strategy, applications for Local Green Space designations and Hesters Way Neighbourhood Plan, together with technical reports and assessment detailing constraints and opportunities for West Cheltenham.

This is the first formal stage in the preparation of the SPD. Once consultation has been completed, a full report on the consultation, together with any subsequent changes to the SPD, will be presented to Council. This is scheduled for 21st April 2020. The amended SPD will be presented to Council for approval, if approved the SPD will become a material consideration to the determination of future planning applications.

Recommendation:

That the Executive Committee:

- 1. Approves the Draft Cyber Central Garden Community Draft Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), at Appendix 1, for consultation in accordance with Regulation 13 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 for a period of five weeks.**
- 2. Approves the consultation arrangements set out in Appendix 2 of this report.**
- 3. Delegates authority to the Head of Development Services to make editorial changes to the draft SPD in terms of formatting, presentation and accuracy prior to publication for consultation purposes.**

Reasons for Recommendation:

Having an SPD in place for West Cheltenham will support the Council in exercising its responsibilities as a Local Planning Authority. An SPD, once approved, will help guide future decision making and will have material weight in decision making.

Resource Implications:

Resource implication on officer time to undertake the consultation, analyse the responses and make any changes appropriate before progressing the SPD towards adoption.

Legal Implications:

The preparation of an SPD is not a statutory requirement, but a decision for each local planning authority based upon demands for further information to assist in the delivery of sustainable development and they are not subject to independent examination.

An SPD cannot in itself establish land use, development management or site allocations policies, but can be used to provide further guidance for development on specific sites or on particular issues.

An SPD must contain a reasoned justification of the policies contained within it, must not conflict with the adopted development plan and must have regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

In preparing an SPD the Council must comply with its Statement of Community Involvement and must carry out formal public consultation for at least four weeks, accompanied by the provision of a Consultation Statement setting out who was consulted in the preparation of the SPD; a summary of the issues raised; and how those issues have been addressed.

Once adopted, the SPD would be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. A planning authority can adopt an SPD either as originally prepared or as modified to take account of any representations made in relation to the SPD or any other matter they think is relevant.

Risk Management Implications:

There is no statutory requirement to prepare SPDs. However, it is considered to be important that Tewkesbury Borough has appropriate planning policies to guide the development of the garden community to ensure that it supports the objectives of the Joint Core Strategy and comes forward as a high quality sustainable site that makes a positive contribution to the wider area.

Performance Management Follow-up:

Following the consultation the SPD will be subject to a further Council decision seeking the adoption of the SPD. Following adoption, the Council will monitor the effectiveness of the SPD as part of the planning and development process and will use the results to review policies and practices if necessary.

Environmental Implications:

Progressing with this stage of consultation will allow full public and stakeholder engagement on the master planning principles for the delivery of the Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Joint Core Strategy (JCS) allocation at West Cheltenham. The JCS was subject to a Sustainability Appraisal.

1.0 INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

- 1.1** The Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Joint Core Strategy (JCS) was adopted by the three JCS Councils December 2017. Three specific policies are relevant to this report, firstly Policy SA1 – Strategic Allocations, secondly Policy A7 - West Cheltenham and thirdly, Policy SD5 – Green Belt.
- 1.2** Policy SA1 is a delivery policy that sets the context of how the JCS strategic allocations will be delivered. It requires that development proposals should enable a comprehensive scheme to be delivered via a masterplan. The policy sets out expectations in policy terms of use of local green space, the planning of infrastructure and strategy for transport.
- 1.3** Policy A7 formally designates land at West Cheltenham for approximately 1,100 new homes and approximately 45 hectares of employment land to be focused on a cyber security hub. The policy provides detail within the context of Policy SA1 and Policy SD5 relating to comprehensive master planning, constraints and transport.
- 1.4** Policy SD5 details the JCS policy for green belt, this also includes land identified to meet longer term development needs and allocated as safeguarded land. Land at West Cheltenham immediately adjacent to land allocated for development by Policy A7 is safeguarded. The trigger for development on this area is through a review of the JCS. The policy sets out criteria for development proposals, should such land be released, in terms on integration, transport and infrastructure and not leading to piecemeal, isolated or inefficient use of land in this area.
- 1.5** In spring 2019 the local planning authorities of Cheltenham and Tewkesbury agreed to the commissioning of consultants to prepare a masterplan SPD for West Cheltenham. It was agreed jointly across the two Councils of Cheltenham and Tewkesbury that, in order to drive quality both in terms of physical buildings, but also good place making in terms of connectivity to existing communities, transport, green space, infrastructure and sustainability, the Councils needed to take a more directional role in the steering of delivery outcomes. Having an SPD in place will provide: further planning guidance to supplement JCS policy A7 and add value in the determination of future planning applications.
- 1.6** Six consultancy bids were submitted via Homes England Framework. Following assessment, including interview of three shortlisted bids, consultants Avison Young were appointed.
- 1.7** The draft SPD, the subject of this report, has been prepared under the provisions of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. It is important that the Council as local planning authority takes a lead in the planning of the major strategic allocation at West Cheltenham, by doing so it provides an opportunity for community and stakeholder engagement on the SPD before any decisions are made on this key aspect of delivery of the JCS.

2.0 GARDEN COMMUNITY

- 2.1** In November 2018 a joint bid by Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Borough Councils was made to the Garden Communities programme. The impetus to submit a bid was twofold, firstly concerns around pre application engagement with the site promoters at that time to deliver a successful comprehensive development that embedded the principles of sustainable and mixed communities as set out by the JCS, and secondly to drive the agenda of Cyber Central, building on this opportunity to drive exceptional quality and innovation.

2.2 Homes England supported the bid for Garden Communities and this status was awarded in June 2019. In providing Garden Community Status to the delivery of West Cheltenham, Homes England will be looking for clear demonstration against the principles set out in the bid, including:

- Diverse living options – varied affordable and flexible tenancies with the first 1000 homes being delivered by Cheltenham Borough Council.
- Connected – an accessible development that is physically, digitally and culturally integrated.
- A 24/7 campus – a dynamic community that integrates a diverse mixture of uses and people.
- Inclusive – a transformational development that creates strong communities.
- Healthy – a green and biodiverse development that encourages physical and mental wellbeing.
- Environmentally innovative – an ecologically friendly development that is restorative to its natural surroundings.
- A smart ecosystem – a connected community that is digitally, environmentally and socially intelligent.
- Intense & tranquil – a vibrant and thriving community within a unique landscape setting.
- A world class campus – a collaborative community that brings together leading cyber businesses and innovators alongside academic facilities dedicated to cyber and digital technologies.

2.3 In developing this SPD, taking fully into account the principles of Garden Communities we have a unique opportunity to deliver a national exemplar, planning for a pioneering new community that combines world class cyber business and academic facilities, exemplar housing and state of the art amenity and leisure facilities in a highly accessible and environmentally sustainable development. In drafting this SPD Homes England has been fully engaged.

3.0 CONSULTATION AND FEEDBACK

3.1 Engagement with the local community and wider stakeholders has been an integral part of the masterplanning process, this has included;

- Internal officer working group - comprising officers from across Cheltenham Borough Council, Tewkesbury Borough Council and Gloucestershire County Council with a remit to consider, advise and inform the emerging SPD. This group has fed into the drafting of the SPD.
- Engagement with Homes England technical specialists' team.
- Engagement with stakeholders including NHS, County Education, Gloucestershire Highways, Wildlife and Wetlands Trust, GCHQ, infrastructure providers. Informal engagement has taken place together with an evening workshop on 3 September 2019. 32 people attended the workshop representing the following groups:

BAE Systems, Bamboo Technology Group, Boddington Parish Council, Cheltenham Borough Homes, Cheltenham churches, Cheltenham Borough Council, Church of England, First LEP, Gloucestershire County Council, Gloucester Local Nature Partnership, Hester's Way Neighbourhood Plan Forum, Hester's Way Partnership, local residents, Police, Stagecoach West, Swindon Parish Council, Tewkesbury Borough Council, Uckington Parish Council,

University of Gloucestershire and Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust.

- Four community drop in events were held at the following times and locations;
 - 11 September, 12:30-3pm at Hester's Way Community Centre.
 - 11 September, 3:30-5:30pm at Springbank Community Centre.
 - 19 September, 1-3:30pm at Tewkesbury-Cheltenham West Community Fire Station.
 - 19 September, 4:30-7:30pm at Gloucestershire College.

The community drop in events provided the opportunity for local residents to give their thoughts and ideas about the area, and the key opportunities as the masterplan was developed. A large map of the area was tabled alongside information boards introducing the project and key diagrams showing our initial ideas. 210 people attended across the four events. Whilst many wider stakeholders and local groups recognise the benefits of Cyber Central and the opportunities it brings for existing and new residents, residents at engagement sessions nearest to the site raised localised issues relating to boundaries, loss of green space and views, and regarding trees and hedgerows.

3.2 The feedback from the engagement to date has been invaluable in shaping the masterplanning process and has resulted in redrafting of the SPD in a number of key areas. From the feedback received during this stage of engagement, we have amended the SPD in the following ways:

- Emphasis on green spaces close to the existing community - the plan has been altered following drop-in events with local residents who were supportive of a new park close to the Springbank neighbourhood.
- Impact of traffic and car parking - aiming for the new development to have enough car parking to serve the employment and residential areas. Sustainable transport modes including improved bus networks and cycle networks will also contribute to improving access and reducing the reliance on the private car.
- Spreading the impact of employment - although the focus for the employment area will be to the south of the SPD area, close to GCHQ, conversations have highlighted the opportunity to focus some employment space with good access to the new road to J10 of the M5.
- Integration - comments have strengthened the focus on delivering links and shared facilities for new and existing residents.
- Response to climate change emergency – opportunity to be innovative.

4.0 CONSULTATION ON DRAFT SPD

4.1 Consultation on this SPD will be undertaken collaboratively by Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Borough Councils and facilitated by the Avison Young consultancy team under the provisions of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

4.2 Consultation on the SPD will be undertaken in accordance with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). The SCI is available to view on the Council's website: https://tewkesburyborough-my.sharepoint.com/:b/g/personal/website_tewkesburyborough_onmicrosoft_com/EeWUSrunIGBFugGFm8R_kcsBoq-7yhabFJkPprUYmknZg?e=L8eedl

4.3 Consultation will take place for five weeks beginning on 13 January 2020 and closing at 5pm 17 February 2020. The minimum period for consultation as set by The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 is four weeks.

- 4.4** To aid consultation an online community platform is being created by consultancy Commonplace. This will supplement engagement via our more traditional routes of Council websites, general notifications and face to face engagement. Using this platform will help the Councils reach those who do not engage through the more traditional channels to help us balance our understanding of community needs and views on the draft SPD. Using this platform will give the Councils real time community feedback, allowing us to focus our resources on amendments needed to the SPD.
- 4.5** The following list provides the range of consultation methods that will be utilised;
- Commonplace online community platform.
 - Letters/e-mails to all interested parties via CBC/TBC online database, including all Councillors and relevant Parish Councils.
 - Leaflet drop to locality directly impacted by the area of the SPD.
 - E-mails to Gloucestershire Voluntary and Community Sector.
 - Press releases.
 - CBC/TBC website.
 - CBC/TBC social media accounts (Facebook and Twitter).
 - Posters.
 - Public exhibitions.
 - Deposit locations for hard copies at council offices, community centres and libraries.
- 4.6** Any person may make representations on the SPD. Any such representations must be received by the local planning authority by the date specified. A consultation statement is provided at Appendix 2 of this report.
- 4.7** Technical appendices will be prepared to support the SPD for the purposes of consultations including analysis of site context and constraints and a full summary of the early engagement work with stakeholders and the wider community.

5.0 RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICIES/STRATEGIES

- 5.1** Joint Core Strategy (2011-2031).
Emerging Tewkesbury Borough Plan (2011-2031).

6.0 RELEVANT GOVERNMENT POLICIES

- 6.1** National Planning Policy Framework.
National Planning Practice Guidance.

7.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (Human/Property)

- 7.1** Resource implication on officer time to undertake the consultation, analyse the responses and make any changes appropriate before progressing the SPD towards adoption.

8.0 SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS (Social / Community Safety/ Cultural / Economic / Environment)

8.1 The preparation of the SPD provides the opportunity to guide, encourage and improve development within the Strategic Allocation that could have a positive impact in terms of helping to bring forward more sustainable forms of development.

9.0 IMPACT UPON (Value For Money / Equalities / E-Government / Human Rights / Health And Safety)

9.1 None.

10.0 RELATED DECISIONS AND ANY OTHER RELEVANT FACTS

10.1 None.

Background Papers: None.

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Appendices:

- 1 – Draft Cyber Central Garden Community Supplementary Planning Document.
- 2 – Consultation Statement.