

EXETER CITY COUNCIL**SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - ECONOMY
6 SEPTEMBER 2012****PLANNING MEMBER WORKING GROUP
18 SEPTEMBER 2012****EXECUTIVE
2 OCTOBER 2012****SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT ON SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT****1 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 This report is to enable Members to approve a draft Supplementary Planning Document on sustainable transport for public consultation.

2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Council is in the process of preparing a Local Development Framework (LDF) which, once complete, will supersede the Exeter Local Plan First Review, adopted in 2005. The LDF comprises a suite of documents, divided into:-
- Development Plan Documents (DPDs) such as the Core Strategy, adopted in February 2012, which contains strategic policies, and the Site Allocations and Development Management DPD which is currently published in draft for consultation; and
 - Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) which are not subject to independent examination but will have full public consultation, an example being the Residential Design SPD adopted in September 2010.
- 2.2 The Council's Local Development Scheme sets out its proposals in relation to other elements of the LDF. These include an SPD to "clarify and amplify policy relating to the provision of sustainable transport". A draft has been prepared following initial consultation within the Council and Devon County Council, and forms Appendix 1 to this report.

3 THE DRAFT SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT SPD

- 3.1 The new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) says that local authorities should use SPDs where they can help applicants make successful planning applications or aid infrastructure delivery¹, and this SPD is designed to do both. From Chapter 4 onwards, it takes the form of a practice manual, setting out the type of development to which each chapter applies and the relevant policies in the Local Plan or elsewhere in the LDF. It is designed so that the earlier chapters apply to all development including the smallest applications, whereas later chapters apply to progressively larger schemes. This is explained in Table 1 on Page 3, and means that applicants with minor proposals can stop reading at the appropriate point. Each

¹ At paragraph 153

chapter also contains, where relevant, a checklist for applicants, and conditions and section 106 obligations which are likely to apply.

- 3.2 While it is not practical to summarise the whole document in this report, the following paragraphs highlight some points of particular interest.
- 3.3 **Chapter 4 - Access and facilities for people with disabilities** precedes the other policy chapters, because it is relevant in part to nearly all development proposals, however small. It summarises a number of transport and access needs relevant to people with a variety of disabilities, some of which are expanded upon in subsequent chapters.
- 3.4 **Chapter 5 - Parking and other facilities for cyclists** takes the opportunity to update the cycle parking standards contained in Schedule 2 of the Local Plan. Surveys have been undertaken at workplaces (through staff bicycle user groups) and shops and other public places (using Sustrans volunteers) to check the adequacy of actual provision. People on the Wavelength panel have been asked about the adequacy of cycle parking where they live and work, and elsewhere. The standards have also been compared with those of other authorities.
- 3.5 **Chapter 6 - Car parking** contains a rationale for the inclusion of this subject in an SPD on sustainable transport. This includes the fact that the NPPF does not advocate maximum standards for parking, but permits the setting of local standards based on factors including the need to reduce the use of high-emission vehicles, local car ownership levels, and the availability of public transport². The SPD restates the parking standards from the Local Plan, but as indicative rather than maximum standards, because it was considered that to omit parking standards altogether would be unhelpful to applicants.
- 3.6 **Chapter 7 - Connections between the site and its surroundings** deals with proposals that require existing infrastructure to be altered, for example to form or close an access. It points out that providing more than one access to a site for pedestrians and cyclists can encourage use of those modes by reducing travel distances.
- 3.7 **Chapter 8 - Travel plans and travel packs** has been prepared in close consultation with Devon County Council, who have specific requirements related to the size and impact of developments.
- 3.8 **Chapter 9 – Off-site improvements** applies to developments whose impact is such that they are required to make a financial contribution towards improving transport infrastructure or services. This complements Core Strategy policy CP18 and the Planning Obligations SPD in relation to section 106 contributions, but also anticipates the adoption of a Community Infrastructure Levy in Exeter.
- 3.9 **Chapter 10 – On-site movement networks** applies to developments that are large enough to have roads and/or paths within the site. It aims to ensure that layouts cater not only for cars, but provide safe and convenient routes for pedestrians and cyclists, as well as roads capable of accommodating buses where appropriate.

² See NPPF paragraph 39

- 3.10 **Chapter 11 – Car clubs** is intended to supersede the current Supplementary Planning Guidance on the subject, updating the financial and other details, and extending the concept from car-free city centre sites to larger development areas where a car club might form part of a package of sustainable travel measures.
- 3.11 **Chapter 12 – Significant transport proposals** includes for completeness a summary of such projects, including the Devon Metro package of rail improvements and plans for the bus, road and park and ride networks.

4 NEXT STEPS

- 4.1 It has been necessary to screen the SPD to determine whether it needs to be subject to a Strategic Environmental Assessment. It is considered that it does not, principally because it amplifies higher level policies rather than itself creating a policy framework, and this preliminary view has been communicated to the statutory consultees, namely English Heritage, the Environment Agency, and Natural England. Any comments from those consultees will be reported verbally at the meeting.
- 4.2 If approved by Executive, the SPD will be made available to the public and interested organisations for at least four weeks, by way of consultation. Representations received during that period will be considered and a further report presented to Planning Member Working Group and Executive.

5 RECOMMENDED

- 5.1 That Scrutiny Committee – Economy and Planning Member Working Group support the draft Sustainable Transport SPD.
- 5.2 That Executive approve the draft Sustainable Transport SPD for public consultation.

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Local Government Act 1972 (as amended)
Background papers used in compiling this report:-
Screening for Strategic Environmental Assessment
Cycle parking survey material