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| 29 March 2017 | | ITEM: 11 |
| Full Council | | |
| Thurrock Design Guide – Draft Residential Alterations and Extensions Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) | | |
| Wards and communities affected: All | Key Decision: Key | |
| Report of: Councillor Mark Coxshall – Cabinet Member for Regeneration | | |
| Accountable Head of Service: Andy Millard – Head of Planning and Growth | | |
| Accountable Director: Steve Cox – Corporate Director of Environment and Place | | |
| This report is Public | | |

Executive Summary

The Draft Residential Alterations and Extensions Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is the first in a series of daughter documents being produced by the Council to supplement the newly adopted Thurrock Design Guide. The purpose of the Draft Residential Alterations and Extensions SPD is to provide detailed guidance to planning officers, applicants and agents on how to appropriately alter and extend individual residential dwellings in Thurrock.

In developing the Draft Residential Alterations and Extensions SPD the Planning service has undertaken in-depth research, including an assessment of the Council's existing guidance, a comparative study of national publications and best practice in the UK, and a series of internal and external workshops with both officers in Development Management and industry experts to ensure that the guidance is fit for purpose and future-proof.

In accordance with the relevant regulations, SPDs must be subject to a period of public consultation before they can be formally adopted by the Local Planning Authority.

1. Recommendation

1.1 To approve the Thurrock Design Guide: Draft Residential Alterations and Extensions Supplementary Planning Document (Appendix A) for public consultation.

2. Introduction and Background

2.1 Thurrock's character has formed and evolved over centuries as agriculture, industry and the river have shaped the landscape, the make-up of its people

and the quality of life. The Borough has one of, if not the largest and most ambitious, growth programmes in the country with over £6bn of investment driving the creation of 26,000 new jobs and 20,000 new homes adding to the existing 66,000 households over the next 20 years. With that, the need to strengthen the identity of Thurrock has never been greater.

- 2.2 The Council's Planning Service receives over 850 applications a year for residential alterations and extensions. Even though these residential alterations and extensions are relatively small in scale they form a cumulative force in shaping how our towns and landscapes look and feel. Therefore, careful management of these projects is as important in their own right as other larger new developments in the Borough.
- 2.3 The Design Guide for Residential Alterations and Extensions is a daughter document of Thurrock Design Guide (Adopted by Cabinet in March 2017). The document focuses on balancing the applicants' needs, rights of neighbours and what is best for the wider community and will play a critical role in reinforcing the importance of place and improving the design quality of all residential alterations and extensions that require Planning Permission. The proposed guide would also benefit homeowners wishing to alter and/or extend their property using permitted development rights as it provides clear and concise advice on how to make the best out of their alteration/extension.
- 2.4 The Design Guide for Residential Alterations and Extensions is being prepared as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). SPDs provide additional detail and guidance to support policies and proposals in an adopted Local Plan. Although SPDs do not have the same weight or status as policies in a Local Plan, they can still form a material consideration' in determining planning applications.

3. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options

- 3.1 The importance of achieving good design and the benefits this can bring in delivering sustainable communities, is clearly set out in National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). Although the adopted 'Core Strategy' Local Plan has policies relating to design, these need the technical and executive details to be able to inform development proposals in a meaningful way. The purpose of Residential Alterations and Extensions SPD is to provide specific guidance to officers, applicants and agents on how to appropriately alter and extend individual residential dwellings in Thurrock. It is building on the broad principles and place-typologies set up in the adopted Thurrock Design Guide SPD with an intention to address local issues and context.
- 3.2 In developing the Draft Residential Alterations and Extensions SPD the Planning service has undertaken in-depth research including an assessment of the Council's existing guidance, a comparative study of national publications and best practice in the UK, and a series of internal and external workshops with both officers in Development Management and industry experts to ensure that the guidance is fit for purpose and future-proof.

- 3.3 Once adopted, the standards and guidance contained within this document will replace the content in the Thurrock Borough Local Plan Annex adopted in September 1997 that provided guidance on residential alterations and extensions.

Consultation on the Draft Residential Alterations and Extensions SPD

- 3.4 It is proposed that a 6-week public consultation on the draft document will take place in April. During the consultation period the draft document will be made available to view in the Civic Offices and borough's libraries and to download on the Council's website. This approach is in accordance with the Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement.
- 3.5 In addition to the statutory requirements, the Council will also seek to publicise the consultation on the draft document by writing to members of the Local Plan Consultee Database and using local papers and social media to advertise the consultation.
- 3.6 The Council also intend to hold a series of workshops with key stakeholders and members of the community to advise them of the contents of the document and invite them to make comments. Other informal consultation activities with internal and external stakeholders may also take place during the consultation period.

4. Reasons for Recommendation

Thurrock Design Guide: Draft Residential Alterations and Extensions SPD

- 4.1 Thurrock Borough Local Plan Annex (adopted in September 1997) is currently used by officers when assessing planning applications for residential alterations and extensions. All relevant guidance in the September 1997 Annex have been carefully reviewed by the officers and the research team. This process concluded that a full update is needed to better comply with the current national policies, industry standards and design approaches.
- 4.2 Consultation on the draft document will enable key stakeholders and the local community with the opportunity to influence the document ahead of it being adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document to the Core Strategy and Policies for the Management of Development Local Plan.

5. Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)

- 5.1 The Draft Residential Alterations and Extensions SPD will be subject to extensive public consultation.

6. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact

6.1 The Design Guide SPD and subsequent daughter documents including the Draft Residential Alterations and Extensions SPD will help the Council to substantially raise the quality of new developments coming forward in the borough and strengthen corporate policies and priorities particularly in place-making, health and well-being improvement, land promotion and environment protection.

7. Implications

7.1 Financial

Implications verified by: **Laura Last**
Management Accountant

The costs associated with the consultation of the Draft Residential Alterations and Extensions SPD will be met from within the existing Local Plan budget.

7.2 Legal

Implications verified by: **Vivien Williams**
Planning & Regeneration Solicitor

The proposed consultation on the Draft Residential Alterations and Extensions SPD is in accordance with the relevant regulations and the Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement. The guidance within the document supplements adopted policies within the Council's Core Strategy as such it has not been subject to a separate Sustainability Appraisal.

7.3 Diversity and Equality

Implications verified by: **Natalie Warren**
Community Development and Equalities Manager

The Draft Residential Alterations and Extensions SPD will be subject to a Community and Equality Impact assessment to assess the borough-wide equality improvements through better design solutions. The CEIA will also allow for possible negative impacts to be assessed and mitigated.

7.4 Other implications (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder)

The Design Guide SPD and subsequent daughter documents including the Draft Residential Alterations and Extensions SPD set out Council's requirements regarding assessing the context of a site and the key design principles and objectives for safe, healthy and sustainable developments.

8. **Background papers used in preparing the report** (including their location on the Council's website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

- Annexe of Thurrock Local Plan (1997) - <https://www.thurrock.gov.uk/borough-local-plan/thurrock-borough-local-plan>
- Thurrock Design Guide SPD - <https://www.thurrock.gov.uk/supplementary-planning-documents/supplementary-planning-documents>
- The adopted Core Strategy and Policies for Management of Development (2011) - https://www.thurrock.gov.uk/sites/default/files/assets/documents/core_strategy_adopted_20111221_full.pdf

9. **Appendices to the report**

Appendix A – Thurrock Design Guide – Draft Residential Alterations and Extensions SPD

Report Author

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