

ENVIRONMENT AND ATTRACTIVE CITY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

18 June 2010

HOUSEHOLD ALTERATIONS AND EXTENSIONS SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT

REPORT OF THE DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Strategic Priorities: Attractive and Inclusive City, Prosperous City

1.0 Purpose of report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise Committee of the responses received following public consultation on the draft Household Alterations and Extensions Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) and to seek Committee's comments on the revised SPD.
- 1.2 The Committee's comments will be reported to Cabinet on 21st July 2010 when agreement will be sought to approve the draft Household Alterations and Extensions Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) as a Supplementary Planning Document.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 At its meeting on 7th October 2009, Cabinet approved the draft Household Alterations and Extensions SPD for the purposes of public consultation.
- 2.2 This SPD sets out detailed design guidance on alterations and extensions to existing residential properties. It is intended to help achieve consistency in determining planning applications, whilst allowing for local characteristics, good design and the effect of previous decisions to be taken into account.
- 2.3 The document aims to encourage good design by concentrating on issues of scale, height, massing, layout and parking. The guidance identifies the main design principles and illustrates with examples the issues that should be considered. Wherever possible, this guidance document sets out certain standards and acceptable dimensions to supplement the relevant policies contained within the draft Core Strategy of the Local Development Framework (LDF) and other Development Plan Documents. In particular the guidance will amplify policy B2A (Sustainable Urban Design) in UDP Alteration No. 2 and saved UDP policy B2.
- 2.4 Furthermore the SPD also serves to provide guidance for the public to interpret the allowances and restrictions of householder development rights permitted by the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Amendment) (No. 2) (England) Order.

2.5 The document has been taken forward through the statutory planning process in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 (as amended).

3.0 Consultations on the draft Household Alterations and Extensions document.

3.1 The draft Household Alterations and Extensions SPD was subject of public consultation between 12th March and 22nd April 2010.

3.2 During this period all information relating to the consultation, including the draft Household Alterations and Extensions SPD was available online at www.sunderland.gov.uk/householdalterations.

3.3 A Public Notice (Local Advertisement) of the consultation was published in the Sunderland Echo prior to the commencement of the statutory consultation period. A letter was sent to bodies specified by the regulations and key stakeholders with either a CD containing the relevant documents or a link to the council's website from which a copy of the updated SPD could be obtained. Furthermore an exhibition detailing the contents of the document and copies of the document were also made available during normal opening times at Sunderland Civic Centre.

4.0 Consultation responses and changes to the Household Alterations and Extensions SPD

4.1 It has been identified through the consultation process that concern exists in relation to three issues in particular. These issues and the Council's response are set out below.

4.1 Flexibility of guidance

The flexibility of the guidance contained within the Household Alterations and Extensions SPD was questioned by a number of respondents. Concern was raised that guidance was often too rigid and allowed little flexibility for innovative design solutions.

4.2 Council response

Following receipt of these responses, a session was held with Development Control planning officers to explore options for revising policies to provide a more flexible approach. A number of changes have been made to the guidance to provide this flexibility and where appropriate it is acknowledged that all cases will be considered on their individual merits.

4.3 Design advice relating to dormer extensions to Sunderland cottages

Terraced Sunderland cottage properties are unique to Sunderland and as such the SPD provides specific guidance for the alterations and extensions to these properties. Whilst all respondents welcomed the incorporation of guidance relating to the development of these traditional properties, there were concerns the guidance would be confusing for members of the public to interpret.

4.4 Council response
This section of the SPD guidance and the supporting images/diagrams has been subject to substantial review, in order to make the guidance more transparent and easier to understand.

4.5 Flood Risk, Nature Conservation and Sustainability
Concerns were raised regarding the content and quality of information presented within the draft SPD relating to Flood Risk, nature conservation and sustainability. Particular concerns were raised with regard to alterations and extensions not requiring planning consent and the need to complete additional checks for flood risk zones or utility services.

4.6 Council response
Relevant sections of the SPD have been amended in light of the comments received to provide potential developers specific guidance relating to these additional considerations.

4.7 All representations received, and the changes made the SPD as a consequence, are set out in **Appendix 1**.

4.8 The draft Household Alterations and Extensions SPD can be found in full in **Appendix 2**.

5.0 Recommendation

5.1 Committee is recommended to consider the amended draft Household Alterations and Extensions Supplementary Planning Document and refer its comments to cabinet for consideration.

6.0 List of appendices

Appendix 1: Draft Household Alterations and Extensions Supplementary Planning Document public consultation - schedule of representations and City Council responses

Appendix 2: Draft Household Alterations and Extensions Supplementary Planning Document

7.0 Background Papers

- Household Alterations and Extensions (Supplementary Planning Document) (2010)
- Household Alterations and Extensions Supplementary Planning Document: Sustainability Appraisal/ Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Report

- Household Alterations and Extensions Supplementary Planning Document: Screening for an Appropriate Assessment