

Meeting:	Strategic Planning Advisory Panel
Date:	14 th February 2006
Subject:	Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)
Responsible Officer:	Group Manager – Planning and Development
Contact Officer:	Daniel Wells
Portfolio Holder:	Planning, Development and Housing
Key Decision:	No
Status:	Public

Section 1: Summary

Decision Required

The Panel is asked to: -

- (i) Note the content of this report, and;
- (ii) Subject to the views of the Panel, recommend to Cabinet that the draft Affordable Housing SPD be placed on four-week formal statutory public consultation from 24th February 2006.

Reason for report

The policies relating to Affordable Housing Provision (H5) and Affordable Housing Target (H6) in the adopted Harrow Unitary Development Plan (HUDP) are key policies in the Plan. As with the policy in the previous HUDP, the production of supplementary guidance is considered important in ensuring that the implementation of the policy is effective. A Supplementary Planning Document is thus being prepared, and a timetable for its production was included in the Local Development Scheme in June 2005. The purpose of this report is to inform members of the progress made in respect of this SPD and its accompanying Sustainability Appraisal report (SA) and to secure endorsement to its publication for statutory consultation.

Benefits

To ensure that the Council's objectives in applying affordable housing policies H5 and H6 in the adopted HUDP are achieved.

Cost of Proposals

The cost of producing the SPD and associated SA will be met within the approved planning departmental budget.

Risks

Delay in meeting the Local Development Scheme (LDS) timetable milestones may also lead to a reduction in the Planning Delivery Grant (PDG).

Implications if recommendations rejected

Failure to provide supplementary planning guidance to developers may prejudice achievement of the Council's objectives in securing affordable housing as provided for in policies H5 and H6 in the adopted HUDP. This will also lead to a failure to meet the approved LDS timetable.

Section 2: Report

2.1 Brief History and Options considered

The policies in the adopted HUDP relating to affordable housing were developed within the context of the emerging London Plan. In preparing the Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document to provide helpful information to landowners, developers and Registered Social Landlords, it is essential to make reference to other recent published and draft guidance produced by the government and the Mayor. These include the Consultation paper on the new Planning Policy Statement 3 (PPS 3), the Mayor's Housing Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG), the 2004 London Housing Capacity Study and the draft Alterations to London Plan Housing Provision Targets. The performance of the policies was included in the Annual Monitoring Report 2005.

Due consideration has been given to several options on how to develop affordable housing policy in Harrow. The LDS agreed by Cabinet identified production of an Affordable Housing SPD as being the most appropriate option in Harrow.

Consultation on the SPD

A letter was sent out on 11 August 2005 to a total of 56 developers, Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) and other people of whom it was considered might be interested in pre-production consultation for the Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). The letter invited the recipients to suggest any particular areas they would like the SPD to cover, and recommend how consultation should be carried out. It also asked for expressions of interest for participating in a possible working group to discuss the development of the SPD. There were a total of twelve responses with nine expressions of interest in a working group.

A workshop meeting was held on 16 November 2005. Developers and Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) active in the Borough were invited to attend.

The following people attended the workshop:

Name	Organisation
John Stuart	Metropolitan HP
Jo Morris	Catalyst Housing Group
Richard Celand	Paradigm Housing Group
Graham Nickson	John Grooms Housing Association
Angela Cook	John Grooms Housing Association
Penny Halliday	Genesis Housing Group
Natalie Rose	Network Housing Group
Richard D'Cruz	ASRA GLA HA
Kumar Sivakumarau	Warden Housing
Karen Coe	Dominion HG
Martin Brimm	Pioneer P.S. (on behalf of George Wimpey & Laing)
Daniel Wells	Harrow Council, Forward Planning
Alison Pegg	Harrow Council, Housing and Enabling
Rebecca Caprara	Harrow Council, Housing and Enabling
Elaine Slowe	Harrow Council, Housing and Enabling

Staff carried out presentations summarising the intended topic areas of the SPD and the main policies that were expected to be incorporated. The feedback gathered from the ensuing discussions was recorded and considered throughout the drafting of the SPD.

The Affordable Housing SPD has been developed in close consultation with Housing Enabling, Development Control and Legal Services staff. Representatives of these departments have been present for a series of Project Steering Group meetings, and the Group's member's have all had the opportunity to consider the attached draft before it is presented to SPAP.

Sustainability Appraisal

All documents produced within the Local Development Framework (LDF) are subject to a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) to inform decision-making by providing information on possible implications of policies, proposals and guidance in terms of social, environmental and economic factors. The SA is designed to incorporate the requirements of the SEA Directive 2001/42/EC. Work on the SA for the whole LDF process has been undertaken in order to ensure that all considerations are integrated into all of the stages of the plan-making process, including SPDs. The SA report which has been prepared to go with the Affordable Housing SPD therefore drew on this work and developed it as far as is relevant to the document.

Consultation on the Sustainability Appraisal

An Affordable Housing Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report was produced for consultation in November 2005. It was subject to a six-week consultation period in which the four statutory consultees English Nature, English Heritage, The Countryside Agency and the Environment Agency were invited to comment on the SA as it had been developed at that stage. The main purpose of this was to establish that the Council had 'scoped' the breadth of documents and policies that have relevance to the topic area, to gain approval of our SA process and to invite any early comments for the SPD or SA process. The Council received comments from English Heritage, which have been considered in the production of the SPD and SA.

The draft SA may be subject to further improvement following formal public consultation.

Documents Attached

The draft Affordable Housing SPD is attached as Appendix 1 and the draft Sustainability Appraisal as Appendix 2.

Next stages

Having considered the responses and agreed any necessary changes, the draft Affordable Housing SPD and Sustainability Appraisal Report will now be subject to a statutory period of public consultation. It is open to the Council to choose a period from a minimum of 4 weeks, up to a maximum of 6 weeks. Because of the requirement that no documents with a potential political bearing should be consulted upon during pre-election period beginning on 24 March 2006, officers recommend that a 4-week consultation period begin on Friday 24 February 2006. This would allow the SPD to avoid any slippage from the timetable set in the LDS.

2.2 Options considered

Due consideration has been given to several options. However, the LDS agreed by Cabinet on 23rd June 2005 identified production of an SPD as being the most appropriate option in Harrow.

2.3 Consultation

The stages for producing the SPD, as set down in the approved LDS, have followed the appropriate procedures, including the means of engagement set down in the submission Statement of Community Involvement (SCI).

2.4 Financial Implications

Costs are contained within the approved Departmental budget.

2.5 Legal Implications

The process of preparing and adopting statutory SPD is governed by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004. The Council must therefore have regard thereto and comply with the requirements thereof.

2.6 Equalities Impact

Both the SPD and SA promote equality of opportunity and social inclusion.

Section 3: Supporting Information/Background Documents

Appendix 1 - Affordable Housing SPD

Appendix 2 - draft Sustainability Appraisal

Background Documents:

1. Sustainability Appraisal of Regional Spatial Strategies and Local Development Documents, ODPM, November 2005
2. Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development
3. Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing
4. The London Plan (Spatial Development Strategy for Greater London), Mayor of London, February 2004.
5. Housing - The London Plan Supplementary Planning Guidance, Mayor of London, November 2005

Any person wishing to inspect the background papers should telephone 020 8424 1460