

Northumberland Local Plan

Highways and Transportation Design and Delivery Guidance Supplementary Planning Document Scoping Document

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1. Introduction

1.1. About this consultation document

- 1.1.1. The Council is going to prepare a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) to provide guidance on the design, layout and delivery of highways and transportation related infrastructure and features associated with new development in Northumberland. The Highways and Transportation Design and Delivery SPD will provide further detail on the planning policies that relate to the design of highways and transportation in the emerging Northumberland Local Plan.
- 1.1.2. This consultation document sets out the Council's initial views on the scope and content of the proposed SPD and is seeking feedback prior to preparing a draft SPD for consultation. In particular the Council is seeking views from individuals and organisations who are involved in the delivery and building of new residential development in Northumberland.

1.2. How to get involved

- 1.2.1. The Council is seeking your comments at this stage in order to consider what level of guidance should be contained in the Highways and Transportation Design and Delivery SPD. Specific consultation questions have been included within this document to identify the issues that the Council would particularly welcome views on.
- 1.2.2. Consultation on this scoping document is taking place over a six week period between 30 January 2019 and 13 March 2019.
- 1.2.3. Comments in response to the consultation document can be submitted online or by returning a response form by email or by post. The Council is encouraging people to submit their comments online but you may wish to submit comments by completing a response form, which is available from libraries, customer information centres and County Hall or can be downloaded from the Council's website at www.northumberland.gov.uk/localplan. Details of how to respond to the consultation using these methods is provided below:
- 1.2.4. Online: Comments can be submitted via the consultation website at www.northumberland.gov.uk/localplan;
- 1.2.5. Email: planningstrategy@northumberland.gov.uk
- 1.2.6. Post: Planning Policy, Northumberland County Council, County Hall, Morpeth, Northumberland, NE61 2EF.

1.2.7. All comments must be received by **5pm on Wednesday 13 March 2019**.

1.3. What is a Supplementary Planning Document?

- 1.3.1. The main purpose of an SPD is to add further detail to specific policies contained within the Development Plan. They do not set or introduce new policy but provide guidance on the interpretation and implementation of the policies. An SPD may address a particular theme, such as transport and highway design, or it may provide guidance on the development of a specific site or area.
- 1.3.2. SPDs are prepared by the Council in consultation with the community but are not subject to independent examination in the way that a Development Plan document, such as the Local Plan or a Neighbourhood Plan, would be. The regulatory framework for adopting an SPD is set out in the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.
- 1.3.3. Once adopted, the contents of a SPD are a material consideration when making decisions on planning applications.

2. Policy context

2.1. The National Planning Policy Framework

- 2.1.1. The role of planning in ‘fostering a well-designed and safe built environment’ is enshrined within the objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2018) for achieving sustainable development¹. The NPPF identifies high quality buildings and places to be a fundamental aspect of what the planning process should deliver.
- 2.1.2. Patterns of movement, streets, parking and other transport considerations are considered to be ‘integral to the design of schemes and contribute to making high quality places’².
- 2.1.3. Setting clear design expectations is placed at the centre of the ‘achieving well-designed places’ chapter of the NPPF. This is to ensure that applicants have as much certainty as possible about what is likely to be acceptable. The NPPF highlights the importance of making sure that local design expectations set out in policies and guidance are informed by the aspirations of the local community.

2.2. The Northumberland Local Plan

- 2.2.1. The Northumberland Local Plan will be a single new Local Plan for the whole of Northumberland and will replace all of the previous District and County Council Local Plan and Core Strategy documents. Once adopted, the Local Plan will become part of the Development Plan along with Neighbourhood Plans prepared by local communities. The Development Plan forms the statutory framework for future development of land and buildings.
- 2.2.2. The ‘Quality of Place’ chapter of the Northumberland Local Plan - Publication Draft Plan (Regulation 19) contains the key policies which address the design of new development. The Council is going to prepare a separate Northumberland Design Guide SPD which will address design matters more generally, while the Highways and Transportation Design and Delivery SPD will focus specifically on the design of highways and transportation. A scoping document for the Northumberland Design Guide SPD has been published for consultation alongside this document and can be accessed via the Council’s website at www.northumberland.gov.uk/localplan.
- 2.2.3. The following key policies relevant to the design of highways and transport infrastructure and features are included within the Quality of Place chapter and

¹ Paragraph 8, National Planning Policy Framework (2018) MHCLG

² Ibid, paragraph 102

the Connectivity and Movement chapter in the Northumberland Local Plan - Publication Draft Plan (Regulation 19):

- QOP 1 - Design Principles
Overarching policy that sets out the principles which must underpin the design of all new development.
- QOP 3 - Public Realm Design Principles
Policy which sets out principles that, together with the principles set out in QOP 1, must inform the design of buildings and spaces that are intended to be accessed by the public.
- QOP 6 - Delivering Well-Designed Places
Development management policy establishing the requirements of planning processes to ensure good design is delivered.
- TRA 1 - Promoting Sustainable Connections
Overarching policy that sets out the transport and movement principles which must underpin new development, including the design of transport and highways infrastructure.
- TRA 2 - The Effects of Development on the Transport Network
Policy which sets out the requirements for developments affecting the transport network, including requirements in relation to design.
- TRA 4 - Parking Provision in New Development
Policy which, in conjunction with Appendix D of the Local Plan, sets out standards for parking provision serving new developments, including requirements in relation to the design of parking provision.

2.2.4. As design is a cross-cutting theme, the Northumberland Local Plan - Publication Draft Plan (Regulation 19) includes a number of other policies which have implications for highways and transportation design. Some policies which focus on types of development, in particular Policy HOU 9 in relation to housing, include requirements around design which would be relevant to highways and transportation. Certain policies which address specific social and environmental themes, such as health or climate change, also include requirements to ensure that the design of new development, including design of highways and transport, contributes towards achieving positive outcomes.

3. Role and Scope of the Highways and Transportation Design and Delivery SPD

3.1. Role of the Highways and Transportation Design and Delivery SPD

- 3.1.1. The Highways and Transportation Design and Delivery SPD will provide guidance on how Local Plan design policies relevant to highways and transportation should be interpreted and applied. It will be particularly relevant for decision makers, applicants and design professionals involved in planning applications, including highways and transport engineers. The guidance within the SPD may also be of interest to local communities, as the design of development can have a significant influence on how people experience the places where they live, work and visit. It is considered that all those involved with or affected by the design of new development should have the opportunity to inform the content of the Highways and Transportation Design and Delivery SPD.
- 3.1.2. Highway design has frequently been regarded as the product of the rigid application of highway engineering standards, resulting in utilitarian and 'anywhere' development that contradicts the principles of contemporary urban design. Context specific design that does not rely on conventional standards can achieve the same high levels of safety and amenity. The SPD will seek to facilitate and promote innovative designs that are appropriate to context and character. The document will be prepared to outline the highway and transport related design considerations that should be taken into account in advance of preparing the layout of a development.
- 3.1.3. In particular, well-designed streets should accommodate all movements, functions and purposes, with the inter-relationship considered from the outset. The emphasis should be on 'people movement', with the needs of people with health conditions or impairments, elderly people, and children, prioritised for all modes. Walking and cycling should be considered the most important modes of transport, as they increase human interaction, contribute to well-being, and are the most sustainable forms of movement. In addition to offering a sustainable alternative to the car, walking and cycling can also make a positive contribution to public health, the overall character of a place, and to tackling climate change through the reduction of carbon emissions.
- 3.1.4. An aim of the guide will therefore be to encourage a move away from generic prescribed standards by placing a more positive emphasis on using engineering judgement to arrive at feasible and reasonable context specific solutions. The SPD is intended to facilitate this by outlining the parameters and principles that the Council considers to constitute good highway design.

3.2. Proposed scope of the Highways and Transportation Design and Delivery SPD

3.2.1. It is proposed that the Highways and Transportation Design and Delivery SPD should include the following:

- Guidance around highway design in the public realm
- Guidance relating to how design can achieve appropriate access and movement
- An explanation of highway design and geometry
- Guidance around achieving sustainable travel
- Approach to highway trees and landscaping
- Guidance relating to site development and delivery
- An explanation of requirements in relation to commuted sum payments

4. Proposed structure of the Highways and Transportation Design and Delivery SPD

4.1. The following sets out the suggested structure of the Highways and Transportation Design and Delivery SPD:

- 1. Introduction**
 - 1.1. Purpose of the SPD
 - 1.2. Status of the document
 - 1.3. Overview of the document structure
- 2. Background**
 - 2.1. Policy context
 - 2.2. Developing the planning application in highways and transport terms
 - 2.3. Key Principles for development
 - 2.4. Context
- 3. Defining the Development**
 - 3.1. Transport Assessments, Transport Statements and Scoping Studies
 - 3.2. Travel Plans
 - 3.3. Movement Framework
 - 3.4. Roads and Streets
- 4. Details**
 - 4.1. Planning for Pedestrians
 - 4.2. Cyclists and Cycle Parking
 - 4.3. Car Parking
 - 4.4. Electric Vehicle parking
 - 4.5. Powered two Wheeler
 - 4.6. Public Transport
 - 4.7. Refuse Collection, Servicing and Access
 - 4.8. Highway implications in Conservation Areas and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty
 - 4.9. Highway Trees and Landscaping
 - 4.10. Design & Construction Standards
 - 4.11. Highway Materials
 - 4.12. Drainage and Sustainable Drainage
 - 4.13. Road Safety Audits
 - 4.14. Street Lighting
 - 4.15. Utility and Services
 - 4.16. Structures
 - 4.17. Signs & Road Markings
 - 4.18. Traffic Speeds
 - 4.19. Traffic Signals
- 5. Delivery**
 - 5.1. S38 Agreements and Highway Adoption Procedures
 - 5.2. S278 Agreements
 - 5.3. Construction Management Plans
 - 5.4. Stopping up of Highway
 - 5.5. Private management and maintenance
 - 5.6. Commuted Sums

- 5.7. Street Naming and Numbering
- 5.8. Highway Records and Searches

5. Consultation and Next Steps

5.1. Consultation questions

- 5.1.1. We are seeking responses to the following questions in relation to the Highways and Transportation Design and Delivery Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) scoping document:

Question 1

- a. Do you agree with the proposed role of the Highways and Transportation Design and Delivery SPD as set out in section 3.1 of this document?
- b. Please provide further comment if there is anything you would change in relation to the proposed role of the Highways and Transportation Design and Delivery SPD.

Question 2

- c. Do you agree with the proposed scope of the Highways and Transportation Design and Delivery SPD as set out in section 3.2 of this document?
- d. Please provide further comment if there is anything you would change in relation to the proposed scope of the Highways and Transportation Design and Delivery SPD.

Question 3

- e. Do you agree with the proposed structure of the Highways and Transportation Design and Delivery SPD as set out in section 4 of this document?
- f. Please provide further comment if there is anything you would change in relation to the proposed structure of the Highways and Transportation Design and Delivery SPD.

5.2. Next Steps

- 5.2.1. Following the consultation on this document, a draft Highways and Transportation Design and Delivery SPD will be prepared. The feedback received from the consultation on this scoping document will be used to help inform the contents of the draft document.
- 5.2.2. The draft Highways and Transportation Design and Delivery SPD will be published for public consultation and feedback will be used to help finalise the SPD. The Council will then adopt the SPD and it will become a material consideration in reaching decisions on planning applications.

- 5.2.3. A Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) screening will be carried out prior to a consultation on the draft Highways and Transportation Design and Delivery SPD to determine if there is a need to carry out an SEA. SPDs do not normally require Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) except in exceptional circumstances where there are likely to be significant environmental effects that have not already been assessed during the preparation of the Local Plan. The Council will consult the environmental assessment consultation bodies on the result of the SEA screening and will make this information available during consultation on the draft SPD.
- 5.2.4. A full timetable will be identified for the preparation of this SPD following an analysis of the feedback from the consultation on this scoping document.



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