

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	Meeting:	Cabinet Member and Advisers for Regeneration and Development Services
2.	Date:	Monday 3rd March 2014
3.	Title:	Adoption of supplementary planning guidance: 1. Householder Design Guide 2. Development in the Green Belt
4.	Directorate:	Environment and Development Services

5. Summary

Two separate guidance documents have been prepared to assist in dealing with planning applications for extensions to residential properties and for developments in the Green Belt and have been referred to in officer reports for approximately 12 months. The intention is to formally adopt these documents as the Council's supplementary planning guidance, to eventually form part of the Rotherham Development Plan.

6. Recommendations

That the two supplementary guidance documents be adopted by the Council as Interim Planning Documents, to ultimately be adopted as Supplementary Planning Documents as part of the Local Plan.

7. Proposals and Details

Background and context

Supplementary Housing Guidance 1 'Householder development' and Environment Guidance 1 'Extensions to dwellings in the Green Belt' form supplementary guidance to the Rotherham UDP, adopted in 1999, though are now in need of updating. Two draft guidance documents were prepared and subject to public consultation in January 2013.

Only one comment was received in respect of the 'Householder design guide', from a local Planning Agent who wanted certain matters clarifying and raised no objection to the principles of the Guidance. Only two people commented on the 'Development in the Green Belt' guidance. One was from a member of the public who questioned the definition of 'infill development' within villages as the Draft Guidance indicated that this would only be allowed in a gap which fronts the highway, whilst currently the UDP (Policy ENV1.5 'Infilling within Green Belt Villages') is not so prescriptive and in principal will allow development in a backland plot.

However, this is incorrect as Policy ENV1.5 currently states that: “Infilling means the filling of a small gap in an otherwise built up frontage.” It is not considered that the existing Policy supports such backland development, and it is not intended to alter the Policy or supporting guidance in this respect. The other comments were received which were primarily points of clarification, rather than against the principles of the Guidance, and these comments were taken into account as the Guidance has been amended.

The two Guidance documents as revised are attached at the Appendices to this report and have been referred to in all relevant officer reports. During the course of the last 12 months we have received several appeals in respect of refusals of planning permission for both house extensions and development in the Green Belt. Some Inspectors have given the new guidance little weight as it has not been formally adopted by the Council. Others have given the Guidance more weight and have either accepted their principles or not had issue with them.

The proposed ‘Householder Design Guide’ would continue to support UDP Policies HG2 ‘Existing Housing Stock’, HG5 ‘The Residential Environment’ and ENV3.1 ‘Development and the Environment’. The ‘Development in the Green Belt’ guidance will continue to support Policy ENV1.3 ‘Extensions to dwellings in the Green Belt’, though in addition would support Policy ENV1 ‘Green Belt’, ENV1.5 ‘Infilling within Green Belt Villages’ and ENV3.5 ‘Alternative Uses for Rural Buildings and Buildings in the Green Belt’. Both Guidance documents would ultimately form Supplementary Planning Documents to support the Local Plan once adopted.

8. Finance

The adoption of the Guidance will give them more weight and reduce the potential for costs being awarded against the Council where the Guidance is referred to in officer reports and relied on as part of the Council’s case.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

N/A

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

Success at appeals would be strengthened if Guidance is adopted and given more weight in decision making process.

11. Background Papers and Consultation

Appendix 1 – Householder Design Guide

Appendix 2 – Development in the Green Belt

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