

New Eastern Villages (NEV) Framework Travel Plan

Draft Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

Planning Committee

Date: 12th April 2016

Author: Head of Planning, Regulatory Services and Heritage

Parish / Wards Affected: All, but particularly those in the east of the Borough

Purpose

- To update the Planning Committee on the preparation of the New Eastern Villages (NEV) Framework Travel Plan draft Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), and
- To seek approval from the Planning Committee for public consultation on the NEV framework Travel Plan draft SPD.

Recommendation

That the Planning Committee agrees to:

1. A six week period of public consultation for the NEV Framework Travel Plan draft SPD as soon as reasonable practical, in accordance with the arrangements set out in paragraph 2.5.
2. Authorise the Head of Planning, Regulatory Services and Heritage, in consultation with the Director of Law and Democratic Services to make minor changes to the content of the document, if required, prior to carrying out the public consultation.

1 Reasons

1.1 Policy NC3 of the adopted Swindon Borough Local Plan 2026 (Local Plan) allocates a new mixed use development of about 8,000 new homes with associated employment, education, retail and leisure uses to the east of the A419. It sets out the overall requirements for the NEV including Rowborough and the expansion of South Marston village expansion. Central to the development of the NEV are the proposed sustainable transport links detailed within the policy which will connect the proposed villages together as well integrating them with the existing communities of Swindon and the surrounding villages.

1.2 The NEV Framework Travel Plan draft SPD supports the principles brought forward within Policy TR1 and TR2. Policy TR1 seeks to deliver a high quality transport network, throughout the Borough, which supports economic growth, regeneration

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and housing growth. Furthermore, Policy TR2 seeks to ensure new development is located and designed to reduce the need to travel and to encourage sustainable modes of transport. It also requires a Travel Plan to be submitted with applications which are likely to have a significant transport impact. The submitted Travel Plan should assess and mitigate the impact of development and promote sustainable travel choices.

- 1.3 The draft NEV Framework Travel Plan SPD provides a strategic overview for the NEV development, and forms one stage in promoting sustainable transport measures across the site. It will provide a joined up approach across all development islands, to ensure consistency for developers and future occupiers of the NEV.
- 1.4 The draft SPD supports the Council's Corporate vision and pledges, the core principles of the Local Plan, and the stated objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2012).

2 Detail

Background

- 2.1 Adopted in March 2015, the Local Plan "provides the policy framework to deliver sustainable growth to 2026 and beyond." The NEV Framework Travel Plan draft SPD seeks to provide further guidance on the Local Plan policies that relate to the NEV and in particular, Policies NC3, TR1 and TR2.
- 2.2 The draft SPD, which can be found at **Appendix 1** of this report, has been prepared following discussion with a range of stakeholders including delivery partners. It sets out how the Council will ensure a consistent approach to delivering a framework travel plan across the NEV. It will provide a package of measures to promote sustainable travel within the context of a mixed use development with multiple developers and occupiers on site.

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- 2.3 The NEV Framework Travel Plan outlines the principles and suggested management mechanisms to reduce the number of car trips within and to the NEV. A well connected layout to enhance pedestrian and cyclist permeability as well as providing priority to public transport vehicles are some of the primary approaches to reduce car dependency and to achieve sustainable development.
- 2.4 The NEV Framework Travel Plan also offers developers the opportunity to pay a voluntary "per dwelling fee" to the Council to fund established behaviour change initiatives as part of the implementation of their travel plan.

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2.5 Some of the key benefits of a travel plan include:

- Improving site accessibility and travel choice;
- Supporting and encouraging the establishment of sustainable communities;
- Providing choice and quality to access key services;
- Increasing business efficiency and equality;
- Delivering local and global environmental improvements through reduced congestion, reduced pollution and noise;
- Providing opportunities for safe, active, healthy travel, supporting Central Government's health agenda.

Consultation

2.6 The draft SPD must be published for a period of public consultation. Developers have been made aware of the Framework Travel Plan and it was circulated as part of an early engagement exercise. Public consultation should take place for six weeks commencing as soon as practicable, when all interested parties can make representations. Copies of the draft SPD will be sent to all affected Parish Councils and officers will be available to provide advice and respond to questions during the consultation period. Once responses have been evaluated officers will bring the final SPD before Committee with a recommendation to adopt.

3 Alternative Options

3.1 The Council could delay consultation on the draft SPD and chose to rely solely on the policies within the Local Plan to guide the detailed delivery of the NEV. The Local Plan sets the strategic policy framework for Swindon but this alone is not considered adequate to ensure all aspects of the vision are delivered, managed and secured in a phased and co-ordinated manner.

3.2 Delay to the publication and future adoption of the SPD is likely to prejudice the Council's ability to establish a comprehensive planning framework to guide development to the detriment of the proper planning of this strategic development. This would result in a missed opportunity to coordinate a transport network at the strategic and local level and to secure the timely delivery of infrastructure across the development.

4 Implications, Diversity Impact Assessment and Risk Management

Financial and Procurement Implications

4.1 The financial implications arising from publishing and consulting on the draft NEV Framework Travel Plan SPD are to be met from the Planning budgets for 2016/2017.

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Legal and Human Rights Implications

- 4.2 Human rights legislation has been considered in the preparation of this report and it is considered to be compatible with convention rights.
- 4.3 The preparation and adoption of the SPD is a process covered by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and associated regulations and amendments.

5 All Other Implications (including Staff, Sustainability, Health, Rural, Crime and Disorder)

- 5.1 There are no immediate staffing implications of such a document, which provide further guidance to Policy NC3, Policy TR1 and Policy TR2 in assessing proposals for development at the New Eastern Villages.
- 5.2 The Council has a duty to ensure that the preparation of the SPD is in accordance with the sustainability principles of the National Planning Policy Framework.
- 5.3 The draft SPD conforms to the policies in the Local Plan which has already been subject to a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) incorporating SEA and Health Impact Assessment (HIA) to ensure that the impact of proposals can be minimised with the least negative impact possible.
- 5.4 The coordination of the strategic travel network at the New Eastern Villages proposals, including the expansion of South Marston village will make a significant contribution to the demographic and economic needs of the Borough.

Diversity Impact Assessment

- 5.5 The draft SPD conforms to the policies in the Local Plan which has already undergone a DIA and no negative impacts were predicted.

6 Risk Management

- 6.1 Delaying the process of consultation and eventual adoption of this SPD carries less risk in the short term, but much higher risk over the medium-long term, as it would result in the lack of adequate tools necessary through the Planning System to uphold the detailed aspects of the policy and the Council's strategic objective to deliver sustainable development at the New Eastern Villages.

7 Consultees

- 7.1 The Board Director, Resources (Section 151 Officer) and Director of Law and Democratic Services (Monitoring Officer) are consulted in respect of all reports.

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8 Next Steps

- 8.1 If Planning Committee approve the recommendations of this report, the draft SPD will be made available for public consultation for a period of six weeks as soon as reasonably practical in accordance with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement in Planning. Copies of the SPD, and accompanying documents, would be distributed to a wide range of statutory consultees, including Parish Councils.
- 8.2 The documents would be made available for inspection at the Civic Offices, at libraries in the Borough, and on the Council's website. Following completion of the public consultation period, all representations and suggested minor changes by the Council to the Plan will be submitted to a subsequent Planning Committee for adoption in under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended).

9 Background Papers

- 9.1 Appendix 1 - New Eastern Villages Framework Travel Plan Draft SPD (April 2016)