

Bath & North East Somerset Council		
MEETING:	Cabinet	
MEETING DATE:	14 March 2012	EXECUTIVE FORWARD PLAN REFERENCE:
		E 2351
TITLE:	Sustainable Construction & Retrofitting Supplementary Planning Document: Consultation Draft	
WARD:	All	
AN OPEN PUBLIC ITEM		
<p>List of attachments to this report:</p> <p>Appendix A: Sustainable Construction & Retrofitting Supplementary Planning Document: Consultation Draft (March 2012)</p> <p>Appendix B: Bath Homes Fit for the Future Programme of events workshops and activities throughout March and April 2012</p>		

1 THE ISSUE

- 1.1 A Sustainable Construction & Retrofitting Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) has been prepared for public consultation. This guidance will support the Council's Core Strategy policies on these issues. The guidance within this SPD is aimed at householders and small scale house builders and includes practical advice, tips and information including planning, building control and historic buildings advice. The guidance is particularly important in Bath & North East Somerset in light of the need to achieve climate change objectives in an area with a highly valued historic environment. The document is based around a series of annotated diagrams to make it easy and practical to use. The SPD also seeks to clarify the Council's approach to how particular energy saving measures will be viewed by the Local Planning Authority.

2 RECOMMENDATION

The Cabinet agrees that:

- 2.1 The Sustainable Construction & Retrofitting Supplementary Planning Document: Consultation Draft (**Appendix A**) is agreed for a six week public consultation in March- April 2012.
- 2.2 Responsibility is delegated to the Divisional Director of Planning & Transport to make graphic and minor textual amendments prior to publication of the SPD for public consultation.

3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 There are no direct financial implications as a result of this decision. Existing budgets cover the costs of preparing and consulting on this SPD.

4 CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- *Promoting independence and positive lives for everyone*
- *Creating neighbourhoods where people are proud to live*
- *Building a stronger economy*

5 THE REPORT

Background

- 5.1 The Sustainable Construction and Retrofitting Supplementary Planning Document has been prepared to give additional support to the Core Strategy policies on Retrofitting and Sustainable Construction. However, it is perhaps atypical as an Supplementary Planning Document as it also contains information around permitted development, historic and listed buildings and building regulations – this reflects work with stakeholders and the request a single point of information on “planning” issues.
- 5.2 Retrofitting Policy CP1 in the Core Strategy states that the Council encourages retrofitting measures to existing buildings to improve their energy efficiency and adaptability to climate change and the support appropriate incorporation of micro-renewables. The policy also states that the Council will seek to encourage and enable the sensitive retrofitting of historic buildings (including listed buildings). This approach gathered support from English Heritage, local residents and interest groups via the Core Strategy process.
- 5.3 Sustainable Construction Policy CP2 sets out sustainability criteria that planning applications should address (such as energy efficiency, water use, minimising waste and recycling in construction etc.) and requires all major development to undertake either a Code for Sustainable Homes (CfSH) assessment or a Building Environmental Assessment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) assessment. The SPD aims to offer guidance and tips to improve the environmental performance related to smaller scale development including a single residential new build or home extension introduces key principles included in these national methodologies.

The Approach

- 5.4 The SPD is a practical and technically based “how to” guide. Annotated diagrams feature as the main content of the SPD. Symbols are used to flag up relative costs and carbon savings of each intervention; and show whether planning permission, listed building consent is needed or where building regulations need to be complied with.
- 5.5 In relation to Sustainable Construction the SPD identifies key national and local information sources and introduces nine key principles, explaining each one through annotated diagrams and pictures. These nine principles are:

- Land use and ecology
- Siting and Orientation
- Passive Design
- Thermal Mass
- Surface Water Run-off
- Water
- Energy
- Materials
- Waste

5.6 In relation to retrofitting existing buildings, section-drawings and hand sketches of 5 prevalent house types in the district have been used to explain how different buildings are constructed. This understanding is key to appreciating what environmental issues are present e.g. main areas of heat loss. This also demonstrates the major construction differences between traditionally constructed (pre 1919) and modern buildings e.g. traditional buildings are typically solid wall construction with breathable building fabrics, so ventilation and permeable materials need to be considered if you are adding insulation or draft-proofing to prevent problems such as condensation and damp. The five house types are based on existing buildings in B&NES, and are as follows:

- 17th Century cottage
- 18th Century Georgian townhouse
- Victorian/Edwardian terrace
- Early 20th Century (1930s semi-detached house)
- Late 20th Century (post 1985 semi-detached house)

5.7 A range of passive (energy efficiency) and active (micro-generation and building engineering solutions) are then explained in more detail, including details of consents and key issues. These include measures relating to draft proofing, insulation, windows (renovation, secondary and double glazing), ventilation, heating systems and micro-generation technologies.

5.8 The range of measures explained have been informed by the useful and robust work undertaken locally by Bath Preservation Trust and the Centre for Sustainable Energy in *Warmer Bath* (see Background papers). This cutting-edge local project recently received the RTPI National Planning award 2011 for innovation in the “sustainability” category.

5.9 Essentially, the SPD aims to inspire and inform people of ways in which they can improve the energy efficiency of their home, be it historic or modern, and to enable people to find out:

- What retrofit measures are most suitable for their house type
- What planning, building control & listed building permissions you need
- Clarification of how interventions will be viewed through the consent process
- How can you generate your own renewable energy
- Top tips for new build/extensions to make your building have a lower environmental impact

Links to Corporate Agendas

5.8 The SPD links with and supports five key corporate agendas:

Climate change commitments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports the Sustainable Community Strategy commitment to a 45% CO2 reduction below 1990 levels by 2026 • Supports national renewable energy target of 15% of UKs energy from non-renewables by 2020 • Helps delivery policy commitments in the Core Strategy • Tackles a key source of B&NES CO2 emissions (41% B&NES CO2 emissions are from domestic properties)
Improving the condition of homes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • B&NES has a high proportion of “hard to treat” historic properties • Supports public health projects linked to excess winter deaths and fuel poverty • Applies lessons learnt from Housing Services retro-fit pilot of 18 B&NES private homes completed in 2010
Promoting a low carbon economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports environmental services which play a significant role in the local economy – worth £168m • Retrofitting should generate £540m in sales and 3200 jobs per year (2011-2020) across the West of England • It is estimated that the B&NES spend on PV alone £179m over the same period • Supports the green jobs programme and development of Low Carbon Skills Academy to support development of a local workforce for retrofit
Facilitating the community access to financial incentives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supports the Council's project to facilitate a local approach to the “green deal”, a new government-led financial mechanism which supports the uptake of energy efficiency measures and retrofit. Work funded through the green deal will include many of the ideas included in the SPD such as new boilers, insulation and solar panels. The launch of the Green Deal is planned for Autumn 2012. This is likely to trigger significant additional demands for planning and listed building applications, so this SPD should help to pre-empt many of the more basic questions. • Supports access to other financial incentives such as Feed in Tariffs for micro-renewables and the Renewable Heat Incentive (e.g. for biomass heating) • Supports existing grant funds for insulation e.g. Warmer Streets
Supporting and fostering community activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council response to call to action in <i>Warmer Bath</i> publication by Bath Preservation Trust and CSE • SPD has involved collaborative work with local groups with an interest in energy, climate change and the historic environment • SPD complements and strongly links with Bath Homes Fit for the Future events programme – which includes a range of community led activities

6 RISK MANAGEMENT

- 6.1 The report author and Lead Cabinet member have fully reviewed the risk assessment related to the issue and recommendations, in compliance with the Council's decision making risk management guidance.

7 EQUALITIES

- 7.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been completed and documented. No adverse or other significant issues were found.
- 7.2 This Equalities Impact Assessment of the Core Strategy assessed the parent policies on Retrofitting (CP1) and Sustainable Construction (CP2), the SPD provides additional information and detail in relation to these policies. These policies were seen to have a positive impact on all equalities groups (in particular age, religion/belief, race and disability) as the policies help reduce running costs of all buildings and the principles can also be applied to community buildings. Microgeneration can also generate income for local community groups and residents.

8 RATIONALE

- 8.1 There is a requirement for all Supplementary Planning Documents to undergo public consultation in accordance with planning regulations and the Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement for Planning.

9 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 9.1 None.

10 CONSULTATION

- 10.1 *Ward Councillor; Cabinet members; Parish Council; Town Council; Overview & Scrutiny Panel; Local Residents; Community Interest Groups; /Partners; Section 151 Finance Officer; Chief Executive; Monitoring Officer*

Corporate Working Group

- 10.2 A corporate officer working group has supported the development of the SPD and has included officers from Planning Services, Sustainability Team, Building Control, Housing, Property and Development & Major Projects.

Stakeholder Workshop

- 10.3 A Stakeholder Workshop Event was held in July 2011. A report of this event is available as a background paper. There was a strong consensus that the presentation and graphic style was a good approach. Detailed comments were also gathered on emerging draft materials which have since been taken on board.
- 10.4 Ongoing work with key stakeholders has included more detailed discussions with English Heritage.

Consultation Programme

- 10.5 At an early stage in the development of the SPD it was considered that given the target audience – home owners and small scale developers – that a different approach to consultation should be taken. The approach is focused around collaborative events and a programme that will have more general interest to the community. Consultation events are mainly to be held in Bath, although they are designed to attract residents and other interested parties from across B&NES.
- 10.6 Under the linked project “Bath Homes Fit for the Future” a programme of consultation activities has now been put together to support and coincide with the launch of the draft SPD for public consultation. This has been organised collaboratively by a working group consisting of an officer from both the Sustainability Team and Planning Policy, a graduate intern volunteer, together with representatives of Bath Preservation Trust and Transition Bath.
- 10.7 A range of local groups, volunteers and Bath residents have also supported the project and some of the events on the programme are to be led by local businesses and amenity and interest groups, local residents will also be opening their homes as part of the open house weekend. Other volunteers are assisting with stewarding for events, social media campaigning, press liaison, photography etc. The full events programme is included as **Appendix B**.
- 10.8 Advertisement of the programme includes a main article in the Council’s Connect Magazine (March 2012) and both national and local media coverage.
- 10.9 Alongside this the normal regulatory requirements will need to be met for an SPD including press notices, notification of consultation to local and statutory consultees. Consultation with Parish and Town Councils and with other groups is also planned.

11 ISSUES TO CONSIDER IN REACHING THE DECISION

11.1 Customer Focus; Sustainability

12 ADVICE SOUGHT

- 12.1 The Council's Monitoring Officer (Divisional Director – Legal and Democratic Services) and Section 151 Officer (Divisional Director - Finance) have had the opportunity to input to this report and have cleared it for publication.

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Sponsoring Cabinet Member	<i>Councillor Tim Ball</i>

Background papers	<p><i>Stakeholder Workshop Report (July 2011)</i></p> <p><i>Draft Core Strategy (2011)</i></p> <p>http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/SiteCollectionDocuments/Environment%20and%20Planning/banes_cs_interactive.pdf</p> <p><i>Equalities Impact Assessment of the Core Strategy Submission Version (October 2010)</i></p> <p>http://www.bathnes.gov.uk/SiteCollectionDocuments/Environment%20and%20Planning/Equalities%20Impact%20Assessment%20of%20Draft%20Core%20Strategy%20Nov%202010.pdf</p> <p><i>Warmer Bath: A Guide to improving the energy efficiency if traditional homes in the city of Bath (2011) Bath Preservation trust and the Centre for Sustainable Energy</i></p> <p>http://www.cse.org.uk/downloads/file/warmer_bath_june2011.pdf</p>
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