

## ADOPTION OF WESTERHAM AND ST LAWRENCE (SEAL) VILLAGE DESIGN STATEMENTS

Cabinet - 4 April 2019

Report of	Chief Planning Officer
Status	For Decision
Also considered by	Planning Advisory Committee - 12 March 2019
Key Decision	No

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**This report supports the Key Aim** of ensuring that Sevenoaks District remains a great place to live, work and visit.

**Portfolio Holder** Cllr. Robert Piper

**Contact Officer** Naomi Sargent, Ext. 7122

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**Recommendation to the Planning Advisory Committee:** That it be recommended to Cabinet that approval is given for the adoption of the Westerham and Seal St Lawrence Village Design Statement as a Supplementary Planning Document.

**Recommendation to Cabinet:** That approval is given for the adoption of the Westerham and St Lawrence (Seal) Village Design Statements as a Supplementary Planning Document.

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**Reason for recommendation:** To allow the guidance given in these documents to be brought forward by the local community, to be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

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### Introduction and Background

- 1 A Village Design Statement (VDS) is a practical document produced by local people, which forms a material consideration when assessing planning applications and development in their local area.
- 2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) does not specifically mention VDS's but their use will support the need for good design as covered by chapter 12 of the NPPF.
- 3 Once adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), a VDS can provide a clear statement of the character of a village against which planning applications can be assessed. It can also provide a guide for development and can also assist decision makers in providing guidance about

how development should be approached and undertaken so as to respect the local identity and also meet the concerns of local residents. Once adopted the SPD's will supplement the Local Plan.

- 4 There are three VDS's adopted as SPD's in the District including Underriver, Seal Village and Otford Village. There is also one Parish Plan for Otford which has been adopted as an SPD.

#### **Proposed Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD)**

- 5 The proposed Westerham Design Statement, prepared by Westerham Town Council, looks at different issues affecting the areas of Westerham and Crockham Hill, including landscape character and open spaces, building design and materials, conservation area, housing development, extensions and alterations, property boundaries and street furniture, surrounding land and agriculture and the surrounding natural environment. Under each category some of the issues that the areas face have been laid out; through this discussion a number of design principles have been raised, at the end of each section, that are wished to see followed for development in the area.
- 6 The proposed St Lawrence (Seal) Village Design Statement, prepared by Seal Parish Council, looks at different issues affecting the ward of St Lawrence in Seal, including landscape character and open spaces, building design, conservation area, housing development, extensions and alterations, property boundaries and street furniture, public footpaths and bridleways, surrounding land and agriculture and the surrounding natural environment. Under each category some of the issues that the areas face have been laid out; through this discussion a number of design principles have been raised, at the end of each section, that are wished to see followed for development in the area.
- 7 Westerham Town Council has prepared the VDS for Westerham. It is now proposed that this document be adopted as SPD. As required by the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 (as amended) Consultation Statements have been prepared for each document. These are attached in Appendix A.
- 8 Seal Parish Council has prepared the VDS for Seal St Lawrence with input from the residents of Seal through the Seal Parish Plan Questionnaire in 2010. This VDS is an update of the adopted Seal VDS in 2004. This VDS is linked to the Seal and Underriver VDS's adopted in 2012. It is now proposed that the St Lawrence VDS be adopted as an SPD. As required by the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 (as amended) Consultation Statements have been prepared for each document. These are attached in Appendix A.
- 9 The statements illustrate that the proper procedures have been followed in the preparation of this document.
- 10 The VDS's have been sent to the Conservation Team and Development Management for comment and have been amended with the authors to

ensure they are in line with the revised National Planning Policy Framework and the Local Plan. It is therefore recommended that the approval is given for them to be adopted as an SPD.

## **Key Implications**

### Financial

Any cost will be met out of the existing budget and MHCLG funding for local planning authorities to support neighbourhood planning will applied.

### Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement

The SPD and Neighbourhood Plans are prepared under planning legislation. The regulations regarding notification of adoption/approval of these documents will be followed.

### Equality Assessment

The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

## **Appendices**

Appendix A - Westerham Village Design Statement 2019

Appendix B - St Lawrence Village Design Statement 2019

Appendix C - Consultation Statement - Westerham

Appendix D - Consultation Statement - St Lawrence

## **Background documents**

None

**Richard Morris**

**Chief Planning Officer**