

Sevenoaks District Council

Seal and Underriver Village Design Statements Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

Consultation Statement

Introduction

In accordance with the relevant Planning Regulations, the Authority is required to prepare a statement providing details of the consultation undertaken during the preparation of the Supplementary Planning Document; a summary of the main issues raised; and how they have been addressed in the final version of the document. This paper fulfils this requirement and sets out the public participation in the preparation of the document (Regulation 17 (1) (b)) and then the statutory public consultation undertaken on the draft Supplementary Planning Document (Regulation 18).

Once adopted, both the Seal and Underriver Village Design Statements SPD will form part of the Sevenoaks District Local Development Framework. It will not form part of the formal development plan for the area but will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

Approach to consultation

Sevenoaks District Council considers that when preparing SPDs it is appropriate to inform, consult and seek the participation of organisations and/or individuals in order to ensure that the documents more closely reflect local needs and priorities.

The Council undertook a 6 week formal consultation on the Seal and Underriver Village Design Statements between 28th Jun 2012 and 9th Aug 2012.

As part of this consultation, the Council:

- Published the Seal and Underriver Village Design Statements on the Sevenoaks District Council website and through the Council's consultation system;
- Made the draft SPD available for inspection at the Council's offices and libraries in the Council's administrative area during normal office hours;
- Invited persons and organisations on the Council's LDF mailing list and those registered on the Council's consultation database, to make representations during the consultation period.

Public Participation in the Preparation of the VDS

Underriver VDS Consultation and involvement of residents was undertaken locally by Seal Parish Council. In 2004 a committee of local people prepared The Underriver

Village Design Statement, this edition has been revised by Seal Parish Council to reflect the views of local people from study for the Seal Parish Plan Questionnaire 2010. In order to allow VDS to be incorporated into the Sevenoaks District Local Development Framework, it has been through a full consultation process prior to publication.

Seal VDS Consultation and involvement of residents was undertaken locally by Seal Parish Council. This Village Design Statement is an update of that produced in 2004. This Statement is the product of a lot of discussion within the local community. The original statement started with a questionnaire distributed to all the residents with the local newsletter. That was followed by a public meeting in the Village Hall. After redrafting, it was then approved by the Parish Council on 13 March 2003 and sent to the Sevenoaks District Council for further statutory consultation. This update follows a further questionnaire distributed to all the residents of Seal in September 2010. It reflects changes in planning guidance and the environment as well as the views of residents of Seal as expressed in their responses to a questionnaire in September 2010.

Sustainability Appraisal

A Sustainability Appraisal for the Village Design Statements was not been undertaken as Sec.180 (5)(d) Planning Act 2008 removed the compulsory requirement for a Sustainability Appraisal for a Supplementary Planning Document.

Comments

Underriver VDS

The Parish Council has put forward the following changes in response to the points raised.

1. Environment Agency (Jennifer Wilson):

Inserted new recommendation stating

"Any application for development must be accompanied by an adequate proposal to deal with the treatment of sewage and contaminated water to prevent land contamination."

2. Kent Wildlife Trust (Miss Debbie Salmon)

Additional recommendation stating:

Any impacts by development on the important designated sites and ancient woodland within the area are to be fully mitigated. The replacement of dead and dying trees should be avoided, unless they are a health and safety risk. Dead and dying wood provides important habitat for bat species and the special invertebrates found within ancient woodland habitats.

3. Kent County Council (Ms Liz Shier)

Revised recommendation R3 to accommodate suggested wording.

Additional clause stating 'The historic pattern of roads, tracks, field boundaries and hedgerows that gives the modern landscape its character should be protected during development. Where possible, historic features should be enhanced and promoted as key components of the local environment'.

4. Natural England (John Lister)

Additional clause stating:

“The Sevenoaks Landscape Character Assessment (LCA), provides a context for looking at possible changes and for seeking to ensure that countryside character is protected and enhanced, and where possible, opportunities are taken to create new and to protect and enhance existing habitats, wildlife corridors and stepping stones. An understanding of LCA will also help to ensure that planting outside settlements is in harmony with the character of the countryside”

Seal VDS

The comments made by Kent County Council, The EA and Natural England were also made on the Seal VDS.

Sevenoaks District Council Comments

All the comments raised were in support of the documents and were purely concerned with making points/amendments designed to strengthen the documents. The amendments proposed by KCC and Natural England were proposed for both documents and it is considered that they should be included in Seal VDS.

Given this situation the amendments proposed by the Parish Council are considered appropriate. It is considered that subject to the changes proposed above and to any other minor amendments, the VDS for Seal and Underriver be recommended for adoption as SPD.