

**CABINET
6 SEPTEMBER 2022**

**CONSULTATION ON SKERNINGHAM GARDEN VILLAGE DESIGN CODE
SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE (SPD)**

**Responsible Cabinet Member – Councillor Alan Marshall,
Economy Portfolio**

Responsible Director - Ian Williams, Chief Executive

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To update Cabinet on the progress of Skerningham Garden Village Design Code.
2. To gain Cabinet approval to commence public consultation on the Skerningham Garden Village Design Code.

Summary

3. A requirement of the adopted Darlington Local Plan 2016 – 2036 (Darlington Local Plan) is for the Council to progress with the creation and adoption of Supplementary Planning Policy Documents (SPD) based on Design Codes for both Garden Communities.
4. The Burtree Garden Village SPD was successfully adopted in 2022 and work has been progressing on the completion of the Skerningham Garden Village Design Code which is attached in **Appendix 1**. It is proposed that this Design Code is now formally consulted upon with the aim of adopting the Design Code as an SPD following the consultation feedback. This process will be in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework changes in July 2021 and in particular the National Model Design Code. The consulted document and amendments will be presented to Cabinet and if agreed forwarded to Full Council to be approved as the Council's Supplementary Planning Policy which would be used as material consideration in the planning application process.
5. The development of the Skerningham Garden Village Design Code has been led independently by DesignNE who have carried out extensive public consultation in the completion of the document. The Design Code process of Skerningham Garden Village has been recognised by the Department of Levelling Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC) as a Second Phase Pathfinder and its engagement process is a National Pilot which will set an approach to be adopted by other local authorities in England on the development of design codes across the country.

Recommendation

6. It is recommended that Members: -
- (a) Note the progress and content of the Skerningham Garden Village Design Code.
 - (b) Approve the commencement of a public consultation on the Skerningham Garden Village Design Code.

Reasons

7. The recommendations are supported by the following reason: The Council must follow the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Inspectors report to convert Skerningham Garden Village Design Code into a Supplementary Planning Policy Document SPD as part of the Darlington Local Plan 2016-36.

Ian Williams
Chief Executive

Background Papers

- (i) Skerningham Garden Village Design Code
- (ii) Darlington Local Plan 2016 – 2036

Mark Ladyman: Extension 6306

S17 Crime and Disorder	The Design SPD has a role in reducing crime through the promotion of good design and location of development
Health and Well Being	A key objective of the Design Code for Skerningham GV SPD will be to improve people's health and wellbeing by protecting and improving the economic, social and environmental conditions in the Borough
Carbon Impact and Climate Change	A Sustainability Appraisal has been carried out on the strategic issues and options for this site. Achieving sustainable development will be a fundamental objective of this SPD.
Diversity	An Equalities Impact Assessment has been part of the local plan preparation process
Wards Affected	Harrowgate Hill; Heighington and Coniscliffe; Sadberge and Middleton St George and Whinfield
Groups Affected	All
Budget and Policy Framework	The SPD will be prepared using existing budgets and will ultimately form part of the Council's Planning Policy Framework
Key Decision	Yes
Urgent Decision	No
Council Plan	The SPD Design for Skerningham GV SPD will represent the spatial implications and help achieve the economic growth aspirations of the Council Plan
Efficiency	The consultation stage of the SPD represents the most efficient way to include public opinion on strategic design and will have regard to the legislative and engagement requirements
Impact on Looked After Children and Care Leavers	This report has no impact on Looked After Children or Care Leavers

MAIN REPORT

Information and Analysis

8. The Skerningham Garden Village is a site allocation in the adopted Darlington Local Plan 2016- 2036. The Inspector's report and its modifications detail the policy for the site in H10 and recommends that a Skerningham Design Code should be consulted upon and once agreed established as a Supplementary Planning Document Design Code for Skerningham Garden Village.
9. DesignNE has been commissioned by the Council to prepare the Skerningham Garden Village Design Code in line with policy H10 of the Local Plan with engagement of the local community. The product of this work which commenced in February 2022 presents a blueprint for the draft SPD Design Code Skerningham Garden Village.
10. The draft Skerningham Garden Village Design Code (attached in Appendix 1) has been prepared in line with the NPPF July 2021 and its National Model Design Code. It also follows the remit and guidance of the 2nd Round of the Design Code Pathfinders by the office for Place and the Design Code Team in the Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities. The Council received a £122k grant to progress this Design Code in limited time and showcase its approach to other Local Authorities in England.
11. DesignNE have facilitated a series of community engagement events between March to July 2022. In addition, several articles on the Design Code process and its workshops have appeared in the local press, leaflet drops, the DBC website, the DesignNE website and the One Darlington Magazine.
12. Workshops took place and lead independently by DesignNE:
 - (a) 24th March 22 Central Hall, Dolphin Centre
 - (b) 26th April 22 Oban Court Care Home, Whinfield
 - (c) 28th April 22 Harrowgate Hill WMC
 - (d) 19th May 22 Harrowgate Hill WMC
 - (e) 9th June 22 Harrowgate Hill WMC
 - (f) 30th June 22 Harrowgate Hill WMC
13. Over 250 local people took part in these workshops and contributed to the Draft SPD Skerningham Garden Village Design Code.
14. The strategic guidance on design ambitions and place making of the SPD for the Design Code for Skerningham Garden Village includes:
 - (a) Character Area Coding;
 - (b) Settlement Character;
 - (c) Interfaces with blue and green Infrastructure;
 - (d) Gateway Points;
 - (e) Darlington Specific Design requirements;
 - (f) Detailed Design Quality Coding Checklist.

The Suggested SPD Consultation Process

15. Table below:

Cabinet to allow draft SPD to go through public consultation	6th September 2022
Draft SPD Consultation	9th September 2022 – 7th October 2022
Amend SPD based on consultation input	From 7th October 2022
Amended and consulted on SPD to come back to Cabinet and Council for approval	8th November 2022 24th November 2022
Adoption of SPD	End of November 2022

16. Following the completion of the community engagement and consultation period the design code together with proposed modifications will be presented to cabinet and if approved forwarded to Full Council for adoption as a Supplementary Planning Document.

Financial Considerations

17. The SPD preparation and conversion will be funded by DLUHC Design Code Pathfinder funding.

Legal Implications

18. There are no direct legal implications arising from this report.

Consultation

19. This process will be in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework.