

**Cheltenham Borough Council**

**Cabinet – 17<sup>th</sup> December 2019**

**Cyber Central Garden Community – Draft Supplementary Planning Document**

<b>Accountable member</b>	<b>Councillor Jordan – Leader</b>
<b>Accountable officer</b>	<b>Tracey Crews – Director of Planning</b>
<b>Ward(s) affected</b>	<b>Springbank, St. Peters, St. Marks, Hesters Way</b>
<b>Executive summary</b>	<p>This report seeks authority to consult on Cyber Central Garden Community Draft Supplementary Planning Document for a period of 5 weeks. It is recommended that consultation commences on the SPD 13<sup>th</sup> January 2020.</p> <p>The draft SPD has been subject to engagement with key stakeholders and the wider community of West Cheltenham through a series of face to face engagement sessions. The draft has been subject to technical review by specialist officers across Cheltenham Borough Council, Tewkesbury Borough Council and Gloucestershire County Council.</p> <p>The SPD has been informed by The Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Joint Core Strategy (JCS), the emerging Local Industrial Strategy, Connecting Cheltenham transport strategy, applications for Local Green Space designations and Hesters Way Neighbourhood Plan, together with technical reports and assessment detailing constraints and opportunities for West Cheltenham.</p> <p>This is the first formal stage in the preparation of the SPD. Once consultation has been completed, a full report on the consultation together with any subsequent changes to the SPD will be presented to Council. This is scheduled 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2020. The amended SPD will be presented to Council for approval, if approved the SPD will become a material consideration to the determination of future planning applications.</p>
<b>Recommendations</b>	<p><b>That Cabinet:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>1. Approves the Draft Cyber Central Garden Community Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for consultation in accordance with Regulation 13 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning)(England) Regulations 2012 for a period of 5 weeks (appendix 2),</b></li><li><b>2. Approves the consultation arrangements set out at appendix 3 of this report, and</b></li><li><b>3. Delegates authority to the Director of Planning to make editorial changes to the draft SPD in terms of formatting, presentation and accuracy prior to publication for consultation purposes.</b></li></ol>

<b>Financial implications</b>	<p>The funding for preparation of the SPD was agreed by the Local Planning Authorities. Consultants Avison Young were appointed at a cost of £189,832, shared equally between Cheltenham Borough Council and Tewkesbury Borough Council.</p> <p><b>Contact officer:</b> <a href="mailto:Andrew.knott@publicagroup.uk">Andrew.knott@publicagroup.uk</a>, Tel: 01242 264121</p>
<b>Legal implications</b>	<p>The preparation of an SPD is not a statutory requirement, but a decision for each local planning authority based upon demands for further information to assist in the delivery of sustainable development and they are not subject to independent examination.</p> <p>An SPD cannot in itself establish land use, development management or site allocations policies, but can be used to provide further guidance for development on specific sites or on particular issues.</p> <p>An SPD must contain a reasoned justification of the policies contained within it, must not conflict with the adopted development plan and must have regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State.</p> <p>In preparing an SPD the Council must comply with its Statement of Community Involvement and must carry out formal public consultation for at least four weeks, accompanied by the provision of a Consultation Statement setting out who was consulted in the preparation of the SPD; a summary of the issues raised; and how those issues have been addressed.</p> <p>Once adopted, the SPD would be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. A planning authority can adopt an SPD either as originally prepared or as modified to take account of any representations made in relation to the SPD or any other matter they think is relevant.</p> <p><b>Contact officer:</b> <a href="mailto:cheryl.lester@tewkesbury.gov.uk">cheryl.lester@tewkesbury.gov.uk</a>, Tel: 01684 272691</p>
<b>Corporate and community plan Implications</b>	<p>The SPD directly supports the delivery of policy A7 of the Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Joint Core Strategy as referenced by the Corporate Strategy. The masterplanning principles of the draft SPD supports wider community planning and delivery of the Cheltenham Place Vision.</p>
<b>Property/Asset Implications</b>	<p>The land is currently occupied under a farm business tenancy, and a small parcel being used as a car park under a lease. This will continue to be managed by the property team in line with common practice until such time it is required for development</p> <p><b>Contact:</b> <a href="mailto:dominic.stead@cheltenham.gov.uk">dominic.stead@cheltenham.gov.uk</a> 01242 264151</p>
<b>HR implications (including learning and organisational development)</b>	<p>There are no direct HR implications arising from the content of this report.</p> <p><b>Contact:</b> <a href="mailto:julie.mccarthy@publicagroup.uk">julie.mccarthy@publicagroup.uk</a> 01242 264355</p>

<b>Key risks</b>	If progress is not made on the preparation and adoption of the Cyber Central Garden Community SPD it reduces our ability to establish our parameters for masterplanning at the development management stage.
<b>Environmental/Social/Equality Implications</b>	Progressing with this stage of consultation will allow full public and stakeholder engagement on the master planning principles for the delivery of the Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Joint Core Strategy (JCS) allocation at West Cheltenham. The JCS was subject to Sustainability Appraisal.

## 1. Background

- 1.1 The Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Joint Core Strategy (JCS) was adopted by the three JCS Councils December 2017. Three specific policies are relevant to this report, firstly Policy SA1 – Strategic Allocations, secondly Policy A7 - West Cheltenham and thirdly, Policy SD5 – Green Belt.
- 1.2 Policy SA1 is a delivery policy that sets the context of how the JCS strategic allocations will be delivered. It requires that development proposals should enable a comprehensive scheme to be delivered via a masterplan. The policy sets out expectations in policy terms of use of local green space, the planning of infrastructure and strategy for transport.
- 1.3 Policy A7 formally designates land at West Cheltenham for approximately 1,100 new homes and approximately 45 hectares of employment land to be focussed upon a cyber security hub. The policy provides detail within the context of Policy SA1 and Policy SD5 relating to comprehensive master planning, constraints and transport.
- 1.4 Policy SD5 details the JCS policy for green belt, this also includes land identified to meet longer term development needs and allocated as safeguarded land. Land at West Cheltenham immediately adjacent to land allocated for development by Policy A7 is safeguarded. The trigger for development on this area is through a review of the JCS. The policy sets out criteria for development proposals, should such land be released, in terms on integration, transport and infrastructure and not leading to piecemeal, isolated or inefficient use of land in this area.
- 1.5 In spring 2019 the local planning authorities of Cheltenham and Tewkesbury agreed to the commissioning of consultants to prepare a masterplan SPD for West Cheltenham. It was agreed jointly across the two councils that in order to drive quality both in terms of physical buildings, but also good place making in terms of connectivity to existing communities, transport, green space, infrastructure and sustainability, then the councils needed to take a more directional role in the steering of delivery outcomes. Having an SPD in place will provide further planning guidance to supplement JCS policy A7 and add value in the determination of future planning applications.
- 1.6 6 consultancy bids were submitted via Homes England Framework. Following assessment, including interview of 3 shortlisted bids, consultants Avison Young were appointed.
- 1.7 The draft SPD, the subject of this report, has been prepared under the provisions of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning)(England) Regulations 2012. It is important that the Council as local planning authority takes a lead in the planning of the major strategic allocation at West Cheltenham, by doing so it provides an opportunity for community and stakeholder engagement on the SPD before any decisions are made on this key aspect of delivery of the JCS.

## **2. Garden Community**

- 2.1** In November 2018 a joint bid by Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Councils was made to the Garden Communities programme. The impetus to submit a bid was twofold, firstly concerns around pre application engagement with the site promoters at that time to deliver a successful comprehensive development that embedded the principles of sustainable and mixed communities as set out by the JCS, and secondly to drive the agenda of Cyber Central, building on this opportunity to drive exceptional quality and innovation.
- 2.2** Homes England supported the bid for Garden Communities and this status was awarded June 2019. In providing Garden Community Status to the delivery of West Cheltenham, Homes England will be looking for clear demonstration against the principles set out in the bid, including:
- Diverse living options – varied affordable and flexible tenancies with the first 1000 homes being delivered by CBC
  - Connected – an accessible development that is physically, digitally and culturally integrated
  - A 24/7 campus – a dynamic community that integrates a diverse mixture of uses and people
  - Inclusive – a transformational development that creates strong communities
  - Healthy – a green and biodiverse development that encourages physical and mental well-being
  - Environmentally innovative – an ecologically friendly development that is restorative to its natural surroundings
  - A smart ecosystem – a connected community that is digitally, environmentally and socially intelligent
  - Intense & tranquil – a vibrant and thriving community within a unique landscape setting
  - A world class campus – a collaborative community that brings together leading cyber businesses and innovators alongside academic facilities dedicated to cyber and digital technologies.
- 2.3** In developing this SPD, taking fully into account the principles of Garden Communities we have a unique opportunity to deliver a national exemplar, planning for a pioneering new community that combines world class cyber business and academic facilities, exemplar housing and state of the art amenity and leisure facilities in a highly accessible and environmentally sustainable development. In drafting this SPD Homes England have been fully engaged.

## **3. Consultation and Feedback**

- 3.1** Engagement with the local community and wider stakeholders has been an integral part of the masterplanning process, this has included;
- Internal officer working group - comprising officers from across Cheltenham Borough Council, Tewkesbury Borough Council and Gloucestershire County Council with a remit to consider, advise and inform the emerging SPD, This group has fed into the drafting of the SPD.
  - Engagement with Homes England technical specialists' team.
  - Engagement with stakeholders including NHS, County Education, Gloucestershire Highways, Wildlife and Wetlands Trust, GCHQ, infrastructure providers. Informal engagement has taken place together with an evening workshop on 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2019. 32 people attended the workshop representing the following groups:

BAE Systems, Bamboo Technology Group, Boddington Parish Council, Cheltenham Borough Homes, Cheltenham churches, Cheltenham Borough Council, Church of England, First LEP, Gloucestershire County Council, Gloucester Local Nature Partnership, Hester's Way Neighbourhood Plan Forum, Hester's Way Partnership, local residents, Police, Stagecoach West, Swindon Parish Council, Tewkesbury Borough Council, Uckington Parish Council, University of Gloucestershire and, Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust.

- Four community drop in events were held at the following times and locations;
  - 11th September, 12:30-3pm at Hester's Way Community Centre
  - 11th September, 3:30-5:30pm at Springbank Community Centre
  - 19th September, 1-3:30pm at Tewkesbury-Cheltenham West Community Fire Station
  - 19th September, 4:30-7:30pm at Gloucestershire College

The community drop in events provided the opportunity for local residents to give their thoughts and ideas about the area, and the key opportunities as the masterplan was developed. A large map of the area was tabled alongside information boards introducing the project and key diagrams showing our initial ideas. 210 people attended across the four events. Whilst many wider stakeholders and local groups recognise the benefits of Cyber Central and the opportunities it brings for existing and new residents, residents at engagement sessions nearest to the site raised localised issues relating to boundaries, loss of green space and views, and regarding trees and hedgerows.

**3.2** The feedback from the engagement to date has been invaluable in shaping the masterplanning process and has resulted in redrafting of the SPD in a number of key areas. From the feedback received during this stage of engagement, we have amended the SPD in the following ways:

- Emphasis on green spaces close to the existing community - the plan has been altered following drop-in events with local residents who were supportive of a new park close to the Springbank neighbourhood.
- Impact of traffic and car parking - aiming for the new development to have enough car parking to serve the employment and residential areas. Sustainable transport modes including improved bus networks and cycle networks will also contribute to improving access and reducing the reliance on the private car.
- Spreading the impact of employment - although the focus for the employment area will be to the south of the SPD area, close to GCHQ, conversations have highlighted the opportunity to focus some employment space with good access to the new road to J10 of the M5.
- Integration - comments have strengthened the focus on delivering links and shared facilities for new and existing residents.
- Response to climate change emergency – opportunity to be innovative.

## **4. Consultation on draft SPD**

**4.1** Consultation on this SPD will be undertaken collaboratively by Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Councils and facilitated by the Avison Young consultancy team under the provisions of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning)(England) Regulations 2012.

**4.2** Consultation on the SPD will be undertaken in accordance with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). The SCI is available to view on the Council's website: [www.cheltenham.gov.uk/info/46/planning\\_policy/1040/statement\\_of\\_community\\_involvement](http://www.cheltenham.gov.uk/info/46/planning_policy/1040/statement_of_community_involvement)

- 4.3 Consultation will take place for 5 weeks beginning 13<sup>th</sup> January 2020 and closing 5pm 17<sup>th</sup> February 2020. The minimum period for consultation as set by The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning)(England) Regulations 2012 is 4 weeks.
- 4.4 To aid consultation an online community platform is being created by consultancy Commonplace. This will supplement engagement via our more traditional routes of council websites, general notifications and face to face engagement. Using this platform will help the councils reach those who don't engage through the more traditional channels to help us balance our understanding of community needs and views on the draft SPD. Using this platform will give the councils real time community feedback, allowing us to focus our resources on amendments needed to the SPD.
- 4.5 The following list provides the range of consultation methods that will be utilised;
- Commonplace online community platform
  - Letters/e-mails to all interested parties via CBC/TBC online database, including all councillors and relevant parish councils
  - Leaflet drop to locality directly impacted by the area of the SPD
  - E-mails to Gloucestershire Voluntary and Community Sector
  - Press releases
  - CBC/TBC website
  - CBC/TBC social media accounts (Facebook and Twitter)
  - Posters
  - Public exhibitions
  - Deposit locations for hard copies at council offices, community centres and libraries
- 4.6 Any person may make representations on the SPD. Any such representations must be received by the local planning authority by the date specified.
- 4.7 A consultation statement is provided at appendix 3 of this report.
- 4.8 Technical appendices will be prepared to support the SPD for the purposes of consultations including analysis of site context and constraints and a full summary of the early engagement work with stakeholders and the wider community.

## **5. Reasons for recommendations**

- 5.1 Having an SPD in place for West Cheltenham will support the Council in exercising its responsibilities as a Local Planning Authority. An SPD, once approved will help guide future decision making and will have material weight in decision making.

## **6. Alternative options considered**

- 6.1 Consideration was given to producing the SPD in house, however due to demands of the Planning Policy teams across Cheltenham and Tewkesbury and commitments to the review of the JCS, preparation of the Cheltenham Plan and Tewkesbury Borough Plan, together with limited in-house urban design resource neither the time or specialist skills were available to deliver an SPD in a timely manner.
- 6.2 Given the strategic importance of the delivery of West Cheltenham it was not considered suitable to not prepare an SPD.

## 7. Performance management – monitoring and review

7.1 Following adoption, the Council will monitor the effectiveness of the SPD as part of the planning and development process and will use the results to review policies and practices if necessary.

<b>Report author</b>	<b>Contact: Director of Planning</b> <a href="mailto:tracey.crews@cheltenham.gov.uk">tracey.crews@cheltenham.gov.uk</a> 01242 264126
<b>Appendices</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Risk Assessment</li><li>2. Draft Cyber Central Garden Community Supplementary Planning Document</li><li>3. Consultation Statement</li></ol>
<b>Background information</b>	Gloucester, Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Joint Core Strategy <a href="https://www.jointcorestrategy.org/">https://www.jointcorestrategy.org/</a>

The risk				Original risk score (impact x likelihood)			Managing risk				
Risk ref.	Risk description	Risk Owner	Date raised	Impact 1-5	Likelihood 1-6	Score	Control	Action	Deadline	Responsible officer	Transferred to risk register
	If timely progress is not made on the production and adoption of the Cyber Central Garden Community Supplementary Planning Document it will be more difficult to embed masterplanning principles to deliver against garden community outcomes at the development management stage.	Director of Planning	29/11/2019	4	2	8	Accept	Commence consultation on draft SPD by 13 <sup>th</sup> January 2020.  Seek adoption of the SPD by April 2020.	April 2020	Director of Planning	
<p><b>Explanatory notes</b></p> <p><b>Impact</b> – an assessment of the impact if the risk occurs on a scale of 1-5 (1 being least impact and 5 being major or critical)</p> <p><b>Likelihood</b> – how likely is it that the risk will occur on a scale of 1-6 (1 being almost impossible, 2 is very low, 3 is low, 4 significant, 5 high and 6 a very high probability)</p> <p><b>Control</b> - Either: Reduce / Accept / Transfer to 3rd party / Close</p>											