

Andover Town Centre Public Realm Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document

Report of the Planning Portfolio Holder

Recommended:

1. That the Andover Town Centre Public Realm Design Guide, attached as Annex 1 to the report, be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document.
2. That the Head of Planning Policy and Economic Development be given delegated authority, in consultation with the Planning Portfolio Holder, to make changes of a minor nature prior to publication.

SUMMARY:

- The Andover Town Centre Public Realm Design Guide is recommended for adoption as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). The SPD provides a basis for securing high quality development in Andover Town Centre. It will primarily be used as a tool by Development Management Service to coordinate development of the public realm in Andover Town Centre.
- The draft SPD has been prepared by New Masterplanning as part of the Delivery of the Andover Town Centre Regeneration Masterplan. The options under consideration are whether or not to adopt the recommended SPD.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This report proposes that the draft Andover Town Centre Public Realm Design Guide SPD with changes resulting from the public consultation is adopted. If adopted, the SPD will provide a coordinated guide for the improvement of public space in Andover Town Centre to encourage social and commercial activity.

2 Background

- 2.1 Emerging from the 2020 town centre masterplan, a vision for the town centre was developed with local people and stakeholders. This vision will be translated and applied to Andover's public realm to ensure that public realm improvements play their part in delivering on the shared vision for the town. As part of the Delivery of the Andover Town Centre Masterplan a consortium led by New Masterplanning was appointed to undertake the development of two design guides (Andover Town Centre Public Realm Design Guide and Andover Town Centre Design Guide for Developers and Occupiers). These guides are intended to ensure that a high quality of development design is maintained in the Town Centre in both the Masterplan area and beyond.

- 2.2 Following approval at Cabinet in December 2022 the Andover Town Centre Public Realm Design Guide was consulted upon with the intention for it to be adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). As such, it will carry material weight in the determining of Planning Applications. It will be primarily used as a tool for the Development Management team and those involved with promoting and guiding development in Andover Town Centre.
- 2.3 The Design Guide is concerned with issues such as movement, pedestrian and cycle infrastructure, traffic calming measures, use of space for events, the introduction of green and blue spaces, street furniture, materials, integration of facilities such as EV charging points etc. It is designed to provide a coordinated structure for the many different bodies and Council departments who manage the public realm.
- 2.4 The Design Guide builds on national guidance and best practice. It is not intended to be overly prescriptive or restrictive. It will encourage the best in design and development quality. The guide includes examples of best practice and how they can be applied in the context of Andover Town Centre.
- 2.5 As the Design Guide makes reference to areas of Andover Town Centre that are adopted highway, it makes reference to Hampshire County Council's technical advice and signposts the appropriate processes.

3 Corporate Objectives and Priorities

- 3.1 Growing Our Potential – the Corporate Plan 2019 -2023 identifies town centres as a strategic priority. It recognises the need to change the face of the High Street and future proofing our town centres to be accessible places where people live, shop, work and spend their leisure time. Enhancing public realm and improving the appearance and environments of our town centres will also require investment over time. The Council's new corporate plan will echo these objectives. Andover Vision 2017 – 2037 identifies 5 key themes one of which is being part of a thriving town centre. The Vision recognised that to do this it needs to be creative in developing the future retail, leisure and residential offer for the town centre. Improve the appearance and environment and strengthen and grow the evening and night-time economy.

4 Consultations/Communication

- 4.1 It is a legal requirement to undertake public consultation on an SPD for a minimum period of 4 weeks (The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012, Part 5 Regulation 12(b)). The public consultation period ran from Friday 16th December 2022 to Friday 3rd February 2023 (7 weeks).
- 4.2 Significant public consultation has taken place relating to the objectives of the Andover Town Centre Regeneration Masterplan, in conjunction with Andover Vision and the projects flow from that consultation and the identified aspirations of the community.

- 4.3 The summary of comments and officer responses are contained in annex 2. The public consultation showed support for the design guides approach to green and blue infrastructure and making the River Anton a key feature in the town. There was support shown for the tree planting strategies within the Public realm design SPD and the implementation of strategies that result in a calming effect on road traffic. The representations welcomed the design guides encouragement of walking and cycling and vibrant and healthy street scenes. There were representations made covering community engagement of underrepresented groups on key decisions for infrastructure & design. This is to be considered as part of future proposals. The design guides consideration of seating and arm rests was supported along with the aspects of play and playfulness in the incorporation of children's physical activity in the public realm.

5 Options

- 5.1 There are two options to consider, whether to adopt the SPD (option 1) or not (option 2).

6 Option Appraisal

- 6.1 If the draft Andover Town Centre Public Realm Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document were adopted, the Council would use the document in the negotiation of planning applications and the promotion of high-quality developments. The document will provide guidance to developers and the public on the benefits and delivery of good quality design of public realm in Andover Town Centre. For this reason, this option (option 1) is recommended.
- 6.2 To not adopt the SPD would mean the Council would rely on the design policies contained within the current Local Plan and those of the future Local Plan. These policies are less detailed, more generic and do not make specific reference to Andover Town Centre. This could lead to the Council not securing quality of development and public realm improvements required to realise the Council's regeneration aspirations. A lack of clarity around the public realm is likely to lead to various bodies acting without coordination, leading to a poor quality and confused environment. For these reasons option 2 is not recommended.

7 Resource Implications

- 7.1 Adopting the Public Realm design Guide SPD can be met within existing resources.

8 Legal Implications

- 8.1 Once adopted as an SPD, the Design Guide will form part of the Council's suite of planning documents and would be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. In order to achieve the status, the relevant Regulations have been complied with.

9 Equality Issues

9.1 An EQIA screening has not identified any potential for unlawful discrimination or adverse impact.

10 Other Issues

10.1 Community Safety - None

10.2 Environmental Health Issues – None

10.3 Sustainability and Addressing a Changing Climate - The SPD would contribute towards the negotiation and provision of new development that will contribute towards the environmental sustainability of the Town Centre.

10.4 Property Issues – The content of the SPD will inform future proposals on the Council's future development of its landholdings.

10.5 Wards/Communities Affected – Andover (St Marys)

11 Conclusion

11.1 To help guide and deliver high quality development within Andover Town Centre it is considered that the changes made to the Draft SPD (Annex 1) should be approved and the Draft SPD should be adopted.

Background Papers (Local Government Act 1972 Section 100D)

[Test Valley Borough Revised Local Plan DPD](#)

[Statement of Community Involvement 2023](#)

[Andover Masterplan 2020](#)

Confidentiality

It is considered that this report does not contain exempt information within the meaning of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, and can be made public.

No of Annexes:

2

File Ref:

N/A

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Report to:

Cabinet

Date:

12 April 2023