

MODEL FARM SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT

Report By: Planning Policy Manager

1 Wards Affected

Ross on Wye East

2 Purpose

- 2.1 To inform members of the comments received to the Draft Model Farm Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) published for consultation purposes in June this year and to consider appropriate changes. This document is included within the Council's Local Development Scheme and is being produced as part of Herefordshire's Local Development Framework. As a development brief it outlines the approach that should be taken to the development of the site for employment purposes. Once adopted it will form a material consideration in the determination of future planning applications.

3 Financial Implications

- 3.1 The costs of preparing and producing this document are being met from the Planning Delivery Grant.

4 Background

- 4.1 Model Farm is Council owned land located in the Hildersley area of Ross-on-wye, approximately one mile to the east of the town centre. The site, which totals some 15 hectares is within the settlement boundary of Ross-on-Wye and is identified in the adopted Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan under policy E3 as an allocated employment site.
- 4.2 This supplementary planning document (SPD) has been prepared by consultants on behalf of Ross Area Partnership and Herefordshire Council. It has been produced to expand upon and provide additional information and guidance in support of policies contained within the Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan and in particular particularly policy E3. It expands upon the outline planning permission gained in January 2008 for the development of employment uses including B1, B2 and B8 together with the change of use an adjacent landscape buffer zone. Whilst that permission agreed a new vehicular access to be formed onto the A40(T) to the south east corner of the site, matters concerning the layout, scale, appearance and landscaping of the development were reserved for future consideration.
- 4.3 Whilst significant consultation took place through the UDP process in respect of the use of this land for employment purposes and again more recently through the outline planning application, consultation on the more detailed proposals, design and layout have been through the preparation of this SPD. A draft SPD forming a development brief was published for consultation

purposes in June this year along with a Sustainability Appraisal and Consultation Statement. Consultation on the draft brief took place over a six week period 12 June to 25 July 2008 and was undertaken in accordance with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement. A public meeting was held in the Ryefield Centre, Ross on Wye on 2 July to enable local discussion on the draft proposals.

5 Aims of the SPD

5.1 The principal aim of the SPD is to set out a clear vision for the development and delivery of the site to meet the needs of Ross-on-Wye. It will guide the sustainable development of Model Farm and also help prospective developers achieve a high quality development, maximising the site's contribution to the development of the local economy. In so doing the SPD will:

- Provide guidance on the existing planning policy framework which will influence the delivery of any future planning application;
- Identify the development requirements and constraints of the site;
- Provide guidance on the delivery of high quality design and landscaping principles for the site;
- Provide guidance on the delivery of access and movement to, from and within the site; and
- Ensure that the development can become fully integrated with the surrounding area.

6 Development Objectives

6.1 The principal development objective identified for the site is the creation of a pathfinder employment development, assisting in the growth of the local economy and providing diversified sources of employment away from traditional industries. The SPD confirms a preference for the development of innovative knowledge based businesses which will act as a catalyst for future employment and economic growth within the area. This will result in a diversifying away from a local economy that has been dominated by a number of large storage, distribution and general industrial uses. To achieve this will involve the delivery of a mix of employment uses including high quality commercial space, offices and an element of live/work development with supporting infrastructure.

6.2 In addition to the delivery of a pathfinder employment development, the SPD requires proposals to deliver a scheme which:

- Is a highly sustainable low carbon development
- Is innovative in design
- Promotes vibrant community development
- Is affordable

- Promotes the development of a modern enterprise cluster within the area.

7 Development Requirements

7.1 The SPD requires a comprehensive design approach to be taken to the site as a whole to ensure full integration of all components of the scheme, including the different business uses proposed. Consideration of the site in its entirety will enable the design and layout of the scheme to develop in a cohesive manner and create a sense of identity. Whilst the UDP through policy E3 identifies a number of development issues that need to be addressed within any development, the SPD expands upon and provides additional policy guidance under the following headings:

- Building form and layout
- Access and movement
- Archaeology
- Green buffer
- Landscaping, boundary treatments and nature conservation
- Drainage and aquifer
- Planning obligation

7.2 Further sections describe the additional information that is required to accompany a planning application i.e. design and access statement, surface water drainage scheme, ecological assessment, whilst a number of design principles are set out which any proposal are required to address.

7.3 An element of the Model Farm site has been identified as being appropriate for the delivery of a new form of economic development comprising a live/work development. The SPD describes the live/work concept and its benefits in the context of Ross-on-Wye. Growth in the live/work employment sector provides a significant opportunity for the diversification and growth of rural economies, previously dependent on agricultural and traditional economies.

8. Comments received and Suggested Amendments

8.1 Comments received were from the Environment Agency, Natural England, Advantage West Midlands, Ross Area Partnership, Ross and District Civic Society and a number of local residents. All written comments and the Council's response is set out within the schedule attached (Appendix 1) and the Consultation Statement. In summary, amendments are proposed to address

- Issues relating to the use, management and landscaping of the buffer zone
- Pedestrian and cycle access through/into the buffer zone/use of disused railway line

- Measures to restore, enhance and manage biodiversity into the overall design
- Inclusion of appropriate renewable renewable energy generation to supply the development
- Pollution prevention measures
- Techniques for efficient use of water
- Use of permeable paving solutions

8.2 An amended version of the SPD is attached (Appendix 2).

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Cabinet Member (Environment and Strategic Housing) be recommended to agree the changes to the draft Model Farm SPD as identified in this report and for the document to be adopted as part of the Councils Local Development Framework.

Background papers

Local Development Scheme (January 2008)
Statement of Community Involvement (Adopted March 2007)
Herefordshire Unitary Development Plan (Adopted March 2007)