

Report of	Meeting	Date
Chief Executive (Introduced by the Executive Member for Economic Development and Partnerships)	Executive Cabinet	28 August 2014

CENTRAL LANCASHIRE BIODIVERSITY AND NATURE CONSERVATION SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT UPDATE

PURPOSE OF REPORT

- To seek Member endorsement of the attached draft Central Lancashire Biodiversity and Nature Conservation Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

RECOMMENDATION(S)

- It is recommended that:
 - Executive Cabinet endorses the draft Biodiversity and Nature Conservation SPD, as detailed in Appendix 1, and approves it for consultation for a six week period between September and October.
 - Authority be delegated to the Chief Executive to approve minor changes and amendments prior to the consultation.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF REPORT

- The Central Lancashire authorities are producing a Biodiversity and Nature Conservation SPD. This report explains the purposes and objectives of the Biodiversity and Nature Conservation SPD, summarises its contents, and sets out the broad timetable for consultation and adoption.

Confidential report Please bold as appropriate	Yes	No
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Key Decision? Please bold as appropriate	Yes	No
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REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)

(If the recommendations are accepted)

- To ensure that guidance is produced to provide advice on how the biodiversity and nature conservation policies, as set out in the Core Strategy and the Chorley, Preston and South Ribble emerging Local Plans, are to be implemented.

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

5. None.

CORPORATE PRIORITIES

6. This report relates to the following Strategic Objectives:

Involving residents in improving their local area and equality of access for all		A strong local economy	
Clean, safe and healthy communities	✓	An ambitious council that does more to meet the needs of residents and the local area	

BACKGROUND

7. SPDs offer local planning authorities the opportunity to add guidance in specific policy areas. They are documents that must be prepared in consultation with interested parties, and must be subject to a screening process to discover whether a sustainability appraisal would be required. Unlike Development Plan Documents (DPDs) SPDs do not require independent examination before they are adopted.
8. On adoption, this SPD will be one of a suite of Central Lancashire SPDs that form part of the Local Development Framework for the Central Lancashire authorities of Chorley, Preston and South Ribble. They are to be considered alongside policy in the Central Lancashire Core Strategy and the Local Plans of the three authorities. The Councils are working alongside the Wildlife Trust for Lancashire, Manchester and North Merseyside (The Wildlife Trust) and Lancashire County Council (LCC) to produce this SPD.
9. This SPD relates to Core Strategy Policy 22 on biodiversity and geodiversity. In addition, the authorities each have a policy on biodiversity and nature conservation in their emerging Local Plans. These policies are listed in the Appendix to the SPD (Appendix 1).
10. This SPD explains the Councils' approach towards conserving, protecting and enhancing biodiversity. Planning can make an important contribution to protecting and improving biodiversity, which is defined as 'the variety of all life on earth'. Development can have a negative impact on biodiversity, both directly, through the destruction of habitat, and indirectly (e.g. development that results in changes to air or water quality over time). Development can also have positive impacts for biodiversity by integrating new habitats with adjacent spaces.

CONTENT OF THE SPD

11. The SPD provides guidance for applicants in terms of understanding the relevant Central Lancashire policies and what is required as part of the planning application process in order to protect, conserve and enhance biodiversity.
12. The National Planning Policy Framework (The Framework) and the local planning policies refer to the concept of ecological networks. Ecological networks are links between sites of biodiversity importance. Lancashire County Council have produced ecological network mapping for Lancashire to cover woodland and scrub, grassland, and wetland and heath habitats. The SPD provides information on how to consider planning applications having an impact on ecological networks in the Central Lancashire context.

13. The SPD includes sections on the following matters:

- The legislative framework in relation to biodiversity
- Relevant national and local policies on biodiversity and nature conservation
- Designated sites of biodiversity importance
- The Lancashire Ecological Network
- Biodiversity and the Planning application process including:
 - When are surveys and assessments required?
 - Who should undertake a survey and assessment?
 - At what time of the year should surveys and assessments be carried out?
 - Where can data to inform the survey and assessment be obtained?
 - What should be included in a survey and assessment?
 - Designing development to conserve and enhance biodiversity
 - Determination of applications
 - Implementation

NEXT STAGES

14. If approved for consultation, the SPD will be consulted on by the three authorities for a 6 week period during September/October 2014. Following consultation, all comments and suggestions will be analysed and the SPD finalised. In Chorley, it is then proposed to report the final SPD to Council with a recommendation to adopt on 25th November 2014.
15. Final adoption cannot take place until the SPD and a statement setting out the people consulted and a summary of the main issues raised and how they have been addressed, is made available for a minimum of 4 weeks. Adoption is intended to take place after this period in January 2015.

IMPLICATIONS OF REPORT

16. This report has implications in the following areas and the relevant Directors' comments are included:

Finance	✓	Customer Services	
Human Resources		Equality and Diversity	
Legal	✓	Integrated Impact Assessment required?	
No significant implications in this area		Policy and Communications	

COMMENTS OF THE STATUTORY FINANCE OFFICER

17. There are no comments.

COMMENTS OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

18. Adoption of SPD's is voluntary and does not require local examination although a public consultation must be carried out. The procedure to be followed is laid down in The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. The SPD must not conflict with the adopted development plan. The SPD is a material consideration in determining planning applications.

GARY HALL
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Background Papers			
Document	Date	File	Place of Inspection
Central Lancashire Core Strategy	July 2012		www.centrallancashire.com
Chorley Local Plan 2012-2026 (Amended in accordance with Inspector's Partial Report – 6 th November 2013)	November 2013		www.chorley.gov.uk
South Ribble Site Allocations Partial Version 2013	2013		www.southribble.gov.uk
Preston Local Plan (Site Allocations) 2012 - 2026	2014		www.preston.gov.uk

Report Author	Ext	Date	Doc ID
Stephen Lamb	5282	30/07/14	Biodiversity SPD Exec Cabinet Report – August 2014