

Report of	Meeting	Date
Director of Business, Development and Growth (introduced by the Executive Member for Economic Development and Public Service Reform)	Council	19 September 2017

CENTRAL LANCASHIRE EMPLOYMENT SKILLS SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT (SEPTEMBER 2017)

PURPOSE OF REPORT

- To seek adoption of the Central Lancashire Employment Skills Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

RECOMMENDATION(S)

- Members are asked to adopt the Central Lancashire Employment Skills Supplementary Planning Document SPD as detailed in Appendix 1 and delegate authority to the Development and Regeneration Manager in consultation with the Executive Member to make any minor text, layout and formatting changes on the publication of the document.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF REPORT

- This report explains the purposes and objectives of the Central Lancashire Employment Skills SPD which has now been finalised and is intended to be adopted for use for development control purposes.

Confidential report Please bold as appropriate	Yes	No
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CORPORATE PRIORITIES

- 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

- Supplementary Planning Documents (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.

- 6 This SPD is one of a suite of Central Lancashire SPDs that have already been adopted in accordance with the Local Planning Regulations and the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework), conforming and responding to all relevant local and national policies, and based upon a robust and up-to-date evidence base. These SPDs form part of the Local Development Framework (LDF) for the Council, and the other Central Lancashire authorities. They are to be considered alongside policy in the Central Lancashire Core Strategy and the Chorley Local Plan.
- 7 One of Central Lancashire's priorities is to encourage economic growth within Central Lancashire that benefits the people and businesses in the three boroughs. This involves increasing employment opportunities by helping local businesses to improve, grow and take on more staff, helping businesses to find suitable staff and suppliers, especially local ones, and improving the skills of local people to enable them to take advantage of the employing opportunities. The aim of this Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) is to facilitate this by helping businesses already located in Central Lancashire to grow and attract new businesses into the area.
- 8 The SPD does not introduce new policies. The SPD provides planning guidance in relation to the preparation of the Employment and Skills plans which supports the implementation of Core Strategy Policy 15: Skills and Economic Inclusion. The SPD has been prepared jointly between the 3 authorities' Planning and Economic Development colleagues and should therefore be taken into consideration from the earliest stages of the development process of any site, including any purchase negotiations and in the preparation of development schemes. This SPD will be a significant positive for the three Councils and will only be the third in the North-West and first in the country that has been jointly prepared.
- 9 Executive Cabinet granted approval to consult on the draft Central Lancashire Employment Skills SPD in January 2017. The subsequent 6 week consultation was carried out from Monday 30 January until Monday 13 March 2017. Approximately 3000 individuals, companies, statutory consultees and interest groups were notified of the consultation on the draft SPD. All of the documentation relating to the SPD was available to view on each of the Council's website throughout the consultation period. The documents were also available to view at deposit points across the 3 areas, which included the Council Offices and Libraries, and some Post Offices particularly in villages without a library. The consultation was advertised using each Council's Social Media and by press releases. The consultation was also publicised in Chorley Council's e-zines, 'In the Know' and 'In the Boro'.

SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION

- 10 19 responses were received as part of the January – March 2017 consultation. The responses fell into three categories, very supportive of the aims of the SPD; wish to make no comments and those who raised issues. The issues can be summarised as following:
 - Concerns as to extent of information required to validate an application
 - Query how the thresholds have been arrived at as to when a statement is required
 - Stress the need for flexibility to acknowledge the fluid nature of projects
 - Query policy justification and whether this is spatial planning
 - Concerns as to impact upon deliverability of schemes, stifling or delaying development having regard to the advice in the National Planning Policy Framework
- 11 Following this, amendments were made to the SPD, which included to:
 - Seek to align the document with the National Skills Academy for Construction (NSAfC) approach both in terms of the CITBA 'Toolkit' and 'Client Based Approach - Local Client Guidance'.
 - Greater clarity on what the statement will potentially cover.

- Updating of the factual position in respect of the various projects across the three authority areas.
- 12 Under the planning regulations, the revised SPD along with a statement setting out the people consulted when preparing the SPD, a summary of the main issues raised and how these issues have been addressed must be made available for a minimum of 4 weeks before it is adopted. The 4 week period took place from Wednesday 28 June until Wednesday 26 July 2017. A further 4 responses were received, three not making comments and one supporting the SPD which the Councils have noted and which have not resulted in any further additions to the SPD. All 23 responses and the Councils responses are attached at Appendix 2.
- 13 The adopted version will provide clarification in respect of what constitutes a 'Commercial Use'. Therefore it is proposed at paragraph 10.2 of the SPD that Commercial Use will for the purpose of the SPD comprise B1 Business, B2 General Industrial, B8 Storage or Distribution, A1 Shops, A2 Financial and Professional Services, A3 Restaurant and Cafes, A4 Drinking establishments, A5 Hot food takeaways. There may be occasions when the Uses are developed jointly as part of one application and if the cumulative floorspace exceeds 1000sqm a statement will be required.

CONTENT OF THE SPD

- 14 To complement existing activity and facilitate opportunity in association with economic growth envisaged through this SPD, the authorities will now be introducing the need for the submission of an Employment and Skills Statement with a relevant planning application (with the exception of outline applications). The scale of development that triggers the need for a plan being:

Commercial Floorspace over 1000sqm

Housing Developments over 30 units

- 15 The need for an Employment and Skills Statement and what it will cover will be highlighted during pre-application discussions. The requirement for a statement will be included in each authority's validation checklist requiring an update. A statement received as part of an individual application above the threshold will be verified by Employment Skills and Business Support and Planning Policy. Planning Policy will monitor the SPD as part of the Central Lancashire Core Strategy monitoring report.
- 16 An applicant will be required to complete an Employment and Skills Statement template providing all the key background factual information associated with the development (see pages 11- 12 of Appendix 1). Further information will be requested by the development management sections on a case by case basis as appropriate.
- 17 The Employment and Skills Statement will cover such areas as:
- Creation of apprenticeships
 - Recruitment
 - Training (NVQ)
 - Work Experience (14-16 years, 16-19 years and 19+ years)
 - Work trials
 - Links with schools, colleges and university
 - Use of local suppliers
 - Skills Certification
 - Support with transport, childcare and work equipment
- 18 Once the content of the Employment and Skills Statement has been agreed as part of the consideration of the planning application, it will be usually be possible to control the implementation of the Plan via a planning condition or subject to an obligation under

Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 the signing of which will coincide with the grant of planning permission. Specific activities, target numbers, supervision responsibilities and time parameters will be agreed before construction begins. Once adopted, this SPD should be afforded significant weight as a material consideration in determining planning applications.

NEXT STEPS

19. Accordingly, the final version of the SPD is being placed before Members for approval to adopt for use for development control purposes. Officers of South Ribble Borough Council and Preston City Council are taking the equivalent reports through their respective approval procedures. Each Council will then follow similar adoption arrangements and the adoption period identified in paragraph 20 below.
20. Following adoption the SPD and adoption statement will be placed on the Council's website; made available at the Council's Civic offices and local libraries and post offices in villages without a library. Any person aggrieved by the adoption of this SPD may apply to the High Court for permission to apply for judicial review of the decision to adopt the SPD. Any such application for leave to review the decision must be made promptly and in any case not later than three months after the date on which the adoption statement is published – that is by Monday 1 January 2018.

IMPLICATIONS OF REPORT

21. 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

22. There are no financial implications for the Council associated with this report.

COMMENTS OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

23. The legal requirements are set out within the report and SPD, I have no further comments.

MARK LESTER
DIRECTOR OF BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT AND GROWTH

Background Papers			
Document	Date	File	Place of Inspection
Draft Central Lancashire Employment Skills SPD (December 2016)	19 January 2017	17.EC.56	http://mod/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=115&MID=5016#A149707

Report Author	Ext	Date	Doc ID
Alison Marland	5281	7 September 2017	***