

CABINET – 28th APRIL 2005

Report of the Head of Planning Services

ITEM 9 SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENTATION
LEADING IN DESIGN: SHOPFRONTS & SIGNS, FINAL DRAFT

Purpose of the Report

To consider the draft supplementary planning documentation (SPD), Leading in Design: Shopfronts & Signs for adoption, following full consultation.

Recommendations

1. That consideration is given to the representations made under regulation 18 of the Town & Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 and approve the minor amendments identified by the Head of Planning Services. (Appendix 1)
2. That Leading in Design: Shopfronts & Signs is adopted as Supplementary Planning Documentation and is made available as directed by regulation 19 of the Town & Country Planning (Local Development) (England) 2004.

Reasons

1. To review the proposed SPD following full consultation on the draft document to comply with regulation 18 of the Town & Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations.
2. To enable the Leading in Design: Shopfronts & Signs document to be considered for adoption as SPD. (Appendix 2)

Policy Context

Recently published Central Government guidance, Planning Policy Statement 1, states that '*Good design ensures attractive, usable, durable and adaptable places and is a key element in achieving sustainable development. Good design is indivisible from good planning.*' and that '*Design which fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area should not be accepted*'. Development proposals should not be conceived as short term and should be judged by their long-term impact. It advocates the use of design guides to steer development proposals and

identifies shopfronts as a good example. The use of guidelines enables the Council to communicate its commitment to all in the development process.

Regional Planning Guidance for the East Midlands supports the use of 'design led' approaches to development, which take account of historic character. It also stresses the need for architectural design to be functional and to support vitality, yet respect local building character.

In the draft Corporate Plan to 2011/12 one of the priorities for the Council in this Plan period is *'to protect the look and feel of our towns, village and countryside and the key features of our Charnwood heritage'*, of which shopfronts make up a significant part.

This guidance is intended to support this priority and to be particularly relevant to two of the Council's key aims: a sustainable environment and a prosperous and vibrant local economy.

Many policies of the Charnwood Local Plan seek to improve the visual attractiveness of the Borough, including its shopping areas. Policies CA/11 Shopfront Design and CA/12 Shopfront Security aim to ensure that the design of new and replacement shop fronts does not detract from these wider initiatives.

Background

The intention of the guidance is to support the advice in Charnwood – Leading in Design. It sets out the general principles that should be followed in order to achieve good shop sign and shopfront design. The Council recognises that companies make an investment in promoting their business and image. In turn we ask those companies to realise that the Council and other public bodies make an investment in conserving and restoring the character of our streets. This character makes a significant contribution to the commercial vitality and viability of an area. It outlines criteria to be followed in recognising and respecting the essential character of our streets in order to achieve a balance between the extremes of too much control, which can result in a stifling affect, and too much commercial freedom which results in the visual chaos which devalues many places.

This document outlines the Council's aim for improving the standard of shopfront design and advertisement display throughout the Borough. The objectives of this design guidance are not to introduce additional control beyond the current provisions but to assist applicants in the preparation of plans for shopfront works and advertisement proposals in the Borough's towns and villages, and to assist the

Local Planning Authority in carrying out its duty to control development in accordance with relevant policies and government guidance.

In line with the requirements for the preparation of SPD set out in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the initial draft guidance was subject to a four-week key stakeholder consultation period. The representations received were summarised in the Cabinet report of 28th November 2004, which also includes the Head of Planning Service's comments on the issues raised. Following the consideration of Cabinet, a further draft of the document went out to public consultation in January 2005 for a period of four weeks and was accompanied by a sustainability statement and a statement of consultation, as required by the 2004 Act. Following this second round of consultation a summary of the comments received (Appendix 1) and a final amended version of the document has been prepared (Appendix 2), which is now presented for consideration for adoption by Cabinet as SPD. None of the responding consultees made comments on the Sustainability Appraisal. Once adopted the guidance will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

Background Papers: Charnwood Borough Council (2004), '*Borough of Charnwood Local Plan*'.
Charnwood Borough Council (2004), Draft 'Charnwood –
Leading in Design SPD

Key Decision: No

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