

TITLE OF REPORT: Coatsworth Shopfront Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document – Proposed appendix to support detailed design guidance for planning applications

REPORT OF: Paul Dowling, Strategic Director, Communities and Environment

Purpose of the Report

1. The report seeks Cabinet approval to publish the proposed appendix to the 2013 Coatsworth Shopfront Design guide Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for consultation (attached at Appendix 2), which sets out detailed design guidelines to support planning applications. This will be made available as both a printed 'hard-copy' document, and a web-based resource.

Background

2. Section 71 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 places on Local Planning Authorities the duty to draw up and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of conservation areas in their district. There is also a requirement under s.71 to consult the local community.
3. In 2012 The Council successfully secured a grant from Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) to deliver a Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) scheme in Coatsworth Conservation Area which focused on the shopfronts and buildings along Coatsworth Road.
4. As part of the preparation for the scheme, to meet HLF criteria, a conservation area character appraisal and management plan was prepared and subsequently adopted by the Council as a supplementary planning document (SPD) on 16 April 2013.
5. A condition of the THI, is that the Council is required to prepare, and adopt a shopfront design guide. This, with conservation area management strategy, will inform the future development of the conservation area in a constructive manner, assist the delivery of the THI, and provide a mechanism for the maintenance of the public investment during the THI after the project has ended in 2017.

Shopfront Design

6. The THI scheme has a strong focus on the renewal of shopfronts, including restoration of historic fronts, and replacement shopfronts. The Shopfront Design Guide was prepared specifically to respond to the nature of the THI and the grants identified as well as to assist with scheme development. The restoration of, or replacement of, shopfronts is a significant component of the THI and one which will have a material effect on the appearance of Coatsworth Road. The guidance was prepared to inform the restoration of existing, traditional shopfronts, and the replacement of shopfronts on Coatsworth Road.

7. The guidance was adopted by the Council as a supplementary planning document on 16 April 2013 to be used as a material planning consideration in the determination of planning applications in Coatsworth Conservation Area.

New Guidance

8. The THI scheme is due to finish in June 2018. As part of the THI conditions, the HLF requires the Council to provide a plan to maintain the investment generated through the THI scheme.
9. Feedback during the scheme noted that the approved shopfront design guide did not provide sufficient detail for shop owners or tenants to use to develop planning applications. The good/bad practice was welcome but more images, large scale drawings and plan based information would benefit the audience.
10. The shopfront design guide is proposed to be amended, to include an appendix of large scale drawings and details, and specific technical advice on creating a shopfront in a user friendly format for owners and tenants. This will meet the HLF criteria to produce a plan to maintain investment.
11. The revised SPD will supplement policy CS15 of the Local Plan and draft policy MSGP26 of Making Spaces for Growing Places.
12. The revised SPD contributes to the requirement in the National Policy Planning Framework (NPPF) paragraph 126 to publish a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment.

Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)

13. Under section 18 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, Councils are required to produce an SCI, which outlines the Council's strategy for involving community groups, stakeholders and other organisations in the preparation and review of planning policy documents, and in the consideration of planning applications. The NPPF continues to place emphasis on early and proactive engagement with interested parties in the Development Management process, and in the preparation of Local Plan documents.
14. This is an updated SCI, the previous update was in 2013, and the SCI was first adopted in 2007.
15. The approach to consultation as set out in the SCI will apply to all future Local Plan documents prepared by the Council, and in determining planning applications. The objectives and guidelines set out will be in line with those established as part of the wider Council approach to community engagement.
16. Changes in the approach in the SCI see a shift towards electronic forms of consultation such as email and social media which reflects both a reduction in Council resources and a shift in the way the public and other stakeholders communicate.

Policy Context

1. The review of, and proposed amendment to, the Shopfront Design Guide SPD forms part of the Council's Local Plan.
2. As part of the Local Plan, the revised Shopfront Design Guide SPD will help deliver Vision 2030.
3. Coatsworth Conservation Area was designated in 1987. The Coatsworth Conservation Area Management Strategy (CAMS) was prepared to specifically support and amplify saved Unitary Development Plan (UDP) Policies and emerging Core Strategy Policies as part of the THI scheme development. This was adopted as SPD in 2013. The CAMS and Shopfront Design Guide support the Local Plan policy CS15 'Promoting Place Making'. The documents also relate to Saved UDP Policies ENV 7 – 10 which deal with development in, or affecting conservation areas until the UDP Policies are replaced by the draft Making Spaces for Growing Places Plan and specifically draft policy MSGP26.

Background

4. The Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) grant scheme is designed to protect and repair historic properties and features in Conservation Areas. Following the Council's success with the previous THI in the Bridges Conservation Area, the Council successfully submitted secured a THI scheme for Coatsworth Road.
5. Project development funding awarded at Stage 1 was used to specialist conservation consultants The North of England Civic Trust (NECT) to manage the bid process, undertake necessary heritage led building surveying and valuations, prepare a Conservation Area Character Appraisal (CACA), CAMS and Shopfront Guide.
6. The CAMS aims to provide guidance to the local community, developers, the Council and statutory agencies to promote the protection and enhancement of the Conservation Area through the positive management of change and the identification of opportunities for improvement. The CAMS document will provide a framework for managing the implementation of the THI on Coatsworth Road.
7. The Shopfront Design Guide has been prepared to provide guidance for the restoration of existing, traditional shopfronts, and the replacement of shopfronts on Coatsworth Road. This will underpin the offer of grants through the THI for works affecting shopfronts.

Consultation and Next Steps

8. Following consultation on the draft appendix to the Coatsworth Shopfront Design Guide SPD from 1 June to 31 July 2018, the Council will review the representations and comments received and revisit the draft appendix accordingly, making any adjustments which are considered to be necessary in consultation with Cabinet Members and other internal consultees.

9. The Cabinet Members for Environment and Transport and ward councillors have been consulted on this report.

Alternative Options

10. The Council could choose to not consult on the proposed appendix to the Shopfront Design Guide. However, this would impact negatively on the future maintenance of the investment received through the THI and the successful shopfront restoration schemes achieved to date. The publication of the CAMS and shopfront design guide are a requirement of the THI.

Implications of Recommended Option

11. Resources:

- a) **Financial Implications** – Some modest cost will arise in consulting on the draft appendix. The Strategic Director, Corporate Resources confirms that these costs will be accommodated from within existing resources.
- b) **Human Resources Implications** – There are no human resource implications arising from this report.
- c) **Property Implications** - There are no direct property implications arising from this report.

12. **Risk Management Implication** – Progressing and ultimately adopting this appendix will ensure it has full weight when it comes to planning decisions and will help to ensure the delivery of a positive strategy to conserve and enhance the historic environment. A consequence of not progressing and consulting on this appendix would reduce the ability of the Council to maintain the investment secured through the THI scheme. This would increase the likelihood of new developments being assessed and decided in an unplanned way and reduce the ability of Gateshead to resist inappropriate development.

13. **Equality and Diversity Implications** – There are no equality and diversity implications arising from this report.

14. **Crime and Disorder Implications** – There are no crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

15. **Health Implications** – There are no health implications arising from this report.

16. **Sustainability Implications** – There are no sustainability implications arising from this report.

17. **Human Rights Implications** - There are no human rights implications arising from this report. As part of the Local Plan process the Council has a Statement of Community Involvement in place which will be complied with in consulting and engaging with the local community.

18. **Area and Ward Implications** – **Saltwell, Bridges and Lobley Hill and Bensham**

Appendix

Copies of the Appendices will be available in the Members' room and will be accessible on-line.

2. Draft Appendix to the Coatsworth Shopfront Design Guide SPD MSGP Local Plan document

Background Documents

3. Approved Coatsworth Shopfront Design Guide SPD 2013
(<http://www.gateshead.gov.uk/DocumentLibrary/Building/regeneration/Coatsworth-Road-Design-Guide.pdf>)
4. Approved Coatsworth Conservation Area Management Strategy SPD and Conservation Area Character Appraisal, 2013
(<http://www.gateshead.gov.uk/Building%20and%20Development/PlanningpolicyandLDF/LocalPlan/SupplementaryPlanningDocuments/Coatsworth-Road-Conservation-Area-Management-Strategy.aspx>)