

**SUBJECT: Local Development Plan Draft Sustainable Tourism  
Accommodation Supplementary Planning Guidance**

**MEETING: Planning Committee**

**DATE: 7 March 2017**

**DIVISIONS/WARDS AFFECTED: All**

## **1 PURPOSE**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek Planning Committee's endorsement of Draft Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) on Sustainable Tourism Accommodation, with a view to issuing for consultation.

## **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 To endorse the Draft Sustainable Tourism Accommodation SPG, with a view to issuing for consultation, and to recommend to the Cabinet Member for Innovation, Enterprise and Leisure accordingly.

## **3 KEY ISSUES**

### Background

- 3.1 The Monmouthshire Local Development Plan (2011-2021) was adopted in February 2014 to become the adopted development plan for the County (excluding that part within the Brecon Beacons National Park). This statutory development plan contains a number of policies relevant to tourism which are set out in Appendix A of the Draft SPG (attached as Appendix 1). Legislation requires that planning applications are determined in accordance with the LDP, unless material planning considerations indicate otherwise. Consequently, the effectiveness and appropriateness of the LDP policies is essential in securing desired tourism outcomes. However, it is worth noting that the LDP does not have to cover all eventualities. Indeed, Welsh Government guidance on producing LDPs requires that LDPs do not duplicate national planning policy. Topics or types of tourism not covered by specific LDP policies can be considered under national planning policy and/or material planning considerations.
- 3.2 The Economy and Development Select Committee, at its meeting on 13 October 2016, received a report which provided an update on the effectiveness of the LDP policy framework in enabling/delivering tourism related development since the Plan's adoption and reviewed the extent to which the LDP is supporting sustainable forms of tourism accommodation. Particular consideration was given to the policy support for proposals for 'glamping' accommodation - an identified key growth area that the Council wishes to support in principle. The report subsequently recommended that draft SPG be prepared to provide clarity on how proposals for sustainable tourism accommodation will be considered and that the SPG be reported back to Economy and Development Select Committee prior to the SPG being

circulated for public consultation. The SPG was reported to Economy and Development Select Committee on 9<sup>th</sup> February 2017 for comment and endorsement to publicise for public consultation.

- 3.3 Selective use of SPG is a means of setting out more detailed thematic or site specific guidance on the way in which the policies of an LDP will be applied in particular circumstances or areas.

PPW (Edition 9, 2016) at paragraph 2.3.3 states that:

*'SPG does not form part of the development plan but it must be consistent with the plan and with national policy. It must derive from and be clearly cross referenced to a generic LDP policy, specific policies for places, and/or – in the case of a masterplan or site brief – a plan allocation. SPG cannot be linked to national policy alone; there must be an LDP policy or policy criterion that provides the development plan 'hook', whilst the reasoned justification provides clarification of the related national policy.'*

- 3.4 Paragraph 2.3.4 of PPW further emphasises that SPG can be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications, provided that it is consistent with the development plan and appropriate consultation has been undertaken:

*'Only the policies in the development plan have special status under section 38(6) of the 2004 Act in deciding planning applications, but SPG may be taken into account as a material consideration. In making decisions on matters that come before it, the Welsh Government and the Planning Inspectorate will give substantial weight to approved SPG which derives from and is consistent with the development plan, and has been the subject of consultation.'*

#### Draft Sustainable Tourism Accommodation SPG

- 3.5 The Draft Sustainable Tourism Accommodation SPG is attached to this report as an **Appendix 1**. The SPG is intended to provide certainty and clarity for applicants, officers and Members in the interpretation and implementation of the existing LDP policy framework in relation to proposals for sustainable forms of visitor accommodation. For the purposes of this SPG sustainable visitor accommodation is concerned primarily with glamping facilities, although it would also apply to other forms of sustainable visitor accommodation. The guidance relates to proposals outside settlement boundaries (as identified on the LDP proposals maps). The SPG provides an overview of the national and local planning policy context in relation to sustainable tourism, clarifies what is meant by sustainable tourism accommodation in relation to Strategic Policy S11 and outlines the various types of sustainable tourism accommodation to which this SPG relates. The main part of the SPG (Section 4) provides guidance on the interpretation and implementation of the LDP policy framework in relation to proposals for sustainable forms of visitor accommodation. Information is also provided with regard to submitting a

planning application for sustainable visitor accommodation, including details of the Council's pre-planning application advice service.

- 3.6 Further detail/information is provided in the appendices to the SPG. Appendix B sets out the key policy considerations for assessing particular types of glamping accommodation, namely yurts, tepees, bell tents, wooden pods/tents, shepherd's huts and tree houses. These types of glamping facilities are specifically included as they have become increasingly popular in recent years and are likely to continue to be so. A list of example planning conditions that may apply to planning permissions for glamping proposals is provided in Appendix C.

### Next Steps

- 3.7 As referred to in paragraph 3.4 above, for SPG to be given weight in the consideration of planning applications, appropriate consultation needs to be undertaken and any comments received should be taken into account in the Council's decision making process. Following a resolution to consult, targeted notifications will be sent to those considered to have an interest in the SPG topic, although all town and community councils will be consulted and a notice will be placed in the press. The consultation will also be publicised via our Twitter account @MCCPlanning. All consultation replies will be analysed and responses/amendments reported for Members' consideration when seeking a resolution for the adoption of any SPG document.

## **4. REASONS**

- 4.1 Under the Planning Act (2004) and associated Regulations, all local planning authorities were required to produce a LDP. The Monmouthshire LDP was adopted on 27 February 2014 and decisions on planning applications are now being taken in accordance with policies and proposals in the LDP. The Draft Sustainable Tourism Accommodation SPG provides further explanation and guidance on the way in which the tourism related policies will be applied to proposals for sustainable forms of visitor accommodation.

## **5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 Officer time and costs associated with the preparation of SPG documents and carrying out the required consultation exercises. Any costs will be met from the Planning Policy budget and carried out by existing staff

## **6. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS**

### Sustainable Development

- 6.1 Under the Planning Act (2004), the LDP was required to be subject to a Sustainability Appraisal (SA). The role of the SA was to assess the extent to which the emerging planning policies would help to achieve the wider environmental, economic and social objectives of the LDP. The LPA also produced a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) in accordance with

the European Strategic Environment Assessment Directive 2001/42/EC; requiring the 'environmental assessment' of certain plans and programmes prepared by local authorities, including LDP's. All stages of the LDP were subject to a SA/SEA, therefore and the findings of the SA/SEA were used to inform the development of the LDP policies and site allocations in order to ensure that the LDP would be promoting sustainable development. SPG is expanding and providing guidance on these existing LDP policies, which were prepared within a framework promoting sustainable development.

### Equality

- 6.2 The LDP was also subjected to an Equality Challenge process and due consideration given to the issues raised. As with the sustainable development implications considered above, SPG is expanding and providing guidance on these existing LDP policies, which were prepared within this framework.
- 6.3 In addition a Future Generations Evaluation is attached. This includes Equalities and Sustainability Impact Assessments (attached as **Appendix 2**).

## **7. CONSULTEES:**

- Economy and Development Select Committee
- Planning Committee

## **8. BACKGROUND PAPERS:**

- Monmouthshire Adopted LDP (February 2014)
- Monmouthshire Local Development Plan Annual Monitoring Reports, 2014-15, 2015-16.

## **9. AUTHOR & CONTACT DETAILS**

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