

**Report To:** Planning Committee

**Date of Meeting:** 22nd October 2014

**Lead Member / Officer:** Cllr David Smith, Public Realm  
Angela Loftus, Development Planning and Policy Manager

**Report Author:** Kirsty Henderson, Conservation Project Officer

**Title:** Conservation Areas Supplementary Planning Guidance – Consultation draft

**1. What is the report about?**

- 1.1. This report accompanies a draft Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) document on conservation areas which, if adopted, will be used to assist in the proactive management of conservation areas and the determination of planning applications affecting conservation areas.

**2. What is the reason for making this report?**

- 2.1. Following the adoption of the Denbighshire Local Development Plan (LDP), and the update of national guidance, an updated SPG on conservation areas is required in order to provide further guidance for developers, Officers, Members and the public. A draft SPG for public consultation is attached to this report (Appendix 1).

**3. What are the recommendations?**

- 3.1. That Members agree the draft SPG on conservation areas as a basis for public consultation.

**4. Report details**

- 4.1. Following the adoption of the LDP on 4th June 2013, Council agreed to carry forward the existing series of SPGs, including SPG 13 – Conservation Areas. Conservation Areas are “areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. National guidance has been updated since the adoption of the original SPG in 2003, in particular Planning Policy Wales (2014); Cadw’s new policy

document Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment in Wales (2011) and TAN 12. English Heritage has also produced guidance on Conservation Area Management: 'Understanding Place: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management' (2011). It should be noted that the English Heritage document only relates to England and some of the rules and regulations will differ in Wales but it does contain principles to consider which are generic to conservation area management. There are also differences between the previous Unitary Development Plan (UDP) and LDP policies, which may have an impact on planning applications affecting conservation areas. It is necessary to produce an updated SPG on this topic. If adopted, the SPG will be a material planning consideration when assessing applications that affect conservation areas.

- 4.2. Denbighshire County Council has 33 conservation areas. They exist in town centres and rural areas and the special architectural and historic interest of each conservation area is difference and unique. Providing positive and clear guidance in an SPG will supplement relevant LDP policies on respecting distinctiveness, sustainable development, promoting a sustainable economy and valuing our environment.
- 4.3. The public consultation period would be a minimum of 8 weeks and is anticipated to start in mid November 2014. The results of the consultation will be reported back to Planning Committee with a final SPG for adoption.

## **5. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?**

- 5.1. The SPG provides guidance on conservation areas. The positive management conservation areas undertaken through the planning process relates to two corporate policies – 'Developing the local economy', and 'Clean and tidy streets'.
- 5.2. The physical location and number of conservation areas in the centre of all the County's towns and in most villages, is a key consideration for ensuring that development proposals in conservation areas are managed in a positive way with other land use policies, in order to retain their special character and appearance that makes the towns and rural areas of Denbighshire unique. Appropriate management of these buildings are directly relevant to Corporate Priorities – 'Clean and Tidy Streets' and 'Developing the Local Economy'. 'Clean and Tidy Streets' states that - "Denbighshire benefits from having an attractive and inviting landscape, as well as a spread of historic and cultural towns and villages. The quality of this public space is key to encouraging people to move into the county, as well as attracting tourists that help to support the local economy."

**6. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?**

- 6.1. Any costs associated with agreeing the SPG for consultation is contained within existing budgets and it will not affect other services.

**7. What are the main conclusions of the Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) undertaken on the decision? The completed EqIA template should be attached as an appendix to the report.**

- 7.1 An EqIA is not considered necessary for this decision. The principle of managing appropriate change in conservation areas is in national legislation, and supported through adoption of the LDP. The SPG provides further detailed guidance on this. The LDP underwent a full EqIA in May 2011.

**8. What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?**

- 8.1 No formal consultation has been carried out, but informal consultation has been carried out with officers in Development Management Team.
- 8.2 Member input on the content of the SPG has also been provided through the LDP Members Steering Group.

**9. Chief Finance Officer Statement**

- 9.1 Any costs associated with the guidance should be contained within existing budgets and therefore there are no obvious financial implications contained in the report.

**10. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?**

- 10.1 In the absence of up-to-date guidance there is a risk the Council will be unable to effectively operate the LDP policies. The conservation areas SPG provides clear and concise guidance based on up-to-date national policy. The submission of information planning applications affecting conservation areas will improve decision making in terms of speed and quality outcomes.

**11. Power to make the Decision**

- 11.1 The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990
- 11.2 Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act (2004).