

**Report To: County Council**

**Date of Meeting: 26th February 2013.**

**Lead Member: Cllr David Smith, Public Realm**

**Lead Officer: Angela Loftus, Planning & Public Protection Policy Manager.**

**Report Author: Bryn Bowker, Planning Policy Officer.**

**Title: Report back on the consultation of the West Rhyl Supplementary Planning Guidance note.**

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

- 1.1. This report intends to inform Members about the consultation responses received regarding the West Rhyl Supplementary Planning Guidance note, and outline any subsequent changes proposed to the document. The consultation for the West Rhyl Supplementary Planning Guidance ran from October 24th – December 19th 2012.
- 1.2. Like the existing suite of Supplementary Planning Guidance documents, if adopted, the West Rhyl Supplementary Planning Guidance note will be a material planning consideration when assessing planning applications. The West Rhyl Supplementary Planning Guidance note will also provide structure for the Council in progressing regeneration in West Rhyl, including ongoing Compulsory Purchase Orders if required. A further aim is to attract private investment into the area. A map showing the area of coverage for the West Rhyl Supplementary Planning Guidance document is attached as appendix 1.

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

- 2.1. A decision is required on whether to formally adopt the West Rhyl Supplementary Planning Guidance note so that it can be used as a material consideration at planning application stage and guide the regeneration of the area. The West Rhyl Supplementary Planning Guidance note has been discussed with Planning Committee Members on January 23rd. Members of Planning Committee expressed support for the document.

**3. What are the Recommendations**

- 3.1. That Members formally adopt the West Rhyl Supplementary Planning Guidance note to be used as a material consideration at planning application stage and guide the regeneration of the area.

**4. Report details.**

*Background.*

- 4.1. The social and economic issues that challenge West Rhyl are well known. West Rhyl is part of a wider area that is located in the Welsh Government designated 'North Wales Coast Regeneration Area', with a number of strategic documents having been produced at national and local government level in order to help address these identified social and economic issues. The most recent Welsh Government tool used to measure deprivation (Welsh Indices of Multiple Deprivation) ranks 'West Rhyl 1' and West Rhyl 2' as 7<sup>th</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup> respectively out of 1896 assessed areas in Wales.
- 4.2. The West Rhyl Supplementary Planning Guidance note intends to help tackle these social and economic issues by establishing objectives for the area, identifying acceptable planning uses on an area development framework, and by outlining key development principles that planning applications submitted in the identified area would have to accord to. At the heart of the plan is the creation of a focal open space, the improvement of housing quality and built environment, and identifying sites that would be suitable for new development, including employment and tourist uses to complement the nearby high street.

*Consultation.*

- 4.4. The content of the draft Supplementary Planning Guidance, the scope and intention to undertake public consultation was agreed at Planning Committee in September 2012.
- 4.5. The public consultation for the West Rhyl Supplementary Planning Guidance ran for 8 weeks, from 24<sup>th</sup> October– 19<sup>th</sup> December 2012. The consultation included a press notice in the Rhyl Journal, use of the council website and a letter to over 390 organisations/individuals, including: Rhyl Town Council; the Rhyl Adventure Playground Association, Rhyl Community Agency and local agents, informing them of the consultation and telling them how to respond. Letters were also hand delivered to all properties in the West Rhyl Supplementary Planning Guidance area. Copies of the document and promotional posters were made available in Rhyl Town Hall, Rhyl Library, Fforyd Centre, The Village, Rhyl and Caledfryn, Denbigh .
- 4.5. An informal 'drop in' session was held which provided members of the public opportunities to discuss the content of the SPG with officers. The session was held at Rhyl Town Hall on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> November, 3pm-7pm. In addition, Denbighshire organised an informal meeting with members of Rhyl Town Council. DCC Officers also discussed the document with the Member Area Group.
- 4.6. The Council received 15 responses to the consultation, which raised the following issues:
- West Rhyl has enough green space.
  - Houses should be refurbished not demolished.
  - The aspiration and vision for West Rhyl is too wide ranging.
  - The SPG is focussed on an open space that will not necessarily deliver the outlined regeneration.

- An identified revenue source for the maintenance/management of the proposed works is required.
  - The SPG area should include the Ocean Plaza site.
  - The Regeneration area should be offering financial support to private owners with set standards for areas classed as ‘areas of no change’.
  - More refurbishment would enhance the historic setting of the area.
  - The design guidance is too prescriptive and will lead to bland design.
- 4.7. Detailed consultation responses have been summarised and are included in appendix 2 which also contains reference of any proposed amendments to the West Rhyl SPG. A revised version of the West Rhyl SPG is available in English and Welsh with marked changes as appendix 3. Original comments are available to view on request from the Planning Policy team.
- 4.8. Proposed key changes to the document include:
- Adding reference to National Planning Policy.
  - Edited maps to distinguish between the two separate conservation areas.
  - Removing reference to the conservation area as a ‘constraint’.
  - Reference to proposed new public car park on Crescent Road.
  - Adding text to confirm the Council propose to work with the Environment Agency to produce further advice on flooding.

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

- 5.1. *Corporate Priorities 2012-17.* The SPG will contribute positively to the following proposed corporate priorities:
- *Developing the Local Economy-* by setting the framework for the creation of a more balanced community the document will help reduce deprivation in this part of West Rhyl, help address the negative associations of the area, boost private sector confidence & investment in Rhyl, and create new jobs and business opportunities.
  - *Ensuring access to good quality housing-* by playing a key role in helping to meet the delivery of the priority outcome of “offering a range of types and forms of housing...to meet the needs of individuals and families”.

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

- 6.1. There are no additional resources required as information will be submitted and assessed as part of a planning application. Paper copies of the West Rhyl Supplementary Planning Guidance note can be produced within the existing budget, whilst an electronic copy of the document will be made available on the website.
- 6.3. It is not considered that the document would lead to an unacceptable harm on the natural environment or biodiversity.

**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 The West Rhyl Supplementary Planning Guidance document has been screened and it is not considered a full equality impact assessment is required as the document would not lead to unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct that is prohibited by the Equality Act 2010. The completed screening template is attached as appendix 4 to the report.

**8. What consultations have been carried out?**

8.1 As outlined in section 4.4 of the report, a full consultation process has been carried out.

**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 The aim of the SPG is to provide a clear planning framework to take forward the regeneration of West Rhyl against which planning decisions can be made. Without clear guidance, there is a risk that a lack of a consistent holistic approach for development proposals would make it difficult to refuse planning applications that do not accord with strategy outlined for West Rhyl. Furthermore, an absence of this document could partly undermine the evidence base used to help support compulsory purchase orders which are considered a key mechanism in helping regenerate West Rhyl.

**11. Power to make the Decision**

11.1. Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.