

BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE

9 FEBRUARY 2012

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR, COMMUNITIES

**SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING GUIDANCE:
BRIDGEND TOWN CENTRE MASTERPLAN**

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to: update the Committee on the results of public consultation carried out on the draft Bridgend Town Centre Masterplan; advise the Committee of suggested amendments to the draft document arising from consultation; and to seek a recommendation from the Committee that Council adopts the Bridgend Town Centre Masterplan as Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) to the adopted Bridgend Unitary Development Plan.

2. Connections to Corporate Improvement Plan / Other Corporate Priorities

- 2.1 The production of a Masterplan for Bridgend links to the following corporate themes:

- Corporate Plan (2010-2013) Theme 1 Strong Communities – by helping to create a safe, vibrant, inclusive, healthier and sustainable community;
- Corporate Plan (2010-2013) Themes 5 & 6 Proud Past and Green Spaces – by helping our town centres retain their character, heritage interest and local distinctiveness, and ensuring that land is used sustainably;
- Corporate Regeneration Strategy (Fit for the Future) Theme - Realising the potential of our major towns, achieved through a proactive approach to promoting key development and regeneration opportunities; and
- Corporate Regeneration Strategy (Fit for the Future) Theme - A diverse and sustainable economy.

3. Background

- 3.1 On 7th April 2011 the Development Control Committee endorsed the draft Bridgend Town Centre Masterplan and its technical appendices, for the purposes of public consultation.

- 3.2 A 6 week period of public consultation was held between 5th May 2011 and 17th June 2011 and consisted of:

- statutory notices placed in the Glamorgan Gazette on 5th May 2011;

- a press release at the start of the consultation process;
- the depositing of consultation documents and representation forms at every library in the County Borough and at the Civic Offices, Angel Street;
- the placing of all relevant documentation on the Council's website with the facility to make representations electronically; and
- notices sent to targeted consultees with details on how to respond, including notifications sent to the owners/occupiers of all properties within the Bridgend Townscape Heritage Initiative (THI) area directly affected by the guidance.

In addition the Bridgend Town Centre Masterplan went on public display at an exhibition held as part of the annual Festival on the 30 September 2011, which also included a presentation to a select retail and property based audience that consisted of a wide range of agents, local land owners and retail advisors.

4. Current Situation/Proposal

- 4.1 By the end of the consultation period one representation was received on the draft Bridgend Town Centre Masterplan from the Countryside Council for Wales (CCW). A late representation was also received from the Environment Agency Wales confirming that it had no objection to the plan in principle, but put forward a series of suggestions and a request for these to be considered.

Countryside Council for Wales Response

- 4.2 CCW stated that the Masterplan meets the screening Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive. They requested that if it was not intended to undertake a SEA of the Masterplan as part of the Bridgend County Borough Council Local Development Plan (LDP) process, then the LPA should satisfy itself that the Masterplan meets the requirements of the SEA Regulations.

- 4.3 In addition, CCW stated that given the lack of green space identified in the Masterplan SWOT Analysis (Appendix 1), and the recognition that urban green space/ infrastructure can improve:

- environmental quality and amenity;
- health and well-being benefits;
- biodiversity; and
- responses to climate change (e.g. shading, reducing surface water run-off).

That the authority should seek opportunities to incorporate green infrastructure and corridors throughout the masterplan area.

Council's Response

- 4.4 It is not deemed necessary to undertake a Strategic Environmental Assessment of the Masterplan. Although the guidance is supplementary to the adopted Bridgend Unitary Development Plan (which has been the subject of a sustainability appraisal), it is fully in

accord with the emerging Local Development Plan which has also had a Strategic Environmental Assessment undertaken. It is therefore determined, under Article 3 of Directive 2001/42/EC, that this supplementary planning guidance document does not require an assessment under the Directive.

- 4.5 The provision of green space will be considered as part of the detailed planning application stage of any proposals submitted within the study area. The provision of green infrastructure will also be covered by policies within the Local Development Plan and a proposed (separate) SPG that will cover landscape, biodiversity and green infrastructure.

Environment Agency Wales' Response

- 4.6 The Environment Agency Wales (EAW) comments stated that during planning department liaison meetings, the possibility of a Strategic Flood Consequences assessment (SFCA) for Bridgend Town Centre has been discussed with officers. EAW enquired whether the Town Centre SFCA is still a definite project and if so, that they look forward to working with the Council on this work.
- 4.7 Additionally, EAW state that they are aware that there are significant potential redevelopment proposals within the Masterplan area; namely Embassy Site and the Brewery Field and they are happy to assist where possible in providing any appropriate technical advice.

Council's Response

- 4.8 In consultation with EAW, a Flood Study for Bridgend Town Centre, as supplementary information to the Strategic Flood Consequences Assessment (SFCA) undertaken for the County Borough as evidence for the LDP, has now been commissioned and will be completed shortly.
- 4.9 The Council will also consult with EAW as part of any proposals for development within the Town Centre Masterplan area in the future.

Next Steps

- 4.10 In summary, the change to the Masterplan arising from the public consultation responses is:
- The insertion of an explanatory paragraph (at the beginning of the document) confirming that requirements of the Strategic Environmental Assessment Regulations have been followed and that an SEA is not required specifically for this document;

5. Effect Upon Policy Framework and Procedure Rules

- 5.1 The Bridgend Town Centre Masterplan SPG expands upon the existing planning policy framework contained within the Unitary Development Plan giving the public and developers more certainty in the Council's

expectations for future development within Bridgend Town Centre. Once adopted, the SPG will become a material consideration.

6. Equalities Impact Assessment

- 6.1 A screening exercise has been undertaken on the contents of the supplementary planning guidance. There is likely to be a low impact on some groups including disabled people and Welsh speaking individuals. Account will be taken of these and all relevant groups in the arrangement of any consultation events, including the provision of bi-lingual material where required.

7. Financial Implications

- 7.1 None

8. Recommendation

- 8.1 Committee is recommended to:

8.1.1 consider each of the representations received;

8.1.2 agree the suggested reasoned response in section 4 above; and

8.1.3 agree the proposed change to the to the draft Bridgend Masterplan outlined in paragraph 4.10 above.

- 8.2 That the Committee recommends to Council that:

8.2.1 it adopts the Bridgend Town Centre Masterplan (as amended by the change in paragraph 4.10 of this report) as Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) to the adopted Bridgend Unitary Development Plan, and

8.2.2 the SPG, in its adopted form, be published in hard-copy, and on the Council's website.

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Background documents

Draft SPG

Representation received to SPG during Public Consultation
Equalities Impact Assessment Screening Document