

# Chichester District Council

## PLANNING COMMITTEE

### Wisborough Green Village Design Statement

#### 1. Contacts

**Report Author:**

Oliver Brown, Planning Apprentice

TEL: 01243 21030 email: obrown@chichester.gov.uk

#### 2. Executive Summary

The Council has for some time been supportive of local communities who have prepared Village Design Statements (VDS) that guide the design of new development within villages. The Wisborough Green Parish Council has asked the Council to endorse their VDS for use as a material consideration in the Development Management process.

#### 3. Recommendation to Committee

- 3.1. That the Wisborough Green Village Design Statement (attached at Appendix 1) be approved as a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.**

#### 4. Background

- 4.1. A Village Design Statement (VDS) is a document prepared by the local community. A VDS should describe the qualities and characteristics that people value in their village and surrounding area and set out design guidance to show how development should be designed so that it respects the village's character and setting and contributes to its environmental quality.
- 4.2. A number of communities within Chichester District have prepared Village Design Statements (VDS). Originally VDSs were approved as Supplementary Planning Guidance to the adopted local plan. However, under the current planning legislation the most appropriate way of dealing with VDSs is to approve them, where acceptable, as material consideration in the determination of planning applications. They can then be taken forward as supporting evidence for a future Neighbourhood Plans at a future date. The weight given at any appeal to a VDS will be judged on its effectiveness in describing the village's character, the clarity of the guidance and the robustness of the justification for the guidelines in terms of why they are necessary to protect the village's character.
- 4.3. The Wisborough Green VDS team has broken down the village into 10 character areas, describing them in detail arranged around a series of broad topics. The VDS contains a series of planning/design guidelines for the Wisborough Green area. The Local Plan provides the district wide policies and the Neighbourhood Plan provides policies specific to the parish. The VDS is an opportunity for the

local community to expand on these policies in the form of guidance at the detailed village level through the VDS.

## **5. Outcomes to be achieved**

5.1. The benefits of a Village Design Statement include the following:

- Engaging the local community: The process of preparing a VDS helps the community understand what is special about their local area and to then share this with applicants, planners and anyone else intending to make changes in their area.
- On achieving endorsement by the District Council the VDS will become a material consideration in the determination of planning applications. This means that planning officers can make use of the VDS when dealing with cases and also planning inspectors can refer to it when determining planning appeals.

5.2. The VDS can be used by the Parish Council and the community to help inform comments on planning applications or other proposals. The appraisal of the Parish's character can provide valuable evidence for future policy development.

## **6. Proposal**

6.1. To approve the Wisborough Green Village Design Statement as a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

6.2. Next steps - If the Wisborough Green Village Design Statement is approved, the Parish Council will then publish the document. The District Council will be provided with a number of copies. It will also be published on the District and Parish Councils' websites.

## **7. Alternatives that have been considered**

7.1. To not adopt the VDS, which will result in less detailed advice for the determination of planning applications. This could also create the potential for loss of character in the area.

## **8. Resource and legal implications**

8.1. There are no financial implications arising from the adoption.

## **9. Consultation**

9.1. The VDS has been prepared by the Parish Council to reflect the views of the community whose opinions were gathered through consultation run in tandem with the consultation of the Wisborough Green Neighbourhood Plan. This process was launched in November 2011 and concluded in May 2013. The consultation process was comprised of 4 stages – questionnaires were circulated to the village in November 2011, a 2 day consultation event was held in the village hall in April 2012, a village character area workshop was held in

November 2012 and a 2<sup>nd</sup> consultation event was held in May 2013. The responses and information gathered throughout the process has been acknowledged and taken into account in the final document. The consultation process is described in detail within the VDS document and on the Parish Council website.

## 10. Community impact and corporate risks

10.1. The main implications arising from this report and potential risks to the Council achieving its objectives are assessed to be as follows:-

- a) Positive (Opportunities/Benefits): Delivery of corporate objectives; raise the quality of development in the rural areas; demonstration of partnership working with local communities.
- b) Negative (Threats): Raised expectations, as whilst the statement will be a material consideration in the development management process, it will not carry the weight of a supplementary planning document.

## 11. Other Implications

<b>Are there any implications for the following?</b> If you tick "Yes", list your impact assessment as a background paper in paragraph 13 and explain any major risks in paragraph 9		
	Yes	No
<b>Crime and Disorder</b> The Council has a duty "to exercise its functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder in its area". Do the proposals in the report have any implications for increasing or reducing crime and disorder?		✓
<b>Climate Change</b> Are there any implications for the mitigation of or adaptation to climate change? If in doubt, seek advice from the Environmental Strategy Unit (ESU).		✓
<b>Human Rights and Equality Impact</b> This Supplementary Planning Document expands on the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework and the National Planning Practice Guidance.		✓
<b>Safeguarding</b> The Council has a duty to cooperate with others to safeguard children and adults at risk. Do these proposals have any implication for either increasing or reducing the levels of risk to children or adults at risk?		✓

## 11. Appendix

11.1. Appendix: Wisborough Green Village Design Guide

## 12. Background Papers

12.1. Details of the public consultation undertaken into the draft VDS Document may be found on the Wisborough Green Parish Council website; via the following address - <http://www.wisboroughgreen.org/neighbourhood-plan/>