

KENNET DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL – 21st October 2008

Rushall Village Design Statement for Adoption as an Emerging Supplementary Planning Document.

Report Number: PSM/17/08

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To consider the contents of a village design statement (VDS) for Rushall and recommend it for adoption as an emerging supplementary planning document to the 'saved' Kennet Local Plan. A copy of the document is available for inspection in the Members' Room.

2. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 2.1 No direct financial or staffing implications result from this report. Upon adoption as an emerging supplementary planning document (SPD) this document will be a material consideration when considering applications for planning permission.

3. STAFFING IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 None. Any action can be undertaken as part of the Local Development Framework (LDF) process.

4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Draft Regulations published by the government are expected to result in the transfer of responsibility for plan making to the Implementation Executive leading the transition to unitary status before the end of the year. As a result, no further business will be put to the Planning Policy Executive Committee after its meeting held on 25th September 2008. Further meetings of the committee have therefore been cancelled.
- 4.2 A local group has been preparing a VDS for Rushall in consultation with the Head of Forward Planning. Unaware of the forthcoming provisions of the Regulations, the group expected to submit the document for adoption before April 2009. Work was subsequently accelerated in order to submit the VDS while the district council still has responsibility, in order to avoid any delay in adoption by the new authority, caused by the introduction of the new arrangements. In the absence of any meeting of the PPE Committee, the Council is requested to consider the document for adoption.

5. BACKGROUND

- 5.1 A number of policies and proposals contained in the Kennet Local Plan 2011 has been 'saved' under the new planning act and are regarded as part of the LDF until its contents are replaced by new planning documents to be included in the Wiltshire Local Development Scheme. The adopted Kennet Local Plan provides the policy context (saved policies HC22, HC24 and HC26) for considering development within the villages identified in Tables H4 and H5 of the plan. In addressing more detailed issues relating to development proposals, the Council has encouraged the production of village design statements, in accordance with the advice published by the Countryside Agency (now Natural England). Over the years, the Council has worked with a number of local groups in the production of these documents, which are highly regarded by their local communities, and has adopted them as SPG/SPD.
- 5.2 To date, fourteen village design statements have been adopted by the council as SPG and five further VDS have been adopted for the purposes of development control as emerging supplementary planning documents. Criteria for recommending the adoption of individual village design statements as SPG/SPD are based on the principles that it :-
- ◆ has been based upon the Countryside Agency's process;
 - ◆ has been subject to liaison with KDC at key stages;
 - ◆ is compatible with policies of the local plan and emerging local development documents; and
 - ◆ has been subject to an acceptable level of public involvement and consultation.
- 5.3 The Parish Council conducted an initial survey to determine local views on planning and development issues and the acceptability of their outcomes. Initial advice was sought from Kennet District Council and work on the VDS for Rushall commenced early in 2008 with the support of a large number of villagers. A team of 6 steered the process over the following 9 months. An extensive questionnaire was distributed to all occupied houses to gauge the villagers' opinions of what characteristics were valued. A response rate of 60% ensured that the VDS could reflect a consensus of local views. The responses to these questions were incorporated into the specific sections covering the various topics. Additional comments were also provided by villagers' and these were also incorporated into the main body of the document. The VDS was incrementally made available to villagers and the local planning authority for review and comment and revised accordingly. This was enabled through Coffee Mornings on 2nd August 2008 and 4th October 2008.
- 5.4 The group regularly updated the Council on progress and followed the criteria set by the Council for producing VDS. They also responded in a positive manner to comments made by officers on early drafts and amended the document accordingly. The consultation process is

considered to meet the requirements for adoption as a SPD. The VDS was prepared in accordance with the adopted Kennet Local Plan and provides useful additions to the raft of policies to be applied in development control.

- 5.5 The Rushall VDS will be the twentieth village design statement to be overseen and adopted by Kennet and will probably be the last. It is to be hoped that the new unitary authority will maintain the encouragement to local groups to produce such useful documents.

6. RECOMMENDATION

6.1 It is recommended that:-

the Village Design Statement for Rushall be adopted as an emerging supplementary planning document for the purposes of development control.

Background Papers

Correspondence regarding preparation of Village Design Statements held on File 67/13/17

Report Author

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7th October 2008

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