

Agenda Item No. 15

Title:	River Biss Public Realm Design and Implementation Plan (PRDIP) SPD
Portfolio holders:	Councillor Michael Mounde – Economic Development and Planning
Reporting officer:	Adam Nardell – Regeneration Manager
Key Decision:	No

Purpose

To request that the Cabinet agree to go to public consultation on the draft Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)

Background

The significance of the River Biss Corridor has been highlighted by The Urban Design Framework for Trowbridge (adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance) and the subsequent Vision for Trowbridge initiative. This is reinforced by the number of development sites located along the River Biss corridor (e.g. Waterside, St. Stephen's Place and the former Peter Black's site).

During 2007, the South West Regional Development Agency (SWRDA) agreed to work with the Council to develop a public realm design proposal for the River Biss in the centre of Trowbridge (between Biss Meadows and Bradford Road). This had two key aims:

- i) To produce an overall design for the public realm around the River and to identify priority projects which would be developed to detailed, costed designs. These would inform a funding bid to SWRDA under their Civic Pride scheme which if successful could fund the implementation of the identified priority schemes.
- ii) To provide planning guidance to inform emerging riverside developments of the Council's aspirations and requirements for the design of the public.

SWRDA has funded the Council to employ specialist consultants, Halcrow, to develop the public realm design proposal through to adoption as an SPD.

Key Issues

In order to maximise the potential of the Biss corridor in Trowbridge town centre, it is important to avoid a piecemeal approach and to set the standard for new public areas and cycle/pedestrian routes.

Scope of the Guidance

The River Biss Public Realm Implementation and Design (PRDIP) Guide covers the length of the River Biss between Biss Meadows and Bradford Road.

Previous Consultation

This document has been drafted following consultation with councillors, local landowners' agents and other relevant interest groups and stakeholders. There were also a number of exhibitions held at the Civic Hall, Trowbridge Library and The Shires Shopping Centre as well as via the Transforming Trowbridge website.

Content and Purpose of the SPD

The River Biss PRDIP provides guidance on specific design elements and details along the river corridor, including, a pallet of materials and suggestions for street furniture. The Design Guide identifies the different character and functions of stretches of the river corridor, and based on existing district plan policy, seeks to identify opportunities and best practice.

The aim of this document is to assist the district council and developers in the creation of a distinctive and high quality identify for the River Biss corridor

Options

Producing this document as an SPD will ensure that it is a material consideration in the determination of future planning applications. Without an SPD there is a risk that the different areas of the river corridor will not be integrated into the wider concept and opportunities will be missed.

This Design Guide is intended for use by Developers and Planning Officers in assessing proposals affecting the river corridor, and understanding the Councils aspirations for the public environment

Effect on strategies and codes

This report is in line with the Council's objectives in the Transforming Trowbridge Initiative and the Corporate Plan and the Trowbridge UDF.

This document supports existing policies within the West Wiltshire District Council District Plan First Alteration (Adopted June 2004). It has also been included as part of the updated Local Development Scheme and so will be part of the LDF

Risk Management Implications

The work undertaken by Halcrow has been largely funded by SWRDA and the undertaking of a public consultation exercise with a view to adopting an SPD presents no risk to the District Council other than the commitment of staff time.

Financial Implications

The cost of producing this document has been met by SWRDA and will be used in the future to inform the potential allocation of additional funding by SWRDA.

The production of an SPD will add weight to future bids for grants for enhancement schemes which would in turn encourage investment in the public realm.

Legal and Human Rights Implications

As with any SPD it can expand on existing policy within the LDF, but an SPD cannot allocate land.

Next Steps

With the Cabinets agreement we will commence public consultation on the 4th July and following an eight week public consultation period, all representation will be considered. A final draft of the document will be completed in time for the November Cabinet meeting.

Considering the advanced nature of some of the redevelopment proposals along the River Biss Corridor, during the public consultation process existing landholders and stakeholders will be re-consulted to ensure that they are able to integrate the objective of the Design Guide into their schemes.

Timetable for Consultation and Finalising the Content of the SPD

<u>Action</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Target Date</u>
Public consultation	6-8 week	Start: 04/07/08 Finish: 29/07/08
Consideration of Representations	4 weeks	End September
Completion of Final draft		10/10/08

Return to Cabinet with recommendation 05/11/08

Recommendations

Cabinet are asked to:

- Allow the document to go out for public consultation
- Note that the results of the consultation and final draft will be added to the Cabinet work plan for November

Background Papers

River Biss PRDIP SPD Draft
River Biss PRDIP Sustainability Appraisal

LDF Policies

West Wiltshire District Plan First Alteration (June 2004)
Urban Design Framework for Trowbridge SPG (September 2004)